

## CULTURAL POLICY IN INDIAN SOCIOLOGY

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### I

#### Introduction

I attempt in this paper is to understand at a very general level some of the ways in which Indian sociologists have sought to understand India's cultural unity. This appears to be a theme that runs constant from the colonial period. Conceptual questions about Indian culture raised during that period necessarily spills into independent India's sociological discourses. Institutionally however a break takes place with independence. The relationship between policy making of the independent Indian state and sociology came to be seen as integral and symbiotic for many in Indian sociology. For others, while autonomy of academic space from the state was important, the significant context remained a desire for 'swaraj',<sup>1</sup> for an Indian sociology. A corpus of writings arguing about the need and desirability of 'an Indian sociology' in the context of the specificity of an 'Indian culture' has been built up since the first paper of Louis Dumont in the pages of the *Contributions to Indian Sociology*. This debate has been integral to Indian sociology.

The focus in this paper is however on another debate, not entirely unrelated but definitely distinct. This is the attempt to work towards a desirable Indian cultural policy. Two obvious concerns are self evident in this conjoining of the terms 'culture' and 'policy'. The emphasis on culture I understand as linked to two processes. The first of these is linked to the trajectories of sociology and social anthropology generally as disciplines studying cultures. The second is linked more specifically to the development of the disciplines in India where culture becomes a key site for contesting colonial power. The emphasis on policy is perhaps more straightforward, a recognition of the centrality of the state in planning in independent India. It is also an acceptance of the fact that culture in modern nation states are garden cultures, not wild cultures. Change is inevitable. The options are either for a pure salvage anthropology or for a more interventionist attempt to construct a culture or cultures of the nation.

This paper is exploratory. My brief from the organisers was that an institutional rather than a conceptual treatment would be appreciated. I thought a review of presidential addresses of the Indian Sociological Society may provide a possibility for both conceptual analysis and reflect institutional concerns of the profession. Not all presidential addresses have however been published in the Bulletin. The other unfortunate part is that while some issues of the Bulletin do carry reports of professional activities, others do not. I have however taken the Bulletin as an important source. I also found some of the published proceedings of conferences held at the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies in Simla as well as the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)sponsored volumes on the survey of research in sociology and

social anthropology extremely useful. The possibility that I do not know of many other sources is more than likely. I hope that this conference may provide me the direction that I need to proceed with this exercise.

I attempt early in this paper to understand the context for both 'cultural unity' and 'cultural policy'. This paper in section II locates the colonial context within which Indian sociologists' concern with India's culture /cultural unity grew. Section III focuses on how the tasks of nation building, planning and policy making impinged upon the Indian sociologists. The decades of the fifties and sixties, right into the period before Emergency in 1975 appear to be marked by an active concern for sociology to play a concrete role in nation building, in development and policy making, in thinking up ways of resolving questions of cultural unity in India. Section IV, V and VI seek to capture the broad trends in the debates on cultural policy during this period. At the preliminary stage of work that I am in, I offer here very tentatively three trends in the cultural policies proposed within Indian sociology. The *first* is an overt location of unity in the Great Hindu tradition, the *second* in an idea of composite culture, synthesis and pluralism. In both a search for integrative elements is very strong. The *third* is politically a more left inspired cultural policy responding to 'the national norms of democracy, secularism, and socialism'. (Saberwal 1975:6) The last section (VII) seeks to suggest that the last ten years or more have seen a shift in these broad frames of grappling with questions of cultural unity and policy.

The theme of cultural policy cannot be of greater relevance than in today's India undergoing rapid cultural changes initiated by the process of economic liberalisation on the one hand and by state majoritarianism on the other.<sup>2</sup> Quite clearly a new cultural policy is at work. Indian sociology has been concerned with culture policy in the past. It is time to return to their deliberations.

## II

### Why was policy so important?

The term cultural policy is a conjoining of the two terms, culture and policy. This coupling of policy to culture flows from the view that Indian sociology ought to play an active, interventionist role in the running of the independent Indian state. That however was not the only view. The very first issue of *The Sociological Bulletin* carries two lead articles with contrary positions. D.P Mukherjee 's 'Sociology in Independent India' writes-

It is also firmly believed that those who are at the helm of India's affairs must needs cultivate the sociological approach. Further, for the important and immediate task of *reconstructing Indian culture* through intelligent *adaptation* to and *assimilation* of the new forces in the light of a re-interpreted past, *sociology is the most useful study*. No other study contributes so much to active consciousness of kind, which is the declared purpose of India's progress. (Mukerji 1951:13 emphasis mine)

M.N. Srinivas, writing in the very same issue of the *Bulletin* expresses a fear that the subject of sociology in India is unhealthily influenced by social philosophy at one end and social work on the other. The latter he regards a 'greater danger to sociology, especially in a country like ours where there is at present a natural emphasis on social reconstruction'. (Srinivas 1952:35) He is quick to add:

I have nothing but the highest respect and admiration for the great social workers of our country like Mahatma Gandhi, the late Thakker Bapa, and Acharya Bhave, and I do not mind if social work becomes very popular as a subject in our universities, but I must say that it will be a disaster for sociology if it does not assert its autonomy from both social philosophy and social work. Any alliance on the basis of expediency will not only prevent the emergence of the proper kind of sociology but it *will make popular a cheap variety of "applied sociology"* which with everyone with any respect for academic integrity and standards will keep away from. (ibid. emphasis mine)

Srinivas felt that the fact that growth of sociology in America was so closely tied up with the social problems of that country 'has not been advantageous to the growth of "pure" or "fundamental" ... sociology which is devoted to the study of social institutions on a comparative basis which has as its aim the making of intellectually significant statements about the nature of human social relationships'. Presumably D.P. Mukerji would have been as critical as Srinivas on the question of what the latter describes as a 'cheap variety of "applied sociology"'. The issue at stake however seems the broader commitment of sociologists to India's project of nation building and to specific ideals espoused by it. Many sociologists overtly expressed their commitment to secularism, composite culture, democracy and even 'Nehruvian' socialism.. One of the feature of American sociology that 'irritated' him was:

...for all their claim to be "scientists" American sociologists implicitly but none the less deeply, believe in the values of contemporary America, like democracy, equality of the sexes, superiority of the elementary family to other types of family, the benefits of industrialization and so on. (Srinivas 1952:34)

Twenty five years later, the debate did not appear to be dead as S.C. Dube in his Presidential address at the Thirteenth -All India Sociological Conference, asks us to:

Consider also the *artificial distinction between "pure" and "applied" research*, the former enjoying unquestionable superiority. Through a series of logical aerobatics, tortuous statistical procedures, and mystifying model building we appear to arrive at convoluted generalizations that often turn out to be statements of the obvious, their pseudo-profound terminology notwithstanding. What are left unattended are problems whose solution can be helped measurably by meaningful sociological inputs. *The mask of "profound" scholarship often hides puerile and vacuous ideas, it only offers terminological satisfaction with no operational guidelines.* (Dube:1977:11 emphasis mine)

And:

To realize its potential and make a *genuine contribution to the solution of pressing national problems*, Indian sociology will have to contemplate a series of imaginative steps -cleansing of thought-ways and work-ways of the colonial virus, *bringing back the focus on major social concerns*, ensuring disciplinary growth, encouraging interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration, increasing the credibility of the discipline, and developing strategies for the effective utilization of sociological research. (ibid :11-12 emphasis mine)

Dube reiterates that the Indian sociologist 'will have to relate himself directly to the people and their problems. Intellectual elitism in the situation is bound to be counter-productive; permanent dissent and constant anger will lead us nowhere. *Without discarding the function of the critic of social trends and policies, we shall have to assume a more direct role in the challenging task of national reconstruction*'. (ibid)

I.P. Desai in his Presidential address elaborated upon the 'concept of desired type of society' and envisaged a movement to realise it. He argued that the role of intellectuals is not only to claim privileges

but 'there are also corresponding responsibilities or the noblesse-oblige'. Illiterate men and women 'have an awareness of what is happening' and the 'least' that the social scientist can do is to take knowledge to the people in the form and language they understand'. (Desai 1979 :8 )

P.C. Joshi foregrounded 'the challenge of planned national development and social transformation which provided a new context for social science after India's independence'.

With his unerring sense of history Nehru understood the process of change in India after independence in terms of the Great Tradition from a traditional to the modern age. In the West this historic transition was associated with the break from traditionalism (Durkheim 1960) and, consequently, with the emergence of the scientific spirit. In countries suffering from attested development, this transition calls for a far greater utilisation of the revolutionary potential of science including social science. This is because *development in the case of the latecomers is a process of conscious planning rather than of unconscious adaptation* to elemental forces released in the course of a break-up of the old order and the emergence of a new order. The institutionalisation of scientific activity has assumed a new significance and received a tremendous impetus in this background. (Joshi 1975:140 emphasis mine)

There were however voices that were more cautious of an all-out alignment of social scientists with state planning. Surajit Sinha at a conference on *Urgent Research in Social Anthropology* at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, in July 1968 makes the important point that though there was a need for 'anthropological study of problems urgently needed in national reconstruction and development 'as a developing nation we cannot afford to divert a disproportionate quantum of our limited manpower of professional anthropologists away from scholarly involvement in planned social change'. (Sinha 1969:162-63) Rajni Kothari at a conference in the same venue in 1972 on cultural policy articulated his differences vis a vis policy making in general and cultural policy in particular. He argued that:

The whole question of *an appropriate policy for the future has so far been dominated by essentially diagnostic, analytical, and projective models, both in the Marxist and the post-Marxist "social science" frameworks*. What one is asked to do is try to discover "laws" of existence and of change, both in nature and in the unfolding of history, to seek to work them out, and to expedite their process. This has been the dominant perspective born out of the occidental worldview in regard to man, nature and society. This methodological and philosophical approach derives from a certain philosophy of science can be seen only in our times and in societies like ours which have been handed out a predetermined model of goals and objectives. What the intellectuals are going to do and what the future is going to be is all set for us. *...We are all clay for this design of history*. (Kothari 1975:26 emphasis mine)

This approach to policy making Kothari held as responsible for 'the general malaise in which societies like ours find themselves today'. A model of an inevitable future he felt has always led to the suppression of the human will, distorted concepts of freedom and reason and a general manipulation of both nature and human things. 'The notion of "mass" culture itself reflects such a view'. (p.26-7) Kothari was of the view that we need to 'shift from mere facts to values, from mere reason to will, from finding causes in inevitable laws of society to basing them on values.'

Andre Beteille in a slightly different view, while formulating the problem for a symposium on the social sciences in the journal *Seminar* is wary of a social science completely committed to social engineering, undermining its crucial role of 'critical understanding'. He feared that 'too close a relationship

between' the social scientists and 'government is that such a relationship is by its nature asymmetrical.' One way in which these professions might reduce themselves to client status is by having their priorities of research determined by government. (Beteille 1972:13) Sabyasachi documents the extent of dependence on the state for social science research and is wary of the autonomy of social scientists as experts. He contrasts the situation with pre- independence period when Romesh Dutt was a member of the Royal Commission on Decentralisation (1907) G.K. Gokhale and D. Naroji as members of the Commission on Expenditure in India (1897) and reminiscences that they are remembered not for their expert advice but their message to the larger public and their writing as critics. (Sabyasachi 1972:39-40)

If the role of social science in policy making itself was questioned, how were deliberations on 'cultural policy' received. At the commonsense level the idea jars for 'culture' is seen as essentially spontaneous, like its apparent binary opposite 'nature'. Critical of the centralization process underway everywhere, Kothari desired a "cultural policy" for:

...in a democracy there is a great need for the involvement of intellectuals and creative people in the general process of policy-making in economic, social, and other matters. by the same token there is no room for a "cultural policy". *For culture is not a matter of policy -except the policy of leaving it alone.* (Kothari 1975: 30-1 emphasis mine)

P.C. Joshi would answer this with his understanding of different historical contexts. To restate, 'development in the case of the latecomers is a process of conscious planning rather than of unconscious adaptation' (Joshi 1975:140) Cultural policy in the context of a modern nation state was deemed necessary to inform other policies also with a '*measure of deliberation and a sense of responsibility in history*'. ((Saberwal 1975: 3-4 emphasis mine) McKim Marriot emphasised that 'no state, not even an infant one, is willing to appear before the world as a bare political frame. Each would be clothed in a cultural garb symbolic of its aims and ideal being'. (Marriot 1963: 27) Marriot further stresses on the specificity of mid twentieth century nation states which makes matters of cultural policy central.

Modern means of communication have been gradually transforming the cultures of many nations for a century, generally without having been made the instruments of intentional policy. But the availability of such means of communication also opens up new potentialities for the manipulation of culture. The possibility of educating their citizens to a *newly chosen way of life*, of mobilizing them in support of *deliberately cultivated values*, of representing them to the world according to a consciously created image- all these are open to the elites of the new states, either in actuality or in prospect. *Whoever in the new state commands mass communication cannot avoid taking decisions and choosing among alternatives that shape cultural development.* Neither the "resurgence" of an "inner order" nor the diffusion of Western ways is likely to take place *today without the mediation of conscious processes of "cultural management"*<sup>63</sup>. (Marriot 1963:29 emphasis mine)

### III

#### Why was cultural unity so important?

India's cultural unity is a recurrent theme in Indian sociology. Writings before 1947 touch upon it even if the word 'policy' is absent. That the colonial backdrop was the signal most significant context within

which Indian sociology grew and grappled is a fact both widely acknowledged and emphasised. The study of culture has to be therefore located within this broader matrix. Yogendra Singh writes:

- \* Sociologists have been studying culture since the beginning of sociology in India, which roughly corresponds with the establishment of the British rule and the rise of the national movement. *The trauma of the colonial experience inspired them to undertake critical appraisal of the indigenous cultural traditions, and it also made them conscious about the strong points of the western culture. The paradigm of cultural studies that evolved through this historicity led them to debate how the Indian tradition in its essential form could be made to adapt with the western culture without a loss of its core value or cultural identity.* A deeper analysis of the textual culture, the cross-cultural comparisons of dominant traits and themes of culture, and a critical evaluation of the western constructions of the Indian culture and its evolution, were the main preoccupations of this period. This trend was reoriented to empirical-ethnographic studies of cultures. One set of studies contributed richly to the understanding of tribal cultures, their intrinsic attributes and their linkages with other cultures such as those of the peasants, castes and regions. Yet another set of studies, largely under the influence of the American social anthropologists, focussed upon the phenomena of culture in the context of the Indian community and its folk-tradition. *A distinctive feature of this approach, however was its sensitivity to the analysis of interactions between culture and civilization.* (Singh: 2000:emphasis mine)

Singh has drawn attention to the British colonial attempt to present India a divided, bickering conglomeration of tribes and castes not the mettle that nations are made of. This appears as a central backdrop to Indian sociologist's dwelling on both the concepts of 'culture' and 'national unity'. India's unhappy tryst with partition at independence left a long lasting shadow over the question of cultural unity. T. N. Madan writes how 'the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the formal proposal for the partition of the subcontinent in 1940, and the repression let loose by the Raj in the wake of the Quit India Movement in 1942 were the dark clouds under whose shadow DP first composed and then elaborated *Sociology of Indian Culture*. National unity did not cease to be serious problem with independence.<sup>4</sup> In the 1960s Ghurye writes:

To guard against the legitimate and healthy realization of linguistic separateness, militating against the overall homogeneity of political India, there must be comparable central organization for intellectual and cultural life... On the political and administrative side we can trust our political leadership to devise appropriate techniques to see that the various groups above referred to feel at home as one political unit, leaving enough scope to manage their own affairs without interference and yet subject to such wise supervision and even guidance as may keep the centre strong and respected. (Ghurye:261)

The Introductory address by the then Director, of the Indian Institute of Advance Studies, Simla .Niharranjan Ray at a conference in 1969 on *Urgent Research in Social Anthropology* identified two central tasks, first elaborating and strengthening the theoretical and methodological base of the twin disciplines of sociology and social anthropology, and secondly focussing on the major social problems of India. (Ray 1968:23) Of the social problems he identifies as significant is that of 'national unity'. He opts to use the phrase 'national unity, ('a phrase that was used by Gandhi-ji') rather than 'national integration' for 'unity can be brought by social action, but integration, to my mind, is an organic process which can take place only organically and under helpful conditions'. Since 'national unity' is a key problem the Director urges that:

...this should be given some priority and our research projects should be oriented to that end. We may start by asking ourselves *what are the facts and factors, at various areas and levels of the society in which we find ourselves, that are conducive to national unity, what are those that retard this unity?* To what extent are they historically conditioned, to what extent sociologically? (ibid:24emphasis mine)

Once this question is asked the Director ventures to suggest:

... all the major problems of today in the social anthropology of India, will fall into their proper places, one leading to elucidating the other and indicating the interconnectedness of them all- *regionalism* involving language and culture areas; *communalism* involving studies in religious cults, sects, institutions, structurally, functionally and from the point of view of their past history and present-day orientation etc; *caste and tribal problems*, their varied patterns and their politico-economic manifestations, nature, causes and implications; socio-economic organisation of the people at various areas and levels' the structure, function and methods of functioning of this organisation... (ibid:24)

The 'third important national problem' relates 'to our *social objectives of a secular democracy*, not merely on the political front but on the social and economic as well'. This overlaps with the question of 'national unity' and calls for systematic fieldwork 'horizontally' and 'vertically'. The two other points he draws attention to are the 'politically sensitive areas lying almost all along the northern and eastern Himalayan borders' and 'a closer study and analysis of the tribal peoples of the land, scattered not only along the Vindhyan belt but in pockets, small or large, of other areas too'. Most of these challenges to cultural unity Indian sociologists have sought to work upon. I attempt below a somewhat tentative classification of the different strands that went into Indian sociology's understanding of cultural unity of India, from which stemmed their own version of 'cultural policy'.

#### IV

##### **Integration and the cultural unity of 'Indian civilization'**

We have noted that the colonial context was significant in the claims made by Indian sociology that India was a nation with a distinct culture. We also noted that independence which accompanied partition of the country on grounds of religion did not resolve the cultural unity question. Movements based on region, language, tribe and ethnicity remained part of India's landscape. One mode of imagining India's unity was that 'the Aryan spirit is the core of our traditions'. (Mukerji 1942:1)

D.P. Mukherjee writing before July 1942 recalls:

About thirty years ago, Prof. Radhakumud Mookerji wrote a book called *The Fundamental Unity of India*. It created a sensation and was extensively quoted by Indians and non-Indians alike. The importance of his thesis consisted in crystallizing what many Indians had begun to feel in reaction against the subtle insinuations and the overt statements by interested people about *India being a congeries of many languages, habits and cultures*. Prof. Mookerji emphasised the cultural unity of Hindu India, referred to the notion of a single, undivided Bharat-Varsha in one of the great odes of all times, and pointed out that pilgrimages to the extreme corners of this continent brought its diverse peoples into physical and mental contact in an age when communications were difficult. The use of Sanskrit on all ceremonial occasions -and their number as legion and hold all-pervading -made for cultural homogeneity. (Mukerji 1942:31 emphasis mine)

Significantly 'these ideas became the stock-in-trade of subsequent intellectuals in India'. Mukerji further writes that:

Be it noted that the Muslim contribution had no place in the above thesis. But then the Communal Award came mainly at the instance of a few friends of India, and *the sense of Indian unity* was further aroused. In reaction, Mookerji devoted much time and learning to the solution of the problem of minorities on the model offered by the League of Nations. The model solution in turn led to this war and the Professor recommended cultural autonomy for the minorities in language and religion. Later, recent events make it compulsory, even for those who lead a sheltered existence, to analyse further *this problem of Indian unity in culture*. (ibid:32 emphasis mine)

Very early therefore Indian sociology realised the possible dangers of defining the cultural unity in terms exclusive of trends other than the Hindu. The trend however persisted. T.N.Madan reviewing an essay of M.N. Srinivas writes:

Srinivas's essay on the *cohesive role of Sanskritization* ("a profound and many-sided process"- p.68) makes the interesting point that *India's ingenious method of dealing with cultural differences consists in laying a veneer of Sanskritic (Brahman) culture on everything, Hindu or non-Hindu; and this is said to happen through the process of lower castes imitating Brahmanic customs, which was originally called Sanskritization, as also through the deliberate propagation of the life style of high, clean caste Hindu*. Spear's observations are echoed by Srinivas when he makes the perceptive remark: "Indian nationalism... expressed itself predominantly in a Hindu idiom, and this was a factor, though only one, in non- Hindu groups experiencing a certain sense of isolation."(p.81) (Madan 1968:244 emphasis mine)

While the Hindu Muslim tension has in a way dominated the discourse on national integration, the issue of the relationship between the dominant Hindu tradition and tribal societies have been a constant theme in the writings of social anthropology in India. The idea of an Indian civilization has been a steady yet ambiguous present. Steady because it is a constant reference point, ambiguous because scholars are not in agreement with how it ought to be defined. With reference to tribes, scholars have referred to the ongoing process of interaction, including the absorption of tribal peoples into the Hindu fold that has been going on for centuries. I begin with N.K. Bose's usage of the term Hindu civilization here.

*Hindu society itself has been built up over the ages by the integration of various communities*. The key to an understanding of the *interaction between the tribal and non tribal people lies*, according to Bose *in the different types of productive systems under which they lived*. Thus, he does not classify the numerous tribal groups living in India by race, language, and religion, but by mode of livelihood. Similarly, as we have noted earlier, according to Bose it is the monopoly of a particular occupation by each caste, the economic substructure of the system, in which its roots lay deep. But in the delineation of process he strictly adheres to his non-deterministic general view of evolution. As Beteille has summarized Bose's position, "... while the condition of the absorption of tribal communities into Hindu civilization are to be sought in the economic sphere, the manner of this

absorption is dictated by other considerations. And it is this *manner of absorption* that is crucial to an understanding of Hindu civilization." (Beteille, 1975:19) This is where the *ideals* on which the Hindu society was constituted come into picture, and the task of the anthropologist is that of making the actions of men intelligible in the light of their ideals. (Jain 1985 :28 emphasis mine )

Jain suggests that it is ironical in that while Bose held his self-identity as a field anthropologist and was particularly keen on the meticulous study of material culture and classification of tribal people by modes of livelihood, there was a strong tendency in Bose's analysis to interpret the Hindu texts literally. The *Brahminical model* is according to him *the repository of tradition in Indian society and culture*. Temporal processes like the *absorption of non-Aryan, including tribal, communities into the Hindu fold* are subsumed by this model. (ibid:29 emphasis mine)

Bose was cautious to note that the ideals by which a society is governed are not always realized in practice and also that ideals, just as productive organization and technology, do not remain unchanged for ever. However, he believed and sought to demonstrate through a combination of observational data gathered in the course of his "extensive fieldwork," excerpts from classical Hindu texts and epics, the evidence of inscriptions and styles of temple architecture, family histories, documents pertaining to caste associations and tribal movements, etc., that the Hindu socio-ideological scheme of the four *varnas*, the tripartite classification based on the three qualities or *gunas* of *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (valour) and *tamas* (darkness) and the Brahmanical dispensation of absorbing communities into the caste system by providing and protecting occupational monopolies for each caste were the ***key features in the design and process of Indian civilization***. The Muslim impact on India did not alter substantially the basic features of Hindu society and ideology whereas the British impact did. The reason for this, according to him, is that the British brought with them a new technology and a new system of production which the Muslims did not. Muslim society and culture could be accommodated within the broad scheme of the traditional order; but the new forces of production unleashed by the British shook this order to its very foundation. (Jain 1985:28 bold emphasis mine).

G.S. Ghurye's understanding of India's integrative mechanisms were perhaps less complex than Bose's.

The two outstanding features which unified India were Brahmi script and Sanskrit language. The scripts of most Indian languages were derived from Brahmi. Sanskrit became not only the language of sacred texts but also a medium for interregional contact. In this respect it provided an unbroken unity for India till the decline of Hindu polity. With the evolution of regional languages, Sanskrit receded somewhat. He mentioned marriage as another unifying factor in India....According to Ghurye the evolution of India's unity stemmed considerably from the acculturative process. The interactions between Aryans and non-Aryans, Aryans and Dravidians, and castes and tribes promoted religious and cultural efflorescence. The major deities of India - Shiva, Vishnu and Shakti- were symbols of ethnic groups which were incorporated into a single religious group. The Aryanization of the south by Skanda (god) and Agatya (rishi) -gave fillip to Tamil language which became an important literary vehicle. (Venogopal 1998:18-19)

I have mentioned earlier that Indian civilizational unity has been a constant but ambiguous present. The basic understandings of this civilizational unity itself were not only plural but contradictory. For Surajit Sinha, 'the socio-cultural field of India may also be conceived as clusters of several categories of ethnic groups living in villages and towns: tribes, Hindu castes, religious minorities etc.' (165) Spelling out his approach, he argues that 'our understanding of the cultures of particular ethnic groups would remain perpetually incomplete unless the role of the integrative organisation of the state or the zamindari was taken into consideration.' For 'the state and/or zamindaris guide, to a considerable extent, the regional pattern of

inter-group interaction and stratification and the regional synthesis of styles of life.' In a country like India' Sinha argued that 'social relations and cultural forms are closely guided by patterns of land-tenure and land-distribution'. Apart from these two other integrative organisations are mentioned:

One of the characteristic features of *Indian civilization* is that it always had various modes of cultural communication beyond the political and economic boundaries of states. The organisation of all India networks of Sadhus such as those of the Dasnami order of ascetics of narrower territorial range such as the various Vaishnava sects deserve special study by anthropological method. (166-7 emphasis mine)

The other refers to the 'organisation of specialists':

Any *civilization* has its own mode of organizing specialists who live in urban as well rural centres. It is known that the ancient pattern of learning Sanskrit as well as many of the higher arts such as classical music, dance, painting, temple architecture and sculpture have undergone considerable change due to competition with emergent new forms and cultural demands in the society and also due to the decline of traditional patronage. (168 emphasis mine)

The search for integrative organisations seem central in much of Indian sociology.<sup>5</sup> While for some the modes of cultural communication binding Indian civilizational are value based, the 'ideas, for others' it necessarily includes modes and relations of production, and more specifically land, role of the state and institutions such as the zamindari systems. Sinha felt that the tribes, except 'perhaps for the remote aboriginals of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, cannot be properly studied except as historically dependent categories of Indian civilization.' Without this 'perspective of connectedness various kinds of misinterpretation and errors may easily creep in.

We find therefore considerable divergence on how sociologists in India understood 'civilizational' and 'cultural' unity, even as the search for integration and connectedness remained strong. The other point that merits mention is that while I have sought to make three categories, trends within one easily flow into the other. Yogendra Singh who clearly speaks of plural and composite culture also speaks of civilizational unity:

Over the ages, unity of India has been symbolized by a cultural continuity, embodied into a unified principle of consciousness, which has contributed to the identity of its 'inner-structure'. This inner structure primarily lies in the religious principles and their interpretations. The unity or identity has not been static. On the contrary, the structure of this tradition, which throughout succeeded in projecting an image of unity in value-structures, ritual styles and systems of beliefs, also contributed to the growth of a unified world-view of Indian civilization, in spite of the fact that it contained innumerable substrata of cultural beliefs and practices. Both its substantive structure and its underlying processes have been diversified and pluralized, each flowing like small rivulets and streams in its own local and regional matrix, and undergoing its own localized convulsions. But each finally, like all rivulets and streams, merged into the great ocean of the Indian cultural tradition. This interlinkage of the processes in the Little tradition of the Indian culture with its Great tradition, contributing to the processes of transformation and the synthesis in the latter, is a historical reality. (Singh 1988 :28)

## V

### The search for synthesis and a composite culture

D. P. Mukerji's formulations on culture assume cultural synthesis. He is unequivocal that 'there is such a thing as Indian Culture. But disagrees on its equation with Hindu philosophy at its highest, the

peculiar relation between the soul and Brahman. For 'a good many things, e.g. the average individual's views about the ordering of society and his own functions therein, his behaviour and distinctive outlook are missing from this equation'. (Mukerji 1942:1)

As a social and historical process, however, Indian culture represents certain common traditions that have given rise to a number of general attitudes. The major influences in their shaping have been Buddhism, Islam, and Western commerce and culture. It was *through the assimilation and conflict of such varying forces that Indian culture became what it is today*, neither Hindu nor Islamic, neither a replica of the western modes of living and thought nor a purely Asiatic product. Obviously, the contribution of each factor cannot be assessed with any high degree of scientific accuracy. Many people think that the Aryan spirit is the core of our traditions, while others feel that but for Western culture India would have remained primitive. Yet, historically speaking, the *indigenous and incoming forces had welded India into a more or less organic whole*, until western commerce arrived. (ibid:1 emphasis mine)

And then further:

*Indian culture is a specific entity, being the sum of certain traditions which have grown out of the assimilation of many traits and retained their general character down the ages.* The relative permanence is neither good nor bad, the character can be useful or useless for a directed social change. *That character is essentially social.* The six or sixty systems of Indian philosophy do not betray it, but the Indians lived before they philosophised. And it was a fairly rich existence ranging from the sensual to the spiritual. The bond was mainly social bond; the status and the process were mainly social status and social process; the *dharma* was ritualistic, that is cultural. So singular and exclusive was the sovereignty of society, so effective was the social control over individuals that the need for having a state or church was not as strong as it was elsewhere, that even those who had cultivated their soul could not leave society before they had fully lived it through... The Indian Muslim community is based on the same social principle as the Hindu. To put it briefly, India has had only society to the neglect of other agencies of control, which only heightens the tragedy of the modern neglect of Sociology. This general character may restore the balance and correct the disparity that is sure to come in the train of a rapid industrialisation, when the Industrial Society will have been born. (emphasis mine)

The danger, however, he felt was that of revivalism, which he believed could be averted by a scientific study of the Indian social and cultural processes. (Mukerji 1952:26-27) Some scholars have suggested that 'for a time, Nehru's *The Discovery of India* and *Letters from Prison* constituted a tacit statement of Congress's cultural'. (Rudolph and Rudolph 1984:17-8) D.P. Mukerji writing five years before Independence and before Partition about the composite nature of Indian culture observes that 'Jawaharlal Nehru's *Discovery of India*... contains probably the most balanced account of the synthesis' and further that this is a 'balanced interpretation' by a 'a cultured mind possessed of a sense of history'. (Mukerji 1942:217 note 6.) Elsewhere D.P. Mukerji writes that India's foreign policy of non-alignment is itself understood as an expression of India's cultural genius.

Yet, there seems to be an awareness of the fact that India's culture contact should assume some form of *secular humanism* which will be the result of knowledge and constructive social energies and which will be the cultural substitute of war and exploitation, the two hitherto well-known methods of cultural penetration. With this cultural problem understood, the sociology of India's foreign policy becomes intelligible... *India hopes to non-participate in power politics by participating in the formation of a universal culture, for which India's genius is particularly fitted.* It is obvious that this hope cannot be fostered by the study of politics and economics, even

international relations and international economics, unless they are saturated by the sociological approach. (Mukerji 1952:25 emphasis mine)

I have mentioned earlier that concern with state policies marked a break in Indian sociology prior to and after 1947. The other break which have been remarked upon is that sociologists in independent India were more oriented to theoretical<sup>6</sup> and methodological<sup>7</sup> questions of the discipline than the pioneers. In a way this could perhaps explain a more deliberate attempt to theorise what was already a widely held assumption of 'Indian civilization'- its adaptability and plurality. Yogendra Singh writing in the early sixties develops a model arguing that culture is 'a dynamic process of synthesis and change'<sup>8</sup> and rationalises his elaborate theoretical construct by emphasising that :

a crucial problem in the study of social change in contemporary India hinges at the possibility and desirability of cultural synthesis. The majority of thinkers, sociologists and social scientists have accepted the constantly synthesising and dialectical process of cultural change in India. They quote evidence from Indian philosophy, art, science, social structure, rituals and customs to substantiate the hypothesis. (Singh 1964: 52)

Singh moves this assumption from the realm of illustrative evidence to a conceptual understanding.

The socio- cultural or *functional concept of tradition*, however, is a relatively recent development. It has generally come from sociologists and social anthropologists whose study of comparative cultures has revealed not only the relation between different traditions but also their *functional unity*. Hence a very important consequence of its theoretical assumptions is the faith in the possibility of synthesis in the various traditions through *diffusion, imitation, assimilation*, etc., and a constant dialectical evolution of tradition. (Singh 1965:49 emphasis mine)

Singh identifies the dominant themes of cultural values in India as characterized by *hierarchy, holism, continuity and transcendence*. The encounter of India with the west implied introjection of the values of *equality* in place of hierarchy, of *individualism* as replacement of holism, of *historicity* in place of continuity and of *techno-scientific rationalism* in place of the principle of transcendence. (Singh 1989:183) An inevitable contradiction arose for which Singh suggests that:

The type of cultural policy which India requires to achieve its cultural commitments would be that of working out *a synthesis among the values of equality, historicity and holism with collectivity orientation*. But the realities of Indian pattern of social stratification, composition and culture of elites and the nature of power structure create culture demands which tend to push the value-configuration towards a synthesis of historicity with rational individualism- the hall mark of the culture of a capitalist society. (Singh :1978: 89 emphasis mine)

We note in Singh's two formulation emphases on both diffusion, imitation, assimilation as well as on the values of equality and questions of power structure. The latter issues acquire salience however in a more left informed sociology which we examine below. As an illustration, I focus on a specific volume which carries the proceedings of a seminar held in honour of Lenin in 1972. The theme was "Towards a Cultural Policy".<sup>9</sup>

### Cultural policy and the national norms of democracy, secularism and socialism

The volume is divided into seven parts. The Introduction contains the theme paper, a welcome address by S.C. Dube, an inaugural address by the then Education Minister Nurul Hasan and an editorial note of Satish Saberwal. The other parts are 'the Context', 'Languages', 'Arts', 'Science, Technology and the Mass Media', 'Education' and finally the 'Discussions'. The theme paper while acknowledging Lenin's teaching for its measure of universality and durability recognises that:

A cultural policy for our country must emerge as a creative response to the realities of Indian life. Several factors necessitated this; distinctive cultural emphases and traditions of an old civilization; a democratic constitution with a multi-party system; a "free" press geared, in most cases, to segmental socio-economic interests; and a legal system that can delay, if it does not defeat, measures for radical change. (Saberwal ed. 1975:3)

To the question why there is an attempt to evolve a cultural policy for the country, the answer given is that 'various developmental policies and programmes of the government do have a cultural dimension and a great many state functionaries are continually active in harnessing society's values, symbols and myths to diverse purposes.' (ibid) Relevance of culture here flows from developmental agendas. It would be hasty however to infer that this is what this volume is all about. Though development is a key motif, it is by no means the only one.

P.C. Joshi in a remarkable essay in the volume moves away from the dominant integrative framework and seeks to analyse the cultural dimension of economic development. There are a couple of salient themes in his analysis. The first pertains to the *newness of the culture that nationalism of third world countries throw up*. Joshi argues that nationalism in Asian countries like India 'is itself an ideological force, nurturing new socioeconomic ideas (like secularism and socialism). By seeking to identify the various classes and communities with national economic goals and programmes, these facilitate the mobilization of all classes and communities for bearing the burdens of modern economic development:

...the identification of developmental aims with nationalist aspirations facilitates the orchestrating of diverse classes and communities during the transition, ensuring the *minimum of unity, cohesion and cooperation* among them. This very demand on nationalism results in a continuous reorientation of the leadership structure, the socio-economic basis, and the ethos of Asian nationalism, giving it an inner dynamism. Nationalism oriented to the need of *multi-class unification* and mobilization generates its own ideology of economic and social change, one which has to appeal to the most numerous class in Asian societies, viz., the poor peasantry. (Joshi 1975:47-8 emphasis mine)

Class is explicitly used as an analytical category to understand unity in terms of access to resources. The discourse on unity shifts away from the civilizational paradigm. Though questions of economic disparity is a running theme through the volume, the theme paper has a broader approach to culture which is spelt out as:

The reigning perspectives in this field are unhelpful and need reformulation. The problem in the general approach to Indian culture have varied origins- some enduring cultural myths (the Aryan myth and the Dravidian myth ); stereotyped cultural emphases ("spirituality" and "otherworldliness" ); an essentially past-oriented view of culture which ignores some major

*integrative and synthesizing processes; myopic and arbitrary selection of the elements of Indian-ness; and so forth. In this context, what are the levers available for moving from symbols and myths making for psychic and social exclusiveness to those which would make for psychic mobility and social interpretation? How can we redefine Indian-ness without glorification of segmental achievements in the past? What are the elements that weakened the fibre of Indian society in the past and need the attention of a cultural policy? How should the cultural processes be refashioned in order to broaden the sweep and to extend their reach to the economically and socially disadvantaged groups? (Saberwal 1975:4 emphasis mine)*

The kind of cultural policy visualised therefore sought to deal with horizontal discontinuities, arising in differences in language and tradition but also with vertical discontinuities arising in inequalities of income and status. The question of inequality receives here an attention that was if not amiss, definitely low key in the earlier two formulations of civilizational and composite cultural unity. The overt question raised is:

If a socialist transformation entails the transfer of private wealth to public institutions accessible to the masses, what are the key areas for public investment in the seventies, especially in the realms of education, publishing, the arts, science and technology? (ibid:5)

Education, arts science and technology are taken up as prime agents through which society's basic values, symbols, and myths are created and expressed and transmitted. Surajit Sinha's argument was that it is 'essential to buttress the symbols of equality with egalitarian work-day behaviour, with the practice of rugged austerity by the powerful, with neighbourhood institutions like schools shared between "high" and "low", and with productive labour built into the educational process.' (ibid:24) So far as arts are concerned playwright Habib Tanvir wrote:

Our purpose is to revitalise tradition in a manner that would keep the process of modernization close to our nationally accepted values and objectives. Our intention is neither revivalistic nor xenophobic. We submit that a deliberate policy will give us the flexibility to welcome and imbibe cultural strains from diverse sources. (ibid:148)

We clearly hear strains of cultural compositeness. Apart from papers on folk and tribal art we have Krishna Kripalani writing on national akademis and their role. Since an explicit mention is made of cultural unity, (the theme of this paper) I quote in detail. The constitutions of all the three Akademies stress on the need to promote through their activities "the cultural unity of India".

Our obsession with the cultural unity of our country is understandable. It is like a person with a deranged liver always conscious of it. (sic) Or it may be likened to a tantric yogi's obsession with his Kundalini which exists nowhere except in his mind. In the same way there is probably no such thing as the cultural *unity* of India. One wonders if it ever existed. What exists is a cultural diversity interwoven haphazrdly strong as to be described as a cord, spun and twisted through the centuries, is the thread of Brahmin influence so paramount as to give the illusion of unity to the whole of Indian culture. But there are many other threads running independently of it and they all make the groundwork on which is embroidered the complex pattern of our cultural diversity. (Kripalani :170 emphasis in original)

Apart from education and the arts an emphasis on science and technology formed part of India's cultural policy. But here too there were important qualifying statements. The sum of V.D.N. Sahi argument is that the real battle today is neither traditionalism nor for westernism- both are feudalistic in the Indian setting-

but for equality within and between nations....an open future demands alternate patterns of technology. A. Rahman's writing more explicitly articulates the role of science and technology in creating a new culture:

Besides the technological achievements, science can enrich society with its own subculture: respect for facts, consensual validation of insight, and open-endedness of truth. When this subculture does not spread into the larger society, the technology and the resources are employed wastefully, beneficial only to small minorities. (ibid:173)

Three key features characterise a cultural policy that emerges from a perspective that is influenced by a broad left perspective. They are *national integration, cultural autonomy and social equality*. The theme paper further elaborates:

Our efforts at building a cohesive and viable nation, though plagued by hesitation and indecision at certain stages, have emphasised stabilized cultural pluralism while nourishing the national mainstream. Substantial cultural autonomy has thus been accommodated without detriment to the integrative forces. This approach was reflected in Nehru's policies, and the recent reorganization of the north-eastern region demonstrates the continuance of these policies. The politics of consensus has paid off, although primordial loyalties have had to be accommodated in the process. Nevertheless, several issues call for reappraisal. What are the essentials of cultural autonomy? What constitutes its legitimate expression? What are its necessary limits within our contemporary political framework? These issues deal with horizontal discontinuities, arising in differences in language and tradition; but a cultural policy must also address itself to vertical discontinuities, arising in inequalities of income and status. What are the implications for a cultural policy of the need to abridge these inequalities? If a socialist transformation entails the transfer of private wealth to public institutions accessible to the masses, what are the key areas for public investment in the seventies, especially in the realms of education, publishing, the arts, science and technology? Furthermore, what can be done to remove the intense inequalities in our society- not only in wealth but also in status- so that persons of "low" status would not find public institutions informally closed to them? What are the implications of these issues for (i) our language policy, especially for the place of English and Hindi in relation to the regional languages, and (ii) our school system whose stratification underwrites the renewal of our economic and social inequalities? (ibid: 4-5)

## VII

### Of more recent trends

1989 heralded the breakdown of the Soviet led socialist world. While ethnic violence spread and intensified in these parts, Marxist theory saw a general retreat. With the opening of the Indian market and a resurgent Hindu majoritarian party at the helm of affairs, the dominant public discourse of secularism, socialism and scientific spirit is clearly being reworked. Indian sociology's concerns as evidenced in the pages of the *Sociological Bulletin* with India's cultural unity remains but the broader framework for resolving this appears to have undergone some change. What strikes one the most perhaps is the language of 'nationalism' and 'ethnicity' that appears to take over from the older frameworks of cultural synthesis, civilizational unity and composite culture. In a curious sense the desire for an Indian sociology wanes as concepts of state, nation, ethnicity, civil society, pluralism gains ground in Indian sociology's attempt to grapple with the rising tide of communalism and ethnic movements in India. Andre Beteilles observations in another context provides a different kind of explanation for the increasing presence of terms such as ethnicity:

The term caste answers only partly but not fully to what Bengalis mean by *jat* or *jati*, which may refer also, according to context and situation, to tribe, sect, and religious or linguistic minority. It is in this light that we have to view the increasing use of such terms as ethnicity, ethnic identity and ethnic group by sociologists and others to describe a significant feature of contemporary Indian society and politics. I am not suggesting that these are the most suitable terms, but they seem to answer better than the term caste to the mixed bag of social groupings to which I have been drawing attention. Recently, Professor Srinivas has observed, 'In the future too caste will remain important in Indian life. But it will be conceived more in terms of ethnicity.' (Beteille 1996:25)

If this is so as so with regard to caste what about tribes? Illuminating in this regard is a critique of Indian tribal ethnography (1968-72) reported in a survey undertaken by L.P. Vidyarthi:

Vidyarthi's survey shows a singular lack of awareness among the ethnographers of the global upsurge of ethnicity among the historical tribal societies. Though the anthropologists continue to swear by comparative method, there is little evidence of the same in the treatment of the tribal societies *vis-à-vis* the nation societies. But why? There should be a serious heart-searching. ... One of the barren frames of analysis is the transformation of the tribes into peasants. Certainly this is what had happened in the archaic civilizations, or the feudal politics of Europe... But is it true today? Even in an incompletely industrialising country like India, agriculture is inextricably linked up with world industrial network; the ethos of industrial democracy is very much in the air. Besides, the welfare state operates to diversify livelihood pattern of the population. *The tribes* therefore do not just become peasants; they become multinucleated social entities, without losing their distinct identities. *They become proto-nations*... Without sensitising themselves about these historical realities, the ethnographers of tribal societies are writing about the impact of industrialisation and urbanisation. Obviously the stereotypes and myths which have come to be associated with the frameworks of little tradition-great-tradition, sanskritisation, urbanisation, industrialization and so on, could not have continued unchallenged had methodologies of research received more meticulous care. (Cited in Jain 1985:42 emphasis mine)

Writings of T.K. Oommen in the last decade or more has focussed on questions of nations and ethnicities, distinctions between states and nations and the need for conceptual clarity. The search for 'cultural unity' he would critique as part of the endemically national-biased practice of sociologists. The point that he wishes to make is that :

The popular assumption that 'nation-states' are natural human collectivities is unsustainable. In fact, quite a few of them are artificial entities and what is usually referred to as nation-building is nothing but transforming these artificial entities into natural units. ...if the global -society is an abstract notion and a conceptual dope, the state-society is an artificial entity and often an empirical monster. If so, where does one look for and pitch oneself in one's effort to identify an authentic unit of sociological analysis? I suggest that *civilizational-society* provides a viable anchorage and is an authentic unit for sociological analysis which would save sociology from both false universalism and false nationalism. (Oommen 1990:6 emphasis mine)

His view of India's civilizational unity is quite different. But his choice of the term civilizational society is interesting. The reasons he offers are:

Civilizational society recognizes the dignified co-existence of different cultures and life-styles, religions and languages. It does not plumb for an arrangement wherein particular types of economy, polity and culture are taken to be necessarily and always co-extensive. That is, the notion of civilizational- society unambiguously attests pluralism- the central tendency in contemporary world society. In turn, it recognizes that all systems have their share of assets and

liabilities and advocates the judicious fusion of the desirable elements in all civilizations and the rejection of undesirable aspects. (ibid:12)

Partha N. Mukherji's work on ethnicity and nations seeks to review concepts such as class, ethnicity, nation and nation-building as they relate to the substantive problems of nation and nation-building in India. Of some of the basic theoretical problems that Mukherji addresses are: the latent though strong assumption of an enduring cultural integration/homogeneity characterising an ethnic group (nation) on the strength of one or more cultural markers (race, descent, language, religion, caste, etc.). This he argues undermines the strong possibility of cultural differentiations within the same ethnic group and cites the example of Bangladesh's breaking away from Pakistan. (Mukherji 199:24) The second fallacy that he looks at is the overlooking the structural differentiation that may exist within such apparent cultural integrations. The question that he raises is: Does ethnicity encompass class or vice versa? Mukherji writes that if the term nation is to be defined with greater clarity, (i) its historical evolution as a modern phenomena has to be recognised; (ii) its linkage with the state is inevitable; (iii) it has to be recognised that the modern state is a relatively stable and enduring structure particularly because its 'sovereignty' is guaranteed by the global political system; (iv) its political articulation of cultural aspirations and interests while very important, it has to be noted, that class interests and the social organisation of the economy are no less crucial; (v) it should refer to a territory, a people and ultimate citizen-loyalty to the state, transcending ethnic and class loyalties and interests.

It may not be out of order here to refer to P.N. Mukherji's observations two decades earlier. He mentions that two theoretical streams, the functionalist and the structuralist, were running parallel, though doubtless the former was the mainstream and ahead in academic recognition. Perhaps Mukherji in a way suggests that these theoretical approaches were responsible for sociology being unaffected by 'cataclysm of the time', namely communal carnage, sub-nationalism, peasant movements. If that was so it is not surprising that cultural was predominantly thought of in a synthesis /integrative frame. (Mukherji :38-9)

Cultural policy however continues to be on the agenda of Indian sociology as is evident by the fact that this was the theme of the XXI All India Sociological Conference held in 1994. However the manner of addressing it appears to have shifted from the composite and civilizational paradigm. Victor D'Souza in a talk at the conference, proceeds from 'the policy considerations which stem from the basic objectives laid down in the preamble of the Indian Constitution' which include 'justice, liberty and equality for all citizens and the promotion of fraternity among them by ensuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the nation.' D'Souza's argument is that these constitutional objectives are being frustrated because the 'cultural pluralism for which this country is noted' has assumed the form of 'structural pluralism'. (D'Souza 1995:162) His contention is that :

the mere existence of cultural diversity with different collective identities in a society is referred to as *cultural pluralism*; when the different groups are socially exclusive, the resulting situation is termed *social pluralism*; and when the socially exclusive and economically unequal groups are differentially incorporated in dominant-subordinate relationships, the given situation is called *structural pluralism*. (D'Souza 1995:163)

Since structural pluralism has stood in the way of India securing its fundamental national objectives 'what is necessary is not the homogenization of Indian culture or the restriction of cultural expression, but the dismantling of conditions responsible for the transformation of cultural pluralism into structural pluralism'. The demolition of structural pluralism D'Souza advocates would involve 'measures to curb the tendency for channeling of inequalities through cultural and ethnic groups and to reduce the existing inequalities between groups'. While approving of state measures like 'regional autonomy', 'group based reservations and a socialistic pattern of economy' D'Souza finally concludes that the reason why such changes have actually turned out to be counter-productive is the fact that inequality is ultimately based on socially exclusiveness between groups.' The cultural policy should therefore be concerned with 'social inclusiveness among groups'. (ibid:166)

Yogendra Singh is one of the few who persist with the 'civilization' category. Remarking upon the alienating relationship between Western philosophy of Enlightenment and the Indian philosophical traditions, he remarks that:

*... The root of our muted or adaptive response to disenchantment lies in our collective cultural consciousness and the way we have responded to our modernization... the extent to which individualism and the 'soft-state' affect the Western life-world is not the same in our society. This may largely be due to the rudimentary level of industrialization and urbanization in our society or it may be due to our cultural resilience acquired over millennia of cultural and social encounters with alien civilization. It may also be due to the primacy of values in our life not as a means to an end but as an end in itself (Singh 1998:161).*

Quite clearly recent sociological writings has been operating with more current theories of nationalism and ethnicity. One explanation for the focus on nationalism has been the growth of cultural studies in the West (with a concerted interrogation on nationalism) and its arrival in India 'largely outside the institutional fold.' holding the promise of 'engaging in a critique of naturalised ideologies, universalist theories and theorising fragmentary resistance'. 'Consequently', Anjan Ghosh would argue that 'ideas like "modernity" and "nation" have come under scrutiny. (Ghosh 1996:15) I would go along with Ghosh in affirming that 'even early commentators of the post-colonial condition in India were not unaware of the fragility of the national subject'.<sup>10</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> J.P. Singh Uberoi writes: 'Every swarajist should recognize what are the essential preconditions, under this system, for the advancement of universal science in our environment. Until we can concentrate on decolonization, learn to nationalize our problems and take our poverty seriously, we shall continue to be both colonial and unoriginal. A national school, avowed and conscious, can perhaps add relevance, meaning and potency to our science; continued assent to the international system cannot.' (Uberoi: 1968)

<sup>1</sup> This year the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) under the direction of the Ministry of Human Resources directed the Oxford University Publication (OUP) to stop publication of commissioned history books on the charge that Marxist scholars have distorted India's history. Not too long ago there was a controversy about a state directive insisting that all schools begin the day with Saraswati Vandana, an invocation to the Hindu Goddess of learning. More recently we have had successful attempts by groups to stop shooting and showing of films.

<sup>1</sup> Lloyd A. Fallers, (1961) "Ideology and Culture in Uganda Nationalism," *American Anthropologist*, 63: 677-678.

<sup>1</sup> A large number of Western scholars wrote on the fragile cultural unity of India. To mention just two we have Philip Mason ed. (1967) *Unity and Diversity: India and Ceylon* (Bombay: OUP) which talks about the 'fissions' of Indian society and Neville Maxwell who reiterated 'the basic political fact' that an old English servant of the British Raj had summed up that 'there is not, and never was an India...'

<sup>1</sup> In organising the research programme of Anthropological Survey of India Nirmal Kumar Bose suggested among many successive phases of research like survey of selective material traits: crafts: carrying capacity of land and various productive techniques also 'a study of higher integrative institutions such as temples, the chains of *mutts* established by Adi Shankaracharya etc.' cited in Notes in Sinha (1969) p.168

<sup>1</sup> D.N. Dhanagare writes: "Theoretical orientation was, however, not totally missing in Indian sociology. An overwhelming majority of Indian sociologists had found 'structural-functionalism' as an intellectually challenging as well as a satisfying framework." (Dhanagare 1980:25)

<sup>1</sup> I.P. Desai writes: "... we are speaking and writing more to the point and pointedly than, say, before independence.... This consciousness is evident whether the analysis is quantitative or qualitative, or whether the observation is direct or indirect-in the field, or from the records. These are the gains of what is popularly known as "methodology." (Desai 1979:2)

<sup>1</sup> Yogendra Singh mentions in the passing of a recent study by Margaret Cormack (1961) using the symbolism of "Saraswati" and Lakshmi" to represent the struggle between alternative values. He writes, 'She concludes "India is changing, as it always has, but it will remain India," and thus posits faith in cultural synthesis'. (Singh 1969:61)

<sup>1</sup> Issues of cultural policy were always central for newly emergent nation states. In India, it is believed that India's first Prime Minister Nehru's 'resolute rationalism and commitment to a "scientific temper" in effect denied the relevance of religion to national political identity'. It has been remarked that "Indira Gandhi's accession to power in the mid- 1960s' marked the 'beginning of a more articulate and aggressive left secularism in institutional arrangement, ideological formulations, and scholarships'. (ed. Rudolph 1984 :17-18) It is perhaps in this background that at the suggestion of the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Government of India, the India Institute of Advanced Study, Simla held a seminar on cultural policy.

<sup>1</sup> Emphasis on the spurious nature of the middle class, the chief agents of nationalism has been a theme worked upon by both A.R. Desai and much earlier by D.P. Mukerjee.

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