


*modernisation  
of a  
traditional  
society*



*Willard Cantwell Smith*

301.2954

Sm 68M

*under the auspices of the  
American Council Of World Affairs*

**MODERNISATION OF A TRADITIONAL SOCIETY**

MODERNISATION  
OF  
A TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

*by*

WILFRED CANTWELL SMITH

*Issued under the auspices of  
the Indian Council of World Affairs*



ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE  
BOMBAY CALCUTTA NEW DELHI MADRAS  
LUCKNOW BANGALORE LONDON NEW YORK

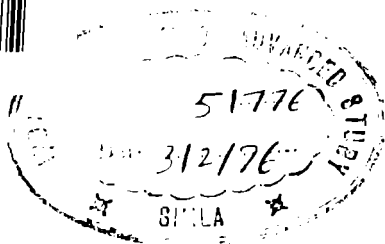
© WILFRED CANTWELL SMITN 1965

The Indian Council of World Affairs, under whose auspices this study is issued, is a non-governmental, non-profit and non-party organisation, founded in 1943 to encourage and facilitate the objective study of Indian and international affairs. The Council as such is precluded by its constitution from expressing an opinion on any aspect of Indian or international affairs. The opinions expressed in this study are of the author, not of the Council.

rary IAS, Shimla



0051776



11/1

3012 954  
5m 68 m

PRINTED IN INDIA  
at National Offset Works and published by P. S. Jayasinghe,  
Asia Publishing House, Bombay-1

## FOREWORD

This book contains the text of the 4th set of Annual Lectures organized by the Council. Prof. Arnold Bergstrasser of Freiburg University was invited to deliver the annual lectures for 1963 and had accepted the Council's invitation. But due to various reasons he was not able to leave West Germany. Hence no lectures could be delivered in 1963.

The 1964 Annual Lectures were delivered by Prof. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Director, Institute of World Religions, Harvard University, on 23, 24 and 25 March 1964 at Sapru House, New Delhi. These lectures dealt with the theme *Modernisation of a Traditional Society*. Prof. Smith's treatment of this subject, which is of special interest to our country, has been very greatly appreciated. The text of the three lectures as delivered is being published in the hope that they will be of interest to many more scholars and men in public life than were able to attend these lectures.

*New Delhi*  
*15 March 1965*

S. L. POPLAI  
*Secretary General*  
*Indian Council of World Affairs*

## CONTENTS

FOREWORD	v
I THE MEANING OF MODERNISATION	1
II THE ROLE OF THE INTELLECTUALS	23
III MORAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS	44

## THE MEANING OF MODERNISATION

**H**ISTORIANS of ideas know well enough that a notion of 'progress' was dominant in the nineteenth century in the West. It is no secret that in more recent times the idea has been challenged, if not superseded. At the very least, few thinkers now subscribe to any doctrine of inevitable progress; or take it for granted that a great march forward of civilisation is automatic. Nevertheless, certain corollaries of this particular view of history have lingered on, affecting men's attitudes long after they have ceased explicitly to believe the primary theory. It has been said that Plato's vision of philosopher-kings does get a belated realisation, in that thinkers do rule the world—but only long after they are dead. It is a pity if their ideas dominate men's minds and behaviour, as unexamined presuppositions, not only after the thinkers are dead but also after the ideas have become out of date, irrelevant. Things change so fast nowadays that we can no longer afford to carry around with us the implications of doctrines after we have adjudged the doctrines themselves untenable.

One secondary concept from the idea of progress lurks still not only in the minds of men-in-the-street but, I think you will agree, in the minds, and therefore in the activities, of quite important, responsible, persons. This is the concept 'modern'. It seems an innocent idea, straightforward and simple; though on scrutiny it turns out to be less innocent than one thought. If things are getting better all the time, steadily, relentlessly, then it follows that to be modern is good; the very term 'modern' then means 'something valuable,' something nearer to one's heart's desire. Once one is no longer persuaded, however, that progress is inherent and self-generating; once one begins to wonder whether

human folly or wickedness, apathy or inadvertence, may divert or frustrate and even perhaps reverse whatever trends toward perfection may be at work in the world; then the meaning of 'modern,' if not shattered, must at least become less clear. The conviction, or assumption, that the term 'modern' designates something desirable, stands or falls, I submit, with the belief that progress in human affairs can be relied upon as inevitable.

Indeed, may we not also assert that something of this sort applies even to the very supposition that the term means anything at all? If the world is moving ineluctably, incontrovertibly, towards some goal that is both fixed and known, however vaguely, towards some tomorrow that is somehow guaranteed, then 'modern' means closer to that goal, more like it. If, on the other hand, the future is not given, definite and unchangeable; or even if it is given but is not known; then what does 'modern' mean? If we do not know the destiny of human life on earth, how are we to tell whether something is modern or not—except in the rather useless sense that everything that exists today is modern? If 'modern' means, in line with the basic trend of events, but if we do not know what the trend of events is, where it is leading, what becomes of our word? To phrase the matter in another fashion, one might suggest that to ask 'What does modernisation mean?' is in effect to ask, 'Where are we going?'

Probably you may agree with me that this latter question is becoming less easy to answer as we go along. I lived in India first for six years in the 'forties before Partition and Independence. In those days personally I was younger, of course, more naive and enthusiastic and with more buoyant optimism; but the situation itself seemed simpler. The zest of the nationalist movement carried us all along, with a programme that was simple at least in the sense of being straightforward: 'Let's remove British rule and get to work.' Some of us were, in addition, socialists, in the simple days before the devastation of the Stalin terror had become revealed, before Hungary, before Chinese imperialist aggression. Those were Messianic days, with the brave new world just round the corner. The task facing humanity might not be easy, yet it was simple. Perhaps, even, it was only negative: if we just got rid of the British, or of the bourgeoisie, or of



communalism, all would be well. We might have to work hard to attain the goal, but the goal itself seemed to be given: it existed in the future, if not in the then present; as an ideal, if not yet as an actuality. And the reality, the truth of the ideal, seemed independent of ourselves: we had to strive to attain it, as I have said, and even perhaps to recognise it, but not to concoct it. Our job was to realise it on earth, but not to construct it in heaven.

Now that the immediate goals of our youth have been achieved—national independence in India, the liquidation of Western imperialism, the welfare state in Britain, the achievement of the proletarian revolution in half of Asia—we find that men's responsibilities for running the world bring vagueness in our sense of what actually we now want, as well as perplexity as to what actually we are getting. We used to be more confident that we knew what tomorrow would look like.

The possibility that things may go wrong—a possibility more vividly in our minds today perhaps both in India and in Western society—means that modernity may be less charming, and is anyway less clear, than we used to suppose. At least, I am proposing that it will repay inquiry.

What really do we mean when we say 'modern'? What ought we to mean? What are we justified in meaning? Let us examine such questions.

First, we may observe readily enough that there exists much enthusiasm for the notion of modernising. Most of those who have anything to do with, or any comment to make upon, present-day developments in India, are 'of course' keen that this country should become modern as quickly and as surely as possible.

Indeed, they tend to take it for granted not only that this is what they do, and should, strive or hope for, but also that 'of course' everyone else will agree with them on this. Contrariwise, to be accused of not being modern, whether a person or a society, is something of which one would be afraid, to which one would surely be sensitive. About any failure to modernise, or to modernise fast enough, all concerned would be supposed without question to be sad. In other words, it is presumed that the term 'modern' designates something good, and something clear.

Now in fact it is not at all difficult to show that both assumptions are unduly glib. I think we can puncture them both in a mere moment or two. Then having broken down any easy, uncritical attitude we may go on to wrestle more seriously and constructively with the really quite difficult problem of what this process of modernisation actually involves.

That 'modern' necessarily means 'desirable' will not stand up to a moment's reflection. Nothing is more modern, I suppose, than nuclear weapons, or the horrendous possibility that the human race can in a flash commit global suicide or at least level civilisations to the ground. Bacteriological warfare is so unthinkable in its loathsomeness that we simply do not think about it, even though it is perhaps more awful even than the atomic menace; yet it is superbly a modern threat. Again, if democracy is modern in the world, even more modern is fascism. The efficiency of its wickedness, and the scale of its oppression, are historically unprecedented. Or if these be dismissed somehow as aberrations (itself an interesting concept), or anyway un-Indian examples, let us turn to more specifically Indian contexts.

One example relevant here is the industrial slum, a facet of the sprawling urbanisation process that marks, for instance, the characteristically *modern* cities of Bombay and Calcutta. Industrial urban slums, the historian notes, are a relatively modern development. An even clearer instance is population increase. Both the absolute numbers of people in this country today, and the frightening rate at which those massive numbers are increasing and will, we are told, increasingly increase—these are modern. Not only are they recent in the straightforward sense of being historically unprecedented, but also they are modern in that they rest squarely on the whole substance and apparatus of modernity in the world: on medicine and scientific hygiene, on technological communication systems and efficient social institutions, on welfare-state structures and ideas. The population explosion and its threat are peculiarly modern affairs.

In fact, in *many* ways modernity is a threat. For many thousands of years geography protected India; in many directions from foreign conquest, and in all cases from foreign rule. In ancient times anyone who dominated India, however alien, had to settle down here and therefore to become in some degree

Indian. It was the beginning of a modern process that enabled this country to be conquered from the sea, and then to be ruled from the outside by foreigners who remained foreigners. Still more modern is the failure of the north-eastern geographic barrier to protect. For centuries upon centuries China could never threaten India across those lofty mountains. It is a *modern* fact, in every sense of the word, that this country should face that new danger.

External aggression is possible in new forms; so also is internal subversion—the novel capacity of a ruthless power, if one such were to seize control here, not only to replace the government but to reach out into previously inaccessible villages, and by modern totalitarian methods to break the continuity of popular culture, even to smash a religious heritage.

These are modern problems, not merely modern amenities. 1

Once the point is pressed, of course, no one will actually defend the idea that everything new, without exception, is admirable; that every single change, actual or potential, is a change for the better. We can all think of innovations that are not welcome. Even the enthusiasts for modernisation do not really intend a blanket approval of everything that happens. In fact, may we not conclude that for those who applaud the 'modern' there is a crucial, though unconscious, difference in meaning between 'modern' and 'recent' or 'new' ?

One of the prominent elder statesmen of the Ataturk regime in Turkey, a grand and able leader, told me once when I was visiting him in his ancestral home in Istanbul that certain repairs that were in train in the house had needed doing again although they had been attended to only two years previously; whereas the same repairs, effected when he was a boy, had lasted 44 years. In other words, the workmanship of the artisans at the turn of the century had been of such a quality as to last almost a lifetime, whereas their successors in recent times did the same job in such a slipshod and insouciant way that the work needed re-doing after only two years. Now he would not have reported this to me, in a long and serious discussion on the Turkish revolution, had he not regarded it, and presented it, as typical of a trend (which we were discussing) towards a less responsible and less fastidious attitude on the part of craftsmen towardse

their tasks, in modern times. I would not have appreciated his illustration nor remembered it, had I not been vividly familiar with just the same sort of development in Canada. Nor would I be relating it to you now did I not expect that you in India would recognise from your personal experience what I have in mind and what he had in mind.

Such a trend in Turkey, in Canada, and perhaps in India, and certainly in other lands that I know, is presumably a world-wide emergence of the depersonalisation of labour, the tendency to work for monetary gain rather than out of a joy and pride in craftsmanship, the loss of a fusion of a sense of moral responsibility and ultimate personal significance with the mundane task at hand. If such a process is occurring throughout the world, so that everywhere workers are finding it less and less normal to derive integrity and satisfaction from a job well done, shall we label it 'modern'? When we talk of modernising India quickly, do we in part mean an attempt to accelerate this particular development? It may be new; but is it what we mean by modern?

This leads then to our second point: that what 'modern' actually means is not transparently clear.

One may even consider the case of the traditionalist for whom what is good lies in the past, in some classic or golden age of long ago, or even just the way things were when he was growing up; and who decries contemporary life as an aberration or betrayal. To such a man, 'modern' may be a term of abuse: it designates something bad. Yet even this is complicated. For one may argue that such a man must be not only unhappy about the present (which of us is not?) but also despondent about the future. For if, instead, he be a revivalist, an active conservative, believing that he and his friends may will to restore some ancient grandeur, then his programme is to re-introduce what has once been, to re-implement his traditionalist ideal. And if he succeeds tomorrow, or even if one believes that he may succeed tomorrow, then will not what is current today be supereded by what, then, is truly modern, or soon will be: namely, that re-actualised ideal? If *that* is what tomorrow is going to look like, then are those of us who have a different aspiration or vision simply

wrong, including being wrong in our sense of what the word 'modern' rightly means or is about to mean ?

For example, those who would revive Sanskrit and who expect it to be revived and to dominate, must hold that to learn Sanskrit is the modern thing to do, and that for an Indian to know only English and Hindi and Tamil or to be content with them is old-fashioned—or soon will be.

I repeat, what 'modern' means is not really clear. Not everything new is good; further, not everything contemporary is modern. After all, Saudi Arabia has come into political existence much more recently than the United States. And when Pakistan finally gets a constitution, will the delay in itself mean that that constitution will be more 'modern' than India's quite regardless of its form and content ? Will it be more modern than India's if it can be shown that India's contains various provisions of a nineteenth-century liberalism, while Pakistan's may contain quite new provisions such as political science has not previously known ?

I think that, in fact, we all mean by 'modern' something else than mere date. But what ? Motor cars are more modern than bullock carts, I suppose everyone will affirm; but which are more modern, Cadillacs or Hindustan Standards ? The latter have been introduced more recently. The scooter rickshaw is a newer phenomenon in urban public transportation than is the taxi, I suppose; though some people, if they can afford it, still prefer the old-fashioned taxi. Do bullock carts, Cadillacs, scooters constitute a series in that order ? The fact that scooters, 'mopeds'<sup>1</sup> and the like are in some ways more relevant to the economic and climatic and democratic conditions of India than are Cadillacs, makes this question a serious one. An answer is not immediately evident. If standards of chemistry teaching in schools are going down, or of English, or of self-discipline, is this then modern ? Should the moderniser support every tendency that the statistician discerns ?

The very fact that one can speak of modernising India is itself interesting. Apparently the idea is that this land can become, and should be made, more modern than it now is; even though

1. Pedal bicycles fitted with a small motor.

everything that exists in India today existed, after all, in 1964. In a purely empirical sense, the *status quo* in India is a modern fact. Indeed, a Westerner who knows and appreciates contemporary India as it stands is a more modern person, I might urge, than is his uneducated neighbour who knows only his own local environment—even if this be replete with up-to-date plumbing and all the gadgets. If a society can become modern, can be made more modern than it actually is, should one think of modernising the United States? Or strive to modernise it? What do these mean? What would they involve?

Am I right in thinking that most people feel (without analysing the idea much) that the United States is already modern, but also is becoming more modern day by day (I personally would question both these, in part), whereas in the case of India they feel that this land may be modernised, may be *made* more modern than it is, but only through effort, only if one works at it? In this view, there would seem to be a process of modernisation, which is taking place in some parts of the world, while in other parts, such as India, it might not take place and indeed will not, unless men exert themselves and push it.

One element in this particular interpretation is clearly valid; namely, that what happens in India will depend on resolution and hard work. The idea of automatic progress has necessarily and rightly been modified by a recognition that the modernisation of India, or for that matter the modernisation of Thailand or Afghanistan, is obviously not automatic or self-generating. It is no doubt a pity that it is not so; but since it is not so, to recognise that fact is clearly a gain. What about the remainder of this thesis, however? If progress here depends upon people's choices and upon their endeavours, what about progress elsewhere? Is there a world process that may legitimately be termed a modernising process, somehow inherent, historically just *there*? Or does the course of events in every quarter depend on the particular choices of people in that quarter, on the decisions that they make but might not have made; upon the particular energy that people in that quarter may choose to devote, or may be able to devote, to pursuing the private objectives that they have set up for themselves?

If some parts of the United States are more modern than others—as I suppose would have to be conceded by those who regard the United States in general as somehow more modern than Thailand—then what precisely is the relation of those persons or areas there that are more modern, to the modernising process? Is prosperity normal, and poverty an aberration? Is technological progress standard, even if not ubiquitous, so that one fails to get it in certain regions where particular obstacles to it have somehow come into play but otherwise it just takes place? Or are the 'backward' parts of the United States just as normal as the 'modern' ones, only by a different norm? The terms 'backward' and 'advanced' imply that the parts that we do not like are static, or are moving slowly, while what we approve is dynamic—suggesting again that the direction is given, even though the speed is not. Do we really believe this, however? Can things not move in various directions, as well as at various speeds?

Can the United States and the Soviet Union both be modern but in different ways? Or in so far as they both become truly modern, will they to that extent necessarily converge? Are we sure that modernity will not be (cannot be) multiform? Could India become modern in quite a different way yet—a third or second modernity? How radically different can various meanings for our term be? If a modernised India will look different from modernised Germany, then the question of what 'modern' signifies becomes still more difficult.

The relation of modernisation to westernisation bears closer scrutiny. The problem is perhaps illuminated by this observation: that probably the person who has the least trouble of all with the term 'modern' for things in India is the casual western tourist, the more naive the better. The less a visitor knows of India, the less he appreciates its complexities and its history, the less sensitive he is to its culture, then the more readily and glibly does he talk of the contrast between 'ancient' and 'modern' here. Their stark juxtaposition elicits his most pointed comments, and he is least troubled by any doubt as to which is which. If he sees something with which he is familiar at home, and that he likes—whether hot-dog or university, large plate-glass windows or night-club cabaret—he calls it 'modern', whereas things that are characteristically Indian and new to him, and especially

if he does not understand them or like them, he calls exotic, traditional, or ancient. In the West, ice cream is a fairly recent innovation, whereas the institution of monogamous marriage is an ancient heritage, and horse-racing is intermediate, some centuries old; yet he does not think it incongruous to find the family of an American jockey enjoying ice cream. An equally mixed situation in India, however, he might well label a stark 'contrast'.

Something of this sort applies even to certain more sophisticated observers and even various 'experts'. I have known political scientists to use quite seriously the categories 'traditional state' and 'modern state' in their study of the Near East, for instance; as though these two types exhausted the possibilities, their criterion of 'modern' being the closeness to the state-form of the West. Yet one may ask, is the traditional (*sic*) Western state really modern? Once it was, perhaps, but is it so any more? An hypothesis could conceivably be propounded that the territorial nation-state, secular, domestically neutralist, is a basically nineteenth-century phenomenon while the newer twentieth-century emergence is rather the ideological state—citing the Soviet Union and China, Israel and Pakistan as instances. Again, one may not approve of this; but then there are doubtless many trends in the modern world of which one does not approve. Or, contrariwise, one might approve it warmly, contending that many of the new states of Africa and Asia will flounder until they can find for themselves, instead of the alien and imitative western basis, some ideological *raison d'être* and dynamic attuned to the culture and aspirations of their own populace. Whether one approves of it or not is distinct from the question of whether this development is in fact taking place.

And whether it is in fact taking place is perhaps distinct from a question of whether or not it is 'modern'. Does the modernisation of India signify that this country should abandon its secularist democratic aspiration, and substitute some dogmatic totalitarianism, Hindu or whatever? Some would answer this with a 'no' and would continue to answer it with a 'no' regardless of what course other new nations might adopt in this neighbourhood or further afield. In other words, these men would be contending that the meaning of 'modernisation' for India is to be



determined not by what happens outside India.

This leaves still unanswered, however, the question of how is it to be determined, internally.

If the matter of modernising India is not to be defined in terms of what other African and Asian nations may evolve, is it to be defined rather in terms of the West's evolution? I do not think so. Before presenting my case, however, against this idea, perhaps it is necessary to remark how widespread an assumption this seems to be: the facile fallacy that 'modernisation' and 'westernisation' are interchangeable terms. It is not that many will uphold such a thesis deliberately. Would that they did, so that their arguments could be analysed. Rather, it is a glib and unconscious error, an unexamined confusion.

To return to the foreign tourist (though once again the foreign 'expert' is sometimes not excluded also, alas!). I have sometimes thought that one might write a short essay concerning such outsiders under the happy title, 'On Seeing What is not There'. A westerner coming to this country for the first time is quite liable to be struck most forcibly by those things that he does *not* find. He has grown up accustomed to taking several things for granted, and when he discovers that they are missing here he is set all aflutter by their absence—so much so that in certain moods he will give virtually his whole attention to what is not there, to the point of hardly seeing or caring what is. In fact, it requires a rather unusual temperament or orientation, or else quite a long time, or both, to see, to become truly aware of, what actually is the situation here, what is going on, what it is that is to be modernised. Almost the whole problem for any one of us coming as a student from the outside is to learn, slowly, patiently, at least in part to see India as it is; to comprehend it in its own terms. Without this, one may arrive simply with a western pattern in mind, and find the many places where this is lacking here; if one is activist, one will set about simply to reproduce it

For pragmatically also, there are well-meaning outsiders in administrative and operational positions whose notion of modernising any African or Asian country is uncritically and simply to introduce western patterns (the only ones they know). It is not that they have thought through the situation, assessed the historical dynamics and social potentialities of the people they

have come to aid, and have concluded that in this quite special situation the most effective means to modernise is to adopt a western model. No: they assume without reflection that 'modern' means western. I have often wondered whether every foreign adviser sent to any African and Asian country should not be required to spend his first year passively learning, before he sets out on any active programme of assistance. It would slow things down in the short run, but perhaps over the long run it might prove expeditious.

That, however, is rather an aberration; we are still trying to find out what 'modern' means. There are, I think, three major reasons why India, or any non-western community, cannot just copy the West in its transformations, and cannot even find the meaning or content of modernisation by simply inquiring from the West. I do not mean that there is nothing to learn from the West—that would be absurd: indeed, any group is obtuse that cannot learn something from another civilisation. India can learn a great deal from the West, I have no doubt; but not, I suggest, at least not directly, what India will, or ought to, look like, what India's goal is to be.

I leave aside the preliminary and perhaps too obvious point that many Indians, of course, do not *wish* simply to 'westernise'; that for many, India's goal must clearly be an Indian goal, and the idea of imitating the West or imposing purely western solutions to India's problem is distasteful or laughable. I address myself rather to those, whether Indian or western, who deliberately wish to change India from its present stage to a more 'modern' stage of its own Indian development and who believe that this means simply adding something from the West; that the difference between a traditional India and a modernised India is a western quantum.

Of my three reasons, the first is the obvious one—that India is different. At a profound level, metaphysical and moral, I am a humanist with massive conviction that man as man, wherever he may be found, in whatever condition, in whatever context, is one. In part, I derive this faith from my Christian religious tradition; in part, I spend my time carrying on a campaign with other representatives of my tradition trying to persuade them to take this matter more seriously, more rigorously, more radically

than has ever been done. I totally and committedly believe that the whole of mankind essentially does, and practically must, form one community. Only, I imagine that it will be a multiform, not a uniform, community at least for the proximate future. Please do not write me off, then, as one of those who hold that India cannot manage democracy or secularism or technology, or cannot hope for prosperity and abundance. All I am contending is that, starting from a different basis, it will most profitably take somewhat different paths to arrive at similar goals, or contrariwise, that the same procedures may lead to differing results.

My study of a non-western civilisation—the Islamic—over the past twenty or thirty years has persuaded me, both in its relation to the West and in its relation to Hindu culture, that both the ultimate unity, and the proximate differences, of differing communities are much more profound than superficial observation would suggest—much more ramifying operationally, much more significant practically.

Let me illustrate disarmingly my thesis that India's differences from the West must exact differences in modernisation. One difference, striking to a Canadian, is climate; it is, patent yet not unimportant, that almost any technique or structure suited to western Europe or North America may have to be modified for India because of the differences in climate. This is not a question of better or worse; yet it is a question. Or, to take a less banal illustration, consider religion. Western secularism involves a separation of State and Church, whereas neither the Hindu nor the Muslim community possesses an organised religious incorporation of the church type. Or again, Law stands in quite a different relation to the Muslim's orientation, and also, though again differently, to the Hindu's from that to the Christian's. And so on. Thus in many ways it is meaningless to speak of religion's playing the same rôle in western society and in Indian.

Or, if these two examples, material and spiritual, seem *recherchés*, let us consider the language question. In my judgement, no one has begun to appreciate the life of this country who has not felt the force of the argument against the retention of English as the medium in the universities here, felt it agonisingly

to the point of recognising it as virtually unanswerable; while at the same time, anyone who has failed to recognise the almost unanswerable force of the argument against *abandoning* English is also, surely, insensitive and unaware. The weight, delicacy, and intractability of this issue in Indian intellectual life are formidable. Yet it is a question that in this form the West does not face, does not appreciate, and on which its example is not of consequence. It is surely foolish to imagine that India can become modern without solving this central problem. Yet it is one that it must solve itself, there being no western solution to import, whether good or bad.

The West, then, is different from India; potentially helpful as some sort of guide, but inadequate as a model. Secondly, the question of modernisation in India cannot be given a simple western answer because there is no simple western answer. The West, too, is groping. The West, too, is in process, is in the swift-flowing stream of change; so that it too, after a period of relative confidence as to direction, is itself now uncertain on that score.

For a time, the leaders of western culture had considerable assurance that the goal was more or less agreed (or at least could become so), so that intelligence and effort could be spent chiefly on ways and means of attaining it. The meaning of 'modernisation', to use our own terms, was thought to be more or less known (or at least knowable). Today, however, when on the one hand certain immediate goals have already been achieved, and on the other hand new possibilities, for both good and evil, far beyond what was pondered until recently, are being opened up for further development, today leaders in the West are increasingly aware that the future is not given, that the directions are not fixed, that the responsibility for effective choosing is theirs, or at least is society's. They are recognising that the future will be largely what man makes it; so that the task of human history is not merely to strive towards a goal, but to choose, to discern, or even to construct a goal.

At precisely such a moment, so wide and deep are the possibilities, so heavy the responsibility, so uncharted the path, that many are frightened by the uncertainty and lose courage as well as faith. Philosophy departments, to take one example,

have largely defected explicitly from the task of guiding man; and Literature, to take another, flees the heroic, and seems content to lament rather than to inspire, to whine rather than to beckon. Against this, however, there is in certain quarters an interesting resurgence of religious faith. And altogether I, for one, am exhilarated rather than daunted by the challenge and possibilities; and am even not quite pessimistic about the prospects of men's rising to their new occasions, however bewildering.

All kinds of mighty issues are raised here, which we must leave aside. To return to our main point, the meaning of the modernisation process is no longer given by the direction in which the West is moving. For western development is becoming increasingly self-conscious, exploratory, existential—so that that development will increasingly explicate, rather than determine, ideas as to human destiny. Modernity is no longer a goal but a process; no longer something to adopt, but something to participate in. It is not something that one has, but something that one does, and does well or badly. We in the West, we realise, may do it badly; and perhaps others may also.

My third reason, however, for affirming that modernisation for India cannot copy the West, follows at once. For, if the most important present-day emergent in western history is an enlarged self-consciousness, perhaps also the most important single new ingredient in that consciousness is its new global quality. It transcends the West; to embrace, at least ideally, all mankind. To put the point in an aphorism, the fully modern West is no longer western; no longer, that is, exclusively western, within the boundaries of its own civilisation. A westerner who is still essentially western is not quite modern; is too provincial to be modern. The categories 'Western' and 'Oriental', or more accurately 'Western', 'Islamic', 'Indian', 'Far Eastern', etc. have been exceedingly important—it is my professional business to say how important. Yet they are today in the process of being superseded, however incipiently, by a new cosmopolitanism. By this I do not mean simply that western minds are beginning to take all the world as their purview; you would quickly detect and resent the arrogance in that. What I mean rather is that alert minds in the West are asking no longer 'Where is the West going?' but rather 'Where is the world going?'

And they are aware that they cannot themselves answer such a question, but that it must and will be answered in colloquium by Western, Islamic, Indian, African and Communist minds (and hearts) together.

The modernisation of the West cannot be defined in terms of the West's future, for the West does not have a future of its own. It can look forward intelligently only to the western stand in the future of the world: a future that all of us must and will construct jointly, for good or ill.

Even our ideal of the future, even if we fail to achieve it, must be an ideal of one world, which means in effect an ideal that all of us can jointly approve. In other words, I am arguing that no intelligent westerner can today posit for himself or for his society an objective or target other than one to which you also here in India can subscribe. For only so can it be global; and, therefore, only so can it be either realistic or desirable. This means, a target that you and he shall have jointly elaborated. In other words, what westerners shall mean from now on by modernisation as a conscious process, is a question that they cannot answer for you because they cannot answer it even for themselves without your participation. A continually modernising West involves its increasing integration in the total modern world; in which an increasingly modernising India is to be an increasingly constituent part.

This is as much true in economics and in religion as it is in meteorology or linguistics. The modernisation of the rest of the world (of America, of Russia, of Pakistan, of Israel and the rest) waits in part on an answer to that question in India and *vice versa*. The modernisation of India and the continuing modernisation of the West, are both questions that are giving way to a larger, more complex, more searching question as to the modernisation of a world that includes both India and the West, includes China and Africa and the rest. To think of modernising India only in Indian terms, or only in western terms, or even in Indian *and* western terms, whatever else it may be, is not modern.

I wish to move on from my destructive attacks on glib notions of modernisation to some positive proposals. But before doing so I must develop briefly two further points. First, with regard

to the modernising westernising tangle. Some of you may have felt that I was being oddly naive here, forgetting the power of anti-western feeling in many quarters in this country and elsewhere in Asia and Africa. Not so. For many years now I have been affirming, publicly and repeatedly in print, that my fellow westerners have no inkling of 'the depth and bitterness and increase of anti-westernism throughout most of the world'<sup>2</sup>—which I have even called perhaps the second most significant feature of global affairs today. For a time this feeling could bolster itself by aligning itself with an emotional or even intellectual link with the Soviet Union. If this link fails, with the U.S.S.R. gradually becoming more identified as one facet of a larger, more diverse, West, the ensuing complications may grow serious. Other nations may temporarily solve this dilemma by shifting their thinking and feeling of this type to the new symbol of China. India, however, has been precluded, by the 1962 attack, from so easy a solution. Anyway, the matter is important; the ambivalence of those who are pro-modern and anti-western complicates our problem still further, rather than simplifying it.

Let me say only this, among the many other things that might be said, that just as Asia to a certain degree in its experience, especially emotional, is anti-'West', so within Western culture, Europe is to a certain degree anti-America; within America, Canada is to a certain degree anti-'the United States' (and French-Canada, anti-English-Canada). Within the United States, anti-ness is perhaps more restless, more vague, less easily targeted: most intelligent Americans are anti-Hollywood and anti-Madison Avenue. Within South Asia, Ceylon is to a certain degree emotionally anti-India, and villagers are anti-town. I do not know what conclusions you can draw from this, except perhaps that the highest form of modernisation is certainly not complacency, that the most constructive form of criticism is perhaps self-criticism; and once again that modernity has its unlovely facets, as outsiders well know.

My second point here touches on the position of those who may be impatient with what they perhaps consider the overly wrought and overly philosophic quality of my argument, and who would brush all this aside with a down-to-earth 'practical'

2. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, New York, 1959, p. 76.

outlook, affirming blandly: 'When we speak of modernisation, we are thinking simply of economics. India or Africa will be modern when poverty has been replaced by welfare, if not by affluence'. Good; but surely by now it is clear that the economic question is not an easy one. Nor is it an independent one, which can be separated from all other considerations. This I shall elaborate later. Wealth, too, is not something that a society has, but something that it does. Even those who think of a modernised India as a richly-productive India, are still involved in the question of how to arrive at that happy condition and the question of what such an India will look like. The word 'modern' may mean 'economically productive', but it cannot mean *only* that. For, a society that produces and consumes a lot of goods is different from a society of privation—different not only economically, but socially, intellectually, medically, politically, educationally, artistically, and, I will argue, even morally and religiously. Whether the other various differences precede or follow the economic difference, is worth asking. The modernising process is not defined or clarified, at least not finally, by simply opining that abundance should displace scarcity. Part of the fundamental problem in all this realm is the glib tendency of many to think of modernism as almost a commodity, something that can be imported or added on, something that can be bought and paid for; so that once you have it you can then relax and enjoy it passively. This idea is not only wrong, but dangerous. Modernism, I repeat, is not to adopt but to participate in; not to have, but to do and to be. And not even to be, but to keep becoming—a process, an orientation, a dynamic.

To sum up, I have argued that not everything modern is good; indeed, some of modernity is horrifying. Not everything recent is modern; indeed, some is retrogressive. To modernise is not the same as to westernise; for how is the West to pursue, or to betray it? Modernisation is something that we seem to want desperately, but we have not yet been able to say what it is.

My suggestion is that although an intelligent man cannot accept any of the popular connotations as they stand, yet he can learn from each, and the answer that he will formulate for himself will preserve significant ingredients from each of the popular misconceptions, avoiding the pitfalls. Can we define our term



in such a way that it remains good, yet recognises potential disaster; that it remains new, yet is discriminating; that it remains applicable to the West, yet not to all of the West, and applies to India in particular, yet universally; that it means something precise, yet does not define the future so as to cancel out freedom? These are minimum tests. I suggest that they can, in fact, be met. Let me propose a definition, deliberately constructed, and you will be judges of its adequacy. Its serviceability and its implications we shall explore in the next two lectures.

I said at the beginning that the concept 'modern' involves a sense that history is moving in a particular direction; and this still seems to be the crux of our problem. For we do not really know where history is moving. Indeed—and this is decisive—our very modernity enables us to make it move either this way or that. Uncertainty is not a failure of our being modern, but a consequence of it. Man cannot tell how men will use the vast new powers that modernity has provided. We do not and cannot know how history in general will unfold. Yet in one area, we can assert a linear development, in one unmistakable, irreversible, direction: namely, the progress of science, with its offspring technology, and the progress of knowledge generally. Who can say whether there is 'progress' or not in art, in morals, in saintliness, in wisdom, in family life; in many areas whether man has in the past done, and will in the future do, daily better, or gradually worse? Is ours the *kala yug*, and was there really a golden age of yore—or will there be one soon? In all other realms opinions differ in their assessment of the past; and even those who argue for progress, admit that it cannot be guaranteed for the future. Tomorrow man may misuse his opportunities. In the one realm of accumulating knowledge, however—both on the technical side, in experimental science; and in general, in human awareness of time and space, history and geography, and man's understanding of his own behaviour—a steady and indeed brilliant, spectacular, march forward has become evident, and seems likely to continue. How we shall use our knowledge and our science, no one knows; but about these it is safe to affirm this much that they have grown and are growing.

Applied, this ever-greater knowledge has been transforming human life by making available to us a vast and ever-increasing new range of possibilities; increasing our power to act and the sweep of our choice, and increasing our awareness. There is nothing to tell us *how* we shall be using this new power; nothing to establish which of the many new choices open to us we shall in fact choose; nothing to pre-determine how we shall behave in the light of our new self-consciousness, our new awareness of ourselves and of nature, of history and of our global, universal context. But it is the power itself, the fact of choosing, the awareness of context, that are modern—and that, nothing, once we have them, can take away. There is nothing essentially modern in choosing any particular one of A or B or C or D...or P or Q...or Y or Z; what is modern is our ability to choose among so many, where our ancestors had no alternative to A, or at most choice only between A and B. We may even choose A, as they did. So long as we do so deliberately, self-consciously, responsibly, knowing that it is a fateful choice over against all the others, then it is still modern—just as it is modern to choose Q or Z, of which those ancestors never dreamed.

Science has provided the machines that can move mountains, divert rivers, turn deserts into gardens (or gardens into deserts). Knowledge and techniques today enable governments to transform societies, change language, increase or curtail freedom, advance or ruin health. Persuaders can entice men to drink coca cola or to stop smoking, to riot over inflamed passions or to be discontent with only one family car. Men have the knowledge and the power to choose the environment in which they shall live.

To be modern does not mean to live in one particular kind of environment rather than another. It means to live in the environment that one's society has deliberately chosen to construct (or to accept); and to do so rationally, self-consciously. This is what science makes available; the power and the knowledge to be effectual, to determine results, to control change. The knowledge of what is possible—an ever-widening knowledge of ever new possibilities—and the technique of implementing these, this is modernity.

India, then, is less modern than some countries, partly because the physical embodiment of science in technological equipment for effective change is less here than it is in, for instance, Canada. It is, however, more modern than it used to be, or than some other countries are, because some of the technological plant, the concretisation of knowledge, is installed; and also the awareness of what is today possible, and how, the understanding of the new potentialities open to humanity, is greater among its leaders than was true earlier or than is true in some neighbouring areas; and the determination to use them. The elite here is a very sophisticated elite indeed, by any standards. India is also, if you will allow me to say so, more modern than it often realises, because much of the environment that obtains in India today is what it is because in effect this society chooses, perhaps unconsciously or out of tradition or even inertia, to maintain it so, even though alternatives are in fact thinkable even within the limits of what is technologically available immediately. Not to change something when one might change it, given initiative and available resources, is tantamount to choosing the *status quo*; and we all choose what already exists far more than we are compelled to do in present-day circumstances. Modernity, I am contending, lies not in what one chooses but in the fact of being able to choose, even if one does not take advantage of potentialities.

Ignorance, then, is a bar to being modern. He who does not know what the twentieth century has made possible is not modern even when he in fact stands, though blindly, before rich alternatives. Awareness, plus technology—which is crystallised, materialised, awareness—constitutes the basis of modernity.

Close to the heart of the modernising process, then, is legislation particularly democratic legislation: society's choice of the laws by which it shall live, its conscious determination of the course that it shall take. Legislation can even be introduced into the religious field, as this country recognised in its bold venture in shaping a Hindu code. Legislation was previously seen as modifying what exists, now as constructing what shall exist. There used to be 'reform' (presupposing that the past persists unless and until qualified); increasingly there is construction, where even to maintain the old in being is a positive decision. The very words *status quo* are becoming a whit old-fashioned,

as too static: we are in flux, and increasingly we choose not between a fixed present and some proposed innovation, but between drift and deliberation.

The process of modernisation in India then, I suggest, is that process by which this country becomes conscious of itself and of its processes, and of the kind of country that it is possible for it to become, and by which it finds or constructs the technical means for executing such choices as it consciously or unconsciously makes. Modernity in the world at large is in process of rendering feasible the gradual transformation of human life from what it has been into what we choose to make it. Our awareness that this is so, our choosing that we will strive for one thing rather than another (whatever that choice be; but it has to be made), and our ability to implement our decision technically—these are the measure of our being modern.

The responsibility is terrific; and the implications large. We shall explore them in our next two chapters.

## THE ROLE OF THE INTELLECTUALS

IN the preceding lecture I have endeavoured first of all to reject certain popular misconceptions about modernisation, arguing that the meaning of the term is not obvious—that what is modern is not necessarily good; that what is recent is not necessarily modern; that what is western may or may not be modern, according to a criterion that quite transcends its westernness; that even in so far as the West is, in part, modern India might and even perhaps must be so differently; that economic prosperity is not itself modernity, being at most one ingredient among many others in a subtle complex, perhaps more of a symptom than a cause. Finally having demolished inadequate notions, I have attempted to propound a positive view that could, unlike these, stand up to analysis and criticism: suggesting that for men to be modern involves their being aware of the situation in which they stand and the processes in which they are participants, and of the possibilities that are available to them, particularly because of science; and involves their choosing deliberately among those various possibilities—choosing in the sense of actively pursuing their freely selected goal. To be increasingly conscious, and to act in the light of that consciousness, constitutes a person or a society as modern.

It should be clear how radically different this proposal is from accepted current doctrine. Most conspicuously, it does not start with economics or technology. Indeed, this divergence may serve to clarify what this series of talks is all about. No one will dispute that the modernisation of India involves eventually a raising of living standards in the economic sense of the term. That the men and women of India should cease to be poor and ill, is basic to my whole orientation.

No one, I repeat, will dispute that there are economic and technological facets to modernising this land. But I do dispute, carefully and rationally, the dogma that these are primary. A modern India will be able to choose and presumably thereupon will, in fact, choose economic prosperity. But this will be the consequence of its having become modern, rather than the precondition.

At least, this is my thesis, which I shall try to elucidate, to make intelligible. Of course, this statement of it oversimplifies. For actually modernisation is a process, not a static condition; and a dialectical process at that—in which intellectual awareness, and things like industrial and scientific construction, better health, and much else, proceed side by side, intertwining and each furthering the other. I intend seriously to urge, however, that the process will proceed very much more surely and more quickly, and perhaps even will proceed only if it is vividly and responsibly recognised that fundamentally in this complex process intellectual and moral awareness is primary, economics and technology are secondary and subordinate.

In fact, I have come around to wondering whether the most monumental fallacy of our age is not the illusion that given certain economic conditions all else will follow. That there is an economic, or economic-cum-technological, 'basis' of modernisation is a glib but unverified assumption, underlying to a fantastic degree the behaviour of governments east and west—in the formulation of policy, in the determination of priorities, in the spending of money and time and emotion. Let me repeat, I am not at all questioning the desirability of economic betterment for the Orient. I am ready to devote my life to advancing its cause. All that I am discussing is how to achieve it. All that I am questioning is the theory that it is a 'base' on which other matters, intellectual, cultural, and the rest, are some kind of superstructure; that the difference between a prosperous India and India as it is now will be primarily an economic or technological difference.

The idea that economics is the basis and ideology the superstructure began, I suppose, as a Marxist dogma. Yet it is interesting to note how widespread it has in fact become, usually tacitly or even unconsciously, in quite un-Marxist circles such as

Washington or Ottawa, and perhaps to some extent in New Delhi. Actually, American and Canadian policy-makers have come to adopt this view only gradually. They began with a different fallacy; namely, the idea that economic progress in Asia could be conceived and treated as an independent item in itself, separate from the history, culture, philosophy, and social structure of India, Pakistan, and the like. This illusion, though never officially abandoned, has in practice given way among those at all closely involved, under the impact of experience. It has tended to be replaced, however, by the other illusion, unconsciously borrowed from the Marxists, so that one has begun to hear talk of 'the social and cultural consequences of economic development', 'the ideological impact of technical change' and the like, implying that the complexity of the modernising process is beginning slightly to be recognised, but that the economic factor in that complex is still thought of as an independent variable.

In India also, probably, the position that I am attacking has appeared in both forms: first, that the economic and technological aspects of national life can be transformed by purely economic and technological measures, independently of the rest of life; and secondly, failing that, that if those particular aspects are transformed, then any other changes in the total social or ideological pattern that may be involved or required will be effected, or will effect themselves, more or less automatically, or anyway reliably. In both India and abroad a good many persons, so far as I can discern, may not believe either of these propositions explicitly, and yet they act as if they believed them. Their behaviour is postulated on such an interpretation. At least, their attention, energy, and funds are given to economic programmes, or their hopes are fastened on these, while the ideological aspect of the change is either ignored or left to look after itself.

The tragedy in this, of course, lies in the sorry possibility that the theory may be wrong; in which case the economic progress of the society will falter, or at least be slowed down. The roseate hopes that we used to have, that a golden age would follow hard on the heels of political independence, have been mellowed, or saddened. It will indeed be hard if there proves to be ground for questioning also the equally glowing hopes that that golden age will be ushered in once a certain number of dams

are constructed or certain fiscal measures enacted.

Intellectual and moral awareness is primary, I have urged. Economics and technology are important but secondary. Of course, you may not agree with this. Yet it is not so easy to disagree as you might think. Some of you may hold to the theory that economic reconstruction is basic; that the future of India turns primarily and fundamentally on this, with intellectual interpretations playing but a subordinate role. Dams are more important than ideas, you may have been persuaded to accept. Yet that itself is an idea—and a terribly consequential idea, one of the most influential and effective ideas in modern history.

Whether it is a true or false idea may be debated; but surely there is no debating the fact that it is an important one. Indeed, I do not see how anyone could seriously dispute my contention that this particular idea has been more important in the modernisation of India than any dam. Dams are the result of such a notion—dams and much else. The economic history of contemporary India is what it is, largely because the intellectuals of this and other countries have held the views that they have in fact held.

Indeed, I will seriously argue that the intellectuals are far and away the single most important class in the economic and social progress of this or any other Asian or African country; and that the ideas that they have held and hold are the first consequential factor in determining the direction and the speed of that progress. For what gets done depends in the first instance on what is believed to be possible and to be worth doing. Any error in the prevailing estimate either of what is feasible or of what is appropriate, will tell drastically in the product (or lack of it). The first step in social transformation is an awareness of what can be done, and a choice from among potentialities that this rather than that is to be the goal.

I said just now that the intellectual theory that economics and technology are primary to progress can be debated as to whether it is true or false. Of course, the matter is not so simple as that; it is not a straightforward yes-or-no issue. If it were, I personally would argue that it is false. Yet more precisely, it is not false so much as inadequate—grossly and disastrously inadequate. It sees one of the factors in a complex process but fails to see others



which happen to be crucial; so that it can be severely limiting to the effectiveness of a national programme. Any social development is limited, of course, within the confines of material, technical, and financial resources. Yet with the world advance of science and of internationalism it is becoming increasingly significant, as was always true, that that social development is limited also, and perhaps even more drastically, and certainly is limited first, within the confines of the society's intellectual awareness of the possibilities open to it and of the means to attain these; and of course, still more narrowly, within the confines of what in fact it chooses to pursue.

This operates at two levels; one obvious though still important, one subtle. The obvious level has to do with the fact that all economic planning, all constructing of budgets, all international schemes, all political programmes, are drafted within the limits of the ideas of the men responsible for them—which means more or less the ideology of the intellectuals of their group. Even after a decision has been taken to spend many millions of dollars and many crores of rupees on, for instance, constructing a dam or an industrial factory, intellectualisation still precedes materialisation in the sense that an engineer must first conceive the dam or the factory, a site must be chosen first in someone's mind, a plan of operation must be formed, etc. Even after the factory is built, to run it efficiently requires both managers and workmen who understand in some degree what they are doing with the new machinery, and who choose to operate it efficiently. This last, I think, is much more important than is often recognised. The capacity of men is much greater than some theories have taken note of, both to misunderstand the possibilities that new equipment makes available, and secondly, to choose, in effect, not to take advantage of those possibilities—their capacity to choose not to use the facilities to the highest advantage of society. Such misunderstanding and such choice are of the utmost importance in economic development.

Now all this, as I say, is obvious enough and would not be worth mentioning were there not a need to reaffirm, as I am attempting to do, the primacy of ideas over matter, and of intellectual questions over economic and technological ones. Marx

was simply wrong in his dogma that matter precedes thought; and a great deal of the slowness of economic progress in Asian and African countries is the price paid for men accepting this ideological error.

Matter influences thought, undoubtedly; but does not determine it. And the more modern men are, the more fully they will allow the material world to influence their ideas, and yet use their ideas to control and determine the material world.

This level, then, is obvious; but the other level, as I say, is more subtle. For so far we have been dealing with more or less technical ideas: the significance of the economic theories of planners, the engineering ideas of constructors, the industrial and mechanical ideas of managers, foremen, and workers. But I would argue that beyond all this there is the massive and decisive influence of the general ideology of all these men: the underlying assumptions; the total attitude to the world, to work, to one's neighbour, to human destiny, to history and to God. This general climate of opinion influences behaviour at every level, from economic planning before factories are built to the workers' operating of machines after they are built, and to the society's orientation to the whole enterprise. It is the construct of the intellectuals as a group, and is crucial in determining both the general shape of modernisation and its speed.

In asserting the primacy of ideas over things, I am not, of course, condoning the intellectual who will not use his hands, or the un-empirical theorist. I would argue, rather, that the thinker who fails to exploit matter for intellectual purposes, or hesitates to soil his hands, is victimised by a consequential, though wrong, idea.

If you doubt the decisive quality of this ideological background of behaviour, you have only to look at other ages or even other societies. Any historian of culture knows that what people take for granted is the single most important determinant of what they think and do. Now, what people take for granted is a function, either positive or negative, of the work of their intellectuals. We intellectuals either formulate the ideological presuppositions of a society, or else allow some to operate unformulated. In either case, we are responsible for the most profound determination of the society's development.

In comparison with this influence, the influence of economics and technology is secondary. And the more modern a society becomes, the more decisive is ideology.

Some might imagine that perhaps I am stressing this primary importance of intellectuals—since I am addressing an audience of intellectuals—in order to flatter. On the contrary: the responsibility is a frightening one. The future development of India, including its economic development, which means the future ability of many crores of men and women and children to be freed from hunger and squalor and disease, turns primarily on us. Modernity has made many things for the first time possible. The first most likely cause of a failure to realise the desirable possibilities will be a failure of us intellectuals—a failure to figure out theoretically that and how it can be done, and to persuade others that it can be done, and can be done thus. A society moves on the basis and within the limits of the general pattern of ideas available to it and dominant. If that pattern of ideas is false or irrelevant or inadequate to any particular movement, such as one towards prosperity or harmony or modernisation, then the society will falter or at best progress slowly in that particular direction, if it does not indeed move in some other.

Most of us, both in East and West, seem to have got fooled on this notion that ideology is secondary or subordinate to economics and technology. Most of us, that is, except, curiously, the Soviet Union. The U.S.S.R. never made the mistake of imagining that all they had to do was to reconstruct the industrial base of the country and ideas would take care of themselves. By no means! They started at once on a massive and sustained ideological programme, vigorously determined to change men's ideas actively and radically, both in particular and in general. They did not sit back confident that ideology would adjust itself once the material situation were altered. Their internal propaganda has been from the start, and continues to be, much more lively and deliberate and total than, for instance, India's. For, whatever they may seem to say, clearly they have in fact believed that in order to change society one must change men's minds. So also China. It is only idealist India and the un-Marxist West that in practice seem to imagine that the moderni-

sation of economics can precede the modernisation of popular outlook.

I am well aware that the Marxist theory on all this is complicated and dialectical; and that the two aspects are in fact, as well as in theory, dynamically interrelated. All I am contending is that, whatever the theory, in practice communist countries have set out to industrialise, paying enormous active attention to the role of ideology, and in practice western and neutralist have done so paying minimal attention to it. And I think it can be shown both in theory and in practice that on this point the communists are right and we have been wrong.

As a matter of historical fact, western countries put a lot of stress on ideological facets of industrialisation in their own case in previous centuries, from Puritan moral codes to Horatio Alger Jr., and from the rationalism of the Enlightenment to scientific pragmatism; though on the whole this was un-self-conscious. It was only when western theorists set out to expedite the industrialisation of Asian and African countries that for various reasons they made the mistake of confining their thinking to primarily economic and technological terms.

Actually the Marxist case supplies a rather bristling example of the very point that I am making. If ever there was an instance of the spectacular impact of ideas on socio-economic development, surely this is it. The inner unfolding of capitalism and the advance of the proletariat did not produce socialism; as the history of Britain, the United States and Germany proves. It was intellectuals (Marx, Engels, etc.) who produced the system of ideas, and it was the ideas, again by means of intellectuals (Lenin, Trotsky, etc.), that produced socialism, first in Russia and subsequently elsewhere. Or take the example of India. The decision to industrialise this country after 1947, the injecting into the history of Indian development of the concept of economic planning, the whole apparatus of deliberate social transformation, these have all been first of all decisions in men's minds, the application of ideas to the evolution of national processes. The drive towards greater productivity, the attempt to improve India's mundane welfare—these derive not directly from an economic but from an intellectual situation. There was in the 1940's nothing inherent in the economic or technological condi-

tion of India or anywhere else that could explain the subsequent transformation drive here. Rather, it was precisely because the objective conditions of this country then were what was called 'backward', were incapable themselves of conducing to economic improvement, that the need was felt actively to implement the *idea* of a transformation. This application of ideas deliberately to channel historical development is clearly the most significant happening in recent Indian economic evolution. In this realm, the modernisation of India begins with the *awareness* that man can intelligibly affect that evolution, and with his choosing to do so.

My plea now is that once that particular idea was crucially injected into the stream of Indian history, the intellectuals should not sit back and expect economic development to take the lead. That lead is simply not good enough, for economic development by itself is an inadequate motive force in the modernising process. This is so in theory, and is proving itself so in practice. To be more precise, it is so in my judgement in theory and it is proving itself so in practice surely in the judgment of almost any observer.

Some of you, influenced by traditional sophistication, may feel impelled to retort that surely it has been historically proven that every great instance of a flourishing culture in human history has had an economic sub-structure. I too, however, I like to feel, am sophisticated. I know that every cultural and ideological achievement in human society can be shown to have had an economic aspect. All I am disputing is whether the economic aspect is really the 'base'. The very first time I appeared in print in a scholarly journal was here in India arguing for the importance of economic aspects of the Mughal culture. The fact, however, that no ideological movement has ever succeeded in human history unless the economic ground was favourable, does not in itself prove that economics is primary. Logically, it makes economics a necessary condition of socio-cultural creativity, but not a sufficient condition. Historians, studying only those movements that have succeeded, have discovered an economic ingredient in their success. They have not studied great civilisations that have *not* arisen, or social transformations that have *not* come off, to see whether the economic conditions may perhaps

also have been favourable, but whether culture may perhaps have failed for a lack of ideological and moral creativity.

My contention is not that economics is unimportant—that would be absurd—but that even when economic conditions are favourable or potentially favourable, progress may nonetheless fail if intellectuals do not rise to the occasion; or if, as we shall explore in my next lecture, people may even know what to do, and yet do not do it.

This sort of consideration is even more cogent and crucial in modern times (note that word) when we are no longer subject to unconscious economic processes, and when in fact (as in the Indian case) the so-called economic 'base' can be, and indeed is being, deliberately modified by human control (and therefore is no longer a 'base'). That the economic aspect of all human history, East and West, religious and artistic as well as social and political, has always been of major importance, it would be obtuse to deny. Yet the religious and artistic, and the social and political, aspects of our history have never been the simple (or even the complex) reflex of that economic history. Even if they had been so in the past, this would no longer be true today, now that we are beginning to understand economic history and the interrelationships of various factors. To be modern is to be aware of the role of economic and of other factors in historical development. And to be aware of any role is to change that role—or at least, to be able to change it.

Marx analysed the development of capitalism. The subsequent development of capitalism itself has been different because of this analysis. The ideas that he propounded enabled men in capitalist societies (as well as elsewhere) to be aware of what they were doing, and therefore to do it differently. Marx's ideas were not always correct but they have certainly been influential, in Britain and America as well as in Russia, among capitalists as well as socialists. To take a more recent example: Galbraith's contribution to our understanding of economic processes contributes also to our control over those processes—contributes, that is, to an increase in the ratio of the respective influence of ideas and of economic facts, in the subsequent economic history of his society; contributes, that is, to the modernisation of the economic process.

Any notion that ideology is some sort of superstructure on a material or economic or technological base, that with changes in the latter new ideas appropriately and somehow automatically emerge—such a notion is not only wrong, but dangerous. It not only misrepresents what has happened and is happening; also, it must affect what is to happen tomorrow. As I have said, I do not think that Marxists really hold this view; certainly communists do not. But many 'left-wing liberals' feel it, even if they do not think it. And such a feeling can be disastrous, a prime obstacle to social advance.

That such an attitude is false can be shown in many ways; but it becomes clearest, I think, when we think of our own case. I am an intellectual; but such ideas as I have are not the automatic product of my environment. They do not arise within me in inherent response to the situation that confronts me. Rather, they are the product of deep turmoil of spirit, of much sweat. To try to marshal them in order and to express them lucidly is a matter of haunting difficulty; to form them at all is both painful and problematic and anything but spontaneous. I presume that this is true of others. Frankly, it strikes me as ridiculous for an intellectual, of all people, to suggest that ideas emerge in any sense automatically out of a situation, or out of a change in a situation. To produce ideas is a creative act, in the deepest sense of the word. Even to select from among other people's ideas is a free act—personal and responsive and consequential. Any intellectual is pretty vacuous who does not recognise, first, that his ideas may be wrong; and, second, that if they are wrong his society will suffer as a result.

Ideology does not simply reflect a concrete social situation. It represents it, if that society's intellectuals strive hard enough; but represents it always, of course, inadequately—more or less so, depending on them—and perhaps misleadingly. In the face of any situation, and particularly in the face of any situation so complex and so dynamic as the current evolution of the world or of our own society, you and I may think this or we may think that, or—and this is terribly important—we may think nothing at all. In so far as we think nothing, or think wrongly, to that extent society in its further evolution will falter and limp, will suffer. It is up to us.

This is a fearsome responsibility; and its significance is rapidly increasing. To modernise is to increase the responsibility of the intellectuals. Their task has always been significant, but in the past never anything like so determinative over so large an area of life as today. I have lately been doing some work on the role of the intellectuals in Mughal history, particularly their changing orientation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the crystallising of religious communities, Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu. I find their earlier accomplishments highly relevant to the construction of the Mughal achievement, and their later mistakes not uninfluential in the final disintegration of Mughal society and culture. No matter how consequential, however, in late Mughal developments the shift in their framework of ideas may have been, yet in comparison with today the total awareness available to any of the thinkers in Mughal India was meagre, of how society works, how history changes, how economics and social structure and ideology affect each other, and so on and on. This being so, naturally their effectiveness in social evolution, though more significant than has sometimes been recognised, was yet severely limited as compared to ours. In other words, the Mughal situation was less modern than is ours. Even so, had their intellectuals thought differently or chosen differently, their society might have flourished longer.

At the present time, the situation in India has lent itself in some ways to a less than clear interpretation because of the fact that Prime Minister Nehru happens to be one of the leading intellectuals of this country. It is surely obvious that his ideas have been of paramount significance in the development of contemporary India. (Sometimes men have stressed that they were *his* ideas, more than that they were *his ideas*). Less obvious, perhaps, is the fact that unless members of any Cabinet, here or elsewhere, have ideas of their own, they operate within the confines of the ideas available to them in the general intellectual climate. Might one not formulate this proposition: that except in so far as Cabinet members are themselves intellectuals, a Cabinet is the executive of a Society's intellectuals in much the same way as the Civil Service is the executive of the Cabinet. The analogy is not exact, because the intellectuals expound the general framework within which thinking takes place, and clarify what are the



possibilities among which men may choose. The actual choice then is made by the Cabinet, but the field within which they operate is constructed by you. Ideology defines not action itself but the limits to action.

To modernise a society is to push back the limits to action. The first limitations to progress are the limitations of awareness. And especially when any goal is generally agreed—as, in the Indian case, economic growth—then to define limits to action is pretty well to define action itself (except, as we shall explore later, for men's not choosing what they know to be effective).

It being on everyone's mind, including my own, I have given a good deal of attention to the question of economics. Yet there are other important questions facing any society that wishes to modernise. They also can serve to illustrate our thesis, in new and important ways; and can serve especially, perhaps, to illuminate the role of the universities in the modernising process. Let us take, for instance, the question of language. Much has been said, of course, this way and that on this issue, which presses hard in a great many Asian and African countries; not least; here. What I would contend is that the intellectual awareness of this problem could be vastly greater, richer, more precise than it is; and that a country like India will be modern in relation to language only when its disciplined self-consciousness in this realm has been much increased. A great deal of the discussion on language matters, and many of the proposed solutions, are at the moment unscientific in the sense of being based on much less information, understanding, and analysis than is potentially at man's disposal today, if only he would go after it. One would like to see in every major Indian university bubbling departments of linguistic science tackling with vigour, and dedication, the many problems that cluster in this realm, with research teams hard at work comprising not only linguistic scientists afire with concern for the problems involved but also young and able participants from philosophy, history, sociology, and related departments. The problem is quite serious enough to justify this kind of full-scale intellectual attack and to reward it richly.

I have chosen this particular illustration partly because I myself find it challenging and intellectually exciting, as well as historically highly significant for the future. I have chosen it

partly also because it incidentally demonstrated where the challenge to Asian intellectuals is specific and unique. For to become intellectually modern in this realm will require creative thinking. The West does not face this particular type of issue, or even much understand it. To take over merely Western ideas, therefore, will not suffice. Nor has the Soviet Union handled its language problems in this intellectual fashion; that is, in a modern way. American linguists, in general the most creative and advanced in linguistic science, have suffered from a sorry bias towards the colloquial rather than the literary language. (One recalls Leonard Bloomfield's monumentally inadequate definition: 'Language is what is spoken'). I have sometimes wondered whether this may be due to the historical chance that most of their work has been with American Indian languages, in each of which no literacy culture is enshrined. Whatever the reason, the resultant bias has vitiated their otherwise brilliant work on linguistics, making it extremely suggestive, but in itself not adequate, for those having to wrestle with problems such as India's, with its pre-eminent literary heritages—provocative, but certainly needing supplementing. Similarly, the work on language by the Oxford Philosophy School, though again brilliant and provocative, is once more inadequate from many points of view, of which one is its general failure to cope with a problem peculiarly significant for India, and all Africa and Asia—the difference in the *Weltanschauung* of radically differing language traditions. The Sapir-Worff hypothesis is nowhere more relevant than in India; and especially to India's intellectuals whose involvement in its ramifications is spectacular and potentially enriching. Again, the work being done in some parts of the world on bilingualism could be, and to be practically useful here would have to be, supplemented by careful and creative studies on the radical linguistic bi-culturalism of which the Orient today is so striking an illustration.

To take a fourth point, the questions of language teaching, especially the teaching of a second language, have recently taken enormous steps forward. The creative adaptation of this to Indian requirements is a desideratum effecting, incidentally, many millions of man-hours per annum, so that in economic terms it is a waste not to be modern here—as

of course is true, though perhaps more subtly, in all the language issues.

There is a great deal of work in this entire realm waiting to be done, calling for first-rate intellectual capacity and zest and promising spectacular results, once awareness is attained and applied. India will become modern here, once it has satisfactorily intellectualised its problem, understood the issue and clarified the new possibilities, so that whatever action it takes will be taken intelligently and consciously.

Here, then, is a matter intellectually exciting in itself, of enormous consequence for the future development of India, economically, culturally and in every way, which the universities might well be tackling. A great deal is nowadays known about language and its role in human affairs, and a great deal more can be found out by the application of effort. To act in this realm without the benefit of this available awareness is certainly not modern.

I intend to mention another question where it seems to me that the future development and welfare of India will depend on increased awareness, increased intellectualisation and clarification: namely, the question of secularism. I know that I am running a serious risk here of being misunderstood. For some, I know, do not recognise that this is a serious problem calling for attention, and may even be offended at an outsider's concern. I considered for a time whether I should avoid introducing it, on the grounds that rather than illustrating and elucidating my general point it might seem instead to confuse it. I decided, however, that it would be intellectually dishonest to omit it; since I do genuinely feel that the issue is consequential and that, as I say, the future welfare and prosperity of this country turn in significant degree on its solution. I apologise, then, to those who feel that there is no problem; and assure them that I have listened to and I think understood their arguments but still hold, in fact all the more earnestly hold, that the aspiration to secularism is precious but precarious.

I will not go here into the delicate and sensitive issue, except to say this: the progress towards secularism will, so far as I can discern, move forward much more smoothly and effectively, and perhaps will move forward only, if secularism and its problems

are conceptualised, clarified, and intellectually wrestled with, and action taken in the light of a greatly increased awareness.

Many in India feel that they know very well what secularism is, but it turns out on enquiry that without realising it they differ even radically, among themselves, in ways sufficiently serious that an observer may apprehend real danger. Here, then, is another issue crying for thought, for clarification. University departments of political science, philosophy, history, and the like, are failing the country, and jeopardizing its future tranquillity and welfare, including its economic growth, if they do not apply their minds with vigour, honesty, and responsible creativity to intellectualising this intricate and important issue.

A somewhat similar example might be taken from the Aligarh Muslim University. The Muslim community in this country, I have said in print, has the potentialities of outstanding development. Nonetheless that community faces many formidable problems, to put the matter mildly. An observer could be much more sanguine about the future evolution of the community if, at the university at Aligarh which is as it were the intellectual and cultural centre of its life, or elsewhere, those problems were being intellectually wrestled with more zealously and boldly and constructively than appears to be the case. The two questions that we have mentioned, of secularism and of language, press conspicuously upon the Muslims. On the former the whole future of the community's position in India manifestly turns; and yet the University has not, to my knowledge, written one book on secularism or offered one graduate course on it.

There are, however, other major questions also; that of Muslim personal law, for instance; or the economics of minorities. An explicit, critical, dynamic, contextually related intellectualisation of the Muslim community's problem is certainly a prerequisite to modernisation—and also to progress. It is with this that the process of free deliberate growth begins. For here as elsewhere, modernisation consists in self-consciousness: an intelligent awareness of the processes through which one is going and of the possibilities among which one may choose, so that increasingly one's history may become what one chooses to make it.

I feel quite sure that the future of Muslim world, whether

in Pakistan or in India, in Turkey or elsewhere, will turn in the first instance on the success or failure of its intellectuals to cope intellectually with the current scene. Beside this, economic questions are relatively minor, are certainly secondary.

The Muslims, however, are not alone in this. The same sort of point applies to, for instance, Ghana, I should guess, though I do not know that country, and to India. A few days ago the principal of a Delhi college was reported in the press as stating that 'the main problem facing educationists in the universities today was intellectual apathy in the minds of students'.<sup>1</sup> In so far as this is true, it is of the utmost significance for the future of India—whether economic or other. Intellectual apathy—especially in so far as it may exist not only among students and even among teachers and professors but also in society generally—intellectual apathy—will, as a plain stark fact of observation, limit India's development more cripplingly, more immediately, than any other tangible factor; more decisively than any consideration more usually in the news, or in the files of the Planning Commission or of the Colombo Plan. Besides intellectual apathy, the building of dams and the pouring in of hundreds of millions of dollars of foreign aid pale into relative insignificance.

Contrariwise, if India is making more progress than some of its neighbours, it is primarily because India is more modern in this intellectualist sense than they, even if it not be as modern in this sense as it may yet become. More generally, if any one African or South American or for that matter western country (such as West Germany) is developing more rapidly or more surely than another, it is doing so first ideologically. It would suggest that the established concept of the economic take-off should be supplemented by a concern for intellectual take-off, which might be defined as the awareness among intellectuals that and how from now on they are increasingly responsible for the pace and direction of human history, for good or ill.

What I am postulating here is the conception, not universally grasped, that human problems can be intellectualised: that it is

1. *The Times of India*, Delhi, 11 March 1964.

possible (though not easy—painful and resolute effort is required, but it is possible) to abstract from any concrete situation or practical problem a conceptual awareness of it, then in its theoretical form that problem can be theoretically solved, in such a way that that intellectual solution can then be translated back into a practical solution. To do this is not the only function of a university, but it is one of its functions: and no university is modern that has not grasped this. No society is modern that does not have universities that have understood this and are afire working at it. Not only is such a society not modern; but until it has such universities, there is not too much hope that it can become so. This is part of the intellectual take-off. The engineering and technical faculties of a university are certainly relevant to its society's development, but less relevant than this.

In speaking of universities, however, there is danger of its seeming that this applies only to them. Universities institutionalise and catalyse this function, but they do not exhaust it. A society is not significantly modern and has but limited scope of becoming significantly modern, until this intellectual attitude, this ideological orientation, is widely dominant in the society. This orientation to problem-solving is as relevant to a man standing in a queue trying to register a letter in an Old Delhi post-office, as it is to those hoping for good relations between India and Pakistan on Kashmir. This kind of modernisation begins with the dedicated enlightenment of intellectuals; but begins to be effective in society only as those intellectuals succeed in conveying this confidence in new ideas, this re-orientation of ideology, more and more widely in society. Intellectuals, then, have a double mission: to solve problems, and to persuade society that problems can be rationally solved.

When I spoke just now of intellectual apathy, and stressed its crucial significance for the modernising process, I hope that no one felt that I was simply trying to lay blame. Intellectual apathy among students, among teachers, or in society at large may be due not only to laziness or to lack of awareness, but also to protein deficiency or chronic amoebiasis; or perhaps to thinking in a language inadequately known; or perhaps to thinking in one language while feeling in another; or perhaps it may be due, as we shall explore in our next chapter, to a lack of correlation

between religious values and intellectual belief. What it may be due to, however, and how it may be remedied, are themselves intellectual problems—which can be and ought to be tackled, and indeed the finding of a solution for which is crucial to the progress of the country. In fact, to go on spending money solely on technology while this remains unsolved is of perhaps questionable wisdom, or at least questionable effectiveness.

The current depreciation of ideological factors, or unawareness of them, or intellectual apathy, may be due to many causes; but I rather suspect that to some degree at least it is the fault of the West, especially of the western 'expert'. No one has believed more uncritically than he that the economic problems of India or other Asian and African countries could be solved departmentally, as it were—the economic-cum-technology fallacy, as I have called it. Such men have come out here, or even have sat in Washington or Ottawa or elsewhere, unaware and insouciant of Indian history and culture, of Indian social structure and attitudes, of Hindu and Muslim philosophy and law, and have imagined that even so they could devise ways to spend millions upon millions of dollars in various technical projects, and expect them to be effective. The idea that one can play a role in the history of another civilisation, without understanding that civilisation or knowing its history until now, or caring about them, is seriously distorting, I suggest. Yet such an idea, of course not phrased so, has in fact been dominant in the West.

This matter is much more complicated and subtle than we have time to go into here; for it raises the deepest issues of western ideology. Some day I should like to analyse the problem sustainedly, for I think it to be of the utmost consequence. For the moment, I must content myself by insisting that it is a major pity how imitative of western universities, in form and pattern, Indian universities are, and how dominated by western categories of thought modern Indian thinking tends to be, even the thinking about India.

The fact is that the West has begun in only extremely incipient fashion to understand any civilisation other than its own. Perforce, it has tended to approach others in the terms that it has worked out for itself; and these are often inappropriate. The structure of a western Faculty of Arts, for instance, is in

my considered judgement and experience in need of serious re-thinking and modification for this new period of western history, in which its intellectual horizon has been suddenly broadened to transcend its own civilization, within whose boundaries it has thought until yesterday. Now that it is attempting to include the whole world in its purview, there is a serious question whether departments like history, economics, art, literature, and the like and more recent ones like religion are the most intelligent and serviceable way to slice up human experience, other people's as well as one's own. To reconstruct our thinking here, we in the West shall need the help of intellectuals from the non-western world, who understand enough of modern western culture and thought to talk to us, and yet are intellectually strong and honest and creative enough to talk back to us, or rather to talk forward with us—not in repudiation or hostile debate, but in colloquium, towards the construction of new categories of thinking adequate to our new multi-cultural world.

As I say, I do not have here the time to elucidate what I mean; but the following one point will perhaps illustrate it. The economic transformation of India has tended to be thought of, both by western minds, and therefore imitatively by Indian minds, as primarily an economic question, something to be considered by economists in a department of economics. I would urge strongly that to see it thus is to see it inadequately, as if economic growth in India were primarily a subdivision of world economics. To see it truly, it is at least equally important to see Indian growth as a facet of Indian history; one particular abstraction from the total evolution of Indian society and culture in our day. The building of a dam, the levying of a new custom tariff, cannot be fully understood except as a new development in Indian history. Those of us who are Indian historians in the West, do not have the technical competence to see this development truly; but neither do economists, and a department of economics is structurally incapable of handling this question aptly.

Though I am in the process of developing certain tentative ideas on the matter, I do not of course know what a Faculty of Arts in the West will look like when it has developed beyond its present limitations to a point where it is adequate to handling this sort of



problem. Nor do I know what a Faculty of Arts here in India will look like when it has developed adequately, either. But I am not too diffident in predicting that neither of them will preserve intact the present form.

In speaking to western audiences, in the past, I have strongly urged the point that Afro-Asian resurgence involves not only a throwing off of western political control but also a refusal to think in western ways. In speaking here now, I may add two further points; one, to plead that that refusal should not be merely negative. It will not conduce to prosperity if it only rejects; or if it only goes back to classical patterns. Westernisation is not required, or appropriate; but modernisation is. Secondly, I would point out once again that we in the West are ourselves increasingly conscious of the inadequacy of traditional western categories of thought for understanding non-western cultures—at least those of us seriously wrestling with these. The two points coalesce. For in other words we, too, are moving forward, are no longer thinking in the old western terms; we are groping towards new ways of thinking that will do justice to your cultures in their classical forms and in their current evolution. You, too, must find new ways of thinking, presumably continuous with your past culture but transcending it so as to handle its modern transformations as well. Your problem then is not really different from ours. A creative effort is required of both of us, which presumably we might make in collaboration. Whether done in collaboration or not, however, the crucial point is that that effort must be made and must be truly creative.

As I have said before, the modernisation of a country like India, and even one of its by-products, its economic growth, are a total process. They involve a transformation not only technical and economic, but social and personal, and intellectual and artistic, and even moral and religious. And they involve this not as a consequence, but in part as a precondition, and all along as an integral ingredient. Let us not underestimate the massive proportions of the new adventure on which modern man is embarked. Every one of us must become a new type of person if we are to live appropriately in the new world that is struggling to be born—if we are to live appropriately in it and, even more, if we are ourselves to bring it into being.

### III

#### MORAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS

**I**N CENTRAL INDIA recently a certain health officer of some standing was approached by an unemployed worker who required a medical certificate from him as one qualification for a new job that he hoped to get. The officer proclaimed, 'I am thirsty; I badly need some whisky. Tell that man that I will see him if he gives me twenty rupees'. The worker, helpless in his dire need to be able to feed his family, finally managed to borrow the money and sent it in. Thereupon the doctor, without seeing the applicant, sent out to him the required health clearance, duly signed.

Now I would urge that if that doctor had no clear awareness of scientific medicine and its potential role in the transformation of the local health situation, he was not modern. He might have a medical degree and be technically qualified with what is called modern competence; but I would not call him modern if he had no understanding of what difference his knowledge, energetically and imaginatively applied, and his official post, constructively used, could make in the individual lives of those around him and in the general tenor of their social affairs. If this vision was, in fact, limited within the confines of the possibilities offered for his own personal wealth and aggrandisement by his possessing the new-fangled foreign gadgets and procedures and exploiting his official position, then I would call this an intellectual failure, in the terms that we were discussing in last evening's talk. Modernisation and progress are blocked, in such a case, by an absence of awareness.

On the other hand, if he does know that with a combination of modern medical competence and administrative authority, such as he possesses, it is possible to cure much illness and sociologically to modify a situation of chronic ill-health in the direction

of general well-being—if he does know this, and yet chooses not that alternative but rather his own private enrichment, then he is modern enough, but useless, personally immoral, socially disruptive. Progress can be blocked by an absence of awareness. It can be blocked also by men's choosing certain options rather than others out of a range of possibilities that may, thanks to awareness, be very wide.

It tends to be assumed that once the technical means are available for increasing, for example, the food supply, then men will automatically and 'of course' choose to use those means to produce more food. This assumption forgets that technical means are unproductive unless men understand how to use them. It forgets also that the Nazis, for instance, whose intellectual grasp was very modern indeed, deliberately chose to use their technology to produce 'guns rather than butter', as they themselves put it. At a less malicious level, men may choose not to use at all what is within their grasp. Progress cannot be made without knowledge. Yet, even with knowledge, it cannot be made without will.

To transform a country like India from its present condition into one of prosperity, health, and social harmony is a large task, one will hardly deny. To effect that transformation is theoretically possible, we now know. But it will not be easy. Perhaps for a short while the intellectual error was commonly made of supposing that it would be fairly easy, once political independence was achieved; or more negatively, the intellectual error of not recognising how formidable was the task. I wonder whether even after the notion of an easy transformation has been routed by events, there is not a mistake, perhaps still fairly common, of giving, perhaps unconsciously, less weight than is its due to this question of the monumental or Herculean nature of the task. I have argued earlier that an economic transformation cannot be effected by merely economic measures. To achieve it, one must as well rally to the task certainly intellectual resources, and, one may easily contend, certainly health resources and many others. I shall be asking presently whether it is legitimate to hope to effect it unless one rallies to the task moral and even religious resources, too, on a much larger scale and at a much deeper level than is yet generally realized.

Leaving that aside for the moment, at least one may ask this question: whether the expected transformation of the Indian scene is likely, in fact, to take place unless the will to transform it is more general, more resolute, more total, than seems currently to be the case.

Certainly many an observer is in danger of being both surprised and discouraged to find that the will to social change is more meagre, less widespread, than one might have hoped. Conceivably, it is also more meagre, less widespread, than is requisite for that social change to proceed effectively.

I do not know what the economists or the other technical experts may say<sup>1</sup>, but certainly the historian may confidently affirm that a highly relevant question in the evolution of a society towards any given goal, such as prosperity or health, is the question of how far, in every situation that arises from day to day, in ordinary life or in public procedures, in making choices men choose the alternative that is most conducive to national welfare. Nothing is more important in human life, one must perhaps always be emphasizing, than human freedom. Nothing is more consequential in social development than how men exercise their freedom: What in fact they choose, and how resolutely they strive for whatever it is that they opt to go after. To consider economic advance without pondering morale and motivation seems to me naive, if not disastrous.

1. This is overly rhetorical; actually one does know that the best economists do affirm the non-independence of economics. A recent example: W. W. Rostow, in his introduction to *The Stages of Economic Growth: a Non-Communist Manifesto*, Cambridge University Press, 1962, insists (pp. 1, 2) that this presentation of 'an economic historian's way of generalizing the sweep of modern history' is 'highly partial' and should not be taken as implying the fallacy that economics is primary: 'This should be clear. . . . Societies are interacting organisms', and he quotes Keynes in support of his conviction that economic growth has its 'foundation in human motivation'. Similarly, Galbraith quotes Marshall to somewhat the same effect, on the title-page of *The Affluent Society* (Penguin Books, 1962; first published, 1958); and this popular essay makes much play of the effect of ideas on economic policy. Economists recognise these truths in theory, but having remarked on them often at the outset sometimes proceed to formulate their studies without being able to incorporate the implications effectively; their readers sometimes fail even to recognise them.

Prosperity is not automatic: it requires vision, and drive. Yesterday we asked the intellectuals for vision. Where are we to look for drive?

What one chooses, among various alternative, is a moral question. The question of drive has traditionally been, in part at least, a religious one. Accordingly, it is not difficult to argue that the transformation of a society is a question with moral and religious implications. Development depends not only on men's notions of what is possible, but also on their notions of what is good, and on the dynamics of their pursuit of what they deem good, the force of their motivations and the quality of their acting. Modernisation is a total process. Or at least, the less total it is, the less rapid. To think that one part of a man's or a country's life can be modernised without the other parts, is to discover that at best such modernisation proves fragile, or slow, if not altogether deceptive.

Whether a medical official chooses to use such medical knowledge and such authority as he has, to improve the public's health, is a moral question that, all our traditions teach, affects the destiny of his own soul. His choice affects also, we now realise and must realise vividly, the development of India. Whether a professor uses his teaching time to inspire and enrich his students, and his free time continually to deepen and refine his own knowledge and understanding, and his devotional time to refurbish and consecrate his intellectual honesty; whether an official in some minor or major office discharges his routine and his special tasks to the limit of his own ability and to the utmost benefit of the public whom he touches; whether any of us outside of our particular jobs take the initiative, or at least lend our weight and give of our leisure time, to further public causes and promote either general welfare or the particular welfare of some group or individual that needs our help; how far any of us have the sensitivity and imagination to see in specific concrete instances what we know to be right in general, and the courage and stamina to do it once we see it—all these are moral questions that are of importance to ourselves and to God, but also are of importance to the current evolution of our country and especially to its modernisation and advance.

Whatever the economists or planners or foreign experts may

have been saying, there are no more consequential questions than these for the economic and social transformation of a nation. Not to recognize this fact is an intellectual fallacy. Not to act in terms of it is a moral one; but is also an economic disaster.

These choices are not only moral acts, each done deliberately in the exercise of our freedom. The decisions out of which they emerge can be unconscious as well as clear-cut, habitual and spontaneous as well as specific and *ad hoc*, reflecting our character and our general *Weltanschauung* as well as immediate rational choices. In other words, what men choose to do, what use they choose to make or to neglect to make of the possibilities provided by their daily situations, is a function of their concern, of their general orientation to the world and what they think important, of their feeling for ultimates—in short, of their religious outlook. What seems to them worth doing; in what directions they are pushed by their sense of cosmic imperatives and final truths; how seriously they take these and how deeply they are moved by them—these are matters that profoundly influence the industrial development of any society. Even what some would regard as so technically theological a question as the accepted degree of God's immanence or transcendence, is significant to the success of the Colombo Plan.

On this last point, perhaps I may throw in a provocative aside, illustrating one of the many interconnections of theology and technology. Whatever position one may hold on the question of the degree to which God is transcendent and immanent, presumably He became more immanent than He previously was on 16 July 1945. For that is the date on which the atomic bomb was first successfully tested; at that turning point in human history the destiny of mankind came with dramatic and terrifying new dimensions into mankind's own hands. A theologian who does not recognise this emergence and its metaphysical significance is to that extent not modern. The setting up of a governmental Planning Commission at a given date in Indian evolution is a comparable historical emergence. Any theology in India that fails to give due metaphysical weight to this decisive new human fact is, so far as this country is concerned, perhaps even more

out of date, more seriously unmodern. One might ask whether it is not naive to expect Five Year Plans to be effective in any society except in so far as its metaphysics is relevant to a world that includes Five Year Plans, a world whose inhabitants are participating deliberately in mundane development. I do not mean that a metaphysics ought to be or must be this-worldly. I insist only that what happens in this world will depend *inter alia* on how this-worldly it is.

I said in the previous chapter that the intellectuals of a society provide the framework of ideas within the limits of which that society acts. Some may have wished to protest that modern intellectuals are not all that influential. In virtually every Asian and African nation, the small modernised élite (to use a currently fashionable word) is a minority more or less out of touch with the generality of its society: socio-economically and probably politically dominant, but not always ideologically influential. Most of the populace in each case act within the ideational framework of a traditional culture. Now it would be outlandish to suppose that I am unaware of this situation. But just as I refuse to call only western things 'modern', so do I refuse to call only the western-educated 'intellectuals'. The intellectuals of any society are by definition those who formulate and nourish that society's ideology, who are the custodians and extrapolators of its dominant ideas and values. It is an intellectual blunder to suppose that the only ideas that really count, the only values that really determine the course of history and allow one to predict the shape of things to come, are western or western-derived ideas and values, is the ideology of the so-called enlightened élite.

This blunder is often made, especially by foreign experts but also at times by national planners and perhaps at times even by that 'élite' itself. And it can be not only a major blunder, but an exceedingly costly one. Of course, all these persons know that other ideas and other values are in fact lying about and are even consequential; but they sometimes think, or at least feel, that they do not really count in the sense that it is only a matter of time until they are superseded, or anyway are kept in their place. They may be thought of as obstacles to progress perhaps slowing down a course of development, but are not recognised

as determining that course. They can be seen as determining the speed of change, but not as defining the direction of change. Yet when I argue that ideology is powerful and that moral *Weltanschauung* is important, I do not mean only one particular ideology or one particular value system. As I have said before, I believe in human freedom. The question posed by modern history is not when will each nation choose this particular course; but what course will it choose.

Let me put this point in another way. Advocates of a certain type of future for, let us say, India who are aware that the ideological and moral outlook of much of the population in fact operates in other, less 'modern' terms, often ask, when will the modern ideology and morale become pervasive. It is possible, however, and conceivably more realistic, to ask rather: when will the pervasive ideology and morale become modern; and especially, modern in what sense.

In the Islamic case, which I have been studying for 25 years, I feel fairly confident in affirming that these are, in fact, the significant questions. Outsiders, and a small handful of westernising Muslims, used to suppose that the Islamic world would become modern and prosperous when the traditional Islamic outlook on the world had been replaced by a new western-derived, secular ideology—at least for all areas of life except a vigorously confined personal one. There is, however, much evidence to show that rather the Islamic world will become modern and prosperous when and in so far as its Islamic outlook, which is in fact in process, becomes modern, industrialisation-oriented. The current history of the Islamic world is the current history of Islam, and only so can it be understood. The future of the Islamic world will be the future evolution of Islam, not the imposition or importation of something else.

This is not easy to formulate; these many years I have been trying to conceptualise the present-day development of Islamic history. In the Hindu case, I am, of course, not competent to formulate it; yet I do feel that I am not being too wildly awry in my perception if I wonder whether something comparable does not obtain here, too: if I speculate whether there is any more significant question concerning the contemporary evolution of India, even for an economist, than to ask what is the current evolution of



Hindu thought and feeling. It could well be that no idea is more distorting about India today than the notion that this country's modern development is or will be a replacement of its Hindu history by some new intrusion called modern history. I should guess that fundamentally what is happening in this country is more adequately to be understood as a new development within Hindu history.<sup>2</sup> This new development is, of course, not yet defined, not yet self-conscious, not yet well known; but it is a new development in this realm nonetheless.

I am well aware that what some have called 'Hinduism' is not fixed or boundaried; I have recently published a book advocating among other things that terms like 'Hinduism' and 'Christianity' should be dropped—not because I do not take religious matters seriously, but precisely because I do. I am not then talking here about 'Hinduism'; I am talking about the current and future development of India. All that I am arguing is that that development depends and will continue to depend on what men in India think and feel and choose, and with what quality they act. What men think and feel and choose, and with what quality they act, are in significant part religious questions. What this country, or any country, not on paper but at heart, chooses to be, and how devotedly it pursues that choice, will finally determine its future—will determine not only the speed of its modernisation but the direction of it. Rather, it will not determine these, it will constitute them.

When I say that questions of human behaviour at this level are religious questions, I do not mean that men and women will necessarily answer them the way their established religious leaders advise them to do. The modernisation of a society involves the modernisation of its religious life (in my sense of the word 'modernisation'; that is, a religious outlook that is aware of modern knowledge and of modern possibilities, and that chooses whatever it does choose, deliberately and consciously from among these new alternatives, and rationally in the light of this new knowledge). This modernising process may involve the modernising of traditional leaders, it may involve the emergence of new leadership,

2. Also, of course, Sikh history, and Muslim history, and the relations among these.

it may involve the taking of moral choice and ultimate motivation out of the hands of a professional class into a people's own hands, the democratisation of morale. Whatever form it may take, without it society does not become modern. What form it takes is a question *within* the modernising process.

You may feel that I am overestimating the role of the common people here. Surely, I have heard it objected, a society can be transformed, even when the transformation sought is as massive a one as is envisaged here, without the will to change being firm and forceful in every member of the society. Now this might be true of a dictatorship, though even there a successful dictator must find means of motivating his society; and the communists, of course, know very well that a people's religious and philosophic outlook is not irrelevant. Again, the matter might be construed as automatic in a capitalistic society, where one device used to industrialise is the linking of economic drive to the individual motivation for economic gain—a sometimes unpleasant and unaesthetic, but not an ineffective, method. (Even in capitalism, however, puritanism, social gospel, atheistic humanism, and other religious and metaphysical positions at every social level have had an important role.) In a democratic planned society, however, it is perhaps fair to ask whether a social transformation is likely to occur much greater than the populace as a whole, or at least not only its first- and second-rank leaders but the lower echelons of responsibility as well, not only wish but will to achieve.

An illustration corroborating this point is the report of the recent remarks on population growth made by Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao of the Planning Commission, during a seminar at the Institute of Economic Growth. The Press report<sup>3</sup> appeared after I had already written my last evening's talk, but it is relevant not only to the role of intellectuals but also to the present discussion and to my total thesis on modernisation. Dr. Rao is represented as having 'prescribed three *mantras* to control the growth of population in the country:

The age of marriage should be raised to 21 years in the case of girls. . . . Couples should not have any child for

3. *Times of India*, New Delhi, 13 March 1964.

the first 5 years of their marriage. No couple should have more than a specified number of children.

These three *mantras* should be enshrined in the code of the community, Dr. Rao said. No amount of contraceptives or sterilisation facilities would bring about satisfactory results unless a social climate in favour of family planning was created in the country. As an aside Dr. Rao suggested that the conventional blessing by pundit at weddings that the bride should have 100 children be discarded in favour of a blessing more suitable to modern times.

Dr. Rao said that the family planning programme in the past 10 years had not been effective. Provision of suitable facilities was not sufficient by itself. More important was the establishment of conditions for the full utilisation of the available facilities. The recent population explosion, Dr. Rao said, had created very difficult problems from the point of view of the implementation of planning objectives.

He thought that the participation of intellectuals was necessary for the solution of the problem. Authority often lost perspective and got involved in details and specific problems. It did not supply a long-range, broad, multi-dimensional and integrated view of the problems. Hence the imperative need to draw intellectuals into the national debate.'

We need not here elaborate the reference to the intellectuals, the primacy of whom I have already stressed; nor the use of the word *mantra* and the reference to the ceremony at weddings, in order to emphasise the religious involvement, which is indeed obvious once one's attention is called to it, however little weight is normally given to this aspect in practice. What I may stress, however, is that in this important realm the choices that are made, and that are momentarily consequential for the welfare of the country and the world, are made by ordinary people throughout the length and breadth of the country. Modern knowledge means that a couple chooses the number of children that it will have. The couple itself is modern in so far as it is aware of this fact. Its moral theory is modern in so far as it is aware that to choose the number of its children is a moral choice.

It is up to the country's intellectual leaders to make people aware. It is up to the country's, or the villages', moral leaders to persuade them that the choice is an exceedingly important one morally; and to advise on which of the many alternatives it is best to choose. The actual choice itself, however, is made not by leaders, but by every man.

This is true also of the role of cleanliness and hygiene and health, of the sense of moral responsibility with which a workman runs a machine, and so on for all the gamut of modern industrial life. Modernisation consists in bringing the country to the point where it can, and knows that it can, choose whether or not to have disease, whether or not to have efficiency, ultimately whether or not to have a brave new world. The actual choice, however, will be made throughout the country by ordinary men and women in their millions.

'The revolution of rising expectations' is a phrase about Asian and African countries that has gained currency. So far as the poor are concerned, the destitute of town and village, the frail and hungry and cold of the slums, no doubt it would be pompous and cruel to ask of them to do more than expect: to expect improvement, expect justice, expect brotherhood. For everyone else however—all those who, however meagrely, share in privilege, whether of wealth or authority or knowledge, all of us who are anywhere on the ladder but the bottom rung—one may perhaps wonder whether our expectations may not have been disappointed in so far as we may have thought of the social revolution as something from which we could expect to receive benefits, rather than as a constructive moral endeavour in which it was our duty to participate, and to which the expectation was that we should contribute. Modernisation, as we have said before, is something not passively to acquire but actively to participate in; not something that we can wait for, but something that is waiting for us.

The problem of a link between industrialisation and morale is perhaps illustrated also in the case of two of the key figures in the modernising process in India, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Everyone knows that the historic role of Gandhiji in the evolution of modern India is due in so small measure to his having developed and presented his programme in

terms related to the traditional culture of the land, so that it was seen, and felt, both inwardly and outwardly, both by himself and by the masses, to have religious and moral involvement. He was saying something new, something modern, but saying it within and not outside the context of the Indian heritage. Hence, he was effective. His career is a clear example of my thesis that the effective history of India even today is its religious history. Nevertheless, though Gandhiji related virtually everything that he did to moral values, he did not succeed in positively relating industrialisation to them. He saw the evils of technology and machine society, but not their good, so that industrialisation remained outside his vision of moral and religious action—and therefore outside the vision of moral and religious action also of those influenced by him; which means, much of the population.

The Prime Minister, on the other hand, is a supreme example of a person for whom industrialisation *is* a moral issue. His total personality, his burning sense of duty, his integrity, his thinking, his feeling, his ultimate concern, his commitment, his self-sacrifice, all are postulated on his profound moral conviction that an economically prosperous India, which is to him an industrialised India, is *good*, is right, is a moral imperative. Now I wonder whether you will agree with me that on the whole he has succeeded in communicating this *moral* sense of the matter to only a rather limited group in the nation. A large section of the populace shares his idea that an industrialised India is desirable, but I wonder how many share his faith that it is cosmically imperative.

What is passively desirable is not necessarily the same as what is actively obligatory. Many will applaud economic prosperity if and when it arrives; but it would arrive sooner and more surely if more shared Mr. Nehru's passionate disinterestedness, his active, though tacit, conviction that it is his *dharma* to strive for it, that it is right to wear oneself out for it regardless of whether it arrives or not.

If I am right in this analysis, I do not see how the point can be uninteresting to the Planning Commission. Probably more people in India today agree with Mr. Nehru than with Mr. Gandhi that industrialisation is desirable (though finally even this may not be true; and that surely is important). Yet perhaps more

agree with Mr. Gandhi than with Mr. Nehru that industrialisation is at least outside the realm of moral concern and commitment—at least, one's own. Theoretically and socially good, perhaps (and one may stress that 'perhaps'); yet alien, at best someone else's responsibility.

I may be wrong in my answer to this question. But I am not wrong, surely, in believing the question to be important. The economic growth of India turns more on this matter than on the details of the budget.

Mr. Nehru's position is secular, in one of the meanings of that much over-worked term; but his morality and his faith are secular too. Secularism, in the western sense of non-religious, or separate from religion, is the darling child of many western observers, and perhaps of some modernists here; and especially no doubt of those inclined to be suspicious of, or even aghast at, my interest, a few moments ago, in Muslim and Hindu morality and faith, and their relation to economic development. Yet secularism neither solves nor evades our problem; it transposes and complicates it. There is a secular morality and faith—in the western case going back ultimately to the Greco-Roman as distinct from the Palestinian strand in western civilization: a morality and faith underpinned by Greek metaphysics and Roman jurisprudence, and nourished over the centuries by some of the noblest minds and greatest movements—such as humanism—of the western world. Apart from such morality and faith of its own, a secularism that is purely negative, irreligious, rejecting or setting aside the morality and faith of religion will (as much modern history shows), prove pretty sterile, if not destructive. The morality and the faith of India to accompany the material aspects of the modernising process and to vivify it, may be Hindu and Muslim and Sikh and Christian, or they may be secular in the Greco-Western sense or in some new Indian style. It is up to the religious and moral, including the devotedly secular, leaders of India to work this out. How they shall work it out is, of course, not my business to say. Yet I may and do say that on whether and on how they work it out depends the future of the country, including its industrial future.

Without appropriate morality and faith no venture succeeds—especially not so monumental a venture as this.

I do not wish to elaborate here on the question of secularism. I am convinced that it is a matter of great complexity and of supreme importance; probably more consequential for the short-run and the long-run development of every country and of the world than is any other issue receiving so little serious attention. I pass by it relatively quickly not because I underestimate its crucial relevance, or because—like so many others, Indian and foreign—I imagine that it can be taken for granted. Rather, I do so simply because I am devoting more specific and sustained attention elsewhere to the problem of it in India, attempting to analyse what it means and can mean and what it involves. Suffice it here simply to say that like most other significant goals, secularism is not automatic. It will be attained in so far as there is an intellectual understanding of what it is and what it involves; and in so far as there is an effectual supply of men and women whose faith in it, and whose moral commitment to it, are strong. This may sound paradoxical, and discouraging to those who would like to get away from these exacting matters. Yet even secularism itself, let alone a secular society's mundane goals, are implicated in man's, in society's, inescapably moral and religious qualities.

Even on the materialist level, the historian must discriminate sharply between a faith in materialism, which may be quite constructive, and a materialist's loss of faith, which leads only to bleakness or chaos. Whether men have faith, and what faith they have, is still the most important question that can be asked of any society, whether by the historian or by the economist.

Now there is nothing inherently startling in the things that I have been saying. The startling matter is that I should say them. The convention has grown up that, however important morality and faith may be, one does not mention them—least of all, in discussions of public affairs, especially economic affairs, and most especially in international economic discussions. This convention is western in origin, and like many western ideas, and especially western categorisations and compartmentalisations, I feel that it must be challenged. Morality and faith *are* relevant to economic progress, *are* part of modernisation. This is obvious once one thinks about it. So much the worse then, for conventions.

Of course, I run the risk of appearing offensive. What has been evolved and presented here as an honest attempt at analysis of what is going on, may be resented as if it were a kind of preaching as to what should go on, which, of course, is not allowed. This kind of thing poses a problem for modern man, for which we must find some solution. In the meantime, I run the risk of offending some persons. Modern knowledge includes the awareness that economic change is relevant to the history of theology, and that theological change is relevant to the history of economics. Any polite conventions of society, like any departmental academic structure, that obscure, that awareness are not modern; and I, therefore, feel that they must simply go.

The modernisation of the world is a tremendous new development; far too stupendous an affair to be comprehended within our old categories, or to be handled within our old etiquette. We are in fact embarked on a transformation that involves the whole of us—our society and ourselves, outward and inward, our pocket-books and our faith. It involves us all, East and West together; so that the future of my children depends in part on the religious evolution of the Hindu thought, the future of Muslim law depends in part on what happens in the New York Stock Exchange, the price of rice in Burma depends in part on the moral integrity of men in Moscow. That is the kind of world we live in. Let us not be too shy to face it, or to admit it.

No doubt to readjust our thinking, to reformulate our interpretations and analysis, to recast our vision of the future and even our programmes, so as to include this modern perspective will not be easy. It is a relatively small matter, however, compared to the stupendous task of reconstructing society itself—which all along was known to be prodigious, but is today seen to be more far-reaching and more all-embracing and more morally demanding than we ever imagined. If our analysis has any general validity, its implications are, I realize, large, both in theory and in practice. Any practical ramifications, of course, would have to be worked out by us individually, in so far as they might impinge on our awareness and our conscience; but even theoretical ramifications I leave at this point, wishing to bring our considerations



to a close simply by tying them together under the one theme with which we began, that of modernisation.

You will remember that in our first lecture we defined modernisation as the process of becoming aware, first of the context in which we stand, global and historical, and of the processes through which our society is moving with increasing deliberateness or at least self-consciousness; of becoming aware also of the new and ever widening range of choice that our increasing technical knowledge and power make possible; and finally, of acting in the light of this awareness, choosing deliberately and morally which of those choices we shall in fact select and energetically pursue. These movements are, of course, dialectical, each as it unfolds entering into the further development of the others. Only as we in fact choose a given possibility, technical or other, and strive in fact successfully to implement it, does the means become realised whereby we can, if we so choose, move on to the end that it has made possible and from where a new series of possibilities then opens before us.

By 'awareness of possibilities', speaking realistically, I mean what is practically possible within the resources actually or potentially available. Abstract theoretical possibilities become concrete practical possibilities tomorrow by dint of our having acted today concretely on the smaller possibilities that were open to us yesterday. Our freedom to choose becomes wider in so far as we actively exercise that freedom at a lower level of choice. Man is free; but one of the options presented to him is to act in such a way that his freedom tomorrow will be greater.

A society may be free to build a factory; if it builds a machine-tool factory, that fact means that it thereupon becomes free to build a whole range of factories. Similarly, a man is free to choose whether or not to be inoculated against cholera, and whether or not to maintain those standards of meticulous cleanliness in his home that will protect him from chronic illness. If he chooses the particular option that conduces to health, then that very health puts him in a position of greater freedom of action than he used to have when his health was less robust. Again, research is that form of intellectual awareness that generates more awareness.

It is this dynamic quality of freedom within the modernising process that enables us to reconcile the moral with the technologi-

cal and intellectual aspects of our problem. Once I have delineated this reconciliation, I will close.

For otherwise, there is a serious dilemma—between, if you like, the Yogi and the Commissar. At the one extreme it would be possible to have the partisan of economic-cum-technical progress, whether Indian enthusiast or foreign expert, who, while agreeing with my analysis of the role of ideas and of faith, might be inclined even to assert that at least one third of all foreign aid, and perhaps also of internal budget expenditure, throughout the so-called emergent countries of Asia and Africa, is wasted because the ideological awareness appropriate to its use is not available; and at least another third is wasted because of questions of morale. This makes his programme run at a very costly inefficiency! Or at a less exasperated level, another might 'recognise' that in order to lead a society to the cherished goal of industrial development one must corral not only technology and education but also moral and religious reform, to the cause. Without these, it will flounder.

Over against this at the other extreme might rise the champion of non-interference, pointing out that such a position betrays in its exponents the wish to impose their own pattern and values on social development, not only in practice by the manipulation of social engineering, but metaphysically—to westernise rather than to modernise, to straight-jacket rather than to free. They do not take seriously, he could contend, the freedom of any society, not only *de facto* but *de jure*, to develop as it chooses—which freedom requires that we reject any preconception that a society will or must move in the direction that we approve or expect. Religion and morals must not, and indeed cannot, be subordinated to worldly causes, however laudable; or, more pointedly, Indian culture and morals are not to be surrendered at the altar of material values or westernising fads, or to be meddled with by foreign advisers or even *deracinés* modernisers from New Delhi. Man not only is, but must be, free to choose his goal. This means that a society is free to develop in other directions; and free even to maintain the *status quo*, if at heart that is what it in fact chooses. If the people of any country at the profoundest, that is the religious, level do not really desire a mechanical society, then the history of that country will move

in some other direction.

There is some force in both these viewpoints, overstated here though they be. Economic planning must have a socially prevalent philosophic under-girding; and on the other hand India's moral culture is ultimately more valuable than even its dams, and India's future will be significant only in so far as it moves to become what it truly and itself sees to be worth while.

These two, considered statically, collide. They are reconciled, however, in the dynamics of modernisation as an on-going process. There is involved the choosing of what one sees to be good from among alternatives that one knows to be possible. To be modern is to know widely and to choose freely. To become, however, modern increasingly, is to choose in a particular way: namely, in the way that conduces to still more freedom and more knowledge. The modern man may choose as he likes, or as his conscience or culture dictates; but one possibility is that he will choose to become yet more modern.

In so far as modernisation is not a condition but a process, it is to that extent self-defining. Provided one knows what one is doing, one may choose any possibility from among the two or several that modernity offers, and still be modern. But in so far as one chooses any avenue that stultifies, or that merely conserves, one is closing the door to further modernisation; and things get worse. Contrariwise, that morality, and that morality alone, which understands what is happening, and freely, morally chooses an avenue that leads to greater knowledge, greater freedom, and greater mundane welfare, that morality, and that morality alone, is dynamically within the modernising process as a process.

No one may tell the moralist what to choose. Yet the intellectual may by theoretical analysis show the moralist in what direction he must look if his morality is to be dynamically modern and free; knowing that only so can society take advantage of progress that is material, intellectual, and moral all at once, and without limit.

Yesterday I spoke of the intellectual take-off. Without it, progress will not begin to be serious. The really fundamental problem, however, in modernisation is its moral aspect.

In these lectures, Prof. Smith paints a much larger canvas than he attempted in his earlier studies and examines the problems facing a multiple cultural, traditional society in its endeavours to adapt itself to new pressures and norms.

In the first lecture, he explains how the current, simplified interpretations of the process of modernisation—which make it synonymous with westernisation, economic development, etc.—are inadequate. He concludes that the process of modernisation involves an awareness “that history is moving in a particular direction” and a continuing endeavour to determine this direction.

In the second lecture, he examines the role of the intellectual elite in the modernising process. He is of the opinion that “to modernise society is to explain the limits of action. The first limitations to progress are the limitations of awareness. To expand this awareness is the special function of the intellectuals.” All planning, formulation of policies and programmes take place more or less within the limits of the “ideology” of the intellectuals of the class that makes plans and policies; and the workers as well as the man-in-the-street who are to implement it should be imbued with that ideology.

In the third lecture, he examines the moral and religious aspects of modernisation. Prosperity, progress, growth and development do not automatically flow from political freedom, technical know-how or freedom from fear and want. They flow from intelligent and deliberate choices and dogged pursuit. Choosing among alternatives is a moral act; it calls for value-judgements and is conditioned by the operative morality of those who make the choice.

For several years before Partition, Wilfred Cantwell Smith had lectured in India on Islamic History. Thereafter, he became Director, Institute of Islamic Studies and Professor of Comparative Religions at McGill University, Canada. For the last two years, he has been Director, Centre for the Study of World Religions at Harvard. In 1943, he published *Modern Islam In India—Social Analysis* and, in 1957, *Islam in Modern History*. In these studies, he examines the social tensions produced in Muslim societies—the Arabs, the Turks, the Pakistanis, and the Indian Muslims—by the impact of Western civilisation, and highlights the need for a fresh evaluation and integration of traditional norms in the context of new moral and social aspirations.

Rs. 4



Library IAS, Shimla



00051776

ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE

BOMBAY - CALCUTTA - NEW DELHI - MADRAS  
LUCKNOW - BANGALORE - LONDON - NEW YORK