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**THE INFLUENCE OF BRITISH POLITICAL THOUGHT IN CHINA AND
INDIA: THE CASES OF SUN YAT-SEN, MAHATMA GANDHI AND
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU**

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE OF
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2000

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the impact of British political thought in China and India. It concerns the life and work of three of the most important nationalist leaders: Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925) in China and Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) and Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) in India. The analysis connects the British aspects of their life and work, which are neither fully understood nor sufficiently appreciated, with their political thought. The first section surveys the existing primary and secondary literature, focusing on the life and work of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru, and outlines the relevant strands of British political thought. The following sections contain an analysis of the political thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru within the framework established in the first section, under the headings of nationalism, democracy and socialism. This thesis reveals a distinctive and profound collection of influences which further the understanding of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru's political thought and constitute an important consideration in assessing the cogency of that thought. Although some profound differences existed between India and China, and between Sun, Gandhi and Nehru, it is evident that there were a number of similarities in the impact of British political thought. Britain provided a rich heritage of political thought and wealth of experience regarding its implementation in practice from which Sun, Gandhi and Nehru could draw in constructing their own political thought. The sophisticated and measured incorporation of British influences tends to support a more positive assessment of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru, not only as nationalist leaders but also as political thinkers.

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SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the impact of British political thought in China and India. In particular it is a study of the nature and extent of British influences on the political thought of three nationalist leaders. In this context there are two aspects to British influences. Firstly, the political thought under consideration here was conceived within, and designed for, countries dominated politically and economically, either directly as in India or indirectly as in China, by British imperialism. Secondly, many nationalists in China and India possessed what can be described as a British connection; that is they were educated in the British style, spoke English, were familiar with British history, the political thought and practice of Britain, had visited Britain, and acquired British friends and acquaintances. Although these nationalists rejected much associated with foreign rule their political thought suggests they drew upon a rich variety of thought which originated in Britain.

This thesis concerns the life and work of three of the most important nationalist leaders who each had a significant British connection: Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925) in China and Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) and Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) in India. The analysis of this thesis connects the British aspects of the life and work of these nationalist leaders, which are neither fully understood nor sufficiently appreciated, with their political thought. These nationalist leaders all left a body of political thought which addressed the problems their countries faced and outlined a model for future



political and economic development. Crucially, a common feature of their political thought is that it possesses important and numerous liberal democratic elements. More specifically, they each, albeit to varying degrees and at different times, favoured democracy and rejected Marxism either largely or completely. It is this combination which makes these three nationalist leaders eminently comparable.

The two chapters of the introduction will establish the background to the analysis of the remainder of the thesis. The first will survey the existing primary and secondary literature and focus on the life and work of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru and the nature of their British connections. The second will focus on the main strands of British political thought, which the survey of the first chapter suggests Sun, Gandhi and Nehru drew upon in constructing their own political thought. The following sections will be devoted to an analysis of the political thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru under the headings of nationalism, democracy and socialism. A chapter in each section will be devoted to Sun, Gandhi and Nehru and will trace the origins and development of their thought and will examine British influences on its main features. The final section will include a conclusion which will summarise the findings of the thesis.

In summary it is contention of this thesis that Sun, Gandhi and Nehru possessed a British connection which influenced the nature and development of their political thought. This connection consisted of a combination of personal influences as well as the activities of Britain in India and China. The British connection is important because it constitutes an important aspect of their lives and works and the background against which it was developed. Further examination of this connection will advance understanding of the nature of their political thought which sought to combine traditional and modern elements. Finally, it is a connection which has been overlooked in much of the literature.

Chapter I

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the life and work of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. It will survey the existing primary and secondary literature to establish the nature of their British connections and British influences on their political thought. The chapter will identify gaps in the existing literature in relation to the analysis of potential British influences. The survey will also include a summary of some of varied assessments of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. Thus the analysis will construct a framework to complement the following chapter that will consider the developments in British political thought which the findings of this chapter suggest will be relevant to the analysis of the political thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru.

Sun Yat-sen

Sun, a Hong Kong educated doctor, became the first President of the Chinese Republic in 1911. However, Sun's brief tenure as President, and China's subsequent descent into warlordism and civil war, consigned him to relative international obscurity compared to the antagonists who succeeded him, Mao Tse-tung and Chiang Kai-shek, the leaders of communist and nationalist China respectively. Nevertheless, Sun is revered as the father of the nation in both Chinas. Despite his failures as a statesman, Sun's political thought contained in his Three Principles of the People, attained lasting popularity and is still regarded as the foundation of policy in the Republic of China.

There has been a great deal of scholarly work on Sun and Sidney Chang and Leonard Gordon's *Bibliography of Sun Yat-sen in China's Republican Revolution, 1895-1925* (1998) identifies three broad approaches: biographical, topical and ideological. This tripartite analysis constitutes a useful framework for considering the available literature. Amongst, the 'biographical' material, which is the most common, the first and for many

years the definitive account of Sun's early life was *Sun Yat Sen and the Awakening of China* (1912) by James Cantlie and C. Sheridan Jones. Dr., later Sir, James Cantlie (1851-1926)¹ was Sun's friend, teacher and mentor and his biography, reflecting this, is rich in details of Sun's early life and character and especially his British-style education. Another early biography by a friend is that by Paul M. W. Linebarger *Sun Yat Sen and the Chinese Republic* (1925). It too provides much detail of Sun's childhood and early revolutionary activities but is rather scant on information for the period between the revolution and his death. The first biography that was both more thorough and more critical was that by Lyon Sharman, *Sun Yat-sen: His Life and its Meaning* (1934). There are two British biographies, worthy of note in the present context although they are both rather dated, and which demonstrate the difficulties with much of the literature. The first was the anonymously authored, under the pseudonym Saggiarius,² *The Strange Apotheosis of Sun Yat-sen* (1939) and is highly critical of Sun and his work. The second, Bernard Martin's *Strange Vigour: A Biography of Sun Yat-sen* (1944), is more balanced and certainly more sympathetic. Two more recent works by Harold Schiffrin incorporate extensive research from sources previously unavailable. *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution* (1968) provides much detail of Sun's life until 1905 while *Sun Yat-sen: Reluctant Revolutionary* (1980), provides a complete account of Sun's entire life. Finally, Marie-Claire Bergere's well researched biography *Sun Yat-sen* (1998) attempts to provide a balanced interpretation which lies between the mythification and subsequent demythification which distorts much of the work on Sun.

The biographical literature demonstrates that Sun possessed a significant British connection. In general terms, Schiffrin remarked of Sun that: "No Chinese political figure has ever been as open to outside influences."³ Others have noted that Sun had a "superficial but nonetheless far-ranging and impressive knowledge of the West."⁴

¹ Cantlie was a Scottish doctor who first met Sun while teaching at the College of Medicine for Chinese in Hong Kong.

² The author has since been identified as H. G. W. Woodhead. Bergere, *Sun Yat-sen*, 466.

³ Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen: Reluctant Revolutionary*, 270.

⁴ See, "Introduction" in *Prescriptions* ed., Wei, Myers and Gillin, xv.

Significantly, Sun came to learn English which served to orientate him towards English language influences. After leaving China, Sun attended Iolani Anglican school in Honolulu, between 1879 and 1882, whilst living with his brother who had moved to Hawaii. He returned to China and continued his education in Hong Kong at the Diocesan School and Queen's College in 1884. Later, between 1887 and 1892, Sun studied at the College of Medicine for Chinese in Hong Kong. After his graduation and a brief period as a doctor, Sun embarked on a career as a nationalist and revolutionary. Following an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the Manchu regime, Sun was forced to flee China and eventually ended up in Britain between September 1896 and June 1897. It was in London in 1896, whilst he was visiting Cantlie, that he was kidnapped by the staff at the Chinese Legation who sought to repatriate him. The incident created a sensation in London and his release was eventually secured with Cantlie's help and after the intervention of the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury. Sun visited Britain again in 1905, 1909 and 1911. Another important aspect of the British connection was Sun's continual search for British government support for his cause, both before and after the revolution of 1911. Additionally, Sun was operating in a wider framework dominated by imperialism and the actions of the British government in China, Hong Kong and elsewhere in east Asia. After repeated rejections from the British, Sun eventually formed an alliance with the Russians and shortly afterward, in 1924, he delivered his famous lectures on the Three Principles of the People.

The topical work examines particular aspects of Sun's life and also identifies a number of British influences. There have been many studies of Sun's western connections, but none focus in a thorough and systematic manner on his British connection. For example, Jeffrey Barlow discusses Sun's French connection in *Sun Yat-sen and the French, 1900-1908* (1979), and C. Martin Wilbur's thorough and objective biography *Sun Yat-sen: Frustrated Patriot* (1976) includes a detailed account of the period of collaboration with the Russian, towards the end of his life. Although Marius Jansen's *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen* (1954) concentrates on Sun's Japanese connection, it reveals that he was exposed to western influences in Japan. Yansheng Lum

and Raymond Lum's *Sun Yat-sen in Hawaii: Activities and Supporters* (1999) explores Sun's Hawaiian connection, including his education at the Anglican Iolani school. Sun was subject to several disparate influences, and according to J. Y. Wong's *Sun Yatsen: His International Ideas and International Connections* (1987), he had several 'international connections' and one of these was British. For example, Wong's *The Origins of an Heroic Image: Sun Yatsen in London, 1896-1897* (1986) examines the significance of Sun's first visit to London and particularly the kidnapping incident, which constitutes a specific and important part of that British connection.

The topical literature is marked by the absence of a comprehensive investigation of Sun's British connection. There are a few exceptions, most notably the research of Wong, who believes that the kidnapping and subsequent media attention created an 'heroic image' which projected Sun to the forefront of the revolutionary movement and eventually enabled him to become the first president of the republic. Wong also investigates Sun's claim that his activities and observations while in London influenced his developing political thought. Wong discovered from the records of the private detectives employed by the Chinese Legation, who followed Sun whilst he was in London, that he made at least fifty visits to the British Library between October 1896 and June 1897 and many of these lasted several hours.⁵ However, this study does not incorporate these connections with the other British connections to which Sun was exposed both before and after his trip to London. There would seem to be a case for all aspects of Sun's British connection to be considered, together with his incorporation of certain aspects of British political thought.

The ideological work also mentions western and specifically British influences on Sun's political thought. This thought has been described as syncretistic, in so far as it sought to combine traditional Chinese thought with that from the west.⁶ Sun claimed that he developed his "san-min-chu," or the idea of democracy based on three principles

⁵ Wong, *The Origins of an Heroic Image*, 274-275.

⁶ Kindermann, "Sunyatsenism - Prototype of a Syncretistic Third World Ideology," in *Sun Yat-sen: Founder and Symbol of China's Revolutionary Nation-Building*, ed. Kindermann.

as a result of his observations made during his 1896-97 trip to Europe.⁷ It is more likely, at this early stage, that Sun was in the process of developing his ideas and incorporating a range of disparate influences. As Norman Palmer remarked: "Throughout his life his philosophy changed as a result of experience and reflection."⁸ This was Sun's claim and three specific sources have been identified: Chinese tradition, the west and his own ideas.⁹ For example, A. James Gregor has shown the imprint of Confucianism on Sun's political thought.¹⁰ Sun's thought also appears to have been widely influenced by ideas from the west. Shao-chuan Leng and Norman Palmer's *Sun Yat-sen and Communism* (1960) explored socialist and communist influences on Sun's thought. Paul M. A. Linebarger's¹¹ *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-sen* (1937) was one of the first studies of Sun's thought and identifies significant western, including British, influences. Donald Treadgold devoted a chapter to an examination of Christian influences on Sun's thought in *The West in Russia and China: Religious and Secular Thought in Modern Times* (1973). More recently, the sympathetic analysis of Sun's thought in Sidney Chang and Leonard Gordon's *All Under Heaven: Sun Yat-sen and his Revolutionary Thought* (1991) identified several British influences including that of John Stuart Mill. It is evident that Sun drew widely from the west and particularly from British sources in developing his political thought. Many of these influences have only been mentioned in the literature, and few have been explored fully, and there has been no attempt to link them together and consider them as a consistent and related whole. It would seem that these influences are

⁷ Sun, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 193. There is, though, no documentary evidence to support this claim, and the term *San Min Chu* was not used publicly until several years later. Schiffrin drew attention to some factual errors which, he believes, led him to doubt Sun's claim: "[Sun] was not in England for two years nor did he visit any other European country, and I suspect that the Three Principles were not so clearly formed at this time as he recalled more than twenty years later." See, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution*, 137. However, the absence of a clearly formulated Three Principles at this time does not mean that Sun was not influenced by his stay in Britain. Wong, whilst confirming that Sun did only stay for nine months in England, admits that "it was quite acceptable in Chinese convention to refer vaguely as being two years what was actually a short period of time stretching over two calendar years." Similarly, "it was quite acceptable in Chinese custom to say that one had been to Europe, even if the trip had been restricted to England." See, *The Origins of an Heroic Image*, 287.

⁸ Palmer, "Makers of Modern China: IV. Sun Yat-sen," 281.

⁹ Chang, "Political Development in Taiwan," 17.

¹⁰ Gregor, "Confucianism and the Political Thought of Sun Yat-sen."

probably connected and could usefully be considered as a whole. Having established that Sun had a British connection, it is now necessary to consider his political thought.

Unfortunately Sun was unable to produce a comprehensive exposition of his political thought before he died. Consequently his thought is scattered in a number of speeches, lectures, articles and books. However, Sun's last will and testament, written the day before he died, hinted at the works he regarded as the most important and which contain the major tenets of his political thought. In this document Sun urges his comrades to "follow my "Plans for National Reconstruction," "Fundamentals for National Reconstruction," "Three Principles of the People," and the "Manifesto" issued by the First National Convention of our Party."¹² According to Sun the 'Plans for National Reconstruction' are actually three works, relating to psychological, material and social reconstruction.¹³ The first of these, concerning psychological reconstruction, appeared in English as an autobiography, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary* (1927). It gives Sun's reasons for the failure of the revolution and also expounds two of his most important contributions, the "Three Stages of the Revolution" and the "Five-Power Constitution." The second of these, concerning material reconstruction, was written in English, and aimed at the western audience, and published as *The International Development of China* (1921). It is significant to note that Sun sought a British imprimatur for this work and asked Lord Curzon to write a preface but he refused.¹⁴ The second work, mentioned in the will, is the "Fundamentals of National Reconstruction" which is merely a concise outline of the plans for material reconstruction covered in more detail in *The International Development of China*. The third work mentioned in the will is the "Three Principles of the People" or *San Min Chu I* which outline Sun's plans for establishing a new Chinese

¹¹ Paul M. A. Linebarger was the son of Judge Paul M. W. Linebarger, Sun's friend and earlier biographer.

¹² A copy of the will is found in Sun, *San Min Chu I*, v. The 'Manifesto' was not actually written by Sun and merely reiterates ideas contained elsewhere and therefore will not be considered here.

¹³ *Ibid.*, vii. The third, concerning social reconstruction, is erroneously named, and is, according to Paul M. A. Linebarger, "little more than a text on parliamentary law." See, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-sen*, 4. Harley Farnsworth MacNair describes it as merely "a basis for the conduct of public meetings in an orderly manner" and hence "of no particular value." See, *China in Revolution*, 80. Therefore, this work will not be examined here.

¹⁴ See, Chang and Gordon, *All Under Heaven*, 119.

Republic under the headings of nationalism, democracy and socialism or people's livelihood.

The 'Three Principles of the People' is widely held to be Sun's most important work, despite inadequacies including repetition, brevity, ambiguity and inaccuracy. For example, Schiffrin remarked that they were "a series of hastily prepared speeches containing tedious digressions and homilies, and inconsistencies and errors of fact."¹⁵ However, many of these can be explained by the unusual circumstances surrounding their production. They were presented in their final form in a series of lectures Sun gave shortly before his death, and represented the culmination of his life's work. Sun was in fact in the process of writing a more definitive statement of his political thought shortly before he gave the lectures, but the manuscripts and notes were destroyed by fire during a revolt by a local warlord.¹⁶ Sun admitted that when he delivered the lectures he was speaking "extemporaneously" and that "these lectures are not at all comparable to the material which I had formerly prepared."¹⁷ According to Gangulee, the 'Three Principles' constituted "the fundamental ideology of the Nationalist Revolution in China."¹⁸ The standard and most widely available English translation, that by Frank Price, is *San Min Chu I: The Three Principles of the People* (1927) and is the version used in this thesis. The translation to the French by the Jesuit, Pascal D'Elia, *Le Triple Demisme de Suen Wen* (1930), suffers from D'Elia's desire to reconcile Sun's thought with Catholicism and is annotated to this effect. Sun also produced an account of the kidnapping incident, *Kidnapped in London* (1897), which was probably written in collaboration with Cantlie. There are also two useful collections of Sun's writings. The first is *The Teachings of Sun Yat-sen* (1945) was compiled by Gangulee, and included extracts from some of Sun's major works. The second, *Prescriptions for Saving China*

¹⁵ Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen: Reluctant Revolutionary*, 253.

¹⁶ See, "Authors Preface," in *San Min Chu I*, xi. Sun proceeded to state that these notes and manuscripts "represented the mental labor of years and hundreds of foreign books which I had collected for reference." This suggests that Sun had been continually exposed to foreign, including British, works over his life, and had incorporated them into his political thought.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, xii.

¹⁸ Gangulee ed., *The Teachings of Sun Yat-sen*, xxxii.

(1994) edited by Julie Wei, Ramon Myers and Donald Gillin, includes much material previously unpublished in English and provides an excellent survey of the development of Sun's thought. Finally, Sun also wrote a number of articles that appeared in British journals, including *The Fortnightly Review*. From these works it is possible to ascertain Sun's political thought as it was finally formulated. Having established the major sources of Sun's thought, it is necessary to mention two related issues which emerge from the literature: his stature as a political thinker and his incorporation of western thought.

In common with many other political thinkers, Sun's thought has been subject to varying interpretations. Sun occupies a position in Chinese history as national father figure.¹⁹ Harold Schiffrin compared Sun with Gandhi in this respect: "Gandhi ... had a permanent and positive impact on India. And Sun Yat-sen likewise did on China... He projected an image of probity that, like Gandhi's, is unique for Third World leaders."²⁰ Despite these personal qualities, M. N. Roy, for example, believed that Sun "did not think; he only schemed."²¹ Lyon Sharman concludes his biography: "I am one of the many Westerners who fail to find him either a profound or very original thinker."²² Saggiarius described Sun as an "irresponsible megalomaniac" and his political theories as "unworthy of a kindergarten pupil."²³ Similarly, Harold Schiffrin said that: "He was an improviser, not a political philosopher."²⁴ It is interesting to note that Schiffrin drew that conclusion in 1980 but in more recent work has amended his estimation quite radically. In 1994 Schiffrin concluded a revised assessment of Sun as follows:

In the past, I, as well as many others, have stressed the ambiguities in Sun's political writings and speeches, and considered his ideological efforts as lacking sophistication. While recognizing the heroic qualities of Sun's persistent struggle for the modernization of China, and while acknowledging the objective constraints under which he labored, I tended to dismiss the three principles as being too generalized.

At this time, given the benefit of hindsight, and after considering the role of ideology in Third World countries, I am convinced that there is an advantage in a

¹⁹ See, for example, Bergere, *Sun Yat-sen*, 2.

²⁰ Schiffrin, "Sun Yat-sen: A Leadership Model for Developing Countries," in *China's Republican Revolution* ed. Shinkichi and Schiffrin, 166.

²¹ Roy, *Revolution and Counter Revolution in China*, 257.

²² Sharman, *Sun Yat-sen*, 335.

²³ Saggiarius, *The Strange Apotheosis of Sun Yat-sen*, 10.

²⁴ Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen: Reluctant Revolutionary*, 271.

synthetic, generalized formula ... Foreign ideologies - whether Marxist, capitalist, or Western-style liberalism - cannot be extrapolated from unique historical legacies and transplanted *in toto* to non-Western, Third World countries ... Thus Sun's approach to ideology, drawing upon various foreign and traditional elements, is an instructive example for Third World modernizers.²⁵

Conversely, others were always more laudatory, in 1937 Paul M. A. Linebarger called the Three Principles "one of the most ambitious bodies of doctrine ever set forth by a political leader."²⁶ Whilst acknowledging Sun's limitations, J. H. Plumb remarked that his "vision was far greater than his political ideology."²⁷ Some of the more recent works are also more positive. For example, Gottfried-Karl Kindermann believes that Sun's thought was the "first comprehensive ideological response emanating from Asia that sought to serve as a set of guiding principles in the historical process of meeting the severe challenges of modernization."²⁸ A. James Gregor has demonstrated the consistency and significance of Sun's thought, despite numerous critiques emphasizing the contrary, although he does admit that he "was not a professional philosopher."²⁹ It would seem that Sun was not a rigorous enough philosopher, nor an active or successful enough revolutionary or a great enough statesman to satisfy all his critics. However, in view of the impact the Three Principles have had on the history of modern China as well as their contemporary relevance, Sun's political thought warrants consideration as an important contribution to political thought.

The debate over Sun's stature as a political thinker also discusses his incorporation of western influences. Sun's eclecticism and incorporation of various western influences, mentioned earlier, has also been subject to varying interpretation. For Leng and Palmer, Sun's references to western thinkers "showed how well-read Sun was, and how great an impact these Western thinkers had on his own thinking."³⁰ But for

²⁵ Schiffrin, "Sun Yat-sen: A Leadership Model for Developing Countries," in *China's Republican Revolution* ed., Shinkichi and Schiffrin, 165-166.

²⁶ Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-sen*, 22.

²⁷ See foreword in Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen: Reluctant Revolutionary*, viii.

²⁸ Kindermann, "Sun Yat-sen: Armed Prophet of Twentieth Century China - A Biographical Sketch" in *Sun Yat-sen: Founder and Symbol of China's Revolutionary Nation-Building* ed., Kindermann, 73.

²⁹ Gregor, *op. cit.*, 55.

³⁰ See, *Sun Yat-sen and Communism*, 19.

Lucian Pye, “they reflect his uneven reading of Western authors.”³¹ Pye acknowledges that Sun attempted to incorporate traditional Chinese thought with that from the west. On this eclecticism Pye continues: “But though they called for a mixture of foreign and Chinese ideas and practices, the doctrines did not capture what was best in each. The *San Min Chu I* tapped much that was second rate.”³² Worse still, according to F. Gilbert Chan, they showed that Sun “lacked the intellectual sophistication to identify the works of the most prominent Western thinkers.”³³ Perhaps this was because, as Bernard Martin believed: “All European political and social theories were new to him and he was spared the normal tendency of Westerners to read through spectacles tinted by a class system of education.”³⁴ Despite the varying interpretations of Sun’s eclecticism, and incorporation of western thought and practice, it is clear from the literature that he did borrow widely from the west. This thesis will examine the reasons for and significance, as well as the nature and extent, of Sun’s incorporation of British influences.

Mohandas Gandhi

Gandhi, better known as the Mahatma or Great Soul, was the most famous leader of the Indian nationalist movement, although he never held formal office in independent India. Whilst Gandhi may be most remembered for his advocacy of non-violence, hand-spinning and his crusades against untouchability he was also a political thinker. Similarly, although Gandhi is remembered as an aesthetic Indian nationalist he was also a British educated barrister who, when he studied in London, aped the mores of the British gentleman, wearing suits from Saville Row. This contrast is reflected in his work for Indian independence which began as a campaign for greater political equality for Indians in South Africa within the existing imperial framework.

There has been a great deal of scholarly work concerning Gandhi’s life and work. A recent bibliography, *A Comprehensive, Annotated Bibliography on Mahatma Gandhi*

³¹ Pye, *China An Introduction*, 139-140.

³² *Ibid.*, 141.

³³ Chan, “The Historical Significance of Sun Yatsen’s Career and Ideology in Twentieth Century Chinese Politics,” in *Sun Yatsen: His International Ideas and International Connections* ed. Wong, 128.

(1995), which surveys the Gandhian material in English, is testament to the wealth of literature available. This vast literature can also be divided into the biographical, topical and ideological. The biographical material is probably the most common and much of it is excellent although some verges into hagiography. The early biographies are dominated by those authors who knew Gandhi and thus abound with rich insight and personal anecdotes. One of the first was that written by a friend and admirer of Gandhi, Romain Rolland, *Mahatma Gandhi: A Study in Indian Nationalism* (1923). To illustrate the defect of the early biographies Rolland has been described as, "the mouthpiece of the Mahatma in Europe."³⁵ The American journalist, Louis Fischer, who met Gandhi, wrote a thorough biography *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (1951) on which the film 'Gandhi' was based. The immense, multi-volume work by Pyarelal, Gandhi's secretary, *Mahatma Gandhi* (1956-1986), provides a wealth of detail on Gandhi's life and work. There then follow a number of more thorough and more objective works. Examples of these include if not the definitive biography, certainly the most extensive, that by D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi* (1951-1954). This work, extending to eight volumes, gives a thorough if sympathetic coverage of Gandhi's life and work. Another well researched volume by an Indian is B. R. Nanda's *Mahatma Gandhi: A Biography* (1958). There are several more recent biographies by British scholars who have produced incisive accounts of various aspects of Gandhi's life and work and who may have benefited from the absence of any emotional attachment to Indian nationalism. A relatively early example is Geoffrey Ashe's objective and scholarly *Gandhi* (1968) which provides a wealth of detail on Gandhi's studies in Britain. Further well researched and informative accounts of Gandhi's life are Antony Copley's *Gandhi* (1987) and Judith Brown's *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope* (1989). In sum there is a wealth of excellent biographical work on Gandhi from which the background to his life and work can be constructed.

³⁴ See, *Strange Vigour*, 78.

³⁵ Moraes, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, 108.

This biographical literature reveals that Gandhi was subject to varied influences and possessed several international connections. His home life was of the traditional Hindu variety. As a child he was well read in the traditional Indian texts.³⁶ However, at the age of twelve he attended an English language school and so began a British-style education.³⁷ According to his autobiography, at the high school Gandhi attended English became the predominant medium of instruction and extracurricular activities included football and cricket.³⁸ Gandhi also came across Christianity during these early years. However, the impression of Christianity that Gandhi gained at this time was though rather negative, since he often saw Protestant missionaries attacking Hindu customs.³⁹ After high school, and prior to leaving for England, Gandhi attended a local college with a view to taking the Bombay University B. A. degree.⁴⁰ He then went to London to pursue legal studies in 1888 and stayed until 1891 when he was called to the Bar.⁴¹ Gandhi's legal studies left him some free time in which he studied for the University of London Matriculation which he passed at the second attempt. Gandhi found time for wider reading and in respect of newspapers he claimed to have "always glanced over *The Daily News*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Pall Mall Gazette*."⁴² He visited Cardinal Manning during the London dockers' strike of 1889 to congratulate him for helping the strikers.⁴³ Gandhi also involved himself in the activities of London vegetarians and eventually became a member of the executive committee of the London Vegetarian Society and founded a vegetarian club in Bayswater.⁴⁴ In 1893 he went to South Africa, and established a successful legal practice, where he remained until 1914, and returned to India in 1915 via London. During this time Gandhi made trips to London in 1906 and 1909 in connection with his campaign on behalf of the rights of Indians in South Africa. Whilst

³⁶ Copley, *Gandhi*, 3.

³⁷ Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, vol. 1, 29.

³⁸ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 30-31.

³⁹ See, Hay, "Between Two Worlds," 309.

⁴⁰ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 48.

⁴¹ Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, 37-41.

⁴² Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 59.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴⁴ Nanda, *Mahatma Gandhi*, 29.

Gandhi spent the remainder of his life in India he made a final trip to Britain in 1931 to attend the Round Table Conference.⁴⁵ In summary the biographical material outlines a noticeable British connection which was initially marked by an admiration for British values but gradually deteriorated after successive British frustrations of Indian calls for home rule and independence.

There is much topical literature on Gandhi, which discusses specific aspects of his life and work, but few studies consider exclusively or thoroughly his British connection. Of most relevance here is James Hunt's examination of Gandhi's trips to Britain in *Gandhi in London* (1978). There are a number of works which focus on Gandhi's period in South Africa. The first, a biography of this period, and one which concentrates on Gandhi's "saintliness,"⁴⁶ is that by Joseph Doke, *M. K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa* (1909). Maureen Swan's *Gandhi: The South African Experience* (1985) attempts to challenge the traditional view which places Gandhi at the epicentre of the South African struggle. Another study by Hunt, *Gandhi and the Nonconformists: Encounters in South Africa* (1986), considers British Protestant influences on Gandhi's religious thought. Gandhi's early work in India is covered in Judith Brown's *Gandhi's Rise to Power: Indian Politics 1915-1922* (1972). A subsequent study by Brown, *Gandhi and Civil Disobedience: The Mahatma in Indian Politics, 1928-1934* (1977), is devoted to the independence struggle of the later 1920s. Other studies concentrate on specific aspects of Gandhi's life. For example, R. Kumar has edited, *Essays on Gandhian Politics: The Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919* (1971) which examines that early example of non-violent protest. Erik Erikson's *Gandhi's Truth: On the Origins of Militant Nonviolence* (1969) is a psychological analysis of Gandhi and his thought and specifically his involvement in the 1918 textile workers' strike in Ahmedabad. Finally, Dennis Dalton's *Mahatma Gandhi: Nonviolent Power in Action* (1993) examines in detail the 1930 salt march and the 1947 fast against communalism and compares Gandhi with Martin Luther King and Malcolm X.

⁴⁵ Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, 305.

Much of the topical literature only deals tangentially with Gandhi's British connection. For example, whilst Hunt's work deals with each of Gandhi's visits to Britain in much detail but does not link these to the development of his political thought. Indeed, whilst much of the literature mentions aspects of Gandhi's British connection or potential British influences, none examine the impact of either on his political thought in a thorough and systematic manner. The most striking feature of the literature is the contrast between Gandhi's early years, through his time in South Africa and his later years in India. The contrast is most marked and symbolised in Gandhi's dress and appearance, and the transition from western to Indian attire, and his rejection of colonial status within the empire as an acceptable guarantor of Indian rights. Despite the contrast there are continuities and not least his use of British sources. However, in the present context, the topical literature does demonstrate the importance of Gandhi's years in South Africa for the development of his political thought and techniques. The literature also details the nature of Gandhi's struggle against the imperial authorities in South Africa and later in India. It is this struggle which forms the framework within which Gandhi developed his political thought.

The ideological studies of Gandhi are numerous and varied. One of the most thorough analyses of Gandhi's philosophy is Raghavan Iyer's *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi* (1973). Martin Green's *The Origins of Nonviolence: Tolstoy and Gandhi in their Historical Settings* (1986) is an excellent comparative study. A more recent analysis is found in Bhikhu Parekh's *Gandhi's Political Philosophy: A Critical Examination* (1989). There are illuminating studies of traditional influences on Gandhi, for example, that by S. H. Rudolph and L. I. Rudolph, *Gandhi: The Traditional Roots of Charisma* (1987) and Bhikhu Parekh's, *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform: An Analysis of Gandhi's Political Discourse* (1989). Conversely, an interesting study of western influences is Chandran Devanesen's *The Making of the Mahatma* (1969) which examines the fusion of east and west in Gandhi and his thought. There are also a number

⁴⁶ Ray "Introduction" in *Gandhi, India and the World*, ed. S Ray, 15.

of studies which undertake a Marxist interpretation of Gandhi's ideas, a representative recent example of which is that by Subrata Mukherjee, *Gandhian Thought: Marxist Interpretation* (1991). Finally, another work by B. R. Nanda, *Gandhi and his Critics* (1985) tackles many of the numerous criticisms of Gandhi and his thought.

There are several important features of Gandhi's political thought which emerge from the ideological literature. Firstly, Gandhi's role as a political thinker has been somewhat eclipsed by his role as a politician and he is known primarily for his political techniques: non-violence, non-cooperation and fasting.⁴⁷ This is perhaps justified because, as Dalton states, "Gandhi was not primarily a theorist but a reformer and activist."⁴⁸ Further, as Iyer has noted, Gandhi, "wrote no extensive treatises,[and] devised no definitive theories;" he was "a man of action."⁴⁹ Despite the absence of a definitive exposition there is much material from which Gandhi's thought can be discovered. Secondly, the time Gandhi spent in England has been identified as an important influence. For example, A. L. Basham stated that: "Gandhi's years in England were perhaps the most formative of his life."⁵⁰ Gandhi read widely, often while he was in prison, and his reading included many books by British writers, for example: Carlyle, Ruskin, Bentham, Bacon, Huxley, Adam Smith, Gibbon, Scott, Kipling and Wells.⁵¹ One significant aspect here is that Gandhi read for the first time, in English translation and whilst in England, some of the Hindu classics. Thus his British connection in this sense reinforced the influence of his traditional, Indian connection.⁵² Further, as well as Gandhi's reading many of his writings mention British works and authors. Overall, the ideological material suggests that Gandhi's thought was probably influenced by a number of British sources but few of them have been fully explored.

⁴⁷ Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, 4-11.

⁴⁸ Dalton, *Mahatma Gandhi*, 1.

⁴⁹ See, *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 1, ed. Iyer, 2.

⁵⁰ Basham, "Traditional Influences on the Thought of Mahatma Gandhi," in *Essays on Gandhian Politics*, ed. Kumar, 21.

⁵¹ Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, 15-16. Much of Gandhi's reading was done whilst he was being held in jail in 1907 in South Africa and in 1923 in India.

⁵² The pre-eminent example here was his reading of the English translation of the Bhagavad Gita, *The Song Celestial* by Edwin Arnold whilst a student in London. See, Basham, loc. cit.

Turning to Gandhi's political thought, the most important source is the monumental *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (1958-1989) which fill ninety volumes, plus additional indexes and supplementary material. Most of Gandhi's work was either written in English or if it was translated, it was often under his auspices, and the *Collected Works*, are in English. A more accessible three volume collection of Gandhi's writings, speeches and correspondence is Raghavan Iyer's *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* (1986). There are a number of edited single volume collections which include: Homer Jack's *The Gandhi Reader: A Source of his Life and Writings* (1956); Iyer's abridgement of his earlier collection, *The Essential Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* (1991) and Rudrangshu Mukherjee's *The Penguin Gandhi Reader* (1993). Finally, there are several, earlier, collections worthy of note: *Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi* (1933); *India of my Dreams* (1947) and his speeches whilst in England in 1931 in *The Nation's Voice* (1947). Finally, Louis Fischer's *A Week with Gandhi* (1942) provides a valuable source of Gandhi's ideas towards the end of his life and immediately prior to Indian independence.

Amongst Gandhi's significant works, the most important single item is his booklet 'Indian Home Rule' or *Hind Swaraj* which he wrote in 1909 while returning to South Africa from London. It also confirms the importance of Gandhi's British connection and he began by noting: "I have read much, I have pondered much, during the stay, for four months in London, of the Transvaal Indian deputation."⁵³ In fact Ray goes as far as to state that "*Hind Swaraj* occupies in Gandhism a place possibly even more important than does the *Communist Manifesto* in Marxism."⁵⁴ Brown claims that, for Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* was "the nearest he came to producing a sustained work of political theory."⁵⁵ Finally, for Dalton *Hind Swaraj* was "one of the key writings of his entire career."⁵⁶ *Hind Swaraj* is clearly an important document but it is necessary to mention at this

⁵³ Gandhi, "Hind Swaraj" in *Collected Works* X, 6.

⁵⁴ Ray, "Introduction," in *Gandhi India and the World* ed. Ray, 22.

⁵⁵ Brown, *Gandhi*, 65.

juncture that Gandhi himself noted in the Preface: "If, therefore, my views are proved to be wrong, I shall have no hesitation in rejecting them."⁵⁷ In some sense it may represent an ideal which may or may not be realizable. *Hind Swaraj* therefore constitutes an essential but not sufficient example of Gandhi's political thought.

Another important work is Gandhi's autobiography, *The Story of my Experiments with Truth* (1927-1929). Although it concentrates overly on some of Gandhi's sometimes curious, ideas and health fads at the expense of his political ideas, it does provide much background up to the mid 1920s. Gandhi's *Satyagraha in South Africa* (1928) gives a detailed account of his activities in his early years. Two further works, *Ashram Observances in Action* (1955) and *From Yeravda Mandir: Ashram Observances* (1945), were written in the early 1930s whilst Gandhi was in prison and expand on the nature of his social reformism. Finally, his *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place* (1945) develops more formally these social reformist programmes with which he was associated in the 1930s and 1940s. All of these works can be found in either the *Collected Works* or separate publications. Having identified the major sources of Gandhi's political thought it is worthwhile making a preliminary survey of the varying assessments of his stature as a philosopher and statesman.

Perhaps not surprisingly given his fame, Gandhi's life and work has been variously assessed. Penderel Moon noted that, "Gandhi was both a politician and a saint."⁵⁸ Ernest Barker, who met Gandhi twice in the 1930s, described him as prophet and "a bridge between the East and the West."⁵⁹ Many of the assessments of Gandhi are exceptionally positive. Some of these may be accounted for by the fact that, as Ray observed, "much of the proliferating literature on Gandhi so far has been unfortunately

⁵⁶ Dalton, *Mahatma Gandhi*, 16. Dalton later notes the "considerable limitations" of *Hind Swaraj*: "It is a brief polemical tract more than a logical development of a serious and measured argument." See, *ibid.*, 18.

⁵⁷ Gandhi, "Hind Swaraj" in *The Penguin Gandhi Reader*, ed. Mukerjee, 3-4.

⁵⁸ Moon, *Gandhi and Modern India*, 9.

⁵⁹ Barker, "Gandhi, As Bridge and Reconciler," in *Mahatma Gandhi: Essays and Reflections on his Life and Work* ed. Radhakrishnan, 59 and 61.

hagiographic in approach, written for the converted by the converted.”⁶⁰ The title *Mahatma* is also indicative of the esteem in which he was held during his lifetime.

However, Ray claimed that

part of his success as a political leader Gandhi owed to qualities which are rarely associated with *mahatmas* - shrewdness, punctuality and organizational competence ... a flair for negotiation and drafting of documents, skill in subtly outmanoeuvring his rivals in public life.⁶¹

The lack of more detailed and searching studies has been identified by Mukherjee, who noted: “Critical evaluations of Gandhi’s political philosophy and the social, economic, and political consequences of that philosophy are conspicuous by their absence.”⁶²

The many positive accounts of Gandhi’s saintly and moral qualities have also eclipsed and inhibited the better understanding of his political thought. Iyer contends that:

It is hastily assumed in India and elsewhere that Gandhi’s moral greatness as a man and his remarkable role as a charismatic leader are more crucial than his contribution to moral and political thought.⁶³

However, even Iyer admits that Gandhi was “a daring though not a systematic thinker.”⁶⁴

On this subject Copley holds that “Gandhi was in no sense an academic.”⁶⁵ Mukherjee notes that “[George] Orwell thought that [Gandhi’s] programme was mediaeval and [consequently of] no relevance to a backward and over populated country.”⁶⁶ In this vein the relevance of Gandhi’s rejection of modern civilisation is questioned by Ray who believes that “in the context of our times when every economically underdeveloped country is seeking to industrialize itself as quickly as possible it is unlikely to make much of an impact.”⁶⁷ Another barbed assessment by A. P. Thornton summarizes many of the criticisms: “To this day Gandhi has a legion of admirers, but no disciples.”⁶⁸ It can be concluded from the criticisms such as these that Gandhi did leave a significant body of

⁶⁰ Ray, “Introduction,” in *Gandhi India and the World* ed. Ray, 18.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁶² Mukherjee, *Gandhian Thought*, 1.

⁶³ Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, 4-5.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶⁵ Copley, *Gandhi*, 3.

⁶⁶ Mukherjee, *Gandhian Thought*, 24.

⁶⁷ Ray, “Introduction,” in *Gandhi India and the World* ed. Ray, 22.

⁶⁸ Thornton, “His Life and Our Times: Nehru and the Colonial World,” in *Nehru and the Twentieth Century* ed. Israel, 75.

political thought, which is worthy of closer inspection, but which ought to be considered separately from some of the more hagiographic assessments of his character. One further criticism, which Ronald Terchek discusses, concerns the universal applicability of Gandhi's techniques. Terchek notes that whilst Gandhi's non-violent techniques were ultimately successful against the British there may be situations where they would not be appropriate and this is best illustrated by Gandhi's advocacy of non-violence by the Jews against Nazi Germany.⁶⁹ There are also some rather less charitable criticisms of Gandhi which are worthy of note in the present context.

Not surprisingly the most stinging criticisms of Gandhi came from the communist left in India and the most conservative elements of the British establishment. The Indian communists' most common criticism of Gandhi was that he was an elitist reactionary. For example, M. N. Roy, held that:

Gandhism is the acutest and most desperate manifestation of the forces of reaction, trying to hold their own against the objectively revolutionary tendencies contained in the liberal bourgeois nationalism.⁷⁰

Another communist, R. Palme Dutt, believed: "The propaganda of a primitive economy as a solution for India's problems is reactionary."⁷¹ Subhas Chandra Bose criticized Gandhi's leadership style of seeking to unify diverse interests within India which he felt was "not a source of strength but a source of weakness in political warfare."⁷² The criticisms of Gandhi from the British side constitute some of the most bitter and most notorious. Foremost among those British criticisms are those by Winston Churchill. In a 1931 speech Churchill stated:

It is alarming and also nauseating to see Mr Gandhi, a seditious Middle Temple lawyer, now posing as a fakir of a type well-known in the East, striding half-naked up the steps of the Vice-regal palace while he is organising and conducting a defiant campaign of civil disobedience, to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King-Emperor.⁷³

⁶⁹ Terchek, *Gandhi: Struggling for Autonomy*, 209-213.

⁷⁰ Roy, *India in Transition*, 344.

⁷¹ Dutt, *India To-Day*, 515.

⁷² Bose, *The Indian Struggle 1920-1942*, 295.

⁷³ Churchill, "Conservative Differences on India" February 23, 1931 in *India: Speeches and an Introduction*, 94.

The journal of the penultimate Viceroy, Wavell, also reveals a critical assessment of Gandhi's character and motives. Wavell's journal entry of 30 June 1946 stated:

His one idea for 40 years has been to overthrow British rule and influence and to establish a Hindu raj; and he is as unscrupulous as he is persistent ... he is an exceedingly shrewd, obstinate, domineering, double-tongued, single-minded politician.⁷⁴

Whilst it is true that some of these criticisms can be explained by the personal idiosyncrasies of the individuals concerned they do demonstrate the extremes and depth of feeling concerning Gandhi.

Jawaharlal Nehru

Nehru was the first Prime Minister of India from 1947 until his death in 1964 and founder of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. His life was full of apparent contradictions. He was one of the most passionate opponents of British rule in India but was educated almost wholly in the British style, including Harrow and Cambridge, and subsequently at the Bar. Further, he was also a passionate democrat and became the leader of the world's most populous democracy, but at times advocated a brand of socialism, and sometimes Marxism, which owed much to Soviet influences. It was Nehru's years in captivity that provided him the opportunity to write and his books were very popular in Britain.

There is a vast body of literature on Nehru which examines all aspects of his life and work which can also usefully be divided into the biographical, topical and ideological. There are several biographical works by compatriots. The definitive work in the field, is the three volume study by Sarvepelli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography* (1975). Another thorough biography is B. N. Pandey's *Nehru* (1976). A popular recent work is M. J. Akbar's *Nehru: The Making of India* (1988). There are also a number of works by British authors. Among the most thorough early works are those by Michael Brecher and Michael Edwardes that share the same title, *Nehru: A Political Biography*, the former published in 1959 and the latter in 1971. A succinct recent work is that by the British historian Dennis Judd, *Jawaharlal Nehru* (1993). Finally, Judith Brown's *Nehru* (1999),

⁷⁴ See, Wavell: *The Viceroy's Journal*, ed. Moon, 314.

a biographical sketch for the Longman 'Profiles in Power' series, is an objective recent account of Nehru's life and work.

The wealth of biographical material identifies the various international connections and influences on Nehru's life and work and, in particular, his British connection. English speaking was enforced at home by Nehru's very westernized and anglicized father, Motilal.⁷⁵ Motilal employed tutors who instructed Nehru in the British style prior to his formal schooling.⁷⁶ Nehru was then educated at the quintessential British public school, Harrow, between 1905 and 1907 and studied at Trinity College, Cambridge between 1907 and 1910. At Cambridge, although Nehru took the natural science Tripos, he noted that the people he met all "talked learnedly about books and literature and history and politics and economics."⁷⁷ After Cambridge he studied law at the Inner Temple and was called to the Bar in 1912. Nehru read widely whilst at university and in London, for example, Edwardes, states that whilst at Cambridge Nehru "began to read widely in other fields, in literature, Greek poetry, politics, history and economics."⁷⁸ Of Nehru's early years, Pandey, concludes: "He had been brought up in the best of both Indian and English cultures, had learnt to be at home in but not committed to either."⁷⁹ Following this education it is hardly surprising that Nehru explained in his autobiography that all his "predilections (apart from the political plane) are in favour of England."⁸⁰ Nehru made several other trips to Europe, and in particular Britain, in later life. The trip to Europe in 1926-1927 is widely held to be an important landmark in Nehru's life and especially his political thinking. The primary purpose of the trip was to enable his wife to recuperate in Switzerland. Whilst based in Switzerland he was able to visit many countries in Europe including several trips to Britain, including London and Derbyshire at

⁷⁵ Pandey, *Nehru*, 20-21.

⁷⁶ Edwardes, *Nehru*, 19.

⁷⁷ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 19.

⁷⁸ Edwardes, *Nehru*, 21. For more detail of Nehru's prison reading see Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, vol. 1, 175. It seems that Nehru had access to a wide variety of books and periodicals. A selection of the periodicals of particular interest here includes: *The Statesman*, the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, the *Modern Review*, the *New Statesman*, the *Nation* and the *Spectator*. The authors of interest include: H. G. Wells, Tawney, Leonard Woolf, J. Huxley, and Toynbee.

⁷⁹ Pandey, *Nehru*, 29.

the time of the general strike.⁸¹ During this visit he attended the International Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism, as the representative of the Indian National Congress, in Brussels in February 1927.⁸² Nehru made further trips to Europe, including Britain, in 1935, 1936 and again during the Spanish civil war and the eve of the second world war, in 1938.⁸³ Another striking feature of Nehru's life is the extent to which he moved, intellectually at least, in British socialist circles. For example, J. K. Galbraith, in recalling his association with Nehru in the 1950s and a meeting in 1961, confirmed the influence of Laski, Tawney, Bernard Shaw, the Webbs and the early Labour Party on Nehru."⁸⁴ Whilst this feature is often mentioned it has not been thoroughly explored in connection with his political thought.

There are a number of studies works which can be considered as topical, in that they discuss certain aspects of Nehru's life and work. B. R. Nanda's *The Nehrus* (1962) examines the first forty years of Nehru's life as well as that of his anglicized, father Motilal. There is also a relatively short, but insightful, study of Nehru and his most characteristic policies, such as economic planning, by Hiren Mukerjee, *The Gentle Colossus: A Study of Jawaharlal Nehru* (1964). This study stands out as a fair and balanced assessment of Nehru's life and work despite the author often finding himself in opposition to Nehru, a member of the Communist Party. There are then some collections which place Nehru's life and work in the wider international context, for example, A. B. Shah's *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Critical Tribute* (1965) and Milton Israel's *Nehru and the Twentieth Century* (1991). Another interesting work which falls into the 'topical' category is Tibor Mende's *Conversations with Mr. Nehru* (1956). This series of interviews that Nehru gave with the author during the 1950s contain valuable insight on current issues combined with recollections of early influences. Finally, B. R. Nanda's *Jawaharlal Nehru: Rebel and Statesman* (1995) contains a collection of essays which

⁸⁰ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 419.

⁸¹ Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, vol. 1, 99 and Moraes, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*, 113.

⁸² Judd, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, 16.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 28. See also Brecher, *Nehru*, 209.

discuss various aspects of Nehru's life and work. Of particular relevance are chapters on Nehru's writings, his relationship with Britain and the British and his economic policies. The 'topical' literature illustrates clearly the range of British influences that impacted in Nehru and also the rather contradictory nature of his political thought.

The topical material highlights very well the contrast between Nehru's long struggle against the British authorities in India prior to independence and his British connection. Nehru became increasingly involved in Congress politics and the non-co-operation movement in the early 1920s which eventually placed him before a magistrate where he delivered one of his first important statements. Whilst the statement confirmed Nehru's nationalist orientation it also revealed an interesting facet of his background:

Less than ten years ago I returned from England after a lengthy stay there ... I had imbibed most of the prejudices of Harrow and Cambridge, and in my likes and dislikes I was perhaps more an Englishman than an Indian. ... And so I returned to India as much prejudiced in favour of England and the English as it was possible for an Indian to be.⁸⁵

Moraes relates a poignant example of this which took place in London during the Commonwealth conference in 1952. Moraes noted that "Nehru attended the Old Harrovian dinner and took an impish delight in singing the school song "Forty Years On" in the company of another Old Harrovian, also a Prime Minister, Winston Churchill."⁸⁶ After independence these two adversaries were reconciled and in a letter Churchill wrote to Nehru in 1955 he confessed that, "one of the most agreeable memories of my last years in office is our association."⁸⁷ This relationship, between British conservative and Indian nationalist, demonstrates well the contradictions within Nehru.

The ideological work on Nehru provides evidence of considerable western and particularly British influences on his political thought. A good general study is M. N.

⁸⁴ Galbraith, "A Man of Two Worlds," in *Jawaharlal Nehru: Centenary Volume*, ed. Dikshit et al, 232.

⁸⁵ Nehru, "Articles of Faith" May 17, 1922, in *Important Speeches of Jawaharlal Nehru*, ed., Bright, 30.

⁸⁶ Moraes, *Jawaharlal Nehru - A Biography*, 35.

⁸⁷ Churchill to Nehru, 30 June, 1955 in *Jawaharlal Nehru: Centenary Volume*, ed. Dikshit et al, 680. This can be compared with Churchill's description of Nehru in 1937: "Communist, revolutionary, most capable and most implacable of the enemies of the British connection with India." Churchill quoted in Nanda, *Jawaharlal Nehru: Rebel and Statesman*, 253.

Das's *The Political Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru* (1961) which identifies influences of Gandhi, Russian communism, Marxism and British parliamentary democracy as being of most importance. In the preface to the collection *Studies on Nehru* (1987), V. T. Patil observed that: "The core of his political thought was based on his firm adherence to democracy, individual freedom and socialism."⁸⁸ Perhaps reflecting this potentially contradictory 'core' the more specific 'ideological' material divides broadly between studies of Nehru's socialism and studies of his liberal and democratic ideas. Pratibha Kagalkar's *Nehru - A Study in Indian Socialism* (1992) identifies the Russian and Marxist influences but notes that: "His attachment to individualism and liberalism reinforced by the influence of Gandhi, prevented him from becoming a total convert to Marx."⁸⁹ In the preface to his study, *Socialism of Jawaharlal Nehru* (1981), R. C. Dutt observed that "there is no systematic study of Nehru in his various phases in terms of his socialist thinking."⁹⁰ Neelam Mishra's *The Socialist Orientation of Jawaharlal Nehru* (1989), also identified vacillations in Nehru's political thought which reflected the influences of liberalism and socialism to which he was exposed. Neeraj's *Nehru and Democracy in India* (1972) also identifies phases in his socialism, which reached a zenith in the early 1930s: "This may be regarded as a period when Nehru's intellectual adherence and emotional attachment to socialism was at its peak."⁹¹ Donald Smith's *Nehru and Democracy: The Political Thought of an Asian Democrat* (1958), stated that "his thinking is steeped in Western democratic traditions."⁹² Ganesh Prasad in his study, *Nehru: A Study in Colonial Liberalism* (1976), believes that Nehru's political thought was in essence the manifestation of the British liberal tradition, amended by the Fabians, and adapted to suit the Indian situation. As such, for Prasad, it reflects the fact that Nehru had "imbibed the values and ideals of the British humanist liberal tradition"⁹³

⁸⁸ Patil ed., *Studies on Nehru*, v.

⁸⁹ See, *Nehru - A Study in Indian Socialism*, 50.

⁹⁰ Dutt, *Socialism of Jawaharlal Nehru*, xiv.

⁹¹ Neeraj, *Nehru and Democracy in India*, 16.

⁹² Smith, *Nehru and Democracy*, 3.

⁹³ Prasad, *Nehru: A Study in Colonial Liberalism*, 41.

The ideological work discusses the distinguishing features of Nehru's political thought as well as influences which included the British liberal tradition, Gandhi, Russian communism and Marxism. In addition to these are Nehru's own ideas which often attempted to blend the early liberal and the later socialist influences, explaining why Dutt considered he was "a man who defied classification into an accepted category, such as Fabian Socialist, Social Democrat, Marxist, or Humanist."⁹⁴ Kagalkar believed that: "Fabian methods of reformism, gradual progress and constitutionalism had a permanent impact on Nehru's thought and action" and his "receptive mind imbibed the very spirit of the British liberal tradition."⁹⁵ Dutt noted an essential characteristic of Nehru's thought by referring to its "various phases" of more and less moderate socialism over Nehru's career.⁹⁶ According to Dutt, Nehru saw no conflict between socialism and liberalism and in fact believed that "civil liberty could hardly co-exist with gross economic inequality."⁹⁷ Smith also identified Nehru's British education, his trip to Europe in 1926-1927 and Gandhi's influence, especially in the 1920s, as crucial periods in the development of his political thought.⁹⁸ Whilst a number of British influences are mentioned in the 'ideological' literature, the extent of Nehru's British connection suggests further influences may be uncovered by a more systematic analysis.

Having identified some of the influences and sources of Nehru's thought the latter itself may now be examined. Whilst there is much available material from which to discover Nehru's political thought it does not all lend itself to analysis. For example, although the *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (1984-1994) currently available only cover the period from September 1946 to October 1951 they run to sixteen volumes. Similarly the *Letters to Chief Ministers 1947-1964* (1985-1989) fill five volumes which elucidate Nehru's years as Prime Minister. However, it is often in Nehru's speeches, and especially his addresses to the Indian National Congress, that his political thought can be

⁹⁴ Dutt, op. cit., xv.

⁹⁵ Kagalkar, *Nehru - A Study in Indian Socialism*, 54-55.

⁹⁶ Dutt, op. cit., 27-42.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 168.

⁹⁸ Smith, *Nehru and Democracy*, 39.

found and there are several volumes of speeches which are most helpful in this regard. The first of these was edited by Jagat Bright *Important Speeches of Jawaharlal Nehru*, which contain numerous speeches from his involvement in the nationalist movement between 1922 and 1946. A second is *Indian Independence and Social Revolution* (1984) which contains several of Nehru's most important Presidential Addresses to the Indian National Congress. Finally, the three volume *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches* (1949-1958) covers the period from 1946 to 1957.

Nehru was also a prolific and widely read author prior to Indian independence when prolonged periods of captivity provided ample opportunity for writing. Das describes Nehru's three most important books that contain his "deeper political ideas" as essentially three histories: one of the world, one of India and one of himself.⁹⁹ Interestingly they were all written whilst Nehru was imprisoned by the Government of India. The first of these, his history of the world *Glimpses of World History* (1934-1935), is a series of letters that Nehru wrote to his daughter Indira from prison. Dutt considered that *Glimpses of World History* "was not the work of a professional scholar" but "threw so much light on his contemporary thinking."¹⁰⁰ In particular, Smith noted that it "reflected very clearly his political thinking during the period 1930-1933."¹⁰¹ Nehru's history of himself, his *Autobiography* (1936), was written whilst he was in prison between June 1934 and February 1935. Judd shares the view that much of Nehru's political thought is rather vague and commenting on his *Autobiography* states: "The book is no closely-argued political tract. Rather it reflects the self-doubt, confusion and philosophical uncertainty that characterized much of Jawaharlal's thinking."¹⁰² Nehru's history of India, *The Discovery of India* (1946), contains a lengthy critique of the period of British rule which is placed in the context of Indian history.

As well as these books there are several collections of essays writings and speeches which help to develop Nehru's political thought. *The Unity of India* (1948)

⁹⁹ Das, *The Political Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru*, 10.

¹⁰⁰ Dutt, op. cit., 79 and 71.

¹⁰¹ Smith, *Nehru and Democracy*, 24.

covers the period between 1934 and 1940. Another collection *Whither India* (1933) contains other work, his famous essay of that name and represents an important source of his thought at that time. Pandey believed that this essay “came near to being” Nehru’s “political manifesto.”¹⁰³ Another collection, *India and the World*, (1936), contains further writings and speeches of that important period. An excellent two volume compilation with a helpful commentary which covers the period up to 1950 is Dorothy Norman’s *Nehru: The First Sixty Years* (1965). This study, containing excerpts of much of Nehru’s work, is interspersed with interviews and other biographical material and was compiled with access to many varied sources. Of particular relevance to this thesis, Gopal, who edited a *Jawaharlal Nehru: An Anthology* (1983), notes in the preface that “it was primarily in English that his thoughts were formulated and expressed.”¹⁰⁴ Nehru’s correspondence is also a valuable source and there are several important volumes. Two of these are devoted to the correspondence between Nehru and his daughter Indira Gandhi, and were both edited by her daughter in law, Sonia Gandhi. The first, *Freedom’s Daughter* (1989) covers the period between 1922 and 1939 and the second, *Two Alone, Two Together* (1992) covers the period between 1940 and 1964. Finally, there is one volume of miscellaneous correspondence, *A Bunch of Old Letters* (1958) which ranges over his life and includes letters to and from Bernard Shaw and Harold Laski.

Nehru’s life and work has been variously assessed. Thus it may be asked as Smith did in 1958: “Nehru is a politician and is it possible to determine what a politician really believes about anything?”¹⁰⁵ Smith observed that: “Some of Nehru’s election campaign speeches contain obvious exaggerations, and may be taken with the proverbial grain of salt.”¹⁰⁶ The implication here is the importance of gauging if Nehru’s political thought was more profound than mere rhetoric. However, Smith concluded that it was possible to separate Nehru’s role as a politician from his role as a thinker because his

¹⁰² Judd, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, 26.

¹⁰³ Pandey, *Nehru*, 152.

¹⁰⁴ Gopal ed., *Jawaharlal Nehru: An Anthology*, xv.

¹⁰⁵ Smith, *Nehru and Democracy*, 4.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

statements were often backed by action, he exhibited consistency and frankness, and he avoided expediency. Further, it is possible that a number of British influences have been overlooked as Nehru's thought has been dismissed especially in the many studies that have focused on his record as Prime Minister.

Nehru's stature as a philosopher-statesman and role as bridge traditional and modern, western and particularly British ideas has been variously interpreted. For Arnold Toynbee Nehru was "unquestionably" a great statesman.¹⁰⁷ For Das a special quality of Nehru was that: "Combined thought and action helped him in formulating his ideas and, in a sense, his political philosophy became embodied in his practical experiments."¹⁰⁸ But for M. N. Roy: "Personal attachment to Gandhi precluded his moving in the direction of genuine political greatness and creative leadership."¹⁰⁹ These variations have been attributed, by Patil, to the fact that: "Nehru was a highly complex individual and that explains why different scholars have either showered wholesome praise on his contribution or have criticised him in uncertain terms."¹¹⁰ Neeraj, also draws attention to Nehru's dual role, as philosopher and politician, and observes that Nehru was "a man who was not primarily a political thinker or a philosopher, but a practical statesman and an administrator."¹¹¹ Although Nehru might not have been a political philosopher, and did not consider himself as such, for Gopal he "was one of the most articulate of modern statesman."¹¹² In an interview in 1956, Nehru insisted that he was "not a professional philosopher."¹¹³ This view is shared by Das, who contends that though Nehru was "not a political philosopher in the conventional sense" he did distinguish himself "more or less as a philosopher-politician."¹¹⁴ Kagalkar describes Nehru as "not a systematic thinker, but an intellectual eclectic."¹¹⁵ However, for Kagalkar this eclecticism was a

¹⁰⁷ Toynbee, "Jawaharlal Nehru," in *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Critical Tribute* ed. Shah, 30.

¹⁰⁸ Das, op. cit., 9.

¹⁰⁹ Roy, "Jawaharlal Nehru: An Enigma or a Tragedy?" in *Jawaharlal Nehru* ed. Shah, 37.

¹¹⁰ Patil, *Studies on Nehru*, v.

¹¹¹ Neeraj, *Nehru and Democracy in India*, vii.

¹¹² Gopal ed., *Jawaharlal Nehru*, xv.

¹¹³ Nehru quoted in Mende, *Conversations with Mr. Nehru*, 100.

¹¹⁴ Das, loc. cit.

¹¹⁵ Kagalkar, *Nehru*, 54.

strength: "Nehru's greatest achievement was his adaptation of the western ideas of Socialism to the Indian context."¹¹⁶ This view is echoed by Smith who concludes: "His political theory is essentially eclectic, drawn from diverse intellectual currents of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."¹¹⁷ Whilst acknowledging Nehru's significant contribution to the nationalist movement, Brecher also identifies Nehru's eclecticism but believes it prevented him from making a "systematic effort to integrate them into a consistent personal and political philosophy."¹¹⁸ In more general terms, Norman concludes that, "Nehru emerges as both an outstanding literary figure of our epoch, and as an important political force."¹¹⁹ For Judith Brown, Nehru was "one of the most influential Asian political figures of the twentieth century."¹²⁰

Nehru, more than Gandhi and Sun, had the opportunity following his emergence as Indian Prime Minister at independence, to implement his ideas. Ironically, in light of the recognition that he was primarily a statesman, many of the criticisms of Nehru concern his failure to fully implement his ideas. For example Prashad concludes that Nehru, "had the vision, but without the ruthlessness to implement it."¹²¹ This belief in Nehru's lack of ruthlessness is shared by Mukerjee who concludes that Nehru's "historic failure" was "the failure to achieve change for fear of the price that might have had to be paid."¹²² Brecher concluded his biography by noting that, "one of Nehru's weaknesses as a political leader" was that "the gap between words and deeds was often wide."¹²³ The American author John Gunter summarised Nehru's weakness as a statesman as being because he was "too decent, too honourable to be a good politician. He is a gentleman. Worse, he is an English gentleman."¹²⁴ Interestingly, J. K. Galbraith recalled that Nehru

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 95.

¹¹⁷ Smith, *Nehru and Democracy*, 181.

¹¹⁸ Brecher, *Nehru*, 599.

¹¹⁹ Norman, ed., *Nehru*, vol. 1, xvi.

¹²⁰ Brown, *Nehru*, 1.

¹²¹ Prashad, *Nehru*, 208.

¹²² Mukerjee, *The Gentle Colossus*, 228.

¹²³ Brecher, *Nehru*, 624.

¹²⁴ Gunter quoted in Nanda *Jawaharlal Nehru: Rebel and Statesman*, 262.

had once quipped, that he was “the last Englishman to rule in India.”¹²⁵ In terms of his personal and mass appeal the testimony is predominantly positive. Brecher remarked of Nehru in 1959: “For twenty-five years or more he has been the idol of the Indian masses, second only to Gandhi. They literally adore him, with a vivid affection and hero-worship.”¹²⁶ Pandey observed that

in assessing Nehru’s place in history, statesmen and historians have been influenced more by the personality of Nehru - his ideas, vision and humanity - than by the impact he made on the course of history.¹²⁷

This brief survey of some assessments of Nehru reveals an interesting contradiction. Nehru was both a philosopher and a statesman, but whilst not primarily a philosopher he was thwarted as a statesman in the implementation of his ideas. N. D. Palmer concluded his assessment as follows: “He deserves the major credit for the success of the new Indian state in preserving and operating the system of Parliamentary democracy which was established upon Independence.”¹²⁸ Similarly, Judd concluded that, “Nehru can be credited with the establishment of a strong democratic tradition in India.”¹²⁹ Brecher also concedes that, despite Nehru’s failures in the practical sphere, his contributions to the nationalist movement “form an impressive record, perhaps without peer among political revolutionaries of this century.”¹³⁰ On this more general level Smith concluded that: “Jawaharlal Nehru may justly be regarded as the foremost interpreter of liberal democracy that Asia has produced.”¹³¹ It is evident that Nehru’s interpretation of democracy, which was in part shaped by British influences, has been subject to much debate. The further elaboration of British influences on Nehru will help to provide a better assessment of Nehru and his political thought.

The above survey of the lives and works of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru has revealed several similarities. Firstly, they each possessed a substantial British connection. Second,

¹²⁵ Galbraith quoted in *ibid.*, 263

¹²⁶ Brecher, *Nehru*, 5.

¹²⁷ Pandey, *Nehru*, 438.

¹²⁸ Palmer, “Jawaharlal Nehru and Modern India,” in *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Critical Tribute* ed. Shah, 61.

¹²⁹ Judd, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, 85.

¹³⁰ Brecher, *Nehru*, 619.

they were all in favour of democracy, albeit to varying extents and in different guises. Thirdly, they all played crucial, transitional and guiding roles in the nationalist and independence movement. Fourthly, they can all be considered as political thinkers *and* nationalist leaders, if not philosopher-statesmen, and their stature as such has been variously assessed from the hagiographic to the blatantly critical and dismissive. These similarities make the three of them eminently comparable in terms of the nature and extent of British influences on their political thought.

¹³¹ Smith, *Nehru and Democracy*, 183.

Chapter II

British Political Thought

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the development of the main strands of British political thought which formed an important part of the intellectual background against which Sun, Gandhi and Nehru developed their own ideas. The previous chapter explored their British connections in terms of education, travel, friends and acquaintances. A preliminary survey of their political thought will reveal a number of British sources, which emphasises further the importance of their British connections. The nature of these influences range from the citation of a British author and or work, through reference to an aspect of British political practice, to the more subtle discussion of ideas and concepts which were, or could be attributed to British sources. Since Sun, Gandhi and Nehru were, to varying extents, political thinkers and statesmen the sources to which they were drawn were a complex blend of those from thought and practice. It is therefore necessary to sketch the development of British political thought over the period 1850 to 1950 to provide a framework for this analysis.

The relationship between British political thought and the political thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru is complex. Firstly, British political thought was never a unified and coherent influence; it was both evolving and composed of numerous strands, including liberal, conservative and socialist. Secondly, differences between and within these strands were often magnified in so far as they were applied to, or impacted on, the empire.¹ For example, some liberals were opposed to colonialism², and others emphasised its reformist

¹ It is necessary to note that whilst the differences were evident in the cases of both India and China they were accentuated in India due to the more exclusive and thorough nature of British hegemony.

² They include Richard Cobden (1804-1865) and Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). See, respectively, Greenleaf, *The British Political Tradition*, 36 and Spencer, "The Proper Sphere of Government (1843)" in *Political Writings* ed., Offer, 27-31.

potential.³ Of the latter, those who offered a largely negative assessment of indigenous civilization⁴ can be contrasted with those with a more sympathetic assessment.⁵ Despite the variations between and within the strands of British political thought, the interaction between Britain and its empire provided a number of issues on which some or all of them converged. These included land reform, village government, industrialism and modernisation, the relationship of Britain to its empire, democracy and the concept of manliness. Thirdly, the purpose of, and the reason for, the incorporation and adaptation of ideas from British sources by Sun, Gandhi and Nehru was often quite different to that intended in the original work. Finally, a distinguishing feature, identified in the previous chapter, uniting Sun, Gandhi and Nehru was that they each favoured democracy. However, they often drew together aspects of the strands of British political thought that possessed varying attitudes towards democracy. The remainder of this chapter is divided into three sections, which trace the relevant strands of British liberal, conservative and socialist political thought.

³ They include the utilitarians Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and James Mill (1773-1836) and the whig Thomas Macaulay (1800-1859).

⁴ James Mill and Macaulay fall into this category. According to one commentator: "The liberal view of Indian society found its fullest expression in James Mill's classic *History of British India* [1818]." See, Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj*, 30. Whilst this may be debatable, it certainly contained a damning indictment of Oriental civilization, and Stokes noted: "His astonishing arraignment of the entire populations of India and China shows the fantastic authority which he was prepared to grant to the philosophic intelligence." Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India*, 53. Macaulay is famous for his 1835 Minute on Education in which he claimed "that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia." That said, the British purpose in India should be to "form a class of persons, Indian in blood and color but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect." Macaulay quoted in *Sources of Indian Tradition* comps. de Bary et. al., 597 and 601. Even between Mill and Macaulay, there is a perceptible difference in the nature of their liberalism. Whilst Mill emphasised good government rather than self government, Macaulay did foresee an occasion when India could attain the latter, albeit somewhat distant. Nevertheless they both favoured increased westernization at the expense of the indigenous civilization. This variant of liberalism has been credited with creating the liberal nationalism that emerged in India in the later nineteenth century. For example, McCully analysed the role of education in this process in *English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism*. Suntharalingam discussed this theory, amongst several others that explain the rise of Indian nationalism in *Indian Nationalism: An Historical Analysis*, 31-33.

⁵ The most famous examples are Thomas Munro (1761-1827), John Malcolm (1769-1833) Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779-1859) and Charles Metcalfe (1785-1846). The work of these four Scottish orientalist administrators is described in Stokes, op. cit., 8-25 and Zastoupil, *John Stuart Mill and India*, 59-86. Their orientalist sympathies led them to favour the integration westernization with the indigenous civilization. This variant of liberalism may have fostered the romantic school of Indian nationalism that emphasised indigenous, rather than western, origins.

The Liberal Background

The work of John Stuart Mill (1806-1879) constitutes an important dimension to the development of liberalism in mid-nineteenth century Britain. More specifically, Sun cited Mill in his lectures on democracy and incorporated the concept of a tax on the unearned increment in his lectures on people's livelihood.⁶ In *Principles of Political Economy* (1848) Mill outlined a broadly *laissez faire* model with a number of exceptions for legitimate government activity.⁷ In particular it included his advocacy of land reform and a tax on the unearned increment. In *On Liberty* (1859), Mill sought to establish "the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual" and posited the principle that liberty should only be curtailed "to prevent harm to others."⁸ An important exception that Mill granted was "those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage" where despotism may be "a legitimate mode of government."⁹ In justifying this definition of liberty Mill gave the "warning example" of the Chinese who "have become stationary - have remained so for thousands of years; and if they are ever to be farther improved, it must be by foreigners."¹⁰ Another work that is particularly relevant for its discussion of democracy and India is *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861). Here Mill put forward his arguments for a democratic system, which included universal suffrage, albeit with some important qualifications on voting.¹¹ This work also revealed Mill's support for the educational and reformist potential of Britain's empire conducted via the East India Company (E. I. C.). Remarking on the E. I. C. and its demise, Mill claimed it had produced

an amount of good government ... which is truly wonderful considering the circumstances and the materials, [but] it is probably destined to perish in the general holocaust which the traditions of Indian government seem fated to undergo

⁶ Mill's influence is discussed in the chapters devoted to Sun's democratic and socialist thought.

⁷ "Introduction" in Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, ed., Riley, xxxviii-xliii.

⁸ Mill *On Liberty with The Subjection of Women and Chapters on Socialism*, ed., Collini, 5 and 13.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., 71 and 72.

¹¹ Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, especially chapters VIII-X.

since they have been placed at the mercy of public ignorance and the presumptuous vanity of political men.¹²

In so far as Mill considered the E. I. C. to be the instrument best able to take advantage of evolved institutions, he occupies a position between those liberals who advocated wholesale westernization and those orientalist who favoured indirect rule and a more tempered westernization.¹³

Another important liberal thinker, and one who emphasised a different aspect of the imperial relationship, was the historian Sir John Seeley (1834-1895), who was a liberal unionist, commonly associated with the concept of imperial federation.¹⁴ As such he constitutes a liberal influence and his most popular book, *The Expansion of England* (1885), was familiar to Gandhi.¹⁵ Whilst Seeley's liberalism shared some qualities with Stephen's, and especially an "antipathy toward radicalism,"¹⁶ in regard to the nature of British rule in India and, more particularly, on the issue of imperial federation, Seeley differed from Stephen. Seeley believed that imperial federation would provide an outlet for the reconciliation of the tensions within liberalism and the aspirations of nationalism whilst maintaining the framework of the empire. Seeley argued that the empire was an extension of the English state and denied that India had been conquered by the British by force of arms alone even though he admitted that the relationship between Britain and India had been initiated by war.¹⁷ As evidence Seeley explained that the British had not confiscated native lands, nor had India become a tributary and British rule had been of little material benefit to the British. As additional support for his argument, Seeley cited Queen Victoria's proclamation which demonstrated that Britain did not "at least openly,

¹² See, *ibid.*, 267.

¹³ Lynn Zastoupil has emphasised the subtlety of Mill's position and also the extent, previously overlooked, of the influence that his Indian experience exerted on the development of his political thought. See, Zastoupil, *op. cit.*

¹⁴ Burrow described Seeley as a "Whig historian" and also remarked that: "For Seeley the great lesson to which English history led was Imperial Federation." See, *A Liberal Descent*, 294 and 296. Deborah Wormell remarked on his unionism in *Sir John Seeley and the Uses of History*, 1.

¹⁵ Wormell noted that it had a "vast circulation" and was "profoundly influential," contributing to the "state of enthusiasm for imperial affairs in Britain" at that time. See, *ibid.*, 154-155. In fact, according to Newsome, it was a "best-seller" and over 80,000 copies were sold in the first two years after publication. See, *The Victorian World Picture*, 140. Seeley's influence is discussed in the chapters devoted to Gandhi's nationalist and democratic thought.

¹⁶ Stapleton, "James Fitzjames Stephen," 245.

¹⁷ Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 8 and 181-183.

claim any rights over India” which was presumably another mark of conquest.¹⁸ This aspect of Seeley’s analysis and in particular the rights that it implied Indians had attained was used by Gandhi in support of his campaign against discrimination in South Africa. However, in the course of his argument Seeley denied that India was a unified nation, racially, politically, linguistically or geographically, and only partially in a religious sense.¹⁹ Wormell considered that whilst Seeley denigrated the claims of nationalism he considered that “representative government ... [was] the only practical form of popular rule.”²⁰ Seeley’s liberal unionism and concept of imperial federation sought to preserve the rights of Indians, and the English state, within the framework of the empire. Although Seeley’s liberalism appealed to Gandhi, it did not influence Nehru who favoured the work of the next liberal thinker who possessed another different solution to reconcile liberalism and nationalism.

This liberal influence on Nehru was the work on Italian nationalism of the historian G. M. Trevelyan (1876-1962).²¹ His liberalism implied a slightly different imperial vision to that of Mill and Seeley. Trevelyan’s study of the Italian unification struggle emphasises his belief in national self-determination and opposition to imperialism and despotism.²² For his biographer, Cannadine, the trilogy “provided historical justification for the optimism of the times” appearing at the same time as the Liberal landslide election victory.²³ However, in many ways Trevelyan’s liberalism was being eclipsed by newer developments and Collini considered that his ‘autumnal Whiggism’ was a “survivor from another age.”²⁴ In its simplest form the liberal definition of nationalism held that each nationality was entitled to self-government as a nation state and

¹⁸ Ibid., 183.

¹⁹ Ibid., 221-225.

²⁰ Wormell, op. cit., 147.

²¹ Trevelyan’s Italian trilogy consisted: *Garibaldi’s Defence of the Roman Republic* (1907); *Garibaldi and the Thousand* (1909); and *Garibaldi and the Making of Italy* (1911) Nehru received the first volume as a prize whilst at Harrow and read the subsequent volumes whilst in London. See, *Autobiography*, 19. Trevelyan’s influence is discussed in the chapter devoted to Nehru’s nationalist thought.

²² Cannadine, *G. M. Trevelyan*, 63.

²³ Ibid., 72. Cannadine also noted that the “trilogy established him as the best-selling historian of his generation.” See, *ibid.*, 23.

²⁴ Collini, *English Pasts*, 24.

was allied to many of the values of classical liberalism like individual freedom as well as democracy. As a liberal Trevelyan favoured individual freedom, possessed an optimistic belief in progress and opposed tariff reform.²⁵ Cannadine considered Trevelyan very much in the Whig tradition, supporting constitutional reform and the development of democracy from the Reform Act of 1832.²⁶ Trevelyan was also sympathetic to the Boers in South Africa and worried that Britain had “become another ‘Austria in Italy’ - an oppressive imperialist power.”²⁷ It is these liberal credentials, particularly Trevelyan’s opposition to imperialism, which appealed to the young Nehru. It is likely that Trevelyan’s liberalism contributed much to the foundation of Nehru’s political thought and in particular his nationalism.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century there was a discernible change in the nature of liberalism.²⁸ Initially, in its opposition to monopoly and privilege, liberalism had possessed a negative conception of freedom, as an absence of restraint, but latterly it became a more positive, enabling doctrine. Ultimately this conceptualization was developed by the ‘new liberals’ at the turn of the century, including T. H. Green (1836-1882), L. T. Hobhouse (1864-1929) and J. A. Hobson (1858-1940). Although none of these ‘new liberals’ were cited directly by Sun, Gandhi or Nehru, their support for democracy, opposition to imperialism and the more positive conception of freedom which allowed for increased state action would have appealed to Sun and Nehru at least. However, there are two more direct and obvious new liberal influences on Sun and Gandhi. Firstly, the Liberal statesman and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (1836-1908) provides a practical and relevant example of the changing nature of liberalism at the turn of the century. Campbell-Bannerman’s famous dictum that “good government could never be a substitute for government by the people themselves” was utilised by Gandhi whilst in

²⁵ Cannadine, *G. M. Trevelyan*, 61.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 93-140.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 63.

²⁸ This change has been widely commented upon and placed around 1880. For example, Vincent noted that from the 1870s “social freedoms” became increasingly important. See, *Modern Political Ideologies*, 39. Ernest Barker identified 1880 as the turning point: “Whilst in 1864 orthodoxy meant distrust of the state, and heresy took the form of a belief in paternal government, in 1914 orthodoxy means belief in the State, and heresy takes the form of mild excursions into anarchism.” See, *Political*

South Africa.²⁹ Secondly, the reforms initiated by Campbell-Bannerman culminated in David Lloyd-George's (1863-1945) budget of 1909 and the subsequent constitutional debate that it instigated. Sun was aware of Lloyd-George's budget and the particularly the land reform measures it contained.³⁰ Having examined the relevant liberal influences it is possible to outline the thought of the pertinent conservative critics of liberalism as it developed over the period.

Conservative Critics of Liberalism

There were numerous conservative critics of liberalism and several of these are crucial to the development of the political thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. As well as being important influences in their own right, these conservative critics also discussed a number of issues in common with liberalism, such as the importance of village communities in India, manliness and democracy. Both Gandhi and Nehru were familiar with the work of the essayist and historian Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), although only Gandhi mentioned it in his political thought.³¹ Carlyle is most relevant here for his three volume history, *The French Revolution* (1837), his criticism of utilitarianism in *Signs of the Times* (1829) and *laissez faire* economics in *Chartism* (1839) and finally for the development of the 'Great Man' theory in *Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841).³² Carlyle's discussion of democracy and representative government can best be considered as conservative, even though he has been described as "hovering on the edges of conservative thought."³³ According to Ernest Barker, Carlyle roundly condemned parliamentary government and democracy as "mere palaver and ballot boxes" and was opposed to free trade and excessive individual liberty.³⁴ Further, Carlyle believed that

Thought in England, 23.

²⁹ Campbell-Bannerman made the remark at a speech in Stirling, 23 November 1905.

Campbell-Bannerman's influence is discussed in the chapter devoted to Gandhi's democratic thought.

³⁰ The influence of Lloyd-George's budget is discussed in the chapter devoted to Sun's socialist thought.

³¹ Carlyle's influence is discussed in the chapters devoted to Gandhi's nationalist and socialist thought.

³² These were all read by Gandhi. See, Pandiri, comp., *A Comprehensive Annotated Bibliography on Mahatma Gandhi*.

³³ Vincent, *Modern Political Ideologies*, 75.

³⁴ Ernest Barker, op. cit., 184.

“might was right” and condemned the “fog sham of self-government” in the colonies.³⁵ For Barker, he advocated a Platonic form of government in which justice prevailed and “preached the supremacy of the spirit in an age of materialism.”³⁶ Carlyle’s romantic conservatism possessed a “strong anti-industrial, anti-individualistic strain” and recognised a “natural hierarchy” in society.³⁷ The criticism of democracy and materialist industrial civilisation was utilised by Gandhi in his condemnation of modern civilisation in *Hind Swaraj*. Thus Carlyle would have represented a conservative and western source that criticised modern civilization and one that Gandhi used in support of his own defence of traditional Indian civilization.

Another conservative cited by Gandhi was Sir Henry Sumner Maine (1822-1888) the academic and jurist who was Legal Member of the Viceroy’s Council, 1862-1869.³⁸ In addition to his legal scholarship, Maine was renowned for his opposition to democracy and for his analysis of Indian village communities. It was largely in the latter context that Gandhi’s citation of Maine can be considered and in terms of publications, three works are particularly relevant. The first, *Ancient Law* (1861), became a classic work on jurisprudence and included Maine’s famous theory, that the history of progressive societies was from ‘status to contract.’³⁹ Maine pursued this theory in the second work, *Village Communities in the East and West* (1871), which was cited Gandhi in *Hind Swaraj*.⁴⁰ Finally, *Popular Government* (1885) was an overtly partisan condemnation of democracy, which is relevant because it illustrates the debate surrounding the development of democracy in Britain and contains a discussion of the referendum.⁴¹ The target of

³⁵ Ibid., 185-187.

³⁶ Ibid., 189 and 191.

³⁷ Vincent, op. cit., 61 and 63.

³⁸ Maine’s influence is discussed in the chapter devoted to Gandhi’s democratic thought.

³⁹ The phrase concludes the fifth chapter: “The movement of the progressive societies has hitherto been a movement *from status to contract*.” Maine quoted in Diamond, “Introduction” in *The Victorian Achievement of Sir Henry Maine*, ed., Diamond, 17.

⁴⁰ Gandhi cited Maine’s *Village Communities* as an authority in an appendix. See, *Hind Swaraj*, ed., Parel, 120. It can be presumed that he was referring to Maine’s work *Village-Communities in the East and West*.

⁴¹ *Popular Government* has received a rather mixed reception. For example, Burrow considered that although it was Maine’s “only major essay in political thought” it was “his most disappointing book.” See, *Evolution and Society*, 173. Conversely, Feaver considered that it was “one of the earliest of the truly modern studies of British political institutions.” See, *From Status to Contract*, 240.

much of Maine's criticism was utilitarianism and latterly the association of liberalism with democracy.

Maine's *Village Communities* drew attention to the similarities between historical European village communities and the traditional village communities in India which still existed and had remained largely unaltered. In this way Maine was able to construct an "evolutionary framework" beginning in India and culminating in modern England.⁴² The study included Maine's description of India "divided into a vast number of independent, self-acting, organised social groups."⁴³ For Burrow, Maine sought to demonstrate that individualism and modern civilisation were "not the birthright of mankind" but rather "a precious historical achievement."⁴⁴ As such the evidence provided by the Indian village community was "a valuable resource for beating down Philosophic Radical cocksureness."⁴⁵ Additionally, and subsequently, it demonstrated that village communities "were inherently repressive and stagnant" and could counter radicals and socialists who advocated a change in property relations in the west.⁴⁶ By demonstrating that the Indian village community was an historical antecedent of the British variety he sought to preserve it against radical reformers who wished to disturb the land tenure arrangements, which Maine believed would be destabilising if applied at the incorrect stage of development.⁴⁷ Feaver, in his biography, has stressed that Maine was not against progress but rather considered that India should pass through the feudal stage and not attempt to skip stages.⁴⁸ Thus Maine's research provided evidence which supported his theory, elaborated in *Ancient Law*, that societies progress from status to contract.

⁴² Dewey, "Images of the Village Community," 306.

⁴³ Maine, *Village Communities*, 57.

⁴⁴ Burrow, "'The Village Community' and the uses of history in late nineteenth-century England" in *Historical Perspectives: Studies in English Thought and Society* ed., McKendrick, 273.

⁴⁵ Burrow & Collini, "The clue to the maze: the appeal of the comparative method" in Collini, Winch, Burrow, *That Noble Science of Politics*, 216.

⁴⁶ Burrow, loc. cit.

⁴⁷ See, Bayley "Maine and change in nineteenth-century India" in *The Victorian Achievement of Sir Henry Maine*, ed., Diamond, 390 and Dewey, op. cit., 295.

⁴⁸ Feaver, op. cit., 117.

The concept of a village community appealed to both liberals and conservatives in Britain.⁴⁹ According to Dewey, on the one hand it could be equated with the “theory of English constitutional evolution” where “each little community had been a school of liberty, a training-ground in representative self-government.”⁵⁰ On the other hand, the evidence on communal land holding popularised in Maine’s work on village communities appealed to radicals like Mill.⁵¹ Of course this usurpation of his work was not what Maine intended and Dewey remarked that “once radicals had seized on the village community’s association with collective property as a reason to eulogize it, he reacted sharply, and in effect condemned the village community by association.”⁵² Similarly, Burrow observed that Maine “was incensed to find himself hailed in the press as a ‘prophet of agrarian radicalism.’”⁵³ As well as appealing to both liberals and conservatives in Britain, Maine’s discussion of Indian villages also appealed to Indian nationalists, including Gandhi, who wished to preserve those institutions although for entirely different reasons. Bayley considered that a strain of Indian nationalist thought, and Gandhi’s in particular, was “historicist and conservative.”⁵⁴ This brand of Indian nationalism idealised the Indian village in its quest for a return to an age before foreign conquest and thus Bayley remarked: “Sir Henry Maine and the Mahatma would have agreed, nevertheless, if one could imagine them meeting in the corridors of the Middle Temple, that the Indian village, the caste system and tribal custom should be protected.”⁵⁵ The concept of the idealized Indian village constitutes a traditional Indian source, rediscovered and utilised by British scholarship, which was also used by Indian nationalists like Gandhi.

⁴⁹ It is also necessary to note that later the concept was also popular with a Fabian socialist like Sydney Webb. In 1915 Webb remarked that Indian village government could and should be an important and effective mechanism of local democracy. See, Webb’s preface in Matthai, *Village Government in British India*.

⁵⁰ Dewey, op. cit., 300.

⁵¹ Ibid., 310 and Feaver, op. cit., 120.

⁵² Dewey, op. cit., 310.

⁵³ Burrow, op. cit., 255-256.

⁵⁴ Bayley op. cit., 393. Metcalf also described how “this idealized village was appropriated in turn by India’s nationalists, who saw in these communities evidence of the antiquity of an indigenous concept of democracy.” See, Metcalf op. cit., 72.

⁵⁵ Bayley, op. cit., 393-394. Curiously, although Bayley’s chapter alludes to the similarities between the work of Maine and Gandhi it does not investigate or speculate on Gandhi’s reading of Maine.

At this time another concept that drew various strands of British political thought together was that of manliness. In a recent study of that concept in Victorian political thought Stefan Collini discussed it in the context of the liberalism of Henry Fawcett and J. F. Stephen and associated it with “stoicism and strenuousness.”⁵⁶ Collini identified Spartan habits, self-discipline, patriotism and athleticism including the love of walking as qualities associated with those considered ‘manly.’⁵⁷ Conversely, these qualities can be contrasted with un-Englishness, sentimentalism and effeminacy that were distinctly unmanly. Collini made an interesting observation that manliness may *prima facie* often lend itself to an association with the other notable Victorian concepts of ‘Social Darwinism’ and ‘survival of the fittest.’ However, Collini believed that this was misleading and manliness emphasised struggle with one’s self and one’s weaknesses rather than a struggle between individuals or nations.⁵⁸ Despite that it was undoubtedly true that Gandhi, and other nationalists including Sun, applied a version of manliness to their concept of nationalism. Collini considered that manliness was not exclusively a liberal concept and in “general terms” it was typically associated with

the temper of essentially Romantic cultural critique, uneasy with modernity, suspicious of the reductive tendencies of science, hostile to the soulless reasonings of political economy, a temper whose political expression, where not straightforwardly Tory, veered, by an intelligible affinity, from Carlylean authoritarianism to a Ruskinian or Morrisian Socialism.⁵⁹

Thus in many ways manliness united conservative and liberal strands of political thought in Britain. However, it is in the context of the empire that the concept of manliness came

⁵⁶ Collini, *Public Moralists*, 189. Stapleton has noted that the “‘masculine’ conception of liberty” that Fawcett and Stephen shared emphasised “a hardy, strenuous determination to overcome adversity, but stoical acceptance of defeat.” See, “James Fitzjames Stephen,” 245. Similarly, G. M. Trevelyan also exhibited a manly side. In his biography, Cannadine remarked on Trevelyan’s passion for walking, whom he claims “delighted in tramping long distances in the country,” and records that Trevelyan “once walked from Cambridge to Marble Arch in twelve and three-quarter hours.” See, *G M Trevelyan*, 145-147.

⁵⁷ See, Collini, *Public Moralists*, 185-188. Further work adds dietary and personal health concerns and abstinence from alcohol and tobacco to this list. See, Warren, “Popular manliness: Baden-Powell, scouting and the development of manly character” in *Manliness and Morality*, ed. Mangan & Walvin, 199.

⁵⁸ Collini, *Public Moralists*, 192-193. This is significant given that much of Gandhi’s thought and action, especially as recounted in his autobiography, can be considered as such an inner struggle.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 185-186. Collini did admit that this characterisation was slightly exaggerated for the purpose of his discussion.

to the fore as it sought to explain why the British had been able to establish themselves in India and to justify and ensure their continued presence.

It was as a code of behaviour that manliness spread from the public schools, the armed services and Anglo-Indian officials and became prevalent in Britain and the empire.⁶⁰ It sought to inculcate self-control and self-discipline and nurtured the qualities of bravery, chivalry, athleticism and healthy living more widely, moral courage and stoicism and was opposed to sentimentality, effeminacy and licentiousness. Manliness was used to differentiate the rulers, the manly British, from the ruled, who, in India, were almost invariably unmanly and effeminate and the western educated 'Bengali babus' were singled out for particular disdain.⁶¹ However, the British did not regard all Indian races as being as effeminate as the Bengalis, the martial races of the north west frontier were considered to possess a high degree of manliness and were respected accordingly.⁶² This differentiation also served to divide India further and provide a reason for India's degradation. At best the notion of Indian effeminacy provided a cultural explanation for lack of progress in Indian civilization and at worst it had been the cause of India's decline.⁶³ Conversely, others have attributed a grander goal in the British pursuit of manliness whereby the "imperial mission would reinvigorate the English race and reforge links between individual duty and national destiny."⁶⁴ In sum, the empire was an arena

⁶⁰ See, for example, *Manliness and Morality* ed., Mangan & Walvin. It is necessary to note that this kind of manliness was not confined to imperialists or conservatives. Socialists like Strachey revealed manly qualities. Thomas made the observation that Strachey had a penchant for walking and discussed it in the language of manliness: "In Strachey, muscular Christianity was replaced by athletic communism: he and Celia walked twenty-five miles a day, he played hockey with Joad and his friends on Hampstead Heath and tennis whenever he could." See, *John Strachey*, 145.

⁶¹ This notion was the subject of Mrinalini Sinha's *Colonial Masculinity*. The Webbs also remarked on this phenomenon whilst visiting India. They expressed surprise "at the universal praise of the wild Pathans" who appeared to them to be a "cruel and treacherous" people "apparently of no earthly use in the universe." The explanation they received was that the Pathans were "fine manly fellows" and the British officers appreciated their qualities, thought they made good soldiers and did not claim equality. See, Sidney and Beatrice Webb *Indian Diary* ed., Jayal, 129-130. Somewhat ironically, it was the Bengalis who had embraced the English learning, advocated by Macaulay and others, most thoroughly.

⁶² The explanation for the existence of Indian manliness was also made to fit into broader justifications of the imperial mission. Accordingly, the manly races of the north west had not been subject to the racial degeneration of the southern Indians. See, Metcalf, op. cit., 84 and 104-105.

⁶³ Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity*, 19 and Metcalf op. cit., 106.

⁶⁴ Jonathan Rutherford attributed this sentiment to Seeley and Milner in *Forever England*, 18. According to Feuchtwanger, Milner possessed a "belief in national efficiency and greatness [that] had made him into an ardent imperialist and believer in the world-wide mission of the British race." See, *Democracy and Empire*, 229.

for the development of manliness and the imperial adventure tradition served to bolster popular support for the empire in Britain.⁶⁵ The ‘great game’ played out on the north west frontier was the embodiment of the imperial adventure tradition *par excellence* and was the ultimate testing ground of British manliness.⁶⁶

The doctrine of manliness seems to have had several impacts on Anglo-Indian relations. Firstly, as well as reinforcing British rule it was likely to have undermined the subject peoples. It has been suggested that Indian nationalists expended considerable effort addressing alleged Bengali effeminacy and “the emasculation of the Bengali male.”⁶⁷ Secondly, the doctrine may have been useful to some Indian nationalists who could first explain “India’s decline from a venerable past” and then justify their plans for “the reform and restructuring of contemporary society to revive the glories of the past.”⁶⁸ More specifically, the concept of manliness played an important part in the development of Gandhi’s nationalist thought.⁶⁹ In a different way the concept of manliness may also have impacted on Anglo-Chinese relations and the development of Sun’s political thought. Certainly, China was subjected to the full force of evangelicalism, which was associated with muscular Christianity, and Sun’s nationalism included the need to develop a national masculinity in the face of external threats to China’s territorial integrity.

Another conservative influence on the political thought of Sun and Gandhi was that of the politician and theorist Lord Hugh Cecil (1869-1956).⁷⁰ Cecil was a liberal individualist, and according to Greenleaf he was “a fervent believer in the limited state.”⁷¹ In a wider sense, and in regard to imperial affairs, he was also a passionate unionist and

⁶⁵ The archetypal imperial adventurer was Lawrence of Arabia who embodied all the crucial manly qualities. See Dawson, “The Blond Bedouin: Lawrence of Arabia, imperial adventure and the imagining of English-British masculinity” in *Manful Assertions* ed. Roper and Tosh. John MacKenzie contends that this tradition was prevalent from the late nineteenth century in Britain and continued into the inter-war years. See, *Propaganda and Empire*, 255.

⁶⁶ Metcalf, *op. cit.*, 104.

⁶⁷ Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity*, 21.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁶⁹ This influence is discussed in the chapter devoted to Gandhi’s nationalist thought.

⁷⁰ Cecil’s influence on Sun and Gandhi is discussed in the chapters devoted to their democratic thought.

⁷¹ Greenleaf, *op. cit.*, 228. Freedman claims that Greenleaf’s assessment of the extent of Cecil’s libertarianism was probably “an overstatement.” See, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, 364.

patriot.⁷² In so far as Cecil connected these two strands of his thought and emphasised the relationship between conservatism and liberty, there is a similarity with J. F. Stephen's liberalism.⁷³ Cecil was the first President of the British Constitution Association, founded in 1905 as a defender of the traditional constitution in face of economic, political and social reform, from both conservative and liberal ranks, in such areas as tariff reform and free trade, the House of Lords and Ireland.⁷⁴ Cecil's most important contribution to political thought was his *Conservatism* (1912). Prior to this Cecil had published another volume, *Liberty and Authority* (1910), which was the text of his Presidential address to the Associated Societies of the University of Edinburgh. This volume, and in particular Cecil's definition of liberty, was familiar to both Sun and Gandhi. Additionally, in the context of Cecil's opposition to constitutional reform he was an advocate of civil resistance and the referendum.

Cecil developed his conception of liberty in *Liberty and Authority* and sought to differentiate it from Mill's classic formulation.⁷⁵ Significantly, Cecil criticised Mill's definition because he had exempted "children" and "savage nations;" whereas liberty, for Cecil: "If it be a right, it belongs to man presumably because he is a man."⁷⁶ That said, for Cecil, liberty was not a right in the same way that justice was, but it was a means to an end, that being, "the essential condition of human progress."⁷⁷ In this way he assigned a moral dimension to his definition whereby progress should be toward increased liberty and increased virtue.⁷⁸ He proceeded to denounce attacks on liberty and singled out Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* as a particular example. Cecil also criticised the conception of natural equality, especially that which was existent in France and the United States. His conception of liberty was uniquely English and it reconciled his conservatism, his belief in a uniquely English definition of liberty and emphasised the

⁷² Rodner, "Conservatism, Resistance and Lord Hugh Cecil," 531-532.

⁷³ This similarity was remarked upon by Stapleton. See, James Fitzjames Stephen," 260.

⁷⁴ Greenleaf, op. cit., 281-285.

⁷⁵ Cecil, *Liberty and Authority*, 10-26.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 15. Cecil also took issue with Mill's belief that ancient civilisations like India and China were 'savage.' See, ibid., 14.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 16.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 17-18.

importance of social stability and authority. It is this 'nationalization' of liberty that resembled J. F. Stephen's conception of liberty.⁷⁹ Despite the English nature of Cecil's definition liberty, his explicit rejection of Mill's definition that excluded nations like China and India and also its spiritual dimension would have appealed to Sun and Gandhi.

In *Conservatism* Cecil advocated the referendum and he recognised the irony of so doing; for it was considered a radical and democratic device.⁸⁰ It is relevant here because Sun incorporated the device in his principle of democracy.⁸¹ It is another example of an issue that united strands of British political thought which were otherwise opposed. At the turn of the century, between 1890 and the first world war, the device maintained a high degree of topicality as it was usurped by conservatives like Cecil and Dicey, as well as retaining more traditional support from liberals.⁸² This topicality arrived quite suddenly - according to Dicey, the referendum was not known in England in 1880 - and was to disappear equally rapidly.⁸³ Cecil justified his support of the referendum as being the lessor of two evils, because "the absolute authority of the most vigorous Radical partisans in the country is a much greater danger to Conservatism than any appeal to the people."⁸⁴ In any event he anticipated that it would provide a bulwark against potentially harmful reforms of the ancient constitution by deferring to the "English people," whom Cecil believed had "a strong leaning towards Conservatism."⁸⁵ Rodner, commenting on the novelty of Cecil's advocacy of the device, noted that he recommended its use for important issues such as constitutional change and home rule, as a way of "bypassing the powerful, all-too-partisan House of Commons."⁸⁶ Whilst conservatives like Cecil and

⁷⁹ Stapleton, "James Fitzjames Stephen," 259-260.

⁸⁰ Cecil, *Conservatism*, 238.

⁸¹ This influence is discussed in the chapter devoted to Sun's democratic thought.

⁸² Meadowcroft and Taylor, "Liberalism and the Referendum in British Political Thought 1890-1914," 36. Somewhat curiously, given Cecil's notoriety during this period, they do not mention his advocacy of the referendum. Rodner discusses Cecil's advocacy of the referendum in the context of his opposition to Irish home rule and constitutional reform in "Conservatism, Resistance and Lord Hugh Cecil," 536.

⁸³ Dicey, "The Referendum and Its Critics," 538. In 1885 Maine had included a brief description of the device and its operation in Switzerland in *Popular Government*, 111-122. Lecky also provided an extensive discussion of the device and its application in Switzerland, USA and Australia in *Democracy and Liberty*, vol. I, 229-243.

⁸⁴ Cecil, *Conservatism*, 238.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Rodner, op. cit., 536.

Dicey⁸⁷ could justify such a democratic device and Lecky considered that it had “promise” for major constitutional issues even it would be difficult to administer in a large country like Britain, others could not. For example, Lord Curzon rejected the referendum’s innovative and untraditional nature and Maine attacked it on similar grounds to his criticism of democracy, as “an appeal from knowledge to ignorance.”⁸⁸ Conversely, and less surprisingly, the device was also supported by liberals like Hobson who believed it would provide “a positive form of popular self-expression” and overcome institutional resistance to social reform.⁸⁹ Amongst socialists it was widely opposed for numerous reasons, and according to Dicey they provided “the most vehement of all attacks on the Referendum.”⁹⁰ For example, Ramsay MacDonald regarded it as being a wholly negative and oppositional and apt to “generate outcomes favourable to the *status quo*,” whilst the Fabians considered it to be against the principles of representative government and “would undermine the authority of parliament.”⁹¹ The controversy over the referendum at the turn of the century propelled it to the fore of political debate. To an observer like Sun it would have appeared a democratic device that could be used for good or ill depending on one’s assessment of the relative capacity of the electorate and Parliament.

Although Cecil’s civil resistance was certainly not passive - he and his friends were referred to as “Hughligans” after the 1911 crisis - it was non-violent, and ethically inspired.⁹² The latter quality may well have been noted by Gandhi and at least would have

⁸⁷ Dicey was the foremost conservative advocate of the referendum according to Meadowcroft and Taylor, *op. cit.*, 38-43.

⁸⁸ Meadowcroft and Taylor highlight Curzon as representative of conservative opposition to the referendum. See, *ibid.* 46. In his appraisal of the device and its critics, Dicey discussed Maine’s objection and dismissed it as largely “irrelevant.” See, “The Referendum and Its Critics,” 546. Maine’s criticism is found in his discussion of democracy in *Popular Government*, 111-122.

⁸⁹ Meadowcroft and Taylor, *op. cit.*, 38-43.

⁹⁰ Dicey, “The Referendum and Its Critics,” 551.

⁹¹ Meadowcroft and Taylor, *op. cit.*, 47 and 48. Clifford Sharp put the Fabian case against the device in a 1911 tract. He elaborated on the role of well informed representatives passing laws that were initially unpopular but became popular once they had been established. However, he did concede that the device might not necessarily be conservative because some measures like “land taxes, supertaxes, [and] heavy death duties” would possess “unquestionable popularity.” He also admitted that the device may be advantageous where “the unit of government is small and the population homogenous in character.” See, “The Case Against the Referendum” *Fabian Tract* 155, 17-19.

⁹² Greenleaf, *op. cit.*, 288. According to Greenleaf, “rooted in a biblicizing form of Anglicanism.” Cecil’s non-violence may also have appealed to Gandhi. There is an interesting contrast

appealed to him. Most famously, Cecil utilised such techniques against the proposed reform of the House of Lords during the passage of the 1911 Parliament Act, culminating in the 'Cecil scene' as he attempted to interrupt debate in the House.⁹³ The immediate cause of this particular tactic was constitutional reform that had been necessitated by the Lords opposition to the 1909 budget.⁹⁴ Later, similar tactics were employed by Cecil's followers during debates over home rule.⁹⁵ On this issue, Rodner observed that "Cecil took care also to distinguish between resistance and revolution;" the former was justified whilst the later was not.⁹⁶ Thus, by placing "the Irish Nationalists as very much [part] of the unwholesome tradition of 1789," Cecil was able to oppose home rule and claim that "the Government was not only risking a 'violent crisis' in Ireland but also was forcing Englishmen of conscience, like himself, to stand by Ulster."⁹⁷ In *Conservatism*, Cecil rejected the liberal nationalism that claimed Ireland should be independent because "Ireland and England are different nationalities."⁹⁸ Thus although many of Cecil's aims concerning nationalism were peculiar to him many of his methods would have appealed to Gandhi.

British Socialist Thought

As well as the conservative critics, the development of liberalism in the nineteenth century was also challenged by socialist thinkers. It is the growing body of socialist thought around the turn of the century that provides a number of potential and actual sources of influence on the political thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. The writer and art critic John Ruskin (1819-1900) constituted a significant influence on the development of Gandhi's political thought.⁹⁹ According to Ernest Barker, Ruskin was not a socialist because he "did not believe in the democratic control of economic life" but he did

between Gandhi and Cecil on this matter concerning their views on the first world war. Cecil supported conscientious objectors whilst Gandhi trained with and organised an Indian volunteer medical corps.

⁹³ Rodner, op. cit., 537.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 535.

⁹⁵ Rodner remarked that Cecil was absent, through illness, on the occasion when Churchill was struck on "the head from a book thrown by one highly irate Unionist." Although Cecil condemned the violence "he did defend the principle of interrupting speakers." Cecil also contrasted his tactics with the more violent and militant actions of the women's suffrage movement. See, ibid., 544 and 540.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 540.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 541 and 542.

⁹⁸ Cecil, *Conservatism*, 240.

possess a “passion for social justice” and “in many ways prepared the ground for Socialism.”¹⁰⁰ Ruskin was a prolific author and many of his works were read by Gandhi; for example, *A Joy for Ever* (1857) and *Unto this Last* (1866) were cited in an appendix to *Hind Swaraj*.¹⁰¹ In *A Joy for Ever*, Ruskin advocated “State-education, State-employment, and State provision for the old age of the labourer.”¹⁰² *Unto this Last*, the title of which was taken from the parable of the vineyard, provided a critique of the market in favour of more just arrangements.¹⁰³ For Ernest Barker the essay envisaged a greater role for the state and the contention that: “Laissez-faire must disappear at the window, and a wise paternalism enter at the door.”¹⁰⁴ Elsewhere, Ruskin held that “the condition of England was a matter of more vital concern than constituencies and ballot-boxes.”¹⁰⁵ In sum, Ruskin provided a critique of the dominant political economy of the nineteenth century. He is representative of the anti-industrial strand of British socialist thought, and of British political thought in general, and shares much with Carlyle in this respect. As such his socialism is in stark contrast to that of the next important socialist influence which did not share his anti-industrialism.

The Fabian Society was founded in 1884 with the object of transforming society in a socialist direction. The decision to take the name of the Roman emperor Fabius indicated the method by which they would achieve socialism in Britain: gradually, but firmly. The centrality of land reform in Sun’s thought and Nehru’s penchant for state inspired socialist economic development that veered toward the Soviet model, owes much to Fabianism and the work of the Webbs.¹⁰⁶ They were, in contrast to many of the continental European socialists and other British socialists, non-revolutionary. Their motto, which appeared in Tract Eight, declared:

⁹⁹ Ruskin’s influence is discussed in the chapter devoted to Gandhi’s socialist thought.

¹⁰⁰ Ernest Barker, op. cit., 190-195.

¹⁰¹ Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, Parel ed., 120.

¹⁰² Ernest Barker, op. cit., 192.

¹⁰³ Wilmer ed., in *Unto this Last and Other Writings*, 157-158.

¹⁰⁴ Ernest Barker, op. cit., 193.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 194.

¹⁰⁶ Fabian influence on Sun and Nehru is discussed in the chapters devoted to their socialist and democratic thought.

For the right moment you must wait, as Fabius did, most patiently, when warring against Hannibal, though many censured his delays: but when the time comes you must strike hard, as Fabius did, or your waiting will be in vain, and fruitless.¹⁰⁷

Following from their gradualism, the Fabians sought peaceful means to achieve their goals, including persuasion, education and permeation.¹⁰⁸ In practice this meant that:

For the attainment of these ends [a socialist state] the Fabian Society looks to the spread of Socialist opinions, and the social and political changes consequent thereon. It seeks to promote these by the general dissemination of knowledge as to the relation between the individual and Society in its economic, ethical, and political aspects.¹⁰⁹

The Fabian Society produced *The Fabian Essays in Socialism* (1889) and a number of tracts on such topics as land reform and taxation and municipal socialism. The founder members were generally bourgeois, middle-class civil servants who envisaged themselves providing “wise and authoritative direction from above.”¹¹⁰ Their policies were collectivist and advocated the public regulation and ownership of the basic industries in order to improve efficiency and reduce inequality.¹¹¹

In terms of intellectual inspiration the Fabians owed more to Mill than Marx; Sydney Webb (1859-1947) and Beatrice Webb (1858-1943), for example, favoured a policy of ‘permeation’ whereby existing elites were used to introduce Fabian policies.¹¹² To this end they established the London School of Economics (L. S. E.) to become the training ground of administrators who would implement Fabian policies.¹¹³ The stress on elitism and efficiency tended to lead to an ambivalence towards democracy and, on Beatrice’s part, towards female emancipation.¹¹⁴ In international affairs their elitism fostered “the general Fabian view of the cultural and intellectual superiority of their class

¹⁰⁷ “Facts for Londoners,” *Fabian Tract No. 8*, 2. Cole claims that the motto was alleged to be a prose quotation but was in fact invented by a founder member of the society, Frank Podmore. See, *A History of Socialist Thought* vol. 3, part 1, *The Second International 1889-1914*, 106.

¹⁰⁸ Nolan, *The Political Theory of Beatrice Webb*, 18.

¹⁰⁹ “The True Radical Programme,” *Fabian Tract No. 6*, 10.

¹¹⁰ Greenleaf, op. cit., 359. The *Fabian Essays* included contributions from Sidney Webb, George Bernard Shaw, William Clarke, Sydney Olivier and Annie Besant. Noteworthy, other members included Harold Laski, R. H. Tawney and Bertrand Russell.

¹¹¹ Greenleaf, op. cit., 374.

¹¹² Ibid., 373 and 401.

¹¹³ Ibid., 402.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 369. Beatrice Webb was initially, in 1889, against women’s suffrage because she “had never ... suffered the disabilities assumed to arise from [her] sex.” However, by 1906 she had changed her mind and gave her support to the campaign. See, *Our Partnership*, 360-363.

at home and of the white race abroad.”¹¹⁵ In summary they tended to favour good government over self-government and according to Greenleaf: “It was easy and natural for such people to assume the need for both domestic and colonial tutelage.”¹¹⁶ For example, the Society was split over attitudes toward the Boer conflict.¹¹⁷ The Webbs visited the far east, including India and China in 1911-1912 and their diary, which records their impression, reflects the qualities discussed above.¹¹⁸ Greenleaf noted that after the ‘failure’ of the two minority Labour governments: “Mrs Webb expressed doubt about the inevitability of gradualness and the possibility of the peaceful transformation of capitalism.”¹¹⁹ The Webbs visited the Soviet Union and were impressed by what they found and recorded their assessment in *Soviet Communism* (1937).¹²⁰ The involvement of George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) in the Fabian Society did much to project the society to the forefront of the British socialist movement. Shaw typified the Fabian hauteur, and according to Rodney Barker: “A degree of impatience with the ignorance and stupidity of ordinary humanity had always been a part of Shaw’s view of politics.”¹²¹ Nehru was familiar with Shaw and his work and Gandhi met him whilst attending the Round Table Conference in London.¹²² Given the nature of mainstream Fabianism, and

¹¹⁵ Greenleaf, op. cit., 368.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. For example, Francis Lee’s study of Sydney Olivier’s thought provides evidence of the sometimes ambiguous relationship between Fabianism and the empire. See, *Fabianism and Colonialism*.

¹¹⁷ Beatrice Webb reported that the majority of the Society, including Sidney Webb, supported the British Empire but there were a number of pro-Boers, including Ramsay MacDonald. See, *Our Partnership*, 191-193. According to Jayal, for Beatrice, the Boer War “represented a blow to the ‘ruling race’ in so far as it demonstrated the superiority of the Boers.” See, Jayal, “Introduction” in Sidney and Beatrice Webb *Indian Diary* ed., Jayal, xli.

¹¹⁸ It is interesting to note the numerous references to the quality of the civil servants they encountered in India. Their comments included references such as: “almost ideal as an administrator over an alien race;” another was, “a competent and careful executive officer” and another was “as successful in administration as he was in sport.” The diary also reveals the Webbian sense of superiority “of the more advanced European communities,” their dislike of the Chinese because they have a “lack of capacity for the scientific method.” They did record a faint sympathy for the cause of Indian nationalism in their expressed hope of “making them party to the Government of India” in which case the “British race might pride themselves on having been the finest race of school masters, as well as the most perfect builders of an Empire.” Sidney and Beatrice Webb *Indian Diary* ed., Jayal, 49, 46, 52 and 211-214 respectively.

¹¹⁹ Greenleaf, op. cit., 404.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 406. Even John Strachey was critical of the lack of objectivity regarding the Soviet Union in this volume. See, ibid., 408.

¹²¹ Rodney Barker, *Political Ideas in Modern Britain*, 44. For an analysis of Shaw’s socialism and activities in the Fabian Society see, Alick West, “A Good Man Fallen Among Fabians” and Harry Morrison, *The Socialism of Bernard Shaw*.

¹²² Shaw’s influence is discussed in the chapter devoted to Nehru’s socialist thought.

especially that of the Webbs and Shaw, there was little in it that would appeal to Gandhi, although Nehru was much taken with mainstream Fabianism. However, there was one member of the Fabian Society, albeit a marginal one, who did influence Gandhi.

The work of the writer Edward Carpenter (1844-1929) is representative of the ethical, individualist and social reformist brand of socialism and is an important influence on Gandhi. Carpenter shared much of Ruskin and Carlyle's critique of modern industrial society. Gandhi cited Carpenter's *Civilization, Its Cause and Cure* (1889) in an appendix to *Hind Swaraj*.¹²³ Following his education and ordination at Cambridge, Carpenter abandoned an academic career, in favour, according to Pierson, of "farm work, sandal making, writing, and lecture tours."¹²⁴ Although his socialism was ethical, idealistic and almost anarchistic he was a member of the Fabian Society and never completely rejected state action.¹²⁵ It was Carpenter's criticism of modern civilisation that was particularly poignant for the development of Gandhi's socialist thought. Carpenter connected the growth of modern civilisation to the emergence of an economic system based on property ownership and the development of democracy. As this civilisation developed society passes through the Feudal age into the Commercial Age in which he identified the "democracy of Carlyle" where: "Parliaments and Constitutions and general Palaver are the order of the day."¹²⁶ In this way Carpenter could criticise the "false democracy" developed in the west and instead advocated an alternative "true Democracy ... which is not an external government at all, but an inward rule - the rule of the mass - Man in each

¹²³ Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, ed., Parel 120. Carpenter's influence is discussed in the chapters devoted to Gandhi's democratic and socialist thought.

¹²⁴ Pierson, "Edward Carpenter," 302 and 322. Carpenter also became a vegetarian. In fact he probably falls into the category of 'cranks' that Orwell described as often associated with socialism that included the "fruit-juice drinker, nudist, sandal-wearer, sex-maniac, Quaker, 'Nature Cure' quack, pacifist and feminist." See, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, 161.

¹²⁵ Marie-Francoise Cachin, "Non-governmental Society: Edward Carpenter's Position in the British Socialist Movement" in *Edward Carpenter and Late Victorian Radicalism*, ed., Brown, 67. Carpenter's position in the Fabian Society was however rather anomalous. He gave a lecture on civilisation in 1889, which was to become the substance of his essay of the same name, which was not received enthusiastically, by those present including Shaw and Bland. According to Chushichi Tsuzuki, "the Fabian reception made it clear that he was somewhat estranged from the main current of British Socialism which believed in civilisation and its continual progress into Socialism." See, *Edward Carpenter 1844-1929*, 79-80.

¹²⁶ Carpenter, *Civilisation, Its Cause and Cure*, 55.

unit - man.”¹²⁷ Carpenter’s assessment of civilisation led him to withdraw from society and from direct political action and concentrate on reform through education avoiding class war and revolution.¹²⁸ Carpenter’s ethical socialist idealism also places him close to the position of Christian socialism and according to Pierson, he “retained much of the traditional religious imagery.”¹²⁹ It is likely that this spiritual dimension may also have appealed to Gandhi.

In the early decades of the twentieth century there were a number of developments in British socialist thought which appear to have particularly influenced the political thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. However there are several important factors which complicate the relationship. Firstly, although some socialist thinkers were democrats and others became so, many were at best ambivalent in their support of democracy, especially during the 1930s. Secondly, socialist attitudes to nationalism were equally ambivalent. This is because one strain of socialist thought rejected the concept of nationalism as being an obstacle to the internationalism demanded by socialism. In contrast there was a significant elitist socialist element which supported the concept of trusteeship for less developed nations whilst they developed sufficiently for self-government. Both of these strains found nationalism to be unhelpful. Similarly both broadly agreed on the desirability and superiority of western civilization and were reluctant to champion an oriental alternative. On the other hand most socialists were opposed to imperialism and particularly the economic exploitation associated with it. Finally, almost by definition, all shades of socialist thought were anxious for economic reform and equality.

There is one British socialist source of influence, exclusive to Sun, which demonstrates these various and conflicting currents particularly well. This is the philosopher and essayist Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) who was initially a liberal, with convincing credentials, although his liberalism has been described as aristocratic, but

¹²⁷ Ibid., 57.

¹²⁸ Pierson, “Edward Carpenter,” 310.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 318. In this sense Pierson goes on to observe that Carpenter “appealed directly to the strong vein of moral sentimentality which pervaded so much of late Victorian life.” This sentimentality can be contrasted with the concept of manliness to which it was opposed.

ended up as a socialist.¹³⁰ It was whilst Russell was in China in 1921 that Sun became aware of him and therefore it is Russell's work published around those years that is most relevant.¹³¹ At that time a recent biographer has emphasised that Russell's "political and economic views were well known in China through translations of *Roads to Freedom*, *The Problems of Philosophy* and *Principles of Social Reconstruction*."¹³² In particular, *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (1916) and *Roads to Freedom* (1918) emphasise his support for guild socialism.¹³³ In the Chinese context, according to Moorehead: "Russell's rejection of syndicalism and state socialism, and his belief in guild socialism ... struck ... [the Chinese reformers] as valuable, even though he had not been thinking of China when he advocated them."¹³⁴ On Russell's return he published *The Problem of China* (1922) where he recommended that China "should try to follow an evolutionary model, and not the rapid Bolshevik one."¹³⁵ It also "expressed his growing fears about industrial civilisation, which he emphasised would spoil the important things in life."¹³⁶

¹³⁰ Richard Wollheim noted that Russell's Godfather was J. S. Mill. See, "Bertrand Russell and the Liberal Tradition" in *Bertrand Russell: Critical Assessments*, vol. IV, *History of Philosophy, Ethics, Education, Religion and Politics* ed., Irvine, 98. Philip Ironside discussed Russell's aristocratic liberalism in *The Social and Political Thought of Bertrand Russell*.

¹³¹ Russell's influence is discussed in the chapter devoted to Sun's nationalist thought.

¹³² See, Moorehead, *Bertrand Russell*, 324. Moorehead also noted that: "Such was his renown that his picture was soon to be seen on advertisements for cigarettes." See, *ibid.*, 325.

¹³³ A. J. Ayer, remarked on this in "Bertrand Russell as a Philosopher" in *Bertrand Russell: Critical Assessments*, vol. I, *Life, Work and Influence*, ed., Irvine 83. Ayer also noted that Russell's guild socialism was opposed to state collectivism. Ironside remarked on Russell's support for guild socialism and opposition to collectivism, which he arrived at having passed through a Fabian phase in the 1890s. See, Ironside, *op. cit.*, 5 and 146. Although Russell was opposed to collectivism, he did become a member of the Fabian Society. However, Beatrice Webb remarked that Russell only became a member because he felt he had to be a member of a party. See, *Our Partnership*, 216. According to Vincent, guild socialism, included a "strong anti-state and pluralist" dimension. See, Vincent, *op. cit.*, 107. The pluralist dimension emphasised the importance of small groups operating between the individual and the state. For Greenleaf: "The pluralists maintained, therefore, that the isolated individual did not exist in reality; nor did the concept of state sovereignty have any intrinsic being. It was not in 'a sand-heap' of undifferentiated individuals unrelated except to the state, but only in an 'ascending hierarchy of groups' that the personality could grow and flourish, that is, be free." The analogy of the sand heap, on which Greenleaf quotes J. N. Figgis, is interesting given Sun's use of a similar metaphor in describing the Chinese. This is discussed further in chapter devoted to Sun's nationalist thought. A further dimension of the guild movement was the incorporation of "the aesthetic or romanticist criticisms of capitalism associated with such writers as Carlyle, Morris, and Ruskin." Therefore, the movement sought "to emancipate man from being a drudge to the machine, and to restore proper ideals of craftsmanship." This objective would certainly have resonated with Gandhi and provides a link with the work of Ruskin and Carlyle with which he was familiar. The movement included Bertrand Russell and R. H. Tawney. See, Greenleaf, *op. cit.*, 419-425. The guild movement thus seems to bring together many relevant influences, especially those referred to by Sun and Gandhi.

¹³⁴ Moorehead, *Bertrand Russell*, 324.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 331.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 332.

Ironside remarked that, "Russell regarded his visit as affording an opportunity to witness liberalism as yet untrammelled by Collectivist accretions."¹³⁷ Russell recorded his views on the Soviet Union in *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* (1920) and was unimpressed by his experience, and according to Kilminster, "Russell came back utterly dispirited at the tyrannical bureaucracy."¹³⁸ Ayer also noted Russell's "hostility to Soviet Communism" in that work.¹³⁹ Finally, in *The Prospects of Industrial Civilization* (1923), Russell - as Moorehead stated - concluded "that liberalism was obsolete and had no power to check the growth of capitalism."¹⁴⁰ Therefore, for Russell, there was a "need for world government to enforce world peace."¹⁴¹ Despite these concerns with the development of liberalism and capitalism, and the potentially anti-democratic implications of his ideas, the balance of his work led one observer to position Russell as a democrat.¹⁴² As a democrat with a sympathetic assessment of Chinese civilization and supportive of Chinese nationalism, Russell would certainly have appealed to Sun. However, the ambiguity of Russell's nationalism and democracy illustrates well the tensions within socialist thought at this time.

There is another socialist influence, in this case on Nehru, more relevant for his criticism of capitalism than his attitude toward democracy or nationalism. This is the work of the historian R. H. Tawney (1880-1962) who is most commonly associated with Christian socialism and since his work was cited by Nehru he represents an important influence from that strain of British socialist thought.¹⁴³ Tawney's socialism stressed the "equality of souls before God."¹⁴⁴ Greenleaf summarised Tawney's attack on the moral

¹³⁷ Ironside, op. cit. 157.

¹³⁸ Kilminster, *Russell*, 229. According to Moorehead *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* "was a bitter attack on the methods used by the Bolsheviks to force through the transition from capitalism to socialism." See, *Bertrand Russell*, 319. Ironside also noted the "bleak perspective" this work offered and quoted a passage from a letter in which Russell described Russia as "an asylum of homicidal lunatics." Russell quoted in Ironside, op. cit., 146-147.

¹³⁹ Ayer, "Bertrand Russell as a Philosopher," 83.

¹⁴⁰ See, Moorehead, *Bertrand Russell*, 352-353.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Wollheim, "Bertrand Russell and the Liberal Tradition," 106.

¹⁴³ Tawney became a Professor at the LSE and was a member of the Fabian Society. It is worth noting that Tawney was born in India and travelled to China and wrote a book on that subject: *Land and Labour in China* (1932). See, Greenleaf, op. cit., 440-441. Tawney's influence is discussed in the chapter devoted to Nehru's socialist thought.

¹⁴⁴ Vincent, op. cit., 102.

deficiency of capitalism as follows: "It fixes men's minds not on restrictive social obligations but on their right to pursue their own self-interest, thus offering great scope for money-making and free play to one of the most powerful human instincts."¹⁴⁵

Tawney developed these arguments in several works. In *The Acquisitive Society* (1920), Tawney shifted his analysis from "sin and morality" to one of "modern economic and social history."¹⁴⁶ In *Equality* (1931), Rodney Barker has observed that Tawney attacked "the British class system" and considered that Tawney's "rejection of the valuations of the industrial market" placed him in the tradition of Ruskin.¹⁴⁷ According to Greenleaf, Tawney considered that, "Socialism must be a doctrine founded on a sense of the need for moral regeneration in the individual and thereby on the radical reconstruction of human relationships."¹⁴⁸ In this sense Tawney's Christian socialism was part of the spiritual and ethical dimension of British socialist thought. Discussing this dimension, Greenleaf associated it with William Booth (1829-1912), Cardinal Henry Edward Manning (1808-1892), Bishop Charles Gore (1853-1932) and Archbishop William Temple (1881-1944) and with nonconformity in general.¹⁴⁹ Gandhi was exposed to numerous similar influences, particularly during his time in London as a student and in South Africa. However, whilst there is much that would appeal to Gandhi in Tawney's socialism, and many similarities, although there is no evidence that he was familiar with his work. Tawney's critique of capitalism would also have appealed to Nehru although probably not for the same reasons, given Nehru's secularism.

A more direct influence on Gandhi and Nehru, however, was the theosophist and politician Annie Besant (1847-1933). Gandhi met her whilst a student in London and she also inducted the thirteen year old Nehru into the Theosophical Society.¹⁵⁰ She was also a member of the Fabian Society and a contributor to the original *Fabian Essays in*

¹⁴⁵ Greenleaf, op. cit., 452-453.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 449.

¹⁴⁷ Rodney Barker, op. cit., 150-151. According to Barker, Tawney held: "Individual rights without any corresponding duties were ... no more than one-sided privileges."

¹⁴⁸ Greenleaf, op. cit., 447-448.

¹⁴⁹ See, Greenleaf, op. cit., 352.

¹⁵⁰ Besant's influence is discussed in the chapters devoted to Gandhi's socialist thought and Nehru's nationalist thought.

*Socialism*¹⁵¹ but is perhaps more famous as the first woman President of the Indian National Congress (1918) and for her work for Indian home rule. For Kumar, Besant's theosophy led her to support an Indian nationalism that recognised India's spiritual character and thus she advocated a "religious, social, economic and national revival."¹⁵² A recent study by Bevir has demonstrated that Besant emphasised the debilitating effects of British imperialism that suppressed India's spirituality and denied Indian self-government.¹⁵³ According to Kumar, Besant favoured moderate means and also "believed the friendship of India and England was indispensable" as part of her wider theosophical vision of a world empire based on universal brotherhood.¹⁵⁴ For Bevir, Besant believed that British imperialism, by introducing individualist Christianity, had destroyed the traditional "Aryan polity" and therefore, Indian nationalists should seek "to restore their pride in their Aryan heritage, to inspire them to remodel their lives in accord with Aryan ideals and Aryan customs."¹⁵⁵ Besant believed that the British had not conquered India by force but by duplicitous dealings, the imposition of a destructive ideology and the rejection of the traditional culture, which had left "Indians with no self-respect."¹⁵⁶ In this way Bevir has suggested that Besant's theosophy did much to provide resources to undermine the ruling British and Christian ideology of the Raj and thus represents the dialectical nature of the empire.¹⁵⁷ Besant's critique of British rule in India and praise of Indian civilization would have contributed to the conservative tinge of Gandhi and Nehru's nationalism, which focused on India's cultural and historical unity. This analysis is certainly in keeping with the diagnosis of India's position under British rule that Gandhi and Nehru produced.

¹⁵¹ Besant's contribution was entitled "Industry under Socialism."

¹⁵² Kumar, *Annie Besant's Rise to Power in Indian Politics 1914-1917*, 67.

¹⁵³ Bevir, "In Opposition to the Raj: Annie Besant and the Dialectic of Empire," 75.

¹⁵⁴ Kumar, op. cit., 62.

¹⁵⁵ Bevir, op. cit., 75-76.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 74. This provides an interesting variant to the debate and can be contrasted with the positions of Seeley and Stephen discussed above.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 62.

Another socialist, the political theorist Harold Laski (1893-1950) became a pervasive influence on many Indian nationalists, including Nehru.¹⁵⁸ Laski enjoyed a prominent status especially during the inter-war years and a recent biography described him as “everyone’s favourite socialist” and “the most important socialist intellectual in the English-speaking world.”¹⁵⁹ Laski was also a member of the Fabian Society.¹⁶⁰ An important feature of Laski’s political thought was its development and transformation over his lifetime. According to Martin, Laski began as a liberal and ended up a Marxist.¹⁶¹ Greenleaf, discussing this transformation and apparent inconsistency, argued that Laski’s Marxism was merely a “fashionable veneer” and as such remained consistent with his earlier views and was understandable in the particular context of the 1930s.¹⁶² Conversely, Lamb disputed this interpretation and concluded that Laski was “firmly in the Marxist camp in the mid-1930s.”¹⁶³ Despite such debates most commentators agree that between his pluralism and his Marxism, Laski did pass through a period of Fabian collectivism.¹⁶⁴ Greenleaf believed Laski was trying to balance the libertarian and collectivist branches of British socialism.¹⁶⁵ In this sense Laski’s work and this dilemma follows naturally from that of Bertrand Russell who had struggled with similar problems earlier. Therefore Laski occupies a similar a position in relation to Nehru that Russell occupied in relation to Sun.

¹⁵⁸ On the influence on Indian nationalism in general, Martin commented: “In no part of the world did Harold have more influence than in India.” See, *Harold Laski*, 249. Isaac Kramnick and Barry Sheerman also commented on the extent of Laski’s influence in India and on Nehru in particular, quoting J. K. Galbraith, who believed that “the centre of Nehru’s thinking was Laski.” See, *Harold Laski*, 589. Nehru met Laski and other members of the Labour Party in June 1938 at the home of Sir Stafford Cripps. See, Judd, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, 42. Laski’s influence is discussed in the chapters devoted to Nehru’s nationalist, democratic and socialist thought.

¹⁵⁹ See, Kramnick and Sheerman, *Harold Laski*, 1-2.

¹⁶⁰ Greenleaf, op. cit., 367.

¹⁶¹ Martin, *Harold Laski*, ix-x. Greenleaf observed that during the first world war Laski’s ideas were “classical Liberal” and “many of his comments at this time would undoubtedly have much gratified Herbert Spencer or the members of the British Constitution Association.” See, “Laski and British Socialism,” 583.

¹⁶² Ibid., 587.

¹⁶³ Lamb, “Laski on Sovereignty: Removing the Mask from Class Dominance,” 331.

¹⁶⁴ Newman observed “a shift toward a more ‘Fabian conception of socialism’ although he cautioned that “it would be quite wrong to assume that Laski had simply abandoned his earlier” pluralism. See, Newman, *Harold Laski*, 75-78.

¹⁶⁵ Greenleaf, “Laski and British Socialism,” 581.

Laski was a prolific author and published several important books during the inter-war years. For Newman, Laski's *A Grammar of Politics* (1925) was his "most influential book" and similarly for Greenleaf it was his "most well-known work."¹⁶⁶ Newman considered that it represented "an early sign" of Laski's shift from pluralism to a more collectivist position.¹⁶⁷ Rodney Barker believed that by this time not only had Laski "moved away from pluralism" but "was repudiating even the modest proposals for constitutional reform which the Webbs, by contrast, had now come to support."¹⁶⁸ Newman identified several features of Laski's socialism which were also shared with Fabianism, including his "intellectual and social" elitism, his fear of "the consequences of the achievement of power by the working class before education levels had been raised" and his disapproval of "violence and revolution."¹⁶⁹ The collapse of the 1929-1931 minority Labour government and Laski's ensuing "deep despair about the survival of democracy" led to the publication of *Democracy in Crisis* (1932).¹⁷⁰ In this work Laski expressed his contention that democracy and capitalism were incompatible.¹⁷¹ In general Laski possessed a "veneration for liberal democracy" and maintained a faith that "secular and liberal values would triumph."¹⁷² It was in the particular circumstances of the 1930s that Laski accepted the necessity of extreme measures to save the principles of constitutionalism within Britain.¹⁷³ This pessimistic and Marxist analysis was continued in *The State in Theory and Practice* (1935). Laski's *Liberty in the Modern State* (1937) contained a positive assessment of the Soviet Union.¹⁷⁴ By the early forties, in *Reflections*

¹⁶⁶ See, respectively, Newman, *Harold Laski*, 65 and Greenleaf, "Laski and British Socialism," 584. According to Martin it became "a university textbook" and he recounted how Sidney Webb had praised it in a letter to Laski: "This is my birthday, which I am celebrating by another read of your great book." Webb to Laski, 13 July, 1925 quoted in Martin, *Harold Laski*, 65.

¹⁶⁷ Newman, *Harold Laski*, 75. Martin recounted how Sidney Webb had praised it in a letter to Laski: "This is my birthday, which I am celebrating by another read of your great book." Webb to Laski, 13 July, 1925 quoted in Martin, *Harold Laski*, 65.

¹⁶⁸ Rodney Barker, op. cit., 138-139.

¹⁶⁹ Newman, *Harold Laski*, 73.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 146.

¹⁷¹ Martin, *Harold Laski*, 79.

¹⁷² Newman, *Harold Laski*, 146 and 131.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 146.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., *Harold Laski*, 192. Later Laski began to question the violence and brutality of the Soviet Union, for example, he was critical of the Webbs' *Soviet Communism* in a 1938 review. See. ibid., 193.

on the *Revolution of our Time* (1943), Laski expressed the belief that the transition to socialism in the west could be peaceful and compatible with liberty.¹⁷⁵ Newman contends that Laski had become more optimistic having witnessed the development of Roosevelt's New Deal.¹⁷⁶

Although Laski was close to the mainstream of the Labour movement on many issues, in regard to India he was rather more progressive. On this point, Newman observed: "It was because he then prepared to participate actively in the campaign for independence - often criticising Labour Party caution - that he became so popular and influential in India."¹⁷⁷ There is much evidence of Laski's support for Indian nationalism. For example, Newman remarked that Laski supported Indian independence consistently from 1915.¹⁷⁸ According to Kramnick and Sheerman, following the collapse of the Round Table Conferences, "Laski remained an outspoken advocate of Indian independence."¹⁷⁹ Similarly, Martin, referring to the 1930s, observed: "Harold spoke on innumerable India League platforms, attacking the British Raj in burning phrases, urging especially the absurdity of teaching Indian students to appreciate the doctrines of Mill and Milton and then expecting them to accept the status of second-class citizens in their own country."¹⁸⁰ However, there are certain features of Laski's political thought that can be counterpoised with his support for Indian nationalism. Firstly, Newman identified references to "backward peoples" in *A Grammar of Politics* and "implicitly racist assumptions" within his work generally which emphasise Laski's elitism and his belief in the superiority of western civilization.¹⁸¹ Newman also identified the elitism in Laski's "continued belief that if Gandhi, he and Sankey 'were left alone for a week we could have solved the whole damned business ... in a way that would have commended itself to most

¹⁷⁵ Martin, *Harold Laski*, 182.

¹⁷⁶ Newman described how Laski met with Roosevelt on a number of occasions in the late thirties and how his book, *The American Presidency* (1940), "was, in effect, a defence of Roosevelt's Presidency." Newman, *Harold Laski*, 181-182.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 115.

¹⁷⁹ Kramnick and Sheerman, *Harold Laski*, 358.

¹⁸⁰ Martin, *Harold Laski*, 84.

¹⁸¹ Newman, *Harold Laski*, 110-111.

reasonable men.”¹⁸² Secondly, Laski, in keeping with his socialist credentials, regarded poverty as a more pressing problem in India and considered that “religion and nationalism were anachronistic forces.”¹⁸³ Despite such views Laski was still able to support the cause of Indian nationalism and thus in the context of the 1930s became enormously influential in Indian nationalist circles.

The final socialist influence on Nehru was the writer and statesman John Strachey (1901-1963) has been described as “the most articulate spokesman for Marxism in Britain” and “one of the most important intellectuals in twentieth-century Britain.”¹⁸⁴ The Marxist analysis of Britain, British imperialism, fascism and the 1930s in general is remarkably similar to Nehru’s and would have been especially appealing to Indian nationalists.¹⁸⁵ Chiefly through two “immensely influential” books he did much to publicize Marxism in Britain during the 1930s.¹⁸⁶ The first of these, *The Coming Struggle for Power* (1932) was “his most successful work” and “brought Communism to a far wider audience than it had reached before.”¹⁸⁷ Newman believed that it was marked by a “blind enthusiasm for the USSR” and for Rodney Barker: “The charm of the soviet example lay thickly on the pages of the most prominent exponent of communism in the 1930s, John Strachey.”¹⁸⁸ His second important work, *The Theory and Practice of Socialism* (1935), “made extensive use of the Webbs’ *Soviet Communism*” and was as “starry eyed, in respect both of Soviet achievements and of likely British developments.”¹⁸⁹ Strachey attained a reputation in the Commonwealth and although he visited Nehru in India in the early 1960s there is no record of an earlier

¹⁸² Laski quoted in a letter to Justice Holmes, 7 December, 1931 in Newman, *Harold Laski*, 119.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 120 and 131.

¹⁸⁴ See, respectively, Hugh Thomas, *John Strachey*, 129 and Noel Thompson, *John Strachey: An Intellectual Biography*, ix.

¹⁸⁵ Strachey’s influence is discussed in the chapter devoted to Nehru’s nationalist thought.

¹⁸⁶ Thomas, *John Strachey*, 129.

¹⁸⁷ See, respectively, *ibid.*, 130 and Newman, *John Strachey*, 56. Stuart Samuels described *The Coming Struggle for Power* as “the most influential book of the thirties.” See, “The Left Book Club,” 70.

¹⁸⁸ Newman, *John Strachey*, 61 and Rodney Barker, *op. cit.*, 171.

¹⁸⁹ Thomas, *John Strachey*, 157.

meeting.¹⁹⁰ In summary Strachey was a widely read and influential Marxist who offered an analysis conducive to the cause of Indian nationalism and which condemned capitalism, predicting that it would “collapse in Fascism and war.”¹⁹¹ His communism was most virulent during the 1930s when he considered it an “overall explanation of, and solution to, the problems of the world.”¹⁹² Strachey regarded the pre-war Labour government of 1929-1931 “a disaster waiting to happen.”¹⁹³ It is worth noting that after the war Strachey’s Marxism was toned down in much the same way that Nehru’s was at that time.

This chapter has placed the work of the thinkers on whom Sun, Gandhi and Nehru drew in constructing their political thought into the broader context of the most relevant strands British political thought. In introducing these thinkers this chapter has created the framework for the main body of the analysis which follows. It is evident that Sun, Gandhi and Nehru in constructing their nationalist, socialist and democratic political thought drew extensively on several aspects of British political thought and practice. The remainder of this study will explore the nature and extent of these British influences.

¹⁹⁰ Newman, *John Strachey*, 155 and Thomas, *John Strachey*, 252.

¹⁹¹ Strachey also possessed the added advantage of being a very lucid writer, which may well have served to increase his influence. See, Newman, *John Strachey*, 57 and 61.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁹³ Thompson, *John Strachey*, 54.

SECTION TWO

NATIONALISM

The purpose of this section is to outline the nationalist thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. It will comprise three chapters that will trace the development of their nationalist thought in order to examine those aspects that incorporate British influence. Each chapters will assess the nature and extent of those British influences on the most important aspects of their nationalist thought. In doing so this section will explore further those British influences highlighted in the introductory section.

In the three cases there were several important similarities in the background against which Sun, Gandhi and Nehru developed their nationalist thought. They were all primarily nationalist leaders and their thought reflects the urgency of that goal. For each of them independence was a priority in order that they could implement the remainder of their programme of economic and political reform. Nevertheless, these economic and political reforms were vitally important and often had to be balanced with the conflicting demands of nationalism. Finally, one further similarity that connected all three was British imperialism in China and India and as a corollary the diffusion of British ideas therein. Whilst the former was antagonistic to nationalism, the latter often contributed to both a critique and defence of imperialism.

Despite these similarities there were also a number of subtle differences between the Chinese and Indian cases. In China, Britain was just one, although probably the most important, of numerous foreign powers who imposed their interests through

unequal treaties and spheres of influence. For this situation, Sun blamed the Manchu dynasty and thus sought initially to remove it with British support. After the revolution and Sun's failure to consolidate his position, unify the new republic and implement his programme he became increasingly anti-imperialistic. Eventually, having failed to acquire British support, towards the end of his life, Sun turned towards the Russians for assistance. In India, where Britain was the dominant colonial power, the situation was rather different. Gandhi initially sought equality for Indian in South Africa within the framework of the empire. However, after his return to India and repeated frustrations with his initial aims, he became an advocate of complete independence. Nehru, in contrast, was always in favour of Indian independence. It is necessary to note that the Chinese situation would suggest a more diverse range of potential influences to which Sun was exposed. In any case the idiosyncrasies of the three individuals and the international nature of their background and life ensured that their nationalist thought was a blend of a wide a variety of influences.

Chapter III

Sun and Nationalism

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the origin and development of Sun's nationalist thought in order to examine the nature and extent of the influence of British political thought and practice thereon. The first section will consider the origins and development of Sun's nationalist thought up to 1924 and the second will consider the lectures on the Principle of Nationalism. Finally, a conclusion will summarize the findings of the chapter.

The Development of Sun's Nationalist Thought, up to 1924

The Fortnightly Review article that Sun wrote whilst in London in 1896-1897, in collaboration with Edwin Collins, appealing for British support of his revolutionary aims, reveals the core of his nationalist thought at that time. The purpose of the article was to alert his audience to "the extent and far-reaching consequences of the corruption which makes China a reproach and danger among nations."¹ As a result of the corruption, Sun

¹ Sun, "China's Present and Future," 424. Sun was referring to the existing Chinese government rather than China as a whole. The article was in part a refutation of an article that had appeared in the August 1896 issue. The article, entitled, "The Future of China" was written under the pseudonym, "L." It details the problems, particularly the corruption, of China and the most suitable policy for Britain toward China. It advocates "that our only true policy is the policy which we have hitherto pursued, namely, refrain from all manner of Jingoism in our dealings with China, and to support the existing political regime both against rebellion from within and against attack from without." See, "The Future of China," 169. The sentiment of both articles is very similar but the conclusions differ: "L" believed the existing regime could be salvaged, whilst Sun held that it required substantial reform. Sun in his article stated: "Indeed, one object I have in writing this article is to prove to the English people that it is in the interests of Europe generally, and of England in particular, to allow us to succeed, and that the policy often recommended (as for instance, by 'L' in the August number of this Review), that of protecting the present Government, is entirely mistaken." See, "China's Present and Future," 440. The identity of "L" remains uncertain although there has been much speculation on the subject. Wong discusses the suggestion that it could have been the British missionary Timothy Richard and identifies the grounds for such an assertion. According to Wong, Sun knew Richard and visited him in London in 1897 although Wong considers that the tone of the article does not "take the stand of the missionary." See, *The Origins of an Heroic Image*, 243-244. Indeed, the article does appear to be the work of a more 'political' observer. However, Richard was on furlough in London at the time and he recalled in his autobiography the meeting with Sun and his disagreement with him: "Reform, not revolution, in my opinion, was needed. But Sun would not be dissuaded from the path of revolution..." See, *Forty-Five Years in China: Reminiscences by Timothy Richard*, 350. Whoever "L" was it is almost certain that he or she was British and also a significant influence on Sun's thought at the time.

stressed the overwhelming necessity of removing the Manchu dynasty: "It is too generally forgotten that the Chinese and the Chinese Government are not convertible terms; but that the throne and all the highest offices, military and civil, are filled by foreigners."² For Sun the implication of this analysis was that:

Nothing short of the entire overthrow of the present utterly corrupt *regime*, and the establishment of good government and a pure administration by native Chinese with, at first, European advice, and for some years, European administrative assistance, can effect any improvement whatever.³

Probably bearing in mind his audience, Sun stressed that such a policy would not alienate British interests in China but rather, the contrary, that they could be furthered. Sun concluded the article by calling for Britain's benevolent neutrality which would allow his party to "reform" China's "government and administration."⁴ Sun was concerned to emphasise to the British audience one of the most important elements of his nationalist thought was that the Manchu dynasty was not really Chinese. The article in a leading London journal provides evidence of British influence on the development of Sun's nationalist thought, which sought, at this time, to remove the Manchu regime and create a western-style alternative.

The concept of patriotism emerged as a significant component of Sun's nationalist thought relatively early in his career. In particular, Wong identified a number of Sun's experiences in London during his visit of 1896-1897 as potentially significant influences on the development of this aspect of his nationalist thought. These included Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee parade and naval review. According to Wong it is likely that Sun witnessed these events, which emphasised the extent of Britain's national strength and provided evidence of British patriotism.⁵ Wong also considered that Edwin Collins, with whom Sun collaborated in the production of two articles, was another potential

² Sun, "China's Present and Future," 424.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 440. Sun's reference to his party as one of reform was no doubt dictated by the audience at which the article was aimed but may also reveal his recognition that in the sphere of domestic government China required reform as opposed to the revolution that was required in the national sphere.

⁵ Wong, *The Origins of an Heroic Image*, 247-273.

influence on Sun's developing nationalist thought.⁶ Collins, Wong discovered, was a British Israelite, who believed in the divine purpose of the British nation.⁷ According to Wong: "If Sun Yat Sen had not known it already, Edwin Collins would have assured him that the Anglo-Saxons were the greatest people on earth, who had built the world's greatest country."⁸ Another important acquaintance in London was James Cantlie, Sun's teacher⁹ at medical school in Hong Kong, who saved him from the Chinese Legation in London following his kidnapping, which happened whilst visiting the Cantlie family. Cantlie was a proud Scotsman and Wong suggested that his patriotism might also have had an impact on Sun's nationalist thought.¹⁰ However, Cantlie's patriotism and sense of Scottish nationalism, as demonstrated by his work in London and throughout the empire, was not narrow but was developed within the framework of a wider British nationalism. All of this suggests that Cantlie's patriotism was more British rather than purely Scottish which may have impressed on Sun the inclusivity and variety within the

⁶ In addition to the article mentioned above Sun and Collins also wrote an article entitled "Judicial Reform in China" which was published in the journal *East Asia* in July 1897. It discussed the use of torture and the corruption of the judicial system in China and called for its reform along western lines.

⁷ Wong discovered, from the reports of the private detectives following Sun, that he made at least nineteen visits, totalling almost forty hours duration, to the house of Edwin Collins. Wong explained that according to British Israelites Anglo-Saxons were "God's chosen race" and "migrants from Israel, who had started their journeys about a thousand years or more before Christ." See, *The Origins of an Heroic Image*, 223, 229 and 228.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 229.

⁹ Sun referred to Cantlie as his teacher long after he had left medical school, which suggests he was an important influence. For example, in 1908, whilst commenting on an article that had appeared in the *Min Pao*, which argued that a revolution would not necessarily lead to the partition of China, Sun described how he was "overwhelmed with admiration" for the argument of the article and how he "selected several passages and translated them for" his "teacher." Sun, "Those Who Fear a Revolution Will Cause Partition Are Ignorant of Current Affairs" August 6, 1908 in *Prescriptions*, ed. Wei, Myers and Gillin, 51 and 53. The editors of *Prescriptions* believe that Sun was referring to Cantlie. There is much evidence to support such a contention. According to Cantlie's son, Sun "always called his father 'teacher.'" Kenneth Cantlie, foreword to *Kidnapped in London*, v. In the text of this account of the kidnapping incident Sun referred to his "old teacher and friend, Mr. James Cantlie." *Ibid.*, 27. In his autobiography Sun also mentioned meeting his "teacher Kandeli [*sic*]" by chance in Hawaii, on route to the United States from Japan having been forced to flee China and then Hong Kong following his first unsuccessful revolutionary attempt, and later "being saved from peril by my teacher Kandeli" referring to the kidnapping incident. See, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 189 and 193. The mis-spelling is probably a result of the translation from Chinese to English that this volume underwent. See, Chang & Gordon, *All Under Heaven*, 213 n.107. Lyon Sharman claimed that the book was translated into English from a Russian translation of the Chinese. Although this possibility is not mentioned elsewhere it would explain the mis-spelling and the other errors referred to above and possibly also the absence of the translator's name on the title page. See, *Sun Yat-sen*, 244.

¹⁰ Wong noted that Cantlie was known for wearing his kilt and was generally very proud of his own Scottish heritage. See, *The Origins of an Heroic Image*, 214.

British nation state. The potential tension between Collins' emphasis on the Anglo-Saxon dimension of the British empire and Cantlie's Scottishness is significant for it seems to be mirrored in a similar tension within Sun's nationalism. At times Sun recognised racial variety within China and advocated a more inclusive melting pot approach but sometimes, and especially in his later lectures, he emphasised the implication of China being dominated by the majority Han Chinese and its status as a 'race nation.'

At this time there is also evidence to suggest that Sun was influenced by the Anglo-Boer conflict in South Africa. In 1903 Sun identified the nationalist potential of the Chinese people and remarked that "their ability to join against a common enemy should not be inferior to that of the people of the Transvaal."¹¹ This reveals a significant British influence as it refers to the nationalist qualities of the Boers in South Africa and their struggle against British imperialism. Several years later Sun expanded on the nature of the qualities that he attributed to the people of the Transvaal. In 1906 Sun contrasted the woeful lack of nationalism in China with the situation in the Transvaal: "The African nation of the Transvaal has a population of only 200,000, yet when Britain tried to destroy it, the fighting lasted three years."¹² In 1912 Sun remarked:

Some years ago, when Britain went to war with the Transvaal, it had 400,000 crack troops and was the premier power in the world, while the Transvaal had a population of only 400,000 and an army composed entirely of farmers. Britain would have had no difficulty in demolishing the Transvaal at a single-stroke, but Britain could not win a quick victory because the people of the Transvaal were united, resolute, and fearless and were able to rely on right to resist might.¹³

Thus Sun was familiar with developments in South Africa and admired the nationalism of the Boers, which had been honed against the foil of British imperialism. Thus it would have appeared a nationalism that was particularly relevant to Sun and China

In a 1906 speech in Tokyo, Sun further developed his nationalist thought, which, by this time, had become the Principle of Nationalism. Sun emphasized the racial element

¹¹ Sun, "A Joint Discussion of the Question of China's Preservation or its Partition," August 1, 1903 in *Prescriptions*, ed. Wei, Myers and Gillin, 28.

¹² Sun, "The Three Principles of the People and the Future of the Chinese People" December 2, 1906, in *Prescriptions*, ed. Wei, Myers and Gillin, 42.

¹³ Sun, "Always Adhere to the Right, and There Will Be No Need to Fear" October 10, 1912 in *Prescriptions*, ed. Wei, Myers and Gillin, 101. The differences in Sun's estimate of the population of the Transvaal may be due to the recording and translation of the speeches or it may be an example of

of his concept: "A person always recognizes his parents and never confuses them with strangers. Nationalism is analogous to this."¹⁴ Crucially, Sun linked this understanding of nationalism to his own objectives. People of a "different nationality," Sun remarked, should not "seize our political power, for only when we Han are in control politically do we have a nation."¹⁵ Here Sun adopts a nationalism that focuses on the majority Han component and overlooks the minority races. Sun believed that the Han Chinese were a "lost nation" because the Manchus dominated them "politically" and discriminated against them.¹⁶ Sun's objective was to "restore" the Han Chinese nation "by liquidating their regime" but despite the tone of this language, Sun insisted that he did not "hate the Manchus per se, but only those who are harming the Han."¹⁷ For Sun, clarifying this qualification was an important "objective of the nationalist revolution" so as to remove the fear amongst the Manchus that the Han simply wanted to "exterminate them," rather than merely wishing to remove the regime.¹⁸ As well as revealing the racial dimension to Sun's conception of Chinese nationalism this speech emphasises Sun's belief that the Manchus had suppressed Chinese nationalism and his programme sought its recovery rather than its creation.

The Principle of Nationalism Lectures, 1924

The lectures on the Principle of Nationalism constitute the fullest and most important source of Sun's nationalist thought. Sun gave the series of six lectures weekly between 27 January and 2 March.¹⁹ They were delivered during a period when Sun was frustrated with the reluctance of the west, and Britain in particular, to support him and the administration that he had established in Canton. Additionally, partially as a result of these rebuffs from the west, Sun had turned to the Russians for support and this may have contributed to the more blatantly anti-western and anti-imperialist rhetoric included in the

Sun's characteristic loose style which fuelled later critics.

¹⁴ Sun, "The Three Principles of the People and the Future of the Chinese People" December 2, 1906, in *Prescriptions*, ed. Wei, Myers and Gillin, 42.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 42-43.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Thus the other four lectures were given on 3, 10, 17 and 24 February.

lectures. It is widely believed that this series of lectures were given at the height of Sun's anti-westernism, and the persistence of positive, as well as negative, British influences may indicate the importance of them to the development of his nationalist thought.²⁰ Despite the lack of official British support Sun did not abandon his western orientation and the lectures include evidence of several aspects of his British connection.

Sun began his first lecture by placing his nationalism in the context of the Three Principles as a whole. Specifically, Sun considered them to be "the principles of our nation's salvation."²¹ According to Sun, China required salvation because there had "been no nationalism" only "loyalty to family and clan but not to the nation," and hence, according to some observers, "the Chinese are like a sheet of loose sand."²² First, Sun explained: "My statement that the principle of nationality is equivalent to the doctrine of the state is applicable in China but not in the West."²³ This was because, traditionally, China had "been developing a single state out of a single race, while foreign countries have developed many states from one race and have included many nationalities within one state."²⁴ This comment belies the recognition of racial diversity in China that Sun revealed on some occasions. Sun then explained his distinction between race and state, which he illustrated with the British example. Sun claimed that the British state included India whereas the British nation was limited to the population of Great Britain: "If we say

²⁰ For example, Wilbur remarked: "The talks on nationalism expressed much greater hostility toward the Western powers and far more anxiety about China's condition than any previous speeches by Dr. Sun that I have read." Wilbur explained that this was in part due to growing frustration with the west and at the same time increasing Soviet influence. See, *Sun Yat-sen*, 204. Maurice William contended that the nationalism lectures were more pro-Soviet and anti-western than Sun's lectures on the other two principles and he explained that this was partly due to Sun's reading of his work, *The Social Interpretation of History* after giving the nationalism lectures. See, *Sun Yat-sen versus Communism*. According to George Jan it was after world war one that Sun "became increasingly anti-imperialistic" and after 1923 he became "intensely" so. In particular, it was "Sun's conflict with Great Britain and other foreign powers over the customs surplus in 1923 that further antagonized him." See, "The Doctrine of Nationalism and the Chinese Revolution" in *Sun Yat-sen's Doctrine in the Modern World*, ed. Cheng, 144, 147 and 145 respectively.

²¹ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 3.

²² Ibid., 5. Sun's use of the analogy recalls the work of the British pluralist thinker J. N. Figgis who used a similar analogy in 1914: "What do we find as a fact? Not, surely, a sand-heap of individuals." See, *Churches in the Modern State*, 87. Figgis did not apply the analogy to the Chinese and it is not known whether Sun read *Churches in the Modern State*, but the coincidence is striking and the publication date makes it a possibility.

²³ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 3.

²⁴ Ibid., 6.

that the British state of India means the British nation, we are off the track.”²⁵ Sun also used a traditional Chinese analysis to distinguish between race-nations and states:

To use an illustration from China’s political history: Chinese say that the *wang-tao*, royal way or way of right, followed nature; in other words, natural force was the royal way. The group molded by the royal way is the race, the nationality. Armed force is the *pa-tao*, or the way of might; the group formed by the way of might is the state.²⁶

Next, Sun outlined the ‘natural forces’ which he believed contributed to the formation of a race-nation and included: “common blood;” “livelihood;” “language;” “religion;” and “customs and habits.”²⁷ Presumably, it was these forces that had established the Chinese race-nation but the implication of Sun’s analysis was that these forces had been somehow deficient since China was currently without “national spirit” and hence in grave danger.²⁸ This danger and his solution, Sun described in Darwinian language: “Considering the law of survival of ancient and modern races, if we want to save China and to preserve the Chinese race, we must certainly promote Nationalism.”²⁹ Sun offered an explanation as to why the noble, natural forces, he associated with Chinese history had not been able to develop the degree of nationalism required in the present age: “But the Chinese people have only family and clan groups; there is no national spirit.”³⁰ It would seem that the aim of Sun’s nationalism was to extend the natural forces, inherent in China, to the national group, where they had previously been limited to the family and clan.

Secondly, Sun turned from the domestic to the international situation to discern any lessons that China could glean. Sun identified Britain as a “pure Anglo-Saxon” race-nation that “has become the most powerful in the world and the state it has created ... the strongest.”³¹ This rather strange statement supports Wong’s contention of a British Israelite influence from Edwin Collins although it ignores Sun’s knowledge of Cantlie’s Scottishness. Sun offered Japan, describing it as “the Great Britain of the East,” as a model in this context:

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 7.

²⁷ Ibid., 9-11.

²⁸ Ibid., 12.

²⁹ Ibid., 11.

³⁰ Ibid., 12.

With area and population not so large as those of Szechwan Province, the Japanese, too, endured the shame of Western domination. But because of their national spirit, which has called forth a fiery heroism, they have, in a period of less than fifty years, transformed Japan from a weak into a powerful state. If we want China to become strong, Japan is an excellent model for us.³²

In other words Sun felt Japan was a good model because it had achieved in the east what Britain had in the west. Looking further afield, Sun praised the Russian revolution and condemned the aggressive policies of the western powers toward the new regime.³³

Having criticized the western powers for their opposition to Russia, Sun examined the threat that these powers posed to China in terms of their rapidly growing populations:

“When I compare their increase with China’s, I tremble.”³⁴ Sun singled out the particularly rapid population growth of the United States but also included that of England and Japan, which when considered in the context of the apparent stagnation of China’s population, constituted a threat to China.³⁵ According to Sun, for China to be a strong and independent nation it must have a large and growing population at least compared to those countries that might constitute a threat.

Sun began his second lecture where he finished the first, discussing the population threat to China. For Sun population pressure was a natural force that contributed to the working of natural selection and as such it was a danger to China.³⁶ However, Sun believed that whilst the population threat was a danger to China in its own right, it was relatively minor compared to the potential threat from economic and political forces.³⁷ Sun considered that the revolution of 1911 had thwarted the more overt political oppression associated with the latter years of the Manchu dynasty: “After the Chinese Revolution, the Powers realized that it would be exceedingly difficult to dismember China by political force.”³⁸ Thus, instead of political oppression the foreign powers had begun

³¹ Ibid., 13.

³² Ibid., 14-15.

³³ Ibid., 17-20.

³⁴ Ibid., 22-23.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 29.

³⁷ Ibid., 31.

³⁸ Ibid., 36.

to use “economic pressure” to suppress China.³⁹ In this regard Sun considered that China was in a much worse situation than more traditional colonies, because China was a “colony of every nation that has made treaties with her.”⁴⁰ Sun described the uniqueness of the situation:

The result is that China is everywhere becoming a colony of the Powers. The people of the nation still think we are only a “semi-colony” and comfort themselves with this term, but in reality we are being crushed by the economic strength of the Powers to a greater degree than if we were a full colony.⁴¹

As the term “semi-colony” implied, incorrectly in Sun’s view, a more advantageous position than that of a colony, he suggested a more accurate term, “hypo-colony,” which recognised that China “is not the colony of one nation but of all.”⁴² Sun cited the numerous forms of foreign economic oppression, stemming from the unequal trading relationships which had been imposed on China by force, which included indemnities and taxes that China was forced to pay.⁴³ Sun also illustrated his concept of economic exploitation with a description of the Chinese textile industry:

Because of the low tariff, foreign cloth is cheaper than native cloth. Since, moreover, certain classes of the people prefer the foreign to the native cloth, native industry has been ruined. With the destruction of this native hand industry, many people have been thrown out of work and have become idlers.⁴⁴

Again Sun was able to use the harmful effects of British influence to explain China’s myriad problems, with an analysis that resembled that of the Indian nationalists and especially that of Gandhi.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 38.

⁴¹ Ibid. In a speech in 1924 in Japan, Sun explained that China was a colony of all the countries that had made treaties with her. In contrast, Sun examined the situation for British colonies: “Let us take for example, Australia, Canada, South Africa and New Zealand, which are all colonies of one country, Great Britain. In normal times Great Britain enjoys few advantages in these colonies, whilst at the same time she assumes serious obligations towards them.” See, Sun, “An Address delivered at a welcome dinner given on November 28, 1924 at the Oriental Hotel in Kobe,” in *The Vital Problem of China*, 158.

⁴² Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 38. Sun explained how he had derived the term: “The prefix “hypo” is taken from chemistry, as in the word “hypophosphite.” A chemical which contains the element phosphoric compound but is of a lower grade than pure phosphoric compound is called a phosphorous compound. A still lower degree of compound is called a hypophosphorous compound ...” See, *ibid.*, 39. This explanation seems to reveal Sun’s scientific background and in particular his medical training under the auspices of James Cantlie in Hong Kong.

⁴³ Ibid., 43-53.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 42. Economic exploitation is discussed more fully in the chapter devoted to Sun’s socialism. This analysis of the Chinese textile industry bears a striking resemblance to Gandhi’s analysis of that industry in India. In view of Sun’s discussion of Gandhi in the fifth lecture of the series the

Sun's third lecture began by repeating the contention that China had lost its "nationalism," which he described as "that precious possession which enables a state to aspire to progress and a nation to perpetuate its existence."⁴⁵ According to Sun, it was the Manchus who had "subjugated China" and crushed "the national spirit of the Chinese people."⁴⁶ Sun considered that, although the Chinese "national spirit had been kept alive in the verbal codes transmitted by ... secret societies" and thus had not been extinguished completely, it had been "destroyed by alien conquest" to a much greater extent than had the Indian national spirit.⁴⁷ Discussing his own nationalist thought, Sun regarded it as having been opposed initially by those reformers who supported the Manchu monarchy and latterly by advocates of communist internationalism which had gained increasing influence in China. Somewhat curiously, given his earlier condemnation of British imperialism, Sun referred to this internationalism as being partly, at least, a British development:

A new theory is emerging in England and Russia, proposed by the intellectuals, which opposes nationalism on the ground that it is narrow and illiberal - simply a doctrine of cosmopolitanism. England now, and formerly Russia and Germany, together with modern young advocates of new culture in China, support this doctrine and decry nationalism.⁴⁸

However, Sun observed that those who advocated this kind of "cosmopolitanism" were also active imperialists, and the irony of this was not lost on Sun: "Before Germany was hemmed in, she talked not of nationalism, but a world state - cosmopolitanism. I suspect that Germany to-day is ceasing to preach cosmopolitanism and is talking nationalism a bit!"⁴⁹ Sun did not dismiss cosmopolitanism completely but rather considered that it was inappropriate for China at its current stage of development. Sun believed that in order for

analysis would support the contention of significant influence from Gandhi on Sun's nationalist thought.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 55.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 56-57.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 59 and 66. It also reveals further influence from the Indian case and either that British rule in India was not as harmful to India as Manchu rule in China or that Chinese nationalism was not as durable as the Indian variety. The latter would have been a more appealing explanation for Sun and hence may help to explain his more virulent anti-Manchuism.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 68. It is not clear to whom Sun was referring in this passage. However, Bertrand Russell criticised nationalism for being 'narrow and illiberal' and given Sun's knowledge of Russell, and reference to him in the sixth lecture of this series, it is possible that Russell was an example of an exponent of the 'new theory' that Sun had in mind. The extent of Russell's influence on Sun is discussed below.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 75.

a nation to survive it must develop a strong sense of nationalism before advocating cosmopolitanism: "If nationalism decays, then when cosmopolitanism flourishes we will be unable to survive and will be eliminated, in the process of natural selection, by other races."⁵⁰ Again the influence of natural selection and the language of social Darwinism was prominent in Sun's nationalist thought: "According to natural laws of evolution, the fit survive and the unfit perish, the strong win and the weak lose."⁵¹ Sun concluded by describing the time when nationalism had been reasserted: "Together we shall use Right to fight Might, and when Might is overthrown and the selfishly ambitious have disappeared, then we may talk about cosmopolitanism."⁵² Here it is possible to detect Sun's contention that cosmopolitanism as it was being advocated by some western powers was based on injustice and the rule of might as opposed to the forces of right and justice upon which the acceptable kind of cosmopolitanism would be founded.

Sun began his fourth lecture with a discussion of imperialism. He defined it as "the policy of aggression upon other countries by means of political force," clearly referring to the political forces threatening China.⁵³ Sun considered that imperialism was still a significant threat to China and that "the [first world] war was merely the overthrow of one imperialism by another imperialism."⁵⁴ Significantly, Sun described the Russian revolution as the one "great hope" that had emerged from that war.⁵⁵ Next Sun repeated his conviction that, in a world dominated by imperialist powers, it was too early to advocate cosmopolitanism in a China devoid of its national spirit. Emphasising his analysis of China as a victim of imperialism, Sun remarked: "We, the wronged races, must first recover our position of national freedom and equality before we are fit to discuss cosmopolitanism."⁵⁶ Discussing Chinese qualities in this context, Sun believed that the latest ideas from the west, "anarchism and communism are old things in China."⁵⁷

⁵⁰ Ibid., 70.

⁵¹ Ibid., 72.

⁵² Ibid., 76.

⁵³ Ibid., 79.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 84.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 89.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 97.

However, despite this equality, in theoretical or philosophical terms, with the west, Sun admitted that in the material sciences China was deficient. Specifically, Sun drew attention to modern, western science, which he attributed principally to Bacon and Newton, who “advocated the use of observation, experiment, and investigation of all things,” although Sun did observe that this had happened only relatively recently.⁵⁸ In conclusion, Sun considered that the kind of cosmopolitanism advocated in the west was merely “a principle supported by force without justice” or “might is right,” presumably in contrast to the ancient Chinese variety of this doctrine to which he had alluded previously.⁵⁹

Sun’s fifth lecture is significant since it summarised the core of his analysis of the Chinese situation and outlined his solution. Sun warned that China must develop its nationalism in the light of the threats the nation faced. Sun discussed this in terms of loyalty to the nation and contrasted the western and Chinese situations. Sun explained his solution for China: “If we are to recover our lost nationalism, we must have some kind of group unity, large group unity.”⁶⁰ In the west, Sun observed: “The individual expands immediately into the state; between the individual and the state there is no common, firm, social unit.”⁶¹ However, in China there were intermediate layers of loyalty which had become overly important and Sun remarked: “But I think that in relation between the citizens of China and their state, there must first be family loyalty, then clan loyalty, and finally national loyalty.”⁶² Yet the existence of these intermediate layers of loyalty would eventually add to the strength of the Chinese national spirit. Next, and significantly, Sun illustrated his analysis with reference to the Indian example. India, Sun observed, was “governed absolutely by the British” and in this sense was not a ‘hypo-colony’ like China.⁶³ The first implication of India’s colonial status was that according to Sun: “The Indian people have no way of resisting the political oppression, but they are meeting the

⁵⁸ Ibid., 98.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 99.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 114.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., 115.

⁶³ Ibid., 119.

economic oppression with Gandhi's policy of noncooperation."⁶⁴ Sun described Gandhi's policy of non-co-operation in some detail and the example it could provide for China:

If India, which is already a subject country, can put noncooperation into effect, certainly in China, which is not at the present moment destroyed, the common people, though they may not easily perform other tasks, can do such things as these - refuse to work for foreigners, refuse to be foreign slaves or to use foreign goods manufactured abroad, push the use of native goods, decline to use foreign bank notes, use only Chinese government money, and sever economic relations with foreigners.⁶⁵

Thus it would seem that despite Sun's contention that China's status as a 'hypo-colony' was generally inferior to that of colonies like India it was advantageous in some respects. According to Sun, China would be better placed to implement a policy of non-co-operation to overcome the forces of economic exploitation. In summary, Sun advocated the pursuit of Gandhian non-co-operation in China:

If our whole body of citizens can practice noncooperation as the people of India, if also we can realize a great national unity upon the basis of our clan groups, no matter what pressure foreign nations bring upon us - military, economic, or population - we will not fear.⁶⁶

Sun regarded the development of the Chinese national spirit as the positive aspect of his nationalism, which would be accompanied by the more negative aspect implied by the policy of non-co-operation.⁶⁷ Sun's use of the Indian example and, specifically Gandhian non-co-operation, constitutes an important and significant British influence, albeit indirect.

Sun's final lecture on nationalism dwelt on the loss of China's ancient national spirit and the necessity of its revival. Sun contended that "China was once an exceedingly powerful and civilized nation" but it had lost its "national spirit" and had "day by day degenerated."⁶⁸ The goal of Sun's nationalist thought was to recover China's "ancient morality" and "ancient learning."⁶⁹ However, despite the positive aspects of traditional China Sun recognised that it was not perfect. He identified several qualities of Chinese culture, which were less commendable and more importantly had created a detrimental

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 120.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 121.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 123.

impression on foreigners. In particular, Sun singled out the Chinese lack of “personal culture” which included poor table manners and especially spitting.⁷⁰ Such poor habits, Sun believed, had contributed to the impression of some foreigners that the Chinese were not capable of self-government.⁷¹ This suggests that Sun had experienced these views in his efforts to attain foreign assistance for his programme, which seemed to have impacted on the development of his nationalist thought. However, Sun did make a significant exception to this observation, that foreigners possessed a poor opinion of Chinese personal habits which were related to their fitness for self-government, and revealed his knowledge of an important British philosopher:

The only exceptions are foreigners who have lived twenty or thirty years in China or great philosophers like Bertrand Russell, who have a wide view of life, and who, as soon as they come to China, are able to discern that Chinese civilization is superior to European or American civilization and give China her due praise.⁷²

Nevertheless, Sun took these criticisms very seriously and incorporated them into his nationalist thought and partially explained China’s predicament: “[I]f we search for the fundamental reason we will find it in the Chinese failure to cultivate personal virtue.”⁷³

Therefore, Sun suggested the problem must be tackled as part of his solution:

If we now want to rule our families and govern our state and not be subject to foreign control, we must begin with personal culture, we must revive China’s ancient wisdom and comprehensive philosophy, and then we can reawaken the spirit and restore the standing of the Chinese nation.⁷⁴

Having thus described the strengths and weaknesses of traditional Chinese culture, Sun concluded by suggesting a programme that he acknowledged drew on western and Chinese sources alike:

If we can reproduce the best of our national heritage just as it was in the time of our forefathers when China dominated the world, we will still need to learn the

⁶⁹ Ibid., 125 and 133.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 135-136.

⁷¹ Ibid., 135.

⁷² Ibid., 136. In his study of Sun’s 1924 lectures, Jan noted that Sun’s support of traditional Chinese culture was unique and counter to the common trend amongst Chinese nationalists of the day. Jan remarked: “It is interesting and significant to see a Westernized Sun Yat-sen advocating the revival of ancient Chinese morality, learning and powers ... Sun was one of the few Chinese revolutionary leaders of his time who did not denounce traditional Chinese culture.” See, Jan, *op. cit.*, 146. Given Sun’s western educational background, and in particular his British connection, a British source that supported traditional Chinese values would have been particularly appealing to him.

⁷³ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 139.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 139-140.

strong points of Europe and America before we can progress at an equal rate with them. Unless we do study the best from foreign countries we will go backward.⁷⁵

Thus although Sun recognised many qualities in traditional China which had been suppressed by the Manchus and identified the damaging nature of imperialism he was still able to accept the necessity of incorporating some more positive western influences.

The influence of Gandhi on Sun's lectures provides another interesting dimension to the nature of Sun's British connection. It is not clear exactly how Sun became aware of Gandhi and the Indian situation. However, there are some important parallels between the Indian and Chinese cases which Sun observed. One possibility is that Sun became aware of Gandhi through the South African situation. Sun referred to the situation in the Transvaal in a number of speeches and was evidently aware of the struggle between the Boers and British imperialism. Sun was also in London in 1909 at the same time that Gandhi was there with the South African Indian deputation and it is possible that Sun may have seen reference to the activities of the deputation in the press.⁷⁶ There is one further connection between Sun and Gandhi that was provided by Sun's friend and teacher James Cantlie. It was Cantlie who was responsible for training the Indian ambulance corps that Gandhi established in London in 1914. Finally, Sun's reference to Gandhi in the lectures in 1924 was after Gandhi had returned to India and his subsequent trial and imprisonment, which helped to establish him as an international figure.

Sun's reference to Bertrand Russell suggests the possibility of another significant British influence. It also appears to be an influence that has been neglected in the available literature.⁷⁷ This neglect is a considerable oversight given Russell's position as one of the most important British philosophers of the period. Further, Russell was one of few

⁷⁵ Ibid., 142.

⁷⁶ Sun went to Europe in the summer of 1909, between May and November. See, *Prescriptions*, ed. Wei, Myers and Gillin, xl. Gandhi and an Indian deputation were in London between June and November 1909.

⁷⁷ Whilst the impact of Russell on China and China on Russell has been discussed the possibility of Russell's influence on Sun has been overlooked. For example, Jerome Ch'en discussed the influence of Russell in China and Philip Ironside devoted a chapter of his study of Russell's social and political thought to Russell's time in China. See, Ch'en, *China and the West* and Ironside, *The Social and Political Thought of Bertrand Russell*. The only study of Sun's thought which mentions Russell is that by Chang and Gordon, but they only make a rather vague comparative point, quoting from Russell's 1938 work, *Power*, and do they consider the possibility of direct influence. See, *All Under Heaven*, 97.

British intellectuals who spent a significant amount of time in China when he replaced John Dewey as a visiting lecturer at the National University of Peking.⁷⁸ In his autobiography, Russell described his arrival in China at Shanghai on route to take up his position in Peking. Significantly, in relation to Sun, Russell remarked:

Sun Yat-sen invited me to dinner, but to my lasting regret the evening he suggested was after my departure, and I had to refuse. Shortly after this he went to Canton to inaugurate the nationalist movement which afterwards conquered the whole country, and as I was unable to go to Canton, I never met him.⁷⁹

This suggests that Sun was either familiar with Russell prior to Russell's visit and wished to meet him or alternatively became aware of Russell upon his arrival. At the very least it supports the possibility that Sun would have endeavoured to familiarise himself with Russell's work whilst he was in China and afterwards. Perhaps the most likely source of Sun's knowledge of Russell and his work was *The Problem of China*.⁸⁰ However, it is necessary to examine Russell and his work on China in more detail to explore further this British influence on Sun's nationalist thought.

Russell published widely on China and the Chinese situation both before and after *The Problem of China*. A number of Russell's early works were translated into Chinese whilst Sun was alive, including *Roads to Freedom*, *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* and *The Theory and Practice of Bolshevism*.⁸¹ However, there are two

⁷⁸ Russell arrived in Shanghai in October 1920 and left China in July 1921. See, Monk, *Bertrand Russell*, 590-602. According to Ironside, Russell spent the year "lecturing in philosophy" at the Government University of Peking. See, Ironside, op. cit., 153.

⁷⁹ Russell, *Autobiography*, 359. Russell only mentioned Sun in one other context in his *Autobiography*. In a preface in 1931 for a book on China by Rachel Brooks, Russell wrote: "Sun Yat Sen justly perceived that if China was to resist successfully the onslaughts of military nations, it would be necessary to substitute the state for the family; and patriotism for filial piety - in a word, the Chinese had to choose whether they would die as saints or live as sinners." See, *ibid.*, 416. This is an interesting comment for it seems to be an admission of the 'ideal' nature of Russell's opinions and criticisms of nationalism outlined in *The Prospects of Industrial Civilization* and a recognition of the realities that Sun faced.

⁸⁰ It is quite possible that Sun may have had access to this English version. Additionally, Chapter XII, "The Chinese Character," appeared in Chinese as "Zhongguo Guominxing de Jige Tedian," *Dongfang Zazhi [Eastern Miscellany]*, 19, no. 1 (1 January, 1922): 21-33; Chapter IV, "Modern China," appeared in Chinese as "Zhongguo Zhi Guoji De Diwei," *Dongfang Zazhi [Eastern Miscellany]*, 19, no. 6 (25 March 1922): 18-34. See, *A Bibliography of Bertrand Russell*, vol. II, 56 and 58.

⁸¹ These translations appeared in 1921, 1924 and 1920 respectively. See, *A Bibliography of Bertrand Russell*, Vol. 1, 67, 72 and 76. Jerome Ch'en's discussion of Russell's impact in China is significant in this context. Ch'en remarked that "the abstruseness of Russell's philosophy in the eyes of his Chinese admirers may have restricted the impact of his more academic lectures on mathematical logic, matter and mind, notwithstanding the enthusiasm his visit evoked. But his more popular lectures on freedom of thought and his criticism of Western civilization in the wake of a disastrous war had

collections of lectures and speeches which appeared first in Chinese editions. The first of these, *Shehui Jiegouxue Wujiang [Science of Social Structure]* (1921) was a Chinese translation of five lectures that Russell gave whilst in Peking. Apparently Russell had intended to give a series of ten lectures but due to poor health only completed five. The five lectures, with some additional material, appeared later in English as *The Prospects of Industrial Civilization* (1923).⁸² The second collection of Russell's work was *Luosu Ji Bolake Jiangyan Ji [Collected Speeches of Russell and Black]* (1921). In addition to containing the first four of the *Science of Social Structure* lectures, it includes a short biography of Russell, lectures on Analysis of Mind, Analysis of Matter, Mathematical Logic and Dora Black's lectures on The Influence of Economics on Political Thought.⁸³

The fourth chapter of *The Prospects of Industrial Civilization*, which was the fourth lecture of the Peking series, contains an analysis of nationalism of direct relevance to Sun's nationalist thought.⁸⁴ Again Russell is often critical but acknowledged the contemporary importance of the phenomenon: "The strength of the instinct is shown by the laudatory names we give to it, such as patriotism, public spirit, devotion to the good of the community, etc."⁸⁵ Russell also identified the existence of nationalism in the west in a manner which may have appealed to Sun's requirements for China:

The great homogenous nations, such as England, France, and Germany, which have a long national history, identity of language and similarity of manners and

widespread and long-lasting influence." See, Ch'en, *China and the West*, 186. This would suggest that the 'Science of Social Structure' lectures and subsequently *The Problem of China* would have been the most influential aspects of Russell's work in and on China.

⁸² According to the *Bibliography*, it is possible that the additional chapters were the remaining five lectures that Russell had intended to give whilst in China. Ray Monk considered that Russell regarded the lectures as "a re-statement of his basic political philosophy as outlined on *The Principles of Social Reconstruction*." See, *Bertrand Russell*, 596 and 597 respectively. This might indicate that the lectures contained ideas that Russell had expressed elsewhere which increases the likelihood that Sun would have been aware of them. In the present context Russell's analysis of nationalism in *The Principles of Social Reconstruction* is pertinent to the discussion in the Peking lectures and later in *The Problem of China*. In *The Principles of Social Reconstruction* Russell defined nationalism as follows: "Nationalism, in theory, is the doctrine that men, by their sympathies and traditions, form natural groups, called "nations," each of which ought to be united under one central Government." Significantly, Russell added: "In the main this doctrine may be conceded." See, Russell, *The Principles of Social Reconstruction*, 23. See note 90 below.

⁸³ See, *A Bibliography of Bertrand Russell*, vol. I, 86.

⁸⁴ In Chinese this lecture was titled, "Shiyezhuyi Yu Guojiazhuoyi Zhi Huxiang Yingxiang [Interactions of Industrialism and Nationalism]" and also appeared under the same English title in *The Kaizo* 3 (October 1921), 123-137. See, *A Bibliography of Bertrand Russell*, vol. II, 55.

⁸⁵ Russell, *The Prospects of Industrial Civilization*, 58.

customs as well as the habit of fighting in common against external enemies, have all the elements combined that go to make up national feeling.⁸⁶

Indeed it was just this national feeling that Sun sought to inculcate in China. The lecture also contained an analysis of Britain and its empire that appears to be relevant to Sun's nationalist thought. Russell remarked on this subject:

The British Empire is self-subsistent as long as command of the seas is retained, but not a day longer. Russia will be self-subsistent as soon as her industry is developed. China could be, given industrial development and a strong army.⁸⁷

Russell also identified the importance of India to Britain in a context which echoes Sun's analysis: "The British have valued India chiefly as a market; if India belonged to any other Power, British goods would be excluded by a tariff."⁸⁸ Finally, Russell predicted a "contest between Russia and America for the exploitation of China."⁸⁹ Clearly this comment may have impressed upon Sun the urgency with which China must act to prevent such an outcome.

For Russell, Sun's nationalism jarred with his own cosmopolitanism whilst he found Sun's democratic credentials endearing. One of the questions which Russell attempted to discuss in *The Problem of China* was:

Can China preserve any shadow of independence without a great development of nationalism and militarism? I cannot bring myself to advocate nationalism and militarism, yet it is difficult to know what to say to patriotic Chinese who ask how they can be avoided.⁹⁰

Indeed, much of Russell's analysis can be placed in the context of a tension between his instinctive opposition to nationalism as an ideal and the necessities of the reality faced by nations like China. Russell would have been one of the western intellectuals who Sun cited as advocating cosmopolitanism and therefore his acceptance of Sun's nationalism is significant. *The Problem of China* contained a positive assessment of Sun and the government he had established in Canton which may have endeared Sun towards Russell's work. Russell made numerous references to Sun's role in the revolution and the government he subsequently established. In Chapter IV, "Modern China," which

⁸⁶ Ibid., 59.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 67.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 68.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 69.

also appeared in Chinese translation, Russell considered that Sun was the “chief promoter” of the 1911 revolution, which he described as “a moderate one, similar in spirit to ours of 1688.”⁹¹ Russell described Sun’s Canton government, established in 1920, as “progressive” and “efficient” and deserving of “the support of all progressive people.”⁹² In another chapter Russell described Sun’s opposition to China’s participation in the first world war and specifically his reasons set out in his communication to Lloyd George as “thoroughly sound.”⁹³ Finally, in his postscript, written in 1926 and added to the revised edition issued that year, Russell claimed that despite Sun’s death the Canton government remained “progressive and patriotic.”⁹⁴ It is clear from these comments that Russell endorsed Sun and his policies and had a high regard for him.⁹⁵

In *The Problem of China*, Russell attempted to provide a subjective analysis of the “merits and demerits” of Chinese civilization.⁹⁶ Crucially, for a reader such as Sun, Russell believed “that China must be saved by her own efforts” and therefore Russell insisted that the Chinese must be

left free to assimilate what they want of our civilization, and to reject what strikes them as bad; they will be able to achieve an organic growth from their own tradition, and to produce a very splendid result, combining our merits with theirs.⁹⁷

In this sense Russell wished to see relations between China and the west, and especially Britain, established on a more equal basis:

If intercourse between Western nations and China is to be fruitful, we must cease to regard ourselves as missionaries of a superior civilization, or, worse still, as men

⁹⁰ Russell, *The Problem of China*, 16.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 68 and 69.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 140. In 1916, Sun sent a telegram to Lloyd George appealing for China not to be dragged into the war on the side of the allies and began by referring to the kidnapping incident: “I owe my life to England; I am grateful to her for it.” However, Sun considered “that a breach of Chinese neutrality would be disastrous for both our countries.” Sun concluded: “It is therefore quite impossible to ask anything of China but for the strictest neutrality.” Sun, “Telegram to Lloyd George,” 1916 in *The Teachings of Sun Yat-sen*, 41-42.

⁹⁴ Russell, *The Problem of China*, 253.

⁹⁵ In a letter to the writer Rachel Brooks in 1963, Russell admitted that he “had admired Sun Yat-sen.” Russell to Brooks, 6 August, 1963 in *A Bibliography of Bertrand Russell*, vol. I, 522.

⁹⁶ Russell, *The Problem of China*, 10.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

who have a right to exploit, oppress, and swindle the Chinese because they are an “inferior” race.⁹⁸

In Chapter IV, Russell admitted that although the Chinese were “as yet incompetent in politics and backward in economic development” they did possess, what he regarded as, a “civilization at least as good as our own.”⁹⁹ This would seem to conflict with Sun’s claim that Russell believed Chinese civilization was superior, although it is characteristic of the rhetorical exaggeration with which Sun was associated. In Chapter XII, Russell described the Chinese strength as “the toughness of their natural customs, their power of passive resistance, and their unrivalled national cohesiveness.”¹⁰⁰ This passage would seem to be relevant to Sun’s lectures which advocated Gandhian methods and which praised latent nationalist qualities. Also in this chapter Russell observed that the Chinese civilization was “the only one that has survived from ancient times.”¹⁰¹ All these sentiments were shared by Sun.

Conclusion

This chapter has revealed a number of British influences which affected various aspects of Sun’s nationalist thought. A significant British influence, and one that has been overlooked previously, was the work of Bertrand Russell. There is evidence to suggest that Sun identified British patriotism as an important dimension of nationalism and, as such, a quality the Chinese should emulate. The most important influences in this context were Edwin Collins, James Cantlie and more generally Sun’s observations and knowledge of Britain. The Boer and Indian nationalist struggles, and especially Gandhi’s leadership of the latter, were also important influences on the development of Sun’s nationalism.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 11.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 63.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 207.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 208.

Chapter IV

Gandhi and Nationalism

The purpose of this chapter is to outline Gandhi's nationalist thought in order to examine the nature and extent of the influence of British political thought and practice thereon. The first section will consider the development and origins of Gandhi's nationalist thought up to 1914 and the subsequent section will cover the period up to 1930. The last section will examine Gandhi's later nationalist thought up to his death in 1948. Finally, a conclusion will summarize the findings of the chapter.

The Origins of Gandhi's Nationalist Thought, up to 1914

One of the earliest expressions of Gandhi's nationalist thought is contained in a 1905 article on the Italian nationalist Mazzini. In the article, Gandhi observed that: "Italy as a nation came into existence recently."¹ Significantly, Gandhi drew a parallel between India and Italy: "Before 1870, she was like the India or Kathiawad of today."² Gandhi attributed the unification of Italy to Mazzini: "Today Italy is an independent European country and her people are regarded as a distinct nation. All this can be said to be the achievement of one man."³ Gandhi provided a brief biography of Mazzini which revealed some remarkable similarities with Gandhi's own life and explained: "In spite of great scholarship that he evidenced, he gave up his books out of patriotism and undertook

¹ Gandhi, "Joseph Mazzini - A Remarkable Career" *Indian Opinion* 22 July, 1905 in *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 1, ed. Iyer, 105.

² Ibid. Kathiawad was the peninsula containing Gandhi's home province.

³ Ibid. There is much evidence of Gandhi's familiarity with Mazzini's work. According to Pandiri, Gandhi mentioned reading Mazzini's *The Duties of Man and Other Essays* in a letter to his son, Manilal, from Pretoria prison in 1909. Pandiri speculates that the edition concerned was, *The Duties of Man and Other Essays* ed. E. Rhys (London: J. M. Dent & Co., 1907) and refers to *Collected Works X*, 65 as the source. See, Pandiri comp., *A Comprehensive Annotated Bibliography on Mahatma Gandhi*, 293. *Collected Works X*, 65 refers to the Appendix of "Hind Swaraj," which contains a reference to Mazzini's *Duties of Man* as an authority cited by Gandhi. Despite this the fact that Gandhi was able to write an article on Mazzini in 1905 suggests that he had read Mazzini, or a biography, prior to 1909 and prior to the 1907 edition of *The Duties of Man*.

the study of law, and began using his legal knowledge gratuitously to help the poor.”⁴

Mazzini established the modern Italian nation, after returning to Italy from England, and Gandhi praised Mazzini’s nationalist qualities:

In Italy he is considered one of the greatest of men. He was a pious and religious man, ever free from selfishness and pride. Poverty was for him an ornament. The sufferings of others he regarded as his own. There are very few instances in the world where a single man has brought about the uplift of his country by his own strength of mind and his extreme devotion during his own lifetime.⁵

The example of Italy, and in particular Mazzini, would seem to constitute an important influence on Gandhi’s nationalist thought. Gandhi incorporated the qualities that he attributed to Mazzini into his own nationalist thought. As such it adds a further dimension to British influence on Gandhi, since he read Mazzini in English and Gandhi likened the Italian situation to that of India. The Italian example also reflects the impact on Gandhi of the late Victorian sympathy with Italian nationalism. Moreover, once Gandhi had identified parallels between India and Italy the contrast between that sympathy and the absence of any such feelings toward India would have been quite apparent to him.

Hind Swaraj represents a substantial contribution to Gandhi’s nationalist thought and twelve of its twenty chapters deal either wholly or largely with this subject.⁶ In the first chapter⁷ Gandhi made a defence of the work of the Indian National Congress and its founders and criticised those who condemned it as well as those who condemned all Englishmen. As an example, Gandhi rebuked those who questioned the sincerity of the moderate Indian nationalist Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917), “the Father of the Nation,” because he believed “that the English Governors will do justice” and therefore advocated a more moderate policy.⁸ Despite Gandhi’s own opinion that the time had come for more active advocacy of Indian home rule, it was a “matter of shame” to “speak about the great man in terms of disrespect” for it was Naoroji who had informed Indians “that the

⁴ Gandhi, “Joseph Mazzini - A Remarkable Career” *Indian Opinion* 22 July, 1905 in *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 1., ed. Iyer, 105.

⁵ Ibid., 106. There is a striking similarity between Mazzini’s life and work, as Gandhi portrayed it here, and Gandhi’s own experience.

⁶ In the present context only seven of these twelve chapters are relevant.

⁷ Ch. I “The Congress and its Officials.”

⁸ Gandhi, “Hind Swaraj,” in *Collected Works* X, 9. Naoroji was also the first Indian to sit in the House of Commons following his election as the Liberal M. P. for Central Finsbury in 1892. See,

English had sucked our life-blood.”⁹ Similarly, in contrast to the violent extremists, Gandhi considered that: “Many Englishmen desire Home Rule for India.”¹⁰ In the following two chapters Gandhi discussed the current condition of India and in particular the partition of Bengal.¹¹ The partition, Gandhi claimed, had been instigated by Lord Curzon, “in the teeth of all opposition” and had produced a “shock to the British power” and created “discontent” and an “awakening” of Indian nationalism.¹²

Gandhi’s praise of Dadabhai Naoroji reveals an interesting dimension to British influences in this area. A few years earlier Gandhi had commented that Naoroji was “undoubtedly to India what Mr. Gladstone was to Great Britain.”¹³ In particular, Gandhi remarked of Naoroji: “His is the purest type of patriotism and comes from a sense of duty to the motherland.”¹⁴ The following year Gandhi developed his praise of Gladstone whilst reviewing Morley’s biography of Gladstone.¹⁵ Gladstone, Gandhi believed, was “one of the greatest men of this age” who through his deep love of learning “was respected both by the Government and the people, and he became much beloved of

Sources of Indian Tradition vol. II, *India and Pakistan* ed. Hay, 87-88.

⁹ Gandhi, “Hind Swaraj,” in *Collected Works* X, 9. Gandhi was probably referring to Naoroji’s *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* [1901] which developed his famous ‘drain theory’ to describe the flow of pensions, dividends and other receipts to Britain from India. Gandhi cited this work as an authority in the Appendix. See, *ibid.*, 65.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 11. Therefore, it was prudent to engage the British, and Gandhi explained: “[T]hat if we shun every Englishman as an enemy, Home Rule will be delayed. But if we are just to them, we shall receive their support in our progress towards the goal.”

¹¹ Ch. II “The Partition of Bengal and Ch. III “Discontent and Unrest.”

¹² *Ibid.*, 12-13.

¹³ Gandhi, “The Grand Old Man of India,” *Indian Opinion* 19 November, 1903 in *Collected Works* IV, 49.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 50.

¹⁵ Gandhi described the work he was reviewing: “A biography in three volumes of Mr. Gladstone ... written by Mr. Morley, his principal follower, has come out recently.” Gandhi also observed that biography was an unknown but useful medium in India: “Since biographical writing is rare in India, people there have not unfortunately been able to appreciate its value. People in the West are more advanced in this matter. Many kinds of lessons are to be found in the lives of great men, and they make a profound impression on the community.” Gandhi, “Mr. Gladstone’s Biography” *Indian Opinion* 14 January, 1904 in *Collected Works* IV, 107. This was undoubtedly a reference to John Morley’s *The Life of William Ewart Gladstone* (1903). It was also reprinted in January 1904. In the introduction to his *Autobiography*, Gandhi, while justifying his decision to publish the work, related a comment made to him that autobiography was also a “practice peculiar to the West” or “amongst those who have come under Western influence.” See, *Autobiography*, 13. Gandhi’s comments are interesting for they reveal an additional aspect of British influence. The importance of biography in Victorian political thought has been identified by Collini who described the “exemplary biography” as one of the “chief means of diffusing” ideas and “to inspire emulation.” See, *Public Moralists*, 195.

them.”¹⁶ In his assessment of Gladstone’s career it is possible to detect an explanation for the high regard in which Gandhi held him:

Although he failed in his endeavours to get self-rule for Ireland, [this] in the interests of England’s prosperity, even Englishmen and his opponents could not say that his labours had not been in the cause of the people’s weal.¹⁷

Thus Gladstone’s anti-imperialism and his dedicated public service were undoubtedly appealing to Gandhi. Finally, Gandhi listed Gladstone’s qualities which “appeared most worthy of emulation” and included “the great man’s gentleness and humility, devotion to family, the state and the people, loyalty to the Queen, patriotism, and faith in the moral law.”¹⁸ It is apparent that Gandhi drew on Naoroji and Gladstone for inspiration in his nationalist thought.

In *Hind Swaraj*, having examined the current condition of India, Gandhi proceeded to consider the historical basis of British rule.¹⁹ Instead of blaming the British for conquering India, Gandhi blamed Indians for their predicament: “The English have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them.”²⁰ Gandhi explained that it was not only Indians who blamed the British, rather than themselves, but also: “Some Englishmen state that they took and they hold India by the sword.”²¹ Just as Gandhi believed that the British had not taken India by the sword he believed that India was not held by the sword: “The sword is entirely useless for holding India.”²² For Gandhi, the British, who were as Napoleon had described them, “a nation of shopkeepers,” had come to, and remained in India, “for the

¹⁶ Gandhi, “Mr. Gladstone’s Biography” *Indian Opinion* 14 January, 1904 in *Collected Works* IV, 107.

¹⁷ Ibid. Gandhi identified a similar sentiment in the case of the Transvaal. See note 25 below.

¹⁸ Ibid., 108.

¹⁹ Ch. VII “Why was India Lost?”

²⁰ Gandhi, “Hind Swaraj,” in *Collected Works* X, 22. Gandhi had used this argument as early as 1895 in his appeal to the Britons in South Africa on behalf of the democratic rights of the Indian community. In particular, Gandhi utilised, anonymously, Professor Seeley’s argument made in *The Expansion of England*. Gandhi, “The Indian Franchise: An Appeal to Every Briton in South Africa,” in *Collected Works* I, 285. Later, Gandhi confirmed Seeley as the source of the argument, see, Gandhi, “The Cinderella of the Empire,” *Indian Opinion* 30 July, 1903 in *Collected Works* III, 383. The influence of Seeley on this aspect of Gandhi’s democratic thought is discussed in the chapter on that subject.

²¹ Ibid., 23.

²² Ibid.

sake of their commerce.”²³ Thus, it was “money” and in particular the involvement and co-operation of Indians in “trade,” rather than “arms and ammunition,” that maintained the British position in India.²⁴ The implication of this analysis for the nationalist movement was that a strategy which targeted commercial, rather than military or political targets, would be more successful. Gandhi used the example of the Transvaal to demonstrate that when commercial attractions were exhausted or unavailable “Mr Gladstone discovered that it was not right for the English to hold it.”²⁵ Further, a strategy which pursued the former, via non-co-operation, would be non-violent whilst, the pursuit of the latter would be violent and ultimately, futile. As well as the influence of Gladstone, this observation reveals that Gandhi was aware of the British position in South Africa, and as such it was an awareness he shared with Sun.

Next Gandhi discussed his belief that British rule had provided the conduit through which modern civilization had entered India.²⁶ Crucially, Gandhi considered, “that India is being ground down, not under the English heel, but under that of modern civilization.”²⁷ The introduction of modern civilization had caused India to become “irreligious” and prone to “immorality.”²⁸ Modern civilization had manifested itself in the railways, and the ‘immoral’ professions of law and medicine and had thwarted the development of Indian nationalism and accentuated divisions between Hindus and Muslims.²⁹ Gandhi summarised the condition of India under the British:

The English have taught us that we were not one nation before and that it will require centuries before we become one nation. This is without foundation. We were one nation before they came to India. One thought inspired us. Our mode of life was the same. It was because we were one nation that they were able to establish one kingdom. Subsequently they divided us.³⁰

Gandhi’s conception of Indian unity included that between Hindus and Muslims, although he accepted that there might be some natural differences between the two

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ch. VIII “The Condition of India.”

²⁷ Ibid., 24.

²⁸ Ibid., 24 and 33.

²⁹ Ibid., 26-36.

³⁰ Ibid., 27.

communities: "I do not suggest that the Hindus and the Mahomedans will never fight. Two brothers living together often do so."³¹ However, Gandhi warned: "But when we do quarrel, we certainly do not want to engage counsel and resort to English or any law-courts."³² In summary, Gandhi stated: "My firm opinion is that the lawyers have enslaved India, have accentuated Hindu - Mahomedan dissensions and have confirmed English authority."³³ The implication of this analysis was that Indian home-rule would prevent modern civilization penetrating India further.

The legal profession constituted a prime example of both Gandhi's belief that Indians had co-operated with the British in the administration of India and the dangers of modern civilization.³⁴ Gandhi's attack on his own profession was remarkable for its vehemence: "Lawyers are men who have little to do. Lazy people, in order to indulge in luxuries, take up such professions."³⁵ Gandhi blamed lawyers for perpetuating British rule:

But the greatest injury they have done to the country is that they have tightened the English grip. Do you think it would be possible for the English to carry on their Government without law courts? It is wrong to consider that courts are established for the benefit of the people. Those who want to perpetuate their power do so through the courts.³⁶

Crucially, it was the participation of Indians in the legal system that maintained British rule:

The chief thing, however, to be remembered is that without lawyers courts could not have been established or conducted and without the latter the English could not rule. Supposing that there were only English judges, English pleaders and English police, they could only rule over the English. The English could not do without Indian judges and Indian pleaders.³⁷

Gandhi's criticism of the legal profession implied the withdrawal of Indian involvement to weaken British rule in India. Gandhi's programme to achieve Indian independence followed from his analysis of the nature and origins of British rule, and modern

³¹ Ibid., 32.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ch. XI "The Condition of India (cont.): Lawyers."

³⁵ Ibid., 33.

³⁶ Ibid., 34.

³⁷ Ibid.

civilization and its manifestations.³⁸ Since Gandhi blamed modern civilization, rather than British rule *per se*, his solution required its rejection:

Now you will have seen that it is not necessary for us to have as our goal the expulsion of the English. If the English become Indianized, we can accommodate them. If they wish to remain in India along with their civilization, there is no room for them.³⁹

More broadly, the professions were manifestations of modern civilization which had been introduced by the British and which should be rejected.

Next Gandhi considered the case of Italy in relation to his nationalist thought.⁴⁰ He observed that India could learn from the Italian example: "Mazzini has shown in his writings on the duty of man that every man must learn how to rule himself. This has not happened in Italy."⁴¹ Gandhi believed that the Italians had only managed to expel their rulers and had not obtained the type of self-rule which Mazzini had sought for Italy and which Gandhi sought for India. Gandhi stated: "If you believe that because Italians rule Italy the Italian nation is happy, you are groping in darkness. Mazzini has shown conclusively that Italy did not become free."⁴² Mazzini constitutes an important western influence but Gandhi also utilised Mazzini's life and work in connection with British influences. In addition to the 1905 article on Mazzini, discussed above, Gandhi made numerous references to Mazzini between then and the publication of *Hind Swaraj*. For example, in 1907 Gandhi observed that Mazzini had "suffered banishment for the sake of his country" and consequently he was "revered ... as the father of Italian unity."⁴³ In the same article, developing the theme, Gandhi identified the willingness "to suffer pain before enjoying pleasure" and to do so "for others" as a "divine law."⁴⁴ This 'law' applied in "political matters" and specifically Gandhi drew on the British example to illustrate its application, and in doing so linked British influences with that of Mazzini on his nationalist thought:

³⁸ This was discussed in Ch. XIV "How can India become free?"

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 39. This passage hints that at this time Gandhi was primarily concerned with rejecting modern civilization rather than British rule.

⁴⁰ Ch. XV "Italy and India."

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 41.

⁴³ Gandhi, "Divine Law," *Indian Opinion* 27 July, 1907 in *Collected Works* VII, 122.

Hampden, Tyler, Cromwell and other Englishmen were prepared to sacrifice their all for the people and did not feel concerned at being robbed of all their possessions. Nor did they feel anxious when their lives were in danger. That is why the British people today rule over a large empire.⁴⁵

There is one final way in which the influence of Mazzini is linked to British influences on Gandhi's nationalist thought. In an article in 1909, discussing his reading in gaol, Gandhi revealed he had read Thomas Carlyle's "forceful book" on the history of the French revolution.⁴⁶ From Carlyle's history, Gandhi claimed: "I realized after reading it that it is not from the white nations that India can learn the way out of her present degradation. It is my belief that the French people have gained nothing of value through the Revolution."⁴⁷ This interpretation Gandhi believed he shared with Mazzini and he also claimed: "Mazzini also thought the same way."⁴⁸ Carlyle was another important British influence at this time and there is evidence to suggest he also exerted an influence on Gandhi's later nationalist thought.

Two important concerns of Gandhi's nationalist thought at this time were his refutation of the beliefs that the British held India by the sword and that India was not a nation in the accepted sense of the term. The argument of Seeley's *The Expansion of England*, a work with which Gandhi was familiar, resembles that which he used in discussing the nature of British rule in India and it constitutes an important influence.⁴⁹ Significantly it is an influence which has been neglected in the literature.⁵⁰ In relation to

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Gandhi, "My Experiences in Gaol [II]" *Indian Opinion* 5 June, 1909, in *Collected Work* IX, 241.

⁴⁷ Ibid. Years later, during the debate concerning the famous "Quit India" resolution of the Congress, Gandhi referred to Carlyle's history and linked the lessons he gleaned from it with his belief in non-violence and the implications for his democratic thought: "I read Carlyle's *French Revolution* while I was in prison, and Pandit Jawaharlal has told me something about the Russian revolution. But it is my conviction that in as much as these struggles were fought with the weapon of violence they failed to realize the democratic ideal." Gandhi quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* Vol. VI, 189. The influence of this work is discussed in more detail below.

⁴⁸ Gandhi, "My Experiences in Gaol [II]" *Indian Opinion* 5 June, 1909, in *Collected Works* IX, 241. In *The Duties of Man*, Mazzini argued that the "condition of the people" had "not improved" following the French revolution because it over emphasised rights at the expense of duty. Mazzini, "On The Duties on Man" in *Life and Writings* vol. IV, *Critical and Literary*, 211-216.

⁴⁹ Whilst he was in South Africa, Gandhi cited this argument of Seeley's in support of his contention that India, since it had not been conquered, had freely submitted to British rule on the condition that Indians would be entitled to equality within the empire, and by extension equality of treatment in South Africa. As such this argument is more appropriately discussed with Gandhi's democratic thought.

⁵⁰ For example, although Parel is one of the few who even mentioned Gandhi's reading of

Gandhi's nationalist thought, the crux of Seeley's argument was his observation of "the simple obvious fact of the extension of the English name into other countries of the globe, the foundation of Greater Britain."⁵¹ Pursuing this argument, Seeley considered that "when the State advances beyond the limits of the nationality, its power becomes precarious and artificial."⁵² As an example of this phenomenon, Seeley cited the British empire in India: "The English State is powerful there but the English nation is but an imperceptible drop in the ocean of an Asiatic population."⁵³ Seeley also believed that India was not a conquered country in so far as it had not been taken and was certainly not held by force of arms. Rather than being conquered by the British, Seeley believed that: "India can hardly be said to have been conquered at all by foreigners; she has rather conquered herself."⁵⁴ This would seem to coincide with Gandhi's analysis of Indian participation in the professions as a contributor to the maintenance of British rule and his view that Indians had 'been found wanting.' Despite this explanation, Seeley considered that it was still a misleading interpretation of the situation; this was because it assumed India was a unified, western-style nation state before the arrival of the British. On the contrary, according to Seeley: "The truth is that there was no India in the political and scarcely in any other, sense."⁵⁵ The implication of this was that it was redundant to consider India in traditional western terms when discussing notions of foreign conquest: "The fundamental fact then is that India had no jealousy of the foreigner, because India had no sense whatever of national unity, because there was no India and therefore,

Seeley, he did so only in the context of Gandhi's discussion of Italian nationalism. Parel observed that Gandhi had first used the notion that it was Indian acquiescence that maintained British rule in his translation of Ruskin's *Unto This Last* in 1908. Further, Parel noted that Gandhi had read Seeley at least by 1903 whereas it is evident that it was much earlier and it was much more influential than the absence of analysis in the literature would suggest. Parel ed., *Hind Swaraj*, xlvii and 39, n.60. See also note 20 above.

⁵¹ Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 8.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 46.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 202. Seeley went so far as to state that India "elected to put an end to anarchy by submitting to a single Government, even though that Government was in the hand of foreigners."

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

properly speaking, no foreigner.”⁵⁶ Seeley’s position on this subject reveals Gandhi’s selective borrowing from *The Expansion of England*.

Seeley developed his argument that India had no unity, prior to the advent of British rule, by comparing the Indian situation with that of Italy. This is significant given Gandhi’s discussion of the Italian example. Seeley also discussed the implications for Britain of an awakening of Indian nationalism. Geographically, Seeley felt there was some similarity between Italy and India: “Italy corresponds in the map of Europe to India in that of Asia.”⁵⁷ There was a further similarity that Seeley described:

No long time ago Italy was subject to the ascendancy and partly to the actual rule of Austria. Its inhabitants were less warlike, its armies much less efficient than those of Austria and Austria was close at hand. And yet, though fighting at so much disadvantage, Italy has made herself free.⁵⁸

For Seeley, this fact was surprising since on all of these points, he considered that “India is more advantageously situated in respect to England than Italy with respect to Austria.”⁵⁹ Seeley explained this paradox, by claiming that the similarities between Indian and Italy were based on the “wholly unfounded” assumption “that India constitutes a nationality” and “that this nationality has been conquered by England.”⁶⁰ According to all the criteria of nationality, commonality of language, race, custom and religious history, India failed in comparison to Italy to demonstrate a significant degree of national unity.⁶¹ In summary, Seeley remarked

that the name India ought not to be classed with such names as England or France, which correspond to nationalities, but rather with such as Europe, making a group of nationalities which have chanced to obtain a common name owing to some physical separation. Like Europe it is a mere geographic expression, but even so, it has been much less uniformly used than the name Europe.⁶²

Seeley considered that “India has never really been united so as to form one state except under the English.”⁶³ Given Gandhi’s discussion of Italian nationalism it is possible that

⁵⁶ Ibid., 203.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 218.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 219.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid., 220-225. Seeley did concede that in religious terms India came closest to achieving a degree of national unity.

⁶² Ibid., 221.

⁶³ Ibid., 224.

the favourable aspects of Seeley's comparison of the Indian and Italian cases would have had a resonance with Gandhi.

Although Seeley dismissed the existence of Indian nationalism he suggested that it could develop in the future and this possibility would have been noted by Gandhi. In offering this explanation of the British position in India, Seeley posited an implication of the possible development of Indian nationalism in the future:

There is then no Indian nationality, though there are some germs out of which we can conceive an Indian nationality developing itself. It is this fact, and not some enormous superiority on the part of the English race, that makes our Empire in India possible. If there could arise in India a nationality-movement similar to that which we witnessed in Italy, the English power could not even make the resistance that was made in Italy by Austria, but must succumb at once.⁶⁴

Crucially, Seeley warned:

Now if the feeling of a common nationality began to exist there only feebly, if, without inspiring any active desire to drive out the foreigner, it only created a notion that it was shameful to assist him in maintaining his dominion, from that day almost our Empire would cease to exist.⁶⁵

This 'notion' was exactly what Gandhi sought to achieve in India. Continuing this theme, Seeley remarked: "In a moment the impossibility of holding India would become manifest to us. For it is a condition of our Indian Empire that it should be held without any great effort."⁶⁶ In summary, Seeley described the ultimate implication of his argument:

And thus the mystic halo of marvel and miracle which has gathered round this empire disappears before a fixed scrutiny. It disappears when we perceive that, though we are foreign rulers in India, we are not conquerors resting on superior force, when we recognise it is a mere European prejudice to assume that since we do not rule *by* the will of the people of India, we must needs rule *against* their will.⁶⁷

Seeley believed that the mutiny of 1857 had failed because it was not "a nationality-movement spreading among the people and at last gaining the army."⁶⁸ However, if a movement were grounded on this basis it would overcome British rule:

But the moment a mutiny is but threatened, which shall be no mere mutiny, but the expression of a universal feeling of nationality, at that moment all hope is at an

⁶⁴ Ibid., 227.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 228.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 231.

end, as all desire ought to be at an end, of preserving our Empire. For we are not really conquerors of India, and we cannot rule her as conquerors.⁶⁹

Given the context of Gandhi's nationalist thought at this time it is reasonable to believe that he had taken Seeley's argument and identified India's need for a patriotic leader to develop latent Indian nationalism. Thus, Seeley's observations on the absence of an effective nationalist movement in India and the implications for British rule should one develop would have appealed to Gandhi.

Despite his comments in *Hind Swaraj* and the lessons he may have learned from Seeley's analysis in practical terms Gandhi's nationalism was still largely latent. Gandhi left South Africa in July 1914 and returned to India via London where he arrived in August. Gandhi organised Indian volunteers to serve as first aiders as part of the British war effort. In advocating this policy Gandhi met some resistance from other Indian nationalists but at this time he was still convinced that Indians "ought to do their bit in the war."⁷⁰ Gandhi based his argument along similar lines to that he had used during the Boer conflict.⁷¹ If Indians sought to "improve" their "status through the help and co-operation of the British" they had a "duty to win their help by standing by them in their hour of need."⁷² Having succeeded in obtaining support for his policy Gandhi and the Indian volunteers underwent a course of medical training prior to deployment in France.⁷³ Unfortunately, Gandhi's health deteriorated, preventing him from further involvement with the medical volunteers, and he returned to India in December 1914. Gandhi's actions in London during this trip, five years after he had written *Hind Swaraj*, demonstrate that he had not completely rejected Britain and all it represented for him.

The Development of Gandhi's Nationalist Thought, 1915-1930

This period, when Gandhi's influence on the nationalist movement was at its zenith, contains the core of his nationalist thought. In an article in 1920 Gandhi developed his

⁶⁹ Ibid., 234.

⁷⁰ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 316.

⁷¹ Gandhi had also formed an Indian Ambulance Corps during the Boer conflict. The corps was mentioned in despatches for its brave work, under fire, at Spion Kop. Ibid., 203-204.

⁷² Ibid., 316-317.

⁷³ According to Gandhi the training was conducted under the auspices of the "well-known" Dr. Cantlie. Ibid., 317. Coincidentally, this was Dr. James Cantlie who had taught Sun Yat-sen in Hong

contention that Indian independence was attainable promptly and at the behest of the Indian population rather than the British authorities. The article discussed Gandhi's claim that "swaraj would be attained in one year."⁷⁴ Gandhi defined swaraj as "a state such that we can maintain our separate existence without the presence of the English."⁷⁵ Crucially, Gandhi explained: "There can be no swaraj without our feeling and being the equals of Englishmen."⁷⁶ Gandhi proceeded to observe that a relatively small number of Britons had been able to rule India because Indians had co-operated in the system of government and he described this situation as "amazing" and "humiliating."⁷⁷ For Gandhi, the solution was simple: "If we refuse to supply them with men and money, we achieve our goal, namely, swaraj, equality, manliness."⁷⁸ According to Gandhi, one effect of Anglo-Indian relations on this basis was "that each is dragging the other down. It is common experience that Englishmen lose in character after residence in India and that Indians lose in courage and manliness by contact with Englishmen."⁷⁹ This situation meant that Indians must not look to blame the British but must turn inward and examine the extent of their co-operation with British rule. Further, Gandhi drew on the British connection positively, to emphasise qualities of British nationalism, and negatively to illustrate the framework of imperialism which was holding India in conditions of less than equality.

A striking feature of Gandhi's nationalist thought at this time is his concept of manliness, which included the stress on Indian self-respect, courage and fearlessness in pursuit of independence. There is a sense in which Gandhi associated manliness or national strength or virility with independence and freedom. Britain possessed these qualities whilst India under British rule lacked them. Martin Green, in his study of Gandhi and Tolstoy, commented on this aspect of Gandhi's thought: "That British

Kong and had later rescued him from the Chinese Legation in London.

⁷⁴ Gandhi, "Swaraj in One Year" *Young India* 22 September, 1920 in *Collected Works* XVIII, 270.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 271.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

culture, at least British politics, was uniquely manly, that was a lesson Gandhi never tired of teaching.”⁸⁰ Green referred in particular to the occasion, whilst in South Africa, when Gandhi had cited India’s ‘unmanliness’ as a cause of the inferior position of Indians in that society. In this article Gandhi had asked the readers of *Indian Opinion*: “Why do the Dutch and the British both hate us? We believe the root cause is not the colour of our skin, but our general cowardice, our unmanliness and our pusillanimity.”⁸¹ Given Gandhi’s repeated references to the quality, so evident in Britain and the British nation and so lacking in India, it is reasonable to suggest it constitutes a significant British influence on his nationalist thought. In this sense Gandhi regarded national manliness or strength and self-confidence as a positive quality of British nationalism and incorporated it into his own nationalist thought.

Gandhi’s conception of manliness is most apparent at a national level. However, when the manifestations of manliness in the Victorian character are examined it is evident that Gandhi also displayed many of them at an individual level. Gandhi’s preoccupation with health and diet, walking, cultivating fearlessness, patriotism and his spirit of service are all qualities shared by the cult of manliness.⁸² There is an interesting dichotomy between the manifestations of manliness on these different levels. In one sense manliness

⁸⁰ Green, *The Origins of Nonviolence*, 13. Green also noted Gandhi’s willingness to use the term “un-British” and his association of Britishness with manliness. See, *ibid.*, 12.

⁸¹ Gandhi, “English Liberalism” *Indian Opinion* 9 March, 1907 in *Collected Works* VI, 358. In terms of manliness, Gandhi proceeded to cite a specific manifestation of ‘unmanliness,’ which he described as follows: “Making a false show of youthfulness, we waste our manhood in sensual pleasures and abuse our womenfolk. Without understanding the true significance of marriage, we remain blindly absorbed in carnal enjoyment. This is an example of our unmanliness.” See, *ibid.* Gandhi’s criticism of marriage in Indian society recalls his own experience of early marriage. This aspect of manliness which stressed individual self-restraint can be contrasted with Gandhi’s use of the concept when he applied it to the nation and where he emphasised other aspects like courage and strength.

⁸² Many of Gandhi’s qualities can be interpreted as manly. He stressed the importance of physical exercise and manual labour in particular and was a keen walker throughout his life, since his student days in London when he began walking to save on public transport costs. Famously, Gandhi used to take daily dawn walks around London’s east end whilst attending the Round Table Conference in 1931. In an article in *Young India* Gandhi mentioned these London walks: “Needless to say I was able to live exactly as in India, and early morning walks through the streets of east London are a memory that can never be effaced.” Gandhi, “A Retrospect” *Young India* 31 December, 1931 in *Collected Works* XLVIII, 433. Similarly, Gandhi’s dietary, hygiene and health concerns and fads are well known and he wrote widely on this subject. Gandhi discusses many these topics and the motivations behind them in great detail in his *Autobiography*. In a *Harijan* article in 1936 Gandhi revealed his belief that a crucial part of life’s trial was the resistance of temptation: “Man’s estate is one of probation. During that period he is played upon by evil forces as well as good. He is ever prey to temptations. He has to prove his manliness by resisting and fighting temptations.” Gandhi quoted in Iyer, *The Moral and Political*

was often attributed to imperialists, and Gandhi seemed to advocate the adoption of similar manly qualities by Indians. However, in another sense Gandhi sought to utilise manly qualities to oppose imperialism more overtly. In this sense Ashis Nandy has speculated that Gandhism amounted to “a transcultural protest against the hyper-masculine world view of colonialism.”⁸³ In essence, according to Nandy, Gandhi attempted to invert the masculine-feminine colonial relationship between Britain and India in two ways. Firstly, Gandhi observed that Indians had failed to remove the British by pursuing ‘manly’ methods, through violence and terrorism, and in failing in this way they had become cowards.⁸⁴ Secondly, and in view of this failure, Gandhi insisted that, in any event, the feminine principle was more powerful because there was a “closer conjunction between power, activism and femininity,” and therefore Indians should follow ‘feminine,’ non-violent methods.⁸⁵ Crucially, Nandy believes that this feminine principle Gandhi pursued, as with his thought in general, was a result of “Gandhi’s spirited search for the other culture of Britain” and his attempt “to be a living symbol of the other West.”⁸⁶ Therefore, his advocacy of non-violence was in part a result of his British connection, and in particular Nandy observed that: “Gandhi’s closest friend [Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940)] was an English cleric devoted not only to the cause of Indian freedom but also a softer version of Christianity.”⁸⁷ Further evidence of the importance of Gandhi’s British connection in respect of this central aspect of his thought was the fact that according to Nandy: “In the 150 years of British rule prior to Gandhi, no significant social reformer or political leader had tried to give centrality to non-violence as a major Hindu or Indian virtue.”⁸⁸ Gandhi sought to apply the qualities of manliness at the individual and national level to the Indian nation as he believed they existed in the British

Thought of Mahatma Gandhi, 94.

⁸³ Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 48.

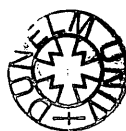
⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 51-53.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 51 and 49.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 49. Andrews was an Anglican missionary who Gandhi first met in South Africa. The pair also met later in India and also during Gandhi’s trip to London to attend the Round Table Conference. The closeness of their relationship is documented in Gracie, *Gandhi and Charlie: The Story of a Friendship*.

⁸⁸ Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 51.



nation and amongst British officials. Thus the concept of manliness constitutes an important source of influence on Gandhi's nationalist thought.

At both the national and individual levels Gandhi's conception of manliness was influenced by British sources. Firstly, Gandhi attributed the quality to the British nation in general. Gandhi cited Britain's superior position in India and elsewhere as evidence of the British manliness. It has also been widely acknowledged that Gandhi was deeply influenced by Victorian culture.⁸⁹ In this respect manliness would have been an integral part of the background in which Gandhi developed his political thought. Green considered the 'adventure myth' as a significant and related aspect of this background. According to Green, this myth, which was a complex of literature which extolled the imperial adventure and the bravery and heroism of British soldiers and explorers, was incorporated into Gandhi's sense of the independence struggle as a similar heroic adventure.⁹⁰ Secondly, an Indian demand for independence was integral to the attainment of Indian national manliness and as such the British would respect the Indian nation more for making such a call. Thirdly, a cause of India's unmanliness was the lack of pride and self-respect in its traditional cultural tradition, which had accompanied the growth of British influence in India and the introduction of modern civilization. Additionally, many traditional British studies of India, as exemplified by Seeley's *The Expansion of England*, were critical of India's lack of nationalism. Gandhi addressed these criticisms in outlining his assessment of the condition of India and his solution in his nationalist thought.

During the 1920s Gandhi also discussed his concept of *swadeshi* which was designed to foster Indian self-sufficiency. Gandhi's Presidential Address to the Indian National Congress in 1924 outlined his scheme of *swaraj*. Gandhi linked the various elements of his nationalist thought and discussed the boycott of foreign cloth and concomitant advocacy of hand-spinning as a method of increasing self-reliance to weaken

⁸⁹ See, for example, Hay, "The Making of a Late-Victorian Hindu," 75-98, and Devanesen, *The Making of the Mahatma*.

⁹⁰ Green, *The Origins of Nonviolence*, 8-10.

the hold of the British and revitalise the Indian village industries.⁹¹ In a 1925 article, Gandhi stated: "My definition of Swadeshi is well known. I must not serve my distant neighbour at the expense of the nearest."⁹² In particular, Gandhi applied it to the case of textiles: "My Swadeshi therefore chiefly centres round the hand-spun khaddar and extends to every thing that can be and is produced in India. My nationalism is as broad as my Swadeshi."⁹³ In an article in 1926, Gandhi illustrated the concept while relating an incident that had allegedly taken place in Britain. Gandhi claimed that King George, whilst attending an "Industrial Exhibition" had "noticed a government employee typing on an American typewriter."⁹⁴ Gandhi explained that "the King, a shrewd man, saw that one should not reject a local product because a foreign article is better."⁹⁵ In other words, Gandhi interpreted this as the King's support for the concept of *swadeshi*. Gandhi used the illustration to endorse his policy and linked it specifically with the case of Indian home-spun cloth:

In our country, however, if we show the same shrewdness and patriotism as King George did and are as much displeased with ourselves, we could feed not one thousand but crores [ten millions] of our starving countrymen. The thing with which we can do this is khadi.⁹⁶

Gandhi had utilised a British example of the application of his principle to promote and justify its application in India. Gandhi also developed the spiritual dimension to the concept of *swadeshi* in a chapter that summarised the concept, and was later published in *From Yeravda Mandir*.⁹⁷ Gandhi's concept of *swadeshi* constituted an important aspect of his nationalist thought and one that reveals British influences.

⁹¹ Gandhi, "Congress Presidential Address," 26 December, 1924 in *Young India: 1924-1926*, 424-447.

⁹² Gandhi, "Swadeshi and Nationalism," 12 March, 1925, in *Young India: 1924-1926*, 664. Gandhi had developed the concept of *swadeshi* over a number of years since his time in South Africa.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 665.

⁹⁴ Gandhi, "Royal Displeasure," *Navajivan* 28 February, 1926 in *Collected Works XXX*, 57.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ "Swadeshi," Gandhi claimed, was "ingrained in the basic nature of man." Gandhi defined *swadeshi* in a spiritual sense: "Swadeshi stands for the final emancipation of the soul from her earthly bondage." In practical terms: "The law of Swadeshi requires no more of me than to discharge my legitimate obligations towards my family by just means, and the attempt to do so will reveal to me the universal code of conduct." Gandhi, *From Yeravda Mandir*, 61-63.

Gandhi's Later Nationalist Thought, 1931-1948

Gandhi's opening speech at the Round Table Conference in London in 1931 encapsulated his nationalist thought at that time. Despite the suspicions of the British as well as other sections of the nationalist movement in India, Gandhi insisted that the Congress was "national" and as such represented "no particular community, no particular class, no particular interest."⁹⁸ Gandhi then explained that, following the resolution of the Karachi session of the Congress which called for "complete independence," he had come to London to demand nothing less than that.⁹⁹ Turning to his own position, Gandhi explained how his nationalist thought had changed:

Time was when I prided myself on being, and being called, a British subject. I have ceased for many years to call myself a British subject: I would far rather be called a rebel than a subject; but I have now aspired, I still aspire to be a citizen not in the Empire, but in a Commonwealth, in a partnership if possible; if God wills it an indissoluble partnership, but not a partnership superimposed upon one nation by another.¹⁰⁰

Such a partnership, Gandhi argued, would be mutually beneficial:

Yes, India can be held by the sword. But what will conduce to the prosperity of Great Britain, and the economic freedom of Great Britain: an enslaved but rebellious India, or an India, an esteemed partner with Britain to share her sorrows, to take part side by side with Britain in her misfortunes?¹⁰¹

Gandhi's admission that India was and could be 'held by the sword' represents a contrast with his earlier position that India was not a conquered country in that sense. Gandhi had used Seeley in support of his belief that India was not held by the sword. However, by 1925 Gandhi seems to have changed his position.¹⁰² It is evident that Gandhi had lost his faith in equality within the framework of empire and with it the influence of Seeley waned.

In a speech at the Faizpur Session of the Indian National Congress in 1936 Gandhi revealed an economic dimension to his nationalist thought. This was in part the

⁹⁸ Gandhi, "The National Demand," First speech delivered at the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference in *The Nation's Voice* ed. Rajagopalachar and Kumarappa, 4.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² In an article that year, Gandhi quoted the British official Sir William Joynson-Hicks who he claimed had stated: "We conquered India by the sword and by the sword we should hold it ... as the finest outlet for British goods." In advocating his non-violent method Gandhi, whilst admitting that India was 'held by sword,' commented: "It is much more economical, expeditious and possible to give up the use of

reflection of the growing influence of socialism in India and especially the influence of Nehru. Gandhi began by defining his conception of Indian independence: "It is complete independence of alien control and complete economic independence. So at the one end you have political independence, at the other the economic."¹⁰³ Gandhi proceeded to outline the economic dimension of his nationalist thought. Firstly, Gandhi considered that British rule had undoubtedly harmed the Indian economy: "History tells us that the East India Company ruined the cotton manufacture and by all kinds of means made her dependent upon Lancashire for her cloth."¹⁰⁴ Secondly, the economic damage caused by British rule had been responsible for related harm to Indian society, especially in the villages:

Continuous unemployment has induced in the people a kind of laziness which is most depressing. Thus whilst the alien rule is undoubtedly responsible for the growing pauperism of the people, we are more responsible for it.¹⁰⁵

In this way, Gandhi's emphasis on the revival of hand-spinning and the symbolism of the spinning-wheel would constitute a vital dimension to the revitalisation of Indian society which would be a prerequisite to Indian independence. Gandhi concluded his speech by summarising the importance of the symbolism of the *charka* or spinning-wheel:

The charka understood intelligently can spin not only economic salvation but can also revolutionize our minds and hearts and demonstrate to us that the non-violent approach to swaraj is the safest and the easiest.¹⁰⁶

This speech demonstrates the importance of economic reform in Gandhi's nationalist thought and its connection to the problems created and accentuated by British rule.

Gandhi's famous "Quit India" speech of 1942 represents the culmination of Gandhi's nationalist thought and also his frustration with what he regarded as British intransigence over India's independence. Before calling for the British to leave India immediately, Gandhi stressed the pedigree of his own loyalty to the Empire and mentioned

Manchester and therefore foreign calico than to blunt the edge of Sir William's sword." See, "The Naked Truth" 19 November, 1925 in *Young India: 1924-1926*, 715-716.

¹⁰³ Gandhi, "Speech at Exhibition Ground, Faizpur," *Harijan* 2 January, 1937 in *Collected Works* LXIV, 191.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 192.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 193. Laziness would not be a quality Gandhi associated with the kind of manliness he was trying to cultivate.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 194.

the closeness of his relations with many English people, including in particular, Charles Andrews with whom he claimed “closer relations,” closer even, “than with most Indians.”¹⁰⁷ Despite Gandhi’s “desire to be true to the British nation” and his “trust of many friends in the West,” he claimed he could “not suppress the voice within” which had required him to make the statement, calling for the British to leave.¹⁰⁸ Gandhi claimed that, on his terms, neither Britain nor America were “free countries” rather they were “free after their own fashion, free to hold in bondage the coloured races of the earth.”¹⁰⁹ According to Gandhi, Britain and America were not ‘free countries’ because they were not “fighting for the liberty” of the coloured races.¹¹⁰ As a result, Britain and America were “strangers to that freedom which their poets and teachers have described.”¹¹¹ Gandhi’s criticism of Britain then became distinctly sharper: “I had great regard for the British, but now British diplomacy stinks in my nostrils.”¹¹² Gandhi argued that India’s value to Britain as an ally in the fight against fascism, which he did distinguish from British imperialism, was diminished because India was held in “bondage.”¹¹³ Therefore, freedom “must come today” and Gandhi concluded: “I have, therefore, pledged the Congress and the Congress has pledged herself that she will do or die.”¹¹⁴ This rallying call to Indian nationalists represents well the dichotomy in Gandhi’s nationalist thought. It marked the culmination of the nationalist struggle against the British but at the same time the inspiration behind it was British.

Discussing Gandhi’s use of the phrase ‘do or die,’ Parel believed that “the inspiration for the new mantra came from a stanza in Lord Tennyson’s ‘Charge of the Light Brigade.’” Parel also noted that Gandhi had been aware of Tennyson’s poem for many years and in an earlier article¹¹⁵ had used it “to praise the heroism of an *Indian*

¹⁰⁷ Gandhi, “Quit India,” 8 August, 1942, at Bombay, in Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings* ed., Parel, 184.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 185.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid. It is not clear to whom Gandhi was referring to here.

¹¹² Ibid., 186.

¹¹³ Ibid., 187.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Gandhi, “Sepoy Bravery” *Indian Opinion* 18 June 1904 in *Collected Works* IV, 216.

soldier who had recently perished in action in Tibet, and of other Indian soldiers who had died fighting for Britain.” On these grounds, Parel considered that “Gandhi had been ruminating over Tennyson’s ideal of heroism and military valour.”¹¹⁶ Rothermund also identified the influence of Tennyson on this aspect of Gandhi’s thought: “But to Gandhi it highlighted the discipline of the soldier which was even more important for the non-violent satyagrahi.” Rothermund explained the subtle amendment that Gandhi made to the poem:

[H]e made a crucial change by substituting ‘Do or Die’ for Tennyson’s ‘Do and Die.’ Whereas Tennyson’s words reflect the tragic inevitability of the outcome of battle, Gandhi’s words suggest an alternative between brave action and ignominious death.¹¹⁷

Interestingly Parel, when discussing Gandhi’s attitudes towards the Japanese in *Hind Swaraj*, mentioned that in 1905 Gandhi had observed that they possessed “unity, patriotism and the resolve to do or die.”¹¹⁸ Whilst Parel did not remark on Gandhi’s use of the phrase ‘do or die’ in this context it is significant that Gandhi had made an important amendment to Tennyson’s poem, substituting ‘do or die’ for ‘do and die’ as early as 1905. While there is much evidence to support Tennyson as the source for Gandhi’s phrase “Do or Die” it is worth noting that Carlyle used the exact phrase in his history of the French revolution which Gandhi had also read. Whilst discussing the storming of the Bastille, Carlyle remarked:

This day, my sons, ye shall quit you like men. By the memory of your fathers’ wrongs, by the hope of your children’s rights! Tyranny impends in red wrath: help for you is none, if not in your own right hands. This day ye must do or die.¹¹⁹

In terms of Gandhi’s conception of manliness, ‘doing’ was distinctly manly, while ‘dying’ would be associated with all that was unmanly. Given Gandhi’s familiarity with Carlyle’s work it is possible that it was his history of the French revolution which was the inspiration behind Gandhi’s famous dictum.

¹¹⁶ Parel, “Gandhi’s Quit India Speech, 1942” in *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings* ed., Parel, 181-182.

¹¹⁷ Rothermund, *Mahatma Gandhi*, 99-100.

¹¹⁸ Gandhi quoted in *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings* ed., Parel, 28.

¹¹⁹ Carlyle, “Storm and Victory” vol. I, Book Five, Ch. 6, *The French Revolution: A History* ed. Fielding and Sorenson, 195.

Conclusion

Gandhi's nationalist thought, in raising the Indian at the expense of the modern and especially the British, rejected by necessity, many British influences. However, Gandhi utilised a number of British sources to rebut some of the justifications of British imperialism in India. Further, Gandhi incorporated a number of British sources and lessons which he drew from the British experience. In particular these sources included Carlyle and Seeley. Gandhi utilised Seeley's analysis that India did not possess a national spirit and his belief that one could develop. Ironically, although Gandhi rejected much that was associated with British rule his rejection was not absolute and with regard to some qualities he recommended that Indians should become more like the British if there were to end British rule. They must be more patriotic, brave, fearless and in general more manly, all qualities which Gandhi identified in the British. This represents an interesting duality in Gandhi's nationalist thought which mirrors that in British political practice. Gandhi seems to have been influenced by heroic, patriot figures and by implication the need to find an Indian Gladstone or Mazzini was evident in Gandhi's nationalist thought.

Chapter V

Nehru and Nationalism

The purpose of this chapter is to outline Nehru's nationalist thought in order to assess the nature and extent of the influence of British political thought and practice. The next section will examine the period up to 1933 and the following section the period from then until Indian independence in 1947. The last section will consider Nehru's nationalist thought following Indian independence. Finally, a conclusion will summarize the findings of the chapter.

The Origins of Nehru's Nationalist Thought, up to 1933

Discussing his education in England in his autobiography Nehru portrayed himself as having been a fervent nationalist who had sought Indian independence from his youth.¹ There is some evidence that his early education may have kindled these sentiments. For example, Nanda described an examination paper that Nehru encountered at Harrow:

The English History paper for the Christmas term, 1906, included combustible material for a future rebel against the British Raj. One of the questions was: 'For what reasons did the American colonies revolt? Why was it impossible to subjugate them?'²

Nanda recognised the irony that the English public schools, which he called the "nurseries of the governing classes," instilled a range of attributes which Nehru put to the opposite use to that which they were normally employed: "The qualities which went to the making of the 'guardians' of the Empire were equally serviceable in hardening the fibre of the future rebel against the British *Raj*."³ Nanda also claimed that Nehru experienced a degree of racial prejudice at Cambridge:

¹ Nehru's autobiography was written in the 1930s, when his nationalist thought was undoubtedly much further developed and he was himself more embittered against British rule.

² Nanda, *The Nehrus*, 74.

³ *Ibid.*, 95.

At a ceremonial function held at Cambridge to award honorary degrees to a number of distinguished persons, including the Aga Kahn and the Maharaja of Bikaner, young Nehru's sharp eyes noted that the Vice-Chancellor did not deign to get up from his chair when giving the degrees to the Indians, although he had stood up for everyone else.⁴

The awareness of the racial aspects of British imperialism in India and its impact of Nehru's nationalist thought became an important theme in Nehru's later work.

Nehru discussed theosophy and in particular Annie Besant in his autobiography and this constitutes a further potential British influence from this period. Although Nehru seemed to de-emphasise the extent of the influence in his autobiography he did devote a chapter to theosophy.⁵ Reflecting on this subject years later Nehru admitted that he considered theosophy to be "totally ineffective" and that "the Theosophical Society seemed to be cut off from the world's problems."⁶ Despite this, Nehru conceded: "Mrs. Besant had a very powerful influence on me in my childhood. And later, many years later, when I had come back on the political plane, again she had a powerful influence on me."⁷ It is interesting to note that Das's study of Nehru's political thought does not mention Besant in the context of Nehru's nationalist thought or his political thought in general.⁸ However, according to a recent study, some of Besant's ideas "recur time and again" in Nehru's thought and especially his later work.⁹ Besant's more positive assessment of Indian culture and its spiritual nature is mirrored in Nehru's later work which emphasised India's long heritage prior to the arrival of the British. In addition to the spiritual aspects of the influence of theosophy and Besant's critique of the economic impact of British imperialism, which seem to have manifested themselves in Nehru's later work, it is likely

⁴ Ibid., 98.

⁵ See, Ch. III, *Autobiography*, 12-16. Here Nehru explained that his British tutor, Ferdinand Brooks, was a theosophist recommended to his father by Annie Besant. Nehru also related how he joined the Theosophical Society at thirteen and the initiation ceremony was performed by Besant herself. However, Nehru also explained that after Brooks left he "lost touch with Theosophy" although he admitted that "Brooks left a deep impress upon" him and he owed "a debt to" Brooks "and to theosophy."

⁶ Nehru quoted in Mende *Conversations with Mr. Nehru*, 13.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Das, *The Political Thought of Jawaharlal Nehru*.

⁹ See, Bevir, "In Opposition to the Raj," 77. For example, Bevir identified the conception of "a spiritual and organic India contrasted with a materialistic and individualistic West," and the adverse "economic impact of the Raj on India" as ideas that Nehru shared with Besant.

that Besant's support of Indian independence also encouraged his early nationalist thought.¹⁰

In his autobiography, Nehru explained that following his return to India from England, he was "a pure nationalist" and the "vague socialist ideas" he entertained whilst at Cambridge had "sunk into the background."¹¹ He claimed: "Nationalistic ideas filled my mind. I mused of Indian freedom and Asiatic freedom from the thralldom of Europe. I dreamt of brave deeds, of how, sword in hand, I would fight for India and help in freeing her."¹² These comments resemble the sentiment of Meredith's "For the 'Centenary of Garibaldi'" that appeared at the beginning of Trevelyan's *Garibaldi and the Thousand*, two verses of which Nehru quoted in *Glimpses of World History*.¹³ Nehru also identified two further significant influences that contributed toward the development of his nationalist thought at this time and are of particular relevance to his British connection. Firstly, Nehru explained that he had received "one of G. M. Trevelyan's Garibaldi books" as a prize whilst at Harrow.¹⁴ He claimed that this work "fascinated" him and he subsequently "obtained the other two volumes of the series and studied the whole Garibaldi story in them carefully."¹⁵ Nehru described the impact of this study: "Visions of similar deeds in India came before me, of a gallant fight for freedom, and in my mind India and Italy got strangely mixed together."¹⁶ Secondly, Nehru claimed that during the Boer war all his "sympathies were with the Boers" and that he had followed

¹⁰ Nehru joined the Home Rule League that Besant founded in 1916. See, Norman ed., *Nehru* Vol. I, 36. Years later Nehru claimed that "Mrs Besant played an important part in Indian politics, and her great eloquence and powerful advocacy did much to revive interest in politics." See, *Glimpses of World History*, 672.

¹¹ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 35.

¹² *Ibid.*, 16.

¹³ See note 38 below.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 19. Since Nehru was at Harrow between 1905 and 1907 it is likely that Nehru received Trevelyan's *Garibaldi's Defence of the Roman Republic 1848-9* (1907), the first of the trilogy.

¹⁵ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 19. The second volume of the series was *Garibaldi and the Thousand* (1909) and the third volume was *Garibaldi and the Making of Italy* (1911). This suggests that Nehru studied the trilogy throughout his time in England and not just at Harrow but as a young man at Cambridge, between 1907 and 1910, and whilst studying for the Bar in London between 1910 and 1912. In this case it is likely that Nehru studied Trevelyan's work much more deeply than just as a school boy in which case the influence was likely to be more profound and long lasting. See also note 37 below.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

events in the press.¹⁷ Thus through his British connection Nehru learned of the struggles of the Boers and the Italians for national freedom. The example of Italian nationalism became a recurring subject in Nehru's nationalist thought and is discussed below whilst the Boers' struggle, although Nehru never returned to it, constitutes an important early source of influence.

It is thus reasonable to contend that Nehru was influenced by the kind of liberal nationalism that he discovered in Trevelyan's work. Das's study of Nehru's conception of nationalism located it within the "liberal humanitarian" variety, prevalent in the nineteenth century, as opposed to the "conservative and authoritarian" tradition commonly associated with fascism.¹⁸ In particular, Das described Nehru's nationalism in terms that have been attributed to Trevelyan and the kind of liberalism that he espoused in the Garibaldi trilogy. For Das, Nehru's nationalism included "an urge to fight against domination or despotic governments, faith in the individual liberty and rights of men, aspirations for greater liberty, equality and happiness for all" and favoured "national self-determination."¹⁹ Thus Das considered that Nehru "saw in his conception of nationalism not a narrow and fanatical urge but a healthy force."²⁰ It is evident that Nehru developed this conception relatively early in his career and Trevelyan would seem to be an important source.

However, these early liberal influences were supplanted by socialist influences from the 1920s onwards. One potential British source of this growing socialist influence on Nehru, which is of particular relevance to the development of his nationalist thought, is the work of Harold Laski. Laski's *A Grammar of Politics* contains a discussion of nationalism which resembles that contained in Nehru's nationalist thought. In discussing the development of nationalism, Laski mentioned the example of Italy and Austria:

It became the thesis of the nineteenth century that States composed of various nationalities were monstrous hybrids for which no excuse could be offered; hence,

¹⁷ Ibid., 12.

¹⁸ Das, op. cit., 70-71.

¹⁹ Ibid. Although Das's characterisation is essentially similar to that espoused by Trevelyan he does not discuss Nehru's reading of the Garibaldi trilogy at all and more especially as a potential influence. In fact speculation as to the Nehru's sources is absent from Das's work.

²⁰ Ibid., 73.

for example, the passionate sympathy of Victorian England with the Italian crusade against Austria.²¹

However, Laski recognised that the growth of nationalism had been accompanied by industrialism and conflict between states, which had tempered his acceptance of it as a wholly progressive force. For Laski, it was because industrialism had “created a world-market, and a world-market implies foreign competition” that “nationalism becomes transformed into imperialism.”²² Therefore, according to Laski: “A nationalism that implies the sovereign right of self-determination is, therefore, a principle of which the consequences are far from different from those envisaged by men like Mazzini and Mill.”²³ It was for these reasons that Laski felt nationalism must be checked: “A nation is entitled to live. But because it cannot live to itself alone, the question of how it is to live is not a question it is entitled to determine alone.”²⁴ Ultimately, although Laski accepted “the rational desire for self-government” he considered the solution to these problems would be found in “world-government” and observed that any “order based upon compulsion can never permanently maintain itself” and gave the examples of India, Ireland and Austria-Hungary.²⁵ There exists in Laski’s position here the same tension between nationalism and the desire for independence and socialism that is evident in Nehru’s nationalist thought. It is evident that Laski was one of the major socialist sources from which Nehru drew to develop his understanding of nationalism.

The Development of Nehru’s Nationalist Thought, 1933-1946

Nehru’s essay, “Wither India?,” which reveals substantial socialist influence, further develops his attempt to reconcile nationalism and internationalism. Nehru sought to place the Indian freedom struggle in the context of the world situation and his wider political thought. He began by explaining that Indian nationalism drew attention to “the inherent conflict between national interests” in the case of the British Government’s claim that

²¹ Laski, *A Grammar of Politics*, 222. Laski’s use of the Austrian example can be compared with Nehru’s discussion of Italian nationalism and Trevelyan’s in his Garibaldi trilogy.

²² *Ibid.*, 223.

²³ *Ibid.*, 225.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 227 and 232.

“they were the trustees” for India.²⁶ However, Nehru admitted, “nationalism does not make us realize the equally inherent and fundamental conflict between economic interests within the nation.”²⁷ Nehru described the world situation in terms of a crisis of capitalism: “The growth of industries and nationalist movements in all the countries of the East checked Western exploitation, and the profits of Western capitalism began to go down.”²⁸ Moving to Asia, Nehru claimed that it was “the main field of conflict between nationalism and imperialism.”²⁹ Then Nehru explained why “the strongest force in Asia” was nationalism rather than internationalism:

This is natural as a country under alien domination must inevitably think first in terms of nationalism. But the powerful economic forces working for change in the world to-day have influenced this nationalism to an ever-increasing extent, and everywhere it is appearing in Socialistic garb.³⁰

For Nehru, India was a part of this wider “Asiatic problem” and it too possessed “a struggle to-day between the old nationalist ideology and the new economic ideology.”³¹ Having described the background, Nehru outlined his policy: “Politically, it must mean independence and the severance of the British connection, which means imperialist domination.”³² However, Nehru also dismissed narrow nationalism: “National isolation is neither a desirable nor a possible ideal in a world which is daily becoming more of a unit.”³³ Consequently, Nehru’s nationalist thought sought to take account of this reality: “Our ideal and objective cannot go against this historical tendency, and we must be prepared to discard a narrow nationalism in favour of world co-operation and real internationalism.”³⁴ However, Nehru distinguished this internationalism from that implied by Dominion status:

British statesmen of the Liberal and Labour variety often point out to us the ills of a narrow nationalism and dwell on the virtues of what used to be known as the British Empire and is now euphemistically called the British Commonwealth

²⁶ Nehru, “Whither India?” in *India and the World*, 42-43.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 43.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 47-48.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 55.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 56.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*, 60.

³³ *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

of Nations. Under cover of fine and radical words and phrases they seek to hide the ugly and brutal face of imperialism and try to keep us in its embrace of death.³⁵

Finally, Nehru remarked: "The British Empire and real internationalism are as the poles apart, and it is not through that empire that we can march to internationalism."³⁶ In this essay Nehru – for all his unease at nationalism – attempted to justify his belief that Indian independence must take precedence over the kind of internationalism required by socialist influences. Thus despite the evidence of substantial socialist influence, Nehru maintained a strongly nationalist position.

Nehru's discussion of Italian nationalism in *Glimpses of World History* is particularly germane to the analysis of British influences on his nationalist thought. Firstly, Nehru admitted that he first learned of Italian nationalism through his reading of Trevelyan's study of Garibaldi. In the chapter devoted to the development of modern Italy, Nehru recommended to Indira that if she wanted to acquaint herself "with the joy and anguish of the struggle" she should read "three books by Trevelyan - *Garibaldi and the Fight for the Roman Republic*, *Garibaldi and the Thousand*, and *Garibaldi and the Making of Italy*."³⁷ Secondly, Nehru made clear that he was familiar with the positive British attitudes towards Italian nationalism and in particular he quoted George Meredith's poetry praising the Italian nationalist leaders.³⁸ However, Nehru observed that the English attitude to Italian nationalism revealed an inconsistency when contrasted with the attitude towards other cases. Nehru remarked:

At the time of the Italian struggle the English people sympathized with Garibaldi and his red-shirts, and many an English poet wrote stirring poetry about the fight. It is strange how the sympathies of the English often go out to struggling peoples provided their own interests are not involved.³⁹

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 62.

³⁷ Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, 510. Nehru explained that he had read these works "long ago" as "a boy at school." Nehru had forgotten the exact title of the first volume and that the second and third were published after he had left school at Harrow; the second whilst he was at Cambridge and the third whilst he was studying for the Bar. See note 15 above.

³⁸ Ibid., 509. In fact Nehru quoted the same two verses of Meredith's "For the Centenary of Garibaldi" that appeared at the beginning of the first chapter of Trevelyan's *Garibaldi and the Thousand*.

³⁹ Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, 510.

It is likely that Nehru had in mind British attitudes toward Indian nationalism as a case where the British interest was threatened.

It is evident that Italian nationalism constituted an important influence on Nehru's nationalist thought and as well as being an influence in its own right it can also be considered as part of British influences on Nehru. In his autobiography, Nehru expanded on the similarities between India and Italy to which he had alluded in *Glimpses of World History*. These similarities had two aspects, the first was that between India and Italy and Nehru remarked:

There is some similarity between Italy and India. Both are ancient countries with long traditions of culture behind them, though Italy is a newcomer compared to India, and India is a much vaster country. Both are split up politically, and yet the conception of Italia, like that of India, never died, and in all their diversity the unity was predominant.⁴⁰

It is significant that Nehru emphasised the cultural unity of Italy and India, rather than the racial, religious or geographic, and this conception of nationalism was central to his later nationalist thought. Similarly, the belief that the cultural unity of India had been dormant, rather than extinguished, and that the unity was amid diversity were themes that Nehru was to develop later in *The Discovery of India*. The second aspect of the similarity between the Italian and Indian situations was that between the 'conquering' nations of Austria and Britain. Nehru also drew a parallel between these two countries:

More interesting is the comparison of England with Austria, for has not England of the twentieth century been compared to Austria of the nineteenth, proud and haughty and imposing still, but with the roots that gave strength shrivelling up and decay eating its way into the mighty fabric.⁴¹

The parallel that Nehru drew admitted that Britain, as in the Austrian case, had become corrupt and thus lost any legitimacy it may have possessed. In drawing the analogy Nehru was likely to have surmised that British rule was neither inevitable nor irreversible.

Nehru's discussion of the rise of Mussolini and Italian fascism in *Glimpses of World History* is pertinent because it addresses Nehru's concern with the development of overly narrow nationalism. Nehru explained the development of fascism as due to specific

⁴⁰ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 430.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 431. It is interesting to contrast Nehru's comparison with Trevelyan's and Laski's.

factors in Italy in the 1920s and 1930s, which included economic problems, the large numbers of demobilized soldiers and the divisions in the Italian left. However, Nehru's condemnation of fascism provides a striking contrast with his previous praise of the development of Italian nationalism and he ignores any possible link between the two phenomena. According to Nehru, Mussolini was able to take advantage of "divisions and splits" amongst Italian socialists to increase his own power whilst he "spoke in favour of the rich one day, and in favour of the poor the next day" so as "to play one off against the other."⁴² Although Mussolini may have portrayed himself as a champion of the poor, according to Nehru, he was "essentially ... the champion of the propertied classes."⁴³ For Nehru, fascism was both devoid of "fixed principles" and "any apologetic attitude towards violence," in contrast to "Communism or Marxism" which possessed "an intricate economic theory and interpretation of history, which requires the hardest mental discipline."⁴⁴ For Nehru, fascism's inherent violence spilled over to Italy's foreign policy, which became imperialistic and confrontational. The rise of fascism in Italy had also caused disappointment for Trevelyan but he explained it as a misunderstanding of the Italian people rather than in Nehru's Marxist terms.⁴⁵

Nehru's Presidential Address at Lucknow in April 1936 placed his nationalist thought into the context of his world view, which at that time saw "the world divided up into two vast groups to-day - the Imperialist and Fascist on one side, [and] the Socialist and nationalist on the other."⁴⁶ Nehru claimed that: "Nationalism in the east ... was essentially different from the new and terribly narrow nationalism of fascist countries; the former was the historical urge to freedom, the latter the last refuge of reaction."⁴⁷ Thus Nehru rejected any solution short of complete independence for India:

⁴² Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, 817.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 818.

⁴⁵ According to Cannadine, "the dramatic rise of Fascism suggested that in some fundamental sense Trevelyan had misread the Italian past and the Italian people." Later Trevelyan suggested that the Italians had lacked the same faith in constitutional government that he observed in the British. See, G. M. Trevelyan: *A Life in History*, 82-83.

⁴⁶ Nehru, "Presidential Address to the 49th Session of the Indian National Congress, Lucknow," 12 April 1936" in *India's Independence and Social Revolution* 23.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Between Indian nationalism, Indian freedom and British imperialism there can be no common ground, and if we remain within the imperialist fold, whatever our name or status, whatever outward semblance, of political power we might have, we remain cribbed and confined and allied to and dominated by the capitalist world. The exploitation of our masses will still continue and the vital social problems that face us will remain unsolved.⁴⁸

Nehru believed that “a clear and definite fascist mentality” was evident amongst the British in India.⁴⁹ According to Nehru, British rule in India had been mutually detrimental:

It is astonishing to find to what depths of vulgarity our rulers have descended in their ardent desire to hold on to what they have got and it is depressing, though perhaps inevitable that some of our own countrymen, more interested in British Imperialism than the British themselves, should excel at this deplorable game.⁵⁰

These problems were, according to Nehru, inherent in the nature of British rule: “I have watched this process of moral and intellectual decay and realized, even more than I did previously, how autocratic power corrupts and degrades and vulgarizes.”⁵¹ Finally, Nehru castigated the communal leaders as “political reactionaries” and hence he regarded the communal issue was divisive, harmful to the cause of Indian nationalism and a diversion from more important economic issues.⁵² This address marked the peak of socialist influences on Nehru’s nationalist thought.

Nehru’s concern with international developments, and particularly the polarisation that he perceived during the late 1930s, is illustrated clearly in his comments on the Spanish civil war. In his Presidential Address at Faizpur in December 1936, Nehru described an “organic connection between world events” and in particular a struggle between nationalism and democracy and the combined forces of fascism and imperialism.⁵³ In this context, Nehru regarded the Spanish civil war as the most obvious manifestation of this struggle of which India was also a part: “And the struggle today is fiercest and clearest in Spain, and on the outcome of that depends war or peace in the

⁴⁸ Ibid., 24.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 25.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., 43.

⁵³ Nehru, “Presidential Address Faizpur Congress,” December 27-28 1936 in *India’s Independence and Social Revolution*, 53.

world in the near future.”⁵⁴ Nehru observed that the League of Nations had been ineffective for “while fascist powers helped the rebels, the League Powers proclaimed a futile policy of non-intervention.”⁵⁵ Nehru’s concern with events in Spain is also revealed in his correspondence with his daughter at the time. This correspondence reinforces the depth of Nehru’s concern with the Spanish civil war and also the fact that Indira kept him informed of British attitudes towards conflict.⁵⁶ In a 1937 article requesting food aid for the Spanish people, Nehru explained that the “same basic forces are in conflict elsewhere as in India.”⁵⁷ In particular Nehru referred to the Spanish civil war in this context:

This conflict of world forces is most evident in Spain, where bloody and inhuman war has waged for over seven months, and where a brutal Fascism and militarism have sought to crush and annihilate Spanish democracy and reduce to dust and ashes the rights of the Spanish people.⁵⁸

Nehru described how the Republicans in Madrid had faced the combined “forces of reaction, the Fascist Powers, foreign legionaries, mercenaries, [and] the farce of non-intervention.”⁵⁹ Nehru’s dismissal of the policy of non-intervention is significant because he associated it with the British Government: “In this struggle British

⁵⁴ Ibid., 52.

⁵⁵ Ibid. In a 1938 postscript to *Glimpses of World History*, Nehru also observed that the Spanish civil war was an international conflict of direct relevance to the Indians freedom struggle. Nehru remarked: “We must understand this Spanish struggle, for it is infinitely more than a local or national struggle.” Again Nehru singled out the British for particular criticism: “The British Government evolved a scheme of non-intervention which has been the supreme farce of our times.” See, *Glimpses of World History*, 959 and 960.

⁵⁶ For example, Indira wrote to Nehru in November 1936, in the wake of the Nationalist advance on Madrid, that “Fascism seems to be spreading almost like flames, while the various Labour parties fold their arms & vote for non-intervention.” Indira to Nehru, 7 November, 1936 in *Freedom’s Daughter*, ed., Gandhi, 293. Nehru made a trip to Europe in 1938 which included visits to Barcelona and London and whilst in London, Nehru spoke at meeting calling for support for the Spanish Republic. The meeting was attended by Michael Foot whose recollection of Nehru’s speech reveals much of his British connection: “He spoke with a cool, natural eloquence all his own or, rather, one strand of it was drawn from the rich source of English literature which he had made his own. The accent, the assurance, the purity of his diction, was one reason why he could stir such hatred among ruling circles in Britain. He could speak the word *freedom* better than they could, and no small part of that gift he had learnt here in England.” See, “The Nehru of 1938” in *Jawaharlal Nehru: Centenary Volume*, ed., Dikshit et al, 223.

⁵⁷ Nehru, “Food for Spain” February 20, 1937 in *The Unity of India*, 265. Elsewhere in this same volume Nehru described his 1938 visit to Spain. Commenting on his visit to Barcelona, Nehru remarked: “I came back full of the tragedy of Spain, which was being strangled not so much by enemies, but by those who called themselves the friends of democracy.” See, “From Lucknow to Tripuri: A Survey of Congress Politics, 1936-1939” March 1939 in *The Unity of India*, 114.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

imperialism, with its so-called policy of non-intervention, has hindered and obstructed the Spanish people in their fight for freedom.”⁶⁰ Thus Nehru drew a parallel between the British policy of non-intervention toward Spain which favoured fascism, by accident or design, and imperialist policy toward India, which was anti-democratic, and essentially fascist. Finally, Nehru claimed that India could not be indifferent to the outcome of the Spanish civil war: “For Fascism and imperialism march hand in hand, they are blood brothers.”⁶¹ This analysis of the Spanish civil war represents an attempt by Nehru to integrate his own nationalist thought within a wider struggle between democracy and nationalism on the one side and imperialism and fascism on the other.

According to Brecher, Nehru’s analysis of the developments of the 1930s, and particularly that given in *Glimpses of World History*, was similar to that made by John Strachey:

Nehru’s analysis of the rise of Fascism and Nazism, the cause of the Great Depression, the growing disunity among the Western Powers, and the approach of war bears a marked resemblance to Strachey’s *The Coming Struggle for Power*, though not quite as outspoken in its Marxism.⁶²

Although Brecher does not cite any, the evidence for the potential influence of Strachey’s work is compelling. The ‘struggle’ that Strachey described was between monopoly capitalism, which had developed into fascism and imperialism, and nationalism. Consequently, for Strachey, as for Nehru, the crisis of the 1930s could only be solved by the replacement of the capitalist system with a socialist alternative. Throughout *The Coming Struggle for Power*, Strachey’s analysis touched on themes that can also be found in Nehru’s nationalist thought. In particular there are some striking similarities between Strachey’s work and each of the most important elements of Nehru’s nationalist thought most relevant to his British connection.

In constructing his Marxist analysis, Strachey viewed the state, and specifically the British state, as a tool constituted for material ends in the pursuit of capitalism. In doing so, Strachey rejected “the orthodox school of British historians,” which took the opposite

⁶⁰ Ibid., 266.

⁶¹ Ibid.

view, and specifically G. M. Trevelyan, whom he considered the foremost member of that school.⁶³ Strachey also criticised H. G. Wells, describing him as “the chief living theorist of the capitalist class.”⁶⁴ Strachey singled out Wells’s *The Outline of History* as the evidence for this assessment, and although he regarded it as a “considerable work” and one of the few of its kind, it did not adequately explain imperialism.⁶⁵ Finally, Strachey remarked that although George Bernard Shaw was “endowed with [a] mind of keener edge than his contemporary” Wells, and had familiarised himself with Marx’s *Capital*, it had led him in the “strange” direction of joining “the Fabian Society.”⁶⁶ It is difficult to gauge the extent to which Nehru may have been influenced by Strachey’s criticism of Trevelyan and Wells. In the latter case *The Outline of History* was one of the very few sources of any kind available to Nehru whilst in jail and even Strachey admitted that the work filled a void, since there were few if any “outline[s] of world history” available.⁶⁷ However, Strachey’s criticism of Shaw and the Fabians is more significant. It is likely that during the 1930s Nehru was more influenced by Strachey’s Marxism than by Fabianism and some members of the Fabian Society. However, in later life, Nehru rejected many Marxist influences and arrived at a more moderate socialism that found a significant role for the state.

Strachey also discussed the relationship between Britain and the Dominions in the context of his analysis of the development of capitalism. For Strachey there was an “indissoluble connection between the whole inevitable drift to monopoly *within* states and the intensification of enmity *between* states.”⁶⁸ In summary, Strachey considered that: “The capitalist system is dying and cannot be revived.”⁶⁹ A consequence, and one of the symptoms of ailing capitalism, was the development of imperialism, which attempted to

⁶² Brecher, *Nehru*, 165.

⁶³ Strachey, *The Coming Struggle for Power*, 20-21.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 189.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 189-191. Ironically, Brecher claimed that *Glimpses of World History* was written largely without reference material “except for Wells’ *Outline of History* and chance books that came his way.” See, *Nehru*, 163.

⁶⁶ Strachey, *op. cit.*, 199.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 189.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 77.

prolong the capitalist system by reserving “the vast natural resources, and the vast markets, of the British Empire for the exclusive exploitation of Empire entrepreneurs.”⁷⁰ However, Strachey identified a problem with this policy that had two aspects. Firstly, he considered “that the interests of the British capitalists and the Dominion capitalists are flatly contradictory” and claimed: “It is proving almost impossible to secure agreement between the British and the Dominion entrepreneurs as to a division of the spoils.”⁷¹ This analysis of conflicting interests is similar to that used by Nehru in *Glimpses of World History* and it follows that conflicts would be greater between Britain and India, which had even less in common than the self-governing, white Dominions. Secondly, Strachey believed that the conflicts between Britain and the self-governing Dominions could not be resolved by simply exploiting “the non-self-governing Empire” to a greater extent, simply because it was not possible because the populations there were already “half-starved.”⁷² This would certainly have accorded with Nehru’s analysis of Indian poverty and the British contribution towards it. Such an analysis led Strachey and Nehru to conclude that capitalism and the British Empire was facing an unavoidable crisis or ‘struggle for power.’

Strachey’s analysis of the decay of capitalism and its implications for the British empire led him to draw an analogy between it and the fate of a nineteenth century empire. Strachey likened Britain to Austria:

Now there is little doubt that in principle the power of the British Empire is in decline. Great Britain is the Austria of the twentieth century. The stage of the nineteenth century was, it is true, the narrower stage of Europe: the stage upon which the complex tragedy of the twentieth century is being enacted, is the whole world. But, with this qualification, the parallel is obvious. The Austrian Empire was, and the British Empire is, a conglomeration of extremely dissimilar parts: no ties of blood, religion, race, or tradition being common to these parts. Both have been the result of long processes of historical accretion, in which pieces and bits of territory have been slowly brought together. Both have been continually disturbed by nationalist movements, and at intervals by open revolts, in one or more of their parts.⁷³

⁶⁹ Ibid., 155.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 242.

⁷¹ Ibid., 242 and 243.

⁷² Ibid., 244.

⁷³ Ibid., 274.

This is significant given Nehru's use of a similar parallel in his autobiography and also the discussion of Austria by Trevelyan and Laski. Additionally, Strachey's insistence that the British Empire was "indisputably a waning and not a waxing influence in world affairs" may have helped to instil in Nehru the belief that Indian independence was inevitable.⁷⁴ This analogy also provides a connection between the influence of Trevelyan earlier in Nehru's life and the later influence of Strachey.

One of Nehru's most important contributions to his nationalist thought was *The Discovery of India*. It reveals the gradual shift in emphasis in Nehru's nationalist thought from the overtly Marxist anti-imperialism of the early 1930s to the later position which stressed Indian cultural unity.⁷⁵ Das identified *The Discovery of India* as the work that contained the essence of Nehru's thoughts on Indian nationalism.⁷⁶ According to Gopal, it offered a "buoyant message" in "the dark years of Indian nationalism" and stressed "the necessity of revitalizing the Indian people."⁷⁷ However, Gopal also believed that Nehru became "engrossed" in Indian culture to such an extent that it led to some "woolly writing" and a lack of "analysis, elegance and clear thinking."⁷⁸ In sum, for Gopal, who recognised the irony in the work, Nehru had "in an astonishingly narrow nationalist tradition ... put together a version of India's cultural history derived from secondary sources and studded with testimonials from European observers."⁷⁹ For Brecher, it was a "rambling and discursive history" of India, which examined Nehru's own "cultural heritage" and reveals "the specifically Indian influences on his character

⁷⁴ Ibid., 275.

⁷⁵ In *The Discovery of India*, according to Gopal: "Jawaharlal is no longer primarily interested in social and economic change, in action and great men, or in Marxist analysis of class struggles." Although Nehru had shifted from Marxism his anti-British rhetoric was as clear and critical as ever. However, Gopal's comments on this aspect of *The Discovery of India* reveal something of the nature of his British connection: "The chapters on the war years blend into a general, scathing account of British rule in India. The severe criticism is not so much unfair as uncharacteristic of Jawaharlal." See, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*, vol. 1, 299 and 298. It is perhaps more accurate to claim that Nehru's criticism is uncharacteristic of his later sentiment, after independence had been obtained.

⁷⁶ Das, op. cit., 76.

⁷⁷ Gopal, op. cit., 299.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid. These 'secondary sources' and 'testimonials from European observers' included many from British sources.

and outlook.”⁸⁰ Despite the varied assessments, *The Discovery of India* brings together a number of the central themes of his nationalist thought, several of which were shaped by British influences.

Firstly, Nehru placed his nationalist thought into the wider context of Indian nationalism during the last years of British rule. At that time, Nehru explained, Indian nationalism was “inevitable” because “national freedom must be the first and dominant urge.”⁸¹ Nehru observed that although this sentiment may have been contrary to the spirit of internationalism, it was nevertheless a reality and the “nationalist ideal” was “not a thing of the past with no future significance.”⁸² In this way Nehru defended Indian nationalism, and his own nationalist thought, from the charge, from the left, that it was not progressive. Then, as he had done elsewhere, Nehru dismissed those who advocated the internationalism implied by the British empire:

Sometimes we are told that our nationalism is a sign of our backwardness and even our demand for independence indicates our narrowmindedness. Those who tell us seem to imagine that true internationalism would triumph if we agreed to remain as junior partners in the British Empire or Commonwealth of Nations. They do not appear to realize that this particular type of so-called internationalism is only an extension of a narrow British nationalism, which could not have appealed to us even if the logical consequences of Anglo-Indian history had not utterly rooted out its possibility from our minds.⁸³

Nehru believed that independence was a priority for India: “Internationalism can indeed only develop in a free country, for all the thought and energy of a subject country are directed towards the achievements of its own freedom.”⁸⁴ Discussing the second world war, Nehru revealed a motivation for his nationalism in his criticism of British imperialism:

Repeatedly we pointed out the inconsistency of condemning fascism and nazism and maintaining imperialist domination. It was true that the former were indulging in horrid crimes whilst imperialism in India and elsewhere had stabilized itself. The difference was one of degree and of time, not of kind.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Brecher, *Nehru*, 297 and 298.

⁸¹ Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 40.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 427.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 430.

Here Nehru repeated some of the convictions of his earliest nationalist thought when he stated that India must attain independence prior to embarking on any reforms of society of the economy.

Secondly, as well as being divisive, Nehru considered that the combination of racialism and imperialism was harmful to both India and Britain:

Imperialism and the domination of one people over another is bad, and so is racialism. But imperialism plus racialism can only lead to horror and ultimately to the degradation of all concerned with them. The future historians of England will have to consider how far England's decline from her proud eminence was due to her imperialism and racialism, which corrupted her public life and made her forget the lessons of her own history and literature.⁸⁶

The decline of British civilization was a theme that Nehru discussed elsewhere in *The Discovery of India* and it is evident he regarded it positively:

Nevertheless Britain has had in the past, and has still, remarkable qualities - courage and the will to pull together, scientific and constructive ability and a capacity for adaptation. These qualities, and others she possesses, go a long way to make a nation great and enable it to overcome the dangers and perils that confront it.⁸⁷

Nehru identified falling population growth as another manifestation of the decline of the civilization: "In England a steady fall in the fertility rate has been noticeable since the eighties of the last century, and it is the lowest now in Europe except for France."⁸⁸ For Nehru this phenomenon was indicative of a deeper malaise:

It would seem that the kind of modern civilization that developed first in the west and spread elsewhere, and especially the metropolitan life that has been its chief feature, produces an unstable society which gradually loses its vitality.⁸⁹

For Nehru, declining population was another aspect of the racial issue: "What is wrong with modern civilization which produces at the roots these signs of racial decadence?"⁹⁰

Finally, Nehru also dismissed the possibility of Dominion status on racial grounds: "The idea behind dominion status, of a mother country closely connected with her daughter nations, all of them having a common cultural background, seemed totally inapplicable to

⁸⁶ Ibid., 327.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 560.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 567.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 569.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

India.”⁹¹ In justifying this belief Nehru cited the treatment of Indians around the Empire and Commonwealth: “The racial discrimination and treatment of Indians in some of the British dominions and colonies were powerful factors in our determination to break from that group.”⁹²

Given the potential influence of Laski and Strachey it is necessary to mention the Left Book Club (L. B. C.) which linked them with Nehru in the 1930s. Along with Harold Laski and the publisher Victor Gollancz, Strachey was a founder of the L. B. C. and, according to Michael Newman, he was its “dominant intellectual influence.”⁹³ The L. B. C. operated between 1936 and 1948 but was most influential in the period from its foundation until the outbreak of the second world war.⁹⁴ It published many socialist works, including those by the Webbs, Laski and Strachey and, according to Hugh Thomas, *The Coming Struggle for Power* “was regarded as a prescribed text.”⁹⁵ Due largely to the predominance of Strachey’s influence the L. B. C. positioned itself to the left of the mainstream Labour Party. In fact the L. B. C. was dominated by the Communist Party through Strachey and according to Samuels: “In most people’s minds the Left Book Club and the Communist Party were virtually indistinguishable.”⁹⁶ Significantly, Strachey sought to establish a united front organisation against fascism through the L. B. C. and to this end “the Club became preoccupied with the struggle in Spain” and held rallies in aid of that cause.⁹⁷ The analysis of the world situation fostered by the L. B. C. was agreeable to Nehru and Indian nationalism and he was aware of its activities and the principal promoters. For example, his daughter Indira discussed the L. B. C. in a letter to Nehru in 1936:

I am thinking of becoming a member of the Left Book Club. Have you heard of it? Its aim is to help in the terribly urgent struggle for World Peace & a better

⁹¹ Ibid., 428.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Newman, *John Strachey*, 54. It is worth noting that Gollancz was also Nehru’s publisher.

⁹⁴ Samuels, “The Left Book Club,” 66-81. Samuels noted that the L. B. C. obtained 57,000 members by April 1939 and estimated a readership of a quarter of a million. Its influence was greatly diminished after the Nazi-Soviet pact of August 1939.

⁹⁵ Samuels, op. cit., 70 and Thomas, *John Strachey*, 159.

⁹⁶ Samuels, op. cit., 78.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 68. Thomas noted that Nehru sent a message of support to the January 1938 rally at the Albert Hall. See, *John Strachey*, 167.

social & economic order & against Fascism by spreading knowledge. ... They publish worthwhile books - selected by Laski, Strachey & Gollancz.⁹⁸

In his reply Nehru advised Indira: "Certainly join the Left Book Club. I have myself been thinking of doing so."⁹⁹ The L. B. C.'s anti-imperialism and support for the Spanish republic is mirrored in much of Nehru's work of this period. Certainly there is evidence to suggest that the L.B.C. was an important influence on Nehru at this time.

A number of these themes, especially those found in *The Discovery of India*, are also found in the work of the British socialist writer and acquaintance of Nehru, H. N. Brailsford (1873-1958). In particular, Brailsford's *Subject India*, which was published in 1943 as part of the L. B. C. series discussed the Indian situation from a perspective similar and sympathetic to that of Nehru.¹⁰⁰ In common with much British historiography, Brailsford detected an element of cowardice and unmanliness in the Indian character: "There is some truth in the usual English belief that part at least of the Indian population is unwarlike."¹⁰¹ Brailsford scrutinised the concept of Indian unity and argued that although there were several races and languages and that the British had sought to "divide and rule," there was nevertheless a "common heritage of culture" and a "cultural unity."¹⁰² Brailsford, like Nehru, also considered that the princely states were "backward and reactionary."¹⁰³ Finally, Brailsford also emphasised the difference between India and the Dominions and appraised it in much the same way as Nehru. For Brailsford, "the Dominions are countries are peopled by our kinsmen" and the implication for relations between Britain and the Dominions was founded on this basis:

The political relationship, vaguely defined, with no organised institutional structure, befits the informal dealings of kinsmen. This tie, unlike anything else in history or

⁹⁸ See Indira to Nehru, 6 October, 1936 in *Freedom's Daughter*, ed., Gandhi, 285.

⁹⁹ See Nehru to Indira, 29 October, 1936 in *Freedom's Daughter*, ed., Gandhi, 289. It is worth noting that the L. B. C. did not support the cause of Indian nationalism unreservedly. For example, Samuels remarked that: "Palme Dutt's book on India ... was subjected to a long and sustained critique by Laski" in 1940. Samuels, op. cit., 83.

¹⁰⁰ Brailsford mentioned in this work that he knew Nehru and had met him in India and London. See, *Subject India*, 30-31. In a letter from Brailsford to Nehru in 1936 commiserating with him on the death of his wife and urging him to continue his work for Indian independence, he thanked Nehru for sending him a copy of *Glimpses of World History*. Brailsford to Nehru, 8 March, 1936 in Nehru, *A Bunch of Old Letters*, 167.

¹⁰¹ Brailsford, *Subject India*, 61.

¹⁰² Ibid., 95, 100 and 101.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 106.

the contemporary world, works best when the Dominion is solidly Anglo-Saxon, as New Zealand is, and very ill when it is alien in blood, as Eire is.¹⁰⁴

Clearly Brailsford appreciated, as Nehru did, the difficulty of incorporating India into the Commonwealth structure. It is worth noting that the racial aspect expressed here and by Nehru is rather more sophisticated than a simple English or Indian dichotomy. Nehru's nationalist thought recognised, as Brailsford does, differences between the British and or Anglo-Saxon races and the other 'white' races, like the Irish or Spanish. It is likely that if Brailsford did not provide a British source directly he would have at least reinforced many aspects of Nehru's nationalist thought.

Nehru's Later Nationalist Thought, 1947-1964

One of the most important issues that concerned Nehru was whether or not newly independent India could remain in the Commonwealth as a republic. In Nehru's 1949 speech in the Constituent Assembly in support of his desire that India remain in the Commonwealth, he was able to present a formula for membership which did not infringe India's complete independence or republican status. Nehru stated that "this new Republic of India, completely sovereign and owing no allegiance to the King ... will, nevertheless, be a full member of this Commonwealth and it agrees that the King will be recognized as a symbol of this free partnership."¹⁰⁵ It was primarily a decision expressing India's "free will" and demonstrating the removal of the imperial connection that had dominated and tainted Anglo-Indian relations previously.¹⁰⁶ The issue of the Commonwealth was especially pertinent for Nehru because it combined his internationalism, his belief that the freedom to conduct foreign affairs was an integral part of national freedom and his recognition of the link with Britain at the national and personal level. Not only was it in India's own interests to remain in the Commonwealth but Nehru explained that the contacts between India and Britain could not be denied, even

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 111.

¹⁰⁵ Nehru, "A New Type of Association," May 16, 1949, in *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches*, vol. 1, 275. The feasibility of such an arrangement was an entirely different matter. For example, Enoch Powell denied the plausibility of a Commonwealth that included an Indian republic. See, Heffer, *Like the Roman: The Life of Enoch Powell*, 184-185.

¹⁰⁶ Nehru, op. cit., 275.

though “many of them were bad, very bad” others, however, “were not so bad,” and “many of them may be good.”¹⁰⁷ Nehru then offered himself as an example:

Here I am the patent example of these contacts, speaking in this Honourable House in the English language. No doubt we are going to change that language for our use, but the fact remains that I am doing so and the fact remains that most members who will speak will also do so. The fact remains that we are functioning here under certain rules and regulations for which the model has been the British Constitution.¹⁰⁸

In summary Nehru believed that membership of the Commonwealth could be reconciled with an independent and republican India. For Nehru Commonwealth membership recognized the realities through which India had passed prior to independence and it was an expression of India’s internationalist foreign policy. Further, India’s membership reflected the historical link with Britain and India’s desire to maintain free associations with countries to their mutual benefit and the benefit of international relations generally.

In an address at the inauguration of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in 1950, Nehru outlined the relationship between culture and his nationalist thought. Nehru explained that each nation had “its peculiar idea of culture” that “had its roots in generations hundreds and thousands of years ago.”¹⁰⁹ These nations, Nehru believed, were unlikely to be “absolutely pristine, pure and unaffected by any other culture” and were “bound to get a little mixed up, even though the basic element of a particular national culture remains dominant.”¹¹⁰ Nehru proceeded to postulate a direct relationship between the degree of cultural openness and national progress:

My own view of India’s history is that we can almost measure the growth and advance of India and the decline of India by relating them to periods when India had her mind open to the outside world and when she wanted to close it up. The more she closed it up, the more static she became.¹¹¹

Nehru admitted that the “nations of the East,” probably referring to China and India, had suffered from this “sense of superiority” in the past and recently “they have received

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 283.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Nehru, “What is Culture?” April 9, 1950 in *Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches*, vol. 2., 364.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 365.

many knocks on the head and they have been humiliated.”¹¹² Thus Nehru considered that Indian nationalism had been too narrow in the past and had not been open to potentially beneficial influences from outside and consequently India had suffered. Overall Nehru noted the irony that although nationalism and the national culture were “essentially good” they had the potential to become “evil” if either the national culture became “static” or nationalism was pursued too far and too vigorously.¹¹³ Therefore, Nehru stressed that it was necessary, although very difficult, “to find a balance” between too much and too little nationalism and between a too closed and too open culture.¹¹⁴ For Nehru finding this balance was “greatest problem today,” apart from “the political and economic problems of the age,” because “behind it there is a tremendous conflict in the spirit of man.”¹¹⁵ In this speech, given the difficulty of solving this cultural problem, Nehru turned more practically, to the economic problems that must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Nehru discussed the linguistic aspect of his nationalist thought in a 1955 speech made in southern India. He outlined the position of the various Indian languages under the Constitution and in particular sought to reassure the audience over the propagation of Hindi, which was predominantly and historically a “northern” language, as the official “all-India language” to replace the use of English.¹¹⁶ Firstly, Nehru explained that although India was a “multilingual country” the various languages were all “fairly intimately connected with one another” and were “in one way or another associated with Sanskrit.”¹¹⁷ This multilingualism was reflected in the Constitution and further Nehru believed that such diversity was a “good” thing.¹¹⁸ However, Nehru considered that it was necessary to have a single ‘all-India’ language for communications between the states and between central government and the states and within the armed forces, and further

¹¹² Ibid., 367.

¹¹³ Ibid., 368.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Nehru, “Emotional Integration,” October 6, 1955 in *Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches* vol. 3,

27.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 28.

this language should not be English, since it was according to Nehru: “[T]otally unbecoming for us in India to adopt as an official language a foreign language.”¹¹⁹ According to Nehru, Indian civilization had endured because “it was a dynamic civilization” with the “capacity for synthesis” but it became a static country, “which did not look outside,” and it “became weak.”¹²⁰ It was during this “closed” period that India “developed an exceedingly narrow idea of caste” and “split into innumerable divisions” which began “a period of political, cultural and social degeneration.”¹²¹ As a result India became “too weak to absorb” the foreign conquerors and eventually lost political freedom and consequently British influences, of language and modern western civilization had an inordinate impact.¹²² More recently India had achieved national freedom by uniting under Gandhi’s leadership and developing “a new dynamism.”¹²³ However, for Nehru it was crucial that this unity should be maintained and India “should not become parochial, narrow-minded, provincial, communal and caste-minded.”¹²⁴ What was “required,” for Nehru, was “an emotional integration of the Indian people” which would ensure that they “might be welded into one, and made into one strong national unit” and at the same time India’s “wonderful diversity” should be maintained.¹²⁵ Thus at the end of his life Nehru returned to the causes of India’s conquest by Britain and the need to overcome the use of English which was one of the legacies of that conquest.

Conclusion

This chapter has identified a number of British influences on some of the most important aspects of Nehru’s nationalist thought. Although Nehru consistently rejected British hegemony in India and sought Indian independence he drew upon a number of positive influences and the negative influence of British imperialism which provided a foil for the

¹¹⁹ Ibid. Although Nehru explained that the non-foreign, all-India language had to be Hindi there was “no question of a conflict between Hindi and other languages” and “people from the non-Hindi knowing parts of India should suffer no disability” from the use of Hindi in the all India civil services. See, *ibid.*, 28 and 29.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 32-33.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

development of his nationalist thought. The more positive British influences included the work of Laski, Strachey, Besant, Trevelyan and the L. B. C. and possibly Brailsford. Additionally, Nehru used British sources to alert him to other nationalist struggles from which he drew inspiration and guidance including in particular those in South Africa and Italy.

SECTION THREE

DEMOCRACY

The purpose of this section is to outline the democratic thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. Although the nationalist thought that was the focus of the previous section often took priority, Sun, Gandhi and Nehru's attachment to democracy was still an important, and defining feature of their political thought, and one which differentiated them from other nationalists in India and China. The section will comprise three chapters that will trace the development of their democratic thought in order to examine those aspects that incorporate British influences. Each chapter will assess the nature and extent of those British influences on the most important aspects of their democratic thought. In doing so this section will explore further those British influences highlighted in the introductory section.

The shared attachment of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru to democracy contained a range of different attitudes and values that were not always consistent. For example, Sun was a convinced democrat; however, the difficulties he encountered after the 1911 revolution led him to modify his democratic thought subsequently. Thus he embraced a transitional period of tutelage in which democracy would be introduced gradually, from the local level upwards. In South Africa Gandhi initially regarded the existing constitutional arrangement as a suitable form of representation subject to the removal of the racial inequalities. Later, in India, he rejected such arrangements in favour of a decentralized village-based alternative. Nehru was always a more passionate democrat

than Sun or Gandhi. It is evident that Nehru's distaste and frustration with British imperialism tempered the influence of British political thought and practice during the years of the nationalist struggle. After independence Nehru was much more willing to accept, freely and without rancour, a variety of British influences to which previously he had been hostile when they had been imposed on India.

Sun, Gandhi and Nehru stressed different aspects of democracy and emphasised particular features, which reflected their political thought more generally. The variety of British influences they incorporated reflects this and significantly, despite the variations, there was some overlap amongst the sources they utilised. Further, British influences also impacted on the most important and novel aspects of their democratic thought. For example, an important contribution of Sun's was the increased number of governmental branches and the extension of the forms of representation in addition to universal suffrage. In India, Gandhi based his democracy on the village *panchayat* or council and in doing so cited the work of Henry Maine. Nehru, uniquely of the three, accepted the traditional British model of parliamentary democracy most closely. However, he constantly emphasised the importance of economic and political freedom as essential to any democracy, due in part to the influence of British socialist writers with whom he was familiar. Despite these differences in emphasis, this section will demonstrate that British influences contributed significantly to the development of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru's democratic thought.

Chapter VI

Sun and Democracy

The purpose of this chapter is to outline Sun's democratic thought in order to examine the nature and extent of the influence of British political thought and practice thereon. The first section will consider the development of Sun's democratic thought up to 1924 and the second will consider the lectures on the Principle of People's Sovereignty. Finally, a conclusion will summarise the findings of the chapter.

The Development of Sun's Democratic Thought up to 1924

One of Sun's first and significant contributions to his democratic thought is found in his autobiography *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*. More specifically, it contained a chapter based on a speech that Sun had delivered on his notion of a fivefold or five-power constitution in 1916.¹ In this chapter Sun discussed his plans for the system of government in republican China. He began by declaring that the concept of the "fivefold constitution" was the "fruit exclusively of my work and hitherto has been unknown."² Sun claimed that he had studied the "history of revolutions for over thirty years" and as a result of this study, observation and reading he believed that the traditional threefold constitution of the west was inadequate.³ Sun explained that although the American constitution was probably the most advanced it had become outdated. Significantly, Sun observed that his assessment was shared by British observers:

I studied the American constitution, which from the moment of its appearance was recognised as a model, not only by the American people itself, but also by the British statesmen, who saw in it something superior to all other forms of constitution in other countries.⁴

¹ Sun, "The Fivefold Constitution" in *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 239-254.

² Ibid., 239.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 240. Sun did not reveal the identity of these British statesmen.

From his study Sun believed: "Today many feel the imperfectness of the American Constitution ... because all that was good and correct a hundred or two hundred years ago is by no means suitable to-day."⁵ Firstly, from his reading Sun claimed that a fourth branch was required: "the power of punishment" or censorate.⁶ Sun explained that the censorate was a system that had worked well in traditional China and had also been endorsed by western scholars.⁷ Secondly, from his knowledge of traditional China Sun believed that the system of examination was "extremely useful" and therefore it should constitute the fifth branch.⁸ Again Sun observed that the examination system was: "[A]dopted in practice by England a fairly long time ago, and by America about twenty or thirty years ago. All this was borrowed from China."⁹ It is evident that Sun had studied the British and American systems of government and wished to utilise the strengths of both in his fivefold constitution.

There is some confusion over the identity of the source that Sun cited in support of additional branches of government. Treadgold observed that Sun twice refers "to a book which is evidently John W. Burgess's *The Reconciliation of Government with Liberty* [1915], both times for the purpose of gaining Western sanction for his censoring power."¹⁰ In the first case to which Treadgold refers, Sun cited a "certain American professor" who claimed, in his book "*Liberty* ... that the threefold constitution does not correspond to the spirit of the times, and therefore he advises the introduction of a fourth component part, the 'power of punishment.'"¹¹ In the second citation, Sun mentions an "American professor, Burgess" who, he claimed, said in his work "*Liberty and Government*" that "the power of punishment in China is the best example of a compromise between liberty and government."¹² However, Chen, in his analysis of the

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., 241.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 242.

⁹ Ibid., 252.

¹⁰ Treadgold, *The West in Russia and China*, 87.

¹¹ Sun, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 241. However, Treadgold noted that while Burgess praised the Chinese censorate he did not recommend that America should add a similar fourth power. See, Treadgold, op. cit., 219.

¹² Sun, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 249.

speech in connection with his study of the five-power constitution, believes that Sun cited a "Professor Cecil (sic) of Columbia" and his book "Liberty and Authority" as a source of support for his concept of more than three branches of government.¹³ There would seem to be an error here because although Lord Hugh Cecil did publish a book called *Liberty and Authority* he was never a professor at Columbia or elsewhere. Nevertheless there is a similarity between Chen's 'Liberty and Authority' and the 'Liberty and Government' to which Treadgold refers. Chen observed that in the same speech Sun also referred to the "well-known American scholar Burgess" and his book "The Reconciliation of Government with Liberty" as another western source of support for his fivefold constitution. Although Chen was unable to identify the first author cited he observed that Sun used different Chinese words in translating the names of the scholars which suggests there were two.¹⁴ However, since Cecil did not comment on the subject of the most appropriate number of branches of government it is possible that Sun mistakenly referred to Cecil and *Liberty and Authority*. Further, Burgess was a professor at Columbia and did write a book entitled *The Reconciliation of Government with Liberty* that discussed additional branches of government.¹⁵ This would support Treadgold's contention, although, bearing in mind's Chen's analysis, it cannot be considered conclusive.¹⁶ However, although Cecil did not discuss the branches of government his discussion of liberty does resonate with Sun's analysis of absolutism and liberty.¹⁷

¹³ Sun quoted in Chen Yuan-chyuan, "Elements of an East-West Synthesis in Dr Sun Yat-sen's Concept of the "Five Power Constitution" and in the Chinese Constitution of 1946," in *Sun Yat-sen* ed. Kindermann, 150. It is necessary to note that Chen referred to a different version of the speech to that which appears in *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*.

¹⁴ In another translation of the speech the name of the author is omitted on both occasions. See, Hsu, *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals*, 92 and 106.

¹⁵ Burgess' analysis of British parliamentary government is enlightening for its similarity to the views expressed by Sun and as such is relevant to the study of his British influences. Burgess also believed that "first the British state was Monarchic" and gradually the power of the state had flowed to the House of Commons. However, according to Burgess, Parliamentary government was arbitrary because it is the "unlimited power of the lower house" which becomes "the unlimited rule of the leader of the majority party." See, Brown, *American Conservatives*, 152 and 159. In this case it seems that British influence on Sun came to him indirectly via a comparative analysis of the British and American systems from an American conservative thinker. It is worth noting that Burgess' criticism echoes those made by British conservatives like Cecil and Dicey, who feared the concentration of power in Parliament.

¹⁶ Further, another study identified the reference to Cecil and discussed it in the context of Sun's concept of equality. See, Wang, *Chinese Intellectuals and the West 1872-1949*, 336 and note 76 below.

Further, Cecil was acutely aware of the 'dictatorship of Parliament' that Sun mentioned. The most likely explanation is that in addition to Burgess Sun cited another work of which he was aware and which he thought supported his views on the fivefold constitution. Thus whilst Burgess represents an American source of influence on Sun's concept of additional branches of government it is likely that Cecil was a British source that influenced Sun's democratic thought and one which will be discussed further below.

In another chapter of *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, entitled "Revolutionary Reorganization of China," Sun outlined his theory of "three phases of development of the revolution."¹⁸ The first phase would be the period of destruction and martial law and would last about three years. The second phase would be one of preparation and consolidation in which local self-government would be established and would last about six years. The final phase would be when full republican and constitutional government was achieved.¹⁹ Sun recalled that when he was in London in 1911 he had had discussions with an Englishman regarding the plan for a three phase revolution. Sun described the incident as follows:

This Englishman heard that I preach the transformation of China into a republic and, conceiving great doubts on this score, visited me at my hotel for the special purpose of talking with me on this subject. We argued for several days without being able to come to an agreement. But when I outlined to him my theory about the three periods of revolutionary tactics, he immediately agreed with me saying: "Yes, with such a plan you can escape the tyranny of autocracy, militarism and politicians, and their infringement of the rights of the people. I consider it my duty, now and for the future, to support you in my articles."²⁰

On hearing of this plan, Sun claimed that the "famous Englishman" was brought around to the view that constitutional democracy was achievable in China and was then able to

¹⁷ Sun made a wide-ranging analysis of political history as the result of conflict between anarchy and absolutism that included examples from England and the United States. See, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 245-251.

¹⁸ Ibid., 120. This theory had first been mentioned in the "Inaugural Manifesto of the Military Government" Winter 1906. See, *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents, 1894-1969*, ed., Shieh, 14. Although it was ostensibly a party document Sun is held to have been responsible for its scope and content. For example Lee believes that the "program of the Military Government," which included the Manifesto, was the work of "Sun Yat-sen and his close associates." See, *Foundations of the Chinese Revolution, 1905-1912*, 43.

¹⁹ Sun, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 120-122.

²⁰ Ibid., 131.

support Sun in the London press.²¹ Sun did not identify this Englishman but he did refer to one of his books, *Changing China*, which he said was “very good.”²² However, elsewhere in 1918 Sun recounted the details of his meeting and explained:

A year before the founding of our Republic, I met in London an Englishman named Colquhoun who had travelled extensively in China, was familiar with our people and customs, and had written many books that discussed China. His book *The Transformation of China* was especially significant. When he heard of my plan to change China into a republic he was full of skepticism and thought it could not be done.²³

This is almost certainly a reference to English writer Archibald Colquhoun’s book, *China in Transformation* (1898), which Sun characteristically cited incorrectly on both occasions.²⁴ This is confirmed in a second edition which was published in 1912, after the meeting with Sun in London in 1911, and Colquhoun reported in the preface:

It may interest readers to know that this work has exercised some little influence on the Chinese reform movement. Dr. Sun Yat Sen, at present leader of the republican party in China, informed the writer that he was seldom without a copy, having in his wanderings, purchased as many as fifteen for himself and his friends.²⁵

Colquhoun also concurred with Sun’s interpretation of their meeting in a 1911 article:

There is something to be said for the plans, as given to me by the reformers, of a military domination to last for a term of years, followed by a transition period, and leading up to full constitutional government.²⁶

Archibald Ross Colquhoun (1848-1914) was a quintessential Victorian polymath: an engineer, colonial administrator, writer, journalist, traveller and explorer and editor. It is evident that his work exerted a significant influence on Sun’s thought and one that has been overlooked in the available literature. Further, in connection with this important aspect of his democratic thought, Sun was pleased to have had his views endorsed.

In the “Doctrine of Sun Yat-sen” (1918), Sun reflected on the nature and progress of the revolution. Sun explained that although the revolution had successfully

²¹ Ibid., 131-132.

²² Ibid., 132.

²³ Sun, “The Doctrine of Sun Yat-sen,” 3 December, 1918 in *Prescriptions* ed. Wei, Myers and Gillin, 206.

²⁴ Coincidentally there exists a volume called *Changing China* written by Rt. Rev. Lord William Gascoyne-Cecil (1863-1936), which was published in 1910. It covers similar ground to Colquhoun’s work and as the author was the brother of Lord Hugh Cecil – whose work Sun had almost certainly read – the coincidence is profound. The influence of Lord Hugh Cecil is discussed below.

²⁵ Colquhoun, *China in Transformation* (1912), viii.

destroyed the old regime it had not been able to implement a constructive phase.²⁷

Therefore, Sun suggested that a transitional period was necessary. It was this transitional period, Sun claimed, that had convinced Archibald Colquhoun, who had been sceptical of the feasibility of establishing a republic in China, that it would be possible “to prevent a dictatorship by the military.”²⁸ In the second edition of *China in Transformation* Colquhoun stated that Sun wished to establish a republic, “though the model is not quite that of the United States.”²⁹ However, Colquhoun maintained that: “So far as it was developed to me by Dr. Sun there was nothing in the republican scheme to adequately replace the Throne and dynasty as the focus of Chinese social and political life.”³⁰

Despite these concerns about the vacuum that the removal of the monarchy might produce, Colquhoun concluded that “the predominant feeling at this moment is one of satisfaction that her people are strong enough at last to throw off the Manchu blight, and ... carry them through towards the haven of stable and respectable government.”³¹ As evidence of their collaboration, Colquhoun claimed that he “had two long and intimate conversations with Dr. Sun, and was empowered by him to state authoritatively the plan of action which the reform party intended to put into action should it gain ascendancy.”³² As well as providing an endorsement of Sun’s ideas, it is evident that Colquhoun’s work influenced the development of Sun’s concept of a transitional phase during the introduction of democracy to China.

Colquhoun’s *China in Transformation* provides a lengthy survey of the geography, economy, society and politics of China together with an analysis of the implications of the Chinese situation for British policy. It emphasises many of the problems of China but also some of the positive features of Chinese society. It is also likely that Colquhoun’s work influenced Sun’s concept of a fivefold constitution. For

²⁶ Colquhoun, “China - A Republic,” 1042.

²⁷ Sun, “The Doctrine of Sun Yat-sen” in *Prescriptions* ed. Wei, Myers and Gillin, 204.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 206.

²⁹ Colquhoun, *China in Transformation* (1912), 132-133.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 283.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 285.

³² *Ibid.*, 280.

example, Colquhoun, like Burgess, identified the traditional Chinese censorate as a creditable institution. In 1898 he described it as follows: “[A] form of precautionary measures is the institution of what is generally known as the Censorate, a body of men, fifty-six in number, who are appointed to ‘censure’ in the various provinces and the capital itself.”³³ In the second edition Colquhoun remarked: “It is interesting to know that the scheme of republican government as explained to the writer by Dr. Sun Yat Sen, includes the board of censors in a modified form.”³⁴ Thus Colquhoun contributed quite significantly to the development of this important aspect of Sun’s democratic thought.

The Principle of People’s Sovereignty Lectures 1924

Sun gave his series of six lectures on the Principle of People’s Sovereignty between 9 March and 26 April, 1924.³⁵ The lectures were given during a period of close collaboration with the Russian communists, which had been precipitated by numerous rebuttals from the west of Sun’s calls for assistance. Despite this the fact that Sun lectured on the topic of democracy is indicative of the importance he assigned to it and the superficiality of any Russian influence he may have been exposed to in this regard. The lectures represented the culmination of the development of Sun’s democratic thought and the most detailed exposition of it.

Sun began his first lecture with a definition of terms. According to Sun the people are “any unified and organized body of men,” and sovereignty is “power and authority extended to the area of the state.”³⁶ For Sun, “government is a thing of the people and by the people; it is control of the affairs of all the people” and consequently people’s sovereignty is “where the people control the government.”³⁷ Sun then divided history into several periods of “struggle” which had culminated in the “age of people’s power,

³³ Colquhoun, *China in Transformation* (1898), 180.

³⁴ Colquhoun, *China in Transformation* (1912), 67.

³⁵ In the original edition of d’Elia’s French translation of the lectures the dates for the six lectures are given as 9 and 16 March, 1, 13, 20 and 26 April. See, Sun, *Le Triple Dénisme de Sun Wen* trans. P. M. d’Elia. However, whilst Price’s English translation concurs with the dates given by d’Elia for the first, second, fourth and sixth lectures it does not give a date for the third and the fifth is dated as 16 March, which being the same as that of the second would appear to be wrong. See, *San Min Chu I*.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 151 and 152.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 152 and 153.

the age of democracy” which existed currently in parts of the world.³⁸ Next Sun surveyed the development of democracy in order to ascertain if China was “ripe for democracy.”³⁹ Sun admitted that, “China from the beginning of her history has never put democracy into practice.”⁴⁰ However, in examining Chinese history Sun found “China making progress long before Europe and America and engaging in discussion of democracy thousands of years in the past.”⁴¹ According to Sun “the first instance of actual democracy in modern times was in England” where a “revolution of the people took place.”⁴² Rather curiously, Sun believed that “the English preferred autocracy to democracy” so “they continued to long for a king” and eventually “Charles II was welcomed back as king.”⁴³ Sun then assessed Rousseau’s theory and its relation to democracy. Sun believed, contrary to Rousseau, that “freedom and equality” were not “endowed by Nature” but rather they were “wrought out of the conditions of the times and the movement of events.”⁴⁴ According to Sun, “universal principles are all based first upon fact and then upon theory; theory does not precede fact.”⁴⁵ For Sun, Rousseau’s ideas were “fundamentally in conflict with the principle of historical evolution.”⁴⁶ However, Sun did not believe that democracy itself was flawed because Rousseau based it on false premises or because monarchy had been restored in England.⁴⁷ Overall Sun considered that despite these anomalies autocracy was “on the wane” in Europe: “Great Britain uses a political party rather than a king to govern the country; it may be called a republic with a king.”⁴⁸ A cursory survey of this lecture reveals several British influences and it is evident that Sun drew heavily on the British experience in justifying his own plans.

³⁸ Ibid., 155.

³⁹ Ibid., 168.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 169.

⁴¹ Ibid., 171.

⁴² Ibid. The “revolution” Sun was referring to was that led by Cromwell which resulted in the execution of Charles I.

⁴³ Ibid., 172.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 174.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 176.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 177-178.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 181.

Given Sun's concern with democracy and socialism, it is interesting to consider the possible influence of Fabian socialism. During the autumn of 1896 Sidney Webb delivered a series of six lectures on the "Machinery of Democracy" for the Fabian Society.⁴⁹ The meetings were only open to "members, candidates for membership and visitors invited by special ticket."⁵⁰ It is not clear whether Sun attended the lectures but they took place in an area frequented by him at that time and they were reported in the subsequent issues of the *Fabian News* and the September issue refers to two articles, by the Webbs of related interest, that would appear in the *Political Science Quarterly*.⁵¹ The first lecture, entitled "Primitive Expedients," was given on 2 October and reported in the November 1896 issue of *Fabian News*, began with a definition of democracy as, "the government of the people, by the people, for the people."⁵² Further, it meant "control, but not necessarily by means of election."⁵³ Webb proceeded to explain that democracy "may or may not" be "based on natural right" but it is rather the "right of each to an equal and identical share in government" rather than a right "to the machinery of democracy."⁵⁴

Sidney Webb's contribution to the *Fabian Essays in Socialism* provides an interesting account of the development of socialism and democracy in Britain. In view of the publication date of the volume and the similarity with the emphasis of Sun's analysis on 'control' it is instructive to examine it in further detail. According to Webb: "The main stream which has borne European society towards socialism during the past 100 years is the irresistible progress of Democracy."⁵⁵ In fact for Webb it was the industrial

⁴⁹ See *Fabian News*, September 1896 where the lecture programme was announced. The six lectures would take place on 2 and 16 October at Essex Hall, off the Strand, and on 30 October, 13 and 27 November, and 11 December at Clifford's Inn, Fleet Street.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid. See, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, "Primitive Democracy in British Trade Unionism," 397-432 and "Representative Institutions in British Trade-Unionism," 640-671.

⁵² Webb, "Primitive Expedients," *Fabian News*, November 1896, 35. This is a term Sun was fond of using to describe his Three Principles programme and particularly the Principle of People's Sovereignty.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Webb, "The Historic Basis of Socialism, in *Fabian Essays in Socialism* ed. Shaw, 33.

revolution that had brought about the “final collapse of Medievalism.”⁵⁶ In turn this had led to “an impetuous reaction against the bureaucratic tyranny of the past,” which left “all the new elements of society in a state of unrestrained licence.”⁵⁷ This ‘licence’ had found expression in the pursuit of absolute freedom in the political and economic spheres; utilitarianism and *laissez faire* respectively.⁵⁸ These developments were only temporary and were soon found to be ineffective and specifically Webb noted “the failure of Individualism to create a decent life for four fifths of the people.”⁵⁹ Thus governments had acted on two fronts; to restrict both political and economic freedom. There is certainly some similarity between Webb’s account and that which Sun gave in his lectures, particularly if his views on the connection between the people’s sovereignty and equality are considered.

In his second lecture Sun discussed the concepts of liberty, equality and people’s sovereignty. In doing so Sun addressed the criticism made of the Chinese by some foreigners which stated that the Chinese “have no idea of liberty” and are as “disunited as a sheet of loose sand.”⁶⁰ For Sun this criticism appeared to be contradictory but could be explained because the Chinese had had “excessive liberty for the individual.”⁶¹ According to Sun the problem in China was not that the Chinese had ‘no idea of liberty’ but rather that they had too much liberty. Sun claimed that the Chinese were suffering from poverty rather than “groaning under the painful yoke of autocracy” as had been the case in Europe.⁶² Sun explained that: “We to-day cannot imagine what the people of Europe suffered under their feudal rule; it was far worse than anything [the] Chinese have ever suffered under their autocracies.”⁶³ Sun cited “an English scholar named Mill” and his definition of liberty: “[T]hat only individual liberty which did not interfere with liberty

⁵⁶ Ibid., 38.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 40.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 41-45.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 60.

⁶⁰ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 191. It is worth noting that Sun was repeating the analogy that he had made in the nationalism lectures. The analogy recalls the use of the term by Figgis, which was discussed in the chapter devoted to Sun’s nationalist thought.

⁶¹ Ibid., 192.

⁶² Ibid., 196.

⁶³ Ibid.

of others can be considered as true liberty. If one's liberty is incompatible with another's sphere of liberty, it is no longer liberty."⁶⁴ Having cited Mill, Sun continued: "Evidently Western scholars had come to realise that liberty was not a sacred thing which could not be encroached upon, but that it must be put within boundaries."⁶⁵ Sun believed that historically the people of the west had not had liberty but once it had been attained they realised that it must be restricted. However, the situation in China was different and Sun believed that too much individual liberty was the reason China had been "invaded by foreign imperialism and oppressed by the economic control and trade wars of the Powers."⁶⁶ Thus the increased liberty that Sun sought was for the nation rather than the individual.⁶⁷ Sun illustrated this with the example of the French Revolution's watchword "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," explaining that of these it was 'Equality' which was "similar to our Principle of People's Sovereignty which aims to destroy [foreign] autocracy and make all men equal."⁶⁸

This lecture reveals the influence of John Stuart Mill. Although Price's translation identifies John Stuart Mill as the 'Mill' that Sun mentioned there is some confusion on this point. Linebarger, who used d'Elia's English translation, believed that Sun cited John Millar's definition given in *The Progress of Science Relative to Law and Government* (1787) rather than the more familiar definition attributed to John Stuart Mill.⁶⁹ However, Treadgold explains the muddle by noting that d'Elia did not mention Millar in the original French edition but added a footnote in the English edition. The note questioned Mill as the originator of such ideas on liberty and pointed out that they pre-date him. Treadgold

⁶⁴ Ibid., 204.

⁶⁵ Ibid..

⁶⁶ Ibid., 210.

⁶⁷ The apparent emphasis on national rather than individual liberty has led some observers to identify fascist elements in Sun's political thought. For example Maria Chang believed there to be some resemblance to fascism in Sun's thought and felt there was "ample evidence that Sun's preoccupation with the divisiveness and rampant individualism that characterised Chinese politics prompted him to support one-party politics." See, *The Chinese Blue Shirt Society*, 32. Specifically, Chang and Gregor identified a resemblance with Italian fascism. However, they concluded that the resemblance differed on the subject of democracy: Mussolini's Italian fascism did not share Sun's belief in democracy. See, "The Thought of Sun Yat-sen in Comparative Perspective" in *Sun Yat-sen's Doctrine in the Modern World* ed. Cheng, 122-123.

⁶⁸ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 212 and 214.

⁶⁹ See Linebarger, op. cit., 98.

adds that Millar's essay does not in any event contain ideas similar to those used by Sun. Further, Treadgold is convinced that Sun's transliteration of Mill's surname meant it was unlikely that he was referring to Millar.⁷⁰ Certainly, the definition that Sun cited resembles John Stuart Mill's classic formulation.

Sun's discussion of liberty also emphasises the influence of Archibald Colquhoun. Colquhoun's *China in Transformation* also incorporates a revealing analysis of the extent of liberty in China which would appear to coincide with that made by Sun. According to Colquhoun:

The great fact to be noted, as between the Chinese and their Government, is the almost unexampled liberty which the people enjoy, and the infinitesimally small part which government plays in the scheme of national life.⁷¹

Colquhoun continued:

The Chinese have perfect freedom of industry and trade, of locomotion, of amusement, and of religion, and whatever may be required for regulation or protection is not supplied by Act of Parliament or by any kind of Government interference, but by voluntary associations.⁷²

The result of this was that "in all practical matters - politics not being considered such - the Chinese genius for association has the freest play and achieves most useful results."⁷³

It is likely that Colquhoun's identification of the Chinese capacity for self-government would have appealed to Sun. In particular Colquhoun's assessment of the Chinese situation in regard to liberty would have been preferable to that found in Mill's work.

In his third lecture, Sun repeated much of his discussion of equality made in the previous two lectures and in particular his criticism of Rousseau. Sun advised that China should "make the line of equality the base upon which to stand" and so avoid being "constantly led astray" by "liberty and equality" as Western nations had been.⁷⁴

Although Sun accepted the existence of natural inequalities between men, and admitted that men have varying levels of "natural intelligence," he hoped that "as moral ideas and

⁷⁰ See Treadgold, op. cit., 217-218.

⁷¹ Colquhoun, *China in Transformation* (1898), 297.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 234. Sun added that implementing his Three Principles would achieve "true liberty and equality," presumably equality of opportunity and political status as opposed to the "false" absolute equality pursued in the west.

the spirit of service prevail, they will certainly become more and more equal.”⁷⁵ There is a potential British source for Sun’s concept of equality. The confusion over the authors that Sun cited in his 1916 speech on the fivefold constitution, discussed above, suggests the possibility that Sun was familiar with the work of Lord Hugh Cecil. Wang also identified the reference to Cecil’s “Liberty” in his 1916 speech. He believes that Cecil’s “contention that equality is detrimental to liberty was probably Sun’s source for maintaining that ‘to make all men equal’ would yield a ‘false equality.’”⁷⁶ However, Wang erroneously cites the publication date of *Liberty and Authority* as 1912 in his discussion. It was published in 1910 and this fact makes it much more likely that Sun would have come across the work since he was in London in 1911. Therefore, it is instructive to examine *Liberty and Authority* in this context. It is particularly worth noting that Cecil began the work with a definition of liberty which included a reference to human progress and which he claimed was superior to that given by Mill. Although Sun seemed to accept Mill’s definition it is possible that the reference to ‘progress’ in Cecil’s definition would have been preferable. Additionally, in *Liberty and Authority* Cecil explained that one of his objections to Mill’s definition was that it excluded children and savage nations.⁷⁷ Cecil specifically identified China as a civilized nation which undermined Mill’s definition and consequently it was a nation which should not be excluded from any formulation of liberty. This more favourable assessment of China also coincides with that made by Colquhoun. Cecil held that liberty was of the utmost importance but equality was “an unreal delusion which never existed and can never exist.”⁷⁸ According to Cecil there was a “formidable error” contained “in the phrase the ‘equality of man.’”⁷⁹ As for the pursuit of absolute equality it is instructive to compare Cecil and Sun. For Cecil:

If authority levels what may be called the natural inequalities; if it rolls the people out into a dead flat of civil and political equality; it does but make way for some

⁷⁵ Ibid., 245.

⁷⁶ See, Wang, loc. cit.

⁷⁷ Cecil, *Liberty and Authority*, 15.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 54.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 53.

inequality much more oppressive, much less easily borne, than the inequalities which are imposed by the hand of nature or have arisen out of the inequalities so imposed.⁸⁰

Similarly, for Sun:

If we pay no attention to each man's intellectual endowments and capacities and push down those who rise to a high position in order to make all equal, the world will not progress and mankind will retrocede.⁸¹

Cecil proceeded to observe that equality had been "artificially imposed" in France and in the United States but not in Britain.⁸² Indeed many of the criticisms of Rousseau and French republicanism in Sun's lectures can also be found in Cecil's work. Cecil sought to counter the natural right or absolute definitions of equality and replace it with a more limited concept. Cecil appears to have been a positive British influence on Sun in this area.

However, Sun developed his concept of equality in a more precise and refined manner than Cecil. Sun conceived of three distinct classes of people and justified this with his theory of sovereignty and ability and the concept of service. As Chu-yuan Cheng observed: "To prevent unrest caused by natural inequality, Sun also advanced the concept of service to mitigate disparities."⁸³ Gregor and Chang identify a Confucian origin to the theory of three classes of people.⁸⁴ Whilst there may have been Confucian influences on this aspect of Sun's thought he also observed the tendency in the west. Sun observed in his third lecture on democracy that the west had "abused" equality which was why "European peoples are still struggling for democracy."⁸⁵ Sun claimed:

In order to struggle more effectively, the people have naturally organized themselves and, realising the value of organisation, have achieved freedom of assembly and of association. This freedom has resulted in various groups, such as political parties and labour unions.⁸⁶

For Sun the striking feature of the western labour movements in this context was that they had been more successful when they had been led by "friendly intellectuals from outside

⁸⁰ Ibid., 55.

⁸¹ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 221.

⁸² Cecil, *Liberty and Authority*, 57-59. Cecil proceeded to explain that a positive benefit of this fact was Britain had been better at dealing with the "inferior races" within the empire.

⁸³ Cheng, "Introduction" in *Sun Yat-sen's Doctrine in the Modern World* ed., Cheng, 6.

⁸⁴ Gregor and Chang, "Wang Yang-ming and the Ideology of Sun Yat-sen," 398.

⁸⁵ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 238-239.

as leaders to guide them.”⁸⁷ However, Sun observed that when the British and French workers “expelled” these leaders they gave up their “wise guides” and “failed to advance.”⁸⁸ Sun was aware of the intellectual leadership of the European trade union movement and applied the lessons he learned from it to his Principle of People’s Sovereignty. Again, Sun’s comments suggest the possibility of Fabian influence.

In his fourth lecture Sun discussed in greater detail his conception of democracy. Sun proceeded to discuss the shortcomings of democracy in the United States and Britain, where the move from “limited to universal suffrage was very gradual.”⁸⁹ In Sun’s view democracy in the west had been limited to the application and extension of suffrage but despite this he believed that democracy was “still moving forward.”⁹⁰ As an example he identified Switzerland where the people had won “the rights of initiative and referendum.”⁹¹ Additionally, he cited some American states that practised “the right of recall.”⁹² Sun observed that thus far democracy had developed four rights; although nowhere were all four being exercised simultaneously. In the nations which had only attained “representative democracy” where only the right to vote existed it was impossible to “avoid some of its abuses.”⁹³ These abuses were particularly evident in China where the representatives had become “swine” and were “despised by the whole nation.”⁹⁴ Next Sun mentioned developments in Russia, where “an absolute government of the people” had been established, which he felt might have “many advantages over a representative government.”⁹⁵ However, he did admit that there was not “much data with which to appraise this new form of government.”⁹⁶

⁸⁶ Ibid., 239.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 240.

⁸⁸ Ibid. It is not clear what events or which leaders Sun was referring to here.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 260 and 265.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 274 and 275.

⁹¹ Ibid., 275.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid., 277.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

Sun began his fifth lecture by acknowledging the superiority of western civilisation in recent times. He claimed that although western material civilisation was superior to the Chinese, developments in political philosophy and the sphere of government were not so far advanced.⁹⁷ Therefore he cautioned that China should not copy the west in all respects, and especially not in the field of political theory, but only in the physical sciences where the west was superior.⁹⁸ According to Sun "the reason why Western democracy has not made more progress is because Western nations have not fundamentally solved the problem of administering democracy."⁹⁹ Further, conditions in China were also different. Thus, he stated that if China were to "apply Western methods of social control as we would Western machinery in a hard and fast way - we shall be making a serious mistake."¹⁰⁰ Sun claimed that he had made a "new discovery in political theory" to improve the "practice of democracy."¹⁰¹ This discovery Sun likened to the thesis of a "Swiss scholar" who thought the "attitude of the people to government must be changed."¹⁰² Sun's discovery was the distinction between "sovereignty and ability."¹⁰³ This distinction fitted with Sun's theory of the "classes of human society" and the belief, discussed in his first lecture, that democracy was "created by human effort."¹⁰⁴ Sun divided humanity into three classes based on "natural intelligence and ability:" discoverers; promoters and operators.¹⁰⁵ Sun left no doubt as to which group he belonged:

We know a way now to make use of democracy and we know how to change the attitude of the people towards government, but yet the majority of the people are without vision. We who have prevision must lead them and guide them into the right way if we want to escape the confusions of Western democracy and not follow in the tracks of the West.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁷ Ibid., 286.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 288.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 289.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 291.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 296.

¹⁰² Ibid. The identity of this 'Swiss scholar' is unclear although Audrey Wells has suggested that it was Johan Bluntschli. See, *The Political Thought of Sun Yat-sen: Its Development and Impact*, 98.

¹⁰³ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 296.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 297 and 299.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 297.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 318.

Finally, Sun summarised his theory: "The foundation of the government of a nation must be built upon the rights of the people, but the administration of government must be intrusted to experts."¹⁰⁷ Sun's ideas here reflect his definition of equality discussed above and again hint at possible Fabian influence.

In his final lecture Sun returned to his analysis that the west had advanced relatively less in the sphere of politics and government than it had in that of machinery and science. Democracy, Sun explained, was potentially a very powerful machine. However, for him, the west had been unable to utilize its full potential because its "methods of controlling machinery were defective."¹⁰⁸ Since the west felt unable to control government, having only the "power of voting," the power of government was by necessity limited.¹⁰⁹ Thus Sun explained that as the west had not fully solved the problem of democracy China would have to "discover a new way."¹¹⁰ The solution was to ensure that there were adequate powers of control which will enable the establishment of strong government. Consequently Sun stated that "if we put in a high-powered, strong government, its activities will be broad in scope and it will accomplish great things."¹¹¹ China must separate sovereignty and ability or "the political power of the people and the administrative power of the government."¹¹² If full sovereignty, or control, was given to the people a "complete and powerful government organ" could be established.¹¹³ Sun then repeated his idea that the power of people, the rights of the people, should take four forms: suffrage; recall; initiative and referendum.¹¹⁴ For Sun, on one side the people "exerted these four great powers," whilst on the other side the government, "to do its best work," must be based on a "quintuple-power constitution."¹¹⁵ These five powers or branches would be the executive, legislative, judicial, civil service examination and

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 330.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 327.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 337.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 343.

¹¹² Ibid., 342.

¹¹³ Ibid., 346.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 350-351.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 353.

censoring.¹¹⁶ The first three Sun attributed to the west while the latter “two new features” had, according to Sun, “come from old China.”¹¹⁷ Sun believed that censorship and civil service examination had been effective in ancient China and had been praised by foreign observers.¹¹⁸ Further, Sun observed that, “Great Britain’s civil service examinations were modeled after the old Chinese system.”¹¹⁹ Sun wanted to “combine the best from China and the best from other countries and guard against all kinds of abuse in the future.”¹²⁰ Therefore, the three “governmental powers” of the west should be combined with the “old Chinese powers of examination and censorship.”¹²¹

At the end of his final lecture Sun provided a clue as to the source of his idea for the four powers of the people: “With ... such political power on the part of the people, we will be able to realize the ideal of the American scholar - an all-powerful government seeking the welfare of the people.”¹²² Sun explained that he had “not been able to describe all the particulars in these lectures” but “those who wish to make a more detailed study can refer to Mr Liao Chung-k’ai’s book translation of the *Government by All the People*.”¹²³ Although Sun does not give the name of the ‘American scholar,’ Chu-yuan Cheng has identified the source as Delos F. Wilcox’s *Government by all the People* (1912) and this would seem to be correct.¹²⁴ In this work Wilcox examines the merits of three powers that Sun advocated in addition to suffrage. According to Linebarger the

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 354.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 356. Thus it would appear that whilst in the fifth lecture Sun laid less emphasis on copying the west his intention was to borrow selectively rather than wholesale.

¹¹⁸ Sun explained that: “Modern foreign scholars who have studied Chinese institutions give high praise to China’s old independent examination system, and there have been imitations of the system for the selection of able men in the West.” Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. The Chinese examination system for selecting officials had impressed European intellectuals since the Jesuits and Prussia attempted to introduce such a system in 1690. See, O’Neill, *Companion to Chinese History*, 87.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 357.

¹²¹ Ibid., 358.

¹²² Ibid., 360.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ See, “Introduction” in *Sun Yat-sen’s Doctrine in the Modern World* ed., Cheng, 5. As well as the subject matter the publication date and the American author would also support the claim as this important source of influence on Sun. Wang noted that a Chinese translation of Wilcox’s work appeared in a Kuomintang journal in 1919. However, Wang seems to suggest that this translation was Sun’s source rather than the original. This would seem to be doubtful given that Sun first mentioned the concept as early as 1916. See, Wang, op. cit., 335.

“four powers are perhaps the most Western element in the whole theory of Sun.”¹²⁵

Similarly, Wang believed the four powers were “clearly Western in origin.”¹²⁶ It is reasonable to infer that in addition to Wilcox’s work Sun was aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the practice of British style democracy, which was confined to the exercise of just one power. This was in his view a shortcoming of democracy in the west and one that he hoped would be overcome in China.

However, as well as this American influence there is also evidence for the existence of British influence on this aspect of Sun’s democratic thought. An important fact about the four powers of the people is that they were one of the latest aspects of his Principle to be fully developed. In fact Sun did not mention them until 1916 despite Wilcox’s book being published in 1912. Of course there may have been a lag between its publication and Sun obtaining a copy. This question is perhaps even more puzzling when the topicality of such powers at the turn of the century is considered. In fact as early as 1896 during the time of Sun’s first visit to London the subject was receiving considerable attention in Britain, even if some of it was negative and critical of the device. For example, the Webbs’ article “Primitive Democracy in British Trade-Unionism” published in September 1896, just before Sun arrived in London, examined the use of the referendum and the initiative.¹²⁷ The Webbs concluded that whilst both devices had been used at various times they were invariably unsuccessful and resulted in the “virtual exclusion of the general body of the members from all real share in the government.”¹²⁸ As such they were counter to the democratic ideal “that everything which ‘concerns all should be decided by all,’ and that each citizen should enjoy an equal and identical share in government.”¹²⁹ This theme was repeated in the related article published in December of

¹²⁵ Linebarger, op. cit., 219.

¹²⁶ Wang, op. cit., 343.

¹²⁷ Sidney and Beatrice Webb, “Primitive Democracy in British Trade Unionism,” 397-432.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 422. This the Webbs observed had happened in practice amongst trade unions because the use of the initiative had led to instability and it had therefore been curtailed, giving increased power to the executive. This had nullified the effectiveness of the referendum because the executive was able to decide on every aspect of its use.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 431.

that year, "Representative Institutions in British Trade-Unionism."¹³⁰ The article identified the "requisites of government" as "how to combine administrative efficiency with popular control."¹³¹ On the whole though the Fabians did not favour such devices as they considered that they undermined representative government.

The third of Sidney Webb's six 'Machinery of Democracy' lectures that he gave in the autumn of 1896 also dealt with the referendum and the initiative. The lecture was delivered on 30 October and reported in the December 1896 issue of *Fabian News*. The report began with Webb's assertion that traditionally democracy was understood to be "election by ballot" whereas the idea of "direct legislation by the people" was quite new. Webb went on to outline the various forms of direct legislation: The Referendum; The Initiative and "Withdrawal of the Mandate."¹³² However, Webb concluded from the experience of Switzerland that "it did not afford much support to the enthusiastic ideas about the Referendum which were held by some Democrats in this country."¹³³ Similarly, Webb repeated his earlier argument, that the experience of the use of the Initiative and the Referendum by English trade unions had been counter productive: "[F]ar from giving the members any real control over their executives, [it] proved, in practice to give the executives more power than ever over their members."¹³⁴ Therefore these institutions had fallen out of favour amongst the trade union movement. Webb concluded that: "The failure of the Referendum and the Initiative, regarded exclusively as means of giving effect to the popular will, does not depend on popular ignorance or incapacity, but is inherent in the whole notion of 'direct legislation.'"¹³⁵ Finally, Webb observed that "neither the Referendum nor the Initiative can accurately express any more of the 'people's will' than a General Election on a reformed electoral system."¹³⁶

¹³⁰ Sidney and Beatrice Webb, "Representative Institutions in British Trade-Unionism," 640-671.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 661.

¹³² Webb, "The Referendum and the Initiative," *Fabian News*, December 1896, 39. The withdrawal of the mandate would seem to equate to the right of recall.

¹³³ *Ibid.* In fact Webb noted that in some Cantons it had been used "as an instrument of reaction."

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

However, not all discussions of these devices were negative. For example, the April 1897 issue of *Fabian News* reported a lecture by A. V. Dicey on "The Need for Referendum in England," which he had delivered at Essex Hall on 19 March 1897. Significantly, given Sun's discussion of the topic, Dicey cited the existence of the Referendum in Switzerland and the United States in support of his case for "a truly democratic check to hasty change."¹³⁷ Another advocate of the referendum of particular relevance to Sun's democratic thought was Lord Hugh Cecil. Cecil's advocacy of the device was spurred over the issues of Ireland and constitutional reform of the Lords. Sun was aware of Cecil and also the furore surrounding Lloyd George's budget of 1909.¹³⁸ It is quite likely that Sun would have been influenced by Cecil's advocacy of the referendum as a means of curtailing the activities of a rampant Parliament against the wishes of a more conservative electorate.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the development and most important aspects of Sun's democratic political thought. As well as the numerous references to British political practice that Sun made while outlining his democratic thought, this chapter has revealed a number of more specific British sources of influence. These include the work of Colquhoun, Mill, Cecil and the Fabians. Sun was a democrat who recognised that China would require the gradual introduction of a democratic system which had been modified to suit his assessment of the Chinese situation. Sun possessed a limited conception of political equality which bears significant British influence

¹³⁷ Dicey, "The Need for Referendum in England," *Fabian News* April 1897, 6.

¹³⁸ Sun referred to the budget in a 1919 speech. See, "The Three Principles of the People," 1919, in *Prescriptions*, ed. Wei, Myers and Gillin, 233. The impact of the budget, and particularly the land reform proposals included therein, are discussed in the chapter devoted to Sun's socialist thought.

Chapter VII

Gandhi and Democracy

This chapter will outline the origins and development of Gandhi's democratic thought in order to examine the nature and extent of the influence British political thought and practice thereon. The first section will trace the origins of Gandhi's democratic thought up to his return to India in 1914 and the following section will examine its development through to his death in 1948. Finally, a conclusion will summarise the findings of the chapter.

The Origins of Gandhi's Democratic Thought, up to 1914

As well as being a significant influence in its own right, Gandhi's experience in South Africa, adds an important dimension to British influence on his democratic thought. Gandhi regarded South Africa as an application of British political practice and himself as a British subject. Consequently, Gandhi's democratic thought at this time was conceived wholly within a British framework and, significantly, he was a democrat before becoming a nationalist. Gandhi's democratic thought during the mid-1890s found expression in his demands for equality of treatment for the Indians in South Africa. Gandhi's appeal to the imperial authorities took the form of a number of petitions to British officials in London, South Africa and India.¹ In 1895, Gandhi made an appeal to Britons in South Africa on behalf of the Indian community, entitled *The Indian Franchise*. Gandhi dismissed a number of the arguments against the Indian franchise which were circulating in South Africa. The first of these claimed Indians were unprepared for, and unschooled in, democracy. Gandhi countered that Indians possessed the franchise in India, albeit a

¹ See, Gandhi, "Petition to Lord Ripon," "Petition to Lord Elgin," "Petition to Natal Council" and "Petition to Mr Chamberlain" in *Collected Works* I, 187-227. The petitions were signed in the name of Gandhi and a number of his associates but it is likely that Gandhi, with his legal drafting skills, was responsible for them.

limited one, and moreover, India had possessed a form of representative democracy since ancient times. Specifically, the Indian form of representation that Gandhi identified as existing from “the earliest ages” was the “*Panchayat*.”² Interestingly there is a British influence on this aspect of Gandhi’s democratic thought. Henry Sumner Maine had discussed the existence and significance of Indian *panchayat*-based democracy in *Village Communities in the East and the West*. Gandhi cited this work in *Hind Swaraj* in 1909 and the influence of Maine is discussed below. It is unclear whether Gandhi had read Maine’s work prior to that time but his argument here suggests he might have done. Secondly, Gandhi denied the argument that India was a conquered country and as such Indians were not entitled to the same rights as other subjects of the Empire. In support of this view, Gandhi claimed, “many British writers think that India is under England with her consent,” including Professor Seeley, whom Gandhi quoted.³ The gist of the pamphlet revealed Gandhi’s contention that the curtailment of the Indian franchise represented an affront to the “fundamental principles” of the British constitution.⁴

It is evident that Gandhi used the work of Seeley to support his contention that Indians in South Africa should enjoy the same democratic rights as other British subjects. In particular, Gandhi used Seeley’s argument that India was not a conquered country and, by extension, Britain governed India with the consent of the Indian people for their mutual benefit. The implication of this for Gandhi’s democratic thought was two-fold. Firstly, since India was governed by mutual consent, Indians were entitled to certain rights, in return for which their consent had been obtained. Seeley admitted that India’s relation to Britain was different to that of the colonies like Australia and New Zealand, but nevertheless India was “not a conquered country” because: “England has not seized

² Gandhi, “The Indian Franchise: An Appeal to Every Briton in South Africa” in *Collected Works* I, 261.

³ Ibid., 285. Although Gandhi does not mention the exact source, Seeley discussed the nature of the British Indian Empire in *The Expansion of England*. Additionally, a second edition of this work appeared in 1895, the year the pamphlet was drafted. This is supported by Gandhi’s reference to the work, albeit inaccurately, in a later article. See note 17 below. It is not clear exactly when Gandhi read Seeley’s work. According to the publication date it is possible that it was whilst he was in London, however, he did not mention it until 1895.

⁴ Gandhi, op. cit., 286.

lands in India, and after displacing the native proprietors assigned them to Englishmen.”⁵ Further, and in summary, Seeley concluded: “The truth is that, though the present relation between India and England was historically created by war, yet England does not, at least openly, claim any rights over India in virtue of this fact.”⁶ Secondly, there was a tacit agreement, that Gandhi shared with Seeley, that the methods and objectives of British rule, including particularly democracy, were both desirable and beneficial. In this respect Seeley constitutes a significant British influence on Gandhi’s democratic thought.

The Boer war provides a demonstration of the practical implications of British influences on Gandhi’s democratic thought in a number of ways. Firstly, in his *Autobiography*, Gandhi explained his reason for assisting the British:

Suffice it to say that my loyalty to the British rule drove me to participation with the British in that war. I felt that, if I demanded rights as a British citizen, it was also my duty, as such, to participate in the defence of the British Empire. I held then that India could achieve her complete emancipation only within and through the British Empire.⁷

Similarly, in his account of the South African years, Gandhi justified his participation in the war as a demand for rights which must be accompanied by the performance of duty:

I advanced these arguments in 1899, and even today I do not see any reason for modifying them. That is to say, if I had today the faith in the British Empire which I then entertained, and if I now cherished the hope, which I did at that time, of achieving our freedom under its aegis, I would advance the same arguments, for word for word, in South Africa, and, in similar circumstances even in India.⁸

Secondly, Gandhi recalled the relations that he had had with British soldiers during the war: “They were friendly with us and thankful for our being there to serve them.”⁹ This sentiment reveals Gandhi’s affection for the British people, dating from his time in London as a student, and can be contrasted with his experience in South Africa which was typified by harassment and discriminatory legislation. For example, Gandhi recognised in

⁵ Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 181.

⁶ Ibid., 183.

⁷ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 203.

⁸ Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, 73. It is necessary to note that Gandhi wrote this account in the 1920s. This is significant since it demonstrates that Gandhi maintained his conception of rights and duties until long after he had abandoned his faith in many of the principles of the British constitution, having become disillusioned with their practice.

⁹ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 204-205.

the oppressive nature of the Asiatic Bill, nothing "except the hatred of Indians."¹⁰

Finally, Gandhi observed that the war had brought many soldiers and officers from India to South Africa. Gandhi believed that this produced a noticeable and significant effect:

With the coming of the officers from Asia, came also its autocracy, and the habits that the autocrats had imbibed there. In South Africa there was a kind of responsible government or democracy, whereas the commodity imported from Asia was autocracy pure and simple.¹¹

This emphasises Gandhi's growing realization that there was a contrast between the theory and practice of British constitutional principles in Britain, South Africa and India.

Gandhi's contributions to his journal *Indian Opinion* also provide evidence of both his faith in the British constitution and his determination for Indians to enjoy equality in the application of its principles in South Africa. The editorial of the first issue claimed that the Indians in South Africa were "loyal subjects" but were labouring "under a number of legal disabilities" which were "undeserved and unjust."¹² Gandhi discussed the rights he believed that Indians possessed in an article in *Indian Opinion* on Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858. Gandhi remarked that the "memorable proclamation" had been "rightly termed 'the Magna Charta of British Indians,'" and as such was especially applicable to the situation in South Africa.¹³ The proclamation, Gandhi argued, gave "the people of India full privileges and rights of British subjects" and therefore Indians had invoked it "whenever any attempt" had been "made to curtail their liberties or their rights as British subjects."¹⁴ Significantly, Gandhi also noted "that in it there is absolutely no qualification whatsoever with reference to the place where the people to whom it was given are to enjoy the fulfilment of the promises given therein."¹⁵ In another article that month Gandhi discussed the argument he had encountered in South Africa that

¹⁰ Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, 99.

¹¹ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 239.

¹² "Ourselves," *Indian Opinion* 4 June, 1903 in *Collected Works* III, 313.

¹³ Gandhi, "The Proclamation of 1858," *Indian Opinion* 9 July, 1903 in *Collected Works* III, 357. This faith in the proclamation led Copley to observe of Gandhi: "He came to South Africa still believing in the imperial rhetoric ... of equality before the law for all citizens of the British Empire. Gandhi's faith in the liberal promise of empire clung to him throughout the South African years." Copley, *Gandhi*, 20.

¹⁴ Gandhi, *op. cit.*, 358.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

because India had been conquered Indians were “not entitled to the same rights as real Britishers.”¹⁶ Gandhi dismissed this thesis for two reasons, the first he had used previously and was taken from Seeley’s *Expansion of Great Britain*.¹⁷ Seeley, Gandhi argued, did not consider India a conquered country “in the real sense of the term” but rather it was “British because the vast majority of its people have, perhaps for selfish reasons, accepted British rule.”¹⁸ Secondly, Gandhi recalled: “British statesmen have times without number disavowed any connection whatsoever with the idea of inequality necessarily existing between the conquerors and the conquered ... and they have done this more especially with regard to the British Indians.”¹⁹ Finally, Gandhi contended that it was “these very principles which have made Great Britain what she is” and they “guide her policy, maybe with temporary aberration, from day to day.”²⁰ This sentiment reveals the extent to which Gandhi had subscribed to the ideals and rhetoric of the Empire, either for reasons of expedience, self-interest or more substantively.

It is apparent that Gandhi used Seeley to support the contention that India was not a conquered country. Additionally, Gandhi’s argument that there was no inequality between the ‘conquerors’ and the ‘conquered’ is also traceable to Seeley. In particular, Seeley identified the importance of the 1858 proclamation in this respect:

In the Queen’s proclamation of November 1st, 1858, by which the open assumption of the government by the Queen was announced, occur the express words ‘We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects.’ That is, conquest confers no peculiar rights, or India is not for practical purposes a conquered country.²¹

Since Gandhi had deployed other aspects of Seeley’s argument, it seems certain that Seeley alerted Gandhi to the significance of the 1858 proclamation. It was then left to Gandhi to compare this proclamation with the Magna Carta, which provided a link

¹⁶ Gandhi, “The Cinderella of the Empire” *Indian Opinion* 30 July, 1903 in *Collected Works* III, 383.

¹⁷ Gandhi cited the title of Seeley’s work incorrectly. Gandhi was probably referring to Seeley’s *The Expansion of England*.

¹⁸ Gandhi, loc. cit.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 384.

²¹ Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 183.

between his observations of political practice in Britain and India and the situation in South Africa.

Gandhi led a deputation to London in the autumn of 1906 on behalf of the Indians in South Africa. Its objective was to present the case of the Indian community, who had been the subject of discriminatory legislation, to the British authorities. As such, and in terms of his democratic thought, the deputation can be regarded as further evidence of Gandhi's attempt to obtain the same democratic rights for the Indians in South Africa as those enjoyed by other subjects of the Empire, according to the principles of the British constitution. In an interview on the day of his arrival in London, Gandhi explained that the deputation sought to protest against a law that, "intended to make every Indian settled in the Transvaal carry a pass, just as the kaffirs are required to do."²² Gandhi also observed that "the disabilities of British Indians in the Transvaal were one of the causes of the late war."²³ The deputation provided a number of important British influences which Gandhi incorporated into his democratic thought.

Gandhi made several contributions to *Indian Opinion* from London which reveal various British influences on his democratic thought at that time. In a number of articles Gandhi recorded the development of the women's suffrage movement which he had evidently been observing keenly. These observations are significant since Gandhi admired the women's methods and courage and sympathised with their objective which was similar to his own: the attainment of the franchise. In this respect Gandhi believed that the Indians in South Africa could learn much from the movement. Not only did it have a similar goal, but also that goal was being withheld by the same authority. In October, Gandhi remarked of the willingness of the women not to confine themselves to 'words' but to include action in support of their cause: "They are bound to succeed and gain the franchise, for the simple reason that deeds are better than words."²⁴ In November, Gandhi mentioned the movement again and repeated his advice: "Every Indian in the

²² Gandhi, "Interview to 'The Tribune'" 20 October, 1906 in *Collected Works* VI, 1.

²³ *Ibid.*, 2.

Transvaal should take to heart the example of these brave women.”²⁵ Finally, towards the end of the deputation’s time in London, Gandhi observed that the Indians in South Africa would have to contemplate going to jail to obtain their rights, just as the suffragettes had done. This was because Gandhi anticipated the failure of the deputation, which appeared unable to prevent the attainment of Royal Assent of the offending legislation.²⁶ It is evident that despite the frustrations encountered by the deputation, Gandhi did not abandon his hope that he could obtain equality for the Indians in South Africa.

Gandhi led a second deputation to London on behalf of the Indians in South Africa in 1909. Gandhi mentioned the women’s suffrage movement in at least twelve articles which appeared in *Indian Opinion* at the time. In these articles, Gandhi praised: the women’s capacity and willingness to suffer; their organizational skills; their endurance; their willingness to fast; their courage and their fund raising abilities.²⁷ Consequently, Gandhi commented: “We can learn quite a few things and draw much inspiration from it.”²⁸ Gandhi also attended at least two women’s suffrage meetings. At one of them he met Mrs Pankhurst and he mentioned the meeting in a letter to his friend Henry Polak, to whom he also enclosed a copy of their weekly publication “Votes for Women.”²⁹ Tendulkar also noted the importance of Gandhi’s observations of the movement, and concluded: “He took a keen interest in all their work, and learnt much of the value and methods of passive resistance from the British women.”³⁰ In defining his policy of *satyagraha* several years later, in his account of the South African struggle, Gandhi referred to the women’s suffrage movement, and also British political practice

²⁴ Gandhi, “Deeds Better Than Words” *Indian Opinion* 24 November, 1906 in *Collected Works* VI, 30.

²⁵ Gandhi, “Brave Women” *Indian Opinion* 1 December, 1906 in *Collected Works* VI, 87.

²⁶ See, “Our Deliverance,” *Indian Opinion* 22 December, 1906 in *Collected Works* VI, 223.

²⁷ See, respectively: “Suffragist” *Indian Opinion* 14 August, 1909, 303 and “Suffragettes” *Indian Opinion* 11 September, 1909, 355; “Suffragettes” *Indian Opinion* 4 September, 1909, 339; *Ibid.*; “Determined Women,” *Indian Opinion* 25 September, 1909, 374; “Suffragettes” *Indian Opinion* 30 October, 1909, 448; *Ibid.*, and “Suffragettes” *Indian Opinion* 6 November, 1909, 474. All articles appear in *Collected Works* IX.

²⁸ “Suffragist,” *Indian Opinion* 14 August, 1909 in *Collected Works* IX, 303.

²⁹ In the letter Gandhi also remarked: “We have a great deal to learn from these ladies and their movement.” Gandhi to Polak, 30 July, 1909 in *Collected Works* IX, 324.

more generally. Gandhi explained that passive resistance, the English equivalent of *satyagraha*, had been used successfully in Britain:

But among the English people, whenever a small minority did not approve of some obnoxious piece of legislation, instead of rising in rebellion they took the passive or milder step of not submitting to the law and inviting the penalties of such non-submission upon their heads. When the British Parliament passed the Education Act some years ago, the Non-conformists offered passive resistance under the leadership of Dr Clifford. The great movement of the English women for the vote was also known as passive resistance.³¹

In sum Gandhi was influenced by the women's suffrage movement and incorporated lessons he learnt from it into his democratic thought.

There is one further lesson from the suffrage movement that Gandhi observed and which he felt the Indians in South African would be well advised to heed. Gandhi noticed that as it wore on and the women became impatient with the lack of progress they abandoned non-violent methods. The articles in *Indian Opinion* in August and September are almost entirely positive and full of praise for the movement whereas in later articles the praise is qualified by Gandhi's criticism of the violent turn the movement was beginning to take. For example, in October 1909, Gandhi reported that the women had broken Asquith's windows:

If the British women mean to fight in the spirit of *satyagraha*, they cannot adopt tactics like those mentioned above. There is no room for impatience in *satyagraha*. Those who want the franchise are in a minority, whereas the majority of women oppose the demand; so the minority has no option but to suffer for a long time.³²

³⁰ Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, vol. 1, 124.

³¹ Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, 112. The 'Dr. Clifford' Gandhi referred to was Dr. John Clifford (1836-1923) the leading passive resistor to the Education Act of 1902. There is some debate about the exact extent of non-western influences on Gandhi's concept of passive resistance. Iyer noted that the tradition was not original to Gandhi, and he cited Das who argued that "passive obedience and the right of resistance were part of the English tradition." See, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, 263. Conversely, Basham noted: "Gandhi's techniques may have been learnt in part from the West, but the practice of *satyagraha*, dependent as it was on belief in 'soul force,' was in no way un-Indian. If the activities of the Irish rent-strikers and British suffragettes and the writings of Thoreau, among other 'Western' factors, stimulated Gandhi to work out the policy of *satyagraha*, it must also have owed much to the influences of his boyhood." See, "Traditional Influences on the Thought of Mahatma Gandhi," in *Essays on Gandhian Politics*, ed. Kumar, 39. Despite the controversy it would seem that British influences at least provided an endorsement of such methods.

³² Gandhi, "Suffragettes," *Indian Opinion* 9 October, 1909 in *Collected Works* IX, 402.

Thus Gandhi warned his readers: "We ought never to forsake the sword of satyagraha and grow impatient."³³ There was also a subtler lesson to be learnt from the women's adoption of violence. It indicated to Gandhi that the British may well be very reluctant to concede rights to the disenfranchised Indians and therefore the struggle was likely to prove long and arduous: "We may observe that the British will not concede any rights even to women in their country without putting them to the test."³⁴ Just as Gandhi rejected the violent extremism of the suffrage movement he rejected that of the Indian nationalists which he encountered in London at this time. While Gandhi was in London, Sir William Curzon-Wyllie, the *aide-de-camp* to the Secretary of State for India, was assassinated by an Indian extremist. Gandhi commented on this assassination in *Indian Opinion*: "I must say that those who believe and argue that such murders may do good to India are ignorant men indeed."³⁵ There is a striking parallel between Gandhi's condemnation of the violence of both the suffragettes and the Indian extremists.

Hind Swaraj represents a very important source of Gandhi's democratic thought and reveals a number of significant British influences. Four of the twenty chapters can be considered contributions to Gandhi's democratic thought. In the first two of these chapters,³⁶ Gandhi questioned the existing goal of Indian nationalism and provided a devastating critique of the English model on which it was based. Consequently, he rejected this goal which sought the kind of self-government that had been granted to Canada and South Africa. Gandhi criticized those who wished to merely remove the British whilst maintaining their system of government in India:

You want the tiger's nature, but not the tiger; that is to say, you would make India English. And when it becomes English, it will be called not Hindustan but *Englistan*. That is not the Swaraj that I want.³⁷

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Gandhi, "Suffragettes Courage" *Indian Opinion* 13 November, 1909 in *Collected Works* IX, 489.

³⁵ Gandhi, "Curzon Wyllie's Assassination" *Indian Opinion* 14 August, 1909 in *Collected Works* IX, 303.

³⁶ Ch. IV "What is Swaraj?" and Ch. V "The Condition of England."

³⁷ Gandhi, "Hind Swaraj" in *Collected Works* X, 15.

In support of his criticism Gandhi discussed the British Parliament in terms similar to the assessment made during the deputations. For Gandhi, the so called “Mother of Parliaments” was rather more “like a sterile woman and a prostitute.”³⁸ It was like a “sterile woman” because it had “not yet of its own accord done a single good thing” and it was “like a prostitute because it is under the control of ministers who change from time to time.”³⁹ Gandhi also attacked the composition of the British Parliament. Its members were “hypocritical and selfish” and they had “been seen to stretch themselves and to doze” during important debates or, conversely, they talk “away until the listeners are disgusted.”⁴⁰ In support of this view, Gandhi quoted Carlyle, who he said had called Parliament “the talking shop of the world.”⁴¹ In dismissing Parliament as a “costly toy,” Gandhi claimed that: “If the money and the time wasted by Parliament were entrusted to a few good men, the English nation would be occupying today a much higher platform.”⁴² He added that “these views” were not “peculiar” to him and “some great English thinkers have expressed them.”⁴³ In support of his assessment, Gandhi cited another British source of criticism: “One of the members of that Parliament recently said that a true Christian could not become a member of it.”⁴⁴ Finally, Parliament was not entirely honest or beyond corruption. Gandhi cautioned:

If they are to be considered honest because they do not take what are generally known as bribes, let them be so considered, but they are open to subtler influences. In order to gain their ends, they certainly bribe people with honours.⁴⁵

Gandhi explained the variability and changeability of the British Parliament as a reflection of the British people whom it claimed to represent. However, the people were victims of the “dishonest” newspapers, from whom they “take their cue,” and consequently they “change their views frequently.”⁴⁶ Gandhi claimed that the root cause of the problem

³⁸ Ibid., 16.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 17.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 18.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

was not the “English people” themselves but “modern civilization.”⁴⁷ Thus Gandhi believed that: “If India copies England ... she will be ruined.”⁴⁸ Gandhi’s analysis of British political practice condemned Parliament as a manifestation of modern civilization.

In the third chapter concerning democracy,⁴⁹ Gandhi surveyed nineteenth century British political history in support of his assessment of the problems of British political practice and the lessons Indians should learn from them. This chapter examined the paucity of rights secured by violence that Gandhi considered characteristic of the British experience. The first example Gandhi gave was the “Proclamation of 1857 [sic]” which he explained was made “at the end of a revolt ... [but] when the peace was secured ... its full effect was toned down.”⁵⁰ The second example was from Britain. “The English in 1833,” Gandhi claimed, had “obtained greater voting power by violence.”⁵¹ It seems likely that Gandhi was referring to the Great Reform Act of 1832, the single year error in the date matches his error in the date of Queen Victoria’s proclamation. Although there was some violence in 1831 associated with its passage it was largely an evolutionary rather than revolutionary development. Nevertheless, according to Gandhi, the use of violence meant that the English had not obtained real rights, since: “[R]eal rights are a result of the performance of duty.”⁵² Gandhi believed that in England there was a problem of “everybody wanting and insisting on his rights, [and] nobody thinking of his duty.”⁵³ Consequently, if Indians wanted their rights they should be obtained through duty rather than violence. It is evident that Gandhi considered “soul-force” or “passive resistance” to be an important part of this duty and he explained that it should back claims for rights:

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ch. XVI “Brute Force.”

⁵⁰ Ibid., 42.

⁵¹ Ibid., 43. This negative assessment of British political history can be contrasted with Gandhi’s identification, more positively, of passive resistance as a feature of British political practice in his discussion of the women’s suffrage movement, mentioned above. These positive comments were written several years after *Hind Swaraj*, in the 1920s, and indicate the enduring influence of some more positive aspects of British political practice and also something of the polemical quality of *Hind Swaraj*.

⁵² Ibid., 44.

⁵³ Ibid.

A petition of an equal is a sign of courtesy; a petition from a slave is a symbol of his slavery. A petition backed by force is a petition from an equal and, when he transmits his demand in the form of a petition, it testifies to his nobility.⁵⁴

Thus Gandhi used two British examples to support his critique of political violence. His analysis of Queen Victoria's proclamation is particularly poignant given his earlier praise of that 'Indian Magna Carta' and reveals the extent of his disaffection with the gulf between British political theory and practice as it was applied in the empire.

Having condemned the use of force Gandhi's next chapter⁵⁵ elaborated his concept of *satyagraha* or passive resistance. Gandhi explained that there was a "proverb among Englishman" that all history is the history of war and therefore a nation with "no history ... is a happy nation."⁵⁶ However, Gandhi disagreed and contended that: "The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on the force of arms but on the force of truth or love."⁵⁷ In summary, "passive resistance is a method of securing rights by personal suffering."⁵⁸ Gandhi explained that "Man-made laws are not necessarily binding" and, in fact, "it is unmanly to obey laws that are unjust."⁵⁹ Therefore, for Gandhi: "Real Home Rule is possible only where passive resistance is the guiding force of the people."⁶⁰ Far from being "a weapon of the weak," passive resistance was superior to physical force because: "Those alone can follow the path of passive resistance who are free from fear, whether as to their possessions, false honour, their relatives, the government, bodily injuries or death."⁶¹ Gandhi concluded that the 'duty' of passive resistance was the most effective and only acceptable method of supporting a claim for 'rights' in society.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 46.

⁵⁵ Ch. XVII "Passive Resistance."

⁵⁶ Ibid., 47.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 47-48.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 48.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 49.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 51.

⁶¹ Ibid., 53.

Gandhi cited Henry Sumner Maine's *Village Communities*, as an authority he recommended, in the Appendix to *Hind Swaraj*.⁶² Maine discussed traditional Indian village society and in particular identified the existence of vestiges of democratic institutions. For example, Maine observed:

But I have good authority for saying that, in those parts of India in which the village community is most perfect and in which there are the clearest signs of an original proprietary equality between all the families composing the group, the authority exercised elsewhere by the Headman is lodged with the Village Council. It is always viewed as a representative body, and not as a body possessing inherent authority, and, whatever be its real number, it always bears a name which recalls its ancient constitution of Five persons.⁶³

These village councils, Maine explained, exercised "quasi-judicial, [and] quasi-legislative power."⁶⁴ Gandhi had called for a return to village-based democracy in *Hind Swaraj* and Maine seems to have endorsed Gandhi's faith in such a system. In summary, it is apparent that Maine's work identified and provided at least an endorsement of the democratic credentials of traditional Indian society of which Gandhi was aware and utilised in his developing democratic thought. It is instructive to compare Maine's position with Seeley to illustrate how far Gandhi had moved from his early thinking. Seeley, in *The Expansion of England*, had claimed: "Of liberty, of popular institutions, there exists scarcely a trace in the whole extent of Indian history or tradition."⁶⁵ This sentiment in Seeley would suggest that Gandhi had either not read Maine until several years after he read Seeley or had not integrated Maine's analysis with the frustrations he had experienced in his struggle in South Africa. Thus Gandhi used British sources both initially, when he used a liberal like Seeley, and latterly when he used a conservative like Maine, to support his changing democratic thought.

⁶² Ibid., 65. The full title of Maine's work is *Village Communities in the East and the West*. It is unclear exactly when Gandhi read this work. However, Gandhi had mentioned the significance of ancient Indian democracy as early as 1895, in "The Indian Franchise."

⁶³ Maine, *Village Communities in the East and the West*, 123.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 125.

⁶⁵ Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 228-229.

Edward Carpenter was another authority that Gandhi cited in *Hind Swaraj*.⁶⁶ Carpenter considered that government in society, prior to the growth of civilization based on the ownership of property, was “essentially democratic,” although it only existed in “rudimentary form.”⁶⁷ However, the development of civilization had heralded the age of aristocracy which had been followed by the commercial age. In the commercial age: “Parliaments and Constitutions and general Palaver are the order of the day.”⁶⁸ This is followed, according to Carpenter, by the breakdown into “the era of anarchy - the democracy of Carlyle; the rule of the rabble, and mob-law.”⁶⁹ This, for Carpenter, was “no true democracy,” or the “rule of the Demos in every man.”⁷⁰ Rather, Carpenter believed that eventually

the false democracy parts aside for the disclosure of true Democracy which has been formed beneath it - which is not an external government at all, but an inward rule - the rule of the mass - Man in each unit - man.⁷¹

In conclusion, Carpenter predicted: “As to External Government and Law, they will disappear; for they are only the travesties and transitory substitutes of Inward Government and Order.”⁷² Carpenter’s criticism of modern civilization and the type of democracy which was based on it and his vision of true democracy bear a remarkable similarity with Gandhi’s democratic thought as it began to develop from this time onwards.

In an article in 1910 Gandhi discussed the struggle of the Indian community in South Africa in terms of the definition of liberty given by Lord Hugh Cecil.⁷³ Gandhi

⁶⁶ The work cited was *Civilisation, Its Cause and Cure*. See Gandhi, “Hind Swaraj” in *Collected Works X*, 65. In a letter to his friend Henry Polak in September 1909, Gandhi remarked that he had read Edward Carpenter’s *Civilisation, Its Cause and Cure* and considered the analysis “very good.” See, Gandhi to Polak, 8 September 1909, in *Collected Works IX*, 396. In the letter Gandhi commends the book to Polak and advises him that if he didn’t have his own copy there was a copy at the farm in South Africa where he and Gandhi lived. This would seem to suggest that Gandhi had read Carpenter’s work earlier and was re-reading it and re-assessing its arguments in the light of his experiences in London.

⁶⁷ Carpenter, *Civilisation, Its Cause and Cure*, 51.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 67.

⁷³ Gandhi, “Liberty,” *Indian Opinion* January 8, 1910 in *Collected Works X*, 121. The article is reproduced as “Liberty and Its Usurpation,” in Iyer, *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. III, 223. Although Gandhi’s article is reproduced in Iyer’s collection of Gandhi’s works, the influence of Cecil is not considered there or elsewhere.

began by quoting Cecil's definition of liberty as the ability "to obey our own conscience rather than the will and conscience of others."⁷⁴ Gandhi remarked that the struggle in South Africa had often been regarded as a struggle for liberty and this interpretation was supported when judged according to Cecil's definition and therefore it should "command universal sympathy."⁷⁵ According to Gandhi, who used Cecil's terms, the Indians were "exercising the power to obey their will and conscience rather than the will of the State."⁷⁶ Gandhi developed this analysis of the struggle, quoting Cecil again, who held that the "true ground for maintaining liberty is that, without it, there cannot be any true sense of virtue or righteousness."⁷⁷ Moreover, Gandhi's quotation of Cecil continued: "Virtue does not consist in doing right, but in choosing to do right."⁷⁸ Finally, Gandhi linked Cecil's definition of liberty to the problem of its attainment, a subject which he felt Cecil had overlooked. Therefore, Gandhi postulated: "If liberty be ability to act according to the dictates of our conscience, we certainly cannot achieve it by force of arms."⁷⁹ Thus Gandhi was able to combine Cecil's definition of liberty with his own preferred method of non-violence: "It is attainable only by suffering in our own persons until our opponents see the error of their ways and cease to harass us by trying to impose their will on us."⁸⁰ Therefore, Cecil constitutes another important British influence on Gandhi's democratic thought that has been overlooked.

Lord Hugh Cecil represents another British influence that Gandhi used to support his demand for equality of treatment for Indians in South Africa. Cecil's address to the Associated Societies of the University of Edinburgh was published as *Liberty and*

⁷⁴ Gandhi, "Liberty," *Indian Opinion* January 8, 1910 in *Collected Works* X, 121. Gandhi cited the quotation: "Lord Hugh Cecil at the Edinburgh University Associated Societies." The speech was reproduced in Cecil's *Liberty and Authority*. For the definition that Gandhi quoted see *ibid.*, 10.

⁷⁵ Gandhi, *loc. cit.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

Authority, and therefore constitutes the most likely source.⁸¹ Cecil began by defining liberty almost exactly as Gandhi had quoted: “*Liberty consists in being able to obey your own will and conscience rather than the will and conscience of others.*”⁸² Cecil claimed that Mill’s definition of liberty was wrong, because he was “obliged to say his principle does not apply to children or to savage nations, but only to those Western peoples who have become civilised.”⁸³ Hidden within this proviso, Cecil believed, was “that vulgar notion that civilisation consists of the British Isles and a few contiguous places, and that all the more distant parts of the earth are savage.”⁸⁴ Whilst Cecil accepted that the “natives of Africa are savage” he doubted the same could be said “of those in India, with their ancient civilisation.”⁸⁵ This analysis, acknowledging the ancient Indian civilization and the universality of the principle of liberty would have appealed to Gandhi.⁸⁶ Therefore, for Cecil, liberty was “not a right” and “the sound *ground for maintaining liberty* is that liberty is the essential condition of human progress, and that without it there cannot be in any *true sense virtue or righteousness.*”⁸⁷ Cecil continued to link his conception of liberty with virtue: “Virtue is attained in proportion as liberty is attained: for *virtue does not consist in doing right, but in choosing to do right.*”⁸⁸ It is this definition that Gandhi quoted in his article in support of his struggle for the liberty of the Indians in South Africa.

⁸¹ Cecil, *Liberty and Authority*. The address was delivered on 4 November, 1909. At this time Gandhi was still in Britain with the deputation since he did not leave until 13 November but there is no record of him visiting Edinburgh.

⁸² Ibid., 10. Emphasis supplied.

⁸³ Ibid., 13.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 14.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ The fact that Cecil differentiated Indians from Africans was also mirrored in Gandhi’s complaint that the Indians in South Africa were being treated as badly as the native population that he had made at the beginning of the 1906 deputation.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 16 and 17. Emphasis supplied. The minor textual differences between the quotations suggest two possibilities. Firstly, they may be typographical errors. Secondly, it is possible that Gandhi had access to a different report of Cecil’s speech than that contained in *Liberty and Authority*. This would be supported by its publication date being 1910 and the fact that Gandhi’s article appeared on the 10 January 1910.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 18. Emphasis supplied. Cecil illustrated his definition and his criticism of Mill by demonstrating the implications of Mill’s argument in the case of temperance. Cecil, added that Mill’s argument ignored the moral implications of action. See, *ibid.*, 20.

Cecil proceeded to discuss the relationship between liberty and equality. Gandhi did not mention this part of Cecil's address but it is pertinent to the development of Gandhi's democratic thought. Whilst Cecil regarded liberty as "the very essential of human progress," he believed that equality, at least absolute equality, was an "unreal delusion."⁸⁹ Cecil believed that Britain had not attempted to achieve such equality, either domestically or within the empire, but rather it had sought only to attain political equality or justice. In particular, British policy in respect of equality, accepting natural inequalities, had manifested itself in British success in its dealings with "inferior races."⁹⁰ In summary, Cecil stated:

I believe that the success of the British Empire in dealing with its vast dependencies results more from this quality than any other - that we, unlike other parts of the Anglo-Saxon race, unlike the French or the Belgians have always denied the equality of men, and always proceeded on the principle that men are unequal but are alike entitled to be treated with justice. To put the matter in one sentence, it is because we believe in liberty and do not believe in equality that we have not unworthily fulfilled our great imperial vocation.⁹¹

Cecil's claim that the British had based their empire on justice seems to resemble Gandhi's understanding of the basis of the relationship and the framework upon which he demanded the rights of the Indians in South Africa. Finally, Cecil concluded his address by revealing the ethical foundation of his thought:

For it is in the growth of liberty, in the growth of the free choice of good and free rejection of evil that we move towards the ideal of a divine society which religion and natural reflection alike set before us as the goal of our hope.⁹²

Certainly, there is much in this passage that Gandhi would have endorsed. Gandhi's emphasis on the importance of self-rule and the control of one's passions, reflected in the importance he placed on vows and abstinence as important facets of his democratic thought, could be included within Cecil's framework.

Finally, Gandhi's visit to London in 1914, on his way back to India from South Africa, provided an opportunity for him to assess the struggle and in doing so revealed more of his democratic thought at that time. In a farewell letter, immediately before

⁸⁹ Ibid., 54.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 59.

⁹¹ Ibid., 61- 62.

Gandhi left South Africa, he discussed the 'Settlement' between the Indian community and the South African authorities which his campaign had achieved. The 'Settlement' to which Gandhi referred was The Indians' Relief Act 1914 which claimed: "To make provision for the redress of certain grievances and the removal of certain disabilities of His Majesty's Indian subjects in the Union and other matters incidental thereto."⁹³

Significantly, Gandhi described the 'Settlement' as "the Magna Charta of our liberty in this land."⁹⁴ Gandhi explained that he described the 'Settlement' as such for a number of reasons, including the fact that it established the rights of the Indian community and especially because it confirmed "the theory of the British Constitution that there should be no legal racial inequality between different subjects of the Crown, no matter how much practice may vary according to local circumstance."⁹⁵ Finally, Gandhi considered that the 'Settlement' had "vindicated passive resistance," which had proved itself "an infinitely superior force to that of the vote, which history shows has often been turned against the voters themselves."⁹⁶ In a farewell speech in Cape Town, Gandhi claimed:

I have always believed there is something subtle, something fine in the ideals of the British Constitution. Tear away those ideals and you tear away my loyalty to that Constitution; keep those ideals and I am ever a bondman.⁹⁷

Gandhi repeated his comparison between the 'Settlement' and the Magna Carta when he arrived in London. In a speech at a reception he claimed that it was "the Magna Charta of British Indians" both in its "substance" and its "spirit" which heralded a "change of attitude" by the South African authorities.⁹⁸ At this time, despite the emergence of some doubts, Gandhi still had faith in the British model.

The Development of Gandhi's Democratic Thought, 1915-1948

In this period the framework within which Gandhi's democratic thought was founded changed from the British empire to an independent India. In 1920, Gandhi stated that

⁹² Ibid., 68.

⁹³ The extent to which this Act achieved these stated aims and more generally the objectives of Gandhi's campaign is a subject of some debate.

⁹⁴ Gandhi, "Farewell Letter" 18 July, 1914 in *Collected Works* XII, 500.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 501.

⁹⁷ Gandhi, "Farewell Speech at Cape Town" 18 July, 1914 in *Collected Works* XII, 505.

swaraj meant Indians “feeling and being the equals of Englishmen.”⁹⁹ It was also the life of “perfect freedom even though it may be full of defects.”¹⁰⁰ In this respect, and quoting the British statesman Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Gandhi observed: “Good government is no substitute for self-Government.”¹⁰¹ Iyer noted that: “Gandhi would not regard good government as better than self-government because he believed there was a connection between individual and national self-rule.”¹⁰² The apparent contradiction between Iyer’s claim and Gandhi’s use of Campbell-Bannerman’s dictum illustrates the two different senses in which Gandhi used his conception of *swaraj* or self-rule or government. Gandhi differentiated between *swaraj* for India and *swaraj* for Indians. Gandhi came to believe that the former was preferable to ‘good government’ whilst he never accepted the same for the latter. Whilst this would seem to explain, at least partially, the motivation behind Gandhi’s use of Campbell-Bannerman’s phrase it is evident that Gandhi altered his position from that in his early years in South Africa when he sought ‘good government’ within the framework of the empire. However, it was apparent that Gandhi came to realize that good government was not achievable under that framework. Faced with this situation Gandhi was then able to explain why that was the case and link this to his democratic thought.

In the early 1920s, Gandhi’s shift in favour of democracy conceived in an Indian, rather than a British, framework is represented by his use of Campbell-Bannerman’s dictum concerning good and self-government. It is perhaps curious that Gandhi did not utilise Campbell-Bannerman in support of his struggle until 1920. Gandhi was familiar with Campbell-Bannerman during the early years of the century and met him in London during the 1906 Indian deputation. Gandhi wrote an article on Campbell-Bannerman, on the occasion of his death, which appeared in *Indian Opinion* in 1908. Gandhi described him as follows: “Sir Henry was a man of kind nature and noble mind. His sympathies

⁹⁸ Gandhi, “Speech at London Reception” 8 August, 1914 in *Collected Works* XII, 525.

⁹⁹ Gandhi, “Swaraj in One Year” *Young India* 22 September, 1920 in *Collected Works* XVIII, 270.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

were not confined to his own people.”¹⁰³ Gandhi also described how Campbell-Bannerman had been supportive of the 1906 Indian deputation:

When the [Transvaal] Indian deputation visited England in connection with the campaign against the law, he was very sympathetic [to the Indian case]. It is said he played some part in bringing pressure on Lord Elgin [to veto the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance].¹⁰⁴

Finally, Gandhi claimed that much could be learnt from Campbell-Bannerman’s example as a worker for the “public good.”¹⁰⁵ Gandhi chided those Indians who had retired at “forty” from active life but still complained that India had not been “granted self-government.”¹⁰⁶ In contrast to these Indians, Campbell-Bannerman, Gandhi observed, had continued working until his seventies.¹⁰⁷ Given his knowledge and admiration of Campbell-Bannerman it is likely that prior to 1920 Gandhi did not subscribe to his dictum and still had faith in democracy within a British framework.

Whilst in Britain during the Round Table Conference, in a 1931 speech at Chatham House, Gandhi revealed a number British influences as well as admitting to some problems in traditional Indian society. He also referred to *The Village Communities of India* [sic] and explained that Maine had described the Indian villages as “self-contained ‘little republics.’”¹⁰⁸ Gandhi quoted a British source in support of his demand for independence and home rule: “Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had said that good government was no substitute for self-government.”¹⁰⁹ Gandhi returned to Campbell-Bannerman’s remark in a speech at the London School of Economics the following month. Having repeated the quotation Gandhi implied that British rule was not even good

¹⁰² Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, 356.

¹⁰³ Gandhi, “Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman” *Indian Opinion* 25 April, 1908 in *Collected Works* VIII, 207.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Gandhi, “Speech at Chatham House Meeting,” 20 October, 1931 in *Collected Works* XLVIII, 197. Gandhi cited the title of Maine’s work incorrectly. He was referring to *Village Communities in the East and the West*.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 204.

government: "Those who are concerned do not feel that British rule has done good."¹¹⁰ It is interesting to note Desai's account of Gandhi's excursions to Oxford and Cambridge where he met a variety of scholars including Lindsay, Coupland, Gilbert Murray, Lowes Dickinson and Barker. Desai concluded: "With all deference to their studies, and their breadth of outlook, and above all to their earnest desire to understand and help, I am afraid, no one, whether in Oxford or Cambridge, seems to appreciate the truth of Henry Campbell-Bannerman's great maxim: 'Good government is no substitute for self-government.'"¹¹¹ On this subject, Hunt concluded that: "Gandhi agreed with the dons on the positive values of British political theory; [but] he thought they overestimated the degree of effectiveness with which that theory operated in India."¹¹² This assessment strikes at the core of the development of Gandhi's democratic thought. Gandhi had consistently supported the ideals of British political theory but had suffered and become disillusioned with its practice first in South Africa and then in India.

Louis Fischer's report of his conversations with Gandhi during June 1942 also reveals something of Gandhi's democratic thought at that time. In particular the conversation involved a discussion of the nature of Gandhi's village-based democracy and his criticism of the practice of democracy in Britain. In reply to a question concerning the welfare of the Indian peasants Gandhi explained that ideally he would improve their lot by ensuring that: "The village would become a self-governing unit living its own life."¹¹³ When Fischer enquired whether these village units would require a national government, Gandhi replied:

"I realize," Gandhi said, shaking his head, "that despite my views there will be a central government administration. However, I do not believe in the accepted Western form of democracy with its universal voting for parliamentary representatives."¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Gandhi, "Speech at London School of Economics," 10 November, 1931 in *Collected Works* XLVIII, 280.

¹¹¹ Desai quoted in Gandhi, *The Nation's Voice*, 199-200.

¹¹² Hunt, *Gandhi in London*, 215.

¹¹³ Fischer, *A Week With Gandhi*, 54.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 55.

As a replacement for directly elected parliaments, Gandhi envisaged a hierarchical system of representative institutions, elected by the villagers. Despite the impracticality of Gandhi's ideal Fischer pushed him to expand on its nature and Gandhi replied:

"There are seven hundred thousand villages in India. Each would be organized according to the will of its citizens, all of them voting. Then there would be seven hundred thousand votes and not four hundred million. Each village, in other words, would have one vote. The villages would elect their district administrations, and the district administrations would elect the provincial administrations and these in turn would elect a president who would be the national chief executive."¹¹⁵

Fischer then remarked that the Congress had been criticised for being rather authoritarian.

In its defence Gandhi retorted:

"Do you think all questions are decided in the House of Commons or are decisions taken in party caucuses and in the clubs of London? Congress officers are elected by the members of Congress, and ministers who are members of Congress abide by the principles of Congress. Sir Samuel Hoare has told me a few things about the workings of democracy in Britain."¹¹⁶

This passage reflects Gandhi's criticism of British political practice that he had first made in his observation of the House of Commons as early as 1909.

Gandhi also developed the concept of decentralized, village-based *swaraj* in his contributions to *Harijan* in the 1940s. In an article in 1942 Gandhi explained: "My idea of Village Swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity."¹¹⁷ Turning to the government of these villages Gandhi explained that it "will be conducted by the Panchayat of five persons, annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications."¹¹⁸ Gandhi returned to the nature of these village republics in 1946. He explained that "every village will be a republic or panchayat having full powers" and as such "capable of managing its affairs."¹¹⁹ Within the villages "ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit."¹²⁰ However, the villages

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 55-56.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 56. Sir Samuel Hoare was the Secretary of State for India at the time that Gandhi attended the Round Table Conference.

¹¹⁷ Gandhi, "Village Swaraj," *Harijan*, 26 July, 1942 in *Collected Works* LXXVI, 308.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Gandhi, "Independence," *Harijan* 28 July, 1946 in *Collected Works* LXXXV, 32.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 32-33.

would not be completely independent or isolated and Gandhi's plan would "not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world."¹²¹ Gandhi also described how the system of villages would interact:

In this structure composed of innumerable villages there will be ever widening, never ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units.¹²²

Gandhi admitted that this was a "Utopian" ideal: "Let India live for this true picture, though never realizable in its completeness."¹²³ In a speech in 1946, Gandhi referred to his *Harijan* article when he discussed his concept of village based democracy. Gandhi stated that he hoped that the village units would be "economically and politically as autonomous as possible."¹²⁴ Correspondingly, political power would as far as possible "rest in the unit itself" and not at the top, "on Mt. Everest," as it was under the British.¹²⁵ This situation would constitute a return to the ancient Indian village system which Gandhi noted had been identified by Maine who had said that: "India was a congeries of village republics."¹²⁶ Since it was well over thirty years since Gandhi had first cited Maine, and possibly much longer since he had first read him, it is evident that Maine was an important British influence. This is reinforced by the increasing importance that village-based democracy attained in Gandhi's later democratic thought.

Conclusion

This chapter has identified a number of British influences on Gandhi's democratic thought. Positively, Gandhi incorporated a number of British sources directly into his democratic thought including Seeley, Maine, Carpenter, Cecil and Campbell-Bannerman.

¹²¹ Ibid., 33.

¹²² Ibid. In an interview with the editor of *The Spectator* while he was in London in 1931, Gandhi had first developed his analogy of the ocean, where "each drop is an entity and yet it is part of the whole," to illustrate his conception of human nature: "In this ocean of life we are all little drops." See, "Interview with Evelyn Wrench" 17 October, 1931 in *Collected Works* XLVIII, 180.

¹²³ Gandhi, "Independence," *Harijan* 28 July, 1946 in *Collected Works* LXXXV, 33.

¹²⁴ Gandhi, "Speech at Meeting of Deccan Princes," *Harijan* 4 August, 1946 in *Collected Works* LXXXV, 78-79.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

Gandhi used the ideas of these authors to varying extents either on their own terms, as purely British ideas, or as British sources which endorsed traditional Indian ideas.

Negatively, Gandhi used aspects of the works of these authors to support his criticism of British political practice. Conversely, and more positively, Gandhi also incorporated a number of aspects of British political practice. Initially, Gandhi sought to apply the ideals and principles of the British constitution, as he understood them, to the situation in South Africa. Ultimately, however, Gandhi rejected the British model, as he came to believe it was fundamentally flawed, being founded on modern civilization. In this sense, the influence of British political practice was at first positive and became negative but it continually constituted the wider framework within which Gandhi developed his democratic thought.

Chapter VIII

Nehru and Democracy

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the origins and development of Nehru's democratic thought in order to examine the nature and extent of the influence of British political thought and practice thereon. The first section will examine the origins of Nehru's democratic thought up to Indian independence and the following section will trace its development in the period between 1947 and his death in 1964. Finally, a conclusion will summarise the findings of the chapter.

The Origins of Nehru's Democratic Thought up to 1947

Nehru's recollections of his education in England provide evidence of some early British and liberal influences on the development of his democratic thought. As a student at Harrow, Nehru recalled that he had "read both books and newspapers more than most of my fellow-students."¹ This interest in current affairs included British politics and in his autobiography Nehru related an incident whilst at Harrow:

I was greatly interested in the General Election ... at the end of 1905 and which ended in a great Liberal victory. Early in 1906 our form master asked us about the new Government and, much to his surprise, I was the only boy in his form who could give him much information on the subject, including almost a complete list of members of Campbell-Bannerman's Cabinet.²

Kagalkar believed that it was at Cambridge that Nehru "was greatly influenced by the 19th century European liberal tradition."³ Accordingly, for Kagalkar, it was this tradition which included the influences of "individual rights, parliamentary system, free election, free press and freedom of speech."⁴ Kagalkar also identified some influences on Nehru peculiar to the British liberal tradition: "gradualism, adaptability, adjustability, peaceful

¹ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 17.

² Ibid.

³ Kagalkar, *Nehru - A Study in Indian Socialism*, 55.

⁴ Ibid.,

progress and resilience.”⁵ Whilst the attribution of some of these influences seems reasonable it is more difficult to attribute gradualism and adaptability to Nehru’s nationalism and anti-imperialism. For example, Pandey believed “Jawaharlal was fiercely opposed to the principle of gradualness that lay at the foundation of liberal thinking.”⁶ Nevertheless, at least as far as his democratic thought was concerned, and especially at this early stage, Nehru does seem to have been substantially influenced by liberalism.

In contrast, socialism, Soviet communism and Marxism were prominent, and became dominant, influences on Nehru’s democratic thought, especially in the 1930s. These influences were moulded by his 1927 visit and his studies, reading and discussions with others. Whilst they were certainly a distinct and separate influence they were affected extensively by Nehru’s British connections and an important example was Harold Laski. Nehru knew Laski and was familiar with his work and there is a striking similarity in their assessments of the 1930s.⁷ There is much evidence to demonstrate that Nehru was aware of Laski’s work and he also knew him personally. For example, Nehru wrote to his daughter Indira from prison in 1943: “By the way, among the books that might be sent to me at some future time is Laski’s: *The State in Theory & Practice*. You ought to find it in my room - a copy given to me by Laski and inscribed by him.”⁸ In 1944 Nehru remarked to Indira that he had received Laski’s *Reflections on the Revolution of our Time*. Nehru must have read it closely since he asked: “Have you purchased Laski’s book or has it been borrowed from someone? I ask this as I have found some passages in it marked in pencil.”⁹ Socialist influences and the work of Laski in particular represent an important dimension to the nature of Nehru’s democratic thought.

Discussing events at the time of his visit to Europe in 1926-1927 in his *Autobiography* Nehru made a perceptive criticism of other Indian nationalists, which emphasised the socialist influences on his democratic thought. Nehru criticised the leader

⁵ Ibid., 56.

⁶ Pandey, *Nehru*, 159.

⁷ Kingsley Martin claimed that Laski was in “close touch” with Nehru. See, *Harold Laski 1893-1950: A Biographical Memoir*, 243.

⁸ Nehru to Indira, 13 November, 1943 in *Two Alone, Two Together*, ed., Gandhi, 302.

of the new Nationalist Party, Pandit Malaviya who sought only “the complete elimination of foreign control in India” and not “social and economic change.”¹⁰ Significantly, Nehru believed Malaviya was misguided for the following reason:

The political training and reading of his youth still influence his mind greatly, and he looks upon this dynamic, revolutionary, post-war world of the twentieth century with the spectacles of a semi-static nineteenth century, of T. H. Green and John Stuart Mill and Gladstone and Morley, and a three- or four- thousand year background of old Hindu culture and sociology.¹¹

Nehru’s erroneous assessment of liberalism as a static, conservative doctrine reflects the extent to which he had become alienated from the early British influences of his youth and the Indian gradualist liberal nationalists. It also suggests the influence of Laski.

It is important to note that Nehru’s *Autobiography* was written in the 1930s and his interpretation of events undoubtedly reflects the views he held at that time. It is interesting to compare Nehru’s criticism here with that made by Laski. The core of Laski’s analysis in *Democracy in Crisis* was that “the principle of capitalism cannot be squared with the principle of democracy.”¹² Laski identified the ‘attempt’ of Green, amongst others, to “outline a theory of the positive state,” in the face of “social misery,” which would reconcile democracy and capitalism.¹³ However, and crucially for Laski, Green did not seek “to disturb the foundation of the old order” and in any event, as a solution it was too little and “was made too late.”¹⁴ It seems likely that the influence of Laski is important in explaining Nehru’s analysis in his autobiography and consequently its impact on his democratic thought.

During the 1930s Marxist influences on Nehru were most evident and this is reflected in the emphasis that he placed on economic events. Although the essay “Whither India?” was devoted largely to economic matters Nehru did discuss the nature of the freedom which he was pursuing for India. Crucially, for Nehru freedom should be achieved for “as many groups and classes as possible” as opposed to the freedom of one

⁹ Nehru to Indira, 18 November, 1944 in *Two Alone, Two Together*, ed., Gandhi, 427.

¹⁰ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 157-158.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 158.

¹² Laski, *Democracy in Crisis*, 215.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 22.

class at the expense of others.¹⁵ Nehru explained that “freedom” and the “form of government” were means to an end, which was “human well-being” or the “good life.”¹⁶ An “essential” component of that ‘good life’ was “personal freedom so far as the individual is concerned.”¹⁷ However, as well as freedom, Nehru considered that “the will and the capacity for co-operation” amongst interdependent individuals was also essential.¹⁸ Nehru incorporated this conception of freedom with his vision of the crisis of capitalism and the rise of fascism in Europe. Nehru observed that as the struggle in Europe, where capitalism was in crisis, “becomes more intense ... the forms of nineteenth-century democracy are discarded” because they cannot solve economic problems.¹⁹ In keeping with the Marxist nature of Nehru’s analysis in this essay the emphasis is placed on political *and* economic freedom as essential facets of democracy. In this context Nehru observed that:

We have got into an extraordinary habit of thinking of freedom in terms of paper constitutions. Nothing could be more absurd than this lawyer’s mentality which ignores life and the vital economic issues.²⁰

Consequently, the solution for India was a “fundamental change of regime politically, economically and socially.”²¹ Thus in this work Nehru emphasised the economic dimension of his democratic thought which was especially prominent at this time.

Nehru began *Glimpses of World History* by questioning his belief that history is the progress of man from “barbarism to civilization.”²² Nehru was doubtful as he surveyed the current state of India in comparison to more glorious past periods of history when India had surpassed Europe in culture and civilization. In Nehru’s analysis of ancient India he observed that “there was a kind of democracy in the Aryan

¹⁴ Ibid., 163.

¹⁵ Nehru, “Whither India?” in *India and the World*, 43.

¹⁶ Ibid., 44.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 52.

²⁰ Ibid., 58.

²¹ Ibid., 62.

²² Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, 6.

settlements.”²³ This democracy was village (*panchayat*) based and it survived through to the middle ages. Nehru explained that the “kings and rulers were far from being autocratic rulers” because “their power was kept in check by elected *panchayats*.”²⁴ Overall, there was a “fairly advanced system of self-government” in India at this time and “there was little interference with this by the Central Government.”²⁵ Having identified evidence of democracy in traditional India, Nehru compared the “struggle against authority and authoritarianism” in India and Europe.²⁶ Whilst Nehru described the struggle for liberty in Europe against religious authoritarianism he explained that: “In India there was no such fight for freedom of conscience because from the earliest days the right never seems to have been denied.”²⁷ According to Nehru, “India started off fairly well in regard to political freedom,” and as an example, “there was no such thing as the divine right of kings.”²⁸ However, Indians became complacent: “Because our whole polity was based on village freedom, people were careless as to who was king” and eventually “absolute autocratic monarchs” gained power and ended village democracy.²⁹ This discussion of traditional Indian village based democracy resembles that popularised by Sir Henry Maine. Although Nehru did not cite Maine here he had read his work and mentioned it later in *The Discovery of India*. It is also possible that Nehru had read Maine whilst a law student in London.

Nehru also examined the growth of democracy in the west in *Glimpses of World History*. Democracy, Nehru explained, held that people should possess “equal political and social value.”³⁰ The expression of this equality was that “each person should have a

²³ Ibid., 24. Das identified Nehru’s recognition of democracy in ancient India as a significant component of his political thought. According to Das these examples of early Indian democratic thought helped Nehru to explain the longevity of India’s civilization. See, *The Political Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru*, 107-108. Smith believed that what Nehru “appreciated most in India’s past were ideas and attitudes which seemed to coalesce with his own philosophy, which has already been formed essentially from Western sources.” See, *Nehru and Democracy*, 32.

²⁴ Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, 131.

²⁵ Ibid., 131-132.

²⁶ Ibid., 232.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 234.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 528.

vote for the election of a representative to the governing assembly or parliament.”³¹

However, Nehru observed that adult suffrage alone was “of little use to the hungry man.”³² Nehru began by discussing the natural rights theorists who initially sought too much freedom: “Probably these statements of the rights of individuals in the American and French declarations erred somewhat [on the side of individual freedom].”³³ Nehru contrasted the “doctrine of equal rights for everybody” with the British doctrine of utilitarianism, which sought “the greatest happiness of the greatest number.”³⁴ Nehru claimed that it was John Stuart Mill, who had given “new direction to the English school of political economy,” founded by Adam Smith, and had “brought socialistic principles into economic thought.”³⁵ So according to Nehru: “Democracy thus came to mean the rights of the majority.”³⁶ In considering the development of democracy in Victorian Britain, Nehru noted that “it was not a brilliant success,” because it consisted of “a great deal of shouting and public speaking and the poor voter being induced to choose a person about whom he knew nothing.”³⁷ Although Nehru’s rather sweeping criticism might be understood bearing in mind his incarceration whilst writing, it does demonstrate the extent to which he was influenced by Marxism at that time.

Nehru’s *Autobiography* also provides some insight to the development of his democratic thought, although it is devoted largely to his life as an Indian nationalist. There are several passages of particular relevance. The first of these deals with the question of Dominion status versus independence. Nehru was opposed to the former because it “envisages the same old structure” and they were in favour of the latter because it would

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., 529.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 531. Nehru, rather erroneously, credited John Stuart Mill with being the “chief ‘utilitarian,’” although he did admit that the theory “started a little earlier in England” and was “brought into greater prominence by Mill.” Whilst it is unclear when Nehru had read Mill prior to writing this work he did read *On Liberty* in prison in 1943. In a letter to Indira Nehru remarked: “The Jail Library has some good books - I read John Stuart Mill’s *Essay on Liberty* here.” Nehru to Indira, 6 April, 1943 in *Two Alone, Two Together*, ed., Gandhi, 170.

³⁵ Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, 531.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 554.

allow them “freedom to erect a new structure to suit our circumstances.”³⁸ Nehru used Tawney, who he described as “that brilliant English writer,” in support of the goal of independence rather than Dominion status.³⁹ Nehru related that Tawney considered that the Labour Party, “even if it obtained a majority in the House of Commons ... would still be powerless to make any radical change in face of the opposition of the privileged classes.”⁴⁰ It is interesting to note that Laski expressed a very similar sentiment in *Liberty in the Modern State*. He remarked that

a socialist government which, even with a majority, takes office in a capitalist society the institutions of which are formally democratic cannot help but be aware of the fairly narrow limits within which it may successfully manoeuvre.⁴¹

Further, Laski believed that the reason for this circumscription, and the resistance such a government would meet was “the danger to which it is exposed if it embarks upon measures which disturb the ‘confidence’ of men of property.”⁴² According to Nehru, in India, “there are no democratic institutions or traditions” but rather “a well-established practice of ordinance and dictatorial rule and the suppression of the liberties of the person, of speech, writing assembly and the Press.”⁴³ This was why he believed that Dominion status would be insufficient. It is necessary to note that Nehru was referring to the period under British rule. Prior to that, as Nehru had mentioned in *Glimpses of World History*, India had possessed vestiges of a democratic heritage.

In his *Autobiography* Nehru devoted a chapter to an attack on the Indian constitutional liberals who were content to attain self-government gradually and at a pace determined by the British. It followed from his critique of Dominion status as a sufficient goal for Indian nationalists. He acknowledged that: “The English Liberal tradition was

³⁸ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 418.

³⁹ Ibid., 421. Nehru also quoted Tawney when discussing the background to the Delhi Pact of 1931. Nehru explained that Gandhian democracy was “the very opposite of the modern idea of a party which is built up to seize the State power in order to refashion the political and economic structure according to certain pre-conceived ideas; or that kind of party, found often enough nowadays, whose function seems to be (to quote Mr R. H. Tawney) to offer the largest possible number of carrots to the largest number of donkeys.” Bearing in mind Gandhi’s conception of democracy, Nehru admitted that Gandhi had not only been a “problem and a puzzle” to the “British Government” but also to “his closest associates!” See *ibid.*, 252.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 422.

⁴¹ Laski, *Liberty in the Modern State*, 27.

⁴² Ibid.

based on economic foundations” and stood “for a certain economic policy - free trade and *laissez-faire*, etc - and a certain ideology of individual freedom and civil liberties.”⁴⁴ In contrast the Indian liberals had “no such background,” did not “believe in free trade,” placed little emphasis on “civil liberties” and were “not liberal at all.”⁴⁵ Further, they were “protectionists” who were neither capitalists nor socialists, they were conservative and moderate and in sum they represented “bourgeoisdom *in excelsis*.”⁴⁶ Nehru not only attacked the Indian liberals’ pedigree but also their habit of looking to England at every opportunity. Nehru, remarked: “Liberal leaders returning from England make mysterious statements about the doings of the great ones in Whitehall, for Whitehall is the Valhalla of the [Indian] Liberals.”⁴⁷ Nehru believed that the largely “well-to-do” liberals could “afford to wait for Swaraj” whereas the bulk of the Indian population could not.⁴⁸ Thus Nehru distanced himself from the Indian liberals, claiming that moderation, restraint and patriotism were not enough and explained: “[W]e want something higher wider and nobler.”⁴⁹ The crux of Nehru’s attack on the Indian liberals was their failure to tackle British imperialism in a forceful way. Consequently, in this regard he was alienated from liberalism and predisposed toward a more radical critique offered by Marxist sources.

In another revealing passage of his *Autobiography*, Nehru compared the development of democracy in the east and the west. Nehru recalled how he had followed events in Europe, especially in Spain and Austria, in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, while he was in prison. Nehru remarked that the Spanish Republic, had been described as “the very *Manchester Guardian* of governments,” indicating that he considered that both stood for liberty.⁵⁰ However, Nehru asked: “Why, if the *Manchester Guardian* stands

⁴³ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 422..

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 410.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 410-411.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 413.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 499. The use of this analogy is significant for two reasons. Firstly, it reveals Nehru’s concern with the freedom of the press which he recognised before and after Indian independence. It was a deeply held conviction and one that was in part the result of British influences. Directly, Nehru was influenced by the free, liberal British press. Indirectly, Nehru recognised the importance of a free press in India during the independence struggle. Secondly, it is possible to compare this comment of Nehru’s

for liberty, has it so little to say when liberty is crushed in India?"⁵¹ This silence was indicative of the contradiction in the British position, even amongst the left, which so frustrated Nehru. He remarked that it was the "great Liberal statesman, John Morley, who had declared that he could not conceive of democratic institutions in India even in the far, dim future."⁵² Effectively, Nehru believed that "English words seem to change their meanings when they cross the Suez Canal."⁵³ Democracy, Nehru felt, was confined to Britain and some favoured Dominions but for an "Eastern country [it] seems to mean only one thing: to carry out the behests of the imperialist ruling power and not to touch any of its interests."⁵⁴ Nehru's impatience with the slow pace of reform in India was undoubtedly compounded by his assessment that: "It is perfectly clear that in matters of imperial policy there is little to choose between Tory or Labour in England."⁵⁵ This passage reveals that Nehru had become frustrated, and alienated, with the application of liberalism in India.

Nehru's Presidential Address to the Lucknow Session of the Indian National Congress in 1936 represents another important contribution to the development of his democratic thought. In placing the struggle for Indian independence in an international context Nehru revealed his belief that British imperialism placed Britain in the same camp as those countries where fascism was developing. Nehru condemned British imperialism for its "fascist mentality" and "its suppression of civil liberty" in India.⁵⁶ Thus Nehru equated fascism and imperialism and opposed it to democracy and socialism as the two great forces struggling for supremacy in the 1930s. Nehru criticized political terrorism as well as gradual reform: "Terrorism is always a sign of political immaturity in a people, just as so-called constitutionalism, where there is no democratic constitution, is a sign of

with another made by Laski in 1930. Laski remarked that, "freedom is rarely better served when a great public organ falls into the hands of one who, like C. P. Scott with his *Manchester Guardian*, determined to make news and truth coincide." See, *Liberty in the Modern State*, 168.

⁵¹ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 499.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 500.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 501.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 503.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 583.

⁵⁶ Nehru, "Presidential Address to the 49th Session of the Indian National Congress in Lucknow," April 12-14, 1936 in *India's Independence and Social Revolution*, 26.

political senility.”⁵⁷ In this way Nehru sought to occupy a position between the violent nationalists and the liberal constitutionalists: the former’s use of violence was as unacceptable as the latter’s faith in gradual reform. Next Nehru referred to the Webbs’ “monumental and impressive” work on Russia and observed:

Russia is not supposed to be a democratic country after the Western pattern, and yet we find the essentials of democracy present in far greater degree amongst the masses than anywhere else. ... And thus scores of millions of men and women are constantly taking part in the administration of the country. There has been no such practical application of the democratic process in history.⁵⁸

Whilst Nehru held up the Soviet Union as an example of what could be achieved in the future, he conceded that it was “utterly beyond” the Congress at that time, but a start could be made if they increased their “contacts with the masses.”⁵⁹ Nevertheless it is evident that Nehru had read, and was influenced by, the Webbs’ *Soviet Communism*. It coincided with the development of his thought, and the direction in which he was being driven by his frustrations with the progress of the nationalist cause, at this time. These frustrations may also explain why he was so uncritical of that work.

A consistent theme of Nehru’s democratic thought was his opposition to imperialism. Nehru differentiated British imperialism from other more positive British influences to which he was well disposed. Whilst Nehru differentiated these two sources of British influence he was never able to reconcile them. In 1936, whilst discussing the possibility of constitutional reform in a letter to Lord Lothian,⁶⁰ Nehru stated:

In India especially we may be forgiven if we reject it utterly after our experience of British rule in the past and present. To talk of democracy and constitutionalism in India in the face of what has happened and is happening there seems to distort utterly the significance of these terms.⁶¹

In the same letter Nehru made it clear that he was rejecting imperialism and the notion of British trusteeship but he was “perfectly prepared to accept political democracy,” although only “in the hope that it would lead to social democracy.”⁶² For Nehru:

⁵⁷ Ibid., 27.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 44-45.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 45.

⁶⁰ Philip Henry Kerr (1882-1940), 11th Marquess of Lothian, was under-Secretary of State for India, 1931-1932.

⁶¹ Nehru, “A Letter to an Englishman,” January 1936, in *India and the World*, 185.

⁶² Ibid., 186.

“Political democracy is only the way to the goal, and is not the final objective.”⁶³ It is these sort of comments which led Pandey to contend that Nehru’s “political thinking seemed to revolve round his two strong sentiments - his aversion for [*sic*] the British Empire and his attachment to individualism and democracy.”⁶⁴ It seems that often the former caused him to embrace sources which were utterly at odds with the latter. This would explain the tension in his democratic thought which at times verged on contradiction. Similarly, Das remarked that in Nehru’s “struggle against the British what he perhaps disliked most bitterly was the undemocratic set-up of their rule in India.”⁶⁵ Undoubtedly British imperialism caused Nehru to look more favourably on Marxism, the Soviet Union and sources of this ilk than he may have done otherwise. It is this situation that led to the tension, almost inconsistency in his thought, between socialism and democracy.

Nehru wrote his history of India, *The Discovery of India*, while imprisoned by the British during the second world war. Nehru began by noting the irony of the “curious turn of fate’s wheel” that had left him in prison in India while in Britain, “many of those who used to bow to Hitler and Mussolini, and approve of Japanese aggression in China, should hold aloft the banner of freedom and democracy and anti-fascism.”⁶⁶ Nehru proceeded to outline how his philosophy of life had changed in recent years. Nehru remarked: “My early approach to life’s problems had been more or less scientific, with something of the easy optimism of the science of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.”⁶⁷ Nehru explained:

Essentially, I am interested in this world, in this life, not in some other world or a future life. Whether there is such a thing as a soul, or whether there is a survival

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Pandey, *Nehru*, 75.

⁶⁵ Das, *op. cit.*, 104.

⁶⁶ Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 5. Laski also reflected on the irony of Nehru’s imprisonment: “In India there is the grave spectacle of men like Jawaharlal Nehru, whose hatred of Fascism requires no proof, willing to take steps of which the logical outcome might well be a Fascist victory. It is impossible not to explain this indifference in terms of the failure of British imperialism to see that it had outlived its claims.” Laski believed that the “indifference” was a result of British imperialism’s racial arrogance, which the Indian nationalists equated with that of Germany and Italy, and the associated economic exploitation. See, *Reflections on the Revolution of our Time*, 283.

⁶⁷ Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 11.

after death or not, I do not know; and important as these questions are, they do not trouble me in the least.⁶⁸

Evidently, Nehru came to believe that the “ethical approach to life has a strong appeal” and especially “Gandhiji’s stress on right means.”⁶⁹ This new approach had in part turned Nehru away from the Marxist analysis and he admitted that although it did not “satisfy” him “completely” it did “offer considerable help.”⁷⁰ Thus this work marks the beginning of Nehru’s retreat from Marxism as he embraced Gandhian influences and re-focused on his instinctive faith in liberal democracy.

In *The Discovery of India* Nehru repeated his conviction of the contradiction between democracy, in the West, and imperialism, which resembled fascism, in the colonies.⁷¹ Nehru observed that the British considered that “democracy ... though good as an ideal in their own home lands, was not suited to the peculiar conditions prevailing in their colonial domains.”⁷² Clearly, for Nehru it the British who exemplified this contradiction: “The British in India have always represented the most conservative elements of Britain; between them and the liberal tradition in England there is little in common.”⁷³ Despite the reactionary nature of imperialism, Nehru still insisted that India “must learn from the West for the modern West has much to teach, and the spirit of the age is represented by the West.”⁷⁴ This ‘spirit of the age,’ Nehru explained, demanded equality, not absolute equality, for people were not “physically or intellectually or spiritual equal,” but rather, “equal opportunities for all and no political, economic, or social barrier in the way of any individual or group.”⁷⁵ Thus Nehru was convinced that the ‘spirit of the age’ demanded that political change must be accompanied by economic change.

The Discovery of India also contains an interesting discussion of the history of Indian civilisation and village self-government, which reveals Nehru’s knowledge of Sir

⁶⁸ Ibid., 13.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 14.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 15-16.

⁷¹ Ibid., 492-493.

⁷² Ibid., 492.

⁷³ Ibid., 494.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 519.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 535.

Henry Maine's work. Nehru remarked that: "Sir Henry Maine has said somewhere that except the blind forces of nature, nothing moves in this world which is not originally Greek."⁷⁶ In disputing such a belief, Nehru claimed that there was "no organic connection between Hellenic civilization and modern European and American civilization."⁷⁷ Although Nehru disagreed with Maine's assessment of the font of civilization, he included a discussion of village self-government in India which mirrored Maine's work. Nehru described "a widespread system of self-government in towns and villages" in India which had been undermined by British rule.⁷⁸ Characteristically, Nehru remarked: "The village can no longer be a self-contained economic unit ... but it can very well be a governmental and electoral unit."⁷⁹ Thus Nehru shared Maine's faith in the democratic credentials of Indian villages although he incorporated his own economic analysis into his explanation for its demise under the British.

The degree of Marxist and Soviet influence on Nehru tends to compromise his credentials as a democrat. As has been mentioned above, it is possible that Nehru's Marxism was superimposed over the liberal influences of his youth. Smith observed that in Nehru's "Marxist-inclined writings of the early 1930s" he "gave scant attention to the Fabians, and criticized their moderation and conservatism."⁸⁰ In 1940 Nehru, maintained his belief that "the Soviet form of government" might "fit" India, albeit with "certain variations and adaptations."⁸¹ Nehru qualified this assertion with the proviso: "I do not mean that the Russian system or methods should be introduced here *in toto*."⁸² In effect Nehru claimed that he thought "the Soviet system can be allied to a great deal of real democracy."⁸³ In *The Discovery of India* Nehru also discussed the "practical achievements of the Soviet Union," which had "laid the foundations for the new civilization towards which the world could advance," but noted that, negatively, they had

⁷⁶ Ibid., 139.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 140.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 244-246.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 536-537.

⁸⁰ Smith, *Nehru and Democracy*, 101.

⁸¹ Nehru, "The Constituent Assembly," 8 April, 1940, in *The Unity of India*, 370.

⁸² Ibid.

compromised individual freedom.⁸⁴ Nehru added that despite this: “The lesser liberties may often need limitation in the interest of the larger freedom.”⁸⁵ This tension reflects Nehru’s constant personal struggle to balance the freedom of the individual with his faith in socialism and the needs of society as a whole. In a letter to Indira, Nehru revealed a qualified appreciation for the achievements of western individualism coupled with a recognition of its future direction:

In the West individualism was emphasised much more, with certain remarkable results in the shape of progress. It went too far and is now leading more and more to an inevitable socialism and communism.⁸⁶

Neeraj also identified Nehru’s “aversion to authoritarianism” and contended that the “revolutionary changes which took place in Russia attracted him greatly, but when he saw suppression of human values under the communist regimes, the liberal humanist in him revolted.”⁸⁷ It is likely that Nehru was attracted to the ideal of economic equality pursued in the Soviet Union and sought to integrate it with his understanding of freedom. According to Neeraj, Nehru “noted that freedom had been the dominating idea of the nineteenth century, but the twentieth century demanded equality as well.”⁸⁸ Kagalkar explained that Nehru was attracted to communism and the Russian example because it “suggested a method for securing national liberation,” and offered a criticism of western democracy with which he agreed: “[T]he poor man’s vote did not protect him from economic exploitation.”⁸⁹ Nehru’s nationalism caused him to look more favourably at the Russian example and undoubtedly influenced his understanding of democracy.

Immediately prior to Indian independence an interim government and Constituent Assembly were established to draft the new constitution. In a debate in 1946 Nehru likened the process to similar exercises in framing constitutions in history, in America, France and also Russia. Nehru discussed the criticism that the resolution had called for

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 15.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Nehru to Indira, 16 October, 1943 in *Two Alone, Two Together*, ed., Gandhi, 287.

⁸⁷ Neeraj, op. cit., 33.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 41.

⁸⁹ Kagalkar, op. cit., 36 and 42.

an "Independent Sovereign Republic" and had not incorporated the word "democratic."⁹⁰ There were several reasons for this omission. Firstly, Nehru considered it somewhat integral, although it was "conceivable, of course, that a republic may not be democratic," but: "Obviously, we are aiming at democracy and nothing less than democracy."⁹¹ Secondly, Nehru considered that whilst democracy was the aim it would be for parliament to "determine what shape to give to that democracy."⁹² Finally, Nehru considered that the nature of democracy was changing and would change further and the resolution had specified the content of economic democracy and had therefore "done much more than using the word."⁹³ Conversely, Nehru explained that the resolution had omitted the word "socialist" for similar reasons.⁹⁴ By the 1940s, Nehru had retreated from the more blatant Marxism of the 1930s and began to prepare himself for the imminent arrival of Indian independence. This retreat was reflected in his democratic thought.

The Development of Nehru's Democratic Thought, 1947-1964

Despite Nehru's Marxism of the 1930s, his record as Prime Minister and later speeches reveal a firm belief in democracy and he is credited with presiding over the establishment of the world's largest democracy. Smith identified Nehru's "distinctive contribution to political philosophy" as the "application of democratic ideas to Indian conditions."⁹⁵

Das considered that Nehru was less a democratic theorist but rather "an experimentalist in the science of democracy."⁹⁶ Judd concluded his biography by crediting Nehru "with the establishment of a strong democratic tradition in India."⁹⁷ For Neeraj, Nehru's "greatest contribution to democracy lies in his new interpretation of democratic ideas and

⁹⁰ Nehru, "An Independent Sovereign Republic," December 13, 1946, in *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches* vol. 1, 11.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Smith, *Nehru and Democracy*, 181.

⁹⁶ Das, op. cit., 94.

⁹⁷ Judd, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, 85.

values and their application to a country like India.”⁹⁸ Nehru has been described, quite aptly, as the “school-master of Indian democracy.”⁹⁹ Gopal also recognised the importance of freedom and “civil liberty as an absolute value” to Nehru, which he “derived largely from the liberalism and non-conformity of Britain” and which should “be safeguarded at any cost.”¹⁰⁰ Kagalkar remarked that: “Nehru’s faith in individualism resulted in his faith in democracy and aversion for any form of authoritarianism.”¹⁰¹ Brecher, in his biography, described Nehru as a “genuine democrat” with a “firm devotion” to “individual freedom.”¹⁰² It is evident that Nehru attempted to incorporate aspects of the western, and particularly British, democracy to the Indian situation.

Although the Indian Constitution was not adopted until 1950 it provided the background to Nehru’s later democratic thought and therefore it warrants examination. The Preamble to the Constitution begins: “WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC...”¹⁰³ It then listed the aims it sought to secure for all its citizens:

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;
LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;
EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all
FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the
Nation...¹⁰⁴

Undoubtedly this reflects significant American influence¹⁰⁵ but much of the sentiment can also be traced to British sources.¹⁰⁶ A great deal of Nehru’s democratic thought as Prime

⁹⁸ Neeraj, op. cit., 261.

⁹⁹ Prashad, op. cit., 207.

¹⁰⁰ Gopal, “The Formative Ideology of Jawaharlal Nehru,” in *National and Left Movements in India*, ed., Panikkar, 6.

¹⁰¹ Kagalkar, op. cit., 76.

¹⁰² Brecher, *Nehru: A Political Biography*, 601-602.

¹⁰³ Preamble to the Constitution of India in Das Basu, *Commentary on the Constitution of India*, 64.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ For example, in an address to an American audience in 1948 Nehru admitted that “in drafting the Constitution of the Republic of India, we have been greatly influenced by your own Constitution.” See, “Discovery of America,” October 19, 1949 in *Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches 1949-1953*, 121.

¹⁰⁶ The Indian Constitution was greatly influenced by preceding British legislation and particularly the Government of India Act of 1935. For example, Brecher considered that the Constitution is a “purely Western charter” marked by a “total absence of distinctively Indian ideas.” He noted that: “Approximately 250 articles were taken either verbatim or with minor changes of phraseology from the

Minister sought to interpret and explain his understanding of the terms of the Constitution.

In one of Nehru's most famous speeches, on the eve of independence in 1947, he revealed that the freedom to which India would 'awake' was not just national freedom but also a measure of individual freedom. Nehru also initiated a theme which he continued throughout his time as Prime Minister; the importance of responsibility as an integral part of democracy: "Freedom and power bring responsibility."¹⁰⁷ In particular Nehru explained that this responsibility rested, initially at least, with the Constituent Assembly, which was "a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India."¹⁰⁸ The following day Nehru explained that the responsibility entailed the creation of a "prosperous, democratic and progressive nation" and the creation of "social, economic and political institutions which will ensure justice and fullness of life to every man and woman."¹⁰⁹ Thus although Nehru did not abandon his concern with an economic aspect of democracy he did place greater emphasis on freedom.

In a speech later in 1948, concerning the framing of the constitution, Nehru revealed his preference for a flexible document which would not become "out of touch with the people's life, aims and aspirations."¹¹⁰ Nehru observed that "there is no permanence in constitutions" and therefore "while we make a Constitution which is

1935 Government of India Act and the basic principles remain unchanged." See, *Nehru: A Political Biography*, 421. Ernest Barker, explaining why he had included the Preamble at the beginning of *Principles of Social and Political Theory*, remarked that: "I am proud that the people of India should begin their independent life by subscribing to the principles of a political tradition which we in the West call Western, but which is now something more than Western." See, *Principles of Social and Political Theory*, vi.

¹⁰⁷ Nehru, "Tryst with Destiny," August 14, 1947, in *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches* vol. 1, 25. Nehru discussed the subject of freedom and the responsibilities which he believed accompanied it in a speech to newspaper editors in 1950. Nehru explained that the press "performs a very essential function in our lives today, especially in the life of democratic countries." Nehru considered that freedom carries with it responsibilities and obligations and it was important that rights "cannot last long if the obligations which accompany that right are forgotten." Nehru quoted Stanley Baldwin in support of his contention. Baldwin, Nehru claimed, had criticised the press who, he said, "had the harlot's privilege and power without responsibility." See, "Freedom and Licence," December 3, 1950 in *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches* vol. 1, 460-462.

¹⁰⁸ Nehru, "Tryst with Destiny," August 14, 1947, in *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches* vol. 1, 25.

¹⁰⁹ Nehru, "The Appointed Day," August 15, 1947 in *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches* vol. 1, 28.

¹¹⁰ Nehru, "The Last Lap of Our Long Journey," November 8, 1948 in *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches* vol. 1, 32.

sound and as basic as we can make it, it should also be flexible.”¹¹¹ Nehru returned to this subject in 1951 during a debate on amending the Constitution. In support of the need for change, and an adaptable constitution, Nehru stated: “A constitution which is unchanging and static - it does not matter how good it is, how perfect it is - is a constitution that has outlived its use.”¹¹² Nehru used the case of the British constitution to support his argument:

A constitution to be living must be growing, must be adaptable, must be flexible, must be changeable. And if there is one thing which the history of political developments has pointed out, it is this. The great strength of the British people has resided in their flexible constitution.¹¹³

Nehru also addressed the observation that the British were able to be so adaptable “constitutionally” because they had no written constitution and hence, by implication, India could not achieve such flexibility.¹¹⁴ Nehru admitted he was aware of this and also that India “could not obviously emulate the British in having an unwritten constitution” because India was a “big country with numerous autonomous provinces and States.”¹¹⁵ However, India could learn the lesson that “the other extreme of a rigid constitution, too, is a dangerous one, which might lead to the break-up of that constitution.”¹¹⁶ Das also identified this reason for Nehru’s support for parliamentary democracy:

One of the reasons for Nehru’s faith in parliamentary democracy appears to be the possibility of change and progress under that system. The keynote of human history is progress, and parliamentary democracy can best achieve it. In view of this, his preference for the supremacy of parliament and the flexibility of the constitution is obvious.¹¹⁷

Das believed Nehru favoured parliamentary democracy because it involves “peaceful methods of action, peaceful acceptance of decisions taken, and attempts to change them

¹¹¹ Ibid., 40. The Indian Constitution cannot really be considered as ‘basic,’ it is the lengthiest Constitution in the world and contains hundreds of articles. See Das Basu, *Commentary on the Constitution of India*.

¹¹² Nehru, “Equality and the Backward Classes,” May 29, 1951 in *Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches* vol. 2, 529.

¹¹³ Ibid., 530.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Das, *op. cit.*, 114.

through peaceful ways again.”¹¹⁸ Flexibility and adaptability were positive features of the British constitution but Nehru realized it would not be possible for India to have an unwritten constitution. Laski also recognised that “the written constitution is increasingly the general rule,” and justifiably so, since “some constitutional principles are so important that their supremacy cannot be too strongly emphasised.”¹¹⁹ However, Laski also recognised that “it is highly undesirable that any constitution should be rigid in character.”¹²⁰ Therefore, Laski noted that: “The conclusion of experience seems to be the desirability of a written constitution which can be amended by a direct and simple process.”¹²¹ Constitutional flexibility was another aspect of Nehru’s democratic thought which reveals evidence of the influence of British practice in general and of Laski in particular.

The tension that existed throughout Nehru’s democratic thought between individual and social freedom and between centralization and pluralism is also present in Laski’s thought. In *Liberty in the Modern State*, Laski observed of Mill, that he “long ago pointed out that in the early history of liberty it was normally and naturally conceived as protection against the tyranny of the political rulers.”¹²² Laski was also concerned about the dangers of centralization in the modern state and declared that: “There will never be liberty in any State where there is an excessive concentration of power at the centre.”¹²³ Laski proceeded to outline an extensive range for the operation of voluntary associations free from the interference of the state. Significantly, he gave the example of the Indian National Congress under Gandhi:

When again, Mr. Ghandi announced that if the British Government did not grant Dominion Home Rule in India by the end of 1929, he and his followers would practise civil disobedience such as a refusal to pay taxes, I do not think that announcement would have justified the British Government in imprisoning Mr. Ghandi [*sic*] before the end of 1929 in order that he might be prevented from accomplishing his threat at a later time.¹²⁴

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 119.

¹¹⁹ Laski, *An Introduction to Politics*, 60-61.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 61.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Laski, *Liberty in the Modern State*, 51.

¹²³ Ibid., 85.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 145.

Laski, in *An Introduction to Politics*, also recognised that “nothing is more urgent in a state” than the preservation of basic freedoms but he too accepted that to ensure “the preservation of order,” these freedoms must be limited, when they threaten that order.¹²⁵

Laski contended: “Because society is federal in its nature, the more widely power is dispersed in a state, the more effective are its operations likely to be.”¹²⁶ Conversely, centralization “lacks the genius of time and place.”¹²⁷ Laski also admitted that “centralisation was less dangerous a hundred years ago than now, simply because the ambit of state activity was so much smaller.”¹²⁸ However, Laski modified his position on centralization as he became increasingly influenced by Marxism in the 1930s. Laski’s early pluralism can be usefully contrasted with his views in *Democracy in Crisis*. Laski remarked of the United States:

American federalism was an admirable expedient in the days of fairly self-contained agricultural communities within the state; to-day, with large scale industry of national ramifications, it is, as the problem of dealing with child-labour makes evident, a grave hindrance to that uniformity of legislation which, over an increasing area, the great society requires.¹²⁹

Nehru, like Laski, was torn between the demands of large-scale centralization and planning as demanded by socialism and its inherent dangers to his faith in individualism and pluralism.

Conclusion

There are two important features of the wider framework in which Nehru developed his democratic thought which impact on the way he incorporated and adapted British influences. The first is his pre-occupation with attaining Indian independence, and hence his opposition to British imperialism, and the other is Nehru’s admiration for, and interest in, socialism, the Soviet experience and Marxism. These two features are linked in so far as Nehru equated imperialism with fascism and for many years felt communism was the only credible alternative to fascism and imperialism. In particular, this chapter has

¹²⁵ Laski, *An Introduction to Politics*, 29.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 41.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 42.

identified several important British influences including the work of Harold Laski, the Webbs and R. H. Tawney. It seems Nehru was consumed by the pro-Soviet enthusiasm of the 1930s, most notably that revealed in the work of the Webbs and Laski. Whilst there were wider international reasons behind this phenomena, for Nehru these years were the culmination of a nationalist struggle which had become increasingly bitter and pushed him toward such an analysis. These socialist influences, which provided a critique of British rule in India and a positive assessment of developments in Russia, were combined with Nehru's liberal heritage and a faith in British style democracy. Another influence that stands out from the others is that of Henry Maine. It is evident that Nehru used Maine to support his contention that India was inherently capable of democracy.

¹²⁹ Laski, *Democracy in Crisis*, 153.

SECTION FOUR

SOCIALISM

The purpose of this section is to examine the socialist thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. Significantly, despite the variety within their plans for the economic development of China and India, Sun, Gandhi and Nehru's socialist thought shared a number of qualities and crucially in each it case was developed within the democratic framework outlined in the previous section. This section will comprise three chapters that will trace the development of their socialist thought in order to examine those aspects that incorporate British influence. In doing so this section will explore further those British influences highlighted in the introductory section, as well as identifying any additional influences which could be attributed to British sources.

There are several important similarities in the socialist thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. Firstly, they each shared an overriding concern with the welfare of their compatriots and also emphasised the importance of economic equality. Secondly, since China and India were both large, rural and agricultural countries the programme of economic development that Sun, Gandhi and Nehru advocated as part of their socialist thought had to address similar problems. Additionally they also recognised the harmful affects of imperialism in China and India. In China Sun identified the British, along with other foreign powers, as having taken advantage of China's internal weakness for economic gain. In India, Gandhi and Nehru blamed British imperialism for India's economic difficulties, although they emphasised different aspects. Finally, there is an

interesting overlap in their socialist thought in so far as Sun cited Gandhi's campaign against foreign cloth imports in support of his own programme.

Despite these similarities there are several significant differences in the socialist thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. In China Sun's anti-imperialism, in so far as it was directed against Britain, was rather less virulent and more qualified. For most of his life, Sun actively courted the foreign powers and Britain in particular in pursuit of the capital he required for his programme of economic development. Gandhi and Nehru were highly critical of British imperialism and its impact on India for very much longer, although for different reasons. Gandhi focused on the destructive affects of industrialism and modern civilization and cited the parlous state of Indian handicrafts as evidence. Nehru's more Marxist perspective led him to concentrate his attack on the harmful impact of capitalism in India and he cited the retardation of the development of industry. However, they both believed the British were responsible, since it was they who introduced both modern civilization and capitalism. The chapters in this section will examine the extent to which British influences were responsible for both the similarities and the differences in the nature and emphasis of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru's socialist thought.

Chapter IX

Sun and Socialism

This chapter will examine the nature and extent of the influences of British political thought and practice on the origins and development of Sun's socialist thought. The first section will trace its origins up to 1924 and the following section will examine the formulation of Sun's socialist thought found in the lectures he gave on the Principle of People's Livelihood. Finally, a conclusion will summarise the findings of the chapter.

The Origins of Sun's Socialist Thought up to 1924

One of the earliest records of Sun's concern with the welfare of the Chinese people is the rather ambitious reform proposal he submitted to one of the most influential Chinese statesmen of the time, Li Hung-chang (1823-1901),¹ in 1894. The proposal is important because it incorporated the characters, *Min Sheng* or people's livelihood for the first time.² It included a number of suggestions that Sun believed would improve material conditions in China. Ta-ling Lee believed that the crux of Sun's proposal, the "gist of his reform ideas" were "contained in the now famous four brief lines."³ These four lines stated:

Now, when people can fully utilize their talents, enterprise will prosper.
When land is used to the full, people will have enough food. When material
resources are employed thoroughly, our material strength will grow. And when
goods can flow without hindrance, the sources of wealth will be plentiful.⁴

Firstly, Sun believed that human talent was being wasted in China and that this was one of the causes of China's problems, whereas the west, and Britain in particular, allowed talent to flourish. Sun, through his experience at medical school, was aware of British

¹ Li was noted for his promulgation of modernizing, western reform projects and was China's representative with the western powers, 1870-1894.

² Jen, "The Beginnings of San Min Chu I," 82.

³ Lee, *Foundations of the Chinese Revolution*, 5.

⁴ Sun, "A Plea to Li Hung-chang" in *Prescriptions*, ed., Wei, Myers and Gillin, 13.

encouragement of, and advances in, science and technology. Secondly, Sun believed “higher levels of science will lead to greater use of materials, and better machinery will lead to more goods” and therefore material wealth would be fully employed in China.⁵ Thirdly, according to Sun, to fully exploit natural resources “there must be officials to supervise agriculture, farming must be in the hands of those versed in agricultural affairs and they must have machines to assist them in planting and harvesting.”⁶ On this subject, Sun was much inspired by the British experience. He compared the deficiencies of Chinese agriculture with the successes of British agriculture and observed:

In the past, Norfolk in England was a sterile district. Then English farmers found its soil was good for planting raddishes. They later made big profits from the bumper harvest ... Human efforts can overcome the natural insufficiency of the land ... In the West, every nation has a department of agricultural planning.⁷

Finally, Gregor, Chang and Zimmerman summarise the fourth aim of Sun’s reforms:

“He spoke of the elementary necessity of constructing vast systems of transportation and communication - the necessary prerequisites for a modern economy.”⁸ According to Sun, well developed infrastructure, which he had experienced in Hong Kong, coupled with a recognition of the importance of merchants, which was absent in traditional China, would do much to facilitate commerce and improve the livelihood of the people. Once more, Sun used the example of Britain to illustrate the importance of commerce: “The reason why Britain can conquer India, control Southeast Asia, seize Africa, and annex Australia is because of its commercial strength.”⁹ It is evident that Sun’s early concerns with welfare, and his four reforms, were much influenced by British sources.

The next mention of livelihood of relevance here occurs during Sun’s stay in London during 1896 -1897. Sun acknowledged the influence of the observations he had made during his stay. For example in a later article, Sun said: “I have seen enough of the discord between capital and labour in Western countries and the misery that besets the

⁵ Ibid., 10.

⁶ Ibid., 6.

⁷ Ibid. It is worth noting that the modern Department of Agriculture in Britain was formed in 1893. See Kenyon ed., *Dictionary of British History*, 7.

⁸ Gregor, Chang and Zimmerman, *Ideology and Development*, 5.

⁹ Sun, “A Plea to Li Hung-chang” in *Prescriptions*, ed., Wei, Myers and Gillin, 11.

multitudes of the poor.”¹⁰ After escaping from the Chinese Legation Sun went to Europe “to study the methods of its political administration” where he found that because the “foremost European countries” had not accorded “complete happiness to their peoples” the “leading European revolutionaries strive for a social revolution.”¹¹ It seems likely that Sun became aware of Marx, Henry George and J. S. Mill at this time.¹² For example, Schiffrin states that in London, Sun

could learn at first hand about the growing opposition to laissez-faire capitalism - how socialists and Fabians, single-taxers, populists and trade union leaders were struggling to eliminate the harmful side effects of unplanned development.¹³

Schiffrin’s remark, and especially his reference to the Fabians, hints at the possibility of an influence on Sun from that quarter. However, any such influences were not manifested immediately and his socialist thought at this time was confined to reform of the existing Chinese economic system.

Sun’s observations and his early concerns with the welfare of the Chinese people found immediate expression in the article he wrote while in London and was published in *The Fortnightly Review*. It attributed the suffering of the Chinese people to “four great afflictions: famine, flood, pestilence, and insecurity of life and property.”¹⁴ The cause of all four of these was the “universal and systematic corruption” of the Manchu regime.¹⁵ The corruption was particularly prevalent in the area of internal customs or *likin*, and consequently it impaired the efficient distribution of produce, including British goods, and

¹⁰ Article in *Independent* of New York, 1912 in *The Teachings of Sun Yat-sen*, comp. Gangulee, 23.

¹¹ Sun, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 193.

¹² There is broad consensus on this point. For example, Sharman suggests Sun read George. See, *Sun Yat-sen*, 58. Bergere also notes that Sun would have been exposed to details of George’s life and work whilst in London. See, *Sun Yat-sen*, 168-169. It is necessary to note that George’s ideas were current in Japanese socialist circles and were also implemented by German administrators in the Shandong region of China at this time. The possibility of Sun’s awareness of these sources of influence has been noted by Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen’s Early Land Policy,” 561-562. George is remembered for his call for a “single tax” on this “unearned increment.” This he believed would suffice to solve the problem of progress and poverty. Sun did not however limit his programme to a “single tax” although he found its simplicity appealing. Paul Monroe describes how: “Sun was much influenced by the single tax idea ... which fits in well with Chinese culture, since outside the cities and indirect taxation, the only tax people knew was the land tax.” See, *China: A Nation in Evolution*, 192.

¹³ Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution*, 60.

¹⁴ Sun, “China’s Present and Future,” 425.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* It is significant that Sun emphasised Manchu corruption rather than British imperialism as the cause of China’s problems. Whilst the intended audience might explain this sentiment it can be usefully contrasted with his more anti-imperialist position later in life.

hampered “profitable trade.”¹⁶ The article, in appealing for Britain’s “benevolent neutrality,” emphasized how commercial opportunities would be improved after a revolution:

Since, even in these circumstances, China is regarded as a good market for English goods, how would not the trade of England benefit if these exorbitant duties and the system of bribery were altogether abolished?¹⁷

Sun concluded by stating that: “[T]he one object I have in writing this article is to prove to the English people that it is in the interests of Europe generally, and England in particular, to allow us to succeed.”¹⁸ However, there was still no mention of the specific policies which were to become fundamental to Sun’s socialist thought. This was to remain the case until the early 1900s, when a reference was made to the “equalization of land rights” which was to become the core of his socialist thought.¹⁹ Thus in these early years Sun was primarily concerned with reform of the Manchu dynasty and had not yet developed a coherent economic programme. Nevertheless, he had a wide exposure to a variety of British influences.

In 1906 Sun developed the specific programmes of his socialist thought. According to Schiffrin: “Sun’s first long discourse on *min sheng* is his October, 17 1906 speech at the *Min Pao* anniversary gathering in Tokyo.”²⁰ The speech repeated the familiar theme that economic growth in the west had not ensured the livelihood of the people. However, Sun observed that “the advance of civilization is a natural and inevitable

¹⁶ Ibid., 428.

¹⁷ Ibid., 429.

¹⁸ Ibid., 440.

¹⁹ There is some dispute over the date the slogan was first incorporated into Sun’s socialist thought. Gregor, Chang and Zimmerman date the event thus: ““Equalization of land rights,” as an expression, had appeared in the oath of a branch of ... the Hsing Chung Hui, in Hanoi in 1902.” See, *Ideology and Development*, 11. According to Ta-ling Lee it was not until 1903 that the slogan “equalization of land ownership” was added to the oath used by the revolutionaries at a military school in Tokyo. See, *Foundations of the Chinese Revolution*, 42. Schiffrin reveals that Sun, in discussions with Liang Ch’i-ch’ao and Chang Ping-lin, as early as 1899, “delved into ... means of curbing agrarian inequality.” See, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution*, 308. The exact date is important, for the closer it is to Sun’s trip to London, the more plausible his claim to have substantially developed the Principle of Livelihood at that time, thus increasing the extent of British influence during this period. Whenever the term was first used, it was not explained until several years later.

²⁰ Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen’s Early Land Policy,” 554. According to Martin Bernal the first anniversary speech was on 2 December 1906 and not 17 October as Schiffrin states. The reason for the error was confusion between the western and Chinese calendars. See, *Chinese Socialism to 1907*, 72. The speech is reproduced in *Prescriptions*, ed. Wei, Myers and Gillin, 41-50.

process” but conceded that “civilization yields both good and bad fruits.”²¹ For Sun, the ‘good fruit’ was increased wealth and productive capacity and the ‘bad fruit’ was the unequal distribution of this wealth, which was a result of the land problem.²² Sun maintained that the inequality of land holding in Britain had led to inequality of capital as civilization had advanced, all of which had caused poverty, unemployment and starvation amongst the workers whilst the capitalists and landowners became increasingly wealthy. Sun illustrated the land problem in the west with a detailed example of a “great British landowner, the duke of Westminster [who] receives one-quarter of London’s total land revenue.”²³ It was against this background that Sun proposed a land tax which would eventually replace other taxes, becoming a single tax, and would “make China the richest nation on earth.”²⁴ Equalizing land rights would not only solve the potential land problem but also the capital problem, as Gregor, Chang and Zimmerman believe: “Governmental acquisition of the “unearned increment” resulting from the rise in land values that accompanied modernization would provide the capital for self-sustaining growth.”²⁵ At this time it seems that Sun was in favour of a ‘single tax’ on land and in this respect his policy was very similar to that of the American social reformer and economist Henry George (1839-1897). This land policy bears the hallmark of influence from Sun’s observations of Britain and the work of Henry George and John Stuart Mill.

Although Henry George was an American, the reasons Sun found his policies so exciting and chose to incorporate them were in part due to British influences. Further, an analysis of British influences also helps to explain some of the criticisms of Sun’s land policy. For example M. N. Roy found that: “The cryptic formula is nowhere elaborated.” Despite this, Roy found enough “elaboration” to conclude: “By ‘equalization of land,’ he obviously meant reversion to the old tribal system under which the King as the absolute owner distributed land to be collectively cultivated by family

²¹ Ibid., 46.

²² Ibid., 45-48.

²³ Ibid., 46.

²⁴ Ibid., 48.

²⁵ Gregor, Chang and Zimmerman, *Ideology and Development*, 12.

groups.”²⁶ George provides a crucial link between Sun’s developing socialist thought and his observations of Britain. It seems that having witnessed the poverty in parts of London, Sun came to the realization that despite the ‘progress’ of Britain, that rich and powerful country with which he was so familiar, the masses of the people had not shared the benefits and remained in ‘poverty.’ Sun observed after his trip to Britain, that the industrial revolution’s “effect on society is exactly similar to that which Henry George described in his book: *Progress and Poverty* [1879].”²⁷ For George this great irony, not only in Britain but also in America and China, was the result of the land problem.²⁸ Sun was aware of the land problem in Britain, for example, in *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, he remarked: “In England up to this day the feudal system of land-holding has survived.”²⁹ Specifically, George’s solution, according to Scalapino and Schiffrin, held that: “Land profits were the root of social evils, and if these were controlled by the state, exploitation could not rear its ugly head.”³⁰ Consequently, for Scalapino and Schiffrin, Sun’s “principle of people’s livelihood, was a modified version of Henry George’s program, the emphasis on the unearned increment concept being apparently derived from John Stuart Mill.”³¹ In particular they observed that “Sun, like John Stuart Mill, focused on the future rather than the past or present unearned increment.”³² The influence of Mill was also noted by Wolfgang Franke: “[Sun’s] idea of ‘equalization of land rights’ goes back to John Stuart Mill and the English ‘Land Tenure Reform Association’.”³³ In terms of mechanics, with its focus on the *future* rather than the past or present ‘unearned increment’, Sun’s land reform programme resembles Mill’s suggestions more closely than those of Henry George and this will be examined below. The incorporation of Mill’s ideas would appear to be a clear manifestation of British

²⁶ Roy, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China*, 275 and 292 respectively. This interpretation is completely inaccurate.

²⁷ Sun, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 36.

²⁸ See George, *Progress and Poverty*. His analysis of the Chinese situation, which would have been of particular interest to Sun, appears on pages 121-122.

²⁹ Sun, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 233.

³⁰ Scalapino and Schiffrin, “Early Socialist Currents in the Chinese Revolutionary Movement,” 325. George believed that such a land tax would be sufficient; it would be a ‘single tax.’

³¹ *Ibid.*, 332.

³² *Ibid.*, 332.

influences, and hence it is worth exploring Mill's approach to the land question a little further.

In *Principles of Political Economy* Mill advocated a tax on "the future increment of rent" which was "unearned."³⁴ This he justified because he "rejected the legitimacy of absolute property in land" which he regarded as "part of the common heritage."³⁵ Mill had first become concerned over the land problem in Ireland and believed that the plight of the Irish peasant was a result of the existing land tenure system.³⁶ For Mill, the solution was the "gradual introduction of peasant proprietorship."³⁷ In effect, this policy resembles Sun's land reform policy. Finally, Mill also exhibited an awareness of, and sympathy with, the plight of the masses in Victorian England. In his discussion of socialism Mill observed: "Suffice it to say that the condition of numbers in civilized Europe, and *even* in England and France, is more wretched than that of most tribes of savages who are known to us."³⁸ However, Mill was never a 'single taxer' in the way George was and at least at this time that aspect of Sun's programme was attributable to George rather than Mill. Having examined the influence of Mill on Sun's land reform programme it is worth returning to that of Henry George.

In sum, British influences appear to explain, at least partially, why, as Scalapino and Schiffrin noted: "When Sun Yat-sen returned to Japan from the West in the summer of 1905, he came back an ardent disciple of Henry George."³⁹ The origin of the explanation lies in Sun's first trip to Britain. Firstly, if Sun had not already come across George for himself, he would have almost certainly learnt more about him as a result of his notoriety in Britain at the time. This was, according to Schiffrin, because: "George's

³³ Franke, *A Century of Chinese Revolution 1851-1949*, 65.

³⁴ Mill, *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill* ed. J. M. Robson, vols. 2-3, *Principles of Political Economy with Some of Their Applications to Social Philosophy*, 821.

³⁵ Richard Ned Lebow, "J. S. Mill and the Irish Land Question," in *John Stuart Mill on Ireland*, 5.

³⁶ Ibid. On this Irish connection, Schiffrin speculated that Sun may have become aware of Michael Davitt (1846-1906), who was a land reformer and became a supporter of the Chinese revolutionary cause, whilst in London. See, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution*, 128.

³⁷ Ibid., 6.

³⁸ John Stuart Mill, *On Socialism*, 68. Emphasis supplied.

³⁹ Scalapino and Schiffrin, *op. cit.*, 325.

second mayoralty campaign in New York and his dramatic death a few days before the election in 1897 received wide attention in the London Press.”⁴⁰ Secondly, George appealed to Sun’s Christian values, which he had obtained at the Church of England School, for George held that: “God had given the land to the people as a common possession.”⁴¹ Thirdly, George’s method, “the governmental appropriation of rent rather than formal acquisition of the land by the government,” offered an alternative to a violent social revolution, which, Sun believed, China should be able to avoid.⁴² Finally, and of direct relevance, George did much to boost the emerging British socialist movement, particularly the non-revolutionary sort. This, Schiffrin contended, accounted for the fact that if George’s

land value taxation device became so integral a part of Sun’s program, it was primarily because Sun received his training in socialism in an England which more than any other country was historically prepared for George’s doctrine.⁴³

Crucially, given the connection between George and British socialism, Schiffrin does not explore the possibility of more direct British influence from that source. The concordance of George’s view with the British socialist movement is important because it provides insight to the true nature of Sun’s doctrine. It was the moderate, non-revolutionary Fabian section of the British socialist movement that most clearly supported George’s view. In view of the popularity of George amongst the Fabians, and the potential doctrinal similarity with Sun’s socialist thought, it is instructive to examine this connection in more detail.

It has already been suggested that George, in calling for land reform, revived Mill’s earlier idea. This led Cole to remark that: “The most curious thing about *Progress*

⁴⁰ Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen’s Early Land Policy,” 558. George ran for Mayor of New York in 1886 and 1897. It is not clear if Sun read the London press but Wong observed that the papers were available at the Cantlie house and there is evidence to suggest he might have done. Further, after Sun was released from the Chinese Legation he wrote to the *Times* thanking the government and the British press for their efforts in securing his release. Finally, Wong discovered that according to the private detective who trailed Sun whilst he was in London he bought newspapers regularly. Wong, *The Origins of an Heroic Image*, 184, 220 and 272.

⁴¹ Cole, *A History of Socialist Thought* vol. 2, *Socialist Thought: Marxism and Anarchism 1850-1890*, 371. Sun was baptised in Hong Kong and whilst in London attended Church with the Cantlie family. See Wong, *The Origins of an Heroic Image*, 182.

⁴² Scalapino and Schiffrin, op. cit., 332.

⁴³ Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen’s Early Land Policy,” 558.

and Poverty is that, though it made an enormous impact on both sides of the Atlantic, there was nothing at all new in what its author had to say.”⁴⁴ However, according to Schiffrin and Sohn, “when George wrote *Progress and Poverty* in 1879 the only land reformer with whose work he was acquainted was Herbert Spencer.”⁴⁵ In *Social Statics* (1850), Spencer stated that he “considered the freedom to use the land as a necessary condition for giving free-play to individualism.”⁴⁶ Even though George may have arrived at his position independently, or at least without reading Mill, his ideas and the pressing problem of land reform provided common ground between liberalism and the emerging socialist movement. It appears that Sun’s Principle of People’s Livelihood also attempted to bridge that gap. George’s unique contribution to the British socialist movement, of which he has been described as the “godfather,” was “his ability to put the case for the underprivileged in simple, moving terms.”⁴⁷ It was these qualities of George’s approach that did much to revive British socialism and Bernard Shaw admitted that after he heard George speaking in 1882 he became a socialist: “The result of my hearing that speech and buying ... a copy of “Progress and Poverty” ... was that I plunged into a course of economic study, and at a very early stage of it became a Socialist.”⁴⁸ Schiffrin and Sohn note that: “Shaw’s reaction was typical of the catalytic effect of the American personality upon an England that was ripe for land reform.”⁴⁹ So when the Fabian society was founded land reform of the Georgian variety became an important part of their programme. Thus George, who is known to have influenced Sun, provides a link with the Fabian Society, which might also have influenced him.

⁴⁴ Cole, op. cit., 370.

⁴⁵ Schiffrin and Sohn, “Henry George on Two Continents,” 87.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 88. Spencer later changed his position on this issue, in line with leading social Darwinists who justified the existence of an “unearned increment.” Henry George took Spencer to task for this switch in his views in his book, *A Perplexed Philosopher*.

⁴⁷ Lawrence noted how Henry George has “gone down in history as the godfather of British socialism.” See, “Uneasy Alliance,” 61 and 73.

⁴⁸ Shaw quoted in Schiffrin and Sohn, op. cit., 85-86.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 86.

The Fabian analysis of the development of socialism in Britain was remarkably similar to that outlined by Sun.⁵⁰ The similarity and possibility of influence has been hinted at but never fully explored in studies of Sun's thought. The Fabians, like Sun, identified the need for social reform. The Manifesto that appeared in 1884 declared:

That the most striking result of our present system of farming out the national Land and Capital to private individuals has been the division of Society into hostile classes, with large appetites at one extreme, and large dinners and no appetites at the other.⁵¹

This is analogous to Sun's realization that the masses, possibly contrary to his expectations before visiting London, were far from happy despite the wealth and power of Britain. The Fabians had also perceived that in Britain socialism seemed to be evolving peacefully under a democratic framework.⁵² The classic doctrinal statement on this process was Sidney Webb's contribution to *Fabian Essays in Socialism* where he provided a detailed historical account of the extension of state activity into almost every aspect of society, at the behest of the government, which was at odds with the prevailing creed of individualism. This process he described thus:

Such is the irresistible sweep of social tendencies, that in their every act they worked to bring about the very Socialism they despised; and to destroy the Individualist faith which they still professed.⁵³

Fabian Tract Fifteen, published in 1893, discusses the progress toward socialism in England within the existing institutional structure. It stated:

"We are all Socialists now," said one of Her Majesty's late Ministers; and in sober truth there is no anti-Socialist political party. That which has long formed part of the unconscious basis of our practice is now formulated as a definite theory, and the tide of Democratic Collectivism is rolling upon us.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Sun hinted at the importance of this when he remarked that: "The philosophy of Henry George is consistent with the views of the socialists." Sun quoted in Sun Tzu-ho, "The Political Programs of the Tung-Meng Hui," 115. S. S. Lo also suggests that it was the Fabians with whom Sun had much in common, even though he also came across Marxists in London: "[T]here was then another school of socialism which was more moderate, and more pragmatic with whose means he could better sympathize." See, "An Old Book That's Worth Rereading: 'The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-sen: An Exposition of the San Min Chu I' by Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, Ph.D.," 318.

⁵¹ "A Manifesto," *Fabian Tract No. 2*, (1884).

⁵² See for example, Cole *Fabian Socialism*, 144.

⁵³ Webb, "The Historic Basis of Socialism," in *Fabian Essays in Socialism* ed. Shaw, 50.

⁵⁴ "English Progress Towards Social Democracy," *Fabian Tract No. 15*, 3.

Sun, like the Fabians, rejected classical individualism. In *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, Sun elucidated his criticism of *laissez-faire* capitalism, which he believed was only appropriate for the pre-industrial age:

During the supremacy of hand labour, the theory of *laissez-faire* prevailed, in order to encourage free competition, suppress the growth of monopolies and distribute income amongst the whole population ... If we retain the custom of free competition or the method of *laissez-faire*, it will be like encouraging a lame man to contend with an automobile in a race.⁵⁵

Finally, Sun also thought socialism could be achieved within existing arrangements: "In a nutshell, it is my idea to make capitalism create socialism in China so that these two economic forces of human evolution will work side by side in future civilization."⁵⁶ The influence of Henry George, which has been thoroughly documented in the literature, suggests a doctrinal similarity with Fabian socialism and a further British influence on Sun which has not been fully explored and which illuminates the influence of George.

The Fabians believed, as George did, that absolute property in land was responsible for much of the inequality that existed in Britain. George, though, felt that a 'single tax' on the 'unearned increment' would suffice to solve the problem whereas the Fabians believed this would constitute only part of their broader socialist aims. Given the rising interest in socialism in Britain, Henry George's popularity and Sun's interest in land reform and the social movements of the time it would seem possible that Sun came across the Fabian tracts.⁵⁷ These tracts discussed the concept of the single tax. For example, Tract Seven, "Capital and Land," published in 1888, eight years before Sun arrived in London, outlined their policy in this area. The "unearned increment," George's popularization of it, and the need for a solution to the land problem in particular and the problem of inequality in general are discussed. However, contrary to George's

⁵⁵ Sun, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary*, 37-38.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Significantly, the tracts which appeared in the years 1896-1897, whilst Sun was in London, included four of major theoretical importance. See McBriar, *Fabian Socialism and English Politics 1884-1918*, 173. The tracts were "The Difficulties of Individualism," *Fabian Tract No. 69*, (June 1896), "Report on Fabian Policy," *Fabian Tract No. 70*, (June 1896), "The Moral Aspects of Socialism," *Fabian Tract No. 72*, (November 1896), and "Labor in the Longest Reign (1837-1897)," *Fabian Tract No. 75*, (March 1897).

position, land reform was seen as a “partial remedy only.”⁵⁸ George Bernard Shaw’s contribution to the *Fabian Essays in Socialism* described the folly of the system of private land ownership and the problems it had caused.⁵⁹ Tract Twelve sets out a practical programme of land nationalization via taxation and Tract Thirty provides an assessment of the “unearned increment” in London and suggests how, if it were appropriated, it might be used to benefit the whole community.⁶⁰ George’s insistence that “socialization of rent was not just another aspect of social reform ... but the final and only solution” led to the situation where, according to Shaw, “the British socialists soon outgrew” him.⁶¹ Other Fabians, for example Edward Pease, believed that George did not go far enough in the socialist direction.⁶² Nevertheless, George’s ideas, whose influence on Sun is widely recognized, decisively influenced the British socialist movement with which Sun became familiar during his trip to London. This supports the argument of this chapter that in the area of land reform British influence on Sun was significant.

A further aspect of the mechanics of Sun’s land reform programme also reveals the influence of British practice. In devising and explaining the method of assessing and collecting the land tax Sun incorporated the lessons of the British experience. It is evident that Sun was aware that land value taxation had been incorporated into the Lloyd George budget of 1909. Sun’s tax would be assessed *ad valorem* on the value of the land. In this regard Sun observed in 1912:

This sort of taxation based on value is already in effect in England. It was passed only after Parliament was dissolved several times. As for British territories such as Australia, such taxation has long been in effect, the reason being that this sort of taxation is quite excellent and has met with no obstruction.⁶³

In Sun’s scheme the valuation would be made by the landowner and to ensure that they did not under value their land to reduce tax liability the government would retain the right

⁵⁸ “Capital and Land,” *Fabian Tract No. 7*, (1888), 4-14.

⁵⁹ See, “The Economic Basis of Socialism,” *Fabian Essays in Socialism* ed. Shaw.

⁶⁰ “Practicable Land Nationalization,” *Fabian Tract No. 12*, (1890) and “The “Unearned Increment”” *Fabian Tract No. 30*, (1891).

⁶¹ Shaw quoted in Schifffrin and Sohn, op. cit., 89-91.

⁶² Pease, *The History of the Fabian Society*.

⁶³ Sun, “The Principle of People’s Livelihood and Social Revolution,” April 1, 1912 in *Prescriptions*, ed., Wei, Myers and Gillin, 66-67. It is evident that as well as being aware of the contents of the budget Sun had noticed the difficulties of its passage.

to purchase the land at the assessed value. Conversely, over valuation would result in an increased tax liability.⁶⁴ Later, Sun explained that this system of self-assessment would “be far more convenient than the method Britain has adopted in recent years.”⁶⁵ Sun proceeded to elaborate this point:

After Parliament passed the land tax bill [the Finance Bill of 1910]; the British government created an assessment bureau for the express purpose of setting land prices throughout the country; it also created another office to resolve reasonable complaints. If a landlord regards the price set by the land assessment bureau as unfair, he can file a complaint, and the bureau will reevaluate its decision. How troublesome this is!⁶⁶

In their study of George, Schiffrin and Sohn describe how Lloyd George’s budget “introduced land value assessments and taxation, and heavy increment duties on landed property, and thereby brought to fruition the spirit, if not the exact letter of Henry George’s program.”⁶⁷ This fact, Schiffrin believed “greatly reinforced” Sun’s “predilection” for the land tax as well as avoiding the British method in favour of self-assessment.⁶⁸ Finally, as an adjunct to the administratively superior system of land taxation, Sun believed that China would be able to prevent the inequalities caused by rising land values that existed in Britain.⁶⁹ This suggests that Sun recognised an official British endorsement of the policies he had learned of through Henry George and British socialists. Land reform was an essential part of Sun’s socialist thought and one that reveals significant British influence.

There is one further dimension to British influences on this aspect of Sun’s socialist thought. Schiffrin also identified the system of land value taxation in New Zealand as a possible influence on Sun: “One aspect of the New Zealand Land and Income Tax Act of 1891 which is of particular interest to students of Sunyatsenism is that the land tax was “based on self-assessment.”⁷⁰ However, Schiffrin does not speculate as to how Sun may have become aware of the New Zealand situation. This fact is important

⁶⁴ Ibid., 66.

⁶⁵ Sun, “The Three Principles of the People,” 1919, in *Prescriptions*, ed., Wei, Myers and Gillin, 233.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Schiffrin and Sohn, op. cit., 95.

⁶⁸ Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen’s Early Land Policy,” 562.

⁶⁹ Sun, op. cit., 236.

because Fabian Tract Seventy-four, which appeared in December 1896, while Sun was in London, concerned the role of the state in New Zealand which, according to the author, represented “the most instructive example of the Socialist trend in our colonies.”⁷¹ The tract outlines the various socialist reforms that had taken place in New Zealand including the land reform policies, which included a land tax and repurchase law. All this would support the possibility of Fabian influence on Sun’s socialist thought and especially his land reform policies.

The Principle of People’s Livelihood Lectures

Sun began his series of four lectures on *Min-sheng Chu I* or the Principle of People’s Livelihood on 3 August, 1924 and three subsequent lectures were delivered on 10, 17 and 24 August respectively.⁷² The timing of the lectures is significant because they were delivered following Sun’s period of close collaboration with the Russians. This suggests the possibility of a tension between Sun’s earlier influences and those of his new allies. The lectures represented the culmination of the development of Sun’s socialist thought.

In the first lecture Sun defined the Principle as “the livelihood of the people, the existence of society, the welfare of the nation, the life of the masses.”⁷³ Sun claimed the Principle described “one of the greatest problems that has emerged in the West during the past century or more - socialism.”⁷⁴ Somewhat confusingly Sun stated that the Principle “is socialism it is communism, it is Utopianism.”⁷⁵ For Sun the problem of livelihood had arisen due to “the rapid progress of material civilization all over the world ... [and] the invention of machinery.”⁷⁶ Thus for Sun it was mechanization associated with the “Industrial Revolution” which had displaced labourers and consequently the “workers

⁷⁰ Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen’s Early Land Policy,” 562.

⁷¹ “The State and its Functions in New Zealand,” *Fabian Tract No. 74*, 4.

⁷² The four lectures formed the final part of Sun’s lecture series on the Three Principles of the People. It is possible that Sun had planned to deliver two further lectures on the Principle of People’s Livelihood but was unable to do so before his death because he had delivered six lectures on nationalism and six on democracy. Chang and Gordon believe Sun had planned four more lectures on the Principle which was the most “difficult philosophical concept of the trio to fulfil.” See, *All Under Heaven*, 114-115.

⁷³ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 364.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 364-365.

had suffered greatly.”⁷⁷ Sun stated that in the west “machinery has become a serious social problem and has stimulated the rise of socialistic theories.”⁷⁸ In turn this had created another “social problem” in the disputes between “socialistic theories” which proved “Western nations have not yet found a solution for the questions involved in” socialism.⁷⁹ Thus Sun attempted to explain and differentiate the Principle from socialism and communism and justify the use of the term ‘People’s Livelihood.’

Sun proceeded to examine the debate amongst socialists in the west and attempted to answer the question: “Is socialism really a phase of the *Min-sheng* Principle, or is the Principle of Livelihood a phase of socialism?”⁸⁰ Sun began by discussing Marx, who he claimed was worshipped “as a sage of the socialist movement” just as Rousseau had been worshipped as a “sage of democracy” in the previous century.⁸¹ In describing Marx’s “scientific method of studying social problems” Sun mentioned in some detail Marx’s stay in London:

At the time that he was exiled to England, England was the most cultured nation of the modern world; no other nation could surpass her. Consequently she was well supplied with all the means for the advancement of culture. She had a great library of several million volumes covering fully every possible subject. In this library Marx studied daily.⁸²

Of course Sun had studied in this library in 1896-1897. Sun explained that Marx’s “painstaking and profound study” had discovered that “human history ... gravitates about material forces.”⁸³ However, in summarising the development of international socialism since Marx’s time, Sun concluded that there had been numerous doctrinal disputes which “seriously questioned” the validity of Marxism.⁸⁴ At this juncture Sun acknowledged the work of Maurice William who, in *The Social Interpretation of History* (1921), refuted the Marxian interpretation of history: “The new theory of this American scholar tallies exactly with the third principle of our party... that livelihood is the central

⁷⁷ Ibid., 369.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 373.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 379.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 381-382.

force in social progress, and that social progress is the central force in history.”⁸⁵ The disputes in the west existed, Sun argued, because “the social problem, not material forces [as Marx postulated], is the center which determines the course of history, and ... subsistence is the heart of the social problem.”⁸⁶ Next Sun examined, in the context of recent developments in the west, Marx’s theory of class struggle as an essential mechanism of social progress. He cited examples of social progress attained, contrary to Marx’s predictions, without class war:

[R]ecent economic progress in the West may be said to have taken four forms - social and industrial reform, public ownership of transportation and communications, direct taxation and socialized distribution.⁸⁷

Sun stated that: “These four socio-economic practices have all evolved through the method of reform.”⁸⁸ In China these programmes would be preventive in nature, rather than remedial, as was the case in the west. Sun proceeded to expound on each of these four areas and in doing so demonstrated the extent of British influence on his socialist thought.

Sun defined ‘social and industrial reform’ as “the use of government power to better protect workingman’s education and to protect his health, to improve factories and machinery so that working conditions may be perfectly safe and comfortable.”⁸⁹

Evidently, Sun was aware of developments in Britain because he noted that such reforms

⁸⁵ Ibid., 383. Curiously, though, Sun described William as a “disciple of Marx.” In *Sun Yat-sen versus Communism*, William explained that “*The Social Interpretation of History*” was conceived with the idea of meeting the challenge of Marxism, Bolshevism and Communism.” Indeed, he noted that the subtitle was: “A Refutation of the Marxian Economic Interpretation of History.” See, *Sun Yat-sen versus Communism*, xvii. According to Bergere, William, a dentist and the son of a Jewish tailor from Kharkov who immigrated to the United States, was, more accurately, a “disappointed disciple of Marx.” See, *Sun Yat-sen*, 385.

⁸⁶ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 383.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 385. Maurice William correctly noted the similarity between Sun’s discussions and examples and his own used in *The Social Interpretation of History*. In particular, William presents much evidence illustrating the similarity between passages in Sun’s *Principle of People’s Livelihood* and *The Social Interpretation of History*. For example, there is a passage in William’s *The Social Interpretation of History* which mentions the four areas of reform that Sun described: “We have seen that Social Evolution has forced the state to attack the capitalist system from four different ‘fronts’: (1) *Social and industrial reform*; (2) *the elimination of the capitalist principle from transportation and communication*; (3) *direct taxation*; and (4) *distribution*.” Significantly, in many of the areas of similarity that William identified concerning topics that Sun illustrated with examples from Britain, the examples were original to Sun, even though the points resembled those that William had made. See William, *Sun Yat-sen versus Communism*, 106-114.

⁸⁸ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 385-386.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 386.

had been implemented there in recent years.⁹⁰ The Fabians also saw the state as having a positive role in society and the economy. For example, Beatrice Webb saw the state as a “neutral instrument of political and social reform, an instrument that would be at the disposal of any group with majority power in Parliament.”⁹¹ Regarding social and economic reform, Fabian Tracts, Nine, Sixteen, and Twenty-three all called for an “Eight Hours Bill.”⁹² These three tracts appeared in 1890 and 1891, and therefore would have been in circulation prior to and during Sun’s first trip to London. In his lecture Sun noted that:

In Marx’s time, the workers in England were demanding an eight-hour day and were using the strike weapon to force capitalists to yield to them. Marx criticized the British workers, saying that their demand was an idle dream which the capitalists would certainly not grant; in order to secure the eight-hour day they would have to use revolutionary weapons. Yet, later, the eight-hour day not only became a reality where workers had demanded it, but it was enforced by state law throughout the country so that all workers in factories, banks, and railway companies needed to work only eight hours a day.⁹³

Fabian Tract Eleven, in 1891, outlined the workers political programme and Tract Fifty-five, in 1894, dealt with the workers school board programme.⁹⁴ Tracts Seventeen and Fifty-four called for poor law reform and appeared in 1890 and 1894 respectively.⁹⁵ Therefore, Sun would have been aware of the development and nature of reforms taking place in Britain.

Sun defined ‘public ownership of transportation and communications’ as “putting electric and steam railways, steamship lines, and all the big business of the postal and telegraph service entirely under government management.”⁹⁶ This amounted to a programme of nationalization and implied Sun’s acceptance of an active role for the state

⁹⁰ William’s analysis identified that *The Social Interpretation of History* had also used the example of Britain. However, William does not speculate over the rationale behind Sun’s reason for choosing a British example. See, *Sun Yat-sen versus Communism*, 106-107.

⁹¹ Nolan, *The Political Theory of Beatrice Webb*, 121.

⁹² “An Eight Hours Bill,” *Fabian Tract No. 9*, (May 1890), “A Plea for an Eight Hours Bill,” *Fabian Tract No. 16*, (1890), and “The Case for an Eight Hours Bill,” *Fabian Tract No. 23*, (May 1891).

⁹³ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 397. According to William’s analysis there is no source for the British example of the eight-hour day reform in *The Social Interpretation of History*. See, *Sun Yat-sen versus Communism*, 131. Therefore, it must have come to Sun’s attention independently.

⁹⁴ “The Workers Political Programme,” *Fabian Tract No. 11*, (1891), and “The Workers’ School Board Program,” *Fabian Tract No. 55*, (September 1894).

⁹⁵ “The Reform of the Poor Law,” *Fabian Tract No. 17*, (1890), and “The Humanizing of the Poor Law,” *Fabian Tract No. 54*, (July 1894).

in the economy. As early as 1912, Sun stated that “it often happens that state-run enterprises cannot accomplish in ten years what privately managed enterprises can do in five.”⁹⁷ This policy is strikingly similar to that advocated first by the Fabians and then the British Labour Party. For example, Beatrice Webb called for the “nationalization of basic industries and controlling production and distribution,” with the proviso that “a society where every industry is socialized might not be feasible.”⁹⁸ Again, the Fabian tracts that appeared either before or during Sun’s trip to London discuss proposals for nationalization. For example, Tract Thirty-two, published in 1891, called for the municipalization of the gas supply and Tract Thirty-five, of the same year, called for the municipalization of the London docks.⁹⁹ Again Sun’s policies resemble those of the Fabian Society.

According to Sun, ‘direct taxation’ was “applied by means of a graduated tax scale which levies a heavy income tax and inheritance tax upon capitalists and secures financial resources for the state.”¹⁰⁰ Great Britain, Sun observed, had “put into effect a plan of direct taxation” which had contributed at “the beginning of the European War, fifty-eight per cent of the annual income.”¹⁰¹ These “financial resources” had enabled the British, Sun believed, to “undertake various social reforms.”¹⁰² Not surprisingly, the Fabians wished to see reform of the taxation system in Britain and Tract Thirty-nine calls taxes to be “increased” and “graduated.”¹⁰³ In line with their non-revolutionary nature, the Fabians also realized that raising taxation, on incomes and on land, could not be justified to the British people without a good reason; therefore the taxation should be

⁹⁶ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 386.

⁹⁷ Sun, “Building Railroads across the Nation is a Matter of Life and Death for the Republic of China,” September 14, 1912, in *Prescriptions*, ed., Wei, Myers and Gillin, 98.

⁹⁸ Nolan, *op. cit.*, 131.

⁹⁹ “The Municipalization of the Gas Supply,” *Fabian Tract No. 32* (1891), and “The Municipalisation of the London Docks,” *Fabian Tract No. 35* (1891).

¹⁰⁰ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 387.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 388. William remarked that *The Social Interpretation of History* also used the example of Britain on this subject. See, *Sun Yat-sen versus Communism*, 109-110.

¹⁰² Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 387.

¹⁰³ “A Democratic Budget,” *Fabian Tract No. 39* (August 1892), 9.

accompanied by a programme of public expenditures.¹⁰⁴ Thus they linked the activities of their socialist state to the taxation and regulation of capital in much the same way that Sun planned. However, Sun realised that because industry in China was relatively underdeveloped, the most important 'graduated tax,' at least initially, would be the land tax.

Sun defined 'socialized distribution' as "consumers cooperative societies which are social organizations for the distribution of commodities."¹⁰⁵ Again Sun cited an example from the west which demonstrated this phenomena: "The most modern municipal governments in Europe and America themselves undertake the distribution of water, electricity, and gas, bread, milk, butter, and other foods for the community."¹⁰⁶ Sun provided an example of such organizations that had emerged in Britain: "A large number of banks and productive factories in Great Britain are now managed by cooperative societies."¹⁰⁷ It is evident that Sun was aware of the development of the cooperative movement in Britain. The movement remained active throughout the nineteenth century but was never particularly successful and was eventually eclipsed by the growth of socialism.¹⁰⁸ For Sun the societies represented the harmonization of classes within the state and proof that cooperation rather than competition or violent revolution was the way of the future.

Having outlined these four examples which refuted Marx's material determinism, Sun rejected Marx's mechanism for progress: "Class war is not the cause of social progress, it is a disease developed in the course of social progress."¹⁰⁹ Thus, according to Sun, "Marx can only be called a social pathologist; we cannot say that he is a social physiologist."¹¹⁰ The role of state industries represented Sun's desire for harmonious

¹⁰⁴ George Bernard Shaw, "The Transition to Social Democracy," in *Fabian Essays in Socialism* ed. Shaw, 190.

¹⁰⁵ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 389. William remarked that *The Social Interpretation of History* mentioned cooperative societies. See, *Sun Yat-sen versus Communism*, 138-139. However, *The Social Interpretation of History* did not use the example of Britain in this regard.

¹⁰⁶ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 389.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 403.

¹⁰⁸ Beer, *A History of British Socialism*, 160-236.

¹⁰⁹ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 391.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

cooperation between public and private sectors, between the state and the people. Sun concluded:

Society progresses, then, through the adjustment of major economic interests rather than through the clash of interests. If most of the economic interests of society be harmonized, the majority of people will benefit and society will progress.¹¹¹

Sun contended that: "Since these various methods of economic adjustment have developed in the West, society has made much progress and the majority of the people have come to enjoy happiness."¹¹² As another example of a contradiction of Marxist theory, Sun cited the British case where "the Labor Party has recently, under a constitutional monarchy, been able to organize a cabinet."¹¹³ Thus Sun observed, that in relation to Marx, "the facts of Western history ... have directly contradicted his theory."¹¹⁴ Presumably, for Sun, socialism was only necessary in the absence of a programme which ensures the principles of livelihood.¹¹⁵ Conversely, if a programme that ensures the livelihood of the people is followed socialism will not be necessary. Therefore, to answer the question which Sun posed, but did not answer explicitly, 'socialism is a phase of the *Min-sheng* Principle.'

In the second lecture Sun returned to the theme of the differences between People's Livelihood and communism or socialism. In defining the concept Sun stated: "I can put my distinction to-day between communism and the *Min-sheng* Principle in this way; communism is an ideal of livelihood, while the *Min-sheng* Principle is practical communism."¹¹⁶ In fact according to Sun the defining difference between "communism and *Min-sheng*" was in "the methods by which they are applied."¹¹⁷ Unfortunately, Sun only added to the confusion over the meaning when he stated that: "It is communism and

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid., 394.

¹¹³ Ibid., 395.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 397.

¹¹⁵ This seems to be similar to the traditional Confucian conception of government. In a society permeated completely by Confucian values of harmony and benevolence, government would be unnecessary or at least minimal. Thus, as Linebarger describes, "government itself is socially pathological." See Linebarger, op. cit., 30. This facet demonstrates the degree of Confucian influence on Sun.

¹¹⁶ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 416.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

it is socialism.”¹¹⁸ For Sun the ultimate goal of this progress was a kind of communism, but he referred to it in terms of the traditional Confucian *Ta-t’ung*, a golden age, which was to be reached in the future. In describing his vision of the future Sun stated: “It is not a form that originated with Marx but a form that was practiced when primitive man appeared upon the earth.”¹¹⁹ On Sun’s comments here, Wilbur noted that after the “blunt refutation of Marxism” in the first lecture on 3 August, he became more “conciliatory” in the second lecture on 10 August, having discussed the disagreements with his Russian advisors.¹²⁰ Rather than dismissing Marxism entirely Sun explained that “we cannot use or apply in China the methods of Marx, although we have the deepest sympathy for his teaching.”¹²¹ Consequently, “class war and the dictatorship of the proletariat” were not necessary or inevitable in China and therefore useful only as a “guide” rather than a “method.”¹²² It is these vacillations that led, as Norman Palmer described, to the situation where: “Each of the contending parties in China today insists that it alone is remaining true to the principles of Sun Yat-sen.”¹²³ However, despite Sun’s own beliefs, Palmer concluded his analysis of the Principle with the assertion that: “It is definitely not a Marxist doctrine.”¹²⁴ Similarly, M. N. Roy stated that: “A mere glance over his lectures on ‘People’s Livelihood’ would be enough to absolve him of the least deviation towards socialism.”¹²⁵ G. D. H. Cole shared this belief, although he did devote a chapter to Sun in *A History of Socialist Thought*, when he declared: “I do not regard him as a Socialist.”¹²⁶ In order to explain the confusion of definition it is necessary to examine the methods by which the goals of the Principle were to be attained.

Sun outlined the programmes of the Principle in the second and third lectures. According to Sein Lin, “the second and third lectures contained the main conceptual

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 428.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 429.

¹²⁰ Wilbur, *Sun Yat-sen*, 243.

¹²¹ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 439.

¹²² Ibid., 440-441.

¹²³ Palmer, “Makers of Modern China: III. Father of the Republic: Sun Yat-sen,” 193.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 283.

¹²⁵ Roy, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China*, 290.

¹²⁶ Cole, *A History of Socialist Thought*, vol. 3, Part 2, *The Second International 1889-1914*, 928. Cole justifies the chapter on Sun as due to the influence he exerted on Chinese socialism.

pillars of *Min-sheng* from which he formulated his land policy.”¹²⁷ Sun began his second lecture by identifying two methods by which the Principle would be carried out: “The first method is equalization of land-ownership and the second is regulation of capital.”¹²⁸ Sun, while distinguishing between socialists in the west, argued that:

Another group of socialists advocates peaceful methods and the use of political action and negotiation ... As political action does not accomplish political social reform in a day, this group is made up of the believers in slow progress, negotiation, and peaceable means. They do not think that the highly capitalistic states of the West should utilize Marx’s method and attempt a precipitate solution of the social problem; they think that only peaceful methods will fully settle the problem.¹²⁹

In drawing attention to these kinds of socialists Sun contradicts the Marxist position and alludes to the fact that his Principle of People’s Livelihood is in line with developments in the west. He then stated that: “The aim of our party’s *Min Sheng* Principle is to equalize the financial resources in society.”¹³⁰ The first stage of this equalization would be the solution of the land problem via a tax on the unearned increment of the increase in land values.¹³¹ The unearned increment was that portion of the rise in land value due “to improvements made by society and the progress of industry and commerce” rather than the individual efforts of the landowner.¹³² The tax would provide a “public fund as reward to all those who had improved the community and who had advanced industry and commerce around the land.”¹³³ Sun said: “This proposal that all future increment shall be given to the community is the ‘equalization of land ownership’ ... it is the *Min-sheng* Principle.”¹³⁴ Sun claimed: “If the land problem can be solved, one half of the problem of livelihood will be solved.”¹³⁵ The government, with the additional resources generated by the tax, would also be able to purchase land and redistribute as necessary. Sun recognized that whilst his solution of the land problem would effectively regulate private capital it would not be sufficient and therefore public capital would also need to be

¹²⁷ Lin, “Sun Yat-sen and Henry George,” 203.

¹²⁸ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 409.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 409-410.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 430-431.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 431-433.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 433.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 434.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

developed. Bergere believed that Sun's modification of George's programme suggests Sun's was a more moderate scheme.¹³⁶ However, from a different perspective, his modification was more similar to that Fabian modification of George, who they felt did not go far enough in a socialist direction. Further, Sun's abandonment of a single tax in these lectures can be contrasted with his initial belief that such a tax would be sufficient. In this sense the possibility of Fabian influence seems substantial. The manner in which capital was to be accumulated was three-fold: first, to "build means of communication;" second, to "open up mines" because China was "rich in minerals;" and finally to "foster manufacturing."¹³⁷ Sun felt the state should have an essential role:

If we do not use state power to build up these enterprises but leave them in the hands of private Chinese or of foreign business men, the result will be simply the expansion of private capital and the emergence of a great wealthy class with the consequent inequalities in society.¹³⁸

Finally, Sun stated: "So we shall certainly have to borrow foreign capital to develop our communication and transportation facilities, and foreign brains and experience to manage them."¹³⁹ A few years earlier, in *The International Development of China*, Sun had outlined plans for the material reconstruction of China, including all manner of infrastructure, industry, agriculture as well as irrigation and reforestation schemes.¹⁴⁰ As the title suggests Sun envisaged foreign financial assistance with these programmes. Further, according to Chang and Gordon, Sun, seeking a British imprimatur, asked Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary, to write a preface to the book, but he refused.¹⁴¹ Sun concluded his second lecture on livelihood thus: "When the people share everything in the state, then will we truly reach the goal of the *Min-sheng* Principle, which is Confucius' hope of a 'great commonwealth.'"¹⁴² Whilst there is much evidence of Sun's socialism in this lecture, it is worth noting that he still wished to connect the Chinese economy with those of the western powers.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 435. The other half was capital.

¹³⁶ Bergere, *Sun Yat-sen*, 169.

¹³⁷ Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 438.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 438-439.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 442-443.

¹⁴⁰ Sun, *The International Development of China*.

¹⁴¹ Chang and Gordon, *All Under Heaven*, 119.

The third lecture concerned the “food problem” which was, Sun held: “The chief problem in the *Min Sheng* Principle.”¹⁴³ Sun claimed that “the food problem bears a vital relation to the life and existence of a state.”¹⁴⁴ This lecture also revealed a difference between People’s Livelihood and communism: People’s Livelihood allowed for the existence of *both* the state and the market. Sun predicted that: “Later, when the *Min-sheng* Principle is fully realized and the problems of the farmer are all solved, each tiller of the soil will possess his own fields.”¹⁴⁵ However, later in the lecture Sun claimed that the “*Min-sheng* Principle aims at the destruction of the capitalistic system.”¹⁴⁶ This apparent contradiction was because the unreformed capitalist system, which existed at the time, was motivated by profit and not the welfare of the people. The food and agricultural problem exemplifies the analysis behind Sun’s Principle particularly well. According to Sun, inequalities in land holdings leading to inequalities in wealth typified the capitalist system as it was developing in China and had developed in Britain and the west. Sun proceeded to connect the food problem to imperialism, and provided further evidence of British influence albeit indirect, when he summarised the situation in India:

Hence, although India has famines every year, the capitalists behind production know that giving food to the hungry millions will bring them no profit, so they ship the food to the various nations of Europe and sell it at a high profit.¹⁴⁷

Sun explained that “capitalism makes profit its sole aim, while the Principle of Livelihood makes the nurture of the people its aim.”¹⁴⁸ Capitalism founded on inequalities stemming from absolute property in land only accentuated inequality. However, free enterprise in a regulated environment and in conjunction with state enterprises was acceptable. Sun cautioned: “[W]e can only make gradual changes in the capitalist system; we must not try to overthrow it immediately.”¹⁴⁹

¹⁴² Sun, *San Min Chu I*, 444.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 446.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 447.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 456.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 478.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 479.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

The fourth and final lecture begins with a lengthy discussion of the problem of clothing. It proceeds to explain how “Chinese silk has been entirely driven out of the international market by foreign silk.”¹⁵⁰ According to Sun “foreign economic domination” had adversely affected China’s terms of trade, reducing export markets and increasing imports.¹⁵¹ Additionally, “poor industrial development” in China and “foreign political domination” had compounded the problems caused by foreign economic domination.¹⁵² In order to develop domestic industry China “must imitate the tariff policy of the Western nations.”¹⁵³ Sun predicted that under this “protective policy” Chinese “industries will naturally be able to develop.”¹⁵⁴ Sun urged: “China must champion native goods and boycott foreign goods.”¹⁵⁵ In order to solve the clothing problem “the state should establish clothing factories everywhere on a large scale.”¹⁵⁶ This lecture reveals some British influence in Sun’s observations of tariff policies and the Indian foreign cloth boycott initiated by Gandhi.

Finally, it is necessary to consider Maurice William’s claim – summarised by Linebarger - “that it was his book which saved China from Bolshevism by making an anti-Marxian out of Sun after he had fallen prey to Bolshevik philosophy.”¹⁵⁷ Linebarger, in his analysis of William’s claim, contended “that through the greater part of his life, he was acquainted with Marxism, and did not avail himself of the opportunities he had for adopting it, but consistently rejected it.”¹⁵⁸ Therefore, Linebarger concluded: “[I]t is a manifest absurdity to assume that Sun Yat-sen, having once been a communist, suddenly reversed his position after reading one book by an American of whom he knew nothing.”¹⁵⁹ Linebarger held that William’s theory was appealing to Sun because,

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 490.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 490-498.

¹⁵² Ibid., 498 and 502.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 507.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 508.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 513.

¹⁵⁷ Linebarger, op. cit., 142. William made this claim in, *Sun Yat-sen versus Communism*.

¹⁵⁸ Linebarger, loc. cit.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 143. This is despite the fact that Sun did quote large passages of William’s book in his lectures. As well as pointing out that Sun had foregone the opportunity to become a Marxist in the past, Linebarger claimed that William is incorrect in his suggestion that Sun read his book during his

uniquely among western works, it coincided with Sun's traditional Chinese interpretation of history by *jen*.¹⁶⁰ Bergere also noted the similarities between William's work and Sun's lectures but concluded that, contrary to William's claim, the work did not convert Sun to a non-Marxist socialism but rather provided useful examples that coincided with his own analysis.¹⁶¹ James Shotwell explains William's importance to Sun in two ways:

Dr. Sun saw at once in the arguments of Dr. William a confirmation of his own innate tendencies with reference to socialism, for which he had hitherto found no statement in terms of logical and systematic reasoning. Dr. William supplied him with a conception of socialism which renounced the class war as historically and economically false...

Alternatively: "[I]t furnished him with a justification for his own doubts as to the theory of class war, and offered him a better statement than he had yet worked out of the application of his own philosophy.¹⁶² Rejecting the dominant doctrine of the first decades of this century in the wake of the Russian revolution indicates that Sun possessed a confidence in the integrity of his doctrines. Shotwell contended that:

It required more than an ordinary act of courage for the leader of the revolution at a time that was still critical to come out frankly and fearlessly in contradiction to the militant philosophy of the one section of the Western world which was ready to support whole-heartedly the movement for Chinese emancipation from Western exploitation.¹⁶³

In other words, despite the united front with the communists and Russian support Sun still held to his non-Marxian, western inspired doctrine. Whilst there is much similarity between William's work and Sun's lectures this can be explained by the fact that Sun's notes were destroyed prior to the lectures which forced him to rely more heavily on William's work. Sun discovered in William's work an interpretation of history which coincided with his own view and provided many examples which he was able to use in his lectures, and which he duly acknowledged, which he had held and developed over many

lectures. According to Linebarger Sun made a reference to the book before he began the lectures and: "Hence, in the twelve lectures that Dr. William interprets as Marxian, Sun Yat-sen was speaking from a background which included not only Marxism but *The Social Interpretation of History* as well." See *ibid.*, 144. Sun's change in persuasion after the first lecture is more likely the result of his interaction with Russian advisors.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 143.

¹⁶¹ Bergere, *Sun Yat-sen*, 385-394. In particular Bergere cites Sun's metaphor on Marx as a pathologist and his examples of four methods of reform in the west and of Fordism in the United States.

¹⁶² Shotwell, "Sun Yat-sen and Maurice William," 21.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 24.

years. Thus British influences from the Fabians were a more important influence than was William.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined a number on British influences of Sun's socialist thought. These included those of Mill, the Fabians and developments in Britain, including most notably, Lloyd-George's budget. Sun's plans for land reform reflect significant British influence from Mill and also the Fabian Society. Later, as he modified his land tax to form one part of a wider programme of social reform, he revealed further British influence from Fabian socialism. It is evident that Sun was aware of developments in Britain and the introduction of the land tax in official policy. These observations extended to Sun's knowledge of British imperial policy and especially India. Overall, Sun demonstrated a significant knowledge of developments in the west and Britain, including the development of socialism, which had occurred since the industrial revolution.

Chapter X

Gandhi and Socialism

This chapter will examine the nature and extent of the influences of British political thought and practice on the origins and development of Gandhi's socialist thought. The first section will outline Gandhi's later socialist thought up to 1914 and the following section will examine the period up to his death in 1948. Finally, a conclusion will summarise the findings of the chapter.

The Origins of Gandhi's Socialist Thought up to 1914

This period contains several seminal events in Gandhi's life that contributed to the development of his socialist thought in particular. Gandhi's activities within London vegetarian circles during the period 1888-1891 merit closer attention. Stephen Hay considered that these activities were of much importance in the development of Gandhi's political thought. For example, he stated: "During his student years in London, Gandhi's membership in the London Vegetarian Society (L. V. S.) brought with it the most powerful set of influences on his whole outlook on life and how he should live it."¹ According to Gandhi's secretary Pyarelal, these activities "brought him into contact with some of the finest types of Englishmen, and this in turn bred in him a deep admiration for some traits in British character."² Similarly for Tendulkar:

Through the cult of vegetarianism Gandhi came into contact with many interesting persons who had to do with [*sic*] new movements in England - socialism, anarchism, atheism, theosophy and birth control.³

Vegetarianism was part of the wider social reform movement which was composed of

¹ Hay, "The Making of a Late-Victorian Hindu," 87. According to Devanesen, the vegetarian activities gave Gandhi "a sense of mission and launched him on his career as an organiser, speaker and propagandist." See, *The Making of the Mahatma*, 180.

² Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 1, 268.

³ Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, vol. I, 36.

many, often connected, groups active at this time including the emerging socialist organizations. It is evident that through the vegetarian movement Gandhi became aware of many social reformers including, Henry Salt (1851-1939) and Edward Carpenter who were humanitarian socialists as well as vegetarians.⁴ According to Hay, after reading Salt's *A Plea for Vegetarianism* (1886) Gandhi became a vegetarian by choice rather than in deference to his mother.⁵ Since Gandhi contributed articles to the L. V. S. periodical, *The Vegetarian*, it is reasonable to assume that he read other articles in that publication.⁶ In particular, Hay observed the similarities between editorials that appeared in *The Vegetarian* and aspects of Gandhi's thought. The most significant of these were those concerning "the failure of modern civilization and the urban blight it created" which appeared in *The Vegetarian* in November 1890 and February 1891.⁷ Gandhi's discovery of vegetarianism in Britain also provided a British endorsement of a cherished aspect of Gandhi's traditional Indian culture. The importance of vegetarianism to Gandhi ensured a link between Indian and British influences connected to those circles.

An aspect of Gandhi's stay in London related to his vegetarian activities was his exposure to theosophy. Gandhi was introduced to Annie Besant, who was also a vegetarian, and Madame Blavatsky (1831-1891) in 1891 and thereafter read Besant's *Why I Became A Theosophist* (1891) and Blavatsky's *Key to Theosophy* (1889).⁸ Gandhi also

⁴ Hay has observed similarities between the programme of the Humanitarian League, which Salt founded in 1891, and Gandhi's later ideas. Carpenter and Salt were both members of the Fellowship of the New Life, the forerunner of the Fabian Society, in 1883-1884. See, Hay, op. cit. 93-94. Carpenter connected vegetarianism with his analysis of civilisation: "Those who live mainly on animal food are specially liable to disease." See, *Civilisation, Its Cause and Cure*, 61.

⁵ Hay, op. cit. 80. Hay believed that Salt also provided a British advocate, and validation, of a traditional Hindu practice. Winsten, in his biography of Salt, claims that Salt met Gandhi at a Humanitarian League tea party. See, *Salt and His Circle*, 118. Ashe concurs with Winsten regarding this meeting, which he believed, served as an entry for Gandhi into Salt's circle. See, *Gandhi: A Study in Revolution*, 33-35. However, Gandhi does not mention this meeting in his autobiography.

⁶ Gandhi contributed a series of articles on vegetarianism in India and Indian festivals which were published between 7 February 1891 and 25 April 1891. See, *Collected Works I*, 24-52.

⁷ Hay, op. cit. 91.

⁸ Hunt, op. cit., 32. Hunt speculates that the two English friends who introduced Gandhi were vegetarian acquaintances. Besant had contributed to the *Fabian Essays in Socialism* but Gandhi does not mention having read them. In connection with theosophy, Iyer identified the potential influence of Blavatsky's *Civilization, the Death of Art and Beauty* (1891) on *Hind Swaraj*. According to Iyer this work is also a dialogue and is similar in tone and language. See, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, 27. This work is not cited by Pandiri as one that Gandhi read but it would have been available when Gandhi was in London as a student and he had read other work by Blavatsky at this time.

became an Associate member of the Blavatsky Lodge of the Theosophical Society in March 1891.⁹ Hay believed that the enthusiastically pro-Hindu aspect of theosophy provided evidence of western validation for Gandhi's traditional culture which helped to reinforce his belief in the merits of Indian civilization.¹⁰ The reasonableness of this assumption is reinforced by Gandhi's explanation of his motives for coming to study in Britain, which he gave in an interview in *The Vegetarian*. Gandhi said that in addition to becoming a barrister he would be able to see, "England, the land of philosophers and poets, the very centre of civilization."¹¹ Thus for Gandhi it was significant that it was not merely a western endorsement of Hindu culture but a *British* endorsement. Gandhi was evidently much enamoured with Britain at this time which lends credence to the notion of him being susceptible to those aspects of British culture which endorsed or coincided with Indian practices. The fact that vegetarianism was often connected through its adherents to some of the most progressive, reformist and radical elements of British society provided Gandhi with an exposure to them he might not have had otherwise. In particular vegetarianism provided a link between Gandhi's traditional heritage and the social reformist and anti-industrial strain of British socialist thought.

Gandhi also developed the religious and spiritual background to his socialist thought whilst in London. This included Christianity, theosophy and Hindu influences and was also connected to vegetarianism.¹² In his autobiography Gandhi recalled that he met a "good Christian from Manchester" in a vegetarian boarding house who gave him a

If Gandhi did read it he would have done so probably in London and in English further reinforcing the strength of his British connection. See, Pandiri, *A Comprehensive, Annotated Bibliography on Mahatma Gandhi*. Further, Hay emphasised the similarity between the lectures that Annie Besant gave in London whilst Gandhi was a student and his conception of truth. See, Hay, op. cit., 84-85.

⁹ Hay op. cit. 87. In 1926 Gandhi explained that what barred him from full membership was the society's "secret side - its occultism." Despite this Gandhi claimed he had always been "in sympathy with its message of universal brotherhood." See, "A Tissue of Misrepresentation" in *Collected Works* XXXI, 377.

¹⁰ Hay op. cit. 77. Hay actually goes as far as to posit that Gandhi may even have incorporated the themes of theosophist lectures given by Besant he attended in London at the time into his developing philosophy.

¹¹ The interview was published in *The Vegetarian* on 13 and 20 June, 1891. See, *Collected Works* I, 53-63.

¹² It is significant to note, as Ashe observed, that the majority of Gandhi's Christian influences were Nonconformist the most notable exception being Gandhi's meeting with Cardinal Manning. See, *Gandhi*, 43.

copy of the Bible and encouraged him to read it.¹³ Gandhi explained that although he struggled through the old testament, the new testament and “especially the Sermon on the Mount went straight to” his “heart.”¹⁴ As a student at the Inner Temple, Gandhi often attended sermons at the Temple Church.¹⁵ There is also some evidence that during his first trip to London, by visiting Cardinal Manning to congratulate him on assisting the striking dockers, Gandhi was concerned with the less advantaged groups in society. Further evidence which supports this appears in a letter that Gandhi wrote to his friend Charles Freer Andrews in 1927. Gandhi told Andrews that he recalled “the controversy that was carried out in the Public Press in 1889 or 1890 in London in connection with the expensive upkeep of the Bishop of London with his Palace.”¹⁶ Gandhi also became a member of Edward Maitland (1824-1897) and Anna Kingsford’s (1846-1888) Esoteric Christian Union.¹⁷ Later, Gandhi commented on the influence of Christianity and admitted that his “regard for the life of Jesus” was “very great indeed,” especially “his ethical teaching, his common sense” and “his sacrifice.”¹⁸ Gandhi’s theosophist friends also introduced him to Sir Edwin Arnold (1832-1904) and his translation of the Indian classic the Gita, *The Song Celestial* (1885), and his life of the Buddha, *The Light of Asia* (1879).¹⁹ This reading encouraged Gandhi to discover other works on religious teachers, including Carlyle’s *Heroes and Hero-Worship* (1841) and in particular the part concerning the life of the prophet.²⁰ Thus not only was Gandhi influenced by Christianity

¹³ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 77. In an interview in 1936 Gandhi also admitted that he came “in touch with good Christians in London ... who placed the Bible in” his “hands.” See Gandhi, interview with Dr. Crane, an American clergyman, in Bombay, quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. IV, 166.

¹⁴ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 77.

¹⁵ Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. VI, 155.

¹⁶ Gandhi to Andrews, 6 June, 1927 in *Collected Works* XXXIII, 445-446. This letter also reveals that Gandhi followed the London press in some detail whilst he was in London and, significantly, he recalled events well over thirty years later.

¹⁷ Hunt, op. cit., 35.

¹⁸ “My Jail Experiences” *Young India* 4 September, 1924 in *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* vol. I, ed., Iyer, 181. The importance of the ethical teachings of Christianity for Gandhi is also identified by Morris-Jones who felt he was primarily concerned with “ethics rather than theology or metaphysics.” See, “Mahatma Gandhi - Political Philosopher,” 18.

¹⁹ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 76-77. When his friends asked him to read the Gita with them in the original Gandhi noted that he was “ashamed” that he had not read it in Sanskrit or Gujarati. Gandhi knew Arnold in London and invited him to become the vice-president of the Bayswater vegetarian club that Gandhi founded. See, *ibid.*, 69.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 78.

through British sources but he was introduced to the great Hindu works in English translation. These wider religious influences permeated Gandhi's socialist thought throughout his life and reinforced his faith in the merits of Indian civilization.

After returning from London, Gandhi left India to pursue his legal career in South Africa. In 1904, whilst in South Africa, Gandhi read Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, which became a very important British influence on his thought. The book was given to Gandhi by Henry Polak, a British friend he had met in a vegetarian restaurant.²¹ He recalled in his *Autobiography* how the book "gripped him" and "brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation" of his life.²² In fact Gandhi claimed that he had "discovered" some of his "deepest convictions reflected in this great book of Ruskin."²³ Gandhi summarised the teachings that he understood from *Unto This Last*:

1. That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all.
2. That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's, inasmuch as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work.
3. That a life of labour, i.e. the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman is the life worth living.

The first of these I knew. The second I had dimly realized. The third had never occurred to me.²⁴

In South Africa, Gandhi proceeded to put these ideas into practice and established a farm community called the Phoenix settlement.²⁵ Gandhi's 1908 paraphrase translation into Gujarati of Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, which he called *Sarvodaya* or the welfare of all, constituted an important contribution to his socialist thought.²⁶ In the preface Gandhi observed that in the west "happiness" was equated with "material happiness" or

²¹ Ibid., 273-274. Gandhi read it in its entirety on an overnight train journey.

²² Ibid., 274.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 274-275.

²⁵ Ibid., 275-276. It is important to mention that Gandhi's legal practice provided a substantial income with which he subsidised the journal *Indian Opinion*, and financed the "Ruskinian" community. Maureen Swan has identified an alternative inspiration to Ruskin behind the establishment of this community. Swan notes that an American educated Zulu had established a similar community at Phoenix around this time. See, *Gandhi: The South African Experience*, 59. If this was a source of influence it was not mentioned by Gandhi who only cited the influence of Ruskin in this regard.

²⁶ "*Sarvodaya* [Unto This Last]" in *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* vol. III ed., Iyer, 410-431. This is an English translation by V. G. Desai of Gandhi's Gujarati version and originally appeared in nine articles in *Indian Opinion* between 16 April and 18 July, 1908.

“economic prosperity.”²⁷ However, Gandhi noted that Ruskin, “an Englishman of great learning,” held, contrary to the prevailing view in the west, that the pursuit of “happiness in violation of moral principles” was “contrary to divine law.”²⁸ Therefore, Gandhi believed that although it was “necessary to imitate the west in certain respects” it was evident that “many western ideas are wrong.”²⁹ Crucially, according to Gandhi the British had “survived so long ... not because they had lived up to the maxims of economics, but because they have had heroes who have questioned them and followed instead” the “principles of moral conduct.”³⁰ However, the result of the materialism, that had gripped Britain latterly, was that:

In England and elsewhere factories have multiplied because of the spread of these ideas. Large numbers of men leave their farms and concentrate in cities. ... As a result, the nation grows weaker, and avarice and immorality increase.³¹

The arrangements dictated by modern economics were “at the root of the starvation prevalent in England.”³² In the conclusion Gandhi stated that Ruskin’s work, while intended for a British audience, was “a thousand times more applicable to Indians.”³³ This suggests that Gandhi was often seeking to identify those British influences which either endorsed or were applicable to Indian practices and conditions. Parel noted that Gandhi adapted Ruskin to suit his own purpose so that where, “Ruskin saw the value of handicrafts even in an industrial society; Gandhi saw the value of the spinning-wheel and handicrafts for the whole of India.”³⁴ In sum, Ruskin was an important influence from the anti-industrial strain of British socialist thought.

Gandhi’s years in South Africa also included further British influences. Gandhi maintained his interest in Christianity attending Christian prayer meetings, reading on the

²⁷ Ibid., 410.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 419.

³¹ Ibid., 428.

³² Ibid., 429.

³³ Ibid., 430. Gandhi expanded on this idea in his autobiography when explaining the apparent hesitancy of Polak in joining him in the establishment of a community on Ruskinian lines. Gandhi commented that although Polak “knew Ruskin much better” than he did “his Western surroundings were a bar against his translating Ruskin’s teaching immediately into practice.” See, *Autobiography*, 282.

³⁴ Parel ed., *Hind Swaraj*, xli.

subject and mixing with Christians.³⁵ His reading included Maitland's *The Perfect Way* (1882), which Gandhi claimed to have "liked" because it "seemed to support Hinduism."³⁶ According to Pyarelal: "Edward Maitland's writings left a deep impression on Gandhiji's mind."³⁷ This religious reading proceeded to include Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You* (1893) which "left an abiding impression" on Gandhi.³⁸ The Christian influence was reinforced by the work of Ruskin which possessed a strong quasi-religious element. It was also in South Africa in 1914 that Gandhi met the Cambridge educated, Anglican missionary, Charles Andrews who would become a life long friend and influence on him.³⁹ British Christian influences can be usefully considered as an important part of wider religious and moral influences on Gandhi that also included Indian influences and Christian influences from non-British sources.

Gandhi's 1906 visit to Britain was a short political mission and reveals little of Gandhi's developing socialist thought, however his 1909 visit is of greater significance, not least because it was on the return journey to South Africa that Gandhi wrote *Hind Swaraj*. Gandhi arrived in London in July and stayed until November 1909 at the same luxury hotel as in 1906, The Cecil in the Strand.⁴⁰ However, despite this indulgence, Gandhi had read Edward Carpenter's *Civilization, Its Cause and Cure* in September, and

³⁵ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 122-125 and 134-137. Parel has remarked that Gandhi's "interest in Christianity ... became deep and intense in South Africa." In part this was due, he believed, to a Presbyterian missionary, Joseph Doke, who became Gandhi's first biographer, and an Anglican missionary, Lancelot Booth, from whom Gandhi developed his interest in nursing. See, Parel ed., *Hind Swaraj*, xxxiv.

³⁶ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 136.

³⁷ Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi* vol. 1, 324.

³⁸ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 136. Tolstoy was undoubtedly a major influence on Gandhi's life and work. The influence of Tolstoy must be characterised as Russian. Hunt claims that Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You* was given to Gandhi by Edward Maitland in 1893. See Hunt, op. cit., 152. It is significant that this important Russian influence on Gandhi came via an English friend, the English language and an interest in Christianity that was initiated by British friends.

³⁹ *Gandhi and Charlie: The Story of a Friendship* ed., McL. Gracie, 2. On hearing of Andrews death in 1940 Gandhi remarked: "When we met in South Africa, we simply met as brothers, and remained as such to the end." Gandhi quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. V, 340. Again, in 1942, commenting on Andrews, Gandhi said: "For me, he sums up the brightest tradition of English culture. I enjoyed closer relations with him than with most Indians." Gandhi quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. VI, 204.

⁴⁰ As well as staying at the same impressive hotel, according to Tendulkar, Gandhi still wore "the conventional dress of an English gentlemen." Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, vol. I, 124.

its critique of modern civilization had a significant impact on his socialist thought.⁴¹

Reflecting on this visit years later, Gandhi recalled a meeting with Lord Ampthill (1869-1935), a pro-Indian peer, in which he “discussed the main points of his book,” referring to *Hind Swaraj*.⁴² Gandhi recommended to Ampthill that England should discard “modern civilization,” which he claimed was “ensouled” with a “spirit of selfishness and materialism,” as well as being “vain and purposeless” and as such a “negation of the spirit of Christianity.”⁴³ Gandhi also condemned “railways, machinery and corresponding increase of indulgent habits” as “badges of slavery of the Indian people” as well for Europeans.⁴⁴ It is evident that Gandhi first aired his views on civilisation to a Briton and whilst in Britain.

During this period Gandhi’s most important contribution to his socialist thought was *Hind Swaraj*. It contains Gandhi’s critique of modern civilization and three of the twenty chapters can be considered in the context of his socialist thought. The first of these includes Gandhi’s discussion of modern civilization.⁴⁵ At the beginning of this chapter Gandhi quoted the “great English writer,” author of “*Civilization: Its Cause and Cure*,” who likened civilization to a “disease.”⁴⁶ This was Edward Carpenter the humanitarian socialist and vegetarian. Gandhi believed that the disease of modern civilization had afflicted the English and drew them to India to trade and having been brought to India by the British, the disease soon established itself there as well. Modern civilization ignored morality and religion and made “bodily welfare the object of life” and meant that workmen are required to work in “factories or mines” under conditions “worse than that of beasts.”⁴⁷ These appalling working conditions not only applied to men but women as well and this “awful fact,” according to Gandhi, “was one of the

⁴¹ Hunt, op. cit., 150.

⁴² Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, 231.

⁴³ Gandhi to Lord Ampthill, 30 October, 1909 in *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* vol. I, ed., Iyer, 332.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ch. VI “Civilization.”

⁴⁶ Gandhi, “Hind Swaraj” in *Collected Works* X, 19.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 19-20.

causes of the daily growing suffragette movement.”⁴⁸ Since the culprit was modern rather than British civilization *per se*, the English people, rather than being blamed, deserved sympathy.⁴⁹ These manifestations of modern civilization had many harmful effects, including the spread of disease, increased quarrels, immorality and sin in India.

Gandhi pursued his analysis of modern civilization as a disease, which he had obtained from Carpenter, in a chapter devoted to the medical profession in India.⁵⁰

Gandhi began the chapter by stating:

One writer has likened the whole modern system to the Upas tree. Its branches are represented by parasitical professions, including those of the law and medicine, and over the trunk has been raised the axe of true religion. Immorality is at the root of the tree.⁵¹

He then explained how the medical profession, as a manifestation of modern civilization, was used by the English to maintain their position in India by inducing Indians to rely on its services and participate in the profession. Gandhi summarised the crux of the problem with that profession as follows: “I have indulged in vice, I contract a disease, a doctor cures me, the odds are that I shall repeat the vice.”⁵² He proceeded to link the deficiencies of the medical profession with India’s predicament: “The fact remains that the doctors induce us to indulge, and the result is that we have become effeminate. In these circumstances, we are unfit to serve the country.”⁵³ In this way Gandhi was able to apply Carpenter’s analogy to the Indian situation in support of his call for independence and his conception of manliness. At the same time Gandhi utilised Carpenter to support his own critique of modern civilization which was so crucial to his socialist thought.

Edward Carpenter was clearly an important influence on Gandhi’s socialist thought. Carpenter describes modern civilization as a disease in the very first paragraph of *Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure*. Carpenter explained that he used the term disease because he believed societies everywhere had found that: “Whenever Civilisation touches them, they die like flies from the small-pox, drink, and worse evils it brings along with it,

⁴⁸ Ibid., 21.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ch. XII “The Condition of India (Continued): Doctors.”

⁵¹ Ibid., 35.

⁵² Ibid.

and often its mere contact is sufficient to destroy whole races.”⁵⁴ As evidence Carpenter had cited the existence of “23,000 medical men” in Britain who, organised as a profession, made a “fetish of disease” rather than attempting to “contradict” the disease itself.⁵⁵ The maladies of “civilised man” and the attendant physicians, Carpenter cited as evidence of a “national sickness” which had been caused by the “*break up of the unity*” of man’s nature which in turn was a result of a civilisation founded on private property.⁵⁶ From this passage it is clear that Gandhi had obtained his analysis of the medical profession from Carpenter. As an alternative to modern civilization based on private property, Carpenter described a “Communism” in which: “Gladly will each man, and more gladly still each woman, take his or her treasures, except what are immediately or necessarily in use, to the common centre, where their value will be increased a hundred and a thousand fold by the greater number of those who can enjoy them, and where far more perfectly and with far less toil they can be tended than if scattered abroad in private hands.”⁵⁷ This seems to be a similar to the kind of trusteeship that Gandhi would advocate later and as such Carpenter represents an important and enduring influence on *Hind Swaraj* and Gandhi’s later socialist thought.

In the chapter on machinery,⁵⁸ Gandhi claimed it was “machinery” that had “impoverished India” and had also “begun to desolate Europe.”⁵⁹ It is apparent that Gandhi associated machinery with Britain, when he observed: “It is difficult to measure the harm that Manchester has done to us.”⁶⁰ He made numerous references to Manchester and its association with the textile trade with India, which had led to the situation where, “Indian handicraft has all but disappeared.”⁶¹ Further, it was not only India that was suffering from the advent of machinery, because Gandhi believed:

⁵³ Ibid., 36.

⁵⁴ Carpenter, *Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure*, 16-17.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 16 and 38.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 16 and 46.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 67 and 64.

⁵⁸ Ch. XIX “Machinery.”

⁵⁹ Gandhi, “Hind Swaraj” in *Collected Works* X, 57-58.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 57.

⁶¹ Ibid.

“Ruination is now knocking at the English gates.”⁶² Machinery and the destruction of the Indian textile industry by competition from Manchester had also had an equally damaging impact on the Indian “moral being.”⁶³ However, Gandhi appreciated that it was “not easy to do away with a thing that is established” because machinery had spread its tentacles widely and facilitated the development of “large cities ... tram-cars and railways [and] ... electric light.”⁶⁴ Significantly, Gandhi observed that: “English villages do not boast of these things.”⁶⁵ Gandhi concluded his analysis: “I cannot recall a single good point with machinery.”⁶⁶ This chapter reveals an interesting mix of British influences, from Gandhi’s knowledge of the textile trade to his example of a pre-industrial English village. The former had been harmful to both Britain and India whilst the latter demonstrated that civilisation and machinery may have spread from England to India it had not engulfed England entirely. Thus Gandhi championed the English village and the Indian village against the evils of urbanization.

The crux of Gandhi’s critique of modern civilization was set out in his translation of *Unto This Last* and in *Hind Swaraj*. The fundamental assumption on which Gandhi’s critique rested was his opposition to the materialism of western civilization. Gandhi was always careful to differentiate between modern civilization and western or British civilization. However, clearly, and almost exclusively, Gandhi’s direct experience of modern civilization was gained either in British India, Great Britain or South Africa. Similarly, his knowledge of modern civilization from written works included predominantly those by British authors and even those works by other Indian authors discussed British civilization. In fact in *Hind Swaraj* Gandhi admitted that Britain had been affected by the disease of modern civilization. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that Gandhi’s conception of modern civilization was overwhelmingly the product of British influences. Yet, significantly, Gandhi felt that the British were just as much victims of modern civilization as Indians. Moreover, in distinguishing modern civilization from

⁶² Ibid., 58.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 58 and 59.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 59.

both British and western civilisation, Gandhi was able on occasion to condemn the former whilst recognising strengths in the latter.

Gandhi's critique reveals considerable influence from both British writers and friends and his experiences in Britain and British India. This is demonstrated, for example, by the fact that many of the ideas in *Hind Swaraj* were evident in Carpenter's work, Gandhi's translation of Ruskin and his discussion with Lord Ampthill. Basham emphasises the significance of British influence and noted that "Gandhi's objection to mechanized twentieth-century life" had "no counterpart in the attitudes of ancient India, which was never averse to innovations of a practical kind."⁶⁷ This suggests that Gandhi's critique was significantly influenced by writers like Ruskin and Carpenter. However, Rudrangshu Mukherjee cautions against overemphasising the influence of Carpenter and Ruskin because Gandhi was "thoroughly eclectic and his borrowings were not impaired by any considerations of scientific and theoretical rigour."⁶⁸ Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that Gandhi found in Ruskin and Carpenter a source of criticism which coincided with his own interpretations of his traditional Hindu culture and which he could apply to the Indian situation. By virtue of Gandhi's early British influences he was orientated towards sources from Britain which he could incorporate into his developing thought. It is also important to note that Gandhi's knowledge of traditional Indian influences came to him first through British sources. These British sources were introduced to him via vegetarian contacts in London and the English language. So while Gandhi may have been selective in his borrowings from the British sources of Ruskin and Carpenter his selectivity was informed by his own conception of his traditional Indian culture which had in part been gained indirectly via British influences. Gandhi's critique also possesses a spiritual dimension which seems to have been, at least partially, influenced by British Christian sources.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Basham, "Traditional Influences on the Thought of Mahatma Gandhi," in *Essays on Gandhian Politics*, ed., Kumar, 41.

⁶⁸ Mukherjee ed., *The Penguin Gandhi Reader*, xii.

Some of the explanations of Gandhi's critique of modern civilization and his rejection of modernization centre on his over reliance on his reading of Ruskin and Carlyle and his experience of the effects of the industrial revolution in England. For example, Aiyar summarised this position as follows:

His study of the writings of Carlyle and Ruskin and his acquaintance with the evils of the industrial revolution - a passing phase of England's social transformation - left a permanent impression on his mind and he did little to correct that impression in the light of social and economic changes which were taking place in England in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.⁶⁹

The over reliance on Gandhi's British connection implied in this explanation contrasts with Aiyar's subsequent, and rather contradictory, analysis of *Hind Swaraj* and the "socialist ideas" therein for which "there was little or no evidence for this philosophy from a foreign source."⁷⁰ This analysis aside there is evidence to support Aiyar's former explanation that Gandhi had adopted the social reformist conscience of the late Victorian era and did not discard it. For example, Hay, concluding his study of Gandhi's first trip to England, describes him as possessing "all the social and cultural skills of a late-Victorian gentleman."⁷¹ Similarly, Hunt concluded his study of Gandhi's visits to Britain: "He was most often in the midst of the urban middle classes, and showed a strong affinity for earnest Nonconformist Christians and evangelical reformers such as the vegetarians and Theosophists."⁷² Gandhi found in the circles in which he moved in London a critique of modern, British civilization which happened to coincide with his own predilections. Gandhi was exposed to many of these important British influences at the most formative period of his life when he was still in awe of Britain and seeking to follow a legal career.

The Development of Gandhi's Socialist Thought, 1915-1948

In a speech in 1916 Gandhi developed his assertion that by adopting the "modern materialistic craze" India had gone "down hill in the path of progress."⁷³ He stated that

⁶⁹ Aiyar, "Gandhi, Gokhale and the Moderates," in *Gandhi India and the World*, ed., Ray, 104.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 107.

⁷¹ Hay, op. cit. 95.

⁷² Hunt, op. cit., 227.

⁷³ Gandhi, "Economic Versus Moral Progress" in *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, 353.

“economic progress” of the materialistic kind was “antagonistic to real progress.”⁷⁴ In a speech to the Muir College Economic Society, Gandhi related that when he was asked to make the speech he had to admit that he “knew very little of economics” and he “had not even read books on economics by such well-known authorities as Mill, Marshall, [and] Adam Smith.”⁷⁵ This remark is interesting in that it not only reveals that Gandhi had read few traditional writers on economics up until that time but also the few authorities he cited were all British and classical. Later in life, Gandhi read Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* and whilst discussing this work in 1934, described how his “economics of khadi” equated to one of Smith’s “disturbing factors” which “prevented economic laws from having free play.”⁷⁶ Conversely, Gandhi read Marx’s work but not until even later in his life, and was unconvinced of its merit.⁷⁷ Pradhan concluded his study: “Although Gandhi’s socialist thought was enriched by the heritage both of the East and the West ... his indebtedness by no stretch of the imagination can be traced to the Scientific Socialism of Marx and Engels.”⁷⁸ Pandiri’s survey of Gandhi’s reading suggests only a few other possible sources of his socialist thought. These include: *Equality* (1897) by Edward Bellamy (1850-1898); *Economic History of India Under Early British Rule* (1901) by Romesh Chunder Dutt (1848-1909); and *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* (1901) by Dadabhai Naoroji.⁷⁹ None of these can really be classified as pure Marxist influences. This supports the explanation of British humanitarian, religious, and traditional Indian sources as being the strongest influences on Gandhi’s socialist thought. For example, according to Adi Doctor: “Gandhi derived many of his economic views from Ruskin.”⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Gandhi “Does Economic Progress Clash with Real Progress?” December 1916, in *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* vol. I, ed., Iyer, 355.

⁷⁶ Gandhi quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. III, 357-358.

⁷⁷ For example, in 1946 Gandhi explained that he had read Marx’s *Capital* whilst he was detained during the [second world] war and had “a high regard for his industry and acumen” but did not “believe in his conclusion.” In fact Gandhi went even further believing that the world “was moving and was outdating Marx.” See, “Address to workers at Midnapore District” quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. VII, 36. Iyer holds the view that Gandhi read “Marx and Engels too late in life for his views to be affected even in the slightest.” See, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, 17.

⁷⁸ Pradhan, *The Socialist Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, 135.

⁷⁹ Pandiri, op. cit., 277-295.

⁸⁰ Doctor, “Western Influence on Gandhian Thought,” in *Gandhi India and the World*, ed., Ray,

In contrast to the paucity of other possible sources for Gandhi's socialist thought the influence of British sources like Ruskin and Carpenter assumes a high degree of significance.

In an article in *Young India* in 1931 Gandhi criticised the Indian communists who, did "not seem to live the life of Communism," whilst claiming that he tried "to live up to the ideal of Communism in the best sense of the term."⁸¹ Gandhi made it clear that his socialism was not the socialism of the Congress Socialist Party. For example, commenting on the Congress Socialist Party's programme in 1934, Gandhi said he disliked it because it ignored "Indian conditions" and assumed "antagonism between the classes."⁸² Similarly, later that year Gandhi advised a member of the party to present "the country with practical socialism in keeping with Indian conditions instead of scientific socialism."⁸³ Gandhi also rejected entirely the concept of class war on similar grounds. In 1934 he stated: "Class war is foreign to the essential genius of India which is capable of evolving a form of communism broad-based on the fundamental rights of all and equal justice to all."⁸⁴ Elsewhere that year, Gandhi claimed that class war would be an "impossibility" if the "non-violent method" was adopted.⁸⁵ For Gandhi socialism should be an action orientated philosophy, beginning with the individual, rather than an overtly theoretical one. Thus Gandhi stressed the importance of his own example in rejecting materialism and embracing asceticism. Additionally, Gandhi rejected the atheism of Marxism and stressed the importance of the spiritual and moral dimension of his

⁸¹ Gandhi "A Word To Communists" *Young India* 26 March, 1931 in *Towards Non-Violent Socialism* ed., Kumarappa, 152. Despite these claims Gandhi felt it necessary in 1939 to explain the apparent inconsistency between his thought and his practice. Gandhi admitted that he did not "avoid" railways, he made use of cars "willy-nilly" even though he hated them and he used fountain pens even though he had a "dislike" for them. "Industrialism and Individuality" *Harijan* 28 January, 1939 in *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* vol. III, ed., Iyer, 529.

⁸² Gandhi to M. R. Masani, 14 June, 1934 in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. III, illustration between 344 and 345.

⁸³ Gandhi to N. Deva, 2 August, 1934 in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. III, illustration between 344 and 345.

⁸⁴ Gandhi, "Expropriation and Socialism" *The Pioneer* 3 August, 1934 in *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* vol. III, ed., Iyer, 557.

⁸⁵ Gandhi "Can You Avoid Class War?" *Young India* 26 March, 1931 *Towards Non-Violent Socialism* ed., Kumarappa, 150.

socialist thought. Finally, Marxism was also an entirely alien ideology developed within, and for, the industrial west. Gandhi considered that:

Socialism and communism of the West are based on certain conceptions which are fundamentally different from ours. One such conception is their belief in the essential selfishness of human nature. I do not subscribe to it.⁸⁶

Therefore, Gandhi cautioned against being “obsessed with catchwords and seductive slogans imported from the West.”⁸⁷ Consequently, for Gandhi socialism and communism of the Marxist variety were not appropriate for India.

Gandhi developed on his concept of trusteeship in the 1930s. He believed that “owners” should “act as trustees,” or “owners” on behalf of, “those whom they have exploited.”⁸⁸ In 1937 Gandhi admitted that his conception of “trusteeship” had “yet to prove its worth.”⁸⁹ In practical terms Gandhi’s “trusteeship” sought “to secure the best use of property for the people by competent hands.”⁹⁰ Trusteeship meant that the owners of wealth should hold it as trustees for the rest of society. For Gandhi trusteeship had a religious aspect because the owner of property should regard their wealth “as a bequest” put in their “possession by God.”⁹¹ Therefore, Gandhi held that: “The man who takes for himself only enough to satisfy the needs customary in his society and spends the rest for social service becomes a trustee.”⁹² The feasibility of trusteeship followed from Gandhi’s idealism and his anathema of class conflict and any violent redistribution of wealth. Gandhi claimed that trusteeship was based on traditional Indian practices. However, the concept of trusteeship is one that Gandhi would have been familiar with from his legal studies. The British influence on Gandhi’s concept of trusteeship has been acknowledged by Adi Doctor who observed that “it was to some extent inspired by

⁸⁶ Gandhi “Class War” *Amrit Bazar Patrika* 2 and 3 August, 1934 in *Sarvadaya* ed., Kumarappa, 89-90.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁸⁸ Gandhi “The Young Communists’ Catechism” *Young India* 26 November, 1931 in *Towards Non-Violent Socialism* ed., Kumarappa, 156.

⁸⁹ Gandhi “So-called Inconsistencies” *Harijan* 20 February, 1937 in *Towards Non-Violent Socialism* ed., Kumarappa, 132.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ Gandhi quoted in 1939 in *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* vol. III, ed., Iyer, 511.

⁹² *Ibid.*

Gandhi's study of English jurisprudence and particularly Snell's *Equity*.⁹³ Gandhi read this book as a law student in London and mentions in his autobiography that he found it "full of interest, but a bit hard to understand."⁹⁴ According to Pradhan, Snell's work describes Gandhi's concept of trusteeship very closely: "[T]he legal owner of property may himself hold the property" not for his own benefit "but for the benefit of another person, the real beneficiary of the property."⁹⁵ In addition to the influence of Gandhi's legal studies, trusteeship therefore reveals further British influences. The elitism and paternalism implied by trusteeship also finds resonance with aspects of British socialism, although not those that Gandhi was particularly influenced by, Fabianism, for example. Additionally, as mentioned above, it resembles some of Carpenter's ideas expressed in *Civilization, its Cause and Cure*, a work with which Gandhi was familiar.

In 1941 Gandhi's *Constructive Programme* provided a brief outline of his framework for an independent India. Acknowledging the difficulties of implementing the ideas outlined in *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi began by accepting that "practice will always fall short of the theory."⁹⁶ However, Gandhi was adamant that to whatever extent practice might fall short of the ideal, that ideal could not be achieved through violence because in this way "perfect equality, economic or otherwise, is inconceivable."⁹⁷ For Gandhi *khadi*, the "symbol of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and equality," was important because it would contribute to the Indian villages becoming "largely self-contained" and as such free them from "exploitation" and "ruin" by the cities of India and Britain.⁹⁸ In particular the "khadi mentality" stood for "decentralization of the production and distribution of the necessities of life."⁹⁹ Gandhi accepted that there would be heavy industries but emphasised that they should be "centralized and nationalized" and occupy

⁹³ Doctor, op. cit., 76.

⁹⁴ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 88.

⁹⁵ Pradhan, *The Socialist Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, 432.

⁹⁶ Gandhi, "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place" in *Collected Works* LXXV, 146.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 147.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 150. It is significant that Gandhi included Indian cities as well as British cities as responsible for exploiting rural India.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

“the least part of the vast national activity which will mainly be in the villages.”¹⁰⁰

Finally, Gandhi restated his belief in economic equality and his faith in the doctrine of trusteeship.¹⁰¹

In defining the nature of his socialist thought towards the end of his life, Gandhi stressed the importance of economic equality. In an article in 1940 Gandhi developed his vision of equality and integrated it with his concept of trusteeship. For Gandhi, “equal distribution” meant that “each man shall have the wherewithal to supply all his natural needs and no more.”¹⁰² Gandhi explained that the “root” of his “doctrine of equal distribution” was “the trusteeship of the wealthy for the superfluous wealth possessed by them” because “the rich cannot accumulate wealth without the co-operation of the poor in society.”¹⁰³ In discussing the differences between “Gandhism” and socialism or communism in 1946, Gandhi stressed that he would “bring about economic equality through non-violence” which meant “converting the people” and “by harnessing the forces of love as against hatred.”¹⁰⁴ Gandhi had been aware of the importance of equality ever since reading *Unto This Last*. In 1946 when asked about his economic programme Gandhi replied: “[That] if mankind was to progress and to realize the ideal of equality and brotherhood, it must adopt and act on the principle of *Unto This Last*.”¹⁰⁵ In an interview in 1946, Gandhi again acknowledged his debt to Ruskin when expanding on his concept of equality. For Gandhi *Unto This Last* “marked the turning point” in his life, from whence he realized that “all should have equal opportunity” because “every human being has the same opportunity for spiritual growth.”¹⁰⁶ Equality would be improved for Gandhi if emphasis was instead placed on the ‘moral being,’ rather than the material, as had been done traditionally in India. This emphasis coincided with Gandhi’s

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 151.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 158.

¹⁰² Gandhi “Equal Distribution” *Harijan* 25 August, 1940 in *Towards Non-Violent Socialism* ed., B. Kumarappa, 19.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 20 and 21.

¹⁰⁴ Gandhi, “Questions and Answers” quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. VII, 54.

¹⁰⁵ Gandhi, “Discussion with Chiefs of Deccan States” quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. VII, 214-215.

¹⁰⁶ Gandhi, “Interview with Andrew Freeman of the *New York Post*” quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma* vol. VII, 281.

interpretation of Ruskin, including the lesson from *Unto This Last* that all work was equally valuable to the individual and to society.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the nature, origins and development of Gandhi's socialist thought. It was a complex blend of humanitarianism, social reformism, and socialism defined by his critique of modern civilization. Gandhi's socialist thought was based on a genuine concern for the welfare of the masses and a broad based equality. Gandhi's programme for economic development was designed to ensure that the spiritual and moral element of Indian civilization was never overwhelmed by the materialism so evident in modern civilization. His socialist thought reveals several important British influences including critics of industrialism and modern civilization, like Carpenter and Ruskin. It also possessed a strong spiritual dimension that was in part a result of Christian influences, including that from British friends and acquaintances, his reading and his observations of Britain. Gandhi's legal training was also an important influence on his doctrine of trusteeship, which became such a central component of his socialist thought.

Chapter XI

Nehru and Socialism

The chapter will examine the nature and extent of the influences of British political thought and practice on the origin and development of Nehru's socialist thought. The first section will examine the origins of Nehru's socialist thought up to Indian independence and the following section will consider its development in the period between 1947 and his death in 1964. Finally, a conclusion will summarise the findings of the chapter.

The Origins of Nehru's Socialist Thought up to 1947

Although Nehru did not produce any major works during these years¹ his autobiography provides insight to his economic thinking.² This period is important because it contains several very significant events in his life as well as some of the earliest expressions of his emerging socialist thought. These events provided stimulus and influence for the development of his socialist thought. In India Nehru's formal education began with home tutors. In his autobiography Nehru notes that one British tutor in particular was very influential, Ferdinand T. Brooks.³ Nehru claimed that, in addition to introducing him to theosophy, Brooks nurtured his interest in science and his "taste for reading," especially English books.⁴ Nehru then went to Harrow and on to Cambridge where, although he took the Natural Sciences Tripos, he gained a wide exposure to economic and social

¹ Nehru did publish his reactions to his trip to Russia in 1927 in, *Soviet Russia* (1929). However, it is not considered a "major" work and Das, for example, does not cite it in his study of Nehru's philosophy. See, *The Political Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru*.

² It is important to note that the autobiography was written during the next phase of the development of Nehru's socialist thought and therefore the comments on this phase are likely to reflect that. Further, only one third of it is devoted to the period up to 1929; the remainder covers the following six years.

³ Ibid., 14.

⁴ Ibid. Nehru mentioned the following authors: H. G. Wells; Kipling; Dickens; Scott; and Thackeray.

matters.⁵ It is evident that Nehru's interest in socialist thought developed at Cambridge. Nehru specifically noted in his autobiography that he discussed George Bernard Shaw's prefaces at Cambridge.⁶ In an interview in 1956, he maintained "that it was really at Cambridge that, broadly speaking certain socialistic ideas - partly Fabian socialism, partly some slightly more aggressive socialistic ideas - developed."⁷ Whilst studying for the Bar, Nehru claimed that he "simply drifted, doing some general reading, vaguely attracted to the Fabians and socialistic ideas."⁸ However, on the evidence of the autobiography and Nehru's works during this period his primary concern was with nationalism rather than socialism. Writing in his autobiography at the time when he first met Gandhi, at the Lucknow Congress in 1916, he states: "It was all nationalism and patriotism and I was a pure nationalist, my vague socialist ideas of college days having sunk into the background."⁹ Nevertheless, it is evident that Nehru was exposed to a very formal British style education which acquainted him with British literature, writers and thinkers and introduced him to current social and scientific developments.

The influence of George Bernard Shaw is also confirmed in a letter Nehru wrote to his daughter Indira from prison in 1935. He encouraged Indira to: "Read more of him. Almost all his plays are worth it and his prefaces to these plays are equally important."¹⁰ Nehru's familiarity with Shaw's work and his admiration for the man are mentioned in another letter to Indira. Nehru wrote: "I have been reading Bernard Shaw's plays again. Twice I have read them previously and seen some of them on the stage. And now for the third time I am going through the lot." He continued: "What a wise man he is, full of the deepest understanding of life."¹¹ Nor was it only with Shaw's plays and prefaces that Nehru was familiar. In a letter to his sister in 1944 he advised: "Someone has sent me Bernard Shaw's new book *Everybody's Political What's What*."

⁵ Ibid., 19. For example, Nehru attended a lecture by George Bernard Shaw on "Socialism and the University Man" in 1907 at Cambridge. See Nehru to Motilal Nehru, 24 October 1907 in *Nehru* vol. 1, ed., Norman, 13.

⁶ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 19. However, Nehru did not specify which prefaces he read.

⁷ Nehru quoted in Mende, *Nehru: Conversations on India and World Affairs*, 13-14.

⁸ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 25.

⁹ Ibid., 35. Nehru did not clarify his understanding of these terms.

¹⁰ Nehru to Indira, 22 February, 1935 in *Freedom's Daughter*, ed., Gandhi, 146.

Significantly Nehru explains: "I mention this so that you might not send it. It is the kind of book you might feel inclined to send me."¹² The abiding influence of Shaw is revealed in a letter that Nehru wrote to him in 1948. Nehru recalled Shaw's address he had heard as a Cambridge undergraduate and noted how he had "grown up in company with" Shaw's writings and books and as a result he had "been moulded by that reading."¹³ This connection with Shaw provided an early entry into Fabianism and British socialism more generally which would remain a substantial influence on Nehru's socialist thought.

The next significant event for Nehru was his trip to Europe, and especially Russia, in 1926-1927. Whilst in Europe Nehru visited England during the general strike¹⁴ and attended the Congress of the Oppressed Nationalities, as the representative of the Indian National Congress, in Brussels in February 1927.¹⁵ In Brussels Nehru met many European socialists as well as other Asian nationalists, including the Labour Party politician George Lansbury (1859-1940) and Madame Sun Yat-sen (1892-1981), the wife of Sun Yat-sen.¹⁶ Later Nehru claimed that as a result of the Congress he "turned inevitably with good will towards Communism."¹⁷ However, Nehru claimed he was acquainted with only the "broad features" of communism and was attracted by the "tremendous changes taking place in Russia."¹⁸ As well as being somewhat superficial Nehru's interest in communism was tempered by his irritation with the "dictatorial ways" and "aggressive and rather vulgar methods" of communists.¹⁹ At the same time, Nehru's speeches at the Congress reflected his growing anti-imperialism, and he emphasised its exploitative nature.²⁰ Nehru expressly condemned British imperialism in India, describing

¹¹ Nehru to Indira, 9 April 1943 in *Two Alone, Two Together*, ed., Gandhi, 176.

¹² Nehru to Krishna Hutheesing in *Nehru's Letters to His Sister*, ed., Hutheesing, 174.

¹³ Nehru to Shaw, September 4, 1948 in *A Bunch of Old Letters*, 500.

¹⁴ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 156. Nehru remarks of the "haggard and pinched faces" he had witnessed in a Derbyshire mining area and that it had been a "shock" to see such "class justice" in England.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 161-165.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 162-163.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 163. Nehru claimed that between the Second and Third Internationals his "sympathies were with the latter."

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Nehru, "A Speech at the International Congress Against Imperialism, Brussels," 10 February, 1927 in *Jawaharlal Nehru: An Anthology*, ed., Gopal, 13.

it as a period in which "free-booters prowled about and committed plunder and robberies in the land in an unbridled manner."²¹ Nehru's visit to Russia, after the Brussels' Congress, stimulated his developing interest in communism. His comments on the visit reveal his pragmatism which became most apparent towards the end of his life. In his account of the trip Nehru stated that in the new Russia: "The real test of success can only be in the measure of happiness of the masses of the people."²² Nehru was also interested in what he witnessed in Russia because he felt India, which was also a large, under industrialised, agricultural country, could learn from the Russian experience.²³

Nehru's most significant and extensive declaration of his socialist thought at this time came in his Presidential Address to the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress in 1929. According to Nehru the world was in a state of transition, he described it as "one vast question mark," as the old order gave way to the new.²⁴ Nehru proceeded to offer his solution:

I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican and am no believer in kings and princes, or in the order which produces the modern kings of industry, who have greater power over the lives and fortunes of men than even kings of old, and whose methods are as predatory as those of the old feudal aristocracy.²⁵

Next Nehru outlined some of the points of his programme which included, the ending of poverty, the introduction of minimum wages and reform of the land-laws.²⁶ As such the programme sought to remedy many of the problems caused or exacerbated by British imperialism. Nehru explicitly rejected Gandhi's theory of trusteeship and noted: "Englishmen consider themselves the trustees for India, and yet to what a condition they have reduced our country."²⁷ For Nehru the only type of "trusteeship that can be fair is the trusteeship of the nation and not of one individual or group."²⁸ Finally, and

²¹ Ibid.

²² Quoted in *Nehru*, vol. 1, ed., Norman, 134. The quotation is taken from Nehru, *Soviet Russia*.

²³ Ibid., 130.

²⁴ Nehru, "Presidential Address at the 44th Session of the Indian National Congress in Lahore," December 29-31, 1929 in *India's Independence and Social Revolution*, 2.

²⁵ Ibid., 11.

²⁶ Ibid., 12-13.

²⁷ Ibid., 13. This criticism marks the beginning of what would become a long-running difference between Nehru and Gandhi on economic matters.

²⁸ Ibid.

significantly, Nehru held that the programme he outlined should be obtained by “legitimate and peaceful”²⁹ methods. By this time Nehru had demonstrated the foundations of his socialist thought, which included his concern with poverty, industrial development and his critique of capitalism and imperialism. Of particular importance was Nehru’s connection of capitalism and imperialism. It is likely that Nehru’s bitter experience of British imperialism had turned him against capitalism as the predominant economic system in Britain.

The leftward drift of Nehru’s socialist thought is confirmed in his essay, “Whither India?” It is widely held to be an important contribution to Nehru’s socialist thought.³⁰ In his autobiography Nehru observed that “Whither India?” had “attracted considerable attention” but this was not really warranted: “There was nothing novel or original in these articles for any one in touch with recent developments and modern Western thought.”³¹ Nehru begins by surveying the world situation, then the Asian situation and finally the Indian situation and identifies the problems and presents his solution. Nehru’s analysis of the world situation offers a distinctly Marxist interpretation of history: “The tremendous importance of economic events in shaping history and forms of government is almost universally admitted now.”³² In line with this Marxist interpretation Nehru summarised the expansion of capitalism in the west and particularly in Britain: “India’s gold, in the early stages helped in the further industrialization of England.”³³ The exploitation of India “brought much wealth to England” some of which “trickled down to the working class” and “took the edge off working-class discontent.”³⁴ Nehru believed that the development of capitalism, following its introduction by the British, was inevitable and he stated that “the processes of history and

²⁹ Ibid., 15.

³⁰ For instance, Dutt described this essay as “a clear statement” of Nehru’s views at this time and Nanda observed that it “spelt out his socialist faith at some length.” See, respectively, Dutt, op. cit. , 84 and Nanda *Jawaharlal Nehru* , 185.

³¹ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 430.

³² Nehru, “Whither India?” in *India and the World*, 44.

³³ Ibid., 46.

³⁴ Ibid., 46-47.

economics cannot be stopped for long.”³⁵ In this way imperialism had helped in the initial development of capitalism and had alleviated the problems of its maturity. However, imperialism was only a temporary expedient and capitalism was now in crisis. Nehru claimed that the “ill distribution of the world’s wealth” had created a paradox, of increased production and increased unemployment and poverty under capitalism, which “grows with it till it eats and destroys the very system which created it.”³⁶ Nehru observed that amongst the capitalist countries only in the United States was “some attempt being made today towards lessening to a slight extent inequalities in wealth by State action.”³⁷ Having provided this background of the world situation Nehru turned to Asia and India.

Nehru considered Asia “the main field of conflict between nationalism and imperialism.”³⁸ Consequently the nationalist struggle for political freedom was the primary urge in Asia. However, this struggle was “becoming a social struggle also for economic freedom.”³⁹ This process was causing a tension between the two forces which was exemplified by the situation in India which was part of the “great struggle going on all over the world for the emancipation of the oppressed.”⁴⁰ Nehru stated:

The whole basis and urge of the national movement came from a desire for economic betterment, to throw off the burdens that crushed the masses and to end the exploitation of the Indian people.⁴¹

Therefore, the solution that Nehru offered was both economic and political: “Politically, it must mean independence and the severance of the British connection” and “economically and socially it must mean the ending of all special class privileges and vested interests.”⁴² In summary, the change would have to be “fundamental” and “revolutionary” for it would be “a foolish waste of energy to think and act in terms of carrying on the existing

³⁵ Ibid., 47.

³⁶ Ibid., 49.

³⁷ Ibid., 53.

³⁸ Ibid., 55.

³⁹ Ibid., 56.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 57.

⁴¹ Ibid., 59.

⁴² Ibid., 60.

regime and trying to reform it and improve it.”⁴³ Nehru concluded by answering the question in the title of the essay, “Whither India?,” as follows:

Surely to the great human goal of social and economic equality, to the ending of all exploitation of nation by nation and class by class to national freedom within the frame-work of an international co-operative socialist world federation.⁴⁴

In sum, Nehru held that the Indian situation could not be considered apart from the wider world situation. In essence the crisis of the world situation necessitated an economic dimension to the nationalist struggle.

Nehru’s treatment of the rise of socialism in the west in *Glimpses of World History* and his analysis of recent world events reveals much of his developing socialist thought. *Glimpses of World History* is widely held to reveal Marxist influence, Dutt for example, observed Nehru’s “acceptance of the Marxist view of the scientific explanation of the historical process.”⁴⁵ In his account of the development of socialism in Europe he contrasts the development of the more moderate, “conservative” and “evolutionary” British brand, including Owenism, Chartism and Fabianism, with the more “radical and revolutionary” continental variety.⁴⁶ Returning to a theme developed in “Whither India?” Nehru also attributed the “moderation of English thought” to English prosperity, which was in part due to “the exploitation of India and other colonial possessions.”⁴⁷ For Nehru, the “British brand of socialism was represented by the Fabian Society with a very mild programme of distant change.”⁴⁸ However, Nehru believed that this evolutionary type of socialism was “weakening” and the difference between it and “other non-socialist groups” was “thinning away.”⁴⁹ Therefore, Marx’s “clear-cut and cogently argued” theory of “scientific socialism” was now “considered the general

⁴³ Ibid., 62.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 63. Nehru elaborated on this increasingly Marxist theme elsewhere in 1933. In a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* he stated that he was “strongly attracted towards Communism.” This attraction also seemed to be quite convincing, Nehru continued: “After all the ultimate choice seems to be between some kind of Communism and Fascism; the middle forms seem to fade off. Between these two all my mind and heart is for the former.” See, “A letter to the *Manchester Guardian*,” 15 December, 1933 in *Nehru on Socialism: Selected Speeches and Writings*, 47.

⁴⁵ Dutt, op. cit., 79. Kagalkar recognised Nehru’s “deep longing for a socialistic order of society.” See, *Nehru - A Study of Indian Socialism*, 42.

⁴⁶ Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, 535.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 549.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 540.

socialist creed.”⁵⁰ Marxism’s “basic idea” was that “production and distribution and other important activities should be largely socialized or controlled by the State.”⁵¹ The Marxist interpretation of history, according to Nehru, was a “grand process of evolution by inevitable class struggles.”⁵² Crucially, Nehru observed that even Lenin, “the greatest modern exponent of Marxism,” warned against considering “Marxism as a dogma.”⁵³

Nehru’s acceptance of the Marxist interpretation of history is demonstrated by his explanation of what he called the “crisis of capitalism” during the 1930s depression in those terms.⁵⁴ For Nehru, it was not due to a “temporary crisis,” as suggested by various “capitalist experts,” but a much “deeper” trouble: the “beginning of the final death agony” of capitalism, which was due to a fundamental “inequality in the distribution of wealth.”⁵⁵ It was not only capitalism that had failed; parliaments too, especially the English parliament, had failed, since they had perpetuated the vested interests of the “possessing classes” in upholding the capitalist system.⁵⁶ In support of this interpretation Nehru quoted Laski, who held that the British government had “become an executive dictatorship tempered by fear of parliamentary revolt.”⁵⁷ The “essential contradiction between the capitalist system and democracy” meant there was no “real democracy” in England; for Nehru democracy included “economic and social equality” as well as the right to vote.⁵⁸

Nehru’s autobiography also discussed the paradox he detected in Gandhi which touches on the nature of Nehru’s socialist thought. Writing of 1933-1934 Nehru observed that he and Gandhi “differed considerably” but he was “grateful” that Gandhi has come “as far as he could” towards his position.⁵⁹ On this subject Nehru attacked those “parlour socialists” who “did little themselves” except “criticize others,”

⁴⁹ Ibid., 544.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 539 and 544.

⁵¹ Ibid., 543.

⁵² Ibid., 546.

⁵³ Ibid., 548.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 875-888.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 882-883.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 934-935.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 934.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 935.

particularly Gandhi, and who “make high socialist doctrine a refuge for inaction.”⁶⁰

Nehru remarked of Gandhi:

Sometimes he calls himself a socialist, but he uses the word in a sense peculiar to himself which has little or nothing to do with the economic framework of society which usually goes by the name of socialism. Following his lead a number of prominent Congressmen have taken to the use of that word, meaning thereby a kind of muddled humanitarianism.⁶¹

According to Nehru, Gandhi’s peculiar use of the term was despite the fact that he had “read many books on economics and socialism and even Marxism.”⁶² The implication is that despite Nehru’s own qualified acceptance of Marxism his socialism was not muddled humanitarianism. Additionally, Gandhi had “no desire to raise the standards of the masses beyond a certain very modest competence” whilst Nehru saw this as essential.⁶³ For Nehru, Gandhi’s “idea of trusteeship” whereby the rich are “the trustees of the poor” resembled a “religious attitude” which was “bound up with the world of long ago.”⁶⁴ Nehru recognised, like Gandhi, that “the industrial age has brought many evils” but, and contrary to Gandhi’s view, it had also “laid down a basis of material well-being which makes cultural and spiritual progress far easier for large numbers.”⁶⁵ According to Nehru, these benefits were not available in India because India had “not profited by industrialism” but had “been exploited by it” and therefore: “The fault is not of industrialism but of foreign domination.”⁶⁶ Nehru then dismissed Gandhi’s “self-

⁵⁹ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 403.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 406.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 515.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 516. The difference between Gandhi and Nehru with regard to the conception and meaning of socialism had been evident throughout the 1930s. In 1934 Nehru had written to Gandhi regarding his use of the term: “A strange way of dealing with the subject of socialism is to use the word, which has a clearly defined meaning in the English language, in a totally different sense.” To this Gandhi replied: “I have looked up the dictionary meaning of socialism. It takes me no further than where I was before I read the definition.” Nehru to Gandhi, August 13, 1934 and Gandhi to Nehru, August 17, 1934 in *A Bunch of Old Letters*, 112-119.

⁶³ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 516.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 518-519. Nehru’s criticism of trusteeship because of the religious implications can be contrasted with his earlier criticism at Lahore on anti-imperialist grounds.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 520.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* Nehru expanded on this point in a letter to Krishna Kripalani in 1939. He acknowledged that: “Violence and monopoly and concentration of wealth in few hands are produced by the present economic structure.” However: “It is not large scale industry that brings any injustice and violence but the misuse of large scale industry by private capitalists and financiers.” In accordance with this analysis Nehru stated: “It is possible, I think, to eliminate the evil and the violence of the big machine by changing the economic structure of capitalism. It is essentially private ownership and the

sufficient village” as “an impossible objective” and called for the “establishment of a socialist order.”⁶⁷ However, Gandhi’s “khadi movement,” whilst it was not a serious “solution of any vital present-day problem,” could serve as “a temporary measure” possibly “for some time to come.”⁶⁸

In the concluding chapter Nehru returned to the classification of his socialist thought. He stated:

As these pages will show, I am very far from being a communist. My roots are still perhaps partly in the nineteenth century, and I have been too much influenced by the humanist liberal tradition to get out of it completely. ... I dislike dogmatism, and the treatment of Karl Marx’s writings or any other books as revealed scripture which cannot be challenged, and the regimentation and heresy hunts which seem to be a feature of modern communism. ... But still I incline more and more towards a communist philosophy.⁶⁹

As always Nehru’s admiration for and tendency towards socialism and communism is qualified and reserved. The autobiography represents a further attempt to place the Indian situation in the context of the wider world situation. It revealed that Nehru accepted the economic interpretation of history in general terms. In particular Marx’s insight was, for Nehru, “due to the scientific method he adopted.”⁷⁰

Early in 1936 Nehru received a letter from Lord Lothian criticising the development of socialism in India. In his reply Nehru acknowledged that Marx’s “interpretation of history is the only one which does explain history to some extent.”⁷¹ Secondly, whilst “a great deal of private initiative may be left” under socialism “nationalization of the means of production seems to be inevitable.”⁷² Finally, Nehru considered that in “theory” it might be possible to “establish Socialism by democratic

acquisitive form of society that encourage a competitive violence.” Nehru to Kripalani, September 29, 1939 in *A Bunch of Old Letters*, 382.

⁶⁷ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 522-523.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 523. The speed of the transition to socialism, and thus the length of time for which these temporary measures would prevail, was mentioned again by Nehru in a letter to Eleanor Rathbone in 1941. Nehru wrote that: “As we grow older, most of us, I suppose believe in the inevitability of gradualness where human progress is concerned.” However, having said that he continued: “You cannot be gradual in putting out a fire that is consuming your house.” Therefore, “the conception of gradualness cannot apply to national freedom.” Nehru to Rathbone, 9 November, 1941 in *Jawaharlal Nehru: An Anthology*, ed., Gopal, 56.

⁶⁹ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 591.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Nehru “A Letter to an Englishman” in *India and the World*, 181.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 182.

means” if “the full democratic process is available.”⁷³ However, in “practice” there “are likely to be very great difficulties, because the opponents of Socialism will reject the democratic method when they see their power threatened.”⁷⁴ This of course raises the question whether Nehru advocated the establishment of socialism by non-democratic or violent means. He tends further toward this more extreme position a little later, “constitutional methods” had “no meaning” if there is no democratic constitution.⁷⁵

It is instructive to compare this analysis with Nehru’s discussion in his autobiography of Tawney’s concerns during the 1930s that it might not even be possible for a Labour government in Britain to gain “real power” in the face of institutional resistance from “the privileged classes.”⁷⁶ Nehru considered that if this is the case in Britain which has “democratic parliamentary institutions” and “a long tradition of civil liberty” the chances of success in India were remote.⁷⁷ The fact that in reality the first post-war Labour government was able to implement much of their programme was probably not lost on Nehru. In 1950 he remarked that: “England is obviously pursuing a socialist policy and has been pursuing it with considerable courage during the last four or five years since the war ended.”⁷⁸ For Nehru, England was not only pursuing socialism; even its capitalism had altered. In a speech in 1956, Nehru observed that “capitalism even in England is different from what it was in the nineteenth century.”⁷⁹ Nehru’s concern for individual freedom, which often conflicted with his socialism, could well be attributable to Tawney. For example, Nehru noted in 1939 that he was “far from being an orthodox Marxist” and claimed that he thought it possible to combine Socialism with “a great deal of freedom for the individual.”⁸⁰

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 183.

⁷⁶ Nehru, *Autobiography*, 422.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 421-422.

⁷⁸ Nehru, “The Middle Way” December 26, 1950 in *Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches*, vol. 3, 15.

⁷⁹ Nehru, “Concept of Long-Term Planning,” January 7, 1956 in *Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches* vol. 3, 78.

⁸⁰ Nehru, “From Lucknow to Tripuri: A Survey of Congress Politics, 1936-1939,” in *The Unity of India*, 117 and 118. Nehru expanded on his belief that it was possible to combine socialism and individualism in a reply to a letter from fellow nationalist Subhas Chandra Bose (1897-1945) pressing him on this point, which to Bose was a contradiction, in April 1936. In his reply Nehru asked: “Am I a

Another important contribution to the development of Nehru's socialist thought was Presidential Address to the Lucknow session of the Indian National Congress in 1936.⁸¹ The address follows Nehru's usual style beginning with an outline of the problem which includes a survey of recent history and the world situation. Nehru saw the world situation as one of crisis and conflict in which "two rival economic and political systems faced each other."⁸² On one side "was the capitalist order which had inevitably developed into vast imperialisms" and which "in its difficulties" had taken to fascism.⁸³ On the other side was "the new socialist order of the U. S. S. R." and the "rising nationalisms of the eastern and other dependent countries."⁸⁴ Nehru declared that the Congress stood, "ranged against fascism and imperialism," and as long as imperialism remained: "The exploitation of our masses will still continue and all the vital social problems that face us will remain unsolved."⁸⁵ Nehru emphasised the importance of his concern with the poverty of the masses and his desire that it should be incorporated within the nationalist movement. He believed that: "The Congress must be not only for the masses, as it claims to be, but of the masses; only then will it really be for the masses."⁸⁶

In presenting his solution Nehru stated: "I am convinced that there is intimate connection between world events, and our national problem is but a part of the world problem of capitalism-imperialism."⁸⁷ Nehru expanded on his current thinking on economic and social matters and clarified much of the earlier vagueness and provided a clear statement of his socialist thought:

socialist or an individualist? Is there a necessary contradiction in the two terms? Are we all such integrated human beings that we can define ourselves precisely in a word or a phrase?" For Nehru the explanation was that he was "temperamentally and by training an individualist" but "intellectually a socialist." In fact Nehru was in favour of socialism not because it would "kill or suppress individuality" but because it would "release innumerable individuals from economic and cultural bondage." Nehru to Bose, April 3, 1939 in *A Bunch of Old Letters*, 350-352.

⁸¹ According to Das, Nehru "declared his socialist faith" in this address. See Das, op. cit., 134. For Pandey, Nehru's address "was a good illustration of his high-flown oratorical style, full of fine principles but carrying little real weight." See, *Nehru*, 193.

⁸² Nehru, "Presidential Address to the 49th Session of the Indian National Congress in Lucknow," April 12-14, 1936 in *India's Independence and Social Revolution*, 22.

⁸³ Ibid., 22-23.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 23.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 24.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 28-29.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 31.

I am convinced that the only key to the solution of the world's problems and of India's problems lies in socialism, and when I use this word I do so not in a vague humanitarian way but in the scientific sense. Socialism is, however, something even more than an economic doctrine; it is a philosophy of life and as such it appeals to me. I see no way of ending the poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism.⁸⁸

Nehru proceeded to detail some of the features of "this new civilization," a "glimpse" of which he had observed in the Soviet Union, including, "the ending of private property," and "rapid industrialization."⁸⁹ However, he noted that although he regarded some developments in the Soviet Union as "a great and fascinating unfolding of a new order" other developments had "pained" him "greatly."⁹⁰ Nehru concluded by expressing a "wish for the advancement of socialism" in Congress and India, whilst accepting that it did not "fit with the present ideology of the Congress" and therefore he would not "force the issue" and "create difficulties" which may hinder the "struggle for independence."⁹¹ Whilst Nehru favoured large-scale industrialization he did not exclude Gandhian village-based development. Even at the height of Nehru's Marxist phase when he was most impressed by the Soviet experiment, and consequently turned more towards large and heavy industry, he still left room for village industries. For example, at Lucknow Nehru stated that he believed "khadi and village industries have a definite place in our present economy."⁹² Nehru also repeated his belief that that "even in imperialist

⁸⁸ Ibid., 32. Nehru's emphasis on the scientific, rather than humanitarian, nature of his conception of socialism follows from his criticism in his autobiography of Gandhi's use of the term socialism discussed above.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 32-33.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 32. Nehru is presumably referring to the "terrible cost" of the violence in the course of this unfolding. Ibid., 23.

⁹¹ Ibid., 33. In 1931 at Karachi the Congress had passed a Resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy. This resolution, amongst other things, promised economic arrangements which would "conform to the principle of justice," state protection of industrial workers' wages and conditions, and reform of the land tenure system. See, 1931 Indian National Congress Resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy, passed at Karachi, as amended by All-India Congress Committee - August 6-8, 1931 in *Nehru*, vol. 1, ed., Norman, 248-251. According to Nehru: "In the Karachi resolution ... [the Congress] took a step, a very short step, in a socialist direction by advocating nationalisation of key industries and services, and various other measures to lessen the burden on the poor and increase it on the rich." However, this "very short step" was indeed only a step for Nehru and it "was not socialism at all," since "a capitalist state could easily accept almost everything contained in that resolution." See, *Autobiography*, 266. More generally the ideology of the Congress was undoubtedly Gandhi's 'muddled humanitarianism.'

⁹² Nehru, "Presidential Address to the 49th Session of the Indian National Congress in Lucknow," April 12-14, 1936 in *India's Independence and Social Revolution*, 33.

England, which throttles us, there are many who do not love imperialism.”⁹³ Nehru repeated this sentiment in a letter to Indira later in 1936: “I must say I like many of their qualities - most of all their restraint.”⁹⁴ In his autobiography Nehru declared:

I do not find any anger against England or the English people. I dislike British imperialism and I resent its imposition on India; I dislike the capitalist system; I dislike exceedingly and resent the way India is exploited by the ruling classes of Britain. But I do not hold England or the English people as a whole responsible for this.⁹⁵

It was Nehru’s opposition to imperialism that necessarily placed him at odds with England. However, Nehru consistently stressed that it was the system and not English people to which he was opposed.

Later in the address Nehru refers to “that monumental and impressive record, the ‘Webbs’ new book on Russia” as a source of his information on recent developments in Russia.⁹⁶ Nehru found in Russia “the essentials of democracy present in far greater degree amongst the masses than anywhere else.”⁹⁷ He seems to hint at the nature of his type of democracy which was essentially economic rather than the purely political type “after the Western pattern.”⁹⁸ Nehru revealed his Webbian influence in a letter to Indira in 1943. Nehru informed Indira:

A week ago Beatrice Webb died at her country house where you and I visited her five years ago. ... How well I remember that visit of ours to Sydney & Beatrice Webb. ... It was a privilege to meet her and I shall long cherish her memory.⁹⁹

Later that month in another letter Nehru revealed the particular influence of the Webbs’ *Soviet Communism*. Nehru told Indira: “I am immersed at present in a careful reading of the 1200 pages of Beatrice & Sydney Webb’s *Soviet Communism*. It is an astonishing

⁹³ Ibid., 47. In Nehru’s Faizpur Address he again distinguishes between the British government and “the mass of the British people” who are “certainly not to be found amongst ‘the ranks of reaction’ in opposition to democracy and freedom. Nehru, “Presidential Address to the 50th Session of the Indian National Congress in Faizpur,” December 27-28, 1936 in *India’s Independence and Social Revolution*, 52.

⁹⁴ Nehru to Indira, 14 December, 1936 in *Freedom’s Daughter*, ed., Gandhi, 303.

⁹⁵ See, *Autobiography*, 418-419.

⁹⁶ Nehru, Presidential Address to the 49th Session of the Indian National Congress in Lucknow, April 12-14, 1936 in *India’s Independence and Social Revolution*, 44. The Webbs’ new book to which Nehru referred was *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation?* (1935).

⁹⁷ Nehru, “Presidential Address to the 49th Session of the Indian National Congress in Lucknow,” April 12-14, 1936 in *India’s Independence and Social Revolution*, 44.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Nehru to Indira 7/8 May 1943, in *Two Alone, Two Together*, ed., Gandhi, 191.

and a wonderful book.”¹⁰⁰ This British influence is important in its own right and also for the glimpse it gives of the nature of Nehru’s socialist thought during the 1930s.

There are a variety of reasons why Nehru turned to Marxism to the extent reflected in his socialist thought at this time. Firstly, he had visited Russia, and been impressed by achievements there, before many of the negative aspects emerged later in the 1930s. His own experience of Russia seemed to have been vindicated by the accounts of others who had visited Russia, most notably the Webbs. Secondly, his frustration with the lack of success of the nationalist movement caused him to explore more radical possibilities. This was reinforced by the policies of the British Labour Party, which had not moved as fast towards obtaining a solution to the Indian situation as Nehru would have liked, and thereby served to sustain British imperialism. Contemporaneously, developments elsewhere in the world, the rise of fascism and the crisis of capitalism, were in stark contrast to the successes that Nehru saw in Russia and socialism. Finally, Nehru’s frustrations with Gandhi and in particular his economic policies, whilst never insurmountable, were at their height.

The work of Harold Laski was another influence on Nehru’s Marxism.¹⁰¹ It has already been demonstrated that Nehru knew Laski and was well versed with his work. In Laski’s critical work, *Communism* (1927), he nevertheless accepted the materialist interpretation of history and the belief that the distribution of political power should be accompanied by the distribution of economic power.¹⁰² Laski’s position altered somewhat during the 1930s. In *The State in Theory and Practice*, Laski adopted a more Marxian analysis which resembled Nehru’s position at that time. According to Laski, capitalism had lasted as long as it had due to rising prosperity but when it was in crisis it

¹⁰⁰ Nehru to Indira, 23 May 1943, in *Two Alone, Two Together*, ed., Gandhi, 206.

¹⁰¹ Laski, like Nehru, has been criticised for holding a somewhat ambivalent Marxist position, as well as dubious socialist credentials in as far as he held a pluralist and democratic persuasion to varying degrees of intensity.

¹⁰² Laski, *Communism*, 90 and 245. Laski also warned of the dangers of violence in the course of what might not in any event be a solution. In fact Nehru may have eventually implicitly accepted many of Laski’s criticisms of communism, for example, with his concerns over violence and with his role for the state in economic development.

“could not afford a liberal policy.”¹⁰³ Therefore, the “owners of property” were reluctant to give up “their legal privileges” which resulted in fascism in some countries and “resistance to social reform in Britain.”¹⁰⁴ A similar view was expressed by Nehru in his letter to Lord Lothian in 1936: “[T]he opponents of Socialism will reject the democratic method when they see their power threatened.”¹⁰⁵ This is comparable with Laski who stated: “As always when the fundamental idea of poverty is threatened, its owners fell into a panic. Political democracy was seen to be the enemy.”¹⁰⁶ Laski proceeded to call for communal ownership of the means of production “to secure the total well-being of a society” as Nehru did at Lucknow and afterward.¹⁰⁷

An important feature of Nehru’s Marxism was its qualified, and ultimately temporary, nature. This can be accounted for in several ways. Firstly, it was always tempered by Nehru’s acceptance of peaceful, non-violent Gandhian methods. Nehru may have accepted the goals of Marxism but he only ever flirted with the violent methods associated with it. This was supported by Nehru’s knowledge of the Soviet experiment which had been to him unacceptably violent. Nehru was also especially attracted to Gandhi’s approach after his visit to the rural Indian villages. This visit had impressed upon Nehru the necessity of making the nationalist movement, which had traditionally been a purely middle class movement, relevant to the masses. Therefore, Gandhi’s identification with the masses had appealed to Nehru. Secondly, Nehru consistently expressed a strong belief in democracy and individual freedom, which was always incongruous with an unrestrained Marxism. This too had been backed by Nehru’s knowledge of the Soviet experiment which, he believed, had suppressed individual freedom and had been overly regimented. Thirdly, Nehru believed that the solution must be suited to the unique conditions existing in India, which European socialism did not address, and consequently it should be of the Indian genius. This feeling also inclined Nehru towards Gandhi who was uniquely a product of India.

¹⁰³ Laski, *The State in Theory and Practice*, 273.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 274 and 275.

¹⁰⁵ See note 74 above.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 274.

Nehru's final history, *The Discovery of India* contains much useful insight to his socialist thought immediately prior to Indian independence. In the introduction, Nehru admits that he has "changed a good deal" and become more "contemplative" since he wrote his autobiography.¹⁰⁸ Nehru begins by surveying recent events, including the development of his own ideas. It was the "desire to experience life through action" and the "desire to discover the past in its relation to the present" that had dominated his thinking.¹⁰⁹ Nehru recalled that Marx and Lenin had "produced a powerful effect" on his mind and the "practical achievements of the Soviet Union" had "advanced human society by a great leap."¹¹⁰ But Nehru declared that he was "too much of an individualist and believer in personal freedom to like overmuch regimentation."¹¹¹ That said whilst he "accepted the fundamentals of the socialist theory" he had "little patience with leftist groups in India" that clung to a "fixed doctrine."¹¹² For Nehru at this time: "A living philosophy must answer the problems of to-day."¹¹³ Having stated his guiding philosophy Nehru was able to embark on his discovery of Indian history. Interestingly, Nehru felt that he was able to do this "almost as an alien critic" since he had come to India "via the West."¹¹⁴

Arriving at the present Nehru discussed his views concerning development and planning. Nehru, in contrast to Gandhi's views, stated his conception of India's development:

I am all for tractors and big machinery, I am convinced that the rapid industrialization of India is essential to relieve the pressure on land, to combat poverty and raise standards of living, for defence and a variety of other purposes.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 328.

¹⁰⁸ Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 10. Judd believed that it "shows a clear moving away from a purely Marxist analysis of social and political problems." See, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, 39.

¹⁰⁹ Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 8-9.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 15.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid., 17.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 37.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 412.

Nehru also claimed that Gandhi's views toward "the use of machinery" had undergone a "gradual change."¹¹⁶ According to Nehru, Gandhi "came to accept the necessity of many kinds of heavy industries and large-scale key industries and public utilities."¹¹⁷ Nehru equated rapid industrialization with the socialist ideal and thus village industries would only be necessary during the transition. However, Nehru observed that the rapidly changing world situation, to which Nehru was always attuned, meant "an attempt to build up a country's economy largely on the basis of cottage and small industries" was "doomed to failure."¹¹⁸ He continued, linking his faith in science with his desire for industrialization: "If technology demands the big machine, as it does to-day in a large measure, then the big machine with all its implications and consequences must be accepted."¹¹⁹ In a crucial passage Nehru reveals an interesting aspect of his conception of socialism:

We are sometimes told that the present Government of India, with its ownership and control of railways, and a growing control of and interference in industry, finance, and indeed, life in general, is moving in a socialist direction. But this is something utterly different from democratic state control, apart from being essentially foreign control. ... This is very far from socialism; indeed, it is absurd to talk of socialism in a country dominated by an alien power. ... Even a complete nationalization (so-called) of industry unaccompanied by political democracy will lead only to a different kind of exploitation, for while industry will belong to the state, the state itself will not belong to the people.¹²⁰

Thus for Nehru imperialism had not only "arrested" the "normal development" of India, which had consequently become "static," it had prevented the development of more progressive forms of society.¹²¹ Significantly, Nehru quoted Tawney in support of this change or choice, which "is not between monopoly and competition, but between monopoly which is irresponsible and private, and a monopoly which is responsible and

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 414.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. Nehru noted that Gandhi qualified his acceptance of the necessity for large and heavy industries by noting that he would want them to be "state owned" and not to "interfere with cottage industries." Despite Nehru's claim Gandhi wrote to Nehru in October 1945 claiming that he stood by "the system of Government envisaged in *Hind Swaraj*." Gandhi to Nehru, 5 October, 1945 in *Nehru*, vol. 2, ed., Norman, 177.

¹¹⁸ Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 414.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 415.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 514-515.

¹²¹ Ibid., 520.

public.”¹²² For Nehru this would entail “the public ownership of the basic and major industries,” “the co-operative or collective control of the land,” and “careful and continuous planning.”¹²³ Nehru’s quotation of Tawney is taken from *The Acquisitive Society*: “The choice before him [the consumer] ... is not between competition and monopoly, but between a monopoly which is irresponsible and private and a monopoly which is responsible and public.”¹²⁴ This influence is interesting for Nehru was, if not always an atheist, passionately secular and the moral and spiritual dimension of Tawney’s socialism would not necessarily have appealed to him. However, Nehru seems to have been influenced by Tawney’s critique of capitalism.

The Development of Nehru’s Socialist Thought 1947-1964

The dual philosopher-statesman nature of Nehru is most poignant at this period in his life. As Prime Minister he was primarily a statesman and even if he had wanted to he had little opportunity to provide a thorough declaration of his socialist thought. It is interesting to note some of the existing assessments of Nehru’s socialist thought at this time. Kagalkar summarises the period, which was dominated by the implementation of the national plans, as “a unique experiment to make socialism democratic.”¹²⁵ The emphasis on the democratic aspect of his socialism is shared by Das who perceived that Nehru’s socialist thought became more cautious, gradual and conciliatory, as well as democratic, as it was tempered by the practicalities and difficulties of implementation.¹²⁶ Mishra also noted that in this period Nehru’s socialism had “mellowed” from that of previous years.¹²⁷ The feeling that Nehru’s socialist thought had been toned down is echoed by Ghose who observed that:

In the fifties and sixties of this century, Nehru’s position as regards Marxism and communism was considerably different from his previous position.

¹²² Ibid., 535. In his autobiography Nehru described Tawney as a “brilliant English writer” when he discusses him in relation to the possibility of India and Indians attaining power gradually via methods of persuasion and through Dominion Status which was the policy the Indian liberals pursued. See, *Autobiography*, 421-422.

¹²³ Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 535-536.

¹²⁴ Tawney, *The Acquisitive Society*, 225.

¹²⁵ Kagalkar, op. cit., 129.

¹²⁶ Das, op. cit., 151-167.

¹²⁷ Mishra, *The Socialist Orientation of Jawaharlal Nehru*, 202.

He had then come to believe that the advances since Marx wrote had made Marxism, in the literal nineteenth-century sense, outdated.¹²⁸

Indeed, as Nanda has observed, Nehru's earlier concern with the construction of a socialist state, in which equality and the problems of distribution would be pre-eminent, was not given formal recognition until 1954 when Parliament passed a Resolution declaring the aim of Indian economic policy as the achievement of a "socialistic pattern of society."¹²⁹ Gopal holds that rather than dwelling on the traditional socialist concern with distributional problems Nehru had by this time come to believe that production was all important and to improve social justice it must first be increased.¹³⁰ Nanda noted that in achieving increased production both public and private sectors would "coexist" in what would effectively be a "mixed economy."¹³¹ In view of these assessments it is instructive to examine more closely the nature of Nehru's mixed economy.

Nehru's preoccupation with statesmanship is reflected in the great majority of his speeches, addresses, broadcasts and statements of the period being devoted to specific issues rather than general principles. However, a survey of these various works does reveal his primary concerns during this period and consequently, indirectly, the general principles of his socialist thought. In his speech on the eve of independence he pledged himself to the "service of India" and to the "ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity" amongst the "millions who suffer" in India.¹³² Nehru advocated the nationalization of the commanding heights of the economy. However, in reality Nehru conceded that it was not practical to use precious resources nationalizing industries that might become obsolete. In a speech in 1947, Nehru warned: "we are on the verge of a new industrial age" and consequently "many of our methods of production will become completely out of date, and what you are thinking of acquiring today may

¹²⁸ Ghose, *Socialism and Communism in India*, 210.

¹²⁹ Nanda, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, 191. For Nanda this was because Nehru concentrated on the implementation of "planned economic development" and was anxious to avoid "indulging in ideological polemics" which would detract from this task. See, *ibid.*, 190-191.

¹³⁰ Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*, 327.

¹³¹ Nanda, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, 190.

¹³² Nehru, "Tryst with Destiny" August 14, 1947 in *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches* vol. 1, 26.

have no value at all.”¹³³ Another specific feature of Nehru’s socialist world view was his concern with poverty and equality. In 1948, Nehru stated that: “Everyone of our three or four hundred million people must have an equal right to the opportunities and blessings that free India has to offer.”¹³⁴ Similarly, in a speech in 1949, Nehru emphasised his concern for the welfare of the Indian people and the “need to raise the standard of the masses.”¹³⁵ In the same speech he identified two competing economic ideologies in the world: capitalism and communism. Nehru declared that he was not “enamoured with ‘isms’” his approach would be “pragmatic,” indeed he declared that “if one thing fails, we will try another.”¹³⁶ For Nehru it was “not a question of theory” but one of “hard fact” and the “method” which “delivers the goods” and “gives satisfaction for the masses will justify itself.”¹³⁷ Finally, for Nehru it was likely that the chosen “method” in India would be “some middle way” between capitalism and communism.¹³⁸

Nehru developed this theme in a speech in 1957 where he contended that, “the whole of the capitalist structure is based on some kind of an acquisitive society.”¹³⁹ Nehru speculated that “the tendency to acquisitiveness” may be “inherent in us” and therefore a “socialist society must try to get rid of this tendency.”¹⁴⁰ Significantly such changes could not be brought about by “sudden law” but required a “long process of training the people.”¹⁴¹ Consequently, Nehru conceded that this “democratic way” of “bringing socialism to India” would “inevitably take time.”¹⁴² In an article in 1958, Nehru accepted aspects of the communist analysis, in particular “the contradictions of capitalist society,” but noted that there were “growing contradictions within the

¹³³ Nehru, “Production, The First Essential,” December 18, 1947, in *Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches* vol. 1, 99.

¹³⁴ Nehru, “The Last Journey,” February 12, 1948, in *Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches* vol. 1, 53.

¹³⁵ Nehru, “To the Business Community” March 4, 1949, in *Jawaharlal Nehru’s Speeches* vol. 1, 141.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 140-141.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 141.

¹³⁹ Nehru, “A Gradual Evolution” 4 January, 1957 in *Jawaharlal Nehru: An Anthology*, ed., Gopal, 315.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid., 315-316.

framework of communism itself.”¹⁴³ Additionally, communism with its “suppression of individual freedom” and violent methods had “tainted” the goal, a “classless society.”¹⁴⁴ For Nehru communism and capitalism were inappropriate for newly independent India. In 1959 Nehru observed that: “[T]he acquisitive society, which is the base of capitalism, is no longer suited to the present age.”¹⁴⁵ Whilst Nehru believed that socialism was “basically a different approach from that of capitalism” he observed that “the wide gap between them tends to lessen” since “many of the ideas of socialism” were “being gradually incorporated even in the capitalist structure.”¹⁴⁶ This economic pragmatism typified Nehru’s later socialist thought.

Conclusion

Nehru advocated a socialist system, defined by economic planning, equality, concern for the welfare of the masses and a large and active public sector. Crucially, this was to be achieved within a democratic framework. In fact Nehru went further, he held that true democracy was not possible without economic democracy. As such this tension drew him towards a middle way which had been pioneered by several British thinkers in their efforts to overcome the same tension. Much of Nehru’s thought can be attributed to British influences either directly or indirectly. Early Fabian influences, especially those from Shaw and the Webbs, remained important throughout his life and were supplemented by the work of Tawney. Nehru’s flirtation with communism, beginning with his trip to Russia, reflected the influence of Laski and later the Webbs. On becoming Indian Prime Minister his economic policy certainly reflected a more moderate balance of these influences rather than that which predominated in the 1930s and immediately before independence.

¹⁴³ Nehru, “The Basic Approach” August 15, 1958 in *Congressmen’s Primer for Socialism*, comp., Malaviya, 192.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Nehru, “India Today and Tomorrow” February 1959 in *Nehru on Socialism*, 118.

¹⁴⁶ Nehru, “The Basic Approach (II)” August 15, 1958 in *Congressmen’s Primer for Socialism* comp., Malaviya, 196.

SECTION FIVE

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this section is to summarise the findings of this thesis. In particular it will outline the very striking similarities as well as noting the differences in the British influences on the political thought of the three figures considered in the thesis. They were all, if not philosopher-statesmen, political thinkers and nationalist leaders who played important, indeed crucial, roles in the foundation of the modern republics of China and India. Further they shared an overwhelming concern with the welfare of the Chinese and Indian people, which was reflected in their socialist thought, and a strong support for democracy reflected in their democratic thought. The evidence of this thesis indicates that Sun, Gandhi and Nehru's political thought was crucially shaped by a British-style education, providing access to a heritage of ideas and practices which could be pressed into service in the construction of their nationalist thought. In sum, this thesis has revealed a distinctive and profound collection of influences which furthers the understanding of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru's thought and constitutes an important consideration in assessing the cogency of that thought.

The sections on nationalism, democracy and socialism examined the nature and extent of the impact of British political thought in China and India as manifested in the work of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. In particular they elaborated the influence of the liberal, conservative and socialist strands of British thought outlined in the introduction. They also explored the sometimes incongruous relationship between the dominant

strands of British liberal, conservative and socialist thought and the political thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru. British influences were a complex mixture of the life and works of British thinkers and statesmen as well as British political practice. However, there were a number of important issues coalescing around land reform, village government, modernisation, democracy and liberty, which often united the three strands of British political thought. In their own life and work Sun, Gandhi and Nehru combined theory and practice, thought and action and this is reflected in the wide range of British influences they drew upon and helps to explain some often surprising uses of the latter. The range of influences included all three strands, if not in equal measure, at least quite evenly. An interesting feature of the relevant liberal sources was the reconciliation of liberalism and nationalism. This aspect was obviously crucial to the three nationalist leaders. Conversely conservatism, at least the conservative sources relevant here, offered a critique of liberalism and many of the developments associated with it in the second half of the nineteenth century. The socialist sources were quite diffuse; some attacked industrialism, others capitalism, others emphasised social reform and some land reform. However, they shared a belief in redistribution, economic equality and thus the incorporation of such sources is more predictable. These numerous and varied influences become more coherent when considered as part of the legacy of British influences as a whole.

Although some profound differences existed between India and China and between Sun, Gandhi and Nehru it is evident that there were a number of similarities in the impact of British political thought. Whilst in many respects imperialism was a negative influence in both India and China it also provided a number of positive influences. Notable examples included the case of British activity in South Africa, both the Boer struggle against the British and Gandhi's struggle against the South African

authorities. It seems that Britain as a dominant imperial power and thriving nation state, provided some inspiration and a model which served as a useful example from which India and China could learn. Britain also provided a rich heritage of political thought and wealth of experience regarding its implementation in practice from which Sun, Gandhi and Nehru could draw in constructing their own political thought. That political thought involved the negotiation between the negative influence of imperialism and the more positive influence from British political thought. Sun, Gandhi and Nehru were complex and often contradictory figures and British influences provide a link between their background and political thought. Nationalism often entailed the rejection of much that was associated with imperialism and for Sun, Gandhi and Nehru nationalism was often the dominant urge. However, there is much evidence to demonstrate that despite this Sun, Gandhi and Nehru drew on many influences associated with British political thought and practice which they regarded as highly relevant to their nationalist aspirations. In each case their political thought was a unique combination of various sources, traditional, foreign, and particularly British, adapted to suit the particular circumstances they faced in China and India. However, it has become apparent in this thesis that although there were numerous British influences, much British political thought was also rejected, and even the thought that was adapted was often employed in quite the opposite manner to that originally intended. Yet the sophisticated and measured incorporation of British influences tends to support a more positive assessment of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru, not only as nationalist leaders but also as political thinkers.

Chapter XII

Conclusion

This chapter summarises the findings of this thesis under the headings of nationalism, democracy and socialism. Each section will compare and contrast the most significant British influences in the cases of China and India as found in the political thought of Sun, Gandhi and Nehru.

Nationalism

It may be expected that there would not be substantial British influence in this area due to the negative influence of imperialism and the dearth of British nationalist thinkers as such. However, there were a number of British influences and several of these linked the Indian and Chinese cases. Amongst these, several of the most notable included the influence of Bertrand Russell on Sun, Gladstone on Gandhi and G. M. Trevelyan on Nehru.

In the Chinese case, an important feature of Sun's nationalist thought which differentiates it from that of Gandhi and Nehru, is that he very early abandoned the possibility of internal reform of the existing regime. In India, Gandhi initially supported reform within the British empire and even though Nehru called for complete independence very early they both stopped short of instigating the violent overthrow of the regime. Thus in this sense their nationalist thought – in so far as it was put into practice – possessed a gradual and non-violent dimension whereas Sun instigated the rather more violent overthrow of the Manchu dynasty. This revolutionary aspect of

Sun's nationalist thought is most likely the result of the peculiar realities of the Chinese situation at that time.

Despite this there were a number of British influences on Sun attributable to British political practice. Although in some respects China was the victim of British imperialism Sun admired British nationalism and the national vigour which had powered Britain's imperialist activities. Sun drew inspiration from the British model of a race-nation or at least his interpretation of Britain as such an entity. It is evident that Sun was familiar with the activities and impact of British imperialism and he mentioned two specific examples from which China could learn. Firstly, and most significantly in the present context, Sun cited Gandhi's non-co-operation campaign in India as an example of the development of Indian nationalism in the face of British imperialism. Secondly, he cited Boer nationalism in South Africa as another worthy example of a virulent struggle of an emerging race nation. Again this is especially significant given Gandhi's involvement in that struggle and as such highlights the interconnectedness of these nationalist struggles. It is necessary to note that Sun did not differentiate between Gandhi's non-violence and the violence of the Boer struggle.

In terms of the influence of specific British thinkers, Sun's nationalist thought also included reference to Bertrand Russell. Sun referred to Russell in his Three Principles lectures and it is evident that at the very least Russell offered Sun an important western endorsement of Chinese civilization, which became a feature of his nationalist thought. A feature of Russell's views on China that is also found in Sun's nationalist thought is the tension between cosmopolitanism and nationalism. Sun's nationalism rejected cosmopolitanism and internationalism and Russell conceded that nationalism could not be avoided in China. The extent of the influence on Sun of Russell's work in and on China has been overlooked and recognition of it brings to light

an important dimension of Sun's nationalist thought. In addition to this influence, there are several further important influences related to the wider activities of British imperialism on China and elsewhere.

In the Indian case there were a greater variety of British influences on Gandhi and Nehru's nationalist thought. Amongst liberal thinkers there was the work of John Seeley, which was an important influence on Gandhi, and G. M. Trevelyan's liberal nationalism, which was a significant influence on Nehru. Whilst they constitute distinct influences there are also several interesting connections between them in so far as they impacted on Gandhi and Nehru's nationalist thought. Firstly, Trevelyan's discussion of Italy and its influence on Nehru can be considered together with the influence of Mazzini's life and work on Gandhi. Secondly, both Seeley and Trevelyan drew a parallel between Britain and Austria in discussing Indian and Italian nationalism respectively. Thus the Italian example, refracted through British sources, constituted an important influence on Sun and Gandhi. Another liberal influence on Gandhi, this time from a statesman, was that of Gladstone and it is an important influence that has been overlooked. Next there were several socialist influences on Nehru's nationalist thought, including those from John Strachey and Harold Laski. As with Sun, the potential for tension between socialist internationalism and nationalism is evident in Nehru's nationalist thought. Nehru reconciled this tension through his emphasis on the anti-imperialism, and the associated pre-war anti-fascism, of the socialist sources he cited. This explains why the influence of this type waned considerably after independence. Finally, conservative influences on Gandhi's nationalist thought included the work of Carlyle and the concept of manliness that Gandhi identified amongst the British and Britain. The influence of manliness, which also straddles several strands of British

political thought, on Gandhi's nationalist thought has also been overlooked and reflects the impact of late-Victorian culture.

Democracy

In contrast to the previous section, in this section one would expect more substantial British influences given that Britain was a pre-eminent example of a developing democracy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Further, the fact that India became the world's largest democracy and Sun, Gandhi and Nehru, all at various times to varying extents, espoused democracy. The range of influences from the various strands of British political thought reflects the sometimes ambiguous nature of the relationship between democracy and liberalism, conservatism and socialism.

In China, there were a variety of British influences on Sun's democratic thought. The only liberal Sun cited was J. S. Mill. However, it was a significant influence, for Sun cited Mill in support of his concept of liberty in his Three Principles lectures. Amongst conservatives, Sun discussed Lord Hugh Cecil's work on liberty and equality and this influence on his thought has been overlooked. It is likely, given Sun's citation of Mill and Cecil's rejection of Mill's definition of liberty, that Sun's democratic thought contained an amalgam of the ideas of Mill and Cecil. In particular both Cecil's denial of absolute equality and Mill's rejection of absolute liberty are found in Sun's thought. In addition Cecil's definition of liberty, which rejected Mill's dismissal of China as a nation beyond the scope of liberty, would have been appealing to Sun. Cecil was the son of Lord Salisbury, who as Prime Minister had interceded on Sun's behalf when he was kidnapped and held in the Chinese Legation in London and eventually secured his release. Whilst it may be attributable to coincidence, it is possible that this connection made Cecil's work more favourable to Sun or at least brought it to his attention. Cecil's positive assessment of China was also shared by Archibald

Colquhoun, another important influence on Sun's democratic thought. Of course Colquhoun was a relatively obscure figure and in this sense Sun shared with Gandhi a propensity to incorporate ideas from sometimes the most unlikely and diverse sources. Finally, there was an important aspect of Sun's democratic thought that drew together liberal, socialist and conservative influences. This was Sun's incorporation of the referendum, a device associated with conservatives, including Cecil, and liberals but rejected by Fabian socialists, with whom Sun was familiar but intensely debated by all three strands at the time. Further, Cecil's advocacy, although not directly cited by Sun, reinforces his influence, since his support was most vociferous in the aftermath of the Lloyd George budget with which Sun was familiar.

In India, British influences on Gandhi and Nehru are remarkable for their quantity and diversity. This is especially true of Gandhi's democratic thought, where influences came from all three strands of British political thought. In the period up to 1914 Gandhi's democratic thought was conceived almost exclusively within the framework of British constitutional practice. After his return to India, Gandhi's democratic thought was overshadowed by his nationalism and dominated by his critique of modern civilization. Liberal influences included those from Seeley and the statesman Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, both of which have been have not been adequately covered elsewhere. In particular Seeley's discussion of the proclamation of 1858 was reflected in Gandhi's early democratic thought. Conservative influences included those from Carlyle, Maine and also significantly Cecil. Carlyle's criticism of parliament - which was shared by Edward Carpenter who was an important socialist influence - contributed an important dimension to Gandhi's critique of modern civilization, which eventually altered the nature of his democratic thought. Gandhi's critique of modern civilization was essentially a critique of modern *British* civilization informed by the

works of British authors and supplemented by his experience. Gandhi cited Maine's work to support his concept of a decentralised village-based democracy. This application of Maine is certainly not what he anticipated but the usurpation of Maine's research for contrary purposes resembles his treatment by British radicals. Most significantly, the influence of Cecil and his definition of liberty, which has been entirely overlooked, constitutes an important dimension to Gandhi's early democratic thought. It is especially relevant here in the context of Cecil's influence on Sun and suggests Cecil's work reached a wider audience and has been more influential than has previously been appreciated.

British influences on Gandhi also included those from political practice and he drew on two important observations of the British experience in his early democratic thought whilst in South Africa. Firstly, at that time Gandhi believed that the Boer war provided an opportunity for Indians to perform the duties which accompany the rights he sought for them in South Africa. Again an interesting comparison can be made with Sun's observations of the Boer war in the context of his nationalist thought although he drew a different lesson from that conflict. Of course one crucial aspect of Gandhi's South African experience was his realization that the inequality he experienced there was not a localized anomaly but a product of a deeper malaise in the political system and the civilization on which it was based. Ironically, the political system that emerged in India following independence bore a greater similarity to that envisaged in Gandhi's early democratic thought, which he had abandoned partly because it had been unattainable. Secondly, Gandhi believed that Indians could draw inspiration from the women's suffrage campaign that he witnessed in London. In so far as this campaign was a non-violent pursuit of rights, it was a significant influence on Gandhi's understanding of democracy and how it could be achieved within a British

constitutional framework. Later, after his return to India, the influence of British political practice was more negative, as Gandhi became increasingly estranged from the British authorities. Consequently, his vision of democracy became more radical and his nationalism more virulent.

In contrast, Nehru's democratic thought was in very large measure a product of two rather contradictory British influences. Firstly, Nehru was significantly influenced by socialists including Laski, R. H. Tawney and the Webbs. These sources led him to constantly stress an economic dimension to democracy and to analyse its development in the west in these terms. Secondly, his deeply rooted conviction in favour of democracy was supplemented, if not formed entirely, by early British liberal influences. Beyond these two important groups of influences it is difficult to identify any other British influences. Nor is it possible to discern any great originality in Nehru's democratic thought. In fact Nehru's originality rested in his statesmanship as Prime Minister of the largest Asian democracy, rather than as a democratic thinker of stature. Somewhat ironically, in view of his emphasis on the economic dimension to democracy, the kind of democracy India became was very much in the British parliamentary mould. In this sense post 1947 Indian democracy deviated from the ideals of both Gandhi and Nehru immediately prior to independence.

Socialism

Sun, Gandhi and Nehru shared numerous concerns associated with socialism and British socialist thought was an important and pervasive influence. The analysis of the socialism section supported this supposition and revealed a wide range of British influences. An important feature worth noting is the fact that Sun and Gandhi's socialist thought was largely non-Marxist, and even Nehru's - where it was influenced by Marx - was formulated via the work of British socialist thinkers.

In contrast to his nationalist thought, Sun's socialist thought was non-violent, gradual and evolutionary. There are two important themes that permeate British influences on Sun's socialist thought. The first of these is the extent Sun emphasised the necessity of developing the Chinese economy with a view to increasing national strength. There were several instances when Sun employed the British example to illustrate the benefits of economic development on Britain's national strength. Ironically, Sun's measure of Britain's national strength was imperial activity not just in China but elsewhere in Asia and particularly in India. However, Sun also recognised that the national strength achieved by the British through economic development had a negative impact on the Indian economy. It is necessary to note that this anti-imperialistic sentiment was more evident later at the time of the Three Principles lectures whilst the former admiration was generally earlier. It is worth comparing Sun's concept of national strength or manliness with that of Gandhi that was examined in the section on his nationalist thought. The most striking difference between the two discussions was that Sun attributed national strength to economic factors whereas Gandhi stressed the importance of moral qualities.

The second crucial and distinctive theme of Sun's socialist thought is connected to the issue of land reform. There were several British influences in this area. Firstly, there was the indirect influence of J. S. Mill via Henry George and his work on the single tax. However, given Mill's stature it is interesting that he did not exert a larger influence. However, this situation is mirrored in his influence on Sun's democratic thought. Secondly, there was the much greater influence of Fabian socialism. It is evident that Fabian influences went beyond the area of land reform. Sun's socialist thought, which avoided class war, envisaged a significant role for the state and was gradual. It resembled Fabian socialism and in so far as it reflected British experience

Sun drew on such socialist developments that he identified in support of his own programme. Further, Sun's method of attaining the goals of his socialist thought resembled the evolutionary, gradual and non-violent permeation associated with Fabian socialism. Finally, in support of land reform Sun drew on the example of the Lloyd George budget which he noted had introduced important reforms of this type in Britain. As well as being an important influence in its own right it also lends support to the potential of influence from Lord Hugh Cecil whose opposition to Lloyd George's reforms was well known.

In India, Gandhi and Nehru's socialist thought reflects two very different strands of British socialist thought. Gandhi's socialist thought possessed several features, which made it such a distinctive and unique blend of ancient and modern, western and eastern, and several of these can be attributed to British sources. Firstly, it was dominated by a strong spiritual and ethical dimension and British Christian influences and theosophist influences are particularly relevant. These included the influence of Ruskin, which was important and extensive, and whose work introduced Gandhi to the Sermon on the Mount. Gandhi's vegetarianism which introduced Gandhi to a circle of vegetarian social reformers and socialists while he was in London. Gandhi's socialist thought, like his democratic thought, included his critique of modern civilization, which was in large part due to the influence of Edward Carpenter. Indeed there are many similarities between Carpenter's action orientated social reformism and Gandhi's socialist thought. Secondly, Gandhi's faith in non-violence led him to reject Marxism and socialism that was associated with violence either directly or via the instruments of the state. This led him to incorporate a novel concept, trusteeship, which attempted to achieve redistribution and equality in a peaceful way. This concept bears significant similarity to the English legal concept of trusteeship and as such was a result of

Gandhi's legal studies in London. Of course it may also have incorporated more traditional systems of land tenure, and in so far as it did, it represents another Indian practice that Gandhi found endorsed in Britain.

In contrast Nehru's socialist thought was rather less original and it resembled inter-war British socialism. It was constructed to solve the problems that Nehru believed had been created and exacerbated by British imperialism and especially the introduction of capitalism. A significant feature of Nehru's case was the fact that he possessed the opportunity to implement his ideas as Prime Minister of India and this gave his later thought an important practical, and ultimately pragmatic, dimension. The most important British influences were Fabian socialism and more specifically the work of Laski and especially his Marxism of the 1930s. Fabian influences included in particular those from the Webbs and G. B. Shaw. The influence of Laski was most evident on Nehru's work during the 1930s when he embraced Marxism, which waned after independence. Nevertheless Laski's pro-Soviet enthusiasm remained a distinct dimension and is reflected in Nehru's persistent use of economic planning as Prime Minister. These influences developed at a time when Nehru's prime concern was nationalism and his anti-imperialism explains much of those he utilised and those he rejected or overlooked entirely. There are further influences that sit rather uncomfortably with those from Fabian socialism and Laski's Marxism. These are the influences of theosophy and the work of R. H. Tawney. Nehru was a distinctly secular thinker and politician and the absence of a spiritual dimension to his socialist thought can be contrasted with Gandhi's. Thus theosophy probably introduced him to Besant's agitation for home rule and, more directly for his socialist thought, her Fabian connections, rather than anything deeper. However, Tawney, who was an important influence on Nehru, whilst being a Fabian, is associated with a Christian socialism more

akin to Gandhi's socialist thought. Finally, Nehru's secular and statist socialism, like Sun's in China but in contrast to Gandhi's socialist thought, advocated the industrial development of India. He possessed a keen interest in science and technology, which had been first aroused whilst a student at Cambridge, and this can be compared with Sun's medical training in Hong Kong.

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