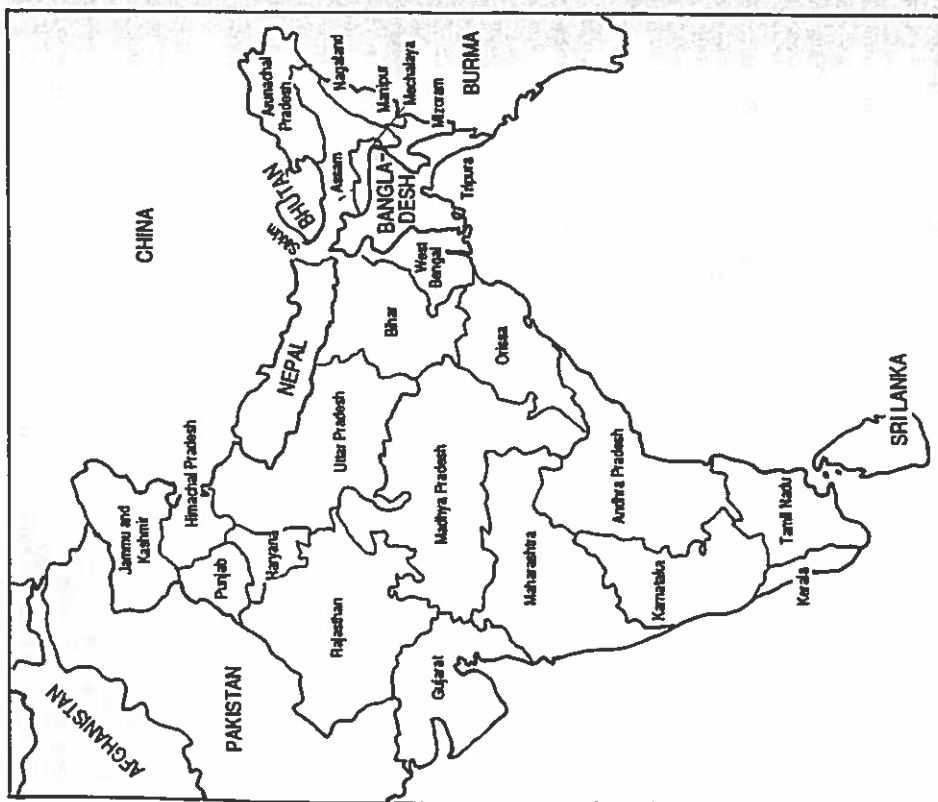


India: Democratic Becoming and Combined Development

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Developing countries are not supposed to offer conducive settings for democratic political systems. India's choice of democracy in a setting of poverty, ethnic diversity, and immense complexity of developmental problems must utterly puzzle any theorist of democratic politics. Anyone can imagine how precarious was the prospect of Indian democracy at the moment of its beginning. Four decades of continuous development of constitutional democratic government in India may then call for two kinds of interpretation. Either democracy in India is a misnomer and the pessimistic expectation did not go wrong, or the theorists of democracy were wrong in writing off the possibility of democracy's compatibility with the most stringent tasks of both economic development and political integration in developing countries.

Before we settle for one or the other interpretation, it would be more appropriate to examine the nature of the last four decades' development of democratic politics in India. This will call for, in the first place, an understanding of some of the basic ideas permeating the nationalist movement. The unfolding of these ideas through organizational practice in preindependence days covers a fairly long period. Indeed, the fact that the national ruling party is now more than a hundred years old may offer some solace to those theorists who worry about immature players taking chances with a sophisticated game like democratic politics in developing countries. For our purpose it is important to consider the inheritance of ideas and institutions that predated the foundation of the new state. We will examine how a set of imported ideas were progressively indigenized to serve large-scale movements and enduring organizations that contributed to the subsequent development of democratic institutions. The second part of our discussion will examine the evolution of the major democratic institutions after independence. This will be followed by an examination of the performance of these institutions with respect to economic development, political participation, and national cohesion. Finally, an attempt will



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be made to analyze the significance of democratic development for India in terms of national and comparative implications.

• HISTORICAL REVIEW •

The Colonial Period

Nationalist fascination with liberal ideas and organized associations began in India by the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The initial stirrings were mainly directed to internal investigation of the working systems of religion, social organization, and education.¹ Colonial domination of the coastal areas had already enforced a new exposure to the ways of the victors. This was, however, a selective exposure. The terms of selection were largely determined by the rules of consolidation of the colonizing power. The imposed constraints may explain why early nationalist liberation in India chose to stay close to moderate reformism.

Modern nationalism in India began with the notion that Indians should reexamine the very foundation of their existing organization of religion, society, and education. The architects of modern reforms believed that grave weaknesses in these organizations had to be overcome before Indians could seriously strive for active opposition to the colonial rulers. Since the problem of nationalism was perceived to be primarily internal, the immediate target of nationalist action was to be their own society and not the foreign rulers'. The emphasis on internal decay was rather unusual for a nationalist ideal and it turned the focus of the reforms to several unspectacular but patient organizational constructions.

Rationalism and Liberalism

Ram Mohun Roy (1772-1833), and the intelligentsia of his generation, felt that the most impressive aspect of the strength of the West lay not in its hardware and firepower, but in its development of rational thought. In fact, Roy welcomed the British rule as a replacement of Moghul rule because it offered an opportunity for the Indians to challenge and reconstruct their superstitious modes of social order in favor of a rational reordering. He had no doubt that such a society should be based on "civil and political liberty."² But he did not leave this transformation to the chance that the colonial rulers might extend their domestic spirit of liberty to liberate the colonized people. Rather, he worked on the assumption that the window on the West would make possible an organized political education, which would enable Indians to recall their original, rational libertarian philosophy. A combination of indigenous

and received principles would thus aid the construction of a politically free and socially transformed order.

Ram Mohun Roy's faith in liberal political education was impressed in a number of modern voluntary associations set up by him and his urban followers in the fields of religious renovation, social reform, and educational modernization. Their constructive initiative was directed toward language reform, legal reform, establishing a vernacular press, defending the freedom of the press, and articulating the rights of women, particularly widows.³ The associational activities spread to different parts of India during the 1860s and 1870s. By this time railroad and telegraph lines had facilitated national communication, and the regional isolation of political consciousness was giving way to an expanding network of public associations concerned with social reform and political protest across the country.

These efforts, however, lacked popular appeal. The liberal appeal to reason and scientific discourse could expand more smoothly only if the pace of introduction of modern education was made faster than what the alien rulers cared for. This pace was dictated by the colonial need for a supply of educated servants of the regime. A unique opportunity for educating the public was missed because the colonial rulers felt educational expansion would threaten their own security.⁴ In fact, the abysmally slow growth rates of literacy and education made it easier for the conservative nationalists to gain support from the less educated public on the basis of traditional symbols of solidarity derived from religion, caste, locality, and speech community.

Nationalist politics in India took a new direction following the extensive armed rebellion of 1857. This revolt was effectively suppressed but it left some deep scars on both the rulers and the ruled. Henceforth, India came directly under Crown rule. Strategies of selective favors and suspicions were now used by the regime to deliberately fragment the national perception of British action along religious lines. While this put a premium on religious solidarity for both the favored and the unfavored alike, it seriously damaged the prospects of rational and liberal national mobilization.

Setbacks for Liberalism

The original appeal of liberal ideas in underdeveloped countries consisted of an admiration for the value of the individual and his reasoned preferences unhindered by traditional ties. It is interesting that the historical timing and fascination with liberal ideas in Japan and India were not very far apart. Paradoxically, it was the perceived threat from the liberal West that moved Japanese nationalism toward preemptive militarist modernism, while the colonial rulers in India positively

weakened the growth of liberalism by an intensified racialist policy. This hastened the development of reactive communalism, whereby each religious community increasingly came to depend on exclusive mobilization to defend its members' interests.⁵

It is easy to argue that the structural features of Indian society could account for the use of traditional symbols for exclusive mobilization in Indian politics of this time. This, however, would ignore the critical role of the political rewards, punishments, and prohibitions used by a newly centralizing effective power—Crown rule in India. For the strategists of Crown rule the need for Indian manpower offered an excellent opportunity to create a loyal base of support for the expanding colonial regime. Discriminatory preference seemed to offer a special dividend for the new rulers in a country where modern education and political consciousness was historically developing in an uneven spacial and ethnic distribution.

The strategy of selective preference deliberately encouraged the formation of particularistic organizations in Indian politics. The military component of this strategy was aided by a racial theory of graded competence—competence judged by loyalty and not by skill or achievement—whereby Sikhs, Rajputs, and Dogras were placed at the top of the scale of preference for recruitment and trust. The economic component of this preference meant a replacement of precolonial notables in the agrarian property structure by intermediaries drawn from groups promising loyalty to the regime. New revenue settlements (from the days of Permanent Settlement in eastern India to other types instituted in the rest of the country) created a rentier class innocent of productive needs but eager to strengthen the order and finance of the regime. The political component demonstrated, for example, a process of actively supporting the Aligarh movement for Muslim reformism against the antireligionism of the Muslim fundamentalists and for Muslim exclusivism against non-Muslims. Similarly, exclusive ethnic politics was actively encouraged. Dravidian sentiments were promoted to drive a wedge between northern and southern Hindus and, at the same time, the less advantaged Hindus in all regions were encouraged to press their claims against their superiors in rank.

By the end of the nineteenth century, it seemed clear that the strategy of colonial security and the scramble for new economic opportunities would leave no chance for the growth of secular liberal nationalism. However, two elements came to the aid of the latter. One was the *ideological affirmation* that modernization necessarily calls for a larger political and economic coalition in order to attain both national advancement and individual enhancement. The other was the *pragmatic assessment* of the benefits of a nationally extended market for enterprise, commodities, and employment. What is more important to

recognize is the linkage between the two. The promise of extended profitability may not melt all segmental coins but it can soften many for a strategic transition. Nationalist ideological affirmation was expected to facilitate such a transition.

Learning by Organizing

Mutual need more than abstract altruism provided the first major springboard for the construction of a national political platform. Thus when the Indian National Congress was created in 1885, it began as a platform of convenience. With various degrees of attachment to liberal principles, political associations that had grown up in the regional isolation of Bengal, Bombay, Madras, and other areas sought to build a coalition. Since the effective political authority in the country was centralized, it was natural to assume that a national bargaining instrument was necessary to augment the power of the constituents. Thus during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Indian Association of Calcutta, the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha, the Madras Mahajana Sabha, the Bombay Presidency Association, and a host of other active associations and individuals helped to form a national political organization that gradually evolved from pleas, petitions, and protest actions to one of the largest and most enduring mass organizations in human history.

During its formative decades, the Indian National Congress performed a number of important functions for democratic political development. It laid the foundation of a national political discourse that facilitated the formulation of political goals and demands in the public arena. It served as a forum for processing conflicting ideas regarding national goals and priorities. Democratic rules of procedure, tolerance of adversaries, and reconciliation of conflicting claims became part of the political education of the participants. From the very inception of the organization the founding leaders were eager to demonstrate their adherence to these democratic norms. Referring to the first phase of the Congress organization one perceptive historian writes that "even though the Congress's democratic procedures were more symbolic than substantive, they indicated a commitment both to representative institutions and to an accommodation of India's pluralism in a future Indian constitution. This commitment was enunciated clearly at the first session of the Congress in 1885, and it remained central in Congress thinking through the drafting of India's constitution after independence in 1947."⁶ The founding leaders were highly successful professionals in their fields who did not have to live off politics. They were also aware of their distance from the Indian masses. In their attempt to speak for the people they recognized that their role was one of preparing the ground for popular self-expression and not one of formulating a corporate national will.

Their basic objective was to create a coherent national forum for representing what they perceived as nationalist interests. They were acutely aware of the social, regional, and religious diversities of the country, and the new organization was visualized as a medium for communication and coordination. That they demonstrated an eager commitment to representative institutions can perhaps be explained by a number of factors. Most of them were trained lawyers who were fascinated by the new legal culture and its linkages with liberal notions. Even those who were not in the new legal profession, including business professionals like Dadabhai Naoroji, appeared to be serious about preparing intellectually defensible cases for Indian representation based on empirical evidence. Thus the careful studies of the nature of Indian underdevelopment by scholars such as Naoroji, Ranade, Gokhale, and R. C. Dutt, using the modes of rational investigation normally employed by recognized intellectuals of the colonial home, set a rigorous standard of liberal discourse.⁷ Few nationalist movements have yielded such a rich diversity of perspectives on the nature of underdevelopment and the sources of national misery. If Naoroji's work anticipated a dependence notion of underdevelopment, the others heavily emphasized the internal roots of mass poverty. No easy explanation was allowed to lend support to facile anticolonialism.

One positive result of these patient empirical investigations was the gradual evolution of a consensual strategy of democratic development during the early phase of Indian nationalism. Ever since Ranade's essay on Indian political economy insisted on separating political liberalism from orthodox notions of *laissez faire*, the nationalist leaders generally agreed about the crucial need for an active intervention of a democratic state for a coordinated development of agriculture, industry, and education.⁸ It is not surprising that the continuity of this consensus has served as a basis for democratic economic planning since independence.

Repression and Radicalization

The turn of the century brought some major changes in the course of nationalism. Although the Congress leaders had succeeded in establishing a viable organ of national representation, the increasing repression and racial arrogance of the colonial regime had made it clear that it was in no mood to listen to voices of dissent or demand. The ruling lords felt secure enough by 1900 that the bureaucratic personnel and the armed forces could be relied upon to deliver the required goods—more revenue squeezed from an already famished country and the use of India as a springboard for mounting expansion of the empire.

If the immediate interests of the colonizer were realized, the long-term prospects of liberal nationalism in India and elsewhere also at the same time suffered a severe setback. The year 1905 marks a turning

point in Asian history. By this time more radical nationalists were ascendant and the old liberal leadership was losing ground in the Congress and the nation. The arrogance and repression of the regime offered a prize incentive to militant nationalism. In the ensuing struggle between brutal imperialism and militant nationalism, whichever gained, liberalism was the loser.

Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 created a new wave of self-confidence all over Asia. This coincided with intensified repression in India and enforced mobilization of Indian resources for British expansionism in Asia. Together these factors strengthened a radical response. Desperation drove the new course of struggle to employ emotional appeals based on highly evocative symbols of solidarity derived from literature, religion, and selective recall of history. Often the intensity of emotional activism erased the distinction between the methods of peaceful resistance and violent adventure. As more people joined the nationalist movement, with the attendant deepening of its social base, the process also paid a high price of creeping cleavage in the nascent nation.

Incentives for Diversion

Radical success using Hindu symbols and recalling the glory of the Hindu heroes mobilized larger numbers but also increased the distance between Hindus and Muslims. Muslim loyalists used this opportunity to carve out a separate road for exclusive religious nationalism. Democratization of the national movement by social deepening through popular mobilization, paradoxically, opened a wide opportunity for attack on both secular mobilization and the principles of democratic politics. The idea of a composite secular nationalism represented by the Congress was challenged from 1906 onward by the exclusive claims to representation based on religious community by the Muslim League and Hindu revivalists. This diversion from the major secular movement for national representation, of course, came in handy for the colonial rulers. Henceforth the political system also actively encouraged a divided system of representation, which reinforced incentives for segmental mobilization on ethnic lines. Beginning in 1909 and in a more elaborate form in 1935, a system of communal representation was introduced by colonial legislation to institutionalize separate electorates for specified ethnic groups.

Besides weakening the national challenge to colonial rule, official encouragement to ethnic solidarity also devalued the case for democratic politics. If the Congress language of democratic politics was embarrassing for some liberals in the administration, the open rejection of democratic politics by the founders of Muslim nationalism must have

been a great relief for the regime as a whole. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had struck the right note equally for the regime and minority religious separatism when he said that a democratic future for India would merely bring Hindu hegemony and oppression.⁹

Exclusive claims to represent a religious community were of course based on the idea that religious communities were homogeneous. The lines of division separating all religious communities in India among caste, language, socioeconomic class and regional groupings could not, however, be easily erased by the leaders' rhetoric. But religious nationalists were not entirely wrong in pointing out the appeal of religion in India. The timing was also appropriate for building separate constituencies in each religious community by intensifying their rivalry for economic opportunities within the colonial regime. The emphasis, however, was entirely on dividing whatever pie the colonial strategists were prepared to concede and not on strengthening the movement for expanding the size of the total pie.

Social Deepening and the Gandhian Phase

Secular nationalists were not unfamiliar with national heterogeneity. Their case for a secular movement seeking to represent people across ethnic boundaries was based on the notion that an individual is not exhaustively identified by his ethnic markers. They were also sensitive to the crosscutting nature of ethnic identities characterizing the Indians: major religious communities are split into many language communities, which in turn are stratified into caste and class formations. Thus Hindi speakers constituted only about a third of the Hindus, while among the Muslims, Bengali and Punjabi speakers outnumbered the Urdu speakers. Given plural identities, the politically interesting affiliations are rarely derivable from social affinities. In fact, an eagerness to utilize one affinity by a political leadership that seeks an easy constituency of popular support may encourage other leaders to exploit the other affinities of the same individual. Thus, for example, the easier course of exclusive Hindu mobilization, by seizing upon the Hindi language loyalty in northern India, created negative political reactions among Hindus who spoke other languages. Similarly, Muslim nationalists' mobilization using the symbols of Urdu language community often left the much larger number of Muslims cold and uncomfortable. Again, religion, language, caste, and other affinities have to compete with the economic affinities developing among people locked into similar stations of both disadvantage and advantage.¹⁰

It was the common cause of the greatest number that the secular nationalist leaders wanted to use as the foundation of national struggle. However, neither the moderate politics of protest nor sporadic radical

movements in regions (as conducted until the end of World War I) had been able to generate mass participation in a common struggle on a nationally significant scale. To be sure, both the moderate and radical styles had helped build an organized arena for nationalist struggles. But it remained for the Gandhian leadership to generate and coordinate mass-based political movements into an effective threat to the colonial adversary.

Probably, the best-known contribution of the Gandhian leadership was to socially deepen the base of the national movement by active incorporation of support from peasantry, labor, and other occupational groups in rural and urban areas. Mass mobilization helped nationalist leaders build a political coalition of social groups to challenge alien rule by peaceful struggle. In doing so, these leaders recognized their mutual differences regarding the future issues of centrality of the state, domain of bureaucracy, role of industrialization, agrarian reorganization, control of production, and pattern of distribution. Gandhi's idealization of peasant production, for example, sharply contrasted with Nehru's idealization of centrally planned industrialism.¹¹ Moreover, significant support existed for more straightforward concepts of capitalist and socialist industrialization. In fact, during the three fateful decades of the ascendancy of Gandhi's leadership, what kept the prominent leaders and groups together was a prudent sense of tolerance of fundamental disagreements rather than any significant agreement on specifics of ideology.

This pragmatic process of inclusion meant that from the second decade of this century the Congress organization increasingly drew sustenance from organized labor, peasantry, trading communities, nationalist business (big and small), students, and professionals. The initial impulse of unionizing labor or organizing peasants and other occupational groups did not always begin under the Congress leadership. However, Congress leaders in different regions gradually either joined the wave or brought the autonomous organizers into a close relationship with the Congress organization. Thus began an inclusionary process of linking mass participation in economic and political action into an institutionalized national organization.

Progressive success in incorporating interest groups called for a delicate task of balancing contradictory interests that was hardly easy for a political organization far from formal power. What made the task more difficult was the frequent need for complex conciliation of the conflicting interests of Indian owners and workers. When both the owners and the workers were aligned with the Congress, the latter could use its influence to mediate in cases of dispute. The joint pursuit of encouraging demands and containing demands by conciliation, in the larger interest of the national movement, helped train a leadership over

decades in the art of managing conflicting interests in both the industrial and the agricultural sectors of the economy.¹²

Authority Formation and Coherence Creation

This transition from an elite-induced forum of protest to an institutionalized organization incorporating a broad spectrum of interests gradually endowed the Gandhian leadership with national authority long before it acquired state power. The readiness of this leadership to accommodate contending ideologies and interests, so long as their advocates were prepared to strengthen the common cause of national struggle and development, was a product of the conviction that consensus regarding national priorities is more important than either exclusive ideology or interest. For Gandhi this was much more than simply a matter of reiterating the primacy of the national collectivity over its smaller constituents. The way of accommodation was a part of his basic philosophy of *satyagraha* ("truth force"), or nonviolent resistance. In other words, this was not merely an issue of strategic prudence. Gandhi's strict philosophy of nonviolent resolution of disputes—where forsaking violence is never allowed to serve as a rationalization for acquiescence or submission to oppression—presupposed a theory of truth. According to this theory all that an advocate can claim for his case is incomplete knowledge. Arenas of contest enable rival advocates of incomplete knowledge to test their positions and to arrive at a new composition based on a creative resolution of dispute.¹³

While Gandhi's fellow Congress leaders were often uncomfortable with his strict adherence to nonviolence, they lost no time in recognizing the pragmatic value of consensus formation. The leaders close to Gandhi could use this consensus for strengthening their control of the growing organization, whereas others could at least hope to thrive on the assurance that dissenters would not be thrown out. Thus Gandhi's emphasis on nonviolence and peaceful resolution of conflict simultaneously served the purpose of generating organizational coherence and offering a novel technique of anticolonial resistance. His choice of targets and his capacity to channel isolated points of popular struggle toward a nationally converging course demonstrated an order of skill far superior to that of his colleagues. In addition, his detachment from office within the Congress not merely helped allocate a relatively smooth distribution of prized positions among his colleagues, but also impressed the importance of separation between power and authority.

Another aspect of the authority formation process actively pursued by Gandhi and his colleagues was the preemptive cooptation of outlying mass movements. This served both as a process of political education and a source of support. When Mohandas Gandhi began his political

career in India in 1915, he had already earned a reputation for his political skill and moral saintliness during his two decades in South Africa. He used this reputation to gradually influence the Congress leadership, as well as to seek an entry into mass movements that were growing outside the Congress initiative. In fact, his successful conversion of local peasants' grievances against landlords in Champaran, Bihar, rural revenue agitation in Kaira, Gujarat, and a major industrial dispute in Ahmedabad into nationally significant resistance movements provided him with unique political capital from 1917 on.¹⁴ These were followed by a succession of moves to enter, redirect, and nationally focus a diverse field of mass action that otherwise might have remained isolated efforts of limited import. Thus he succeeded in linking the national movement and religious demands of Muslim groups in the Khilafat movement, Sikh temple reforms, and Hindu lower-caste temple entry movements.¹⁵ This process extended horizontally to areas that had never tasted an involvement in national movement and vertically to peasants, lower castes, and poor urban workers.

Although most successful in the practice of preemptive cooptation, Gandhi was not alone in its pursuit. Leaders like Nehru, although lacking Gandhi's rural insight, supplemented his moves by inducing the support of more urban-based groups that were fascinated by the Western idioms of socialism and industrial development. These contrasting styles and idioms held together the growing support groups with contradictory future interests and perspectives through a conciliatory system maintained by the Congress through the fateful three decades before independence. This is where the Gandhian transformation of earlier liberalism into a strategy of inclusionary participation, progressively channeled within a frame of rules of peaceful conflict and organized collaboration in and with the Congress, helped build an important historical foundation for future democratic development.

This mass incorporation, however, brought the challenge of providing national incentives sufficient to preserve new elements in an enduring structure of solidarity. While Gandhi appealed to the moral imperative, he also recognized that it calls for unusual dedication and patience. Most of his colleagues had more use for mundane power and interest. Organizational expansion also required attention to the issue of sustenance of different levels of leaders and workers. Increasing access to local governing institutions and legislatures, although strictly limited by colonial needs, opened new doors to Indian aspirants.

From 1919 on politics had to make room for these new temptations. The constitutional reforms of 1909 had conceded limited Indian representation, but the extension of the franchise and the responsibility of the elected members were severely circumscribed. The reforms of 1919 provided for a relatively large measure of responsibility at the local and

provincial levels in subjects such as education, health, and public works that were not "reserved" or deemed crucial for colonial control.¹⁶ However, even these limited concessions were immediately followed by utterly repressive laws known as the Rowlatt Acts of 1919. Growing nationalist resentment against such dubious packaging of reforms eventually led to another round of reforms encoded in the Government of India Act of 1935. While this package conceded an extended electorate based on property qualification to cover about one-sixth of the adult population, it offered no effective concessions for self-government at the center. But it did provide for responsible government in the provinces subject to the discretionary powers of the appointed governors.¹⁷

Although these hedged reforms evoked strong negative reactions from the nationalist leaders, the latter were at the same time reluctant to miss the opportunities offered by the new institutions and their promise of public and private power. Despite initial resistance by the Gandhian leaders to the temptations of limited power, pressures both within and without the Congress made them participate in the limited elections. In 1937 the Congress swept the provincial elections for general seats and formed ministries in seven (eight in 1938) of the eleven provinces.¹⁸ Such electoral success during the preindependence decades helped the Congress organization accumulate valuable experience in constitutional, competitive politics and offered access to office and patronage.

Electoral reforms based on limited franchise were not, however, designed to offer instruction in democratic participation. The communal system of representation fashioned by these reforms put a premium on exclusive ethnic mobilization and collaboration with colonial rulers. The use of religious symbols in opposition to civic culture was now made doubly remunerative by the prospect of prizes for legislative access and colonial collaboration. The latter was made easier because of the bridge between the legislative and the executive arms of government in the British parliamentary system. The corrosive intent and effect of this colonial chemistry was not unanticipated by the Gandhian leadership, which tried to minimize these effects by several means. They scored impressive victories in Hindu as well as Muslim majority provinces and, at the same time, kept up the pace of mass movements in the form of active resistance and civil disobedience campaigns. Besides mass movements, they also extensively built up a network of constructive enterprises in the form of cooperative, small-scale industries and educational institutions and actively encouraged Indian initiative in large-scale industry and commerce. These constructive efforts provided sources of financial support both at individual and organizational levels and of productive engagement for organizational personnel during downswings of political agitation. But the taste of even limited parliamentary and executive access intensified an impatience for formal power. If Gandhi

and a few other leaders could afford patience, most leaders found the decolonizing impulse following World War II to offer an opportune moment to settle for the prize of immediate power—even at the cost of a disastrous partition of the subcontinent.

• EVOLUTION OF THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM •

Political reconstruction in India since 1947 has been remarkable for its consistent and continuous use of constitutional methods for generating national coherence, political stability, and the development of economic resources and political freedom.

The special properties of democracy in developing countries call for an understanding of a complex process of combined political, social, and economic development. Unlike the historically established democracies, which benefited from a sequence of social mobilization and economic development preceding political democratization, democratic systems in developing countries have the unenviable task of simultaneously and rapidly developing the polity, economy, and society. The task gets all the more difficult because public assessment at home and abroad tends to concentrate on a partial development at any point in time without considering the set as a whole. Thus, for example, cursory examination of a slow pace of economic development in isolation may easily mislead one to a negative judgement when, in fact, this might be due to a transitional diversion of resources from efficient performers to underprivileged beginners in order to spread the process of social and political development in a more even manner.

Political Inheritance and Renovation

The initial moments of a new regime can be critical. Ironically, the timing of Indian independence earned largely by nonviolent popular movement coincided with an unusually violent moment in the country's history. The architects of the new state soon realized the complex legacy left in 1947 by the departed rulers. The nation was in disarray. Partition of the subcontinent brought mutual insecurity and suspicion between India and Pakistan. A large part of new India was under princely rule. The most important problems on the agenda of reconstruction were political order and territorial integration. One can imagine the severity of the test these imposed at the moment of Indian independence. It is no wonder that few observers writing in those early years could summon enough faith in democratic development to foresee that the Indian system would survive the test. Fortunately the Indian leadership was aided by three important factors. The peaceful transfer of power made

for a continuity of leadership and institutional structures. A professional bureaucratic system, already manned mostly by Indians, was available for immediate use and required expansion. Above all, the development of the Congress organization into a nationwide political institution, reaching remote corners and incorporating major political segments of the population representing diverse occupational groups, made for a unified exercise of power. Fortunately as well, this power was already endowed with a sense of authority earned in the course of the nationalist movement. Evidently, the partition of the country and the formation of Pakistan appeared to strengthen the legitimation of power in new India by eliminating a major challenge to nationalism and helped establish a new linkage between the Congress party and the Muslim population. But the new leaders did not take their nationalist legitimation for granted. They sought to create a constitutional system that would institutionalize an authoritative democratic system of representation, competition, and exercise of power.

A comfortable Congress majority in the elected Constituent Assembly made for a largely consensual reiteration of some of the basic democratic principles enunciated in the earlier decades. The Constitution of India, operative since 1950, offered a complex coverage of elaborate legal and moral provisions, in the longest document of its kind, to a largely nonliterate people.²⁹ The basic principles enshrined in the justiciable part of the document provide for a parliamentary democratic system of government, fundamental rights, federalism tempered by a preeminent center, and secularism. The nonjusticiable part encodes a series of mild democratic socialist guidelines for the state. While codifying the rules of democratic government, the constitution carefully avoided the Gandhian principles of direct democracy, decentralized authority, and debureaucratization. The Gandhian leaders now needed Gandhi's mantle only for ceremonial legitimation.

In many ways the constitutional text could also be read as a developmental document, for it registered the basic aspirations of the members of a consensual intelligentsia to mold the country according to their tastes and preferences. An idealized blending of Western notions of liberal justice and indigenous notions of self-realization and social welfare had already become a part of nationalist culture that was widely shared by the educated classes. Constitutional encoding of these ideas satisfied their collective pride and reminded them of the social task ahead. Public responsibility was assumed to be mainly one of choosing the right legislators. The rest of the responsibility was now supposed to devolve on the state.

Accordingly, constitutional democracy in independent India cleared the way for an active state appropriate to the realization of simultaneous development on many fronts. A well-knit party, securing majorities in

the national parliament and in a majority of state legislatures, on the basis of elections held every five years, can pursue extensive intervention in the social, economic, and political spheres to generate and direct resources for national development. The power of the government is subject to several limitations. The federal provisions of the constitution, the fundamental rights, judicial review, various statutory commissions and, of course, the legalized opposition may serve as sources of curbs, limits, and warnings. However, these provisions are subject to considerable muting in cases of overriding "public purpose," which can be invoked with fair ease if the government can obtain the required majority support, simple or complex as specified by the constitution.

Besides providing for cabinet-style authority armed with legislative support, the constitution also offers some directions and perspectives for national development. Part four of the constitution spells out the duties of the state, but these articles are not binding on the state. It says that the fundamental principle of governance shall include the duty of the Indian state to promote the welfare of the people by securing "as effectively as it may" a social order in which justice—social, economic, and political—shall inform all the national institutions. A following specification reads like a catalogue of objectives that would be congruent with an ideology of a socialistic welfare state that carefully steers clear of revolutionary socialism.³⁰

What is left out, however, is any sense of priority or urgency among the preferred objectives. The basic law of the country, then, has authorized the state to adopt a course of moderate reforms, but at the same time its amendment procedures ensure that a confident popular mandate can enable a responsible executive to go ahead with more radical reforms. The crucial issue was not what the legal language expressed but rather what the nature of the democratic development in an inexperienced country would make of it.

Democratic Practice and Political Development

Between the first general election held on the basis of universal adult franchise in 1952 to the eighth held in 1984, the Indian electorate has demonstrated a growing capability that was hardly expected in the country and elsewhere. The turnout rate began with the relatively low figure of 45.7 percent in 1952 and moved fairly steadily to a 60.0 percent range in recent elections (see Table 6.1). Many observers had reservations regarding the capacity of largely nonliterate voters to exercise mature choice. In the course of all these elections, Indian voters have proved that they cannot be taken for granted either by the ruling or the opposition parties. At the national level the Congress party has been

generally favored with substantial electoral pluralities, which (because of the single-member-district electoral system) have been translated into large, and sometimes overwhelming, parliamentary majorities (see Table 6.1). But when the same party was found to misuse the basic rules

Table 6.1 Summary Electoral Data: National Parliament and State Assembly Results from Eight Indian Elections, 1952-1985

	1952	1957	1962	1967	1971-72	1977-78	1980	1984-85
Electorate (in millions)	171.7	193.7	216.4	249.0	274.1	320.9	355.6	375.8
Voter turnout (in percent)	46	47	55	61	55	60	57	63
Congress party percentage share of popular vote	45	48	45	41	44	34	43	49
Parliament	42	45	44	40	45	34	—	—
Congress party percentage share of legislative seats	74	75	73	55	68	28	67	79
Parliament	68	65	60	49	60	16	48*	57*
State Assembly								

Sources: Government of India, Press Information Bureau, *Lok Sabha Elections 1984*, pp. 1, 2; Lloyd I. Rudolph and Suzanne H. Rudolph, *In Pursuit of Lakshmi* (University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 130-131; Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., and Stanley A. Kochanek, *India: Government and Politics in a Developing Nation* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1986), p. 302; and others.

* Based on elections held at different times between 1979 and 1983.

* As of 1986; share reduced since the 1987 elections in five states.

of the constitutional system it was served with a crushing defeat in 1977.²¹ The Janata party rule that followed also ended because of the electorate's dissatisfaction in 1980, and the Congress party was brought back to power. Dissatisfaction with the Congress party was seething on the eve of the eighth election when the intervening Punjab crisis and the assassination of the prime minister called for an unambiguous mandate for effective stewardship, and the electorate responded overwhelmingly in 1984. However, the same voters refused to give the Congress party a similar extent of support in the state-level elections that took place only a couple of months later. In fact, over the years, the dominance of the Congress party at the national level has not prevented the persistence of non-Congress parties in power in a number of states. The fragmentation and realignment of national opposition parties often persuaded the voters to try them for ruling at the state level while refusing to support them at the national level. Since independence, and particularly in recent years, the Congress party has usually held a significantly smaller share of state assembly than national parliamentary seats (see Table 6.1).

By May 1987, when after a twenty-month rule the Akali party government was replaced by central rule in Punjab, the party distribution of state-level power was shifting away from the Congress party. Following the state elections in March and June 1987, the ruling party at the center lost control over about half of India's twenty-five states. The victory in Nagaland in November 1987 came as a poor consolation for the Congress. By that time the pattern of opposition party control of the major states revealed this picture: the Communist Party (Marxist) and its allies ruling in Kerala, West Bengal, and Tripura; the Janata party in Karnataka; Assam Gana Parishad in Assam; Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh; All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) in Tamilnadu; Lok Dal in Haryana; and the National Conference in coalition with the Congress party as junior partner in Jammu and Kashmir. As of early 1988 the Congress party did not command a single southern state but it did control the relatively larger states of northern, central, and western India, as well as Orissa in the east.²²

The assured dominance of the Congress party during the first two decades following independence was rudely shaken by the results of the 1967 elections, when about half of the states chose to stay with the opposition parties.²³ When the Congress party split into two organizations in 1969, it was clear that the nationalist mantle was no longer sufficient to hold together a consensual organization for national reconciliation of dominant interests.²⁴ The subsequent realignment of the party signified a victory of the leadership that controlled formal power at the federal level of government. Indira Gandhi, the architect of this Congress party, increasingly transformed the nature of the organization from an institutional mode of accommodation to an electoral instrument beholden to a ruling leadership. The other Congress party, while continuing the older style, slowly disintegrated because of its distance from the state power and patronage. Neither the nature of the new dominance nor the pattern of the party system could ever be the same again.

When the vulnerability of the hegemonic role of the Congress party was demonstrated in the critical interlude between 1967 and 1970, political rivalry could no longer be contained within the old institutional structure of one dominant organization. A cynical game of changing allegiance and party alignment signified a transition toward a new mode of institutionalized party system. The Congress split of 1969 left Indira Gandhi's Congress without a majority and consequently dependent on the Communist Party of India and the regional party of Tamil nationalism, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), to continue in power. The other Congress led by the older organization men frantically sought help from opposition parties. This game of coalition politics put a premium on buying immediate support to stay in power, as against building support to win durable power. Indira Gandhi, as prime minister of the federal

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government, which controlled the strategic points of the economy, and as leader of the larger Congress party, could command larger resources to buy support than her opponents. She confidently went for new elections in 1971 and won the national vote on the basis of a populist rhetoric that enthused the disadvantaged groups without threatening the most advantaged groups in the society and the economy. Her party won a commanding majority in national parliament and in 1972 it won impressive victories in state-level elections. Meanwhile, she won widespread national admiration during the war in 1971 that led to the independence of Bangladesh.²³

All this appeared to restore a pattern of Congress dominance, except that the institutional basis of this new dominance was different. This time the party was less a national institution of interest reconciliation than a central organization for mobilizing endorsement for the leadership and its hierarchical apparatus. Patronage resources at the top made sure that the successively lower echelon leadership was recruited on the basis of loyalty to the apparatus and capacity to cultivate demonstrative support for it. This plebiscitarian transformation left little scope for sustained building of interest-based support or systematic incorporation of diverse interests within the party. It resembled more a state-dominated party lacking an autonomous institutional authority of its own.²⁴ In fact, the old system of the Congress party, which had encouraged regional and local leaders to build sustained social bases of support, was now perceived as a threat to the plebiscitarian organization. The old idea of a party-based state was now transformed into a state-based party.

This shift from relative autonomy of party to its dependence on the state obviously placed a new burden on the state. By emasculating the institutional system of interest incorporation previously performed by the party, it now had to assume the burden directly. By reducing the chief ministers of the states to a band of prime minister's men bereft of secure regional support and power the sites of regional conflict of interest were increasingly transferred to the national state. If the old structure could afford to reduce the intensity of disaffection by distributing its targets in a polycentric arrangement of institutions, the new system proceeded to concentrate the targets in a monocentric space. The conventional distinction between official and public authority was virtually erased. The prime minister's directorate now combined the official authority of the governing system with the public authority of the dominant party system.

Unfortunately for the new leaders, the problems of the early 1970s were too acute in terms of their depth, magnitude, and simultaneous demand on authority to make the new structure work. The refugee trail of the Bangladesh War, severe drought, energy crisis, and economic

failures occurring together offered the most trying test for a newly reorganized authority. As resources were precariously depleted, mounting factional war within the ruling party and public protest against the government rocked the country. The opposition parties were aided by dissident factions within the ruling party and a convergence of nonparty political formations expressing popular disaffection. As the regionally initiated movements of unrest widened, the new ruling authority repressed them as an attack on the nation. This repression further polarized politics into a battle between an increasingly nervous ruling apparatus and an expanding coalition of opposition groups and parties.

Opposition Mobilization and the Emergency

History now presented an opportunity to the opposition that it had never tasted before. As we have seen, the single-member plurality system of electoral representation had discounted the electoral prospects of fragmented opposition parties. Extraelectoral politics of agitation now offered an incentive for these parties to mobilize popular discontent, form a coalition among them, and widen the scope of the coalition by inducting into it popular action groups from many regions, most notably Bihar and Gujarat.²⁵ The latter regions, in particular, could make use of the national prestige of leaders like Morarji Desai and especially Jayaprakash Narayan, whose Gandhian socialist credentials and continued ability to stay away from the small-time clash of economic and ethnic interests had won wide admiration. These ideologically diverse leadership resources helped forge a national unity of discontent although, inevitably, the nature of the coalition left a potential for rift. The goal of this national movement, as expressed in particular by Narayan, was to organize a popular initiative to replace a ruling leadership that was widely perceived as socially oppressive and politically authoritarian.²⁶

While the pressure of the popular movements kept growing, the legal standing and the political stature of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi suffered a severe setback because of a conjunction of two critical events. Her own election of 1971 was invalidated in June 1975 by a high court decision on a case of electoral malpractice lodged by her socialist opponent.²⁷ Besides losing office, this conviction also entailed debarment from elected office for six years. The Supreme Court, however, awarded a conditional stay of the judgement that temporarily allowed her to retain office, without the right to vote or participate in the proceedings of Parliament, pending consideration of a full-scale appeal. Meanwhile, a coalition of opposition parties in Gujarat scored a decisive victory in the state elections in the same month. Her spirited campaign in the state was of no help to the sagging Congress party in the face of the widespread popular movement against her rule.

Indira Gandhi had a comfortable majority in Parliament. Her cabinet included several leaders of national stature and fairly impressive political and administrative record. She could wait for the conclusion of the legal proceedings and, meanwhile, let another leader of her party exercise formal power without much reasonable fear of losing long-term grounds. Ever since the Congress split, her faction-ridden colleagues had owed their political stature considerably to her populist appeal. However, she did not have confidence in a patiently drawn institutional strategy to utilize her populist appeal in a manner that would strengthen both her party and her democratic authority. Instead, she opted for a system of extraordinary powers by invoking the internal emergency provisions of the constitution.

The Indian constitutional system was designed to serve the country in normal and crisis situations. It was assumed during the making of the constitution that internal and external stresses faced by a newly developing country would require certain temporary deviations from normal procedures to tide the system over a crisis. Thus a complex set of emergency provisions permit comprehensive or partial use of special executive powers, depending on the specific situation.³⁶ External aggression or grave internal political disturbance permit comprehensive use, while political crises confined to state levels or financial crisis on a national level may warrant limited use of these abnormal provisions. Many of these provisions have been frequently used before and after Indira Gandhi's emergency phase. In fact, the possibilities of a constitutional dictatorship utilizing these provisions were discussed in the constitutional literature on India from the very beginning.³⁷ But until June 1975, the actual pattern of use of the enabling powers did not entail systematic subversion of constitutional, democratic government on a national scale. This is the crucial point that should help us distinguish between the use of specific emergency powers and an emergency regime that deliberately seeks a transformation of the basic democratic structure into an authoritarian mode of government.³⁸

Indira Gandhi's choice of the emergency option was based on her claim that there was a deep conspiracy to destroy civil order and economic development processes in the country.³⁹ The equation between her own political crisis and national crisis was hardly convincing. In order to register her point she set out to dismantle the democratic system of persuasion and replace it with an authoritarian mode of creating and enforcing public assent. Thus the emergency episode was marked by mass arrests, suppression of civil rights and all opposition voices, elaborate censorship of the media, and a carefully orchestrated campaign to celebrate the virtues of collective discipline promoted by the leader, her son Sanjay, and their nominees. A meek majority in Parliament endorsed the executive orders issued by the prime minister's inner court and the judicial system was emasculated by amending the

constitution. These amendments also ensured the supremacy of the prime minister's role, thus formalizing a system that, as we have discussed, was already in process since 1971.⁴⁰

Much was made of the logic of disciplined economic development, which presumably called for a strong state to guide the economy to serve the nation and especially the poor masses. With all the fanfare surrounding the new regime's twenty-point program—later collapsed into five points—this strong state failed to deliver a rate of progress strikingly different from previous or subsequent regimes.⁴¹ Some of the early gains in grain production were due more to climatic favor than organizational changes. Extensive labor repression and the favor shown to terms of discipline dictated by employers helped register some gains in industrial production, but the overall process of economic development served the rich better than the poor. In any event the populist appeal increasingly wore off as the regime stepped into its second year. By early 1977 Indira Gandhi was confident that her party could get a fresh mandate by appealing once again to the people through parliamentary elections.

Emergency measures were relaxed before the elections. The opposition parties accomplished a rare measure of unity in the form of the Janata party, based on the alliance brought about in the course of the Bihar and Gujarat movements. The March 1977 elections turned out to be a landmark event in the history of India's democratic becoming.⁴² The Janata party and its allies won an overwhelming victory over Indira Gandhi's Congress party. That the Janata government did not endure beyond two years does not diminish the fact that the party system in India revealed a valuable reserve capacity to mobilize the political resources to replace the dominant system by a more competitive one in a time of democratic crisis.⁴³ This interesting case of institutional latency may reflect a deeper civic disposition to support a democratic system than what the manifest level of party competition would suggest.

Sources of Popular Mobilization

Political space in India has not been exhausted by the nationally or regionally organized parties or even interest groups of the conventional kind. At many critical moments of Indian politics, when these conventional formations failed to articulate popular grievances, the latter found their expression in relatively durable coalitions of public groups. Popularly known as "movements" in Indian politics, these serve as mobilizing platforms bringing together various parties, groups, and concerned publics.⁴⁴ These issue-oriented civic movements need to be distinguished from conventional social movements like labor, peasant, or student movements. While the latter represent persistent political

formations organized for long-term interests of occupational or class groups, the short-term civic movements focus primarily on citizenship roles cutting across social groups.

Besides political parties, a wide variety of voluntary associations have offered durable organized vehicles for expressing popular interests and objectives. Industrial labor, organized in nationally extensive trade unions, and peasant associations have remained close to political parties.³⁹ The traditional dominance of the ruling, as well as the opposition, parties over these organized interests have been increasingly challenged by new leadership groups putting higher emphasis on economic issues, but their success has usually been limited to regional scales. Strong national combinations of industrial workers, white-collar employees and agrarian groups have provided Indian parties with bases of continuous support and stable manpower. Larger student associations have usually aligned themselves with political parties. Business associations have been more prominent in large-scale industry.⁴⁰ Their quiet pressures are usually more effective than many unquiet public agitations.

However, organizing rural peasants and workers, despite a long history predating independence, has not proved to be easy. Although the incidence of poverty is highest among agricultural labor and marginal income groups, including tenants and smallholder peasants, their mobilization into organized associations has been hampered by wide variations in agrarian property systems, ecological contexts, social authority patterns (mainly exemplified in caste systems), technological diffusions, and policy approaches.⁴¹ Thus radical mobilization, although initially successful in the 1960s in a few southern districts in Tamilnadu and Kerala under the auspices of two Communist parties, gradually veered toward a wider, multiclass agrarian coalition, which lent an important base of support for the parliamentary radicalism of the dominant Communist party, the Communist Party (Marxist), or CPM. The frequent induction of the Communist parties into power at the state level in Kerala and, more durably, in West Bengal can be understood in terms of their ability to forge a still wider coalition between urban and rural groups with varied class interests.⁴² The gains of democratic incorporation, not surprisingly, have also been the loss of rural and urban radical espousal of exclusive causes of the most deprived classes.⁴³ Access to democratic power, as it were, has served to highlight the compulsion for inclusive combination rather than exclusive mobilization of particular classes. Moreover, this same broadband combination has encouraged shifting reformist coalitions between middle- and lower-caste formations in north Indian states, whereby status-based mobilization has gained precedence over class-based mobilization.

Ethnic Affirmation

Representation or even politicized mobilization of functional interests occupies only part of the politics of participation in contemporary India. The right of association and its active pursuit has given rise to another system of pressures that often cuts across class or functional stations in the society. These associations succeed in recruiting intense loyalty of large segments of the population by seeking to promote exclusive interests based on language, religion, region, caste, and other cultural or ascriptive affiliations. Most observers have interpreted these forms of participation as expressions of primordial loyalty inconsistent with modern democratic politics. A developmental view of this participation may, however, offer a different picture. These are deliberately created political instruments of mobilization that freely utilize the logic of ethnic exclusiveness in order to bargain for certain advantages. How the symbols of ethnicity, to take one example, are used with strategic flexibility for competitive political advantage can be clearly seen in the Assamese movement that hit the headlines in the early 1980s.

Assam is one of the poorer states of eastern India, but it is also endowed with rich resources like oil, tea, and timber. Revenue from these resources, however, largely flows to other parts of India, including the central government. A keen sense of unjust deprivation of the Assamese people was initially enunciated by an Assamese literary association.⁴⁴ Poets, novelists, and musicians helped direct the resentment to the non-Assamese people and gradually articulated a notion of Assamese authenticity. College students sharpened the edge of the movement to the extent that it cut deep into the security and livelihood of the non-Assamese population in the state. Elected governments in Assam made use of the movement but increasingly failed to contain it.⁴⁵ The national government initially ignored it, and subsequently wanted to teach it a lesson by using the instruments of coercion, manipulation, and election. The forcing of an election in 1983 led to the eruption of mass violence of unprecedented proportion.⁴⁶ The massive scale of violence unnerved both the movement and the government. The internal contradictions of the movement were now more clearly exposed. Earlier Assamese authenticity had meant a language-based unity that was supposed to be shared by Hindu and Muslim members of the same speech community. Later the movement sought to rewrite the scope of Assameseness to exclude a substantial number of Muslim speakers of the language on the grounds that they were illegal immigrants from neighboring Bangladesh. Non-Hindi speakers drifted away from the movement and, after 1983, could be used by the elected government to its advantage. The convergence of an adroit leadership in state government and a more compelling national administration under Rajiv Gandhi facilitated a

negotiated settlement in 1985.⁴⁷ The movement leaders also decided to convert themselves into a political party and to participate in the electoral process.

Clearly, the emergence of the Assamese movement and regional language movements in other parts of India including Punjab could have been avoided if the dominant party in the state and the nation had not written them off initially as irritants and, subsequently, as destructive. What is more important for our purpose is the lesson that an electoral mandate can mislead people in power to discount important sensitivities regarding issues of conspicuous disadvantage that, in the Indian case, have encouraged new political formations. The latter often began as small-scale associations outside the frame of conventional politics. These eventually widened into a mass base and led to large-scale associations, which grew stronger by increasingly establishing themselves as speakers for popular issues omitted from the agenda of normal democratic government. The expansion of popular participation encouraged by these populist ethnic movements could be consistent with democratic incorporation—as they had been in the course of two decades in most regions in India—if the inclusionary instincts of the dominant formal authority were not overcome in the early decades by Caesarist complicity. That the process of democratic inclusion need not be confused with incorporation in the dominant Congress party has been amply demonstrated in Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, and elsewhere. The cases of the Tamil and Andhra movements also show how the displacement of Congress rule has enabled the democratic system to expand to incorporate new groups at the state level and also how the newly incorporated groups can be coordinated at the national level.⁴⁸

When leaders like Nehru condemned their rivals as threats to modernity, democracy, and integration, they ignored the importance of progressive socialization of new forces to expand the political resources of a developing democracy. While they took roles ranging from disciplining schoolmasters to colonial policemen, they often lacked the political art of using a receptive state in a developing country to offer assurance to the new competition that it too is equally entitled to access and power. When the persistent hearing problems of these leaders were corrected by the shock treatment of violence, they discovered that accommodation helped to induct new groups with democratic schooling into the competition. The lessons of the 1960s in the Nehru phase were again ignored in the later years of the Indira phase when manipulative craft increasingly replaced the art of cultivating political support. Indira Gandhi's failure was dramatized by the fires that engulfed Assam in 1983 and Punjab in 1984. When her successor, Rajiv Gandhi, succeeded in bringing about workable accords in Punjab and Assam in 1985, it became evident once again that democratic institutions and behavior

may be necessary to develop and manage a nation of India's size and complexity. However, the new prime minister has demonstrated greater skill in generating accords than in making them work, particularly in the case of Punjab as of early 1988.

• DEMOCRACY, PLANNING, AND DEVELOPMENT •

Strategy and Organization

Political democratization, in order to endure, requires a rapid development of economic and social resources so that expanding public demands can be effectively satisfied. But can a democracy in a developing country succeed in generating the required rate of development in a sustainable fashion? This is a question that should be distinguished from one that concerns ideal or spectacular rates of development. The difference in phrasing the question obviously stems from a difference in basic values. A concern for an ideal rate can ignore the issues of how it is brought about and with what cost to freedom, stability, and national autonomy. Those who cannot afford to ignore these issues may, however, opt for an optimum rate consistent with other valued accomplishments. But, it is not necessary to assume that such an optimum cannot approximate or even surpass the maximum attained elsewhere. The linkage problem simply reminds us that the crucial issues to consider with respect to comparative economic development are not, after all, simply economic.

The idea of democratically planned development was pursued by the nationalist leaders long before independence. Gandhian strictures on nationalization, large-scale industrialization, and bureaucratic management of development did not prevent the emergence of a wide area of agreement among other leaders regarding the importance of centrally coordinated planning for rapid industrialization. In 1938 Subhas Chandra Bose, the only major leader in Congress history who openly admired fascist discipline, became the president of the Congress and Nehru became the chairman of the party's national planning committee. Immediately after independence the Congress, as the ruling party, appointed an advisory planning board. As the first prime minister, Nehru initiated the Planning Commission and became its first chairman; he encouraged a process of thinking that assumed that economic development was a matter of scientific problem solving.⁴⁹ Nehru's admiration for scientism was not shared by his party men.

How has planned development fared? The country experienced seven five-year and three one-year plans. During this period the economy registered a fairly steady, although unspectacular, rate of growth, experienced a partial renovation of agricultural production leading to self-sufficiency in food, developed a structure of industrialization that

produces most of what the country needs, expanded the supply of educated and technical personnel able to execute all levels of sophisticated tasks, consistently held down the level of inflation to one of the lowest in the world, and in the process ensured a level of self-reliance and payment ability that kept it away from debt crisis. At the same time disturbing poverty persists, inequality hurts, technology languishes, the second economy thrives, and a number of shadows haunt the economic scene. And yet the popular report cards on the new government leadership in 1985, based on national polls, showed overall public confidence to be higher than expected.³⁰ But the polls can be misleading and confidence can erode. For a long-range perspective, it is more important to look at how development has prepared the required base for rapid enhancement of the people's capabilities to solve their problems. This will entail a wider view of development than the one that narrowly concentrates on material product alone.

The notion of people's capabilities, when applied to India, necessarily directs one to the rural situation. This is where the weight of decades of agricultural stagnation and technological obsolescence had dragged the largest segment of the nation's population to poverty and human incapacity. The most urgent task was to ensure a priority for rural development over everything else. Such a priority would have called for extensive intervention in the agrarian property structure in the form of land reform followed by investment in productive support, technological change, and improvement in human resources. And yet this is where the record of development has been discouraging. Land reform, initiated immediately after independence, still remains largely unrealized in terms of its redistributive goals. As late as 1984 Planning Commission documents giving an advance taste of the seventh five-year plan kept reminding the policy makers that a good part of the redistributive work of land reforms remains to be accomplished.³¹ Drastic intervention in the rural property structure was, in fact, consciously avoided by leaving the reforms to the discretion of state-level legislation. The slow pace of land reform demonstrated a preference for a strategy of promoting production by offering financial and technical support to the relatively better-off segments of the rural population. The proportion of plan investment—implying mostly public investment—directed toward agriculture declined from the first through the second and third plans, the end period of which was accompanied by a severe crisis resulting from extensive drought.³²

During this period public investment through planning was based on a preferred strategy of industrialization that encouraged considerably higher investment for developing organized industries, mining, power, and communications. A socialistic rhetoric was employed mainly to equate social progress with capital goods production under state control.³³ Scarce national resources were increasingly diverted to pursue import

substitution under the leadership of the state. The use of foreign aid increased from a modest 10 percent of the first plan outlay to 28 percent in the third plan. At the same time the increasing self-empowerment of the national-level state through its expanding control of capital, strategic industries, power generation, communication networks, and employment created an impression that the ascendancy of state capitalism was irresistible. Command over national, as well as external, resources and the apparatus of planned control of investment and enterprise by now had endowed the state with a degree of power that could be used to induce collaboration from larger private owners of resources in industry and agriculture. Indeed the prospect of such a collaboration could minimize the dependence of the ruling party on the poorer rural groups. Actually, as the ruling party's pursuit of industrialization strategy progressively intensified, its pursuit of the art of cultivation of mass support and its conciliatory coordination declined. A tired generation of Congress leaders appeared now to rely more on the formal instrument of the state, its tightly organized bureaucracy, its patronage powers, and its capacity to subsidize inefficient enterprise in order to consolidate and enjoy its power.

This was largely what one may call the Nehru phase of planned development. During his lifetime Nehru's influence welded the Congress party to a level of coherence sufficient to maintain a semblance of united pursuit of planned development. Nehru's death in 1964 was followed by Shastri's conciliatory style of coordination of major factions and regions. If his capacity for consensus generation ensured a stable transition in politics, the new phase simply succeeded in maintaining the earlier developmental policy frame. No major departures were expected either. The consensus style, however, increasingly emboldened the chief ministers at the state level to assert their role in national policy implementation. A process of regionalization of authority was already developing even during the Nehru phase, and during Shastri's brief tenure it grew stronger. The strength of the chief ministers of states within the party was dramatically revealed when, following Shastri's death in 1966, they helped elect Indira Gandhi as the third prime minister over the candidate of Congress organization leaders at the national level.

Indira Gandhi's style was inconsistent with a federalized system of authority within the party, but in 1966 consolidation was more important for her than anything else. The years 1966–1967 brought a severe crisis to the economy and the polity. Disastrous drought, legacies of wars with neighbors, economic debacle, and a close call in the 1967 elections appeared to offer the Congress party an impetus for rethinking. However, although five-year planning was temporarily dropped, no radical reorganization of the premises of planning came about. The only major innovation was intensive modernization of agriculture with

stepped-up investment for selected crops and regions aimed at national self-sufficiency in foodgrain production.⁵⁴ Again, the major goal was immediate production promotion and not the wider objectives of raising the long-term capability of the rural poor who composed the majority of the country. Neither the subsequent consolidation of Indira Gandhi's power from 1971, including the phase of emergency, nor her recovery of the popular mandate in 1980 following a non-Congress interlude were used as occasions to question the earlier priorities. The Janata party rule, meanwhile, did raise some questions but its brevity of tenure weakened the effectiveness of its revision of priorities.

Human Base and Food Security

Indian planning began in a social context where nearly 85 percent of the population was rural, the national literacy rate was 12 percent, the majority of school-age children did not attend school, and for most people life was ruled by poverty, oppression, and morbidity. The state of the economy was equally dismal. Orderly management of the colonial economy during the five decades preceding 1950 had registered less than half-a-percent growth rate of per capita real output. Perhaps the only points of relief for the people were that life expectancy was short and the mortality rate was exceedingly high.⁵⁵ Clearly, something more than modest economic development was called for to make even a small step to alter such a nonhuman level of existence.

How does the record of democratic development stand as a response to that challenge? From the moment of independence in 1947 through the subsequent four decades, the people have lent an unexpectedly mature degree of support to the democratic process of economic development. What has this process yielded in terms of altering their level of living? How does it compare with the record of other developing countries following similar or different roads to development? Some basic indicators, despite their imperfection, can be revealing. Expectation of life at birth around 1940 was 32.1 years for Indian males and 31.4 years for females, and on the eve of planned development, around 1949, remained at 32.4 and 31.7 respectively. During the years of development, these figures rose to 41.9 and 40.6 in 1960, 46.4 and 44.7 in 1970, and 50.9 and 50.0 in 1980. A recent report puts the corresponding figures for 1985 at 57 and 56. By historical standards this rapid progress can be counted as encouraging. But by comparative contemporary standards, India's performance leaves room for considerable improvement because many other developing countries have done so much better during the same period. Sri Lanka, largely following a democratic path, succeeded in reaching respective figures of 68 and 72 by 1985, and China, following another path, scored 68 and 70. China's

score is particularly interesting because twenty-five years earlier its base figures (41, 44) were close to India's and substantially lower than those for Sri Lanka (62, 62).⁵⁶

Similarly, the mortality rate for infants (under age one) was 165 per thousand live births in 1960 for both India and China. By 1985 China had reduced the rate to 35 and Sri Lanka to 36, while India's rate was 89.⁵⁷ Sri Lanka's success dramatically showed that it does not take either a violent revolution or a high national income to bring about an unprecedented rate of improvement of human resources. India's average, of course, conceals the fact that within the same country there have been different rates of progress in different states. In Kerala both the life expectancy and infant mortality rates have registered improvements comparable to China's.

Food security, in the sense of general availability and the assurance of access to the stock of foodgrains, has been the most important issue facing the people. Indian planning began with the inherited base of production yielding barely fifty million tons. Production of foodgrains steadily rose until the crisis years of 1966-1967, when lower growth necessitated a sharp increase in imports, which in 1966 constituted 14.4 percent of total quantity available.⁵⁸ The drop in production and drag of foreign dependence pushed the state to begin a renewed effort to modernize agriculture, resulting in a big change on the food front. Production of foodgrains crossed the 100 million ton mark from 1971 and imports steadily declined. Dependence on imported food ended in 1978. In the subsequent three years, no food imports were needed. From 1980 to 1984 a small amount was imported mainly to augment the buffer stock. Production of foodgrains exceeded 150 million tons in 1983-1984—a big jump over the earlier peak of 133 million tons in 1981-1982. Net import of food from 1985 to 1987 was negative, and yet the size of the reserve stock of the state remained comfortable except for 1987 which turned out to be the worst year of drought since Independence. But the ability of the economy to cope with the drought was demonstrated by the fact that unlike the previous drought years of 1965 and 1979, this time the rate of growth of the national product was positive. Indeed, the capacity of the food security system and the general economy to resolutely tide over the crisis that usually accompanies droughts of this magnitude was a new experience for the country.⁵⁹

Success in generating self-sufficiency in foodgrains was accompanied by extensive state action to ensure that demands from the deficit states of the federation were met by transferring the surplus stock of other states in a coordinated manner. The role of the federal government in procurement and public distribution of foodgrains can be crucial for ensuring food security. In the absence of it, there would be no assurance that nationally available food will actually reach the neediest regions and groups. The magnitude of state involvement in procurement and

distribution is indicated by the fact that from the mid-1960s, on an average, close to 10 percent of foodgrains has been annually procured and distributed.⁴⁰ This has enabled the state to maintain price levels consistent with general planning needs and, at the same time, reasonable access for needy areas. And yet public ability to transfer food to deficit regions does not assure access to it at the lowest income levels in rural areas. This is a weakness that production promotion policies, without the benefit of deeper structural reorganization, will find hard to overcome.

A recent World Bank report on sub-Saharan Africa justifies optimism for Africa from the fact that, while contemporary despair about Africa was matched by a comparable feeling about India just two decades ago, the latter now "has emerged from despair to hope in the eyes of the world."⁴¹ The elimination of famines in India since independence contrasts not merely with their catastrophic recurrence during the colonial years, but also with revolutionary China, where severe famine conditions claimed fifteen million lives during 1959-1961.⁴² The experience of democratic planning has demonstrated that democratic instruments can be made to deliver impressive results by a mutual reinforcement of popular voice and prudent policy. But that experience also shows that the reactive type of prudence, as distinguished from anticipatory prudence, can extract a heavy price from the country and especially from the poorer population before a crisis shakes the policy planners.

Thus innovations on the food front should be judged also in the context of the fact that the per capita availability of food has registered only modest progress and that the actual access of the poorer people still remains lower than in many developing countries. The daily calorie supply per capita as a percentage of requirement for India in 1981 stood at 86, while the weighted average of thirty-four lowest income developing countries was 97. The corresponding figure for China was 107, Burma 113, and Sri Lanka 102. If the national average figures are disaggregated by income groups, lower-income groups in India will show worse scores than their counterparts in those three countries.

Nutritional deprivation in India does not stand alone. Progress in providing mass education has been discouraging despite tremendous strides at the higher and technical education levels. The adult literacy rate in India in the eighties has been less than 40 percent. In contrast, the developing countries of East Asia have exceeded 70 percent. The average rate for sub-Saharan Africa in 1970 was lower than that of India in the same period. Now India's rate lags behind that average. Primary school enrollment figures tell us an unexciting story.⁴³ If the premise of industrial priority explains the uneven emphasis on higher education and gross neglect of rural education at lower levels, it is difficult to imagine how comprehensive industrialization can be compatible with

poor quality of labor. Fortunately, this disparity in educational investment was reduced by the end of the 1970s, indicating a better sense of balance among levels of schooling. India's earlier failure to coordinate these components may deprive her industrialization of critical pace and depth. If the human base is left weak, what will be the impact of such weakness on overall economic and political development? We need to examine the pattern of industrialization before we can seek answers to this question.

Induced Industrialization

The dominant intellectual climate in the 1950s could leave no doubt in the minds of any forward-looking leader of a developing country about the virtues of state-induced industrialization.⁴⁴ Industrialization, modernity, and efficient use of resources were universally equated, just as agriculture, traditionalism, and inefficiency were believed to go together. To imagine a situation of inefficient industry wasting resources and modernized agriculture offering a better return on investment and a sounder preparation for the future would have been a heresy unpardonable in the liberal, as well as revolutionary, West and, therefore, among educated people in India. If the heresy has reversed in many sophisticated circles in the 1980s, we should not forget the charm of the original equation.

Indian planning for industrialization was based on the assumption that a rapid rate and a comprehensive pattern of industrial growth can be obtained by assigning priority to the production of capital goods. If this called for going slow on agriculture and consumption goods, it was justified by the promise of future benefits for the nation as a whole. Expanded capacity in the capital goods subsector was supposed to lay the ideal foundation for subsequent production of consumption goods and absorption of labor. Such an expansion was beyond the capability of the private sector. Thus the logic of industrialization also provided a logic of centralization, extensive regulation, and a strategic role for the state in entering production, controlling supplies of inputs needed by private enterprise, directing crucial financial resources, administering key prices, and becoming the largest employer in the country. This logic satisfied the educated middle classes' sense of national mission for a number of reasons. It held a promise of national power and prosperity at the same time that an expanded public control offered a moral gratification. For here was an opportunity to use a socialistic language to control resources in the name of long-run public interest. After about thirty years, it is time to ask, where has industrialization arrived?

Judging in the 1980s, it is apparent that India has acquired a comprehensive structure of industrial production (see Table 6.2). It has pur-

Table 6.2 India: Selected Growth Indicators: 1950/51 to 1985/86

Item	Unit	1950-51	1960-61	1970-71	1980-81	1985-86	Annual percent increase 1950-51 to 1985-86
Population	Million	359	434	541	679	756	2.2
Literacy	percent total pop.	16.7	24.0	29.5	36.2	NA	NA
Real national income:	1950-51=100						
aggregate		100	145	204.7	283.4	351.9	3.6
per capita		100	119.9	135.8	150.1	168.1	1.4
Gross domestic capital formation	percent of GDP	10.0	16.9	17.8	24.5	25.5	12.6
Foodgrain output	million tons	55.0	82.3	108.4	129.6	145.0	2.8*
Industrial production	1970-71=100	29.7	54.3	100	150.7	206.8	5.7*
Village electricity	percent of total villages	0.5	3.8	18.5	47.3	66.0	15.2
Consumer price index (average)	1960=100	81	100	186	401	620	6.0
Government expenditure	percent of GNP	10	19.5	22.1	30.5	35.6	13.6
Foreign exchange reserves ^c	10 million rupees	755	245	438	4,822	7,384	6.7

Source: Center for Monitoring Indian Economy, *Basic Statistics Relating to the Indian Economy* (Bombay, August 1986), Table 8.1-4. For more details and annotation see the source.

* Compound annual growth rate between triennia centered on 1950-51, 1960-61, 1970-71 and 1983-84.

^b Official calculation using a new base (1980-81 = 100 states that the growth rate accomplished by the industrial sector was 8.7 percent in 1985-86 and 9.1 percent in 1986-87. See Government of India, *Economic Survey, 1987-88*, (New Delhi: 1988).

^c Excluding gold and SDRs; March to end of year.

sued a planned policy of import substitution that may be distinguished from the unplanned variants followed by many other developing countries.⁶⁵ Unlike Brazil, to take one example, the planned variant in India made it possible to develop heavy and light industries simultaneously despite a higher emphasis on the former. The Latin American cases of gradual exhaustion of import substitution in light industries and then desperately scrambling for heavy industries, which led to political and economic crisis, involved a pattern that was not shared by the Indian case, spanning about the same period of history. In fact, India's policy of early

emphasis on heavy industries may have allowed it to taste early and then to gradually cope with exchange crisis. Planned import substitution has also facilitated a pattern of industrialization that has endowed the Indian case with a degree of self-reliance rare among noncommunist developing countries acquiring a broad structure of industrialization during the same period of history. The structure of capital goods industries in India is comparable to that of China, but unlike China, a diversified base of consumption goods industries was allowed to develop. Yet a strict regulation of the latter left room for few luxury goods, so that the flood of durable consumption goods characterizing so many industrializing countries was not reproduced in India.

These gains in industrial development were balanced by significant disappointments, however. India's average annual percentage growth rate of industrial production during the period of 1960-1970 was 5.4 followed by 4.3 in 1970-1982.⁶⁶ China's rates were 11.2 and 8.3, Mexico's 9.4 and 7.2, and South Korea's 17.2 and 13.6 respectively. Neither self-reliance nor comprehensiveness can serve as factors inhibiting high rates. Can India's planners take the cover of democracy to explain their disappointment? That will not do because democratic developing countries like Malaysia and perhaps Sri Lanka have a better average record. They have to admit that, with all their devotion to industrialism as the key to rapid development, India's performance on many important counts has moved slower than the average rate for developing countries and for the world as a whole.⁶⁷

The growth rate of industrial product may, however, be less important than the diversification of output indicating the creation of sophisticated capacity that makes an economy poised to move on its own. Between 1951 and 1960, sophisticated machinery and metal industries grew at a compound rate of 14.2 percent against the aggregate industrial rate of 6.4 percent, but during 1960-1970 the lead considerably narrowed, while between 1970 and 1983 the two converged around a low rate of 4.5 percent. The 1980-1985 figures actually indicate the former rate lagging behind the aggregate rate.⁶⁸

Clearly something was wrong: India's industrialization was slowing down when other developing countries were moving faster. This was strikingly evidenced in the steel industry, where per capita production fell way behind that in many industrializing countries.⁶⁹

At the same time, however, the national investment rate in India has not been so depressing. Gross domestic investment as a proportion of gross domestic product was about 10 percent in 1950-1951.⁷⁰ By 1980 India's percentage share of investment stood at 24, compared to 25 in middle income countries, 21 in low-income countries, and 27 in China. Whereas foreign financing of capital formation accounts for a quarter of the total in low-income countries and about a tenth in middle-income

countries, it has substantially declined in India; since 1978 it has rarely exceeded 4 percent of the total.

So far Indian planning has tended more to raise savings than to make better use of capital resources. Persistent inefficiency of the public sector—the share of which in total capital formation rose to 50 percent in the mid-1960s and has remained close to 45 percent since then—largely accounts for the inefficient use. Lower capacity utilization, higher waste of capital and labor, and widespread subsidization of inefficient public sector enterprises have cost the process of industrialization so dearly that the original claims of national mission are now interpreted by the public as a euphemism for the private mission of groups in power to enrich themselves at the cost of national development.

No easy choice, however, awaits the democratic public in India. Not just the Congress party, but all major political parties in the country have misused the public enterprise. Public enterprises have rapidly expanded at the federal as well as state levels within the federation. The record at the latter level is much worse than at the federal level. A number of parties opposing the Congress party at the national level have ruled over these state-level public enterprises. These include regionalist parties in southern India and Communist parties in the south and the east. The paradox of public enterprise in India then can be understandable. Everybody knows their wastefulness and yet virtually no political group seriously asks for their immediate displacement.

Is this predicament a product of democratic development? Hardly so, since authoritarian China had been meanwhile stuck with a much more extensive public sector, which has recently been subjected to reform precisely on the ground that command from the top alone costs the nation efficiency and productivity.⁷¹ Brazil's military regime rapidly expanded the public sector during the 1960s and 1970s, as the state encouraged and subsidized the largest expansion of durable luxury goods production in the developing world while plunging the country into massive foreign debt.⁷² Democratic development in India has thus shared its inefficiency with socialist and capitalist authoritarian modes of development, but unlike them it established a pattern of parliamentary and public responsibility that has not merely kept open the channels of informed criticism, but also the possibility that public enterprises can be curbed and reformed, if not selectively displaced.

At least, public accountability has made sure over all these decades that the composition of commodities produced by these enterprises or through the encouragement of public sector as a whole remains compatible with the developmental needs of the nation rather than with the luxury demands of an exclusive class. For example, in the early 1980s—despite the attainment of one of the largest industrial and capital goods capacities in the developing world—India's ownership of

passengers cars was only 1.3 per thousand population compared to an average of 14.3 for all developing countries and 15.0 for the Ivory Coast. Similarly, India had only 1.7 television sets per thousand population, whereas all developing countries in aggregate averaged 28.4 and the Ivory Coast 38.0.⁷³ Moreover, none of these products had to be imported to India, and most of the capacity created in automobile and communication industries were directed to serve production or defense needs.

Evidently democratic planning has enabled the country to develop an extensive structure of industrialization where quantitative expansion of capacity has not kept pace with qualitative increase in efficient utilization of productive resources. If this were consistent with the foundational logic of self-reliant industrialization in a large country well-endowed with natural resources and a potentially large internal market, a failure to make a timely transition to a more intensive system of industrialization could be self-defeating. This intensive phase would call for elaborate technological change, organizational improvements, and upgrading the quality of products to standards of international marketability. Obviously this would also require major political initiatives to renovate the old systems of planning, controls, management, and incentives. It would be too simple to subsume all these tasks under a blanket category of liberalization, for a mere dismantling of an inefficient system of regulation does not automatically make for an efficient system of resource utilization in a developing country. For example, if infrastructural investments have not paid the right dividends because of inefficient public enterprise management, the mere removal of the latter would not invite stepped-up efficiency and investment, presumably from private investors waiting in the wings for a liberal signal.⁷⁴

The issue for India is more complex. Can democratic planning learn from its internal experience and external exemplars from developing countries well enough to make this crucial transition without violating the basic conditions that have historically sustained the democratic process? One can, of course, settle for simpler issues of industrial growth or efficiency and go for some ideal economic solutions while ignoring or condemning real political practice.⁷⁵ Since we are interested in democratic possibilities, the easier option in this case is obviously ruled out. India's experience suggests that industrial policy has not been a simple function of privileged pressures. If that were so, neither the capital goods emphasis nor the luxury goods deemphasis would have ruled for four decades. Rather, industrial policy has served as a democratic legitimating device that enables certain leadership groups to beat others.⁷⁶ Nehru's definition of national mission at least served him well in his leadership competition, just as Indira Gandhi's desperate spree of nationalization and imposition of control systems over organized industry

were moves to outbid rivals inside and outside her party. If all these moves have inevitably strengthened the state, what will prevent another set of adventurous leaders from weakening selected groups of vested interests in and around the state by negotiating with foreign investors or donors or some internal radical publics to build new constituencies of support? After all, old constituencies of support may breed rivals while innovative new ones may have the virtue of preempting them.

All this is merely to indicate that multiple, although not unlimited, policy possibilities can exist within a democratic system, and these can be effectively utilized by creative or desperate state leaderships. Intensive industrialization would threaten a big chain of patronage but at the same time might open up opportunities for a larger chain of beneficiaries. In a democratic setup, where numbers count, and in a slowly developing country, where because of limited resources state-dispensed patronage soon threatens to peter out or close the routes of access, the promise of a shift of beneficiaries may yield appropriate support for new moves. Crisis in external relations, internal economy, or international alignments can make the moment of change more opportune. The point is that a democratic state need not be viewed as a passive system of receiving and reconciling vocal interests, it can also generate counter-interests to rival, if not beat, them. Particularly in a developing country like India, where privileged formations tend to be structurally, regionally, and ethnically fragmented, flexible support seeking by national political leaders seems to be all the more feasible. On the other hand, we should not underestimate the misgivings of the underprivileged economic or ethnic groups about policies that might diminish the subsidies and protections they have come to enjoy in the labor market.⁷⁷ A shift of industrial policy toward export substitution would naturally strengthen these concerns because of the imperatives of competition. But the increased income and employment opportunities can be used to allay such misgivings. Issues of welfare and justice need not necessarily contradict the case for intensive industrialization in the process of democratic development. When they do so, it signals more a poverty of leadership, mobilization, and policy than a poverty of democracy.

Welfare, Autonomy, and Justice

Democracy offers a unique opportunity to the disadvantaged groups in India to express their priorities regarding developmental values. This freedom of expression and the legitimation of appropriate popular mobilization have raised a number of interesting issues. National development priorities can be understood in terms of an abstract aggregation of collective aspirations imposed by the state, or in disaggregated terms, implying expanding access of less-advantaged groups to resources

they need to enhance, if not to equalize, their social and economic opportunities.⁷⁸ Democratic states in developing countries cannot hope to arbitrarily impose priorities without violating their democratic nature. They have to work out a collective agreement from the welter of competing priorities expressed in the political arena by diverse disadvantaged groups. Not all of these groups are mobilized at once or in one convergent direction either to support or oppose the national state. This is what makes the linkage between development and justice difficult and yet possible in a developing democracy.

Demands for reversal of disadvantage have assumed a bewildering variety of forms. The nation itself was perceived as one disadvantaged community confronting the advanced states of the world, and thus poised for a prolonged struggle for self-reliance since the early years of the nationalist movement. But the very logic of autonomy also spilled over to subnational groups even before independence. As we have seen, Muslim separatism, leading to the partition of the subcontinent, was a prominent divisive expression of this sentiment. Political movements to reorganize states following independence, at times, began with secessionist threats. Soon, however, most of these threats proved to be strategies of bargaining for autonomy rights within the federal structure. The case for a southern separatism expressed by the Dravidian movement gave way to several reorganized states in the region.⁷⁹ Cultural mobilization of the southern states had to compete with the language rivalry of each with the other, and when they peacefully settled for state-level autonomy, their language-based mobilization was substantially challenged by leaders who used caste- and class-based mobilization to gain access to power and privilege within each state.

Regional articulation of disadvantage or claims for autonomous rights have used horizontal mobilization of people who themselves are vertically divided into highly stratified social formations like castes or economic formations like classes. Whenever regional mobilization has confronted the national state, it has diverted attention from the deep structures of division underlying regional communities. Consequently, whenever the national state has refused to negotiate with regional leaders, it has strengthened the domination of the better-off regional elites over worse-off lower-status and class groups. Fortunately, sustained pressures from the regional mass movements have usually succeeded in realizing their autonomy, beginning with the creation of Andhra Pradesh in 1953 for Telugu-speaking people. This was followed by several phases of the states' reorganization leading to the creation of the twenty-fifth state in 1987.⁸⁰ In most cases the creation of autonomous states within the federation has facilitated a transfer of the targets of popular movements from the national state to the regional state. Mobilization at this stage has affirmed either subregional disaffection based on the disadvantages

of the poorest areas of these states, as in the case of the Telangana movement in Andhra Pradesh, or wider lower-caste rights movement, as in Maharashtra.⁸¹

Federal accommodation of regional rights by inclusionary negotiation has in this way succeeded in incorporating into the national polity popular movements representing new political aspirants. By the early 1980s, however, the plebiscitarian mood of the populist leadership as described earlier in this chapter led to exclusionary responses played through manipulative or coercive craft, which drove the Assam and the Punjab regional movements to explosive proportions.⁸² That the leadership was not beyond learning the lesson that such a strategy can destroy democratic rights and national cohesion at the same time was exemplified by the unprecedented Assam and Punjab accords signed by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1985.⁸³ The following Assam and Punjab elections clearly demonstrated that the regional parties that came to power were less threatening to democracy and national cohesion than the national leadership that had earlier weakened both processes by their disjunction. If in Assam the accord had worked better, and in Punjab twenty months of the Akali Party rule has been succeeded by a dissolution of the legislative assembly, it certainly calls for a more imaginative implementation. If the Akali Party's pursuit of the accord was weak, it was not strengthened in any way by the sluggishness of the national leadership in implementing it.

Regional and ethnic justice issues inevitably bring in their trail the poverty and inequality issues that call for redistribution of resources among social and economic groups. Tamil, Telugu, or Sikh power often facilitates the case for internal social and economic competition. If the elites can use their communities against the central authority, the lower formations within them can use the same means to claim their share. The cascade effect of mobilization at successively lower layers of power and economic resources indicates how the class potential of ethnic struggles may be realized.

The limits of the ethnic movements to ensure a just sharing of developmental benefits are set by the fact that the major beneficiaries of successful incorporation have been the educated middle castes and classes. Democratic mobilization and incorporation have enabled them to displace the formerly privileged groups from political power without destroying their economic power. Expanded political mobility and access to state power have encouraged the new leaders to serve their constituencies by offering protected employment, preferential access to education and patronage, and expanded welfare provisions.⁸⁴ These measures have benefited the more advanced groups of the relatively backward castes and have only lightly touched the wider segments of the lowest castes and classes, including the scheduled castes and tribes. Yet it is

interesting to note that the few states in India in which lower-status groups have registered discernible social advancements also happen to be the ones where ethnic politics has played a large part.⁸⁵ In fact the Hindi belt states closely associated with the national leadership, or for that matter the national average of all states in India, would reveal a generally poorer record of performance in economic growth or lower-caste or class advancement when compared with the major states where ethnic and regional mobilization have been salient.⁸⁶

These gains, however, may be small consolation for the country as a whole where the shadow of absolute poverty haunts more than 40 percent of the population.⁸⁷ Statistical measures of income distribution in the mid-1970s indicate less inequality than in many developing countries. For example, the Gini coefficient for India was 0.38, showing slightly greater inequality than in China and Sri Lanka, which stood at 0.33.⁸⁸ However, income statistics can be notoriously misleading with respect to mass poverty and lower-class and status deprivation. Movements for social justice and redistribution of resources thus have a long way to go where demands for egalitarian and fair access suffer from the fact that caste, class, and regional stratification often compete for attention. Measures of protection and welfare, when extended to the lowest castes, may not take care of the lowest *classes*, or the worst-off region, or the most vulnerable ethnic groups. Competing and dispersed bases of deprivation and the consequent demands for competing norms of justice and equalization appear to strengthen the need for democratic political competition, for in the absence of it there may be little assurance that one issue of justice will not overwhelm other valid claims for justice. Plural justice thus requires combined pursuit of regional autonomy, progressive reduction of inequality of status, class and ethnic honor and security, and a pace of economic development consistent with but not overriding these objectives. Any fair assessment of democratic development in India has to wrestle with this stubborn complexity.

• THEORETICAL REVIEW •

Liberal democratic theories, as conventionally stated, are more preoccupied with political mechanisms for contestation and articulation than with what these mechanisms can accomplish for society. Such an emphasis on contest may be appropriate to societies where reasonable levels of living have been already accomplished or where crucial functions of development need not call for sustained collective endeavor. By excluding development from its charge, the state can simply be assigned some regulative and protective functions. But is this limited preoccupation justified by even the history of Western democracies? Perhaps

the limited focus on *being* a democracy diverts our attention from the more complex historical issue of *becoming* democratic.⁴⁹ When the issue of active becoming is analyzed, it may show that there are more things in common between democratic evolution in the advanced and developing countries than is commonly assumed in the conventional literature.

Democracy in developing countries can hardly be appreciated merely in terms of degrees of contestation and expression, as many studies have sought to do.⁵⁰ A better way would be to focus on the gradual process of active cultivation of ideas and institutions contributing to the installation and strengthening of a democratic system, through a simultaneous development of social, economic, and political resources. This would imply an emphasis on the transformative role of the state as a collective instrument. The basic issues here, during a critical transition, would be less about formal mechanisms of checks and balances, rights and obligations, and more about the authority of political movements, the strength of operative (if not ideological) consensus, the weight and distribution of actual and latent opposition, and the ability of the system to evoke legitimating sentiments on the basis of performance. For, in a fragile moment of beginning, rules can be easily violated by a state that comes to control most resources in the name of the public. But the same state will more often respect the rules where the absence of such rules may deplete, if not defeat, the economic and social power of the ruling leaders.

The rules of democratic legitimation and incorporation have served the ruling groups rather well in India during their four decades of operation. Unlike in neighboring Pakistan, which emerged from exactly the same colonial experience, the Indian leaders benefited from an early process of converting nationalist support into electoral support. Continued electoral support allowed them to dominate the developing civil society through state control over economy, education, communication, coercion, and extensive systems of patronage and subsidy. The dominant economic classes in industry and agriculture generally found the system profitable and conducive to a stable set of expectations in a national market of vast potential. If occasionally, as in the staggered sequence of modest reforms of land tenure and private enterprise control, some threats were posed to the highest propertied classes, compensatory avenues of gains were maintained for them through formal or informal channels.

Moreover, new entrants to privileged formations were encouraged through the use of public sector financing, licensing, and tax policies in industries, and by promoting relatively affluent peasant entrepreneurs. At the same time, the promise of expansion of privilege offered a mobility incentive to a wider number in rural and urban areas who developed a sense of stake in the system more on the basis of aspiration

than accomplishment. The successful incorporation of regional aspirations in a federalized polity created another important constituency of support for this legitimated democratic system. If all this was not enough to impel the leaders to maintain the rules of the regime, the negative reactions of wide segments of the public threatening the brief interlude of rule violation during the emergency could make them fall in line. Besides, the gains of abiding by the rules were also appreciated by the opposition leaders when they realized—as in Kerala, West Bengal, and other states—that access to power, and its prolonged use in cooperation with other parties ruling in the center, would not be denied. When leaders of capitalist and communist persuasion develop and sustain a democratic system of rules with equal eagerness there must be something more to it than a mere veneer on class rule or a chance gift of colonial history.

All these leadership sets have worked through fairly structured organizational systems with relatively durable organizations and modes of mutual interaction. This organizational system has worked best when it has encouraged incorporation of multiple interests from civil society, including ethnic expressions. Such voluntary associations have also served as latent sectors of potential political leadership in moments of crisis as, for example, discussed earlier in the context of plebiscitarian adventures of central leadership. It is true that there have been occasions when the organizational system in the country witnessed disturbing challenges. These threats have always been limited in time and territorial extension. Thus communist insurrectionary challenge in the early 1950s and late 1960s remained confined to a few districts, separatism of the DMK or the hill peoples' secessionism failed to expand or converge, and religion-using Sikh separatism in the 1980s had to contend with its own rivals in a community that composes 2 percent of the nation's population. All these widely dispersed threats were also widely staggered over time, and in most cases yesterday's adversaries were turned into next day's partners.⁵¹

This resilience or absorptive capacity has been considerably aided by an ideological consensus (evolving since the nationalist period) regarding liberal means of resolving conflict, the basic premises of self-reliant planned development, and the directive as well as responsive functions of the state in society. Thus no matter which political party has ruled at the center or at the state level, its functioning pattern has shared a degree of similarity that would have been hard to anticipate from its rhetoric before capturing power. This ideological consensus reinforces the consensual readiness of political actors to play by mutually accepted rules.

How deep is the foundation of support for the system? Studies of advanced democracies show that basic agreements among articulate

groups seem to be more decisive than their wider penetration among the masses.⁸² Empirical studies of Indian political perception indicate a degree of penetration that clearly goes beyond this minimal requirement. By 1967 70 percent of Indian adults identified with a party, compared to 60 percent in the United States in 1972. The attitudes of nonliterates and those with minimal education demonstrated strong commitment to parties, in fact considerably stronger than comparable U.S. cases. A high correspondence was demonstrated between party identification and party issue preference.⁸³ Another empirical study has found that partisanship is "not only associated with more [system] supportive attitudes, the attitudes themselves are richer and more basic to the viability of competitive institutions in India."⁸⁴ These studies also reveal that the perception of party differences among Indian partisans is informed by a remarkable tolerance of the ideologies of other partisans, who are rarely regarded as radical threats to the system.⁸⁵ Democratic political development has apparently not been constrained by the slow development of the so-called social and economic requisites of democratic being.⁸⁶

Indian democracy can be understood as a deliberate act of political defiance of the social and economic constraints of underdevelopment. In fact it has been an adventure in creating a political system that would actively generate the social and economic development it lacked at its moment of foundation. This creative exercise in the autonomy of political initiative and inducement to reverse the expected sequence of democratic development called for a simultaneous treatment of multiple issues like national cohesion, economic development, social justice, citizen efficacy, and human development. The requirement of combination also presupposed that exclusive attention to one objective could be self-defeating. Rather, divided attention implied that the system could benefit from a plurality of expectations from various publics. For example, success in managing challenges to national cohesion and promoting agricultural development may reduce the intensity of adverse reaction to the slow implementation of land reform. Thus it is not surprising that aggregate public confidence in the democratic system has not depended on the performance of particular governments in exclusive issue areas. When the "sons of the soil" or the backward castes are enthused to support a regime that offers them special mobility through a protected job market or job reservations, the system obviously gains allegiance at the cost of economic efficiency.⁸⁷ But the consequent gains in the political efficacy of the system may allow it to promote efficiency in other areas of economic action.

Admittedly such balancing acts are favored by the nature of social divisions, structural diversities, and the ecological differences in a complex country like India. It is also clear that these acts have been

performed well enough to sustain the regime so far. But the limits should not be ignored. Success in balancing requires an imaginative leadership, which no system ensures. Worse still, as one author had put it in a related context, it may be "a good net to catch allies, but one highly vulnerable to anyone with sharp teeth."⁸⁸ The art of balancing, even if forthcoming, may become vulnerable to resolute adversaries having independent access to crucial resources, particularly at a point when the resources of the state are dangerously depleted. Moments of economic crisis, international disturbance, tides of internal populism, or desperate actions by dominant classes to break a perceived stalemate may effectively challenge the hard-earned resilience of four decades.

Rapid development of the democratic state's resources of production, organization, distribution, communication, and legitimization can best preempt such danger. Unfortunately this art of balancing practiced in recent decades, by Congress as well as non-Congress leaders at federal and state levels, has thrived more on distributive skills—largely displayed in patronage, subsidy, and welfare promotions—than on rapid creation of resources.⁸⁹ It is tempting to believe that this is inherent in the process of democratic becoming in an inhospitable society. It is equally tempting to ask if the same society, with its compulsion for combined development, can be served better by alternatives to democracy, particularly at this point of development when the progressive taste of democratic becoming would scarcely make the people settle for anything less. However, neither logic nor the historical lessons discussed here would warrant a conclusion that democratic development in a context like India's must necessarily be more self-destructive than self-regenerating.

• FUTURE PROSPECTS •

Barely a decade after the launching of independent India's constitutional democracy, a major Western work on Indian politics confidently warned that "the odds are almost wholly against the survival of freedom and that...the issue is, in fact, whether any Indian state can survive at all."⁹⁰ Now that the structure of freedom and the state itself have survived such dire predictions for four decades, the issue can admit a somewhat different statement. The analysis in this chapter implies that the successful maintenance of democracy in India has ensured the stability of the new state and reasonably steady development, achieved with a degree of self-reliance and relative freedom from world economic oscillation that is rare in contemporary history. The processes of democratic becoming have crossed a threshold of reasonable success in a world which has witnessed, especially in the 1980s, a resurgence of

interest in democratic development. As the appeal of the "glamorous" alternatives to democratic development wear off, more realistic assessments of the enterprise of what I have called the role of democracy in combined development will be possible.¹⁰¹

This is not to deny that the political accomplishments of Indian democracy can pose their own problems that can and should worry us. The mass mobilization in the late 1980s against the secular rules of the state on the part of Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu revivalists, to take one example from the ethnic agenda of Indian politics, indicates that democratic opportunities of expression do not rule out an attack on either secular rationality or democratic reason itself.¹⁰² In fact, the social deepening of democracy can strengthen antidemocratic social and political forces in a manner even more threatening than the adventurous emergency regime of 1975–1976. After all, that adventure did not challenge the rationality of secular democracy. Neither did it create social dissension in the bureaucracy and the armed forces. And the adventure was short, shaky, and unsure of its own norm. Its continuity with some of the original elements of nationalist consensus may set it apart from the new moods of fundamentalism shared by a generation that can dispense with the basic values of the system as long as it can squeeze the system to its favor. Fortunately even the biggest potential danger to the system (i.e., Hindu revivalism) is likely to defeat itself if it chooses extreme courses, because of its own horizontal and vertical cleavages of region, language, caste, and class. The danger, however, cannot be minimized in view of the fact that a long evolution of Hindu inclination to avoid exclusivism has been the strongest pillar of secular rationality sustaining Indian democracy, as we have touched upon at the beginning of this chapter.

Although values alone cannot sustain a democracy in a developing country they need an emphasis in our story, in addition to that which we have given to structure, institutions, leadership, and performance. Democracy is about choice, and the citizens' choices are not inexorably determined by economic or social structural factors. As we have seen, many choices are made that cannot be explained by structural constraints alone, just as the advance creation of the political inclination to settle for some issue outcomes as opposed to others is a function of the art of creative and farsighted leadership. India has had its share of artful leadership and citizen choices consistent with democratic becoming. This is not simply a question of more visible national leaders enjoying or exploiting office—it refers to the larger issue of leadership at all levels of political life, including state and district levels. When the issue is posed whether the present state of democratic being can reproduce at least enough political and economic resources to continue the country's democratic becoming, we can do well to recall how the larger networks

of political combination and leadership across parties and citizen groups have worked in recent years. This may afford us more optimism than by unreasonably locking our sight on those who, at the moment, happen to be in the limelight.

• NOTES •

1. For an early history of associations in India see, for example, B. B. Majumdar, *Indian Political Associations and Reform of Legislature (1818–1917)* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1965), ch. 2–5. See also S. Natarajan, *A Century of Social Reform in India* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962).
2. See Stephen Hay, "Western and Indigenous Elements in Modern Indian Thought: The Case of Ram Mohun Roy," in Marius B. Jansen, ed., *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 318.
3. For details see J. Das Gupta, *Language Conflict and National Development* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), pp. 78ff.
4. When the nationalists sought to persuade the ruling authority to introduce compulsory primary education, their move was turned down. As late as 1911 only 1 percent of Indians would be considered as literate in English and 6 percent in vernacular languages. According to high-ranking British administrators Indian "power to stir up discontent would be immensely increased if every cultivator could read." See Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India, 1885–1947* (Delhi: Macmillan, 1983), pp. 66–67.
5. For a discussion of preemptive militarism in Japan see Akira Iriya, "Imperialism in Asia," in James B. Crowley, ed., *Modern East Asia: Essays in Interpretation* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1970), pp. 122ff. Increasing racialism in colonial rule was typified in a comment like "we could only govern by maintaining the fact that we are the dominant race..." quoted in Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India*, p. 23.
6. John R. McLane, *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 94–95.
7. Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* (Delhi: Publications Division, Government of India, 1969 [originally published in 1901]), p. 116. For a collection of others' writings see A. Appadorai, ed., *Documents on Political Thought in Modern India*, vol. 1 (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1973).
8. See W. T. deBary, ed., *Sources of Indian Tradition*, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 140, and A. Appadorai, *Documents on Political Thought*, vol. 1, p. 163.
9. See deBary, ed., *Sources of Indian Tradition*, vol. 2, pp. 194–195.
10. For a detailed discussion see Das Gupta, *Language Conflict and National Development*.
11. Gandhi's ideas are discussed in R. Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973). For Nehru's ideas see M. Brecher, *Nehru: A Political Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959). See also Ronald J. Terchek, "Gandhi and Democratic Theory," in T. Pantham and K. L. Deutsch, eds., *Political Thought in Modern India* (New Delhi: Sage, 1986), pp. 307–324, and B. Parekh, "Gandhi and the Logic of Reformist Discourse," in B. Parekh and T. Pantham, eds., *Political Discourse* (New Delhi: Sage, 1987), pp. 277–291.
12. The complexity of the job involved in keeping multiple interests together, and yet not exclusively serving a dominant interest due to populist compulsions of the movement, is discussed in C. Markovits, *Indian Business and Nationalist Politics, 1931–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 180–181.
13. These ideas are analyzed in detail in Joan Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), esp. pp. 190ff.
14. See, for example, Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi's Rise to Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972). For a detailed analysis of these movements, esp. pp. 52–122.
15. *Ibid.*, especially pp. 190–249.

16. For a background of the 1919 reforms see S. R. Mehrotra, "The Politics Behind the Montagu Declaration of 1917," in C. H. Philips, ed., *Politics and Society in India* (New York: Praeger, 1962), pp. 71-96.
17. The Act of 1935 and its working is analyzed in A. Chatterji, *The Constitutional Development of India: 1937-1947* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1958), pp. 3-25.
18. The general seats were those that were not specifically designated for Muslims, Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians, or Sikhs. For most purposes these would imply constituencies for Hindu candidates.
19. The official version of the constitution was in English. In late 1987 a Hindi translation of the document was approved by a constitutional amendment. Thus the fifty-sixth amendment relatively enlarged access in a country where most people cannot read English. Hindi reading ability extends to about one-third of the country's population.
20. See *The Constitution of India*, commemorative edition (New Delhi: Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, 1974), pp. 17-18.
21. For an analysis of the 1977 election see Myron Weiner, *India at the Polls: The Parliamentary Elections of 1977* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1978).
22. The first quarter of 1988 also witnessed the end of communist rule in Tripura, where a Congress-dominated coalition came to power. Meanwhile, the AIADMK rule in Tamilnadu failed to survive the succession crisis following the death of the party's most popular leader, M. G. Ramachandran.
23. This turning point and its aftermath is discussed in Richard Sisson, "Party Transformation in India: Development and Change in the Indian National Congress," in N. S. Bose, ed., *India in the Eighties* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1982), pp. 1-23; and Stanley A. Kochanek, *The Congress Party of India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), especially pp. 407-447.
24. The idea of the Congress party as a national reconciler of interests has been extensively treated in many works, of which at least two may be noted: Myron Weiner, *Party Building in a New Nation: The Indian National Congress* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967); and Rajni Kothari, *Politics in India* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970).
25. For details of the politics of the 1970s and its impact on the 1980s see Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr. and Stanley A. Kochanek, *India: Government and Politics in a Developing Nation*, 4th ed., (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986), p. 204ff.
26. See Myron Weiner, "Political Evolution—Party Bureaucracy and Institutions," in John D. Mellor, ed., *India: A Rising Middle Power* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1979), especially p. 32f.
27. For the Bihar and Gujarat agitations see Ghanshyam Shah, *Protest Movements in Two Indian States: A Study of Gujarat and Bihar Movements* (Delhi: Ajanta, 1977). See also Geoffrey Ostergaard, "The Ambiguous Strategy of J. P.'s Last Phase," in David Selbourne, ed., *In Theory and Practice: Essays on the Politics of Jayaprakash Narayan* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 155-180.
28. Jayaprakash Narayan explained his position in these words: "I am aiming at a people's movement embracing the entire nation. A movement cannot have a clear-cut program. The main purpose of a movement is to articulate people's wishes." See his collected writings published under the title *Total Revolution* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1978), vol. 4, p. 141. Positive programs favored by him and the core groups of this movement in Bihar are stated in pp. 165ff. These include political accountability of the elected legislators to their constituencies, devolution of decision making authority, and implementation of agrarian reforms through peoples' committees. See *ibid.*, pp. 168-170.
29. The opponent was Raj Narain, who defeated Indira Gandhi in the election of 1977. The court case and the events following it are described in K. Nayar, *The Judgement: Inside Story of Emergency in India* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1977).
30. These provisions and their use in 1975 are discussed in Zubair Alam, *Emergency Powers and Indian Democracy* (New Delhi: S. K. Publishers, 1987), pp. 94-103. The 59th amendment of the constitution passed by parliament in March 1988 empowers the federal government to impose emergency in Punjab.
31. See, for example, A. Gledhill, *The Republic of India: The Development of its Laws and Constitution* (London: Stevens, 1951), pp. 107-109.

32. This distinction is discussed in detail in J. Das Gupta, "A Season of Ceasars: Emergency Regimes and Development Politics in Asia," *Asian Survey* 18, no. 4 (April 1978): pp. 315-349.
33. Why she ended up choosing this option has been subject to extensive speculation. A good analysis of possible reasons and explanations is in P. B. Mayer, "Congress [I], Emergency [II]: Interpreting Indira Gandhi's India," *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 22, no. 2 (1984), pp. 128-150. How the emergency leaders defended this case is exemplified in D. V. Gandhi, ed., *Era of Discipline: Documents on Constitutional Readiness* (New Delhi: Samachar Bharati, 1976), p. 2 and *passim*.
34. The constitutional changes, as intended and executed, are discussed in detail in Lloyd I. Rudolph and Suzanne H. Rudolph, "To The Brink and Back: Representation and the State in India," *Asian Survey* 18, no. 4 (1978): especially pp. 392-399.
35. The developmental implications of emergency are analyzed in Das Gupta, "A Season of Ceasars," pp. 332ff.
36. See Myron Weiner, *India at the Polls*, for a detailed analysis.
37. The political implication and the economic record of the Janata rule is analyzed in J. Das Gupta, "The Janata Phase: Reorganization and Redirection in Indian Politics," *Asian Survey* 19, no. 4 (1979): pp. 390-403.
38. Some of these mobilization processes are discussed by Ghanshyam Shah and J. Das Gupta in their papers included in Atul Kohli, ed., *India's Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988): pp. 144-168 and 262-304. See also Barnett R. Rubin, "The Civil Liberties Movement in India," in *Asian Survey* 27, no. 3 (1987): pp. 371-392.
39. The literature on labor unions in India is extensive. For surveys of the role of trade unions in Indian politics, see S. Jawaid, *Trade Union Movement in India* (Delhi: Sundeeep, 1982); and R. Chatterji, *Unions, Politics and the State* (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1980), esp. pp. 27-86. For a survey of peasant associations see A. N. Seth, *Peasant Organizations in India* (Delhi: B. R. Publishing, 1984); and K. C. Alexander, *Peasant Organizations in South India* (New Delhi: Indian Social Institute, 1981).
40. See Stanley A. Kochanek, *Business and Politics in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), especially part 3.
41. These are discussed in detail in an excellent analysis of the pertinent literature by Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susan H. Rudolph, "Determinants and Varieties of Agrarian Mobilization," in M. Desai et al., eds., *Agrarian Power and Agricultural Productivity in South Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 281-344.
42. The support bases in Kerala are discussed in T. J. Nossiter, *Communism in Kerala* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); those in West Bengal are discussed in Atul Kohli, *The State and Poverty in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), ch. 3.
43. As one study of Kerala points out, "It seems that the agricultural labor movement...has now been integrated into the existing system. The reduction in militant struggles, the increasing institutionalization of collective bargaining and parliamentary politics are all indicative of this." See Joseph Tharamangalam, *Agrarian Class Conflict: The Political Mobilization of Agricultural Laborers in Kuttanad, South India* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1981), p. 98. Another more empirical survey conducted in Tamilnadu reaches a similar conclusion. See Marshall M. Bouton, *Agrarian Radicalism in South India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 310.
44. The role of a literary association like the Assam Sahitya Sabha in generating a popular movement was not unique to Assam. Similar cases of organized literary initiative in different states of India remind us of the political significance of nonpolitical associations. For a discussion of this association and its alliance with the All Assam Students' Union see my "Language, National Unity, and Shared Development in South Asia," in William R. Beer and James E. Jacobs, eds., *Language Policy and National Unity* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Allanheld, 1985), pp. 208ff.
45. For a chronological survey see T. S. Murty, *Assam: The Difficult Years* (New Delhi: Himalayan Books, 1983).
46. On 18 February 1983 a mob of about 12,000 people killed 1,400 men, women, and children.
47. The Assam accord was announced by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on 12 August 1986. It was described by newspapers as a balancing trick that left "no winners or losers." See, for example, *India Today*, 15 September 1985, international edition, p. 27.

48. The organizational durability of the DMK, and later of its breakaway part, the AIADMK (which ruled Tamil Nadu until early 1988), and that of the Telugu Desam (which rules Andhra Pradesh), as well as their record of cooperation with national parties, were hardly anticipated at the time of their inception.

49. For a discussion of his ideas on planning see Bruce F. Johnston and William C. Clark, *Redesigning Rural Development* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), p. 24.

50. For one example see *India Today*, international edition, 15 November 1985, pp. 8ff. This is actually an assessment of the prime minister's record. A reasonably discounted value can, however, be assigned to his government by implication. A similar positive result was recorded in another poll conducted by *The Telegraph*, Calcutta, 31 October 1985. By early 1988 the prime minister and his leadership continued to enjoy more public confidence than the national level alternative leadership despite the growing disappointment with his performance. See *India Today*, international edition, 29 February 1988, pp. 17-23.

51. See *The Approach to the Seventh Five-Year Plan, 1985-90* (Planning Commission, Government of India, July 1984). Center for Monitoring Indian Economy edition, p. 9.

52. The proportion of plan outlay devoted to agriculture was 14.8 percent in the first plan (1952-1956), 11.7 percent in the second plan (1955-1961) and 12.7 percent in the third plan (1961-1965). The corresponding figures for organized industry and mining were 2.8 percent, 20.1 percent, and 20.1 percent. See the *Statistical Outline of India, 1984* (Bombay: Tata Services, 1984).

53. For a critique of Indian plan strategies see John W. Mellor, *The New Economics of Growth: A Strategy for India and the Developing World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), especially pp. 274ff. For a sophisticated analysis defending the plan strategies see S. Chakravarty, *Development Planning* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 7-38.

54. This refers to the agricultural policies that have acquired the popular label of "green revolution."

55. For an account of this colonial legacy see Dharma Kumar, ed., *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 947ff.

56. See the *World Development Report, 1987* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 258.

57. *Ibid.*

58. John Wall, "Foodgrain Management: Pricing, Procurement, Distribution, Import, and Storage Policy," in *India: Occasional Papers*, World Bank Staff Working Paper no. 279, May 1978 (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1978), pp. 88-89.

59. See Government of India, *Economic Survey, 1986-87* (New Delhi, 1987), pp. 8 and S-7 through S-15, and *Economic Survey, 1987-88* (New Delhi, 1988), pp. S-23-24 and *passim*.

60. In 1985 and 1986 the procurement rates were 16 and 15 percent of new foodgrain production respectively. Even in the worst drought year of 1987, this rate exceeded 12 percent. *Economic Survey, 1987-88* (New Delhi, 1988), p. S-24.

61. *Toward Sustained Development in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1984), p. 2.

62. See Amartya Sen, *Resources, Values and Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 501ff. for an interesting comparison of the scale of famines in colonial India and socialist China.

63. Primary school enrollment as percent of age group for sub-Saharan Africa in the early 1980s was 77.6 percent, for East Asia 113.0, and for India 90.0. Compiled from *The World Bank, World Tables*, vol. 2 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984 edition), pp. 158-159, *World Development Report 1984* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 226, and *World Development Report, 1987*, p. 262.

64. For an idea of how the leading economists of the 1950s thought about desirable strategies of development and how in the 1980s they assess their earlier thoughts, see Gerald M. Meier and Dudley Seers, eds., *Pioneers in Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

65. Jagdish Bhagwati's distinction of several variants of import substitution would help one to place the Indian policy in a clearer perspective. See his "Comment" on Prebisch in *ibid.*, pp. 201-202.

66. I have used total industrial growth rates because of easier availability, but growth rates in manufacturing are not very dissimilar. See *The World Bank, World Development Report 1984*, p. 220.

67. Thus one estimate suggests that the annual percentage rate of growth of industrial product in India was 4.1 compared to 6.3 for nonsocialist developing countries and 4.3 for the nonsocialist world. See S. J. Patel, "India's Regression in the World Economy," in *Economic and Political Weekly*, 28 September 1985, p. 1652. How seriously such estimates need to be taken is an issue that may be controversial. See, for instance, K. N. Raj, "Economic Growth in India, 1952-55 to 1982-83," in *Economic and Political Weekly*, 13 October 1984, p. 1804.

68. From *Basic Statistics Relating to Indian Economy* (Bombay: Center for Monitoring Indian Economy, August 1984), Table 14.9-2, and August 1986, Table 14.11-2.

69. With all the affection for steel, per capita steel consumption in India increased from five kilograms in 1952 only to seventeen in 1982, whereas in China it grew from two kilograms to forty-one. By 1982 per capita steel production in India and even China—two cases of relatively self-reliant planning—remained way behind compared to South Korea (339), Taiwan, Mexico (114), Argentina (121), and Brazil (105). *World Economy and India's Place in It* (Bombay: Center for Monitoring Indian Economy, October 1986), Table 8.8.

70. Data in this section has been compiled from sources cited in note 68 (including also Table 22.3) and World Bank, *China: Socialist Economic Development*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1983), p. 120.

71. For some details of economic reforms in China, see W. Byrd, et al., *Recent Chinese Economic Reforms*, World Bank Staff Working Papers no. 652 (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1984).

72. For an account of the Brazilian public sector's expansion and the attendant problems, see *Brazil: A World Bank Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1984), especially pp. 30ff. The strong preference for luxury goods production catering to the upper 20 percent of the population in a country of high inequality is discussed in Alain de Janvry, "Social Disarticulation in Latin American History," working paper for Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics, March 1984.

73. Compiled from *The World Bank, World Tables*, vol. 2.

74. Critical works on contemporary industrial policy discuss some of these issues. In spite of their different perspectives, they agree on the crucial public role in infrastructural investments. See Isher Judge Ahluwalia, *Industrial Policy in India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 168-169; and Pranab Bardhan, *The Political Economy of Development in India* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984), p. 24.

75. Ahluwalia's *Industrial Policy in India* does not entirely ignore the contingency of compromising growth objectives (p. 172), but its detailed treatment is not included in the scope of this work. Pranab Bardhan seeks to account for the avoidance of "hard choices" by the current leadership in terms of its ties to proprietary classes. See especially pp. 73-74 of *The Political Economy of Development in India*.

76. The ideological issues are discussed in Myron Weiner, "The Political Economy of Industrial Growth in India," in *World Politics* 38, no. 4 (July 1986): pp. 604ff. For a discussion of room to effect policy change in the Indian context see John Toye, *Dilemmas of Development* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), pp. 132-133.

77. See Barnett R. Rubin, "Economic Liberalization and the Indian State," in *Third World Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (October 1985): pp. 954-955.

78. We need not discuss in detail the implications of the different criteria proposed by various authors, e.g., primary goods (Rawls), basic capabilities (Sen), or resources (Dworkin). For our purpose it is enough to distinguish the aggregate from the disaggregate approaches to defining priorities. For a useful treatment of these criteria see John Roemer, "Exploitation, Property Rights, and Preferences," in Tibor R. Machan, ed., *The Main Debate* (New York: Random House, 1987), p. 365ff. See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 62ff, where the notion of primary goods includes basic rights, power, economic resources, and self-respect. See also Amartya Sen, *Resources, Values and Development*, p. 315ff and Ronald Dworkin, "Equality of Resources," in *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Fall 1981, pp. 283-345.

79. See Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., *The Dravidian Movement* (Bombay: Popular,

1965) for a general background of the movement in the south; and J. Das Gupta, *Language Conflict and National Development*, pp. 268ff for its linkage with democratic representation.

80. Maharashtra and Gujarat statehood followed in 1960 and that of Punjab and Haryana in 1966. The secessionist movement in Mizoram was transformed into an autonomy movement within the federal system and statehood was conceded in 1986. Earlier, in 1963 the state of Nagaland was created in response to secessionist threat. A decade later several new states were created in the northeastern region. The latest new state is Goa, promoted from the intermediate status of union territory to full statehood in 1987.

81. These processes are discussed in the context of a number of regions in A. Majed, ed., *Regionalism: Developmental Tensions in India* (New Delhi: Cosmo, 1984), esp. pp. 89-114 for Maharashtra. See also G. Ram Reddy and B. A. V. Sharma, *Regionalism in India, A Study of Telangana* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing, 1979), pp. 24-35.

82. The Assam case has been discussed earlier. For a short account of the Punjab situation see D. Gupta, "The Communalizing of Punjab, 1980-1985," in *Economic and Political Weekly*, 13 July 1985, pp. 1185-1190. For details see A. Singh, ed., *Punjab in Indian Politics: Issues and Trends* (Delhi: Ajanta, 1985), and A. S. Narang, *Democracy, Development and Dislocation: Punjab Politics in National Perspective* (New Delhi: Gitanjali, 1986), esp. pp. 136-189.

83. This was unprecedented because this was the first time that the prime minister signed a statement of accord with nonofficial political organizations. Even as of early 1987 the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab, one of the elements of the 1985 accord, was not implemented by the national leadership. This obviously weakened the elected chief minister of the state and also the chances of peaceful solution in this area. See "The Bungled Accord," in *India Today*, international edition, 15 February 1986 for a discussion of the political problems of implementing the accord. See also Francine R. Frankel, "Politics: The Failure to Rebuild Consensus," in Marshall M. Bouton, *India Briefing*, 1987 (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), pp. 31-35.

84. Problems of preferential access are treated in Myron Weiner et al., *India's Preferential Policies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

85. See Roderick Church, "The Pattern of State Politics in Indira Gandhi's India," in J. R. Wood, ed., *State Politics in Contemporary India* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), pp. 236-237.

86. Of the six major states gaining autonomy as a result of regional movements four have attained the highest per capita income level in the country. If we take the annual rate of percentage increase in per capita income at constant prices (1970-71) between 1971-72 to 1981-82, again (among fifteen major states) Punjab scores the highest rank, Maharashtra ranks third, Andhra Pradesh and Haryana rank fourth (tie), Gujarat ranks sixth, and Tamilnadu, seventh. Recent poverty level estimates show lower average poverty compared to the national rate in five of these six states. These comparative data are from *Basic Statistics Relating to the Indian Economy*, vol. 2 (Bombay: Center for Monitoring Indian Economy), September 1985, Tables 14.1 and 14.9.

87. The comparable figure for South Korea is 15 percent and Sri Lanka, 23 percent. See S. Mukhopadhyay, *The Poor in Asia* (Kuala Lumpur: Asian and Pacific Development Center, 1985), p. 8.

88. These comparative figures are from The World Bank, *China: Socialist Economic Development*, vol. 1, p. 94. In addition the share of income of the poorest 20 percent of households was greater in India (7.0 percent) than in any other developing country for which the World Bank reports data, while the share of the highest 20 percent is among the lowest. See The World Bank, *World Development Report 1986*, pp. 252-253.

89. Tocqueville's idea that Americans have come to democracy without having endured democratic revolution and that they are born equal, instead of becoming so, may have implications for impressing such bias. Some of these implications are discussed in another context in Albert O. Hirschman, "Rival Interpretations of Market Society: Civilizing, Destructive or Feeble?," in *Journal of Economic Literature* 20 (December 1982): pp. 350ff.

90. See G. Bingham Powell, Jr., *Contemporary Democracies* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, n.d.), for some samples, pp. 3ff.

91. The taming of the leading Communist parties, the DMK, the Telugu Desam, the

Assam Movement, the National Conference of Kashmir, and the Mizo rebels are some examples.

92. See M. Mann, "The Social Cohesion of Liberal Democracy," in A. Giddens and D. Held, eds., *Classes, Power and Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 388ff.

93. This congruence was revealed for all major parties and not just the Congress party. Samuel J. Eldersveld and Bashiruddin Ahmed, *Citizens and Politics: Mass Political Behavior in India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), especially pp. 80, 90, 104.

94. John Osgood Field, *Consolidating Democracy: Politicization and Partisanship in India* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1980), p. 288. This work is based on data collected in 1966 as part of a cross-national project.

95. *Ibid.*, p. 292.

96. See, for example, Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," in *American Political Science Review* 53, no. 2 (1959): pp. 69-105.

97. Backward caste demands usually benefit middle castes more than others. See Francine Frankel, "Middle Castes and Classes in Indian Politics: Prospects for Political Accommodation," in A. Kohli, ed., *India's Democracy*; and Myron Weiner, *Sons of the Soil*.

98. Adam Przeworski, "Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy," in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 63.

99. I have excluded the issue of corruption. It is a long story and most recently both the national and regional leaders have been involved. The issue of the Bofors arms deal in 1987 and N. T. Rama Rao's case in 1988 are just a few instances. But the corruption issue needs to be seen in the light of the fact that democracy has encouraged and, at the same time, exposed corruption. But exposure does not necessarily eliminate corrupt leaders from politics. Popular toleration of corruption is a problem that cannot be wished away. See, for example, K. S. Padhy, *Corruption in Politics* (Delhi: B. R. Publishing, 1986), esp. pp. 212-213.

100. Selig S. Harrison, *India: The Most Dangerous Decades* (Madras: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 338.

101. Barrington Moore, Jr., who has inspired many scholars to defend "glamorous" options through his landmark work, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), has recently observed: "political glamour can be a disaster that produces enormous amounts of suffering.... If humanity is to work its way out of its current plight...there will have to be leaders...who can turn their backs on political glamour and work hard for [barely] feasible goals rather than glamorous ones." *Authority and Inequality Under Capitalism and Socialism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 125. Not surprisingly, compared to his earlier work, *Social Origins*, Indian democracy comes out in a positive light in this new work (p. 123).

I have used the notion of *combined development* in the sense of the political compulsion to pursue simultaneous or at least multiple objectives in a multi-ethnic developing country interested in comprehensive national development. This use should not be confused with other uses of the term in the literature (notably, Leon Trotsky's use to convey the advantage of historic backwardness). For an elaboration of the latter use see J. Elster, "The Theory of Combined and Uneven Development: A Critique," in J. Roemer ed., *Analytical Marxism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 54-63.

102. The danger of recent Hindu mobilization can be appreciated if one follows the "sati incident," i.e., mass reactions in favor of the widow-burning case in Rajasthan in 1987. See I. Qadeer and Z. Hasan, "Deadly Politics of the State and its Apologists," *Economic and Political Weekly* 22, no. 46 (14 November 1987): pp. 1946-1949. The limits of Hindu confessional politics in the contemporary context are discussed in L. I. Rudolph and S. H. Rudolph, *In Pursuit of Lakshmi*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 36-47.