

political history of India or, more accurately, the unpolitical history of India, bears evidence that the people will not yield its trust to a body that is very much ahead of them. If the time for a revolution comes, the people will make the revolution and not a party; hence it will not be a revolution in the traditional sense. It may be a peaceful revolution or even a parliamentary one; on the other

hand, it may be merely chaotic.

The slow movement forward of the people, the change in their orientation from the past to the future, the desperate negativism of behaviour, betoken that a profound transformation is under way. The emergence of outspokenly conservative parties and organisations indicates that the movement forward has set in. Fortes that are opposed to socia-

lism and are determined to defeat it have not armed themselves to lay a ghost. The election results, in sum, throw light on the political structure in India and, in fact, form its main substance or content. A systematic study of the elections and their relation to political movements could lead us to understand the nature of the Indian political system and to develop a scientific theory of Indian politics.

A Case of Aborted Growth: India, 1860-1900

A Comment

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DR George Rosen (*The Economic Weekly*, August 11, 1962) argued that whereas some industrial growth occurred in India during the last half of the 19th century—in cotton textiles, jute manufactures, coal mining, and in investment in railways and engineering—the growth was insufficient to increase incomes or the degree of urbanization. He then argued that economic hypotheses alone could explain the failure of industry to "take hold": the absence of internal markets because of low wages and famines, the reduction in artisan incomes when mill-made cloth undercut the rural weavers, and imported machinery of assured quality at little more (and perhaps less) cost than that at which an Indian industry could have produced it are together fully sufficient to explain this period of economic history.

I have no quarrel with this much of the thesis, but from it he derives the conclusion that "one does not need a wide variety of sociological reasons to explain the absence of development in India", and that it is incorrect to argue that "Indians were averse to money-making". My complaint is that the second proposition—aversion to money-making—is not necessary to establish a sociology of underdevelopment, and that the first proposition—logically "sufficient" economic reasons eliminate the need to consider sociological reasons—does not answer the question of whether the

sociological causes give rise to the economic causes.

Wrong Equation

The error of equating aversion to money-making, lack of profit motive, other-worldly motivation, absence of a materialist philosophy, and other psychological-philosophical attitudes, to sociological factors would not arouse my ire—and in fairness to Rosen, he does not make the equation, but rather points out that many have—were it not that it is so commonly committed. The sociological point is not that people are different, but that they reason, choose, and act in different environments of which the social structures are important components.

Poverty was and is an important cause of the absence of internal markets; but another contributory factor is the absence of monetization. Absence of monetization can be called economic but has its roots largely in the social systems of *jajman-kamin* relationships, *6a/at-and-elientele*, and "permanent service". Here the point is that people do not have the monetary means—as opposed to real income—to buy; not that there is no interest in goods or money.

Or take Rosen's statement that for "the higher income group, the larger part of its consumption expenditure was probably on imported consumer goods in the absence of Indian production and *under the influence* of English rulers" (*italics mine*). Is not this *influence* a compounding of emu-

lation arising from a new *social* hierarchy and from the colonial *political* situation with whatever utilitarian virtues the imported goods provided? One cannot account for this influence by examining costs, profits, risks, and uses alone. One must take account of prestige and power, and this is what those of us who argue "sociologically" wish to see emphasized.

Diffusion of Profit Motive

Another case in point (one which Rosen does not mention, but illustrative of the issue being debated here) is the absorption, as an economic cause, of the "diffusion of the profit motive" when gains must be spread among the membership of an extended family. The motive diluted is economic, but to account for the dilution the analyst must describe the kind of family involved, and a family is not primarily an economic institution.

The heart of Rosen's argument—that good businessmen would not have built large industries in India between 1860 and 1900—stands. What is not substantiated by his evidence is that his is a satisfying explanation (even if, within the limits of his argument, it is logically sufficient). The conditions underlying the circumstances outlined by Rosen could have been non-economic or "sociological" and if they were—as some of us believe to be the case—then the fuller explanation of abortive growth must be in part non-economic.