

order and not multiply causes of civil strife and disaffection with the government. Second, the Persian conceptions of sacred kingship they brought to India were universalistic in vision and appealed to a realm of ideas that overspilled the boundaries between religions, especially ideas of astrology, millennialism, time cycles, and the interpretation of omens. Here again India and Iran were cultural cousins, Iran being a conduit of astrology and astronomy from Mesopotamia and the Hellenistic world for India, and India returning the favor at other times. Astrology in particular was a “science” that circulated freely among Muslims, Christians, and Hindus, from India to Europe.³⁴

It is a mistake, therefore, to view the relation of Islam to Indian civilization through a “clash of civilizations” model, with its assumption of mutual exclusion, as if they were closed systems. On the contrary, Islam developed its distinctive Perso-Islamic culture within the penumbra of Indian Civilization, in Abbasid times. Part of the appeal of Islam to Indians was that aspects of it were already familiar, such as sacred kingship and the devotionalism and mysticism of Sufism; aspects of it, indeed, were Indian, although in a new configuration that gave prominence to the tradition of the prophets.

1.1 company primarily wanted trade

1.2 princely states were allowed to stay but slowly whittled away

1.3 military was a “mistake”

2.1 british rule was fundamentally different from previous takeovers

2.2 most important impact of the revolution in 1857 was harsh feelings

3.1 what was the influence of the princely states? What if the british just took the princely states over?

Read the section in red about Company rule
Optionally, there's the section in orange about British Rule

CHAPTER 10

Europeans

European Merchants

British Rule

India and European Civilization

India was deeply affected by the astonishingly successful expansion of Islam and Islamic states across much of Europe and Asia from about the eighth century. This expansion had created a cosmopolitan world of trade, diplomacy, taste, and knowledge that penetrated and blended, in different ways, with Indian Civilization, drawing on it and adding to it. It was through the Islamic world that Indian ideas and inventions reached Europe in late medieval times, including what al-Adli of Baghdad, a ninth-century writer on chess problems, called India's three contributions to the world: the game of chess; the collection of folktales and animal fables called the *Panchatantra*; and the zero, that is, the place-notation of the number system—what in English is called the Arabic numerals, although they derive, ultimately, from India.

Some eight centuries after the Asia-wide expansion of Islam had begun, from the time of Columbus, European nations began an expansion of their powers, which crossed Asia and Africa and encompassed the New World, as well. It was a truly worldwide expansion, broader than that of Islam, but made possible by building on the accumulated geographical knowledge of the Muslim countries and by new technologies of navigation. Indian Civilization was again profoundly affected, although by different means and in novel ways.

European Merchants

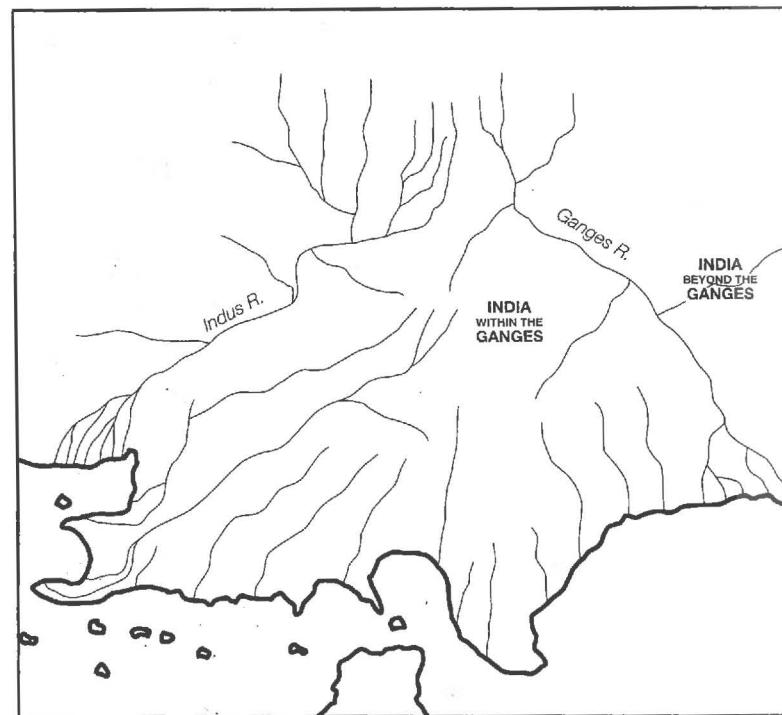
Before the worldwide expansion of European power, for medieval Christian Europe, India was the edge of the earth, a distant horizon,

a strange land where things were very different. The strangeness of India for Europeans could take monstrous or pleasant forms virtually without limit, because they were unchecked by experience. It was commonly stated in medieval bestiaries or books about animals, for example, that the elephant had pillar-like legs that lacked knee joints and had to sleep standing up, leaning against a tree, because it could not get up if it fell down. It was said that hunters would saw a tree half through in hopes that an elephant would lean against it and fall, unable to rise again. This and other fanciful ideas about India were legacies of ancient Greek writers, endlessly reproduced.

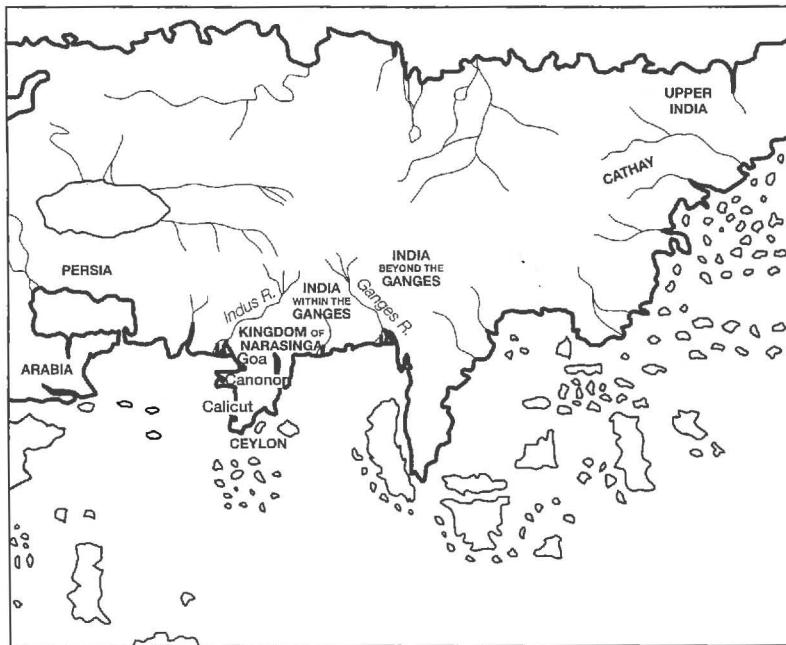
Images of India in medieval Europe have a dream-like character, but they were not free inventions and, on the contrary, had their own history. The legacy of Greco-Roman antiquity was one great fund of such images, and from it medieval Europeans drew the most exotic pictures of India. Thus in the *Nuremberg chronicle*,³⁵ for example, published in 1493 at the beginning of print in the West and at the outset of the great voyages that would take European merchant venturers to India, we find pictures of fantastic races of people in India such as the mouthless people who are nourished by smells and the backward-foot people, which go way back to the hearsay reports of the Greek writer Ctesias in the fifth century BCE (see Chapter 4). Besides images of repellent, freakish strangeness, Europeans also entertained pleasing images of India as a land of luxury and wealth and the source of desirable and expensive things such as diamonds, silk, exotic animals, and spices. This reputation for wealth was certainly a function of the trade of ancient times, for, as noted earlier, only the most precious commodities could repay the very high costs of transportation over so long a distance. India had been a source of exotic and expensive items of trade since the time of Solomon in the Bible, and it was a supplier of luxuries to Rome in ancient times, such as pearls, ivory, silk, and precious stones, to a degree that caused alarm because of the drain of wealth it entailed, as we saw in Chapter 8. Indian goods again made their way to Europe as its economy recovered from the collapse of the Roman Empire and slowly began to grow in the course of the Middle Ages. Now, however, India was a part of the large Asian trading world created with the spread of Islam, and Muslim merchants and states now intervened between Europe and India. The creation (in 1299 CE) and spread of the Ottoman Empire in Turkey, and its revival of the institution of the caliph as head of the worldwide community of Islam, further solidified Muslim centrality to the trade of Eurasia. The Islamic countries, unlike those of Europe,

had direct knowledge of India and a vastly superior and more rational understanding of the geography of Eurasia developed through the trade, exploration, and conquests of Islamic forces in India and elsewhere. Europeans drew on this fund of geographical knowledge and built on it from experience as their own trade grew and expanded to India and beyond, and the real India began to come into focus.

Venice made its fortune through this trade in precious goods from the Muslim east, but other European nations and their merchants soon were searching for passages to India that would bypass the Muslims. Columbus surmised that he could reach India by sailing west around the world, and when he reached the New World he thought he was in India. This supposition was assisted by two features of early printed maps of the world, deriving from the geography of Ptolemy (c. 150 CE). On the one hand, there was no effective means of determining longitude, and world maps based on Ptolemy greatly overestimate the east-west



MAP 8 India in Ptolemy



MAP 9 India as seen from Europe, 1545

dimension of the Eurasian landmass. By putting the coast of Asia too far to the east, one could infer that the distance from Europe to Asia in the other direction, across the Atlantic Ocean, is not very great. The other feature of these maps is that countries are named but no boundaries are drawn around them, and India tends to sprawl across Asia eastward to the coast. In Ptolemy's map (Map 8) India proper is called "India within the Ganges," something called "India beyond the Ganges" is the name for Southeast Asia (the Ganga River was thought to flow due south, separating the two Indias), and in northern China one finds "upper India"; India is practically a name for Asia as a whole. Map 9 shows a Ptolemaic map of 1545 modified by improved knowledge of India due to European voyages.³⁶

Spain soon lay claim to the Americas and the Philippines, but Portugal made the first effective explorations in the other direction, of the southern route around Africa to the coast of India, beginning with the voyage of Vasco da Gama in 1498 (Figure 18). For about a century Portugal dominated the European trade of Asia. The Portuguese created



FIGURE 18 Vasco da Gama

a watery empire of trade, consisting of a few small land bases established by treaty with the local powers, reaching from Goa on the west coast of India to Macao in the south of China. Portugal enforced its domination of the seaborne trade through a far-flung network of armed ships that required all ships of other countries to take a *cartaz* or charter from the Portuguese and trade only with the Portuguese in certain items. In this way Portugal came to dominate the trade in spices, and much else besides. In exchange the Portuguese brought American crops to Asia that had a lasting impact: potatoes and corn (maize) that allowed farming in soils and seasons where it was otherwise difficult; new luxuries like tobacco and pineapple; and two foods so completely integrated into Indian cooking that it is hard to imagine that they are really fairly recent introductions: tomatoes and chili peppers.³⁷ As we saw in Chapter 9, the Portuguese played an important role in the success of the South Indian empire of Vijayanagara by supplying it with horses, which were very scarce in the south and badly needed for warfare against their northern neighbors.

The Portuguese brought Catholic Christianity with them to India and Catholic missionaries from various countries who set about learning Indian languages and making converts, and establishing the Pope's supremacy over the ancient community of Thomas Christians in South India, who claimed to have been led to Christianity by the apostle Thomas. The missionary enterprise was pulled in different directions by contrary forces promoting assimilation with Indian culture and isolation from it. At the one extreme, the attempt of Jesuits to present Christianity in a form acceptable to Indians led to the work of the Italian Jesuit Roberto Nobili, who adopted the dress and way of life of a brahmin renouncer. This impulse was canceled by Rome, however, in the upshot of a "quarrel of the rites," in China as well as India, and the suppression of the Jesuit order by the Pope somewhat after. At the other extreme was the Inquisition instituted at Goa to enforce orthodoxy among Catholics, in response to anxiety that lingering Hindu beliefs and practices were compromising the purity of Christianity in India. During the heyday of Portuguese control of the India trade, the Portuguese language was widely used on both coasts of India as a medium of trade, and a sprinkling of Portuguese words in Indian languages, such as Hindi *almari* (Indian English *almirah*, a wardrobe or chest of drawers) and *tauliya* (towel), persist as vestiges of that period.

The ambitions of Spain and Portugal soon clashed, and their rivalry was resolved by the Pope, who drew a vertical line on the globe through South America that awarded Portugal everything eastward of Brazil and Spain everything to the west of it. Other European nations and their merchant companies began to push their way forward, however, and intra-European rivalry proved a powerful force in the expansion of European economic and political power around the world, beginning about 1600. East India companies were formed by the English, the Dutch, the Danes, the French, and some others, with monopoly rights over their nation's trade with India. The most effective of these were the Dutch and the English, and they and the Portuguese formed a three-cornered struggle for the India trade. The ultimate outcome of the struggle was that the Portuguese were confined to a few small trading stations on the Indian coast, the Dutch concentrated their power on Indonesia and the Spice Islands, and the English came to dominate the trade of India itself.

In many ways the European trade with India, leading up to colonial rule, was continuous with the old Roman trade, in the sense that India supplied Europe with rare commodities such as spices and gems, and luxurious manufactured goods, especially fabrics, in exchange for silver and gold. But while these terms of trade were in broad terms stable over a very long period, the trading methods of the period of European expansion were quite new, involving the creation of merchant companies that had monopoly powers of their country's Asian trade and arms to protect and enforce them on their rivals. These companies did not promote free and peaceful trade but instead monopolies maintained by force. They entered into political relations with Indian powers to establish and maintain small enclaves on land in which to collect tradable goods for shipment homeward and to sell goods shipped out from Europe. East India trading companies of the different European nations had to be political actors, negotiating relations with Indian rulers, and not just commercial ventures. These circumstances led to European rule of Indian territory and people by a body of foreign merchants, something entirely novel in India's history.

British Rule

The rivalry of European nations among themselves was a driving force for the international expansion of European imperial power in the

seventeenth century and after, and these rivalries were projected on the whole world. The rivalry of England and France especially had momentous consequences in the middle of the eighteenth century: the extinction of French rule in Canada by the British; the revolt of the thirteen colonies of America from British rule with French assistance; and the establishment of British territorial rule in the eastern part of India (Bengal). Conquest of Indian territories came about when armies of the British East India Company and its Indian allies fought the armies of the French East India Company and its Indian allies—the beginnings of the British Indian Empire.

In the course of the warfare in Europe and Canada of the French and English nations, the French and English East India Companies entered the fray by fighting one another in India and implicating their Indian allies in the struggle. Thus in India the rivalry between the two was not carried out by the governments of the two countries but by joint-stock corporations of merchants and the Indian princes who gave them trading privileges and leased them small patches of territory on the coast for their trading posts. These “factories,” as they were called, were not places of manufacture but essentially warehousing facilities, so called because they were governed by someone called a “factor” or commercial agent of the company. Some factories were fortified and protected by Indian soldiers under European officers. These armed forces of the merchant companies now became war-making entities that drew Indian governments and their armies into the commercial and national struggle between the British and the French. The upshot of a long and complicated struggle was that the British East India Company army, under Robert Clive, defeated the Mughal governor of Bengal, Siraj ud Daula, at Plassey in 1757. Clive's victory was secured by a prior secret agreement with two of Siraj ud Daula's generals, who held back their armies, and Clive replaced Siraj ud Daula with one of them, Mir Jafar, as Bengal's governor. Within a few years the East India Company became the effective co-ruler of Bengal, and was given a charter authorizing its new powers by the Mughal emperor in Delhi. He granted it the *diwani*, or fiscal administration of the country, in concert with the existing political and military administrator. The situation was highly anomalous; a merchant company from England had become a territorial ruler in Bengal under a grant of authority from the emperor of India. In a sense the East India Company was a Mughal vassal, but that was only the legal clothing in

which the military power and diplomatic maneuvering of the Company was dressed.

In later years the British liked to say that they acquired an empire in India “in a fit of absent-mindedness.” The process was not so thoughtless and innocent as this phrase wants us to believe. The Company had in fact aimed at territorial dominion, following the Dutch model, in the past, although without success, and had the Dutch example before it in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), where the Dutch governed large lowland territories as the kingdom of Ceylon retreated to the mountainous interior. But the immediate cause of British rule in India was the worldwide struggle of England and France, which the English and French East India Companies joined in, the consequences of which—the *diwani* of Bengal—were unanticipated.

In any case the transformation of the Company was profound, from a trading company with negligible territorial holdings on the coast of India for the purposes of turning a profit to a governing power ruling vast and increasing agrarian territory from which it had to collect taxes and over which it had to maintain law and order. It was the beginning of the period of Company rule, which lasted for about a hundred years, from 1765, when the Company acquired administrative powers in Bengal (the *diwani*), ending in 1858 when, at the close of the Rebellion of 1857, the British government put an end to Company rule and imposed *Crown rule*, which is to say, direct rule of British India by the British government. Crown rule also lasted about a hundred years, from 1858 to independence in 1947.

An utterly new kind of empire in India was created by the British East India Company. Previous foreign rulers had come with land armies as conquering powers; this one had evolved from trading company to territorial ruler. Previous invaders came and settled in India, making it their home and the home of their descendants; the British sent out its young men, aged seventeen or eighteen, to be civil servants and military officers, but they all intended to retire to Britain at the end of their careers, and considered Britain their home—those who remained in India were mostly the rather large number of Britons who died of illness before their time and were buried there. Although ideas of colonizing India with European settlers, on the model of America, Canada, and South Africa, were floated from time to time, the East India Company strongly resisted. It wanted to avoid creating situations of conflict between a large European population with ideas of its own

superiority and the much vaster population of Indians, which would unsettle British rule. For the same reason the Company assiduously prevented the admission of nonofficial Europeans, including missionaries. Indeed, the numbers of Europeans in the British Indian government were kept very small—three to five thousand in the civil service, more in the army—supervising very large numbers of Indian employees. The connectedness with the home country depended on sailing vessels of improved design and speed, but the voyage often took six months. Nevertheless, the relatively faster means of communication made for an altogether new kind of empire in which small numbers of East India Company officials were born, schooled, and (if they were lucky to live long enough) buried in Britain but spent most of their adult life in India, participating in its governance or the Company's commerce, under the direction of Company headquarters, East India House, in faraway London. For all these reasons the political, institutional, and religious character of India's relation to Europe through the agency of British rule was shaped quite differently from its relation to the Islamic world. At the same time, India as a colony of the growing British empire was under very different conditions of rule than the British settler colonies of Canada, the thirteen colonies of America, Australia, New Zealand, the West Indies, and, later, South Africa.

C The Company's military successes in India were accomplished by large numbers of Indian soldiers under British command, and smaller numbers of British soldiers. The means of success lay not so much in military technology, which was not very different from that of the Mughals and other Indian powers, which were fully in the gunpowder era, using artillery and matchlocks or flintlocks. The European advantage lay in the rapidity and massing of firepower achieved through close formations of well-drilled men. The new organizational techniques yielded, at the beginning, outsized victories in the sense that smaller forces under British command bested much larger Indian armies. This advantage could not last forever, and indeed Indian princes very quickly learned to make use of European officers (especially those left unemployed by the defeat of Napoleon) to train their own officers and troops in the European techniques of battlefield organization. As they did so, ever-larger British and allied forces were needed to defeat their opponents in India.³⁸

The other contributing factor to British military success in India was the alliances that the British made with Indian rulers against other

Company
military
advantage

change
over
time

Indian opponents. Such allies retained the rule of their own countries throughout the period of British rule, although at a price, which included leaving their foreign affairs in the hands of the British-Indian government while contributing to the maintenance of the Indian army, sometimes through ceding territories to pay their obligations. These "princely states" remained formally outside British India and managed their own regimes of taxation and administration, and their own armed forces, but each of them had a British "resident" who kept them apprised of British policy, and often interfered with the internal governance and the succession to the kingdom. The Indian princes played a large role in the system of alliances that extended and consolidated British rule in India, but over time their political functions shrank, although the British came to regard their military forces as a valuable and inexpensive supplement to the army of British India and in the world wars. Their presence throughout the two centuries of British rule gave the political map of British India a patchwork quality, with large areas of direct British rule interrupted by the princely states, some of them large as Britain itself, some smaller than an American county (Map 10). In aggregate the princely states covered a third of the landmass of India, right up to the end of British rule.

In 1857 a mutiny of Indian *sepoy*s or soldiers against their British officers in Meerut, near Delhi, spread and morphed into a broad rebellion against British rule that engulfed much of North India. Causes of discontent were many, but the immediate one was the introduction of the Enfield rifle, the cartridges of which were greased with animal fat, and the belief that the grease was beef tallow and pig fat gave offense to Hindu and Muslim sepoy alike. Army mutinies had occurred before, and been contained, notably the Vellore mutiny of 1806 in South India. That mutiny, too, had in it an element of feeling that religion was under attack, in the form of orders imposing a new uniform code that included European hats and forbid beards, earrings, and marks of religious identity on the forehead. Whereas the mutinies at Vellore and other garrisons were quickly suppressed and did not spread, the 1857 mutiny and the resentments out of which it originated grew and fused with the bitterness that Indian princely allies felt over their treatment by the British and the continuing loss of their powers. One of the chief causes of alarm was the policy of "lapse," by which a princely state was dissolved if there was no direct heir, a policy that, in the long run, would lead to the winding up of all the princely states and their disappearance

Sepoy
Rebellion

almost
Puppet
States



MAP 10 British India in 1939

into British India. The mutiny quickly boiled into a full-scale military insurrection attempting to restore the old regime of India prior to the British, the regime of the Mughal, the ruler of the Marathas called the Peshwa, and the Indian princes, and to drive the British out of India. The insurgents took Delhi and declared the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah II emperor of India, as indeed, he always had been in a formal sense, remembering that British India began when the Mughal emperor granted the diwani of Bengal to the Company. The Rebellion also spread to Kanpur, where it was led by Nana Sahib, discontented son of the last Peshwa, to Lucknow, and to parts of central India where the Rani (queen) of Jhansi led a heroic resistance. The mutiny spread

Mutiny
spreads

through army garrisons in various parts of North India, but garrisons elsewhere remained loyal to the British and were used to put it down. After a year the mutiny was finally suppressed. It had been a war of independence, led by the army and the elites of the old regime of the princes, but it was not unified. The Rebellion failed, and India's independence from British rule was to come nearly a century later, under the leadership of quite new elites with quite different ideas of the nation. Although the Rebellion of 1857 did not achieve India-wide extension of its power, it was India-wide in its visibility, and it served to advertise and make vivid the disaffection of many Indians from the colonial regime.

The aftermath of the failed Rebellion was a complex mixture of repression and conciliation by the British. The mutineers themselves, at least those thought to be directly involved in the killing of Britons, were harshly and publicly punished, some of them being tied to the ends of cannon and blown in half. The Mughal Empire was formally abolished, Bahadur Shah being exiled to Burma (Myanmar) to end his days there. Company rule was also brought finally to an end when, in a proclamation of November 1, 1858, Queen Victoria formally assumed the government of India, which in effect meant that India was now ruled directly by Parliament in London rather than by the Company under a charter from Parliament. The royal proclamation, in offering assurances that Indian religions would not be interfered with and that the rights and territory of the princely states would not be encroached on, identified religious alarm over British attempts to reform Indian society and the discontent of the allies as the principal causes of the insurrection, and seemed to abandon the reform program for Indian society formulated in the 1830s. The army was reorganized. In India there had always been an Indian army with British officers and Indian noncommissioned officers and sepoys, as well as a British army with British officers and troops. Now the number of British officers in the Indian army was increased, and the size of the British army was increased as well. Perhaps the most important outcome was the bitterness of feeling that divided Britons and Indians as a result of the killings of British civilians besieged by the insurrectionists and the harsh punishments that followed. Henceforth, resistance to British rule was to take new forms under new leadership, inspired by a new goal—to turn India into a nation-state like those of Europe and the Americas.

Rebellion
aftermath:
changing
methods
of rule

India and European Civilization

British Colonial Rule

British colonial rule was the means by which India came into close contact with the civilization of Europe, and the specifics of that rule shaped the ways in which India was affected by Europe.

It was only gradually that the British developed policies that promoted the introduction of aspects of European civilization in India. The initial conditions of British rule all favored the opposite policy, namely, one of minimal of interference with the customs and traditions of the Indians. The British in India were the servants of a joint stock company that was there to make a profit for its shareholders in Britain, not to undertake costly and profitless projects for the Europeanization of Indian society. Its government was minimal and provided little beyond a law-and-order function; it had, for example, to be forced by the British Parliament to set aside the pitifully small sum of 100,000 rupees for education and the revival of learning. It was very much a government on the cheap and took no responsibility for the education, reform, and uplift of the people. Moreover, it was believed that British rule would not last long and its tenure could be cut short if it provoked Indian unrest by taking measures offensive to Indians. Given that foreign rule is inescapably irksome and unwelcome, the object of government was to “lessen the weight of the chain by which the natives are held in subjection,” in the words of Warren Hastings, the first governor-general—to make its rule as light a burden as possible in every matter that did not touch the profit of the Company and the security of its rule. This mindset had several policy outcomes, the most telling of which concerned religion, the family, and land revenue.

Catholic missionaries, especially Jesuits, had long been resident in India and promoted the spread of Christianity, with the active assistance of the Portuguese. One of the most successful missionary ventures was the production of an abundance of Christian writings in Tamil by the Italian Jesuit Constantius Beschi, who became a virtuoso in that language. The Protestants were slower to get involved. The first were the Danes, at their trading stations in South India (Tranquebar) and Bengal (Serampore, near Calcutta). Lutheran missionaries from Halle, in Germany, were patronized by the Danish king and formed a long and continuing connection with South India.

But the East India Company prohibited missionary activity in its territories, on grounds that it would antagonize Indians, Hindu and

Muslim, and so jeopardize its operations. Thus the first American missionary to sail out of New England after the War of 1812 to promote Christianity in India, Adoniram Judson, was clapped in jail when he reached Madras, and had to turn his attentions to Burma instead. The ban on missions certainly removed a potential source of dissatisfaction of Indians with British rule, but it was intensely criticized in England, so it was not maintained without cost, especially with the rising tide of evangelical religion in England in the opening years of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless the ban lasted many decades until pro-missionary opinion in England successfully pressured Parliament to end it when the East India Company’s charter was renewed in 1813. By that time British Baptist missionaries, Carey, Marshman, and Ward, had been working out of Danish Serampore (Srirampur), near Kolkata, with some success, long before the Church of England had missions in the field. Although the numbers of conversions were tiny in relation to the whole population of India, the missions had a number of significant effects, most notably through their schools, but also through their critiques of Hinduism, as we shall see.

Although the Company’s policy of keeping missionaries out had at last to give way, its noninterference stance toward the family had consequences that last to this day. In England, matters of family law were adjudicated in ecclesiastical courts of the Church of England, and in India the colonial government, with the English pattern in mind, undertook at an early stage to recognize in India a distinct Hindu law and Mohammedan or Muslim law governing matters of marriage and inheritance in its courts, whereas criminal and contract law were made uniform for all Indians. Thus in family matters the colonial regime perpetuated the authority of the ancient Sanskrit law books (*Dharmashastra*) for Hindus and the Sharia law of the Islamic jurists for Muslims, and if anything the authority of these ancient texts became greater, insofar as it tended to replace local customary practices. The British government was wary about interfering with these bodies of law, and legislated on family matters in only a very limited way. One of the consequences was that at a time when the possibility of civil marriage (i.e., marriage outside of religion) was being invented in Europe, there was and remains limited scope for civil marriage in India and most marriages are performed by religious authorities. Although Parliament in independent India has taken charge of creating new laws for marriage and inheritance for Hindus and others, Muslim law in India remains a

separate domain, essentially unchanged from the Anglo-Mohammedan law (as it was called) of the colonial period. The Indian Parliament, with its Hindu majority, undertook to set aside the authority of the Dharmashastra and legislate on family matters for Hindus, but it has felt it too politically sensitive to interfere with the existing religiously based law for Muslims because of their being in the minority, with the result that there is no uniform law of marriage and inheritance for all Indians. (By contrast, the parliaments of Pakistan and Bangladesh, where Muslims are the majority, have not hesitated to legislate concerning marriage.) This impasse has been a source of continuing friction between Hindus and Muslims in the Republic of India, as the law for Hindus has been reformed to bring it in line with current sentiment, but the law for Muslims remains in the hands of religious authorities and is deemed unchangeable by Parliament.

Finally, in the matter of land revenue the early tendency of the Company was also in the direction of minimal interference, and it decided on a policy of permanently settling the revenue obligation of large landlords, called *zamindars*, holding hundreds of villages. The idea behind the Permanent Settlement, as it was called, was that the zamindars, having a fixed, unchanging amount of revenue to be paid every year, would be induced to increase the output of agriculture by investing in improvements, because every additional increment of production by the peasantry would yield the zamindar a pure profit that he would not have to share with the government. The Permanent Settlement was also convenient to the British rulers in that it put the burden of collecting revenue from the cultivators on the shoulders of the zamindar, and relieved the government of the obligation to maintain large numbers of petty officials for this purpose.

In various ways the policy stance of minimal interference and no reform came under increasing pressure in the opening decades of the nineteenth century, when various independent forces converged to create an overwhelming British interest in reform of India along European lines. The change began with the land revenue. Because the overwhelming majority of Indians were farmers it was the main form of government income. The way in which agricultural production was taxed had large consequences both for the rulers and the ruled. When territories of the interior of South India fell to the British in 1792, Thomas Munro was one of the army officers involved in surveying the newly acquired tracts and settling the revenue from them. He settled it,

not on large landholders or zamindars, but on individual cultivators or *ryots* (*Hindi raiyat*). Through Munro's advocacy the *Ryotwari* system became the standard for future revenue settlements in South India and the region of Mumbai, rather than the *Zamindari* system. It sought to give the cultivator a strong property right in his land and so make the land-owning peasant, not some rich zamindar, into an agent for the improvement of agriculture. This entailed a revolution in government. To hold the individual cultivator responsible to pay the land tax, the government needed an army of petty revenue officers to measure each individual field to assess and collect the taxes, under a British collector appointed in each district of every province. Because these revenue officers had low pay and abundant opportunities for peculation and extortion, the collector was given virtually unlimited powers to investigate and dismiss members of his staff. In addition, whereas the executive powers of collectors were originally separated from the judicial powers of the courts set up by the East India Company, collectors now were given extensive judicial powers as well, which was a substantial departure from British governmental principles of separation of powers between the executive, legislative, and judicial functions. This, then, was the pattern of rural government from then on: a highly paid British collector with great executive and judicial power fielding a lowly paid and numerous army of Indian revenue officials. In this way government reached every cultivator directly and not through the intermediacy of a large land owner.

Besides the reform of land revenue, with its liberal ideology of promoting improvement through private property rights and the incentive of personal gain (under the oversight of a distinctly nonliberal collector), the turn to reform was also promoted by the convergence of two distinct strands of liberal reform coming out of England: Utilitarianism that sought government reform and the evangelical movement that sought social reform. These forces as they concerned India were represented by James Mill, leader of the Utilitarians, and Thomas Babington Macaulay and Charles Trevelyan, who had evangelical connections. They were not natural allies, and in fact Macaulay had published a devastating attack on Mill's famous essay on government. Circumstances brought them together, however, especially in India. Mill greatly favored the Munro system of revenue; Macaulay and Mill promoted education of Indians in English rather than the classical languages of Indian law, Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic. Both sides promoted a policy stance of

How a changing Europe impacted India

changing India for their perception of India's good by the massive introduction of European ideas. The decade of the 1830s was a period of massive reform in England as well, with the broadening of voting rights and the reform of parliamentary government to make it more representative and responsible to the voters. It is a paradox that the great era of liberal reform in England promoted in India the idea of liberalism directed from above by a government that was not responsible to the people it ruled, but rather to the Parliament in faraway Britain, a kind of liberal despotism. This new policy stance was justified by a new theory of government in India. Whereas earlier British rulers in India were under no illusions that they were there for the good of anyone but the stockholders of their company, the new reform-minded rulers persuaded themselves and others that they were there for the good of the Indians, to prepare them for self-rule in some distant future, through a policy of gradual social and political reform toward a European model of civilization.

Impacts of European culture on: Over the course of British rule the tide of reform and Europeanization ebbed and flowed. For example, after the Rebellion of 1857 the British concluded that Indian resistance to British rule had been provoked by too much Europeanizing reform and that a more conservative policy was needed to calm Indian fears about their religion and way of life being eroded by government policy. Thus matters of religion and social custom, especially family law, were to be closed off from reform along European lines. Despite this policy, European power and the circulation in India of ideas from Europe created revolutionary effects on Indians. Let us draw up a list of these, which were not always clear-cut and often were contradictory.

family As to family and kinship, the impulse to maintain ancient laws of marriage and inheritance perpetuated the existence of separate legal spheres for Hindus and Muslims and, if anything, extended the scope of the Sanskrit shastras and the Muslim Sharia law in Indian society. Thus in the main family and kinship matters remained firmly under religious authority, upheld by government law courts, and were little touched by reform through the making of new law, except through the decisions of judges in lawsuits. In this respect the effect of British rule was deeply conservative. On the other hand, the critique of Hinduism and Islam by Christian missionaries had a strong focus on the family and on the place of women, fastening on such issues as child marriage and the seclusion of women. This missionary critique of Hindu social

practices did not create large numbers of conversions to Christianity, but it did provoke a movement among Indians for the reform of family law that issued eventually in important changes, such as a raising of the age of marriage and the equal inheritance of sons and daughters.

It was in the political realm that the effects of European civilization were most deeply felt, because the British, without wishing to, brought before Indians the idea of popular sovereignty as a model of government. The government of India was under the sovereignty of the people of Britain, not of India, and in that sense we could say that with respect to India the government was a despotism, the opposite of the popular sovereignty ideal. Increasingly exposed to European practices and ideas in the newly created colonial institutions of higher education through the English language, Indians could not help learning that popular sovereignty as an ideal was sweeping Europe and the Americas, creating what has since become the international norm for government. Indians had known republican forms of government (*sangha*) in the ancient past, but kingship (*rajya*) had long since won out as the normative form, so that by the time of colonial rule the idea of popular sovereignty was both very old and indeed largely forgotten, and at the same time very new in India. In a sense popular sovereignty was at the heart of the liberal ideology of empire, as Indian self-governance was the endpoint of the idea of British tutelage. However, the idea that the people are the only legitimate source of government authority was certainly in contradiction to the colonial relation, and it soon inspired a movement for national self-government, the first stirrings of which were seen by the middle of the nineteenth century. This led to the nationalist struggle against British rule and, ultimately, independence.

The third main head of the effects of European civilization on India concerns higher learning, science especially, and technology. Here the timing of empire had significant consequences, because just after Britain acquired territorial rule in India it underwent the Industrial Revolution, making it the first industrial country in the world. The effects of the Industrial Revolution profoundly reshaped Britain, and they changed Britain's economic relations with India just as profoundly. Up to about 1800 Europe had paid dearly for luxury goods from India, especially fine textiles of all kinds, and a great many words for textiles came into English from that trade, such as *calico*, *muslin*, *chintz*, and *bandana*. The English were great traders of woolen cloth in Europe, but could not sell it in India, and had to acquire New World silver in the

politics

technology

Amsterdam markets to trade for Indian textiles. These terms of trade were largely unchanged from the times of the Roman trade with India, in which again India supplied manufactured goods in exchange for coined money. After 1800 the terms of the India trade began to change, and change drastically, as English industrialists in Manchester developed a machine-based textile industry for the manufacture of cotton cloth. This new industry made cotton cloth so cheap that it undercut handloom-made cotton cloth in India, even with the transportation costs of shipping American or Mediterranean cotton to Manchester, and Manchester cloth to India added on. Moreover, British rule ensured that cotton cloth from Manchester met no tariff barriers in India, as it would have if Indians had been ruling their own country. To be sure, the effects of industrialization were also socially disruptive in Britain, whose handloom industry was also destroyed and whose self-employed weavers lost their livelihood and were forced to become industrial factory workers at a wage. These effects have spread worldwide and could not be stopped, although they could have been slowed and made less harsh in their social effects in India if it had had national self-government. The overall result was that India became a supplier of raw materials and an importer of (now machine-made) manufactured goods, a complete reversal of the former terms of trade. The destruction of the handicraft industry of cloth production was not, however, the end of the story. Over the long run, Indian entrepreneurs, importing English machinery at first, created a machine-based textile industry in India that has since undercut the textile industry of England. Thus the long-term effect has been a spread of the new technology that, under conditions of free trade, favored India's entrepreneurial know-how and its low industrial wages.

The story of textiles is one of the major ways in which new technologies from Europe were dramatically changing India; the introduction of railways was another, which has since become completely domesticated to the Indian scene, and indispensable to the daily life of people everywhere. Indians quickly took to engineering and science and made them their own. India's former advancement in mathematics and astronomy had made a contribution to the scientific eminence that Europe achieved in the Renaissance and provided a fund of knowledge on which Indians could draw in coming to terms with the new science and technology emanating from Europe. India's ancient engagement with science had left an imprint on the Indianate world it created in Central, East, and Southeast Asia, and its engagement with phonology

and grammar now shaped Europe through the European study of Sanskrit and the discovery of Indo-European. The exchange of ideas was not an equal one, but it was not all one-sided, either.

In the end, perhaps the profoundest effects of European learning on India lie in the idea of history. European scholarly study of ancient India completely revolutionized the understanding of India's deep past, from its representation in the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Puranas, and connected it with the history of other countries and civilizations. The new history, and the new political ideal of the nation-state, could be combined to create a new idea of India and of its trajectory toward the future, toward independence.