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**Understanding P. R. Sarkar: Epistemic boundaries, critical
commentaries and comparative analyses**

Inayatullah, Sohail Tahir, Ph.D.

University of Hawaii, 1990

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UNDERSTANDING P.R. SARKAR:
EPISTEMIC BOUNDARIES, CRITICAL COMMENTARIES AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSES

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
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BY

Sohail Tahir Inayatullah

Dissertation Committee:

James Dator, Chairperson

Robert Bobilin

Johan Galtung

Michael Shapiro

Robert Stauffer

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other discourses but real human suffering. Shalini Bhatnagar helped me understand Indian history.

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ABSTRACT

Indian philosopher and activist Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar is the focus of this study. Taking a critical interpretive approach, we attempt not to explain but to understand Sarkar and his work. Chapter one alternatively reads Sarkar's life sympathetically placing him in the mythological hero narrative and critically placing him in the politics of mythification. Chapter two places Sarkar's work within positivist, interpretive and poststructural sites of knowledge. We develop Sarkar's work not as a predictive theory, but as an alternative cultural approach and as a political asset that allows voices and realities previously silenced to be heard.

Chapter three places Sarkar in the context of the Indian episteme. Sarkar uses the Indian episteme as a point of departure but articulates a new metaphysic and an alternative economic growth/distribution mechanism that radically transforms Indian thought. Chapter four contextualizes Sarkar's theory of history in various Indian constructions of time, space and power. While Sarkar takes the classic cyclical historical viewpoint, he includes within it the possibility of individual and societal spiritual and economic transformation, thus allowing an exit from the tragedy of history.

Chapter five summarizes the prose of his history. We trace his various movements, stages and dysjunctions: the worker, warrior, intellectual, and capitalist eras, the worker's revolution and the intended spiritually-led permanent revolution. Chapter six places

Sarkar in the context of other macro historians; specifically, Ssu-Ma Chien and Chang Hsueh-Cheng from Chinese macro history, Ibn Khaldun from Islamic macro history and from the West--Vico, Comte, Hegel, Marx, Gramsci, Pareto, Mosca, Spengler, Toynbee, Sorokin, Voegelin, Foucault, Polak and Galtung. Chapter seven situates Sarkar's social laws within an alternative politicized construction of science and social theory. Chapter eight concludes this study asserting that Sarkar's theoretical moves and social movements will most likely be among the most significant in the coming century if not centuries.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING SARKAR

We are proceeding towards effulgence from darkness, from imperfection along the golden steps to perfection. No obstacle on the way will be able to stop our advancement. Pushing aside and smashing all obstacles and impediments we will move along our destined path. Our ideological rationality is our valuable asset, the blissful glow of macrocosmic effulgence is our goal and the inherent desire to bring well-being to all living creatures is our way. Moving ahead is the very wont of life. Wasting valuable time in lethargy is nothing but inertness; hence we must keep moving. The chant of our forward movement will be the very expression of our vocality, the very pulsation of our life.

P.R. Sarkar, Full Moon of May Message, 1989¹

TO BEGIN WITH

Embedded in the words of Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar's message is a notion of linear time; a notion that tomorrow can be better than today. His message is meant to inspire individuals to image a new future and move towards it. Yet at the same time, there is an alternative message as well. It is not incidental that the message is given on the full moon of May, for Sarkar also lives very much in the cyclical time of antiquity, not solely in the quantitative linear time of modernity. The full moon is not simply another day for Sarkar, rather, it is a day that evokes and recovers historic meanings. The full moon is of the cycle; of the rise and fall, of the waxing and waning of life, of civilization. Yet there is a linearity, a movement from darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge, from imbalance to balance.

This notion of opposites is central to Sarkar's metaphysics. Like other dialectical thinkers, Sarkar asserts that obstacles lead to

individual and societal growth. They are a necessity. Challenges lead to responses: to the resolution of conflicts, for what is, is essentially ripe with opposites, with complimentary contradictions.

This move from darkness to light is not solely a mystical move; it is not the traditional dichotomy of the sun as the rational and the moon as the irrational; the sun as the conscious surface and the moon as the unconscious deep. Rather, Sarkar's project is not to leave the rationality of scientific modernity for the irrationality of the religious; rather it the creation of a new rationality that . attempts to reconcile traditional dilemmas between the spiritual and the material, between the scientific and the mystical, individual and collective, structure and agency. His rationality is centered not only on humans though; an integral part of the rational is pure undefined and unbounded Consciousness. Finally, his rationality is not one that excludes the environment of animate and inanimate beings normally thought of as unliving, rather, it includes all living creatures.

Thus, his rationality is grounded in a universal humanism, what Sarkar calls a neo-humanism; a new humanism that has as it goal a consciousness that cannot be described, but which can be personally experienced as blissful, beyond pleasure and pain. The grammar of the "blissful" again is central in the Sarkarian cosmology, for it is that state of mind that is the end all of existence. It is not the accumulation of wealth, beauty, knowledge or wisdom, rather it is a state of unity wherein distinctions between subject-object no longer exist, where the mind moves in a continuous flow of unconditional

love. The location of the preferred or the good in the blissful also ties Sarkar into the Indian spiritual and philosophical tradition, for the goal of life in this project is not the attainment of a specific quality--virtue, beauty, patience or goodness--but the location of self in a state of no-qualities, what, then, positively has been called, "bliss." Thus, not the mental/behavioral, but the spiritual.

This state is not the collective utopia of the European Enlightenment thinkers; rather it is the eupsychia of the individual. For instance, for Hegel the ideal state is that of Being realizing itself. The vehicle for this realization is the nation. For Aurobindo it is the association of humans; for Sarkar, the vehicle is the individual. A good society is one that manages to represent harmoniously the spiritual needs of its individuals (Carspecken 1987, 29).

From the traditional Tantric shamanistic perspective the problem with the construction of the good has been the problem of what William Irwin Thompson (1976) calls misplaced concreteness. The real cannot be translated into institutions such as "God," "nation," or "society." Thus, the tantric has consciously remained on the fringe, unintelligible to all--silent, naked, and disruptive. However, Sarkar as a mystic does not seek unintelligibility. Unlike some branches of Tantra, he does not seek to disrupt all pieties. Sarkar is not like the Tantric yogi who lives naked, unconcerned with body, food, manners, gender, government and economy. Nor does Sarkar advocate that one sleep with one's mother, defile one's sister, and rest one's

feet on the head of one's guru (Garrison 1983). Rather he breaks with this perspective and argues that his philosophy and the movements he has begun are consciously and eminently rational. The rational is the real; it is that which leads to the spiritual, to the maximization of individual and collective "happiness" and a minimization of pain. The irrational is not the right brain and the "intuitive" of the New Age spiritual movement (Ferguson 1980); it is not counterpoised to the rationality of modernity. Rather to Sarkar modernity is the irrational for it exists within a grid of the geopolitical. That is, it exists within a network of nations, religions and ideologies which have as a goal the finite, the limited and thus the dogmatic; it exists within a grid of discursive identity that necessitates an opposite. For example, identity in one nation means non-identity in another; identity in one religion means non-identity in another; identity in one gender means non-identity in another. For Sarkar, the rational must be an identity that is all embracing, the ultimate real. Being itself. His philosophical point of departure, Tantra, then is the struggle to break out of all boundaries, to dialectically transcend the limits of what is, and move to a location where one exists in the presence of the spirit, not the nation, or as Sarkar states it, any "ism."

At the same time, Sarkar participates in the traditional religious discourse which discourse claims a more profound revelation of truth that is not irrational nor arational. Rather, it is the truth and thus, a priori rational and, of course, natural. Unfortunately, the frames of meaning of modernity have hidden or distorted these

alternative spiritual frames of meaning as escapes from the real, refusals of the sensate world, or as prehistorical and prescientific (Nandy 1987). But this is to be expected, as for Sarkar, everything that is moves in various cyclical, pulsative patterns. The banishment of the spiritual from modern life is part of his reason of being; his mission is to recover these vanquished meanings and at the same time to reinterpret them to create a new tomorrow.

It is through this reinterpretation that Sarkar separates himself from conventional constructions of Hinduism or the Indian condition or indeed the religious. Like the Protestant ethic of the West and Bushido of Japan, Sarkar has articulated a code of behavior which is amenable to economic growth, to a dynamism, to a distribution discourse that acknowledges the value of differences between individuals. For him, economic equity is a goal, the intellectual and existential sameness of totalitarianism is not. Yet at the same time Sarkar does not neglect the distribution formula of the democratic socialists; he argues for a limit to wealth accumulation and a progressive distribution of wealth. Central to his alternative political economy is his location of the spiritual and the intellectual in the language of resources. They are assets that contribute to the good society; most of humanity's present predicaments are caused by their misuse and underuse. At the same time Sarkar distances himself from conventional New Age utopian spiritual thinking.

Sarkar believes that new age thinking makes a critical mistake by arguing that the transpersonal is similar to the pre-ego state, the

archetype for Jung, myth for Joseph Campbell (Towsey 1986). The transpersonal is not a return to the Freudian id: it is not that type of unrestricted and undisciplined primitive freedom. For Sarkar, there is a dialectical progression from the crude mind (located in the senses) to the ego mind (located in the intellect) and the transpersonal causal mind (located outside of brain in the collective mind). The solution to modernity is not the return to the primitive, the shamanistic, or a return of the ancient gods. It is the building of a new spiritual rationality. Consciousness has already emerged with the breakdown of the bicameral mind, one cannot return to preconsciousness, to an inability to distinguish personal thoughts with the voices of Gods (Jaynes 1982). For Sarkar, the movement now is to a deeper layer of mind which is increasingly abstract and grounded in bliss; the body and intellect are mere tools for this level of mind.

In addition, unlike the historical Indian conception, he is not simply placing the attainment of bliss--of the eternal--as the sole goal of life: Rather by calling for movement in individual and community life, in calling for change, he is questioning philosophies that are solely other worldly oriented. But like the ancients, this movement is a chant still, a word that represents the real, the ultimate Real and its realization by symbolic participation in it. For unlike other philosophers, Sarkar is also located in the guru discourse. The world is known not solely through the intellect, but it is also divinely revealed through spiritual practices and through devotion to the Other, the Supreme. Moreover, he is perceived by the

faithful as someone that is omniscient, that can give boons to the true, that can bestow healing and powers upon individuals through his power--a power that comes from the touch, the sight, the presence and the word--and more importantly can lead others to enlightenment.

Sarkar .hen should not be read only as an intellectual nor should he be seen only as a mystic. Indeed, there are many sites in which we can place him. Unfortunately, most of our situating practices come from Western categories; what language does one have for someone who is guru, mystic, political philosopher, linguist, historian, movement leader, to mention a few categories. Genius, of course, would simply be a discription that privileges the intellectual construction of the real; guru privileges the spiritual dimension; and movement leader, the activist, praxis dimension. Much of this study is an attempt to find a location for Sarkar within and without his own Indian tradition. In addition to comparative analysis, we can ask whom does he speak to. While he often remains in the devotional discourse, he also speaks to the intellectual, the revolutionary, and the movement organizer. At the same time, he is not speaking to the academy nor is he speaking to the business community, Sarkar's effort is to speak to create a new culture, a new discourse, a new cosmology. Part of this effort comes from self-interpretation but most of it from his students' interpretation of his³.

A BIT OF PERSONAL HISTORY

When attempting to understand this cosmology, the task then becomes how is one to approach it. What aspect of Sarkar to stress?

What to ignore? And at another level, what will be silenced by the choice of discourse chosen and created? What will be privileged? These are issues and problems which we will continually address.

Fortunately or unfortunately, his response when asked by his students and followers as to which realm of meaning he himself is in is cryptic. His much quoted response is "I was a mystery, I am a mystery, I will remain a mystery³" (Kalynesvarananda Avadhuta 1986, 11). This assertion might be a textual strategy in terms of not allowing the interpreter to force the self in any particular grammar or it might be an effort restate that that which is true cannot be explained or understood for the will to understanding leads to a distortion in the truth itself. At the same time this assertion places him outside of conventional discourse and allows for the creation of a new mythology.

The other way to extract the problem of identity is to see whom Sarkar aligns himself with. In his writings we find him speaking to those who are central to the Indian philosophical discourse; such as, Shankaracharya, Sidhartha Guatama, Maharishi Kapila, Caetanya Mahaprabhu, Tagore, Bose, Ghandi, among others. But specifically he speaks of two figures: Shiva and Krishna. To him, both were extrahistorical figures. They existed empirically, but they played a grand, mythological, role in righting the balance of the world. Like other philosophers who speak from the ancient, classical episteme, the rise and fall of Dharma, the truth or the way is among the central theoretical constructs of history.

According to Sarkar, both Shiva and Krishna were figures who brought about cultural renaissances in their time and, more significantly, fought against evil and for righteousness. Both endured incredible trials and traumas and both were eventually victorious in their battles. While Sarkar does not privilege his own self when he speaks of these two historical figures, it is noteworthy that Sarkar too has started numerous renaissance movements and also speaks asserts that the most critical task is that of righting truth in the world. Too, he has been a controversial figure in India. He spent seven years in prison; his organizations were all banned by Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi in 1975; all his schools and other projects closed; monks and nuns brutalized; and both communistic and capitalist nations have refused him entry. Communist nations for his intellectual/spiritual activities and capitalist nations for revolutionary writings; an alternative reading is that he has been refused entry because of the alleged violent acts by some of his followers during the Indian Emergency (Schneider 1983).

For Sarkar, Shiva aided in the epochal transition from humans as animals qua survival of the fittest to humans as family qua social responsibility. In addition, he systematized spiritual activities (for example, stages of meditation), invented dance and music.

Krishna had two main roles. The first was to bring about a spiritual transformation through the bhakti cult. This was the notion that the good could be realized through the heart, through the worship of the symbol of the transcendental: Krishna as godhead. Krishna placed the devotional system first, ahead of the yogic system of

enlightenment through discipline and austerities and the system of enlightenment through intellectual questioning; that is, the view that one arrives at the real through negation, neti, neti. Combined together, the yogic and intellectual views, according to Sarkar's interpretation of Krishna, resulted in a escapist, ideational society. In contrast, Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita reminded Arjuna of his duty to fight, to struggle. Whether one interprets this historic and myth laden conversation as a call to fight against the demons of the self, or whether it means that Arjuna had to follow through in his duty to unite India even if it meant the death of his beloved (but enemies) cousins, for Sarkar's purpose, it is a confirmation of the view of struggle, of dialectics and their resolution; a struggle that is valid at the personal level and at the societal level. It is as his earlier message exhorts, a call to move forward, to reject the old and embrace the new.

Thus Shiva is in many ways the father/mother of the family and society, and Krishna the father/mother of the larger India, but Sarkar by placing himself textually in their midst, sees his mission as that of providing the means for the unification of humanity. Of course, Sarkar never states this as his role. Gurus are far too wily to make this type of mistake. To maintain legitimacy they must stay outside the ego-identification game, yet at the same time they must locate themselves somewhere to gain or allow the devotional process to occur.

When pressed during his embittered court case by the Prosecution if he was like Shiva and Krishna, a taraka brahma--the door between the world of the known and the unknown--Sarkar replied in the

negative" (Reiter 1976, 2). And yet in his article, "The Transitional Period", he writes how in times of crises, in transitional eras between epochs, great leaders who represent the visions of the future, emerge to bring a new era (Sarkar, 1987, 62-64). These are universal women and men. But in the much longer cycle, the moral cycle of the rise and fall of Dharma it takes a taraka brahma to destroy the old and bring in the new. While he does not claim this site of reality production, many of his students certainly do. Read this way many of the texts of his numerous movements are attempts to create a mythology to provide evidence and entrance into this world view. Read this way, the critical question that guides this study is clearly: what is Sarkar up to? can be answered the creation of a new cosmology, a new discourse, a new way of knowing and thus being and doing. Our question then becomes is this possible? It is possible to create a new way of knowing, an entirely new worldview and yet have it be intelligible to those in the present? And if it is entirely intelligible then in what ways is its reinscribing the present.

Among the strategies available in creating a new discourse is that of rethinking time. The present is seen as a transitional point between a tragic past and a bright future to be. In Sarkar's words, "Human civilization now faces the final moment of a critical juncture. The dawn of a glorious new era is on its one side and the worn out skeleton of the past on the other. Humanity has to asopt either one or the other" (Ananda Marga 1982, 22). At the level of the person, his birth is now interpreted by his followers as having special significance as is the expected date of the beginning of Sarkar's

spiritual socialism, in the first decade of the next century. These textual move places him immediately in dramatic time; time that begins with a great event. Resituating time is among the myth creation process necessary to begin a new discourse. One of the ways to understand him is then to seek his work in the context of myth generation: in the context of the genesis of a new cosmology.

Besides his historic birth time, there are other stories which augment the myth creation process. Among those include Sarkar claiming the ability to see the room of his birth from his mother's womb, trying to sit up at birth, and wanting to communicate with others but not having the physical resources to do so (Ananda Marga 1976, 10-13).

Also useful for our interpretive effort is a story when he was only a few years old. In this story, every night he is taken far away across the river Ganges to a wide stretch of sand. There an old man meets him. The old man carries the trishula, the trident of Shiva and attempts to teach the child the Shiva mantra. Sarkar is annoyed that his sleep is lost every night. Finally one night, he snatches the trident away and attacks the old man. The man disappears and in his place stands Shiva. Sarkar has a realization of his past lives and his future destiny (13).

While one may read this critically or cynically and argue it is simply a story to gain believership, credibility, that is myth creation not as meaning generation but mythification as the obscuring of truth for purposes of power. However, Joseph Campbell in The Hero With A Thousand Faces (1968) avoiding the truth/false of stories

problem is far more instructive. Myth is the unconscious, the deeper patterns which give meanings and make understandable the moments and monuments of our daily lives.

Sarkar's stories are the classic stories of the hero. There is a challenge. A battle. A struggle. The hero meets the challenge and is victorious. Great boons are bestowed upon him. Every religion, ancient or modern, has this. Equally significant is that the old man is nothing but oneself, for he disappears when young Sarkar attempts to eliminate him. It is his Sarkar's own consciousness projecting to resolve a fundamental conflict.

The next significant story occurred when Sarkar was four. While with his parents at the Shiva temple, Sarkar began to recite the Shiva mantra in accurate classic intonation much to the shock of the priest and others. It was the same mantra he had learned from the yogi by the river. Later when he was five years old, his parents and sister criticized him for not studying, for only lying on his bed and dreaming and for not even being able to learn Bengali. The next morning in response he wrote his name down in six different scripts. About those early years Sarkar later wrote, "A list of my activities for the future and the method of doing them as well as a rough plan were prepared by me while lying on the bed of that hut in Bamunpara. Whatever you see today is the yield of my thought process at the age of seven years" (Sugatananda Avaduta 1985, 10).

While these stories establish him in the guru discourse, another story places him in a different perspective. Sarkar narrates this story:

I was a very young boy then, possibly 8-9 years old, and I used to go to the field at the bottom of Jamalpur Hills every day. Many renowned astrologers had seen my horoscope after my birth, and the majority of them had declared that I would vanquish all religions and establish my own Dharma. This revelation about my future personality frightened the fanatic followers of a particular religion. I am deliberately omitting the name of that religion. They thought that if all the religions were vanished, theirs, too, could not survive. Consequently, they decided to end my life so that the very cause of their fear would be eliminated forever. This would have saved all the religions from virtual extinction, which they considered to be a great calamity for humanity. They were always in search of a suitable opportunity to kill me, but they couldn't get one until I started visiting the field regularly. I climbed up the hill; they chased me. When they were sure no one else was present on the spot, they caught hold of me and tied my waist and belly with dry clothes. They sprinkled kerosene oil on the clothes and lit them up. The clothes were burning furiously. I stood motionless. They were watching the scene with anxiety and patience. Because of the heat of the burning flames, my stomach burst forth, throwing out my intestine and other internal organs. I then fell down. Thinking that I was dead, they fled away. But I didn't die, I was in a comma. After I regained consciousness, the clothes were still emitting smoke. With great difficulty I got up, held all the organs (which had since come out) with both my hands, and proceeded towards home. Whosoever saw me in that condition fainted, it was such a horrible scene! I was thereafter admitted to a hospital and was stitched and treated for three months before being discharged (Kumar 1984, 22).

Along with the hero mythology--the struggle against evil--the other significant aspect of this story is that it is a model, a preview of things to come in Sarkar's life.

The next significant story which is important to mention occurs in the early 1950's. It helps lay the foundations for the numerous discourses we wish to deconstruct and analyse. By this time Sarkar had become a known mystic with a small following. However he continued to work as an accountant for the railways. In this particular story, he had gathered five of his disciples together and told them that each would be allowed one wish which he would fulfill. This is the personal representation of the wishing tree, again so

prominant in world mythlogy. His disciples interestingly enough decided not to wish for power, wealth, beauty, sex, eternal life or any of the other fabled wishes. Instead, they ask that Sarkar remain alive for another fifty or so years and until he could establish a spiritual oriented society on the planet. Sarkar, then, instead of dying replies, "so be it" (Harigovind Acharya 1977, 8). This story besides bringing forth the notion of social responsibility clearly shows that the will of Being can emerge in many ways, there is a plan and it can expressed in a myriad of ways that are unkown until after the fact, thus there is structure and agency. Sarkar was ready to leave his body, but the wish of the people bade him to stay. This story also locates him in the Bodhisattva discourse; the one who exists without samskara--without personal desires and needs that must be expressed--he exists not for himself, but for the purpose of others. Sarkar then exists for the development of the collective good. Whether Sarkar had seen this at seven is not discussed as it might be in the Western context, that is, if he had known of the future, did he know of this event. If not then the problem of error creeps in. But for the Indian mind and especially for the Sarkarian world view this is not a problem.

At this point Sarkar began his spiritual organization Ananda Marga or the path of bliss. A few years later he started other sister organizations, Renaissance Universal and Renaissance Artists and Writers Association as well as the more directly political, PROUTist Universal. While this is not the place to detail the rise and fall and rise again of Sarkar's organizations, that is, a sociology and a

politics of societal movements; sufficient to say that the Ananda Marga followed a cyclical pattern of rise of power and then a fall. By the late 1960's Ananda Marga had grown to allegedly a few million followers. The Indira Gandhi government had banned any civil service workers from joining it arguing that it was a subversive organization. The Ananda Marga version, as we might expect, was that its workers were moral and honest and thus opposed the massive corruption of Indian government. The government version was that Ananda Marga had become a defacto political party and that it was thus not a religious organization (which was allowed) but a radical political movement (which was far more contentious) (Schneider 1983).

One of Sarkar's most senior monks defected in 1971 turning State's evidence. This follows the mythic pattern of the closest disciple betraying the Master). Sarkar was arrested on over a 100 counts ranging from murder to homosexuality. The organization was a banned during the 1975 Indian Emergency, its school closed, workers tortured, and its membership decimated. In prison, Ananda Marga and PROUTist Universal managed to work with other banned political groups. They then perceived Ananda Marga in a different light than the fanatical marginal image that had been constructed by the Indira government. Sarkar to protest the tortures and conditions that his workers were placed under endured a five year fast. His only sustenance was a daily fortified cup of milk. This continued the hero mythology and managed to keep the organization vitalized: the notion of the fast and sacrifice.

The next decline occurred during the late 1970's when he was found guilty by the Courts, although the International Commission of Jurists and other international groups asserted that he had not received a fair trial. In protest, a subgroup of the PROUT movement allegedly threatened government officials, threw blood at diplomats and firebombed numerous Indian embassies. Vimala Schneider in her The Politics of Prejudice: the Use and Abuse of Power to Suppress the Ananda Marga Movement chronicles these events and attempts to deal with issue, albeit from an Ananda Marga partisan view. Schneider concludes that most of the alleged terrorist actions were part of a disinformation campaign, with a few actual incidents done by overzealous/misguided followers. These various activities led to Ananda Marga being named a terrorist organization with Interpol, FBI and CIA actively monitoring members' activities. The most famous case was in Australia where three members were convicted of conspiracy to murder the then leader of the National Front in Australia, and suspected bombing of the Sidney Hilton Hotel during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 1978. However, as Tim Anderson in Free Alister, Dunn and Anderson reported the case was manufactured by the Australian secret police to gain more funding to stave off possible budget cuts. The three were pardoned and obtained sizeable civil awards from the government for their many years in prison.

The 1970's were difficult to Sarkar and his movements as well. Eight monks and nuns self-immolated in protest of Sarkar's jailing. His health deteriorated in prison where he could hardly see or speak. However after prison his health returned. Following Indira Gandhi's

defeat, the Supreme Court released Sarkar. His travel plans around the world were truncated as the Filipino, American, Japanese, Italian and other governments refused him permission to land. In 1989 the American government began to reverse its earlier ruling that Sarkar was a communist terrorist and thereby should not be allowed entry. The communist allegation results from his theory of history which argues that there are inevitable, often violent, revolutions in all political systems.

In his classic mythic language Sarkar had this to say in his yearly messages when he was in jail.

History bears testimony that whenever persons state the absolute truth in any sphere of life, whether it be spiritual, social, economic or otherwise, sought clarifications of doubts, or protested against injustices, the evil forces forthwith plotted against them, administered poison to the them, and slandered them, jumped on them with rage, misused their authority against them, and mercilessly dealt them blow after blow. But the blows boomeranged and ultimately the evil forces were annihilated by those very blows. Remember, by an unalterable decree of history, the evil forces are destined to meet their doomsday (Ananda Marga 1982, 36).

This is clearly different from the language of the traditional yogis; in fact, its style is that of prophecy or that of a revolutionary. Moreover, as with numerous other passages, Sarkar often reverts to the laws of karma. They are intended to give hope during periods of grave crisis, reminding the believers that in the final analysis that which is true will survive and that which is distorted will die. This metaphor of truth and falsehood is the central metaphor of Indian history, from Shiva, Krishna and onwards to present day.

However, the history of Sarkar's movements can be interpreted in a variety of ways. One might use the sociological discourse and examine the rise and fall of social movements or one might use the political/national security discourse, or one can use the world systems discourse, thus placing Ananda Marga and Proutist Universal in the category of anti-systemic movements.

In Sarkar's own view movements follow a dialectical path: thesis, antithesis and synthesis; a movement is born, it is suppressed (if it truly challenges the distribution of meanings and resources), then oppressed and if it survives these challenges it will be victorious. The strength of the movement can be measured by its oppression. If it is truly part of the new, and if the present is one of brutality and corruption, then certainly there will be major battles. Costly battles.

In 1981, however, allegations spread through Calcutta that Ananda Marga members were stealing children. A mob formed and eighteen monks and nuns were burnt alive. A dozen, in addition, were severely injured. Interestingly, Mother Theresa who also has similar projects in Calcutta but at a smaller scale when compared to Ananda Marga's has received numerous International awards instead of suppression or oppression. The Sarkarian response to this would be that Mother Theresa is apolitical, only serving the poor and not questioning the structural basis for poverty. Moreover, she, unlike Sarkar, has not refused to meet with world leaders unless they change their individual life behavior or receive initiation into his meditation practices.

In addition, the years of jail, the "martyrdom" of numerous monks managed to spread Sarkar's projects throughout the world. Sarkar's intellectual discourse has been recently popularized by Ravi Batra in his The Great Depression of 1990.

The key to understanding Sarkar's life is its mythic nature; that is, we take a phenomenological approach, not one that attempts to discover the one truth of his history. Central to understanding Sarkar's history include his omniscience, his incredible struggles followed by incredible victories and a belief by his followers of his saint/godhood if not his role as world spiritual teacher.

Equally important in understanding Sarkar is the rise and fall and rise of his organization; the movement progressed from only a few initiates in the 1950's, to tens of thousands in in the 1960s, to again a few thousand in the 1970's and then growth again in the 1980's. Should the movement expect struggle again? If Sarkar's plan is to create new levels of awareness and success then certainly the 1990's might be as trying as the 1970's. Using Sarkar's own typology of physical, mental and spiritual, if the first cycle was political and physical oppression, the next stage would be intellectual scrutiny, a battle of ideologies. If this is survived than the final stage is perhaps the most difficult, the spiritual struggle of worldly victory--the problem of governance, of the possibility of the victors becoming the new tyrants.

THE STUDY

Having provided a bit of background of Sarkar's personal history and the world view from which he emerges, what then is the purpose and hope of this study? What are its boundaries? What are its goals? First, this study is part of a much larger project. Sarkar's works have an incredible wide range. He has spoken extensively on nearly every field from global history to biology to literature. But while Sarkar has spoken a great deal, much of his work is not yet intelligible to a wider audience because of the way he speaks and the Bengali language he uses. A few of his students have begun the epistemic translation task and translating Sarkar's works into other styles of knowledge--academic, popular, and educational, for example.

For example, Sarkar's recent contribution to Indian theory of evolution argues for the existence of a new substance, microvita. These are the basic units of life but exist more as mind than as matter. They are the missing factors that help explain material processes and numerous present scientific anomalies. They carry ideas and diseases throughout the universe and are "the mysterious emanations of the Cosmic Factor"(Sarkar 1987a, 8: 23). This is obviously not intelligible to those who are not versed in the works and languages of the of the Indian episteme or in mystical God-talk. Rudreshananda Avaduta in his Microvita: Cosmic Seeds of Life has begun the task of placing Sarkar's microvita theory in the context of other theories of life. However, most other writings by Sarkar's students have attempted to substantiate within the narrow but useful empirical oriented definition of proof his various theories; Ravi Batra in

economics and history and Michael Towsey on cosmology and consciousness.

None, however, have been critical of his social theory or attempted to place his social theory in a comparative context or indeed culturally or historically locate his theory at all. They have sought merely to uphold the text, not understand it on terms other than its own. They have not sought to locate his theory in Indian or Islamic, Chinese or Western social intellectual history. For in doing so, the text would become discursive, that is, it would cease to be prima facie truth, and instead be grounded in culture and criticism, that is, in the human story.

This study will take the works of P.R. Sarkar and place them in the intellectual and historical context of other key thinkers. It will attempt to examine Sarkar's cosmology, specifically his theory of history, his theory of civilizations, his alternative political-economy, his theory of consciousness, and epistemology and his development ethics, and his vision of the future. The approach will be critical deconstructionist and comparative. The focus will be on Sarkar's theory of change, and the episteme from which he speaks. His alternative political economy and his theory of leadership will be touched upon but the thrust will remain at the temporal dimension and at the level of power.

The work will thus be a textual interpretation of Sarkar's works. We will not be directly interested in developing, for example, indicators of his cyclical theories, nor will we be interested in applying them to various regions and determining their forecasting

viability. Instead what will follow is how Sarkar's cosmology compares with other compelling epistemologies, theories of history, and visions of the future, specifically those of key similar yet culturally different thinkers such as Ibn Khaldun, Ssu-Ma Chien, Frederick Hegel, Giambattista Vico, Gaetano Mosca, Vilfredo Pareto, August Comte, Pitirim Sorokin and Arnold Toynbee. At the same time we will be placing Sarkar in Indian thought, alongside the six orthodox schools and the three heterodox schools, and in the Indian construction of history.

We will attempt to ascertain how they construct history; what is their vision of the future. What are the key factors that cause social change? Are they internal or external? Is history and future linear or cyclical or both? Is it possible, indeed, to know the past, present and future? The approach will be to enter these cosmologies from a discursive perspective. As we search for problems within Sarkar's cosmology, we will ask what purposes are served by introducing a cyclical theory of history. What does having such a theory do to the overall cosmology? Who does it privilege? What discourses does it enable and what discourses does it depoliticize, that is, make irrelevant and even frivolous. This will be done in the context, as mentioned earlier, of various other critical perspectives.

RELEVANCE

Why do this? And why concentrate on Sarkar?

Most prominent is Sarkar's uniqueness. In India, he is one of the few "God-men" (this term has currency within the Indian philosophical

context, but within western discourses, of course, this category is non-existent). Sarkar not only has an organization of yogi monks/nuns whose intention it is to spread basic Tantra meditation practices, but he also has a whole social service relief organization, that of Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team. But what makes him unique, and the various organizations he has established, is that he asks why is there hunger, why is there poverty, why is there human suffering. His conclusion, unlike others who argue that it is related to self, (that is our karma not in the personal sense but in the cultural sense of a people who deserve to be colonized, "we are rotten people" as it is so often said in South Asia) or related to military (that is, poverty exists because of lack of organization and discipline), or related to development (the institutions are inappropriate, the religion backward, the people lack greed) is that it is India's place in the capitalist system, its colonial legacy. This is a legacy of the maldistribution of resources, of underdevelopment and overdevelopment, of center and periphery, of rich and poor, of the domination of the few by the many, and the development of economic, political, cultural discourses to legitimize this domination. However, Sarkar does not use the above terms. For him, there is an imbalance between the physical, mental and spiritual domains and between the individual and the collective. For him, it is that India suffers from geo-political sentiment (nationalism), socio-sentiment (racism and casteism), it is not imbued with a spiritual consciousness. Finally, the leadership is immoral, working on the principle of ego gratification instead of social responsibility. Finally, present and past problems result

from a misuse and non-use of physical, intellectual and spiritual resources.

Sarkar's efforts have been to construct a way out. His alternative is the Progressive Utilization Theory or PROUT. Largely this is the self-reliance model but coupled with a new spiritual episteme. However, unlike the Gandhian effort--the Bhudan movement, for example--Sarkar is far more radical in his land reform demands. Simply asking the landlords to give up their land is absurd as the structure is too deep, the discourse privileges the powerful. The key to Sarkar's political economy is the cooperative system; also integral are limits to private ownership and income. This involves a rethinking of resources toward intellectual and spiritual resources. There is also a move from a materialistic consumption vision to a spiritual needs vision. Obviously to do this, one needs at least normative power, if not military and economic. One needs revolutionary changes. However, this revolution must be far deeper than simply seizing state power for one remains within the world interstate system, or in Sarkar's language in the worldview of the Vaeshyan. Moreover, the ideas of the present remain current. Thus, one needs a deeper shift, a spiritual shift, a cultural revitalization, a revolution of being. One needs to initiate populist movements to take back hope and vision.

The ontological basis for Sarkar's thinking is primarily Tantra. It is similar to Marxism in that it is based on dialectics, but the ultimate "stuff" of the universe is pure Consciousness, pure Being, a reality beyond the scope of the human mind and the root of all that

is. For Sarkar, the motivation for all social movement and individual movement can be described as struggle, however, this movement is pulsative and cyclical. The goal of existence is the realization of the infinite. Thus, the language of PROUT privileges the spiritual.

The other reason for studying the works of Sarkar is his theory of history; his theory is a significant difference between PROUT and other ideologies and civilizations, whether Marxism, Buddhism, or Islam, or between key macro-thinkers, Marx, Sorokin, Toynbee and others.

For Sarkar, there are not simply two classes, the bourgeois and the proletariat. Basically, he sees four classes with leadership vested in those who have attributes of all classes. The shudras/workers, or those who are controlled by the physical environment, or in his words the wave of the environment is longer than the wave of the worker. The ksattriya/warrior, one who attempts to control the environment through physical strength, or technology. The vipra/intellectual one who uses theory, the intellect, mind, to control the environment. And the vaeshya/capitalist, the one who controls and enjoys through the acquisition of wealth. To him, their centrality in history is cyclical, such that there is a circulation of elites. Thus, we have the era of workers, the era of the warriors, the era of priests and intellectuals and finally the era of capitalists. Now it is in the capitalist era that everyone becomes a worker (wage laborer), and all classes become the "boot lickers of the capitalists" (Sarkar 1987b, 5: 64).

In each era the ruling elite has cycles of of ascent then descent. Then the next class comes into power and this continues. Of course, there are counter revolutions and there are counter-evolutions; as well as revolutions and evolutions. Thus, for example, Russia went from the capitalist era, to the warrior era, and one might predict an age of intellectuals next with increased rights for intellectuals, and perhaps a resurgence of the religious and spiritual.

Of course, all this is problematic! How does one know which era one is in? What are appropriate units of analysis? And more significantly how does a theory such as this emerge? How does it relate to other theories of history that emerge from the Indian context. Is it intelligible to them? Is it ever new or a mere re-statement of the classic caste division of labor?

Thus, this theory raises numerous problems in terms of unit of analysis: civilizations, regions, nations, or societies, structures or associations. What about, say, Pakistan, which has had its natural cycle influenced by another civilization--is it in the beginning of a capitalist expansion of the muslim era; or is it the typical military, authoritarian, peripheral State. In addition, what is the relationship between class and the world system as a whole? How do we determine the mass psychology to ascertain the particular era of a collectivity?

The contribution, nonetheless, is in seeing history as cyclical, as dialectical, as not rooted in the empirical world, but in the collective psychology, or mythology or in the sense of order that

organizes the prevailing ideas. And it is in that politics does not end, unlike the communist vision, when class struggle does end. Struggle between classes continues. Sarkar's mission is to create a condition where the exploitive era of each class rule is shortened, where one gets the benefits of the new cycles, capitalism, or religion, or a centralized polity, but does not have to spend unnecessary centuries in its deep contradictions. Much of this study will be about finding different ways to talk about this theory.

Of course, the empirical questions in this are problematic. How does one operationalize the theory? But we will not be focus on that question. Much more important will be questions that arise from the post-structuralist model, that is, what is the basis for this discourse; How has this cyclical notion of theory developed? The obvious link is with the Indian system of varna, caste. Also relevant for exegesis is the Indian notion of the of cycles; that the basic pattern of history is ever repeats itself. As mentioned earlier, of particular interest will be the efforts to see how other macro historians have constructed their historical patters. How does Sarkar compare with them? For example, does Toynbee's use of civilizations correspond with Sarkar's basic mentalities. What is the telos of history?

In addition, given that Sarkar not only is creating a new cosmology, but is shaped by Indian cosmology, we will attempt to trace his thinking in Indian thinking, particularly the six schools of Indian philosophical thought, and recent major philosophical projects, by Aurobindo, for example. Thus the effort will be to deconstruct

Sarkar's cosmology in the context of Indian philosophy as well as other significant macro-historians, and myth creators. How does Sarkar have to speak to to be understandable? What is the epistemic context to which and from which he speaks.

While PROUT as the social movement will not be the focus of this disseration, we will nonetheless pay attention to the actual strategies that result from the way this world view is configured. From the Marxist perspective the obvious strategy is uniting those that are oppressed and seizing control of the means of oppression. For Sarkar, the strategy that results is obviously partly spiritual, in the sense of promoting awareness-transforming technologies such as meditation; partly cultural, in the sense of regaining one's sense of identity; partly universalistic, in the sense of identifying with the cosmos, the universe, as opposed to one's particular family, tribe, ethnicity, or nation; and finally partly what we traditionally consider as activist, in the sense of organizing workers, strating cooperatives, building model communities. Sarkar then is not simply attempting to create the space for an alternative politics, but also an alternative culture, economics, and spirituality.

Concretely, a key element in PROUT strategy are society movements--based on cultural revolutions--that is in organizing people with like mindedness in terms of geography, language, or cultural legacy, and having them challenge the material bases and homegnizing influences of capitalism and communism.

The taks is to create cultural struggles as well revive indigenus peoples. At the same time, the effort is economic self-reliance. All

this in the context of a larger spiritual humanism. Perhaps the best examples are Amra Bengali in India and Kasama in the Philippines. Kasama is a federation of regional self-reliance PROUT movements. Their demands include--100% employment to local people; creation of local industries based on locally available raw materials, non-export of raw materials; instruction to be in local languages, and then various specific demands, ie. removal of foreign military bases and land reform.

Now in these movements, although PROUT does attempt to build alliances with other spiritual groups, the goal is often counter to efforts to mediate disputes, the goal is often polarization; to flush out those who have local interests at heart and are there to make people feel dignified, and those those who are there to exploit land, labor, culture, and knowledge, to make people feel inferior.

Sarkar, like Marxist writers, focuses on structure--namely, his social division of worker, warrior, intellectual, and capitalist. However, he is also concerned with not only describing what he believes to be the real, but positing an alternative future as well. For Sarkar, the goal is a society where individual rights such as employment, food, health, education, shelter and clothing are guaranteed as are intellectual rights--self-expression. It is to create a society where people are materially taken care of, and intellectual free to pursue the spiritual quest of one's relationship with the pure Being.

Development then is not modernization since modernity actually makes the spiritual pursuit difficult; cultures are cannibalized,

instead of freedom we have anomie, apathy, mental illness, at the personal level; unemployment, inflation, and inequity at the structural level, and inferiority, imitation, lack of innovation and creativity, a sense of defeat and fatalism, a sense that one's own ideas are not worthy at the cultural level.

We have underdevelopment and overdevelopment; poverty beside richness. For Sarkar, the key is balance; societal balance, ecological balance and personal balance. Societally, a balance unattainable unless there are clear limits to the accumulation of wealth. However this does not imply the confiscation of all personal wealth; rather there remains individual wealth. But by and large the system is one of cooperatives. The state sets the limits; society is run by autonomous boards and cooperatives. While this deal with the equity portion of the wealth problem, what about growth? Sarkar primarily argues that inequality is only allowable as long it leads to the growth of the overall system. As the wealth of the rich increases, the State must endeavor to reduce the ratio of the rich to the poor. This ratio has to be constantly reduced (the minimum guarantees thus increase constantly). Here, the final goal however is not full employment, but with each technological advance the goal is less working hours. The goal then is to go beyond survival, and create a society, where internal development, mental bliss is possible. These are outlined in his various principles of PROUT which basically call for a limit to wealth accumulation, a better use of physical, intellectual and spiritual resources on the individual and group level, a balance between the individual and the collective good, and

an understanding that these principles have to be applied differently in different places at different times.

The other key difference and relevance of Sarkar's work and the work of others is the emphasis on the environment. But again this is informed by the spiritual philosophical tradition. Plants and animals are alive. They have some degree of mind. Sarkar argues for a new humanism, a spiritual ecology, that doesn't put humans at the center of all political economic and cultural discourses. Rather, they are one of many the inhabitants of earth.

Just as there must be balance in the social discourse, in personal life as well there must be a balance between action, thought and meditation. An overemphasis on any one area causes the individual to be out of harmony with self.

Sarkar's efforts are multi-fold. He has a new theory of Consciousness. One that posits Being first, which then becomes bounded to a stage of Cosmic Mind and further breaks into light and the basic particles until finally there is the solid universe. For Sarkar the real is composed of waves of consciousness. These waves transform into various forms of energy. The final form is physical matter. At this stage evolution moves towards Being through various struggles. Humans stand at a point where they have reflective consciousness, a sense of duty and the possibility to awaken in themselves pure being. This model attempts to metaphysically resolve the evolution-creation problem. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, he theorizes about new particles which bridge the gap between mind/body and unify the other forces of physics: weak force, strong force,

gravity, electromagnetism. They take the shape of matter, but they are faster than light and can carry thoughts.

Sarkar is comprehensive. He has a new theory of history, cyclical. He has a new development model; a new development ethics and a global development strategy. He also has articulated a new model of inner spiritual development. Sarkar has developed new spiritual practices calling it the science of intuition. He argues that spiritual realization is impossible without a commitment to challenging injustice.

PROUT intends to be the new model of civilizational development. It has in terms of its criteria (a leader, a socio-economic theory, an universal outlook, texts, a spiritual theory, and spiritual practices). According to Sarkar, most movements and ideologies as well as cosmologies are lacking in some of these ingredients. For example, Buddhism is weak on socio-economic theory. Marxism, obviously weak on spiritual practices and spritual theory.

Thus Sarkar's PROUT not only has a critique of the present, a theory of change, but a vision for an alternative future as well. Finally, it is a concrete social movement that is attempting to transform this present into its preferred future.

The above have been some reasons as to why it is relevant to study Sarkar and his theory of PROUT--its own claims and some of the basic problems it attempts to solve, as well as it is a very real movement, with programs, projects, and in a very real way, many of its organizers including Sarkar spend years in jail in India.

Again, our concern is largely with Sarkar and comparing the discursive spaces he is creating with those created by other macro-thinkers, and only tangentially with PROUT the social movement. And again, we are not attempting to provide empirical proofs for his work. Rather, we are interested in comparing his thoughts with other key thinkers so as to assess their differences and similarities so as to understand their projects. In addition, we wish to understand how it is that he has constructed this discourse. We thus wish to place it in a historical context. We wish to take Sarkar out from the heaven of devotion and faith to the real world of implications, inquiry and analysis. We wish to place him within epistemological various sites: the sites of other macrothinkers and the site of Indian intellectual spiritual history. For while Sarkar may be creating a new cosmology, a new discourse, he at the same time is created and contextualized by various discourses. He too is a subject of very particular ways of constructing the real, of the ordering of historical knowledge. It is these connections that will be explored and made transparent.

We wish to take Sarkar's core writings place them within a discursive orientation and then attempt to deconstruct this discourse. What identities are privileged? What interests are privileged? By seeing the world as spiritual, what epistemologies are privileged and what identities gain from this. Obviously a society that privileges the spiritual perspective, privileges those who claim that they are spiritual, and then claim that the State should assign value to that class.

We also wish to examine the structural implications of Sarkar's writings. What are the underlying structures and attitudes toward structural and personal violence, for example. Does he indeed transcend the mind/body, structure/agency, collective/individual, spirit/matter distinctions as his students' claim, or does he simply restate them from a different philosophical view.

We will also in a cursory manner attempt to critique the world created by Sarkar. The effort will be to look at this discourse of utopia, to attempt to evaluate utopias, their contradictions, their structures, the conditions that allow their creation, the languages that create victomhood and oppressor.

Therefore while Sarkar claims to be universal and claims that his theory is time invariant, space invariant and perception invariant, he is still rooted in a third world context; one born in Calcutta, in a tradition of poverty, personal and institutional corruption and the utter pervasiveness of death. In this regard, spirituality is the defense against the onslaught of modernity.

While the style will be that of comparison and later critique, the purpose is to develop an intercivilizational dialog between great macro thinkers; albeit, this dialog is meant to empower the topic of this dissertation, Sarkar and PROUT. However, we hope that this critique will make the carriers of new ideologies more reflective of their contradictions, more willing to see the alternatives to one's own discourse, and more willing to see the similarities, and more willing to see how various identities are distributed and shaped by

the discourse at hand--in the case of PROUT, how, for example, the discourse of hierarchy embedded in spiritual perspectives.

The comparative critique will be multifold. Much of it will center on the problem of ideology. Sarkar claims to lay truth bare; is such a claim problematic given the history of such grand claims. How are we to situate his truth claims? We will place them in different sites, specifically, the predictive, comparative and the poststructural. But initially Jiddu Krishnamurti is particularly instructive.

Now is there a means, a system of knowing oneself? Any clever person, any philosopher, can invent a system, a method; but surely following a system will merely produce a result created by the system? ...by following a system, a method, a means through which to know myself, I shape my thinking, my activities, according to a pattern, but the following of the pattern is not the understanding of oneself (Krishnamurti 1966, 25).

And:

In order to transform the world about us, with its misery, wars, unemployment, starvation, class divisions, and utter confusion, there must be a transformation in ourselves...but not according to any belief or ideology, because revolution based on an idea, or in conformity to a particular pattern is obviously no revolution at all (27-28).

This evokes the idea that revolutions all create new victors; the deeper structures of oppression rooted in our mind remains untouched, or as Zen master D.T. Suzuki would say, mind remains unnatural (Suzuki 1964). Or as Ashis Nandy has written, "yesterday's dissent is often today's establishment and, unless resisted, becomes tomorrow's terror" (Nandy 1987, 13). Also relevant with respect to the comprehensiveness of Sarkar's work is William Irwin Thompson's commentary. "As Homer recognized long ago, your unique excellence is also your tragic flaw; your greatness hobbles you" (Thompson 1976, 80). Comprehensiveness too

as a negative. Instead of future visions the results are blueprints that close the possibility of a new future and limit new categories of thought. Power is simply delivered to a new broker.

But part of the human condition is that people do start movements, new ideologies are born, and we do need to examine them, discern their contribution, and determine if they will join the dustbin of ideas, or actually create new languages, structures, and visions. Will Sarkar's contribution to history actually give insight to historical processes or is it simply another construct that takes away from understanding the really real? Does his cosmology allow the real to become more negotiable and thus allow more alternatives pasts, presents and futures? Will Sarkar be one of the most significant thinkers in human history? Are his ideas at the level of Shankaracharya, Khaldun, Comte, and Marx. Will they be studied a thousand years from now?

WHAT FOLLOWS

So far we have attempted to introduce the complexity of Sarkar and his thinking. In this introduction, we have attempted to locate Sarkar in various discourses, his personal life primarily within the mythological discourse; one that does not privilege the subject but argues that there are deep structures which overlap various individual events. Understanding these deep structures places what might be seen as unique and fantastic individual occurrences in a larger historical, albeit timeless discourse.

The next chapter will lay the theoretical foundations for how we will attempt to understand Sarkar. Largely, we will come to terms with his work not through various empirical oriented proofs, but rather it will be through a two pronged approach, the interpretive focusing on commentary and comparison and the poststructural focusing on locating Sarkar in the Indian episteme. These two perspectives will be contrasted given their apparent differences, Sarkar is interested in recovering the truth that has been concealed, while Foucault is interested in calling into questions of all notions of truth, although he too speaks from a locatable particular site. Similarities between the poststructural Foucauldian perspective and the Sarkarian perspective will also be discussed.

The third chapter will place Sarkar in the Indian episteme. Asking is Sarkar Indian. Who within the Indian context does he speak to, who must he speak to, and how does he attempt to reconstruct Indian philosophy. We will also examine his theory of consciousness and place in the context of other Indian schools of thought. The question of reconstruction will be contextualized by the cosmological approach of Johan Galtung which examines the implications of world view on four vectors: distribution, growth, structural violence and direct violence.

The fourth chapter will continue the task of the earlier chapter but specifically examine the Indian construction of history. How does Sarkar differ from classical models of Indian historical thought as well as from the nationalist, Marxist, and recent Subaltern schools of thought? How does he respond to the Orientalization of Indian

history? Does he borrow from these traditions or does he create an entirely new history. Finally, how does his model differ from the model of varna that it resembles?

The fifth chapter will focus in on Sarkar's theory of history and change stated in its own terms. We will be especially sensitive to the how of his speaking, his prose.

The sixth chapter will compare Sarkar's theory of history, his theory of civilization, his philosophy of neo-humanism with the writing of other significant macro thinkers. Included will be comparative summaries from Eric Voegelin, Michel Foucault, Ssu-ma Chien, Chang Huseh-Cheng, Ibn Khaldun, Giambattista Vico, Auguste Comte, George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, Gaetano Mosca, Vilfredo Pareto, Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, Pitirim Sorokin, Fernand Braudel, Immanuel Wallerstein, and Johan Galtung. Of course given the range of thinkers, some we will concentrate on and others we will simply mention in passing. Given the overload of Western thinkers, we will focus on the Chinese macro thinkers and on Ibn Khaldun. In addition, we believe Khaldun is the prototype and founder of modern sociological thinking from which other cyclical theories borrow. While the choice of these thinkers is somewhat arbitrary, they all aid in better understanding Sarkar.

The seventh chapter will attempt to find ways of thinking about Sarkar's assertion (and those of the macrothinkers above) that they have discovered iron laws of history. What types of laws are these? Natural? Social? Spiritual? If they are laws, has only Sarkar discerned them? Moreover, what is Sarkar's view on philosophical

diversity? Is there one truth or many truths? We will thus attempt to understand the notion of laws from a range of perspectives, again using the notion of empirical, interpretive and poststructural. This chapter will not attempt to compare Sarkar to other grand thinkers, but rather analyse his thinking in the context of various epistemological perspectives.

The eighth and last chapter concludes the study.

Notes

1. Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar is also known as Shri Shri Anandamurti, his spiritual name, which means in whose presence one feels bliss. He uses this name for his spiritual talks. Sarkar gives a biannual message, one the first of the year and one his birthday celebration in May. In general, Ananda Marga Publications presents his spiritual texts with his spiritual name and his social and political texts with his family name. As much as possible, we follow this division in our bibliography.
2. These are called Baba stories which are passed on among Ananda Marga members orally as well as printed in a variety of movement newsletters and magazines. They create a very specific devotional discourse by placing Sarkar in the mythological discourse. The stories are consistent with the rich guru as god "magical" talk that inhabits India. The range of newsletters are available in the U.S. from Ananda Marga, 97-38 42nd avenue. IF. Corona, NY 11368 and in India from Ananda Marga, VIP Nagar. Tiljila, Calcutta. 700039. All of Sarkar's texts are also available from these two addresses.

CHAPTER 2

EPISTEMOLOGICAL APPROACHES

INTRODUCTION

In the writing of a study, there is always a question of the how of writing; among other problems, the problem of the text as well as the problem of the situation of meaning, in author, reader, interpreter, text, or other. This how of writing is seen and presented differently depending on the intellectual style of the . historical period of writing and the cultural space from which one writes. Our question becomes that of attempting to find a way to understand Sarkar. What are the different ways we can understand Sarkar and the texts from which he emerges. One the whole we argue that there are three primary styles, the positivist, the interpretive, and the poststructural, of which we favor the last two. The positivist is associated with the applied and the empirical approaches. The interpretive is loosely associated with the comparative, "translation," "framing," and the phenomenological. Finally, the poststructural perspective includes a section which negotiates the ontological space of the prediscursive.

The positivist perspective asserts that a real world does exist; a thing is true if it corresponds to the real world. Higher levels of correspondence are achieved most often through quantification, the operationalization of social concepts to measurable indexes. When quantitative data is not available, the measurement process must be logical, fit agreed upon conventions and if not, show how one's own

hypothesis fits the data better. The goal is to explain through one's theory more of the real world of the present or the past. The theory must be general in that it can explain deviations from the norm, but not so general that the theory becomes anecdotal or useless in explaining variations, in explaining change. Language in this view is that language is politically neutral; it merely describes the real; it in no way participates in the social construction of the real. Good research attempts to find the most adequate language. Finally, in good research the researcher is disinterested from the results of the study. The goal is objective truth not colored by prior beliefs, funding sources, inner callings, cultural frames of reference, or a priori universals. In this view the present is science (objective), the past is ideological (subjective).

The alternative view is the interpretive view. All research is ideological here. The goal is understanding through empathy, through a reduction of distance, through a confession of one's preunderstandings. The goal is to find the hidden layers of meaning that are covered by the dominant ideology, whatever it might be. Any empirical objectivity of the real then is damaged, but not intrasubjectivite objectivity. This damaging of the empirical occurs because of the primacy of the subject, the placing of the subject within cultural frames, and the view that knowledge is paradigmatic. Thus the real changes through history as different ways of understanding the real become authoritative. Here, history cannot be a positivistic science since it deals with humans; it is above all reflection, interpretation, comparison, the framing of alternative

views, and translation into alternative perspectives. And, if indeed there are basic regularities, they are ones that are perceived differently by different cultures and different systems of knowledge. Yet there is a basic unchanging essence, a real world to be discovered and interpreted. For within the interpretive view, central is the search for universals--for what is uniquely human--in spite of all the apparent differences between humans. Indeed, human reflection on humanness is humanity, itself. Human reflection on history is indeed history itself, to paraphrase Vico.

The third position aims not for proximity but for an epistemological distance. Instead of the search for universals, reality is ungrounded, with the real becoming a social construction. The goal is to make contentious all histories, all presents, and all futures. It is to search for the structure within all configurations and to make bare their construction. Language no longer is neutral, rather it is complicit in the creation process. There is no extralinguistic reality from which one can stare objectively at what is and thus create a true understanding of the events, periods, ruptures, closings and openings of history. While these three reflect and represent real divisions in Western thinking, the Indian episteme we can move back and forth, easily, and if in contradiction, it is not a problematic contradiction. Unlike Western cosmology wherein one epistemology authoritatively dominates, Indian cosmology embraces multiple epistemological positions.

This study will move back and forth between the second and the third position. Specifically, the comparative position has aspects of

the poststructural and the interpretive. By bringing in other macro thinkers who have directly participated in the reality construction effort, we gain a distance from Sarkar. However by comparing these thinkers to him, we gain a better understanding of his historical construction. Also, to some extent his work is denaturalized yet at the same time legitimized by it, for now he stands with that which is in the fold, the grid of comparison. By attempting to place Sarkar within a cultural construct, we gain a better understanding of who he is and how he constructs. We gain insight. We see his contribution to human thought. We uphold his text.

Now the Sarkar project differs from the poststructural attitude because for Foucault and others, there cannot be an empirical or cultural science, since the real is but one interpretation over other interpretations. The Sarkar project, however, is the creation of a science of history; in fact it is the creation of a science of everything: music, dance, language, meditation. Yet this science is not a materialistic conception of science, since central to Sarkarian notion of science is the intuitive. Knowledge of the real can be obtained through intuition. However, his use of the word science is different than the "Western" use; from within the Indian tradition, the science (the empirical), the philosophic (the speculative) and the religious (the a priori transcendental) are not divisions. Rather they are part of the same project, with science redefined as systematic and practical, philosophy as intellectual and religious as devotional. In the third chapter we further investigate how one can speak of a science of mysticism and not be speaking incredibly.

Sarkar's true science is then a technique of distance, not only from the empirical world, but also from one's emotions, thoughts, history, culture, so that then one can have perfect knowledge of the real. It is a distancing from the material and intellectual worlds to obtain a proximity, a hermeneutic grounding in the spiritual. But the distancing of the poststructural view is different from Sarkar in that no position of the true is upheld. Sarkar truth, however, is the privileging of one way of knowing the world over other ways. In the poststructural view, there is no discovery since all knowledge is mediated, representational. Any science, whether an empirical science or an interpretive science is a particular political effort, as the creation of a new interpretation of the real. Not the final revelation of the True.

DEVELOPING THE FOUCAULDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Foucault argues that "the problem is not so much that of defining a political 'position' (which is to choose from a pre-existing set of possibilities) but to imagine and to bring into being new schemas of politicization" (Shapiro 1987, 23). Thus we are not simply concerned with presenting Sarkar's views to the public as an advertising campaign but with taking that which appears to be natural and making it unnatural or remarkable. We are also not interested in creating new historical categories, new periods of histories, but we are interested in attempting to see what epistemological/methodological positions are supported by any theory of history. How is the subject

place? What becomes objectified? What voices are heard? What is lost?

This then, as mentioned, above is in marked contrast to the interpretive position (hermeneutic/phenomenological), where the goal is to improve the conversation, to through empathy and through dialog--through an appreciation of the cultural contexts of particular texts--come to a better, more comprehensive understanding of the texts and the cultures that are the objects of one's research, project. The objective is to understand Sarkar more deeply. Unlike the interpretive position, Foucault according to Michael Shapiro, "has sought to not to improve extant political conversations by making them more comprehensive. Rather, he has sought to distance us from the various linguistic practices which give us objects, subjects, and the more general valuing practices within which they function, the discursive economies of meaning and value in given historical periods" (Shapiro 1987, 14).

Thus our question becomes that of seeing how various discourses give us Sarkar. To see how Sarkar has constructed his world; instead of simply understanding the construction for what it is by itself. And to see how various Indian discourses have constructed Sarkar. That is our interest in the Indian episteme, in the world view which gives us a subjectivity like Sarkar.

Foucault's effort is to problematize contemporary conversations; to show how texts, conversations, the real are created by various discursive practices--the legal, the economic, the religious. Moreover, to show that by constituting the real in a particular

discourse, one silences alternative discourses. The real thus emerges within the "intersections of various discourses ... that create various objects and give roles with attendant responsibilities to various subjects" (Shapiro 1981, 151).

With this distancing the role of the writer and intentionality becomes problematic; that which has been written becomes a product of various discourses and histories, not solely the ownership of the particular writer. However at the same time, "it would be reasonable to ask how how this self-understanding of Foucault's, based on his understanding of language as something that controls and creates kinds of speakers, comports with his designation of some theorists, like Freud and Marx, as 'initiators of discursive practices'" (Shapiro 1981, 163). That is, while language speaks us, at the same time, a few of us create discourses or ways of knowing that contextualize future knowing. These originators of knowing for Foucault are particularly Freud and Marx because irrespective of the truth of their analyses or predictions, others use them as a point of departure. Their worldview contextualizes our thoughts. Largely because they found ways to create understanding that was markedly different from the understandings of their day. Said differently, our cosmology--the deep linguistic, structural codes that define the real, the episteme of knowledge--creates who we are. On occasion, a new cosmology, or less ambitiously, a new discourse, for it can be argued that discourses exist within cosmology (and cosmologies are particular discourses!), emerges. We can then ask has Sarkar created a new

cosmology (as he intends and as followers such as Ravi Batra in The Downfall of Capitalism and Communism claim).

It is not possible to predict a new discourse for the technology of prediction uses the understandings of the present and a new discourse is about a new way of knowing. We can, however, assert that a new way of knowing explains the world differently, more according to our value preferences, or resolves seemingly unresolvable contradictions.

SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Foucauldian approach is that (1) the real is problematized and seen as the production of various discursive practices; (2) the self is denaturalized and seen not as a thing, but as a creation, a verb, the subject thus is thrown off the pillars of modernity: discrete time, rationality and individuality. "What is to be resisted is what Nietzsche regarded as western metaphysics' model of subjectivity, the assumption that there is a 'stiff, steadfast, single individual'" (Shapiro 1988, 12). "The politics of Foucauldian grammar thus rests on a Nietzschean way of posing questions about subjectivity; the question is never 'who' but 'which one,' which of the multitude of possible selves is being brought into recognition by a particular institutionalized form of intelligibility and the practices it encompasses" (Shapiro 1987, 22); (3) the real is historicized, thus making the task of the writer that of creating a history of the present; of showing how the constitution of a

particular present is a result of the victory of one discursive practice over another. For Foucault,

truth is a thing of this world; it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has a regime of truth, its 'general politics': this is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth, the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Foucault 1980a, 131).

IMPLICATIONS

Given the above understanding of Foucault, we can ask numerous relevant questions about Sarkar that are unavailable in other epistemological perspectives. The question becomes not, is Sarkar's notion of Cosmic Consciousness true, but how is it true? Not, what is the spiritual, but how does the spiritual travel in Sarkar's discourse, what part does it play in his cosmology? What results from this question is a genealogy of God-talk in the Indian context; that is, how is it that Cosmic Consciousness has come to be framed the way it has: the Supreme Consciousness as beyond good and beyond understanding by language and thus mind. Moreover, Sarkar would want us to recover our spiritual roots; but these roots, from the Foucauldian perspective are not transcultural, not universal, rather they are part of a particular discourse, a particular history. Of course, Sarkar's recovery project is different than the Western attempt to reenchant the rationality (in the economic sense of the word) of the modern world, since Hinduism allows for simultaneous epistemes. Tantra is no longer dominant--The Vedic and the Secular are--yet it still exists.

But this Foucauldian approach does not only distances but hermeneutic anchors. "The question I asked myself was this: how is it that the human subject took itself as an object of possible knowledge? Through what forms of rationality and historical conditions? And finally at what price? This is my question: at what price can subjects speak the truth about themselves? (emphasis added) (Shapiro 1988, 20). The question of price is where the weighing begins. The problem then becomes a question of politics, of valuing; what is the cost to humans of a particular type of social construction, of a particular social cosmology? who gains? who loses? Thus, one can then ask the structural question and begin the humanization of spiritual constructions. Of course, the other critical question is by what means will one weigh and naturally what one chooses will again be an interpretation, for one cannot stand outside of discourse. In Sarkar's language one is caught in the relative world of time, place and person. This valuing must then be a will to decision. For example, Johan Galtung (1983) in his "Religion as a Social Factor" compares various cosmologies. He asks what are the implications of each cosmology in terms of the type of societies they create across variables such as economic distribution, economic growth, direct violence, and structural violence? Thus, one must examine the implications of a particular interpretation of the world on the world, even if this interpretation on interpretation is in itself an interpretation.

This has not been attempted within the PROUT literature. Or in other literatures. For example, Syed Abidi argues that through the

genealogical method of Foucault, one can bring Islam from the heavens to the earth, that is to lasso God. "...there remains no way to "lasso" God, other than demystifying the ensemble of power relations which is legitimized by His so-called representatives who are constantly appropriating 'Godly Discourses' in order to cling to their privileged positions" (Abidi 1988, 25-26). For Abidi, the question was how to deal with Islam in Pakistan. His answer was to critique the way that the Islamic discourse has been constituted, concluding that Islam has been appropriated by the military and the landlords at the expense of the poor in the village and at the expense of a democratic syncretic Islam. Through a genealogical analysis, Abidi showed the dialectics of the discursive formations that have created the Pakistan of today. His conclusion of betrayal, however, did not however deconstruct Islam itself. Islam was left innocent with the problem of betrayal located in modern politics. But for Foucault, this issue of implication is critical. For him it is the problem of the Gulag. That is not to attempt to understand the Gulag system as an error, a betrayal of the theory of Marx and Lenin, but "...it is a matter of asking what in those texts could have made the Gulag possible, what might even now continue to justify it, and what makes its intolerable truths still accepted today" (Welch 1985 p. 67). Thus, the question could have been what in the structure of Islam leads to certain horrendous realities. Instead, the question was posed as how was Islam appropriated by the villains of the masses, thus saving Islam from blame. The military and the landed elite became nominated for the role of villain. While Sarkar's work is

largely theoretical as the movement is young, it began in 1955. We can still attempt to speculate as to the type of structures that might be created and we can attempt to understand the implications of the type of structures which he believes should be created. Ashis Nandy (1987) has made this point in that one can see untouchability as a mistake in Indian history or as a necessary result of Indian cosmology; this seeing, this choice is a political one. Our question will be what are some possible Gulags that might emerge from Sarkarian thinking, not only at the level of physical violence but at the level of impoverishing theory. Has Sarkar, for example, reinscribed the structural violence of the caste system by reinterpreting it in his theory of history?

But we desire not only to be like the "Masters of Suspicion," Nietzsche, Marx and Freud in that the genesis for this study is that Sarkar has much to offer in terms of his theory of history, his alternative political-economy, his theory of consciousness, his critique of capitalism and Marxism, as well his vision of the good, but we engaged in a dialectic between a politics of fascination, indeed a politics of complicit admiration, if not faith, and a politics of suspicion, of criticism. How this tension plays itself out will be the story behind (of) the story of this study.

While the methods of Foucault will lead to a distance thereby allowing a deconstruction of the real in Sarkar's texts, we will also need to understand Sarkar's texts on their own in light of the preunderstandings of the researcher. Gadamer in Truth and Method says it well:

A person trying to understand a text is prepared for it to tell him something. That is why a hermeneutically trained mind must be, from the start, sensitive to the text's quality of newness. But this kind of sensitivity involves neither 'neutrality' in the matter of the object nor the extinction of one's self, but the conscious assimilation of one's own foremeanings and prejudices. The important thing is to be aware of one's own bias, so that the text may present itself in all its newness and thus be able to assert its own truth against one's own foremeanings (1975, 238).

DIALECTICAL TENSION

We exist then in a dialectic between the hermeneutic and the post-structural, the Foucauldian. Thus, we will at once be engaged in recovering meanings and in showing how Sarkar argues that the PROUTist discourse can lead to a reduction in human suffering, that his writings cast a new light on human history; that is, in showing how notions of the good, the transpersonal can be regained through reconstituting the real and at the same time we will gain distance through analyzing Sarkar's cosmology (in terms of its Hindu influences) and comparing Sarkar with others who have tried to reveal, to lay bare the human condition, the "problematique". We will unclothe and clothe in the hope of developing a better gaze and understanding of ourselves in the hope of understanding Sarkar. We will attempt to locate within Sarkar's writing what he sees as natural; we will attempt to problematize his cosmology as well as excavate his problems; that is, problematize his problematizations. Therein lies the obvious tension.

Returning to Abidi's refusal to problematize Islam, we gain another example in Ziauddin Sardar. He is a Muslim futurist and an ardent critic of intellectuals who simply write to support a particular cosmology. He argues that a large part of "desolation of

the contemporary Muslim panorama is the result of the almost total absence of vigorously independent and devoted intellectuals." (Sardar 1988b, 170) The problem for him is that most Muslims are ideologues; they have a tendency to dominate and control and believe that they have a monopoly on reason and judgement; they believe that the movement leader is always right--the guru mentality--the guru is beyond criticism; and they are unable to take criticism. Thus, for him there are two types of intellectuals, the critical devoted ones and the ideologues. Of course, the notion of the disinterested empiricist intellectual is thrown out, *prima facie*, given the universal epistemology of Islam as would be the case in the Sarkarian worldview. The important point here is the necessity for a politics of doubt, and a politics of devotion, that is, for Sardar, someone who is a practicing Muslim. Here of course, we are alluding to the role of the intellectual in any civilizational project. Sardar's project is to recover the truth and beauty of Islam that existed once but has been vanquished with the rise of western civilization. While his and other similar projects are willing to participate in the recovery of meaning project, the deconstruction aspect of the project exists only insofar as alternative western epistemologies are concerned.

For example, Sardar (1988a) argues that the authoritarianism so common in Muslim thought and so prevalent in Muslim history is a direct result of almost total replacement of the Quaranic ideals by Greek pagan philosophy; a pagan philosophy that had embedded in it the values of oligarchy (Plato), slavery (Aristotle), hierarchy (Aquinas), necessity (Spinoza) and domination (Marx). Instead of the Islamic

ideals of equality, fraternity, and happiness for all, the Greek cultists "made happiness the sole privilege of the philosophers and members of secret mystical societies" (Sardar 1998a, 15). Sardar believes that all that is bad in human history was Greek and tragically Islam claimed this Greek legacy. For Sardar, the only hope for the "sanity of Western civilization and the survival of Muslim thought depends on burying the cult of Socrates and the authoritarianism of Plato where it belongs--deep below the ruins of the Pantheon" (15). But the key is the concluding sentence. "The really surprising thing is how such a theology became an integral part of Muslim thought and how it has managed to survive to this day" (15). This how from Foucault's perspective is the key. The unpacking of this how can occur through a variety of ways: comparisons, genealogy of discursive formations, and deconstruction.

Now Sardar's categories of devoted intellectuals and intellectual ideologues are not replicated in Sarkar. To him there are intellectuals who use the mind for their own gain and those who use their mind for the service of the collective. Within his own movement criticism of the movement is at one level supported given Sarkar's belief in the superiority of his ideology¹ and at the same time criticism within the movement is acceptable after praxis, not merely for what Sarkar calls "intellectual extravaganza," the display of the intellect to gain respect and power within the intellectual community. At the same time, there have not been any attempts to deconstruct Sarkar's worldview. The problems of the PROUT movement (alleged acts of violence, for example) have been understood as reflections of

frustrated (albeit misguided) revolutionaries reacting to the injustice of the capitalist system, to the brutal conditions that the PROUT movement had to endure during the 1970's and not because of the internal theme or structural of PROUT. Here, we do not judge, but simply like Nandy wish to assert that the judgment of which interpretation to use, internal to a cosmology or external to a cosmology, is a political judgment. Gandhi aware of this dilemma opted for a different tactic, placing means first and ends never. For him, there was no road to peace and justice. Justice and peace were the road to paraphrase his famous words, there is no road to self reliance, self-reliance is the road.

This critical attitude is what we hope to create in the Sarkarian discourse, for like Islam and Western civilization it has roots in antiquity, but it also claims to be a new cosmology, one that can lead to liberation of the oppressed and can lead to the creation of new oppressions and violations on the human body.

So far in this chapter, we have briefly presented the discursive perspective of Foucault. We have contrasted this with the hermeneutic/interpretive perspective. In addition, we have examined two efforts of understanding discourses within the Islamic perspective and noted how both left untouched the episteme, the cosmological basis of Islam. Within the Foucauldian perspective the episteme cannot be left untouched for it shapes what is allowable as knowledge; who is the knower and known; and what is the context in which the parameters of true and false can be discussed. We will now engage in a discussion of the various ways in which one can problematize

understanding in the context of Sarkar's texts. In this final section we will attempt to show how Sarkar, in addition, to the recovery of spirituality and other meanings, attempts to create a distance as well.

We began this section by asking how does one constitute the real, what categories of thought does one use; and furthermore, in what ways is one's method of inquiry related to or constitutive of the object of inquiry as well as to the discourses (texts, practices, the social construction of what-is) that frame one's method. The primary and most used approach is the positivist. We have divided this discussion into the applied and the empirical.

APPLIED

Nearly all PROUT writing uses this applied approach and the problems found remain bounded by the parameters of this positivist perspective. Ravi Batra in his The Downfall of Capitalism and Communism and The Great Depression of 1990 uses this perspective as does Tim Anderson in The Liberation of Class. This is the method of taking the categories of Sarkar's theory as given and then applying them to various historical events. What emerges is a revisionist history; a history reinterpreted to fit Sarkar's cyclical-dialectical view of history and its component categories of worker, warrior, intellectual and acquirer. For example, to quickly gloss, in the context of Western history, the Roman Empire now becomes the apex of the Warrior Era, the rise of Christianity becomes the beginning of the Intellectual Era, and the industrial revolution the beginning of the

era of the Acquisitors, and the worker-led socialist revolutions of the twentieth century, the beginnings of the next cyclical era of Warriors.

This approach is useful in bringing new readings to history and allowing certain structures to emerge that may have been lost by a particular discursive practice, for example, the rationalist-capitalist discourse which privileges a dynastic linear model of history at the expense of structural mythic discourses or the Marxist model of history that privileges economic explanations at the expense of mythological and spiritual interpretations. Thus, various meanings are recovered that heretofore were silenced.

The problem with the application orientated approach is that it does not problematize these categories themselves. How these particular categories came to be important is not explored, nor is the worldview that these categories privilege questioned. Thus, the categories themselves are treated as given. One might, for example, ask are these new categories of thought heuristics, ideal types, or inductive empirical categories. Here, the problematization strategy of Foucault is particular useful, for now we are not simply interested in history, but in a metahistory, in the way that history is constructed, or put forth in discourse. Foucault, for example, would be far more concerned with the history of the notion of the wheel and would use as his data interpretations such as Frank and Fritzie Manuel's Utopian Thought in the Western World. They, for example, write how with the idea of progress, the Europeans left behind the primitive notions of cycles. "The French and German doctrines of

progress [set] up a frame for a utopia of progress that dominated the mind and sensibility of its respective national society for more than a century [and achieved freedom from the wheel] (Manuel 1979, 453-460). Significant is that in the Indian context someone like Sarkar can use the wheel as the central metaphor for his theory of history and still be considered current. For Foucault, history is not the search for stages of evolution or development, but how particular problems have become so, and how other events and practices are not considered problems, have remained apolitical. In how, for instance, we have constituted history in stages or how we have believed that there is an essence, a truth, a secret behind the passage of time

From the Foucauldian perspective, central is the problem of the metaphor; what is gained by the use of the wheel metaphor (and its reference to revolution), or of the wave metaphor (up and down, eternally), or of the life cycle metaphor (birth, childhood, adult, elder, death), the pendulum (back and forth between two states bounded in space/time), of the Fall (from Heaven to Earth and then to Heaven/Hell) or the metaphor of dark/light (from savage Asiatic economies to developed modern liberal nation-states), or of the Sun/Moon (conscious and unconscious; rational and irrational, masculine and feminine). While all metaphors lighten and darken (the obvious meta-metaphor), the relationship of this process to cosmology and to the Foucault notion of the price of our discursive formations is critical. What is lost and gained by a particular metaphor and how are metaphors "chosen."

Furthermore, in applying a theory of history to history itself, one intrinsically selects those events, trends, and patterns which fit into one's preunderstandings. This obviously raises various issues as to the study of history itself; is there one history, or are there alternative histories that are created or repressed, that is, is history dependent on the subject, on interpretation and, if so, how so? Furthermore, it can be argued that one's notion of history is constitutive of one's theory; that history does not exist independent to one's linguistic structures. Viewed from this perspective, one's theory, preunderstandings are complicit in the dominant discourse of the present, thus making any objective history fundamentally problematic. If this is the case, then a serious attempt at uncovering the politics of one's historical categories, one's theory of history, is imperative so as to understand how one is structuring history, to understand what is being epistemologically gained and lost. Without this inquiry, one's preunderstandings remain unproblematic and thus uncovered within various power configurations.

Unfortunately as of this writing all attempts to understand PROUT have remained in this applied level. Criticisms of Batra's work have centered around not more applications, but a return to the authority of Sarkar's text. They have returned to the authority of Sarkar and have largely argued that Sarkar did not indeed mean it that way. The notion that there might be more than one interpretation of history in terms of the level of history--micro, macro or meso--or that history is changed depending on who has power, or that different interpretations of history lead to different political calculations

and different insights remains untouched. By and large the perspective is that if there is not unanimous agreement as to the application of the Sarkarian theory, then all is lost and the movement is delegitimized. Instead of a search for alternative interpretations and attempts to reconcile these, this view attempts to uphold a particular position, at the cost of the richness of history itself. The alternative notion that each macro history adds to our collective understanding has yet to gain currency as the perspective that all history is problematic since the agreement to any view simply reifies particular categories that are only relevant to that era. It is a view that does not accede any possibility of an authoritative history of history since each category from which one creates one's history is a particular category, not a universal transcendental from which generalization, implications and inferences can be drawn.

To summarize, at the heart (to use a metaphor of the body since we are referring to a body of knowing) of the application oriented approach is that there a world that exists outside our knowing efforts. Language mediates this description, but it is neutral except that some cultures have words that describe the real more adequately than others do. Indian culture, in particular, can better describe the spiritual view of the real.

Sarkar, of course, with his view that what-is is space, time, subject dependent does not assert this view. His goal is to write a history that includes the voices of those who have been marginalized: females, workers, the poor. Moreover, if we examine his history, the posture is to create a world that has its base change albeit cyclical

change. The real world that exists in PROUT commentary are Sarkar's theories. These must be upheld, developed, proven so as to bring in the new era. Other histories must be shown to be lacking, less general or too general, or formulations of a particular ideological movement. As Sarkar speaks from perfection, his view is described not as ideological (in terms of embedded in power) but as ideological in terms of the pure expression of the subliminal idea.

The debate that then rages is how are the commentaries of Sarkar true to the spirit of Sarkar? Is there one long term cycle of worker/warrior/intellectual/acquisitor or has there been many. Recently Phil Carspecken in his "Playing the Devil's Advocate" (1990) has argued that acceptance of Sarkar's theory is dependent not on the facts or the evidence of history per se, but the primary acceptance of Sarkar as guru as infalliable. Once a personal and emotional relationship with Sarkar has been established and the various cognitive dissonances are massaged through sundry internal movement discourses then there is intellectual acceptance of the theory. But, of relevance, here is not the psychological discourse Carspecken is attempting to privilege, but the assumption that just as there is a natural science, there should be a social science. From this view, Sarkar goes too far in suggesting space/time invariant laws. Good social research is about finding relationships between crime and demographics for example, not about how crime changes are defined by the larger epoch. Carspecken in that particular article speaks from the applied empirical perspective and faults Sarkar for a theory that adds nothing to sociology, the notion that Sarkar speaks from and to a

different paradigm is largely ignored. What results is an effort to return to the original texts and search for statements that authoritatively state how many cycles there are. This again forgets the role of interpretation and the problem of the place from which Sarkar speaks. We will return to this debate in chapter seven when we attempt to situate Sarkar's laws, not prove or disprove, them.

The applied view then is similar to the liberal/marxist view of finding a key stage, a key motivator, a key axis (progress, for example) and then writing history to fit into that key. This is not only the case for history, but temporality in general, that is, for the future as well. Alternatively, a politics of meaning approach suggests, irrespective of the claim of the writer that the history being written is a history of the true (and not simply an interpretation, myth creation, a general pattern), that all history serves many functions, including power and privilege at levels of epistemology, and the allocations of linguistic and economic resources. All history serves to legitimize a certain perspective. To create or nominate a certain future.

The counterpart to the politics of the meaning perspective is that macro-writers such as Sarkar are not claiming episteme as a criteria for judgement. Sarkar speaks of the iron law of history and he writes history in light of his stages. He is not interested in examining the contradictions or counterclaims within his perspective; history to him follows clear stages, power moves in clear patterns. One may interpret this in many ways depending on the social location of the perceiver but this does not change the fact that after a

warrior era intellectuals will take over. Ascertaining these stages is at best difficult. For example, is China in a warrior era moving towards an intellectual era with the student revolutions or was the communist revolution a revolution of the intellectual-priests and now China, as it opens up, is entering a capitalist era.

While these questions are important, our reading of Sarkar is that we assert is that is presenting a theory that is to be used as a resource to better understand the totality of reality. He has helping recover alternative frames of meaning and concomitantly creating new frames and thus delivering political asset to various meaning communities.

EMPIRICAL

The next approach, an extension of the applied, is the empirical approach. Here the world is divided into theory and data, with language simply describing the real world, not being constitutive of it. The question then becomes to determine operational, that is, measurable, definitions of Sarkar's theory. For example, what are the indicators of each social era? How does one know empirically when one is in a particular era? Sarkar asserts that those of the intellect and martial psychological wave are reduced to workers, proleteriat in the era of acquiritors; from the empirical perspective, the questions then become: how do we define this category? what are valid indicators for this theoretical construct? and, how can we find reliable and precise data that measure the above. Finally, to prove the hypothesis

correct, alternative explanations must be disproved, and the results must be repeated by different studies.

To take another example, Sarkar writes that collectivities (civilizations, nation-states, empires) are unified either when they have a common enemy (an anti-sentiment) or a universal common vision (an ideology). From the empirical perspective, the project would then be to define collectivities (nations or empires) and then devise valid statistical measurements of unity and separation and finally to operationalize the notion of common enemy and common good into real world measurable indices.

There are many problems with this approach. It makes an artificial distinction between what is being talked about and the language one uses to talk about it, forgetting the poststructural perspective that one's empirical categories exist in various discursive practices--definitions of what constitutes the real that give significance to one's results. It thus assumes that there exists an extra-linguistic reality that can be objectively talked about. Also problematic is the assertion that one's real world indicator is conceptually related to one's hypothesis, not to mention the problem of gathering reliable data, in terms of the categorization, the collection and the reporting of data. It also reduces the significance of a theoretical formulation to that of a instrumentalist and rationalist perspective, forgetting the role of the researcher, the interpreter. This is different from Foucault's effort. He moves to distance, not disinterest. He has an anchor, that of the search for regimes of truth, and its existing they are. The empirical

approach also does not problematize the theory itself, except in terms of proving or disproving hypotheses, nor does it compare the theory with other theories, except at the level of data analysis. More significantly, the theory as deeper myth (as a story that gives meaning to basic questions of the nature of what is) is denied and the theory as action in terms of creating a different world) is denied.

However, once we see the empirical perspective as a language, a discourse, then instead of statements that are only meaningful in the context of empiricism, we gain insight into how a theory might be translated (operationalized in the language of the empirical approach). An example is allowing for a discussion on indicators of each particular era without reducing the various hypotheses to mere measurable indicators. Then, given that Sarkar redefines development to include the significance of animals and plants (that is, an economics as if all living things mattered) any discussion of indicators of development would now include the impact on animal and plant life. This impact would not be an externality, rather it would be central to the economic equation. Thus, the empirical can be used differently when seen as a discourse or as a way to recover meanings. While the positivist basically sees reality vertically with the theory above and data below, the interpretive perspective is horizontal in its approach, seeking to find similarities, seeking to frame the text in alternative texts, seeking to translate the text into other ideological positions, and finally seeking to understand the text on its own terms as well. The effort is to understand Sarkar better by seeing how it stands with respect to other traditions and

alternatively with the phenomenological perspective in seeing what we can learn from the insights of the text.

COMPARATIVE

The next approach is the comparative approach. In this perspective, instead of applying Sarkar's theories to history or to the future, or searching for measurable indicators, we take Sarkar himself as our object and compare him to other similar present and historical thinkers, searching to understand him in light of the thinking of others. At the same time, Sarkar's PROUT can be compared to different ideologies such as liberalism or conservatism, or if we treat it as a movement, it can be compared to different social movements. Finally, we can treat it as a religion and then compare it to Islam and Christianity or treat it as a cosmology and then compare its structure with Western, Oriental, African or Pacific cosmologies.

This comparison can be structured along various categories such as ontology, epistemology, polity, economy, nature, technology, center-periphery relationships and time. This approach is useful in that a taxonomy of Sarkar's thinking is developed and we can better understand Sarkar and or PROUT as it now stands in the context of other powerful traditions.

But there exists a significant problem with this approach. This approach is ahistorical. We are simply comparing one thinker or philosophy with another at a particular place in time while they existed in different times and operated from different views of the world. Deciding how to see PROUT in itself is problematic.

PROUT is in some ways a cosmology, in other ways a development model, as well as a social movement (although the certainly there should be a relationship between social movement, development model and cosmology, with cosmology providing the code for the development of the others). Thus, what one compares PROUT with becomes increasingly problematic. We will in this study, alternatively compare PROUT with other cosmologies and concentrate on its movement dimension elsewhere and compare Sarkar with other macrothinkers, leaving in abeyance the problem of time. Instead we will focus on the problem of understanding change as a perennial problem. We will ask how does Ibn Khaldun's use of cycles differ from Sarkar's. In what ways do Ssu-Ma Chien and Chang Hsueh-Chen perceive the free will/structure problem? Does the Tao function in their discourse as dharma functions in the Sarkarian construction? Or, how does Mosca's notion of social forces compare with Sarkar's mentalities? Why do they both focus on these types of powers instead of Montesquieu's checks and balances?

Besides the ahistorical problem, equally problematic with this approach is that it does not reveal the structure of the categories chosen; for example, the categories one chooses for comparison are also an integral part of a cosmology, of a discourse. For example, the categories economy and polity have only recently been distinct and the separation of the categories nature and technology only are sensible in Occidental models of thought. Thus the categories one chooses are in themselves problematic insofar as they are often part of the structure of a particular discourse; in fact, so much so that one may end up with a taxonomy which effectively simply compares not

two cosmologies with each other, but the given cosmologies with the silent cosmology which the categories chosen are themselves embedded in--in this case, the epistemology of modernity. While, one might ideally assert that, we will attempt to use their categories as much as possible as they themselves might have used them given their episteme, or that we will try to reenact history, understanding it as it really occurred, our perspective is that both of these are impossible given our location within the poststructural problematique of the writer, reader, interpreter. Our goal in comparison will simply be to better understand Sarkar using writers that are more easily understood by most readers. We hope that significant commonalities and differences can be illustrative in leading to understandings of Sarkar and PROUT outside of its own discursive representations, in making Sarkar more intelligible to others and indeed to his movement.

TRANSLATION

The next approach is the translation approach; one that we implicitly use throughout this study. Here one takes the language of Sarkar, the categories of PROUT and attempts to translate them into an alternative tradition. For example, Sarkar's expresses his social philosophy in sixteen principles developed and articulated in the form of sutras with accompanying commentaries and constituted in the discursive practices of the Indian philosophical tradition. We can, however, group them in different ways. Borrowing from the Western social science tradition, we can use: theory of consciousness

(ontology, creation-evolution theory, mind-body problems, layers of the mind), development model (concept of progress, theory of value), theory of history (social cycles, dialectics), development ethics (neo-humanism, economics as if all living beings mattered), and strategy (regional, linguistic social movements). Alternatively, we can also group Sarkar's thought into three frames: critique, eschatology, and strategy. Sarkar's writing implicitly and explicitly critique the present global system and the values that underly this system, and at the same time they provide a blueprint and a vision for an alternative vision, a sense of what could be. Finally, Sarkar provides a strategy of how to go from here to there. The problem with this approach is that any attempt to translate involves not just a problem of syntax, but a problem of discursive practices; that is, a problem of the deeper values and structures embedded in various ways of thinking, or languaging, so that a translation may miss not only the entire structure of a perspective but critical categories as well.

Thus in a translation, meanings are regrouped and then reunderstood not in the context of the original text but in the context in the world of the translation. This problem of translation, among other things, makes the empirical approach difficult, and should make any approach that claims certainty and fidelity of representation contentious. However, by virtue of it being a translation, there is a useful strategic value in that the information is available to other linguistic communities which allows the translated text to become part of the terrain of these communities. In addition, through a hermeneutic theoretical move, one might discover various meanings by

comparing the original with the translation. The empirical approach is similar to this. However, the translation (in the empiricist perspective) is seen as a vertical effort between the theory world of ideas and the real world of data, while the above approach is a horizontal approach between various theoretical constructs.

FRAMING

Another approach is that of framing Sarkar's work through the perspective of a variety of disciplines. For example, one may frame it in the language of systems theory, and then reinterpret various elements of Sarkar's work as inputs (spiritual inspiration), outputs (social transformation), outcomes (outputs that feedback to inputs, struggle). One can then look at the various relationships between the subsystems (the spiritual, the organizational, the political) and determine their contribution to the system and the overall goal of the system--in Sarkar's language, that of spiritual realization and social change. This goal can then be disaggregated into subgoals, that of one nation becoming PROUTist, or social welfare projects completed.

Alternatively, one could frame Sarkar's PROUT in the language of futures studies. PROUT then becomes an alternative image of the future competing for legitimacy against the dominant vision of the future, modernity, and along with other images, the socialist democratic vision, the environmental vision, the Islamic vision, or the global socialist vision. PROUT, then, is reconstituted as an alternative possible future. Of course, from the perspective of Sarkar, PROUT is not an alternative vision, it is the vision of the future, or at least, the most probable vision of what is to be.

Moreover, from the perspective of the futures field, PROUT is defined as a forecasting methodology, as a way of predicting the society of tomorrow.

While this approach is quite useful, the failings are obvious. Any discipline one might use has its own biases; each discipline privileges a certain discourse. For example, systems theory simply organizes in a rationalist and functionalist fashion the components of the system, it does not allow for alternative designs or interpretations, for example, those possible through a dialectical framework, or a mythic symbolic one. Moreover, systems theory is a metaphor that makes certain assumptions as to what is considered the natural state of things (the notion that every system naturally moves to a state of equilibrium, for example). As a metaphor it exaggerates and hides; certain meanings are accentuated, others are silenced.

The futures approach, too, is problematic. First, it is ahistorical. Secondly, the problem of constituting the future in two seemingly discrete categories, preferred and probable, is critical. The probable future is determined by a variety of forecasting technologies such as dialectics, statistics, cycles of history, or expert opinion and is phrased apolitically, that is, the role of subjectivity in terms of which forecasting methodology is chosen or the role of epistemology one's theory of knowledge, is seen as given.

However, once we politicize the category of probable future and argue that it is often a result of problem selection, or methodology selection, or one's discursive practices (one's ideology, at a simple level), then the problematic nature of the distinction

between probable and preferred becomes apparent. Even when the most probable solution is seen as a dystopia, this creation functions as a warning system, a way of articulating what might happen if one's preferred future does not result, or if the present continues, then as an objectively gotten probable future.

Finally, by focusing on PROUT as a predictive social theory, in so far as Sarkar contends that the social cycle is an inexorable law of nature in much the same way as numerous writers have located Marxist theory, then the legitimacy of the entirety of the theory falls or rises based on its social forecasting utility; its interpretative value, its critical value, its value as praxis are denied. Here, the notion of the politics of the natural in terms of Sarkar's "laws of nature" would be a critical avenue of deconstruction; it is the monument of information that stands before us, waiting to be swallowed; but of course, the swallowing will be less painful and violent to our selves if we search for the discourses that create a grammar of laws; for example, significant is the discourse of the West which asserts that the natural world has laws, but the world of humans does not (except in economic models), while the Indian perspective does not make such a dramatic separation of the ordered and unordered world. Here then the goal would not be to recover meanings, but to distance ourselves from Sarkar's assertions that his social cycle is an iron law of nature; that is, to make problematic the notion of laws and the notion of nature. This can be done through a variety of methods offered by Foucault.

However, the futures approach provides new meanings and allows different discourses to speak, thus potentially shedding light on that which is to be interpreted. Moreover, by framing it in the category of thought of "alternative future", it is somewhat legitimized as an actual possibility of a future society, rather than fiction. Therefore, its theoretical framework and its policy prescriptions are seen as potentially relevant in the various academic, governmental, and international development dialogs.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL/HERMENEUTIC

The next approach is to look at the way Sarkar himself constitutes his world. We begin with the phenomenological, hermeneutic perspective; we are concerned with gaining insight into the text on the terms of the text. Instead of seeking to test the text or translate the text, or to refit the text in a "prepackaged" methodology, we examine how PROUT sees itself. What categories and structures does Sarkar use? For example, Sarkar develops a six point theory of successful societal development: spiritual ideology, spiritual practice, perceptor, spiritual texts, socio-economic theory, and social outlook. With these categories we can locate PROUT as well as other systems or movements. Also illustrative is Sarkar's typology of the failure of theories. For him the first category is that of hypocrite's theory, or those developed to serve the interest of a particular class or interest, that is "to dupe the people" (Sarkar, 1987, 6: 17).

The second is the range of theories that exist without any basis in the real, with the day to day suffering of the physical world or the possibilities of the spiritual world; that is, they speak solely in the world of mentalities. The third is the range of theories that result from a particular culture or environment, but are universalized and thus fail because of their generalization. For Sarkar, the Marxist effort can be thus categorized. The fourth are those constructs that fail to develop because of implementation problems: political, bureaucratic or individual.

This approach is highly useful because we see how PROUT creates itself, we see its structure in its terms, we see how PROUT sees the world and we learn from it about the way we construct our world. Instead of interpreting Sarkar, we now engage in the process of rethinking our own selves, our own world. We uncover ourselves. This process reduces the distance between author, text and audience and a multi-layered dialog is created. This is the approach mentioned earlier in our quote of Gadamer. This approach also corresponds to that of the devotee, who reads not to philosophically analyze or to make problematic, but to be inspired, to change one's own self so as to reach new self-understandings and interpretations or to act and change the world in which these interpretations become known. Of course, this approach does not problematize PROUT itself. It does not allow for comparison between different cosmologies; that is, while this model obviously critiques communism for being weak on spiritual practice, we do not find out how communism locates PROUT in its hierarchy of successful movements or theories. In addition, it is

ahistorical in that we do not see the historical context of the various constructs of PROUT.

POSTSTRUCTURALIST

The last approach for discussion, which has been the central theme throughout this chapter and will remain so throughout this study is that of the poststructuralist, the Foucauldian. Here we examine the various structures within Sarkar's cosmology; that is, the linguistic discourses, the way that it is constructed, the monuments of language and power in front of us. From this perspective the goal is to examine and to critique the text of Sarkar and see what discourses or linguistic worldviews he is privileging; what epistemologies and discourses he is seeking to encourage; and what ways of thinking as constituted in the various discourses he is attempting to make problematic, to critique. Instead of dialog, we are seeking to distance ourselves from a typical, that is, mundane discussion on the varieties of what Sarkar really means in a certain text. With this perspective we gain insight into the structure of Sarkar's writing. For example, Sarkar is clearly attempting to make the present less concrete by developing a dialectical-cyclical theory of history. Also, he is attempting to gain a distance from present conversations by showing that who we are, is constituted by the particular problems of an era. In addition, he is politicizing the future by not positing an end to politics; that is, a state when all class struggle is over. Yet he embraces structure by arguing that there does exist a cyclical law of social change. Sarkar is also

privileging the spiritual location and creation of identities and structures by positing that the end of all of existence is spiritual realization. Here again Sarkar is distancing "us" from our notions of "self." For Sarkar the Self is ever being created and constituted by culture, politics, historical eras, and by past-life events as well as by the forces of the universe, the outward and inward, expansion and contraction forces. Who we think we are, is not what we are.

But while Sarkar distances and makes the self of modernity problematic, Foucault would also problematize Sarkar's theory of self. For Foucault the critical question is not what is real, as with the comparative approach, but how is it real? How is Sarkar's cosmology constituted? What are the values embedded in it? Given that language structures are complicit with the domains of power, we are then not surprised that Sarkar's work is largely critical of the present and critical of the way we normally constitute our histories of the present. For him history is the history of elites. The stories of the courage of the suppressed have been silenced, the victories that are told are those of the already powerful: the wealthy, the royal, and the keepers of the word, the various priests of knowledge.

He is critical of the reality of poverty and the poverty of our theories of reality. We can thus better understand how Sarkar returning to the idea of self, is attempting to relocate the self away from our common understandings; that is, the self as related to status, income, a body, to a self located in spiritual consciousness eternally distanced from ego, time and space and at the same time a self located in all other selves, thus allowing for a discourse that

enables compassion and activism. For Sarkar the reconstitution of spirituality becomes a defense against modernity and a purposeful effort to unite in the world with all other living beings, and thus as an effort to transform the withdrawn self of antiquity and the segmented self of modernity.

The examples above are only illustrative of the type of inquiry that one enters within the mode of the poststructuralist approach. This is not to say that we should abandon the other approaches. They too are important in gaining understandings of PROUT, especially the comparative approach, the hermeneutic, and the translation approach (in which we are forced into by virtue of examining Sarkar's text). However, the poststructural approach is more enabling in that we better understand the social construction of PROUT and then create an epistemological space that results in richer interpretations of PROUT. For example, simply testing PROUT's theory of history on various civilizations in the pursuit of an objective history forgets that one has a preunderstanding, and that this understanding is part of a politics; that is, that objectivity is a problematic, that our subjectivity remains complicit in present domains of power. The comparative approach by leading to a distance and by understanding Sarkar in the terms of others is also highly useful; it distances and it brings us closer to the text.

The poststructuralist approach is complimentary with other approaches such as the futures or the comparative by providing a larger structure for critical inquiry, thus placing a context for the recovery of meaning project. For example, if we were to describe the

culture, the political-economy or the historical place of a particular collectivity like the Philippines, we can create different levels of responses. The first is to revise Filipino history in terms of Sarkar's eras, to see how the present has come to be within the language of PROUT; and at a different level of analysis, we can deconstruct this revision; that is, the notion of cycles, and we can discover how such a discursive practice results in various commitments to history, to the present, and to notions of a good society. In much the same way the question how do the writings of Sarkar compare with the writings of great Islamic scholars Ibn Khaldun, for example, can lead to various types of analysis. One can compare how they see themselves, how their writings deal with the problem of the present dominant system of modernity, that is, at their effort to develop counter hegemonic discourses and, at another level. How they are constituted by present discourses, and how they have come to be. Thus, the various approaches are not exclusive.

The strength of the poststructuralist inquiry is in focusing on how power is constituted in the real. In fact, the purpose of this type of inquiry is seeing that power has no place to hide, or more fittingly seeing that power has no place to hide in the past, present, and future. Sarkar, of course, is already attempting this when he argues that the type of knowledge interests one has are largely dependent on the larger power relations, on the particular cycle in history one might be in. In terms of PROUT writers, Charles Paprocki (1978) has attempted this type of analysis when he argues that epistemology is related to the type of society one. Of course, these

efforts have remained inarticulate to the significance of language structures in concealing power relations. Moreover, the poststructuralist approach has not been used to understand the texts of Sarkar themselves; that is, to deconstruct PROUT as well. Moreover, Foucault's concept of episteme is not the same as the sociology of knowledge effort alluded to above, "The episteme is not what may be known at a given period ... it is what, in the positivity of discursive practices, makes possible the existence of epistemological figures and sciences" (Welch 1985, 10).

BEYOND DISCOURSE

At the same time, given the above privileging of discourse, of the argument that the world is created through language, and that in this imposition, power remains hidden and elusive, it is critical to discuss the prediscursive, the realm outside of language as this is central to Sarkar's texts. Here we stand in a hermeneutic and phenomenological stance in that we are interpreting Sarkar's work, attempting to engage in a dialog between Sarkar and poststructuralism. For Sarkar, discursive analysis privileges the intellect, and reduces the spiritual, the transcendental to the relative, to a mere discourse. Sarkar, himself, argues for a spiritual knowledge interest, one that delegitimizes rationalistic qua modernity modes of knowing as well as intellectual qua in mind ways of knowing. Thus while Sarkar would agree that the discursive approach is a critically important perspective and that language does create the world that is why he and other mystics such as those of the Zen Buddhist tradition

emphasize ways of knowing other than the intellect. For Sarkar, therefore, the poststructuralist effort is an activity contained within the arena of mind. The task then becomes to transcend mind through activities such as meditation and through spiritual tests--that is, the creation of a discourse where life situations are perceived by the the individual as having no solution except that of trust in the spiritual Other. Here the practitioner is forced out of mind; the self then no longer is constituted in ego, but in itself, in unmediated, unexpressible consciousness. The subject-object duality does not exist, rather there is a state of the unity of consciousness. In his words:

That which comes within the orbit of mind is but a relative truth, not an eternal truth and so it will come and go. Scriptures (texts) and mythologies are but stacks of bricks, they are only arranged in layers, carrying no significance or intrinsic value. So how can they describe the transcendental entity which is beyond the scope of the mental faculty. How then can this intuitional perspective be interpreted, which is beyond the compass of body, words and mind? Here both the teacher and disciple are helpless, because the subject, which is beyond the domain of any academic discourse and discussion, is simply inexplicable and inexpressible. Whatever said and discussed comes within the ambit of the mind and so it is a relative truth--true today and false tomorrow. That is why, the teacher becomes mute when he is asked to explain transcendental knowledge (the Buddha remained silent when asked if the Transcendental entity existed and equally silent when asked if it did not exist) and consequently the disciple, too, becomes deaf. So ... in order to explain this profound mystery, there is no other alternative than to emulate the symbolic exchange of views between a deaf and a dumb person (Sarkar 1975, 114-115).

The transcendental, then, is the realm of the prediscursive, a space that cannot be talked of, or listened to, for such an effort would evoke the discourses of the present, past, and future, that is, the discourses that transpire because of mind. And mind can only perceive a minor part of the universe. Almost all of Being remains

outside of human perception. "That is why it is said that this expressed universe [which humans have access to] is but a very small island in the ocean of the unexpressed universe" (Sarkar 1987a, 11: 30). The universe ultimately is mysterious and we are ultimately not capable without resort to other ways of knowing to know the universe. Sense perception only allows that which is near to reach us. Reason and logic are confined by language. Only direct intuition of Being allows us to know the Real.

For Sarkar, language attempts to symbolize the real. Meditation and other intuitive activities attempt to engage the infinite Being. But "...when because of the depth of the inner feelings, [the] mental waves seek symbolization [representation] but do not succeed, the mind itself ceases to work. Such a state is called samadhi" (36). The distinction between the object and subject disappear. Here the mind is unable to express the unexpressible, thus the mind becomes suspended. The guru becomes deaf and the disciple dumb.

The counter response from the poststructuralist position is that the distinction being made is an ontological one in terms of what is real. Discursive analysis constitutes itself by asking how has it become real, how has the view of a transcendental self emerged and what are its commitments. Thus, the purpose is not to engage in an ontological debate as to the nature of ultimate truth, but to seek to uncover the politics of ontology. By constituting the real as a discourse, we gain distance from past and present and future and see the real as human creation and thus contentious; that is, available for negotiation. It is because of the recognition of the primacy of

discourse, and the effort to avoid this location, that both teacher and student remain in silence and thereby in a non-discursive space.

While intuition may lead to a particular state, personal communion with Self or Supreme, ultimately when one articulates the experience one turns to communication, to dialog, and thus some form of mediated expression.

However, as to the nature of Being, the responses would vary. Different writers might argue that intrinsically, what is, is from the first to the last, within and without, meaningless, and thus all knowing efforts are projects of imposition of the knower. The prediscursive is not the realm of the spiritual, but the realm of other possible discourses, ways of constructing what is.

Alternatively, one might argue that one simply cannot know the ontological status of what is. Also, from the Sarkarian view ultimately one can say nothing about the ultimate nature of being, except that any effort to say anything would be embedded in mind, in language and structure, time, place and subject, in relativity. The problem of the relationship between the absolute and the relative then becomes the key and unresolvable, by mind, issue. For once we define this nature (of Being), then, we, for the poststructuralist, simply create new categories, hierarchies; that is, models of existence, or what is commonly called philosophy. This is unavoidable since after the silence and the muteness, we (the teacher and student) still must return to discourse and recreate the world once again. We enter a discursive space; a space embedded in meaning, in language, in historical identity, in power.

The task for Sarkar then becomes of privileging a spiritual discourse because to him one's theoretical formulations become better in that they are created from a non-discursive space that is intuitional; intellect is placed within a larger epistemological framework.

Upon expression the discourse of the present, past, and future of power then emerges. For in agreement with the poststructuralist, Sarkar asserts that once one speaks then one immediately constitutes oneself in mind, and thus in a particular power structure, in a discursive practice. Finally, from the Sarkarian perspective the problem with the poststructural perspective is that there is no closure. Reality is kept open, acceding to no position; there is no unproblematic site of knowing, thus not allowing a politics of transformation. For Sarkar, then, there must be a science of politics wherein an ideal system can be created; once the world is destructured, it must then be reconstructed. Certainly some voices will be silenced, but others will be raised or created. By speaking from a place that is less ego-driven, Sarkar's closure is better and just from his view; it is rational, neo-humanistic, socially just and spiritually progressive and therefore a ground from which human suffering is reduced and human happiness increased.; a new society is constituted.

From the poststructuralist Foucauldian committed to inquiry and analysis, the how of that constitution then becomes the critical and interesting question. For this study as well, the how, the epistemic

boundaries, the critical commentaries and the comparative analysis are
the key.

CHAPTER 3

THE EPISTEMIC BOUNDARIES

THE GROUND OF THOUGHT

Those women and men who begin new cosmologies evoke the universal and the transcendental, but their grand efforts also spring from the dust and the mud of the particular and the mundane. They are born in particular places, they live in specific homes, and they die in locatable sites. Ibn Khaldun's asserts that his sociology is time, space and culture invariant, but the bases for his theory emerged from the specific ground of Islam. His theory of history, his comments on historiography can be located to the current thinking of the time, the 14th century. From knowledge of Bedouins, from personally participating in various coups and assorted palace intrigues, it is not surprising that what emerges is a history of dynastic change, with Bedouin unity derived as the key explanatory variable.

But using the life cycle of an individual to infer the nature of his theory simply personalizes a series of events; it while remembering the subjective does not place the subjective in historical economic and language practices that surround that person, the episteme. The personal discourse is useful but there is more than that. To demarcate his work, Khaldun had to speak to previous writings of history. He had to write of those who solely aimed to tell what had happened, to write the daily affairs of the royal. Khaldun, too, existed within the Islamic episteme; a way of knowing that privileged rationality and logic; that believed in the

development of knowledge over time; and like Khaldun's theory of the rise and fall of unity had unity among Muslims as the key axis for the growth of Islam.

Chinese macro-historian Ssu-Ma Chien had to write within his episteme before he could change it. To be intelligible, he had to write in the context of Confucian history. There were various problems as to periodicity of history, as to the causes of the rise and fall of dynasties, which had to be resolved. But, however unique and revolutionary his writing was, it still existed within a particular sea of knowledge. While this is obvious to us when we examine the past, however when we examine our present, we locate it developmentally as the rational and the scientific. The past is constructed as relative and ideological with the future the fulfillment of truth once the last vestiges, the remnants, of the past have been vanquished. Thus, we submit our own present to ourselves as outside of history, outside of a metaphysic. Too, Sarkar's writings and those that attempt to interpret his world locate him outside of history; they claim that Sarkar is outside of his Indian tradition as if his knowledge was not contextual.

But every writer comes from a discourse. Hegel's conception of history was a direct response to the third antimony and Kant's problematic solution to it. "According to Kant, both universal natural necessity and freedom are necessary and also antinomy, since every event must have a prior cause, and yet, unless there is a first and hence free cause, the series will always be incomplete and the law of nature thus never sufficiently grounded. Kant solves this antinomy

by showing that the contradiction is not in the world but in consciousness, positing two distinct and independent realms, the phenomenal realm of nature and noumenal realm of freedom" (Gillespie 1984, xiii). Hegel accepts Kant's antinomy and makes it his dialectic.

Marx, although he attempted to create a perfect new world realizable through an objective understanding of the real, he too was responding to a tradition speaking to and from 19th century Europe. His thinking was contextualized by the Enlightenment and its German response even as he tried to speak to the problem of hierarchy and oppression throughout history.

Our perspective then is that every thinker and every thought exists within boundaries of what is considered intelligible. There is no place where one can speak from objectively, to be able to speak outside of discourse. Epistemological boundaries--languages, structures, and practices--exist and they define the significant and the trivial, the negotiable and immutable. And, these boundaries are also subjects of different discourses. New discourses, ways of knowing, are created. These new discourses are then the historical ruptures that end the old and begin the new. They are periods when the future ceases to be an image, to be a vision, and becomes a present.

Foucault calls these ruptures epistemological acts and thresholds.

...they suspend the continuous accumulation of knowledge, interrupt its slow development, and force it to enter a new time, cut it off from its empirical origin and its original motivation, cleanse it from its imaginary complicities; they direct

historical analysis away from the search for silent beginnings, and the never-ending tracing-back to the original precursors, towards the search for a new type of rationality and its various effects. They are the displacements and transformations of concepts (Foucault 1972, 4).

These new discourses break the ground of previous ways of knowing. They reorder knowledge and claim new positivities: they rearrange what is significant and what is trivial; they rearrange the relative placements of self, nature, god; space is turned over; time is reestablished and suddenly the world is anew again. But these new discourses must spring from the soil of other discourses. To function, the ever new must be intelligible to the old and the aging. Without this intelligibility, only those who exist outside of contemporary notions of the natural and the rational can participate in the new discourse. A new discursivity then is not created; rather, the alternative structure remains in the mind of a few, if at all.

Our questions and intentions for this chapter are simple. We begin with the geographical. Sarkar was born in 1921 in India. With the exception of a few trips outside India he has lived there all his life. Our larger question then is how has India influenced him. The obvious level is that of the Indian languages he speaks. But we are not concerned solely with language but with discourse. How have the ways in which Indian thought, history, culture been constructed, handed down to him, influenced the choice of his categories? Does he have an Indian mind?

When he speaks, who is he speaking to? When he writes, what are his metaphors, his comparisons, his analogies? Simply seeing who and what he writes about and what he chooses not to be write about is one

approach in placing him. The other approach is to examine Indian philosophy, Indian history and Indian culture and determine the large movements, the important events, the critical stages, the various constructions and determine what objects and subjects Indian thought itself creates? What language does the Indian episteme give as its resources to present day Indian writers. What are the norms that create the categories in which an Indian thinker, philosopher must speak? To whom must Gandhi, Tagore, Aurobindo and other twentieth century activists and writers speak? What ordering of knowledge speaks them? What are the discourses, the worldviews that circumscribe the boundaries of what they can see, feel, hear, conceive, and act upon?

What then is the Indian episteme? What is considered natural? What rational and what irrational? How has the real been divided; how have categories been spaced?

A sociological way of saying the above is how do Sarkar's various theories and theoretical frames compare with the history of Indian thought, with the history of Indian history, with the history of Indian culture and with the history of great Indian thinkers? Who else has attempted to create new discourses, or does Indian thought present itself with an alternative unity of discourse that is not centered with the author?

Thus in our analysis for this chapter we will proceed dialectically between the assertions, the knowledge claims of Sarkar and an idealized interpretation of Indian thought. Our goal, again, is a particular type of deconstruction. We seek to locate Sarkar

himself within the Indian episteme. We seek to find out whether Sarkar is Indian or is his thought beyond its historical limit? Or is he Indian and not-Indian at the same time? Is he creating a rupture in Indian thought by reconceiving its grounds?

This chapter is an effort to come to terms with the question whether it is possible to produce a new cosmology and maintain intelligibility in the cosmology from which one springs. Our task then is also genealogical in the sense that we seek to place Sarkar in history, not outside of history and culture. As much as he might claim to have access to universal knowledge and claim to have created a theory for the "good and happiness of all" we assert from the Foucauldian perspective and the structural perspective as well that this "universal" is grounded in a particular.

Our decision to locate Sarkar in Indian thought does not merely arise from the spatiality of his birthplace. His various texts are written in Bengali or Sanskrit; he has specifically written two tracts on Indian historical figures: the first on Shiva and the second on Krishna. In his writings there is repetitious mention of the Upanishads, the Gita, the teachings of the Buddha, and present day Gandhi and Tagore. Islam and Christianity receive but a few lines although he has certainly been influenced by their more horizontal structures, especially the notion of the brotherhood, the fraternity of Islam. In his article, "The Views of Other Faiths" (Sarkar 1987b, 3: 31-41) he focuses on the various divisions in Indian thought as well as on Marxism. In his writings on PROUT his emphasis is on a comparison of Marxism and Democracy: his critique is of capitalism. He

is signaling to ancient history and to the problems of the present. The relevance for us here is who does he seek to differentiate himself from. This "who" is one working definition of the culture from which he springs (with the exception of Islam, Marxism and liberalism, although they too constitute present India).

To begin with let us lay out various points of departure and categories from which we can locate, compare and contrast Sarkar. We will lay the groundwork of Indian thought. How is Indian thought constructed? What are its rule and regulations? What are the conventional readings of Indianness, of Hinduism¹.

How is Indian thought divided up? Are there schools, authors, divisions of time? And how does Sarkar locate himself in these various schools? Is he orthodox or heterodox or outside of the tradition itself?

This chapter will articulate the Indian episteme and place Sarkar within it. Using Galtung's cosmological analysis, that is, the division of cosmologies and the structures embedded within them (Occident and Orient and their interrelationships--as to person, nature, self, structural and direct violence and growth and distribution) we place the Indian system and then Sarkar within the structure. We will comment generally on the Indian intellectual style and Sarkar's own intellectual style. Finally we will compare Sarkar's perspective to the six major orthodox schools: Nyaya, Vaisheskika, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimamsa, and Vedanta; and the three heterodox schools, Buddhism, Jainism, and Carvaka. The obvious question is will Sarkar's cosmology become a new school and if so, orthodox or heterodox or

outside of the Indian doxa? Or will it like Aurobindo's worldview be seen as inspiring, but simply an update of previous thinking?

The focus of the next chapter specifically locates Sarkar's theory of history along side other theories of Indian history: the classical, the nationalist, the idealistic, the vedic-hindu, the marxist, the subaltern to mention the most prominent. Does Sarkar borrow from these histories? Are they similar? Different? If so, how so? This chapter also examines how India itself has been constructed, largely asking which of the various discourses that have imposed themselves on India does Sarkar align himself with? How does he see caste and class? This is especially central given his use of varna to derive his theory of history.

SARKAR'S SELF-LOCATION

First of all, how does Sarkar generally locate himself. He writes:

Many theories have been propounded in the world. Some of them were concerned mainly with the spiritual world; they had no concern for the rationality of the psychic world at all. Unfortunately, most of these theories have been thrown into the garbage heap of history. There were some theories which showed some concern for the psychic realm as well, but they could not develop the mental equipoise of society and were rejected by the people. Some of these philosophies pertaining to the physical realm sounded very fine indeed, but they were not in perfect tune with the hard realities of the objective world. Those philosophies were quite satisfactory in the dreamland of theory, but they had no connection whatsoever with the practicalities of the earth. Other theories, sounding somewhat pleasing to the ear, have spoken glibly of human equality, but upon application people discovered the ineffectiveness of these theories because the fundamental principles were contrary to the basic realities of the world 'Diversity is the law of nature: uniformity will never occur.' The world is full of diversities--a panorama of variegated forms and colors, diverse varieties and expressions. One must never forget it. Sometimes the superficial display of

these theories has dazzled the eyes of the onlooker, but actually they contained no dynamism...Many philosophies in the past have rendered this kind of disservice to humanity. In the end they only flung humanity into the quagmire of dogmatism, the breeding ground of innumerable mosquitos. They did not contribute to the welfare of any human being (Sarkar 1983, 2-3). (emphasis added)

For Sarkar, it is consciousness as desire directed toward the infinite which is the highest and most valuable treasure of humanity--what he calls devotion. The correct theory aids in the finding the balance between "the spiritual and material worlds and [is] a perennial source of inspiration for the onward movement of society" (Sarkar 1983, 4).

In the above quotes, Sarkar speaks to the various philosophies which have made India today. It is a disguised critique of the most dominant strain of Indian thought, Shankaracharya's Advaita Vedanta (overly other-worldly), of Gandhism (impractical) and of Marxism (overemphasis on equality at the expense of individuality). But more importantly is his criteria of good theory: human welfare. These are theories that lead to the meeting of basic human needs for shelter, food, and so forth and theories that balance his trilevel division of the real: physical, mental and spiritual. And finally and most important, is his assertion that theories are to be seen as assets to provide an intellectual discourse which can lead to that which is central to human existence: bhakti or the uninterpreted movement of mind toward that which cannot be symbolized, Krsna, Brahman...This then is the theoretical structure of structure which he imposes on the various theories that have claimed possession of the real.

Significant is a lack of claim of the truth in-itself of the theory. It is not that some were ontologically false and others metaphysically real, but it is that the more basic value of human needs, mental, physical, and spiritual, were not met by these theoretical constructs. This is in accord with his position that the phenomenal world is utterly and totally dependent on three variables: time, place (space) and person (the status of the individual observer).

Yet while Sarkar states this to differentiate himself from the philosophers, Brahmins, gurus, leaders behind him, generally it is the relativization of truth that distinguishes the Indian and the Western tradition. For Sarkar, the critical difference is between truth as rta or the facts and truth as satya or human welfare, that which leads to physical, mental and spiritual growth.

SARKAR AND INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

The Indian tradition is first of all a tradition that has therapy as its primary focus, the resolution of a specific problem. Resolution of the problem. It is therapeutic philosophy. The goal is end of pain, the end of suffering. The realization of this goal is the same as Truth. Truth in-itself that does not lead to the cessation of suffering is merely rta. Truth is Bliss², Sat is Ananda. Thus when we examine Indian thinking or Sarkarian thinking we must be careful of our own structural biases, of our preunderstandings (of, for example, truth as outside of value or outside of bliss). While it might be going too far to assert this, it is a useful point of reference that

most knowledge claims in Indian philosophy are predicated on the secondary nature of intellectual truth (truth as correspondence to a real world outside of the observer) and the primary nature of truth as bliss. This is not however a utilitarian reading of the text of Indian philosophy; the goal is not the practical. It is not simply that happiness feels better than sadness, rather Indian thinking attempts to move beyond mental-emotional states of pleasure. Ananda is beyond the pleasure and pain of the body. It is beyond the desire of the physical world and the mental world. It is located in the site of the everlasting.

This is the second key point. The first is philosophy as therapy and the second as suggested in the previous chapter is that the real is outside of time and space and individual perspective. The real is outside of mind and thus self as defined as personality, ego, family, place, region, nation, class, race, religion, and ideology. It is timeless and thereby prediscursive, prior to language and practice. God is simply a symbol of this reality; however while this symbol can be used as a point of focus (in so far as the symbol participates in that which it points to), it remains transitory. And that which is transitory is not real except in terms of the relative world. That which is everlasting is real. Thus the distinction is that of permanence and impermanence. True knowledge leads to the permanent, whereas false knowledge (however valuable on its terms) leads to the impermanent.

There is thus a real self, termed atman and a variety of social or false selves. But this atman is not simply static as commonly

described--it is not a thing--rather it is goal directed. As Sarkar states, "There is in every living being a thirst for limitlessness" (Sarkar, Ananda Marga Brochure). Thus, human consciousness once emergent is "goal directed, giving rise to a set of peculiarly human needs and motivations" (Carspecken 1987, 28). Human consciousness is primarily social in nature and "the self is not something ready-formed which pursues desires and interacts with other ready-formed selves in a mechanistic way. Instead, all selves are interpenetrated with each other. Human actions cannot be understood as simply movements of selves to gratify various desires, [however], rather all action is better conceived of as human expression which changes the self either positively (causing growth) or negatively (causing constriction)" (Carspecken 1987, 28).

From this most Indian thought derives an objective basis for morality; that which leads closer to the spiritually constructed self. However, the objective morality does break down for the human who has been able to distinguish the permanent and the impermanent, who knows what leads to dukkha (sorrow) and what to ananda (bliss). There is conventional morality and there is extramortality for the enlightened one.

This essential nature is called Dharma, or duties, laws, obligations, but essentially it can be read as the basic nature of the self. There are different dharmas: human dharma is the struggle to discover ananda. According to Sarkar in terms of present developmental ethics: "The evolutionary forces have not stopped. The theatre of action has shifted to the psychic level. Evolution is now

expressing its power in the daily struggle of men and women everywhere to attain dignity" (Carspecken 1987, 28). This last statement is certainly very Gandhian in that political dignity becomes associated with the traditional other-worldly ananda. Sarkar, as did Gandhi, perceives his role as more than spiritual not only the enlightenment of a few souls, but as civilizational, the creation of a structure for the enlightenment of all.

Granted that Carspecken's reading is perhaps a poststructural or even a Buddhist reading of the self. The Buddha, for example, refused to give the self a material reality and simply called it the aggregation of vital forces. However, how these forces stay together during and after transmigration was not clear though. Indeed, one could argue that the history of India is the history of the regulation of the self: who has the right to control the self, to give it mantras for its freedom, to gain tributes from it, to extract labor from it, to gain its homage, to place it in the body or in the mind, and finally to set it free.

THE KARMA DISCOURSE

The control and responsibility of the self relates to the next fundamental concept in Indian thinking: karma. Karma, in short, is a system of merits and demerits, the baggage that travels with the self, throughout time and space. In more rigorous language it can be spoken of as sanskara, or potential desires that must be experienced. The way out of these desires are numerous and these paths of escape take the space of the whole landscape of Indian philosophy and history.

Indeed, karma and the escape of the self is the subheading of the historical text of India. The traditional way or the mass way is through giving priests--the keepers of the self--food and other donations. Alternatively, one might do good works, as defined by the spirit of the times. This notion of good works remains undeveloped in Indian thought, except as articulated in the yamas and the niyamas: least-violence, truthfulness, cleanliness, contentment, simplicity, non-attachment and other moral principles. However, good works often lead to good sanskaras; thus, various tracts assert that chains remain chains whether they are made of iron or gold. Another historical alternative has been to do nothing; that is, to avoid all types of action and not create or reap karma. This is the path of renunciation. The notion of simply doing one's duty, however defined, as a way of avoiding undue karma, or iron chains, has been another response. The radical zen position in response to the karmic problem has been: how can that which is essentially pure--the self--gather dust? The ego is simply unaware of its own inner nature. Thus the zen master finds ways to break the ego from mind and then to reidentify it with pure self. With this reidentification, there is sudden enlightenment. All karmas fall away. The counter response to that position has been even the enlightened get cancer and other diseases, they just do not identify with the pain since they know it is temporary. They perceive the world from a position of compassionate non-attachment. One cannot escape one's previously implemented desires, one's previous actions.

The Sarkarian position again reaffirms his move to balance the spiritual and the material: the reflective and the dynamic. Individuals must do their duty, yet at the same time, they must, through the use of various mantras keep their mind identified with atman or paramatman (the supreme self), or within the devotional discourse, with Shiva, or Krsna. Thus one acts but one does not identify with the actions. This in effect is a reconfirmation of the advice of Krishna to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita. The final way out of karma (or sin in the comparative Christian reading) is surrender to the Godhead. While the privileging of the Godhead has led to the reification of the god-symbol, philosophically, it has coherence in that the mind of the self is ever thinking of the Other. Thus as there is no ego-identification, no new karmas arise. One is free. At the same time, there is the notion of the savior who can erase and wipe clean the slate of karma. Here one is also free.

Thus, within the karma discourse there remain numerous debates over the proper place of karma. In contrast, however, to the Western notion of sin, karma can be read as linking responsibility with the individual. It can thus be conservative (do nothing to cause change) or welfare orientated (help others to cleanse karma). Karma can be used as a way to blame the victim or as a way to encourage good works that benefit self, family, and other collective groupings. It can also be ambiguous as no one (except the Godhead) really knows who is getting what karma and how.

Typically karma is seen as the deeper cultural problematique that has kept India from becoming modern and developed--karma as fatalism

and acceptance of one's horrendous conditions. Karma at the populist level has found meanings and structures quite different from its various philosophical interpretations. Sheryl Daniel in her article titled, "The Tool Box Approach of the Tamil to the Issues of Moral Responsibility and Human destiny" tells these stories:

In another case, a ...boy of about eight years fell seriously ill and died. His family could not trace his death to any sin of his own or of the known family members, but they confided to me that it must have been the result of the bad karma resulting from the sin of an ancestor two or three generations earlier....[O]ther types of karma exchange are said to occur when a person accepts cooked food from another person. It is for this reason that Tamils are eager to accept the cooked food and even leftovers of the gods, Brahmins and holy men: they believe that they are acquiring some of their good karma and will gain greater prosperity as a result. For the same reason, they are selective about accepting food from undesirables such as thieves and prostitutes who will transfer a measure of their bad karma in the food which they cook....Fear of karma transfers from mere physical proximity makes villagers cautious about whom they allow to enter their homes. A holy man ...is, of course, always, welcome..the same cannot be said of widows or barren women (Daniel 1983, 29).

Good and bad karma can be passed on from the family and to the family. The enlightenment of one individual creates enough good karma to guarantee the enlightenment of an entire clan. While a more critical reading would examine the role of the priestly class in providing this enlightenment vehicle, significant is the complexity of rules and logic that accompany karmic transfer.

On a modern level, the journal Vedic and Modern Science run by the Transcendental Meditation movement argues that a group of meditators meditating in a specific area can influence peace, violence as well as the stock market in a nearby area. While they use the language of science to justify this transfer (wave theory and the new

physics), structurally it remains karmic theory. "Good" actions lead to "good" results. However, the definition of this goodness, for example, in the case that increased meditation by meditators in a specific area raises the price of the stock market, remains unproblematic to the Transcendental Meditation movement. Stock prices are human welfare are not necessarily synonymous except within a capitalist framework. They do not politicize themselves.

Karmic theory either is thrown out altogether as an impediment to development or is embraced entirely as ancient wisdom. The many uses of karmic theory, the meanings embedded in it and the politicizations of these meanings (who gets what and how done we know good and bad) remains undone. Interpretations of karma remain authoritative. Sarkar's effort has been to remove the control of karma from the priest and to attack renderings of it that blame the victim. He has chosen to redefine it.

But the larger philosophical effort of ungrounding karma--seeing how it is put forth in discourse, by whom and for what use, as Foucault has done for Western sexuality--has not been Sarkar's project. Thus, those at the top layer of society can and do continue to use it to justify the status quo. Hierarchy then finds philosophical substantiation. Prosperity means one has good karma. There is little discussion as to why good is related to prosperity. Indian philosophy on its terms should be read as good karma meaning that which leads to ananda, not wealth or privilege. Thus, birth in a rich family does not necessarily mean good karma, for wealth--if it leads the individual to identification with the material plane--could

be read as bad karma (unless one sickens and then renounces the gross world).

Necessary to make karma intelligible over time is the notion of rebirth. This is important in Sarkar's thinking. He even develops theories as to why we do not remember our previous births: lack of intuitional development and as a coping device for the young to avoid confusion. While again this is not the place to restate Indian philosophy, what is significant for our quest in understanding Sarkar and the Indian episteme is that Sarkar appears to follow the classic Indian model, although he adjusts it for his particular PROUT. Thus, he counsels against readings of karma that blame the victim; rather he locates the site of karma not in the nation, the community, or the clan, or caste, but rather in the individual, in desire and responsibility. Batra (1978), in contrast, argues for a karmic reading of history: empires rise and fall because of good and bad karma. Thus, in the rise exploitation occurs and once karma "kicks back" there is the decline. But for Sarkar, karma must be reinterpreted lest it fall into nihilism, given that the dominant model in Indian thinking argues that nothing indeed is real.

Karma for Sarkar is related to desire. Within this model what one desires must be fulfilled in some form. Thus one must return, forever attempting to fulfill various desires. Indeed, one's birth in the next life is dependent on the desires that need to be realized. The problems associated with this type of thinking are obvious: the ability to rationalize, to blame, to ignore, to create new nuances of karmic transfers to the point where the spiritual model is totally

subverted by the supply/demand and costs/gains of the self-interest economic model. Philosophically, what results are not the invention of new models of greed (economic growth), nor new realms to conquer (expansion), nor equitable models of distributive justice, but, as one might expect in an idealistic worldview (as Sorokin uses the term), new and newer theories, of speculations upon speculations, fantasy upon fantasy, all tied together by a thin thread of logic, of reason.

A natural implication is the centrality of the free will versus determinism question; whether humans simply play out their role in the cosmic drama or whether they can improvise and prevail upon the scriptwriter to make alterations, or whether they can somehow break out and move outside of the script. In either case, within the Indian context, there remains a very real and a surprisingly thick philosophical nexus which must be negotiated. Even if Sarkar simply calls these theoretical extravagances, he too is forced to develop his own theory based on the arrangements given to him by the various schools of thought. Even Jiddhu Krishnamurti (1966) who rejects all metaphysics, not in the Foucauldian perspective of asking not what is the real, but how is the real put forth in discourse; but who asserts that self must simply gaze at the self. He spends most of his textual space arguing against theory and eventually develops an anti-theory along with various organizations that promote the Krishnamurti school of thought. Samuel Beckett, not speaking to the Indian episteme, still is useful here.

"What can you expect, they don't know who they are either, nor where they are, nor what they're doing, nor why everything is going badly, so abominably badly, that must be it. So they build

up hypotheses that collapse on top of one another, it's human, a lobster couldn't do it" (McCarthy 1973, front page).

But for the Indian, there remains karma to explain why things are going so badly and the hope for one that is beyond karma, the redeemer, who will once again bring dharma back.

In addition to truth as bliss, philosophy as ultimately therapy, the self as a goal directed social construction with karma as the glue that links the self from life to life, there are other salient features of Indian thinking as well.

Indian thinking is synthetic in that the positions of various schools are argued back and forth but they are not outright rejected. This goes as well for the recent liberal/democratic and state socialist ideologies. Sarkar, too, while he differentiates himself from various schools, still can conveniently quote from seemingly opposed positions when they can inspire individuals to act, and think in accordance with the deeper goals of the Indian tradition: bhakti. And even while he makes a strong distinction between the Tantric and Vedic perspectives, largely arguing that Tantra is more individualist, struggle orientated, dynamic and pre-Aryan while the vedic is more group, prayer oriented and Brahmanical, he can easily in the next discourse quote extensively from the Upanishads. Similarly, he can critique Buddhist philosophy for being weak on socio-economic theory and then use the Buddha's dialogs as assets for his own project. Underlying this is the belief that nothing is totally good or bad in the relative universe and that nothing is totally outside of the Indian project. Of course, he attempts to quote in a way to reinforce his activist and rational position on the good life.

Along with the synthetic approach is the privileging of the spiritual perspective. Only Carvaka and recently the Marxist variants argue for an alternative perspective. While Orientalist critic Ronald Inden (1986) argues that generalizing Indian thought as spiritual or synthetic only reinscribes the notion that India is either backward, mysterious and irrational or mystical, exotic and erotic; nonetheless, as a starting point we assert that Indian thought can but be described as ideational or idealistic (to use Sorokin's language again). With respect to Western thinking it falls closer to Platonic and Kantian thinking than the Cartesian perspective. The central questions in Indian thought relate to the nature of the self, not is it materialist or spiritual, but how is it spiritual. Nor is there a consciousness beyond the material, but what is its nature and how does it relate to the creative force of Prakrti or the energy/actional component of the universe. Its orientation is fundamentally metaphysical. This is not to say there are no implications for the structure of power--polity, economy, and culture--that derive from this, but simply that the project is primarily one that has at its center the search for the Other; an other which is believed to be outside of space, time and the individual, which exists independently of our knowing efforts, but when known, through prayer, meditation, chanting, provides the solution to the problem of meaning. And, this Other at the same time is the self, the subjective, the internal. The Other then is both external and internal. What is, then, is more than what the senses perceive and, what is, then, is more than what reason can conceive. Moreover, once that which is beyond senses and reason is perceived

then it can be transmitted. The perception of this self, however, is a project of many lives. Once realized, it accords one with the ultimate status, that of guru. The guru then can teach others how to realize the self and because of the difficulties of self-realization and because of the guru's prior experience, his or her status in Indian thinking, whether materialistic or spiritual, becomes central. Teacher as guru is also compatible with the Indian notion that reality is naturally multileveled and hierarchical. Each human can be placed on this hierarchy depending on his or her spiritual realization. We should then not be surprised at the centrality of Sarkar's leadership model and that Sarkar's model of leadership is not one that privileges philosopher-kings (the wise intellectual) but rather the spiritual-intellectual (the one who has all types and levels of knowledge and all types of social existence).

The critique of the Orientalist discourse (the Orient as either spiritual or erotic as an opposite of the rational economic model of the West) has merit in that the politics of Indian thought are often left examined such that, for example, caste is seen as an independent condition of Indian thinking instead of a category of inclusion/exclusion that developed with Kingship or with an attempt of the Aryans to somehow include the Dravidians within the natural order, but at a lower level. However, while a critique of Orientalism is useful in that it politicizes natural categories, we, however, take the position that the Indian project or mission is significantly different than the Western position, notwithstanding that most

understandings of the Indian position have been packaged by European and American Orientalists, specifically, Western Indologists.

UNITY OF DISCOURSE

Also useful in understanding the Indian project is that there is no word for philosophy in Sanskrit. Philosophy, in the Indian perspective, is only one part of the overall dynamic--it is vijnana, knowledge derived from reason. The word used to describe the overall project is darshana, or to see, to a particular type of view. Thus, it is perspective. It is only with the political hegemony of the Brahmin class that philosophy becomes the highest branch of knowledge. Karma and bhakti then became located underneath vijnana. Implicit in the notion to see is that there are many ways to see and that there are many seers. It becomes an additive form of knowing, not an exclusive, first originator, the prophet model variety. Thus, it is quite understandable that there is no one book as with Western religions, rather there are a range of texts that have more than ordinary authority. This is similar with Sarkar's work in that there is not particular text that stands above other texts, rather his work exists in a textual unity. However, this is not to say that the texts are not authoritative, it is just that authority is not based on historical origination, rather, the texts are eternal, outside of time; indeed mythic, for the Indian truth has always existed.

This is one reason why, as opposed to the Western project which finds its unity of discourse (the unity of the historical text) in the author, in the writer himself, in the Indian context the author is

removed from center stage in a move congruous with the death of the postmodern author. Instead of the author, there arise different views of the world. Specifically, the six orthodox schools and the three heterodox schools, with Indianized Marxism and liberal democratic capitalism as the latest entries in this project.

Authors are quoted only at points when authority is needed. While the author is important it is not the individual author that gives credence to a perspective but the perspective itself. But ultimately it is the reader who must give meaning to the text by reinterpreting his or her self, for the text finds its durability in its ability to change the self of the interpreter, not the reification of a particular preheld concrete self. Again, truth is transformation, the realization of ananda, not a particular philosophical assertion. The location of meaning in the reader is similar to the postmodern project in which meaning is neither with the author or the philosophy, but is moved to the point of contact, the point of thought, the point of significance: to the reader, the interpreter, the watcher.

But the Indian writer to be intelligible to history must speak to these different schools of thought, to the unbroken mass of tradition, of historical texts. Gandhi to validate himself reinterpreted the Upanishads. He found the future of India in its past and made this past an alternative present. (Nandy 1983) Even Rajneesh who claims to be universal, first speaks directly from the Tantric perspective, although his style has been the "left-handed" Tantra school which forces the liberation of the self through the emersion into pleasure, though emersion into death and sexuality. He is universal, he is a

guru, precisely as an Indian would be. He does not stand outside the Indian context either. Likewise, Jiddhu Krishnamurti attempted to stand outside the tradition. He was to be the avatar of the world, the point from which the knowledge of heavenly worlds was to pass through, but Krishnamurti rejected this purpose for him. What did he reject this power for. He did not turn to the bhakti schools nor did he turn to the karma schools, nor did he convert to one of the Occidental religions (Islam, Christianity, or Judaism), Marxism or Liberalism. Rather his effort was to argue that all systems of thought were creations of the mind; a mind that was essentially socially fabricated and thus ripe with deceit, anger, expectations. The way out was to simply watch ones desires, ones mind, and to even watch the desire to watch. Out of this, for Krishnamurti, comes the natural self that can truly love and truly experience the world as it is. But while this view rejects the orthodox grand system building schools, it falls very much in the Indian tradition; it falls squarely within the tradition of natural versus artificial self and it can be seen as an interpretation of the Vedanta school or the negation of the self project of the Buddha. For Vedanta the world is unreal, thus attachment to this world is a mistake. Political organizing would be equally a mistake as would spiritual organizing. Krishnamurti, like the yogis of the past, who had no attachments and thus could not be controlled, takes this perspective but critically applies it to the welfare state, to the Marxist project of reconstructing the political economy and the self. And while he attempts to go outside of the Hindu project, while asserting that gurus create a dependence on the

external, on form, his rugged spiritual individualism recapitulates back to the basic yogi myth. Finally to him, it is through understanding the self, that all is understood.

Sarkar is similar to Krishnamurti in that they both deny that their projects are Hindu. Sarkar would assert that India has a spiritual tradition and that is why he takes his birth there. (Another feature of the Indian episteme, one is not born but takes birth, thus privileging individual action but the structure of karma too influences this choice.) His movement begins in a particular soil but is universal. But both simply--albeit at a profound level--are engaged in massive reconstruction projects. Krishnamurti's is unorganized and only accessible to intellectuals and the upper-middle class as well as to foreigners (his homes were in Europe and the U.S.A). While Sarkar as we are discovering is opting for a major overhaul in the tradition at all levels--cultural, political, economic, philosophical--at the level of civilization. But as we continue to place Sarkar within this soup of Indian civilization, he is through and through Indian. As with Krishnamurti, attempts to move outside the Indian project eventually moves one back.

Returning to the problem of the unity of discourse, much of the privileging of schools of thought instead of a particular author is because the Indian discourse has no founder. While Sarkar argues that it was Shiva who systematized Indian thought and who led the matriarchal society from immorality to morality, others divide Indian thought differently. Central are discussions as to when the Vedas were written, what ideas were brought from where, but no starting

point is given. While Buddhists date their mission from Siddhartha Guatama's enlightenment, "Hindus" see the Buddha as one more among many who were enlightened. In addition, Buddhism is believed to have been vanquished by the monist arguments of Shankaracharya, possibly since Buddhism had been transformed to an ineffective, elitist nihilism. With the author pushed to the side, great figures in Indian thought soon become archetypes; they become gods. Their historical reality becomes less important. Even Mahatma Gandhi was perceived as capable of healing the sick and causing illness to those who took his name in vain, as Shahid Amin (1988) has argued. Gandhi too became an archetype of the larger Indian mythic structure.

THE GURU

The many gods of the Indian pantheon are also explained by the notion of multiple levels of reality of Indian thought. Center stage of this archetype is man or woman as god: the guru. This basic principle we see throughout Sarkar's writings and throughout Indian thinking. It is not the philosopher who can argue truth, or the businessman, or the political organizer, or the king who occupies the role of author, it is the enlightened one. Whether it is Sarkar's Shiva and Krsna, or whether it is the Buddha and the bodhisattvas that follow him, or whether it is Patanjali (the systemizer of Yoga), or the many gurus of this century, once the ultimate state is defined not necessarily by knowledge but by bliss, and once the transition to this bliss is located in a transmission from guru-disciple, then it is the guru that holds many of the keys to understanding Indian thinking.

While a sophisticated reading would argue that the guru functions as the Other in that the guru forces the individual out of the ego self into the transpersonal mystical self, the mythic reading is that the guru functions as the one who can personally liberate one from karma. He or she is the door between the expressed and the unexpressed worlds. Why the guru does not become author and thus become the anchor of discourse relates to the centrality of experience within the Indian discourse. The guru brings one to the mystical state. The guru guides and controls. His thoughts, words and actions must follow one another; ultimately, it is whether the guru can transform the atman of the individual to the supreme atman of Brahman that is the key.

In addition, the problematic nature of the self in addition adds to the synthetic nature of Indian thought. With the self concrete, there can be a founder. But with the self simply a congealed desire, or a social construction, and the real self a universal self, then the writer cannot but be backstage. Writing indeed is not the individual writing, but the will or play of Shiva or Krsna at the populist level or by the Macrocosm as Sarkar would refer to it. The individual is but an instrument. Moreover, the self by following various disciplines ceases to be the self of time, place and person, of contemporary discourse, of the confines of the objective material world and its various descriptions, becomes a reflection of that which is true, of ananda. The true, however, is available to all and thus not assignable to specific individuals.

The discourse of guru is evident within the totality of Indian writing. Only recently has this been translated into what is called Leadership studies in the Occidental discourse. For Sarkar, there are different levels of spiritual leadership. First, there are the taraka brahmas, the key figures that restore the rightful balance in the universe. Second are the enlightened ones who bring people to the spiritual path. Third are the various scientists and inventors.

Now Sarkar's leadership model takes the enlightened one and makes him or her into an intellectual; then he takes the scientist or . inventor and makes him or her into a sage. Finally he adds an activist dimension. This to him is the sadvipra, the spiritual intellectual. It is this group that can provide the leadership for transforming the world. That he would opt for a leadership solution to the human dilemma can be read many ways. Among them is that the leadership discourse comes out naturally from the Indian episteme. Only those in touch with the real, who understand struggle, are humble, follow basic moral principles can provide the extracyclical leadership to bring on the next revolution. These are Gramsci's organic intellectuals, but as one they now obtain a spiritual color. The problem of abuse of power by these leaders is handled by having group rule; the problem of the sadvipras simply becoming part a new superclass is not developed. The obvious analogy of the rule of the Imam becoming the rule of the ayatollahs is explained as exploitive vipra rule, but the failure of Iran as an event which can be read as an asset to the PROUT movement is hardly developed.

Significant for us is the centrality of the guru in Indian thinking as the Taraka Brahma in Tantric thinking or as the avatar in Vedic thinking, or the bodhisattva in Buddhist thinking, and at a lower level as the satguru (the pure, truthful guru, the one that is truly omniscient), and the plain guru who brings one along the path of spirituality. The categories of teachers in itself is fantastic. While some assert that the guru must be married and simple, others argue that the guru must be a monk and a renunciate. For Sarkar, the perfect guru must have the various occult powers. These include: anima, the ability to become as small as possible; mahima, the ability to become as big as possible; laghima, the ability to maintain a composure of lightness even while carrying the responsibilities of the universe; prapti, ability to provide all with what they need; iishitva, omniscience; vashitva, the ability to be in control of one's mind; prakamya, the ability to translate every psychic wish into physical reality; and antaryamitva, the ability to enter the body/mind of anyone. What is significant for this discussion is not whether they are real or not for those that claim they have them resort to various reasons not to use them such as deeper karmic laws such that the world cannot suddenly become the way they want it (the deeper law of teaching the world through example and action the true path, not simply changing all into perfection) but that these characteristics are seen as normal and rational. They are not in the Christian sense seen as only the right of the Son of God, but rather they are seen as the potential attributes of every great guru.

But Sarkar changes their meanings from their occult mystical definitions to social other oriented definitions. Laghima now becomes true understanding, for "...unless you understand how much pain and sorrow is accumulated in others' minds, how many tears well open their eyes, you cannot alleviate their sorrows and sufferings." (Sarkar 1989, 6) Antaryamitva is retranslated as the ability to enter others' minds so as to know their desires and pains. Thus, the purpose becomes not the fantastic power insinuated, but the necessity to remove human suffering. However, Sarkar claims that these qualities are but natural characteristics of the Macrocosm in its bounded form, in taraka brahamas such as Shiva and Krishna. Alternatively, if one translated these to the claims made by the creators of the new information technologies (divine light as fiber optics, omniscience as the perfect information system, entering the body/mind as microscopic revolution) we would have a mirror of Western technology. Within the ideational worldview, it is then not surprising that one creates categories such as the above and assigns them potentially to the individual; conversely, within a sensate ideology, it is not surprising that they become assigned and embedded in various technologies. Alternatively, once the mind is seen as outside of the physical world, then the powers and abilities assigned to it can easily become unimaginable, only limited by our own discursive spaces. In this sense Sarkar's and others' prediction of the good society that is possible once mental and spiritual potentials become tapped does not appear unreasonable, but a natural derivation from the Indian worldview.

BEING, STRUCTURE AND AGENCY

The question then becomes how to create a society where such possibilities can arise or in Hegelian terms, how to create a society where Being can realize itself. The situation of Being remains the primary differentiation of the various modes of thought: in matter, in spirit, outside both, in both and neither; in society, in the individual, in specific great individuals, in the state, in matter as technology, in the movements of masses of people, that is in mass populations. The Indian solution by and large has been in the individual self, not how can Being itself realize itself, but how can the many beings return to the original source, or how can they travel through Brahmachakra, the cycle of Brahma. The question of how Being acts in history and the problem of human suffering is ambiguous in Indian thinking. Sarkar, for example, in his theory of history avoids the intrusion of God in history, and yet in his more devotional tracts, it is very clear that Brahman in the form of the Taraka Brahma comes to the planet to correct evil. In his Ananda Sutram, however, he refers to this notion of divine intervention as not an empirical event, but as a concept that evokes bhakti among the mass. Redeemer may or may not ontologically exist; what is important is that the devotee believes that the Other exists. Again, this type of thinking is indicative of the Indian episteme. Something does not have to be empirically (materially) real for it be of utility; as long as it has use value in terms of leading individuals to the right path through devotion, action or knowledge (bhakti, karma or jinana). Truth just as it becomes associated with bliss, becomes associated with

education, history as itihasa, not history as itikatha, meaning to record, or history as the puranas, "mythological, not factual, but educative stories (Sarkar 1987a, 3: 26-27). Moreover, again truth in itself has numerous meanings, the earlier mentioned rta and satya distinction. This distinction is applied to history as well in the interpretation of events. Simply said, the distinctions made in occidental thought of truth and falsehood, good and evil, free will and determination are not so clear. Sarkar (1981, 63-64) writes how after the Mahabharata, the mothers of the fallen Kaoravas were lamenting. One in particular asked Krishna why this event had to happen if Krsna were omnipotent and omniscient, if he was the dream of all men and women. Why human suffering? Krishna's obvious reply--to teach all a lesson that virtue is victorious--was met by the intriguing, "well then why did my family have to die and yours live, why not the other way?" Krishna was silent. She then placed a curse upon Krishna that his entire clan, his kin would die in front of his eyes. Krishna reponded by "so be it." Now does this mean that Being is acting itself out through history, does it indicate that an individual can change the course of the lives and deaths of many, or is it reminding the reader that there is a much larger drama at play and that it doesn't matter if one is victor or loser? It is this last interpretation that Ashis Nandy has favored. He begins his essay titled "Towards a Third World Utopia" with the following quote. "Alas, having defeated the enemy, we have ourselves been defeated ... The ... defeated have become victorious ... Misery appears like prosperity and prosperity looks like misery. Thus our victory is twined into defeat"

(Nandy 1987, 20). The story then can be read as a true story in the sense of aiding one in resolving the structure/agency question; rather it could simply be read as a story to remind us that once the soul enters the body, it must live and die the death of the body. The tragedy of humanity exempts none. For the Indian nothing remains but except the focusing of desire and expectations toward unbounded consciousness.

IN SEARCH OF CRITICAL THINKING

But then within this all embracing worldview, what is the role of criticism, of the intellectual discourse? When reality can be constructed in so many different ways what is the role of self-criticism? C. Kunhan Raja's classic Some Fundamental Problems in Indian Philosophy is instructive. His question as the title might lead us to believe does not attempt to deal with the problems of Indian philosophy from a critical perspective; that is, we are not told what is problematic. His questions are not what doesn't work, what is unreasonable, irrational, nonsensical (he does not develop a politics of order), but rather how Indian philosophy deals with problems. This lack of a critical commentary in Indian intellectual style is investigated by J. N. Mohanty in his "Indian Philosophy Between Tradition and Modernity" (1982).

He comments that Indian philosophy is not orthodox (which he defines as "the hypostatizing of the past into a lifeless, unchanging structure" (23). but rather that it is traditional. Traditional, for him, "is a living process of creation and preservations of

significations"(23). Critique then should be done internally to the system. It should not question the grounds of the tradition itself. Scripture, itself, is seen as epistemologically stronger.

Furthermore, the 'logical' itself is conceived as ancillary to ... the scriptural, so that the tradition did not recognize the autonomy of the logical, be it in the sense of an autonomous, self-subsistence mode of being or in the sense of having an autonomous type of truth (i.e. formal validity, analyticity" (240).

Thus, we find Sarkar repeatedly returning to the scriptural texts and indeed writing his Ananda Sutram as sutras, aphorisms which can be easily memorized and chanted. Naturally then India certainly has not created a Michel Foucault who questions the ground of all categories and thus denaturalizes the authoritative. We should not expect this. The questioning that has emerged relates to the location of identity: such identity is perceived as increasingly abstract, increasingly all pervasive, from personal ego, to family, to locality, to race, religion, ideology, to globalism, to universalism, and finally to that which cannot be symbolized by mind and thought. But how the notion of self and identity has been put forth and how it has been constructed and what are the implications of cosmology to "basic human needs and conditions"--the genealogical, the archeological, and structural--remain ignored problems.³

Moreover, recent critical efforts by modern writers to respond to this might be doomed for the classical Indian will respond that the queries of critical theory simply privilege the intellect at the expense of other ways on knowing. For the Indian, there is sense-perception, reason, authority and intuition. And there is a

fifth way of knowing that emerges and disappears in the collective and in the individual, it is bhakti. A way of knowing outside of criticism. Even intuition can be criticized as after the mystical experience there is translation into the language of the time, but with bhakti there is no translation; no criticism is possible. The devotional discourse remains prediscursive.

Thus, much of the criticism of the Indian perspective has come from outside India. Primary are the various Orientalist schools of thought which have framed Indian philosophy in the superstitious, irrational, nonsensical category. Also significant is the Islamic perspective which places Indian thought in the category of the primitive since from the Islamic perspective there is only one God and Muhammed was the last prophet, thus eliminating the guru and Indian gods. The universal brotherhood of Islam is also fundamentally opposed to the caste hierarchy of the Indian structure.

But while at one level colonialism has led to a fascination with the West: wealth, industrialism, sexuality and modernity, it appears not to have damaged the philosophical spirit--Gandhi, Aurobindo, Tagore, Bose, and specifically Radhakrishna, among others, have kept this tradition going. This can partially be accounted for by the lack of division of science, philosophy and religion in the Indian episteme. It is holistic not atomistic. In contrast is the Western division where sense perception and inference are located in science, reason and authority located in philosophy, and authority and intuition located in religion. This division does not hold true in the Indian episteme, past or present. Rather the various ways of knowing

the real do not contradict each other. Simply, science is seen as a particular darshana, a particular way of seeing the world. Thus, Sarkar can speak intelligibly about a science of intuition, a science of devotion, a science of yoga, a science of Brahman. To him, science simply means that there are causal reasons for various beliefs. They are not based on authority or tradition or intuition. They can be logically induced from the empirical world or deduced from his theory of consciousness. His work is scientific in that there is rational explanation.

However, he does make the implicit difference between the scientific and the irrational or primitive by asserting that his views are better than traditional Indian views because they are more scientific. But to Sarkar, this means that they are more systematic, and he provides a theoretical framework for the understanding of non-material entities, transmigration of the soul and so forth. But he does not make the next move and attempt to find proof within the empirical social sciences as the Transcendental Movement has tried to do. There are no mathematical methods such as chi2 or multiple regression techniques attempting to prove that the mind has material, ego-rational, and transcendental capabilities. However, at the same time, the western notion of science: hypothesis testing, empirical verification, repeatability, objective disinterest from the results of the study or experiment, validity and reliability, and the vertical division of theory and data with values as outside of science is perceived as cultural not as universal. The Indian view of science is perceived as universal.

But, Sarkar does to some extent move out of the Indian tradition. The role of authority is significantly diminished, especially in relation to various concepts he finds inappropriate--exploitive interpretations of the karma, exploitive tendencies in monist schools of thought (as well as social systems that deny basic structural equity and material equally opportunity. In a remarkable statement that can only be intelligible in the Indian context, he counsels his followers to reject the words of the (mythical Brahma) if he appeared in front of one if they are irrational, yet to accept the wisdom of a child if it is sensible (Anandamurti 1986, 79). Besides the implication that God can become human, it is an obvious theoretical move away from the authority of the Vedas and Tantras. Surprisingly and unfortunately Sarkar does not attempt to historicize the rational and natural at this theoretical level. However he does develop a sociology of knowledge which argues that what is significant and real changes as society moves through its different eras, but the deeper tradition of the real within the Indian context remains steady.

CYCLES OF CREATION

As mentioned earlier, this deeper tradition begins with the tradition of understanding the self and assertion that this understanding is objective. "In India, the philosophers did not project their thoughts externally; the project of man's thoughts on the outside world had its counterpart in a similar project on the thoughts inward also; ...the result was that the understanding of the nature of the world became identical with the understanding of the

inward nature of man himself" (Raja 1974, 4). For Sarkar, this is evidenced in his theory of Consciousness or Brahmachakra. Creation is a cycle and has two aspects. Consciousness becomes increasingly dense until it becomes physical matter. The next phase is the development "life" from matter and then through evolution the development of humans. Humanity at this point can return to his animal heritage or move forward toward his divine destiny. The pull of this evolution is the attraction to the eternal and the push is the dialectical physical struggle between humans and nature and between the ideas of humans themselves. Thus, at this level of evolution, there appears choice: the binding force of Prakrti, the creative energy, can be resisted and transcended.

Of particular interest is that the human mind has the same structure as cosmic mind. Both have a witness function, both have an ego-integration function, both have a sense of doing, and both have a mental plate in which all this occurs. In Indian thought thinking must have a space to occur. This space is the mental plate or the citta. This would be a natural derivative of the classical episteme in which thoughts must relate to substances. In addition, once the mind is removed from the brain it must have a place wherein it can reflect, thus the invention of a plate. Now for the Cosmic Mind, the mental plate is the universe itself. Cosmic Mind, as one might expect, is the category used after pure unbounded consciousness is bound by Prakrti, the creative force of desire and action. It is analogous in conventional Western thought to God, and in Platonic thought to the Idea. But the idea is not more real than its physical correspondence.

Both are real at different levels, for at work is a cycle of creation. This binding category is not the traditional Indian maya of illusion, rather it is an integral part of Purusa or consciousness. They are both real and both inseparable. As Sarkar explains, "like two sides of a piece of paper" (Sarkar 1967, 1). The why of creation is considered unanswerable since its understanding is beyond human mind--Mind cannot perceive itself--(yet the construction of cosmology, interestingly, is not). However, alternatively at the level of the devotional discourse, creation is explained by the loneliness of God. The universe was created so that God would have something to do--it was God's desire--the cosmic mysterious drama, ultimately unintelligible to the human mind.

In addition, the universe while in essence a thought projection of Consciousness is composed of basic fundamental factors: etherial, aerial, luminous, liquid, and solid. These have various degrees of interrelations and can play different roles in the movement of space and substance. Sarkar, in addition, to the classic scheme, had added the theme of microvita--the minutiest substance, thus making his thought holistic and atomistic at the same time.

HUMAN SUFFERING

The question of human suffering is answered in alternative ways as well. At the level of the individual suffering stems from desire and attachment. Thus, choice. This, of course, leaves the structure of society (inequity, imperialism, and injustice) as outside of the text. It is only the avatar who through his actions removes the

wickedness in people. In this perspective, the moving force of history is external, for only the avatar can right the imbalance and bring on justice. The denial of this mythic structure--that of hope and faith in the external redeemer--is perhaps the real and awesome contribution of Marxian and neo-Marxist thinking; that is, the analysis of the structure of imperialism and injustice.

Sarkar includes the notion of the redeemer but steps outside the Indian tradition and borrows from critical Marxist thinking, most likely due to the influence of such thinkers such as M.N. Roy or S.C. Bose. Nonetheless, this lack of structural analysis is the glaring weakness of Indian thinking. But then we should not be surprised at the particular social formation of the caste structure. How else could it have continued intellectually undisturbed. A structural discourse immediately exposes it. Thus, while Indian thinking has been strong at the personal, the moral and the abstract (ideational) levels of discourse, it remains weak at the structural level.

How is choice dealt with in the absolute discourse and in the moral discourse? At the outset choice is negated insofar as one accepts that what-is is a creation and that humans are but actors in this larger drama. At this absolute level there is no choice. Thus, the inference that the guru (one whose mind is as the mind of the macrocosm) cannot make mistakes. Virtue is not a choice for him; his action inheres in virtue. Thus, animals do what is natural, humans fluctuate between the natural and the unnatural, but the godman again resides in naturalness.

But there is a third level as well. This is the level of Prakrti; it is the level of creation or alternatively said, at the level of deep social forces. At this level there is choice and there isn't choice. There is a war between virtue and vice, dharma and adharma which at any moment is unpredictable in its form and in its content. This situation is possible because at one level virtue represents the wish of God (of Krishna the godhead in Sarkar's earlier story) while at the same time, ultimately the real, Brahman, is beyond good and evil. It is beyond any notion of morality since morality is a human construction. Thus, the problem of evil and suffering is answered in a both/and perspective that is level or reality dependent. Agency and structure are not put in opposition to each other: rather, they can exist simultaneously as part of a larger question, part of a larger coexistence that can be understood to some degree, but still remains ultimately beyond both agency and structure, for karma creates the conditions of what can be done, yet new karma is ever created and karma can also be broken by the grace of God. Perhaps this is unsatisfactory for the non-Indian mind, but it resides peacefully in the Indian.

THE LAYERS OF THE INDIAN MIND

The model of the Indian mind too follows this both/and pattern. The classic psychological model sees the body as the first layer of mind. This is the level of hormones, glands, blood and cells and is made healthy through the various yogas. The next layer is the Kamamaya kosa and is the layer of physical desire, the instinctive

level, and it is controlled by breath. The Manomaya kosa is the rational/emotional level, and it is concerned with four functions: memory, thinking, dreaming and the experience of pain/pleasure. It is controlled by concentration. The Atimanasa kosa is the transpersonal level of mind, and it loosely corresponds with the Jungian collective unconscious. At this layer of mind every individual is connected, thus allowing for various forms of group consciousness and collective change. Vijinanamaya kosa is the last level of individual mind. Here one's actions are the same as those of cosmic mind. Thus, will and larger historical purpose are identical. The last level, Hiranamaya kosa is a "thin veil that separates one from pure consciousness (Towsey 1986, 103). And continuing in the perfect symmetrical model, Cosmic Mind (God) has similar levels of thought: the physical universe, the crude cosmic mind, the subtle, the supramental, the subliminal and the subjective cosmic mind. There is then a perfect symmetry between the individual and the cosmic. But this mathematical perfection does not end there. Just as the mind is divided into layers, the body is too. The five layers relate to five mental-glandular centers located in and out of the body. These control emotions and desires and are managed through spiritual practices. In addition, there exist layers of the cosmic mind, the lokas. Thus the body and mind of the individual and the body and mind of the universe (the layers of Cosmic Mind) exist in perfect ontological symmetry.

The why of this symmetry, however, is not explained since that would call into question the structure of the episteme. Recent

efforts (Towsey 1986) have been to apply this model to the western model of mind. Again, the above is a brief description of what are volumes of writings on the layers of the mind, each rich with philosophical commentaries and with populist versions assigning gods and demons to each layer. This model is then superimposed on various theoretical enterprises such that each theory is true at its level of existence--Freudian, Marxian, Jungian, but only the Eastern view which has ways to deal with all the layers is ultimately true.

Dharma, defined as "the way" emerges once one has merged with pure consciousness and then begins the theory building process. Theorizing after spiritual realization then is the true. Given the unity of being of one experiences, one's theory then prima facie cannot be racist or limited; it must be outside of all boundaries. There are two contradictions not resolved though. The first deals with the historical realities of theorizing by enlightened ones as eventually resulting in various "isms." This is first resolved by the notion that once the truth is spoken then it enters the discourse of the world; second, by the assertion that there are different stages of enlightenment; and third, by the assertion of the fall of man, from order to disorder, from golden eras to materialistic eras. The contradiction not answered is that if the knowledge of past, present and future is known, then the universe is a closed system, yet consciousness is constantly being bound (downloaded) and souls are always remembering their true identity and reemerging in consciousness. How is this resolved dynamic nature of the world resolved with the omniscient static nature of the world? Sarkar personally resolves it

by not predicting the future and by arguing that all statements change given the relativity of time, place and person. Is then omniscience conditional. Sarkar philosophically resolves this question of the nature of the universe by asserting that mind cannot know pure Consciousness except through self-transcendence. And yet laws are alleged that appear to have a deeper and more concrete standing than the mere tendencies or hypothesis approach! Is the universe both closed and open, and if so how does that reconcile with entropy? Perhaps these laws are deep structures that are but constrictions on what is possible that have emerged from thousands of years of habit. They are historically derived and now are so basic to us that they are natural laws. While this provides some reconciliation, the problem of laws still remains, especially laws that are social as with Sarkar's laws of social change. We will address this further in chapter seven when we situate Sarkar's laws.

Leaving Sarkar outside of this discussion, the problem of ethics and morality and the impersonal nature of consciousness, if only reconcilable at the level of individual choice, appears in contradiction with the model of the avatar, the savior, the bodhisattva. Leaving aside the arguments within this philosophical discourse, more significant are its implications. What results is a social formation that cannot but be vertical and frozen, ever so perfectly symmetrical, since karma privileges personal action and blame at the expense of structural analyses. Moving outside of karma comes not through utopia building, through revolution or governmental social welfare, but through faith in the soon to arrive redeemer.

The classic Indian response to the above critique has been multifold. The evocation of Maya, that social suffering is but an illusion, of the naturalness of varna, of the divine right of power, of the king, or of the right of the Brahmin. It has been as one might expect not a structural response nor a historical response, but a transcendental. A response that cannot be challenged within the framework of the space wherein it is uttered, thus allowing an escape only to an alternative view, Buddhism or Islam, for example. Or more recently Gandhism which intends to make all shudras or liberal capitalism which intends to use inequality for the benefit of the majority, through trickle-down development economics.

Returning to the Indian episteme, central to its understanding are the following: first, history is cyclical but the cycle has direction; second, there is a symmetry between the individual and the cosmic, the body and the mind (as within as without: as above as below); third, truth as leading to physical, mental and spiritual growth, that is, philosophy as resolving suffering, truth as therapy; fourth, there is a unity of discourse with the final meaning resting in the interpreter; fifth, a both/and approach to contradictions; sixth, a view that there are multiple levels of reality; seventh, the privileging of the enlightened one; eighth, a strong vertical/hierarchical dimension; ninth, the self is the center piece; tenth; karma and dharma are the pillars that form the ground; eleventh, holism in that every aspect of creation is intrinsic to it with the nucleus of the universe (since consciousness is everywhere and everything) simultaneously everywhere and in everything; twelfth,

dialectical, in that there are forces in conflict and in tension with each other (and out of these struggles qualitatively different levels of substances appear; thirteenth, consciousness leads to matter which then dialectically evolves back to consciousness; fourteenth, there is a lack of a critical spirit that attempts to question the episteme itself; fifteenth, science is constructed as rational and causal and sixteenth, there are five ways of knowing the real: sense perception, authority, reason, intuition and devotion/love. And finally the Indian episteme has not radically changed through history, rather new levels of reality are additively placed on to the episteme, thus transforming the episteme and at the same time "Indianizing" the new discourse.

THE INDIAN EPISTEME AND FOUCAULT

We will now attempt to compare the Michel Foucault analysis of the history of the European episteme with the episteme developed above. Foucault unlike our perhaps naive ahistorical perspective takes a marked historical view of European cosmology and develops a history of epistemes. Of interest is that Foucault's description of the classical European episteme dominant in the 16th century shows a remarkable similarity to the ancient Indian episteme, which as just mentioned survives today, largely intact, notwithstanding the reformers, the liberals, the technologists, the Muslims and the British.

To Foucault, resemblance was the key that guided the dispersion of order and knowledge. "...resemblance organized the play of

symbols, made possible knowledge of things visible and invisible, and controlled the art of representing them" (Foucault 1973, 17). And in poetic language that in itself resembles the style of the Vedas.

The universe was folded upon itself; the earth echoing the sky, faces seeing themselves reflected in the stars, and plants holding within their stems the secrets that were of use to man. Painting imitated space. And representation ... was posited as a form of repetition: the theatre of life on the mirror of nature (17).

Of course, this view was to a large extent held by the Greeks as well, it was there that the macro/micro interrelationship for the West began.

But the characteristics he uses to describe this resemblance, we do not see in Sarkar's prose and philosophy at all. Foucault's characteristics include convenientia or a kind of intermingling of nature, man, animal and plant. "We see plants in the antlers of stags, a sort of grass on the faces of men...The world is simply the universal 'convenience of things, there are the same number of fish in the water as there are animals, or objects produced by nature or man" (18). This is the ancient astrological world view where everything is related and in mathematical perfection to everything itself. Just as nature has cycles, individuals have cycles, as do dynasties. Thus the social world follows the natural, individual and cosmic worlds.

The next aspect of this episteme, according to Foucault, is aemulatio, or emulation.

There is something in emulation of the reflection and the mirror: it is the means whereby things scattered through the universe answer each other. The human face, from a far, emulates the sky, and just as man's intellect is an imperfect reflection of God's wisdom, so his two eyes, with their limited brightness, are a

reflection of the vast illumination spread across the sky by sun and moon; the mouth is Venus, since it gives passage to kisses and words of love (19).

Space is abolished and the small becomes a miniature version of the large.

The other two characteristics are analogy and sympathy. The analogy model is similar to the model of the Indian body and the chakra system. The universe is held together in analogous relationships. "He [man] is the great fulcrum of proportions--the center upon which relations are concentrated and from which they are once again reflected." (23) Sympathy appears with antipathy and both are of a world in tension with each other, forces in harmony and disharmony.

In Indian thought it is force of vidya and avidya--introversion and extroversion, in harmony and disharmony, expansion and contraction. It is also the three forces of sattva (pure), raja (active) and tamas (static) in equilibrium, until a an equilateral triangle is created. From this shape the seed of desire springs out and Creation begins. In classical Indian thought, the power of language was centered in the name: a name represented the ontology of a thing, a person. Thus the mantra. Mantras can kill. Mantras are secret. Mantras said correctly can give liberation. It is not a mere representation of the modern world, nor is a name a construction as in postmodernism and poststructuralism, rather the name links one to being itself: to ontological truth. Language in the classical episteme is real and it participates directly in the real: the relationship is ontological. Thus, the meditator while repeating the

mantra is in fact becoming that which is being said, since the underlying principle is: as you think you become. Exactitude in repeating the mantra is critical for the right saying evokes the internal Gods; the wrong saying the internal demons; alternatively, the right saying focuses the mind, the wrong saying distorts it.

In the modern world, however, language refers to the real: the real is objective and extra-linguistic. Language then has no intrinsic meaning or magical power in itself. Modern research on Indian meditation can then argue that it matters not what one says, it is the technical act of repetition, of slowing the breath that is critical. The ancient world is suddenly then appropriated by the modern: the enchantment of the word is lost for the periodicity of the world.

However, the post-structural perspective asserts that language participates in the construction of the real and in general takes a skeptical/agnostic position as to whether the real can be known in and of itself. Language then becomes not a vehicle to liberation, nor a mere representation of liberation, but a tool which one can understand, toward which one can allocate resources, what might be called God-talk, or liberation-talk. The mantra then becomes an asset for the mind or in terms of social formation, for the priest.

Returning to Foucault's history of episteme, in the next era, the modern era, these resemblances become notions of madness: magic was hidden and a new form of rationality emerged that had different characteristics. The word ceased to have ontological identity with its referent object. The object stood alone independent of mind and

knower. Knowledge of it, however, remained possible with adequate theory, reason and senses.

Resemblances and signs have dissolved their former alliances: similitudes have become deceptive and verge upon the visionary or madness; things still remain stubbornly within their ironic identity; they are no longer anything but what they are; words wander off on their own, without content, without resemblance to fill their emptiness, they are no longer the marks of things; they lie sleeping between the pages of books and covered with dust, Magic, which permitted the decipherment of the world by revealing the secret resemblances beneath its signs, is no longer of any use except as an explanation, in terms of madness, of why analogies are always proved false" (48).

But while this classical era has left the West (except in various spaces that attack the ideology of science) and been replaced by the modern episteme of representation with language now as symbolic of the real and good theory being fidelity of representation, in India the ancient/classical era continues alongside the modern era.

In Indian thought, the modern episteme has not destroyed the classical one. Social scientists like Ashis Nandy and others use the knowledge of this episteme as a foil against modernity, the Transcendental Meditation movement hopes to legitimize the classical through the modern, but Sarkar, however, attempts to rationalize the classical, removing what he believes is magic and what is not rational. For example, he does not locate witchcraft under women wisdom (premodern) nor under superstition; rather his distribution is knowledge used to attain the spiritual (vidya) and knowledge used to obtain powers for ego-gratification. The ability to move objects, cast spells, injure from a distance, spread social theories through microvita, instruct meditators on the Himalayas to concentrate so a New Age can come into being is not contentious. Rather it is utterly

obvious. His project is to frame the classical in a new rationality, not of the modern, but of the postmodern. Action at a distance is not seen from the view of analogy or sympathy, but rather the power one develops when the mind itself is focused and concentrated.

Again returning to Foucault, given these changes in epistemes and given that for Foucault man epistemologically appeared in the modern era and now will soon disappear, our question becomes did "man" exist in ancient India? For Foucault, European man did not exist unto himself until the modern era, he was simply an image, a reflection of the real that was elsewhere; he did not exist epistemologically. It is only in the modern era that man is a measure of all things. In the classical episteme, there could be no science of man, no separate category of existence. However, man did exist in India in that man was an image, but that image of not above or near, or an analogy, or a sympathy, rather the body of man himself was the ground of experimentation--yoga, the search for the first desire, the division of man into sectors of control, wherein breath and mantras could manage the body, are indications that man did exist. He existed in India and not elsewhere because of the nature of the Indian episteme--it was not antithetical to nature; everything had a soul; God had personal features and was impersonal; humans had a personal soul but were not really that soul; the goal was eternal life but not in a way that the self could enjoy it. It is a paradoxical worldview in that moska (the final liberation) can only be obtained when that which was is to be the obtained had transformed itself. The subject could be free when it was no longer its own object, when it became the

eternal subject, and thus with it no longer in the position of enjoyer.

There are two dimensions to this. First, is the philosophical view of the mind realizing its limitations and transcending itself to become the Other. That is, liberation is a state wherein there is no fear. The second is the classic worldview in which the actual stuff, the substance, of the mind is transformed. Mind is just not an idea; rather it has a presence that is real. Thus, in the Indian and Sarkarian view, the mind is alchemically transformed into a new substance. The transformation of the mind thus is compatible to the classic symmetrical episteme, to the natural and the cosmological: seeds become trees, mind-stuff becomes god-stuff.

STRUCTURE, COSMOLOGY AND SARKAR

We will now move from the theory of knowledge to the implications of knowledge. We will borrow mainly from the cosmological analysis of Johan Galtung. In his article "Religion as a Factor," Galtung (1983) attempts to compare and contrast three main cosmologies (leaving aside African, Pacific Islander and others): Western, Oriental and what he calls Hindu, or Indian. In addition, he attempts to take religion from the transcendental and sort out its implications on four variables: direct violence, structural violence, distribution of wealth, force and meaning (remunerative, coercive, and normative power) and economic growth of these three cosmologies.

We will use his model to first locate Indian thought and then attempt to put Sarkarian thought in opposition to it and ascertain

whether the problems embedded in Indian thought are resolved by Sarkar, and if so, within the Indian context, or outside of it.

Galtung's analysis is structural. He asks the question: "with which structures and processes in very concrete material and human reality would certain religious thought figures, idea structures be compatible (Galtung 1983, 1). Religion to him is a dimension of cosmology. This is the search for the deeper assumptions that underlie people's attitudes and behavior. For Galtung, a cosmology is a social grammar that defines how humans relate to each other as well as to nature, and these categories themselves (1981). It is embedded in individuals and can be seen as a social program. That which is isomorphic to the program is more easily accepted, understood, and followed, that which is not is rejected. These isomorphisms show up at the level of the individual view of mind, at the level of architecture (physical space) and naturally at the level of the the view of space/time and the Other. At one level it is similar to Foucault's concept of episteme (the field of epistemology) and at the same time one can pose a chicken/egg question here. There might be a main cosmology with different epistemes in it: antiquity, classical, modern and postmodern. At the same time developing cosmological analysis in itself is a product of a particular view of ordering the world, of a particular episteme--precisely, the Western modern one. But for both Foucault and Galtung the question is what are the implications for a particular way of viewing the world.

Cosmology for Galtung includes both structure, culture and person. Certain types of actions, ways of seeing are compatible with

certain cosmologies, thus restricting the likely possibility of action for individuals and other groupings. Finally, for Galtung, language is part of cosmology and predisposes various behaviors. It is similar to Weltanschauung but broader and deeper and not assignable to a particular author, but provides the ground from which authors and others speak. Thus, cosmological analysis, like poststructural thought, does not take a stand on the materialism versus idealism dichotomy; rather it is a search for deep structures and ideologies that become revealed once something is compared to something else so that one can see how it differs from other cosmologies. In addition, cosmologies are discrete phenomena. Galtung's question for individual authors like Marx or Sarkar is, is it possible to be from a particular cosmology and create a new one? For Marx, the answer is that Marxism continues the basic Western formation but with new carriers of salvation (the party for the proleteriats) with a new capital (Moscow at one time) and with similar perspectives on gender, nature, and time. With respect to Sarkar this question is at the heart of this effort.

Galtung begins his analysis by developing a religious map of the world. The first are the Occidental religions. The people of the book. Judaism, Christianity and Islam. They are understood by the following factors: personal god (describable by human features), singularist (only one god with "jealousy toward other gods"), universal (the religion is for all, the universe), personal soul (all human beings have a soul which is the link between the individual and God and can be developed further through right prayer and behavior),

and the soul has an eternal life (either in heaven or hell, depending on the behavior). In terms of epistemology it is atomistic (searching to endlessly divide phenomena) and deductive.

Galtung argues that each has linearity developed one after the other (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) and that the present form is secularism, or humanism in its various forms liberalism: conservatism and Marxism. Here there is no God, man is the measure of all things but the prophets remain, whether Adam Smith or Karl Marx.

Furthermore, within the Western cosmological model one has to choose between one of these ideologies at the expense of others. No contradictions are permitted. Finally, the main project is that of sorting good from evil.

In contrast, and this brings us to the next portion of the map, Oriental thought is additive. Contradictions are allowed and are seen as a source of enrichment. Good and evil can coexist; indeed, dichotomies are dialectical inseparable. Nothing, then, is entirely good or bad in this world. Epistemologically, Oriental thinking is holistic and dialectic, searching for totalities and their essences. Things are explained not in terms of their logical interrelationships but in terms of inner forces and processes that in turn follow the whole and are discovered through empirical intuition (nature and spirit together). Sarkar's thought to a great degree follows this pattern, but he intends to be utterly rational as well, and thus, attempts to find a place inbetween and beyond both these perspectives;

a space which as we will discover Galtung argues is still fundamentally Hindu.

In Oriental thought, there is no soul, there is no god, other faiths are not excluded, and it is collectivist. What is critical is the mind working out its problems, its desires. It is thus godless but has many symbol systems of the gods exist within, it is pluralist (other gods are allowed to exist), particularist (dependent on the observer, space and time), soulless and the goal is the nirvana (a place where there is no desire). The key is the description of reality through metaphors rather than the creation of exact maps of reality, for as the Zen story goes, one should not confuse the finger pointing at the moon for the moon.

While the above map is highly useful, what needs to be added is that Islam too is also highly collectivist, high on the fraternity side and that Buddhism (and Hinduism) ultimately lead to a cosmic accounting scheme. Individual realization is lost at the expense of the search for merits to negate one's demerits so one can enjoy the next life. What starts out as a transcendental (yet derived from the empirical) investigation of the self, becomes epicurian in its practice. Instead of the transcendental what is left is prayer to the Buddha outside (functioning as the Western God) to absolve one's karmas (or sins). However, this merit/demerit conversation is different than that of the Christian perspective in that there is less of a priesthood to extract the merits. Nonetheless the similarities that develop over time in these two cosmologies possibly points to a deeper more universal human structure: a desire for immediate sense

oriented rewards (and class or caste power that uses religious messages to extract meanings--obedience, respect, acceptance--labor, or wealth) and a real desire for some type of reality that is beyond the immediate, the temporal, and the sensate. This is the tension of sensation and the ideational so well developed by Pitirim Sorokin. The similarity between these vastly different cosmologies also might point to the fall from heaven hypothesis; wherein each idea begins pure and then power, ego, fame finds a way of remaking that idea to fit the reality of the world.

Alternatively, in Confucianism, "there is no promise of heaven or threat of hell, only the hypothesis, verified in social reality according to the adherents that by following these rules a decent stable society will ensue. It is an ethical code that does not exclude religion" (Galtung 1983, 11).

Shintoism is quite different from the above. "Here there is a clear doctrine of the Chosen People with the Sun Goddess finding her abode in the Japanese Emperor, setting the Japanese people apart from the rest of the world. It is particularist in that they (the Japanese are chosen) but not singularist (in that Japanese combine it with other religions relatively easily)." (11)

In this mapping Hinduism, however, has elements of Occidental and Oriental thought. "Of [Hinduism] one may say everything: there is a personal god, even more if one wants to see it that way; and there is no god if one wants to conceive of them metaphorically. They may be said to exclude other faiths, but they are also rich and complex that they can easily be said to include others, through some little act of

redefinition. They may be said to be for the Hindu space only, but on the other hand, because of that richness easily comprise the whole of the world, because any religion should be able to recognize its basic figures and thought structures somewhere in the tremendous variety of Hindu thought" (13).

Now what of Indian social space. At the outset, for Galtung, it is cruel in the way power is distributed. This is the caste system. This structural violence led to the Buddha's and later on Gandhi's effort to reform this--to make all equal. Ashis Nandy (1987) here has argued that Gandhi's effort was to simply make all into shudras; Marx's was to put the shudras in power, while some like Ananda Coomaraswamy have tried to defend the caste system, by arguing that it is less cruel than the western class system--this however forgets that India has both, a double cruelty one might say.

What about the works of Sarkar? Is he Indian, Occidental or Oriental. One gets an interesting mix. First, he is universalistic--there is a divine command that it is the duty of followers "to bring all to the path of bliss," to the path that leads to ananda, to the good life, righteousness. Thus, it is not as particularistic as Indian and Oriental thought. Secondly, it is not simply singularistic since there is a non-dualistic position; it is not there is God and separately there is nature, rather God and nature exist together. It is non-dualistic. However, the god is not personal, except in the form of the taraka brahma, who is not an ontological person, but must function as real such that one can then

know the real not from reason-inference, sense perception, authority or intuition, but from bhakti.

At the same time, Consciousness qua God is indescribable: beyond space, time and observer. When the infinite is discussed, the guru becomes dumb and the disciple deaf. The soul has eternal life with the goal as in Buddhism being the cessation of desire, or in fact the fixation of one desire that of the unit mind only thinking of the cosmic mind. Thus, here is a critical difference between Buddhism and Sarkarian thought: the goal is not to think of nothing (or to not objectify the eternal subjectivity of the world, the I-Thou relationship), but to think of the infinite, since first, the mind must always think of something by its very a priori nature and, second, since what the mind thinks it becomes. Since the mind cannot by definition think of the infinite, it ceases to exist, and goes into a state of samadhi, and thus attain bliss. Thus, Sarkar's model is first and foremost mystical. This is not to say there are no concrete visions of the material world. For the material is real, but it changes. Thus, it is not absolute. With the world real, the goal then is to reduce human suffering by finding ways in which individuals can achieve their spiritual destiny. This is obviously compatible with Indian cosmology: utopia is a place where the self can realize itself, its true nature. Utopia, on the other hand, in the Western model, is where all one's desires are met (alternatively, where one meets one's ancestors, a basic desire). For Sarkar, it is the place where one has no desires because individuality does not exist as it did before. The realization of the natural self--atman--is irreversible for the

particular individual, although at the cosmic level reordering is constantly occurring.

In moving to the politics of utopian thinking, Galtung asks: who will bring about the new world, where will this struggle take place, and how. What are the specific messages that are embedded in cosmologies with respect to remunerative and coercive power. And, where do they stand with respect to the problem of growth and distribution and the problem of structural and direct violence.

Galtung argues that Hinduism and Buddhism are weak on growth; Hinduism because of the notion of karma and the structural rigidity of the caste system. Islam is also weak on growth because of its doctrine against interest. Christianity obviously is strong on the growth dimension.

Galtung next develops the distribution dimension. This is a concern with the allowable level of inequality. Buddhism by positing right livelihood and the middle way advocates a doctrine of floors and ceilings. Hinduism, however, has no clear cut right livelihood, nor indications of floors and ceilings; rather because of karma, its economic principles are certainly ripe for exploitation. Although growth is possible in the short run, there is no comparable redistribution mechanism (demand function) in the long run. Here, of course, Sarkar differs from traditional Indian thinking in that his work is growth and distribution oriented as we have previously discussed (maxi-mini wage limits, limits to wealth accumulation, simplicity in living, but encouragement of incentives, and of

accentuating the maximum use of physical, mental and spiritual resources).

With the Occidental religions there is the tension between salvation through deeds and salvation through faith. This deeper dilemma finds its expression in Indian thinking in the contradiction between one's own action leading to enlightenment and praying to the gods for assistance in resolving the problem of the material world.

For Sarkar, this tension is dealt with directly. Although liberation is an individual affair, one has a basic responsibility to the universe; one cannot rid the ego of ego unless one is involved in good efforts. However, gold chains or iron chains, those of good and bad karma, are still chains. Effort simply creates more chains. It is devotion that leads to the realization of the unity of self and the infinite. But, in Sarkar's thinking, there must be a balance between the individual and the collective. One does good to the individual to reduce the misery of the individual and to create a better world, where the collective mind can develop. Thus, Sarkar develops an alternative politics that brings the spiritual back to the earth.

What of violence? Hinduism is low on direct violence with its emphasis on ahimsa, but high on structural violence because of the caste system and the dynamics of karma. Islam, with its call for fraternity and its effort to feed the poorest is low on structural violence, but given its historical development, high on direct violence.

However, Galtung argues that both Christianity and Islam have in them certain attitudes to the non-believer that can be used to justify

both direct and structural violence. These attitudes are not found in Buddhism and Hinduism. Hinduism, however, has in its structure, patterns directed against those at the bottom that are not found in Buddhism either. Sarkar again directly reforms this.

For Sarkar revolutionary efforts should not be directed against capitalists, but against the system of capitalism. For in a system where the reincarnation of the soul is accepted, simply killing another does not resolve the problem for the seeds of the problem remain in the mind. The task must then be to correct the mind through spiritual practices or structural constraints. Indeed, at the mystical level Earth in itself is seen as a schooling and testing ground. His comments on exploitation and on violence in general can be traced to Tantric doctrines of struggle. However his acceptance and condoning of Subhash Chandra Bose's program ("to free India") also presents a side to this thinking that is far from Gandhi's passive resistance. Sarkar's would engage in active resistance with violent struggle acceptable but as a final resort. However, even in violent resistance or struggle the goal would remain, ahimsa, that is, the intent not to harm others.

Finally, Sarkar distances himself from Jain and other totally non-violence perspectives by reminding us that the entire universe is violent. Concretely, Sarkar privileges the Krishna of the Mahabharata and the Shiva as destroyer when evil comes to the Earth.

But perhaps, Sarkar's key contribution to traditional Indian thinking is his redefinition of karma. While Sarkar has argued that karma should not be used as a justification for blaming the victim, it

is his conceptual jump that will be far more useful than his humanistic exhortation, for exhortations simply in the long run reinscribe that which is being fought against whether by stating the issue in the same language or by concentrating on that which is wrong, instead of that which needs to be done. Sarkar adds the concept of imposed sanskara, karma or A'ropita (Anandamitra 1967, 181), or to use sociological language, structural karma. Thus, one is in the socio-economic space one is in partly because of past life sanskaras (desires and reactions that must be worked out) and, this is the key, because of the social structure around one, that is, the environment. Thus, the child born in Calcutta and made to beg is not blamed for having bad karma, but rather the structure of society has made it such that bad karma is imposed on the self of the boy. Thus, social environment (as well as physical surroundings) became central in his theory of action and reaction, of causality. This keeps the necessary structure of Indian thought (escaping the wheel of life) yet adds a structural dynamic to it, suddenly changing the environment becomes an appropriate strategy. For an appropriate social and physical environment can then lead to a quickening of one's karmas and a quickening of the process of enlightenment. This theoretical move becomes a potent weapon against jhat, caste.

Finally Galtung includes the secular ideologies in his argument. Marxism is high on distribution, high on direct violence, but low on structural violence. Liberalism emphasizes economic growth. It is not concerned with the other variables and sees them as somewhat natural,

part of the system, as laws of societies, the cost of having left the garden of Eden.

In India, the most recent effort to reinterpret Hinduism, has been Gandhism. Gandhi worked directly to reduce direct and structural violence so that human development and non-violence became inseparable. For Galtung, Gandhism is much closer to Buddhism than Hinduism, both come from the same soil, but both have been forced to leave it.

Finally, the modern ideology of social democracy accepts growth and expansion and the need to reduce both direct and structural violence, thus, making it an ideal system for Galtung. However, from Sarkar's perspective the social democracy experiment is non-transcendental and thus does not appropriately deal with the spirit, with meaning, and with the environmental world, the rights of animals and plants. Moreover, he would opt, especially in the third world, for revolutionary agendas instead of the slow speed of democratic socialism.

Sarkar's goal, then, is to develop an alternative political-economy, theory of distributive justice, that draws its theoretical sustenance not from modern economic theory, but from his spiritual conception of the real. Sarkar's model is growth oriented in that its basic principles assert the need to expand wealth, to find new ways to increase material wealth and it is essentially humanistic in that it asserts a need to continuously redistribute wealth to all members, human and non-human.

On a critical note, the question that must be asked is, does Sarkar have any hope of achieving his transformation of the Indian social formation given the resilience of this structure? How will Sarkar's law of the social cycle and the centrality of spiritual leadership escape the highly vertical structural tensions of Hinduism. Will Sarkar's spiritual leadership simply become yet another way of legitimizing Brahmanism; will the cycle be used not to challenge the present leadership and exploitation but further concretize the caste system? For while Sarkar intends to create a rupture with Indian cosmology, the deeper cosmological grammars may force it to become compatible with Hinduism in the long run (if indeed it has any success in transforming the Indian system); however, if it is successful it could create a global Hinduism that is potentially as destructive as the last few hundred years of Western colonialism.

Moreover, from Sarkar's perspective his philosophy is quite different from Occidental, Oriental and Indian thinking altogether. It is Hindu in that it accepts karma and reincarnation but radically redefines it to include a structural component, accepts the unity of individual self and supreme consciousness, accepts that salvation from the world of suffering is possible, and accepts the multiple view of reality perspective. However, Sarkar's system rejects caste and indeed finds it as one of the strongest divisive aspects of life; rejects the Vedic tradition of prayer to gods, idol worship, temple rituals, and pilgrimages; rejects its non-growth orientation, indeed, Sarkar asserts that a society's level of productivity is a measure of its vitality and through the maxi/mini perspective and its assertion

that nothing can be owned since everything is owned by the Macro entity, develops a distributive justice dimension. His rejection of the Indian model, however, is not merely a theoretical move; Sarkar argues that the movements he has started are structured precisely in ways to develop an alternative cosmology. For while other groups may speak against the caste system, Sarkar's PROUT has methods to avoid the reinscription of caste; for example, intermarriage, not allowing members to attend a marriage where caste or dowry are considerations, and the abandoning of all caste identifications before joining any of his movements.

In terms of person-nature articulation, Sarkar argues that plants and animals have rights, that nature has mind in it (naturally since everything is essentially Brahman). In addition, he takes a humanistic stance on the person-person dimension arguing that most injustices in this world are a result of man's inhumanity toward man, which is especially ironic since humanity is fundamentally one. However, his hierarchy comes through in that he argues that since intellectual and spiritual potentials are rare, those with those attributes should be afforded more incentives to provide work; indeed, should be in positions of governance. But he intends to decrease the inequality of humans toward humans through economic means (PROUT), through cultural means (localism universalism, and cultural movements), and military means (overthrowing governments; in this sense, he comes out more an expansionist Western than classical Indian) and through spiritual means (developing ways to transform inferiority/superiority, inclusion/exclusion models). He is thus

Indian, but attempts to redefine Indian cosmology. Yet other efforts to transform Hinduism have failed. Because of its maturity, argues Galtung, Hinduism is resilient. Modernization efforts will most likely reproduce caste hierarchy (in this capitalism would work perfect there, a ready made proleteriat, but perhaps not as industrious as those of the Oriental cosmology). Both Gandhi and the Buddha challenged the hierarchy of caste and both were marginalized. Will Sarkar find his work far more accepted outside India than within India? In summary, Sarkar takes Indian cosmology but develops an economic dynamic with socialist and spiritual base wherein all property is owned by the supreme consciousness. He reduces structural violence through his structural changes, yet increases the potential for direct violence (calls for revolution). What emerges is a model that is less market driven, more equitable, but probably more expansionist.

INTELLECTUAL STYLES

Also useful in understanding the Indian episteme and Sarkar's location in it is to examine intellectual styles. Here again we will borrow the model developed by Galtung in his essay, "Structure, Culture and Intellectual Style" (1981). In this essay Galtung examines four intellectual styles: the Saxonic, the Teutonic, the Gallic and the Nipponic. Summarizing, in the Saxonic (American) style the key question is how does one operationalize a hypothesis; that is, it is data run, preferring quantitative studies and mid-level hypothesis. It is weak at paradigmatic analysis, but the tradition encourages

debate and discourse. The Gallic (French) style is more concerned with the elegance of the theory not with the empirical level of analysis. Does it follow a certain grammar: how does it sound in French? what does its linguistic construction reveal? According to Galtung, they are very strong on theory formation and paradigm analysis. Alternatively the Teutonic (Germanic) tradition accentuates the theoretical with deductive reasoning and strong schools of philosophy as the center piece. The style is highly elitist with strong divisions among the various theories. It is very strong on theory formation and strong on paradigm analysis, but it is weak on proposition production. The Nipponic style is more ambiguous, more concerned with social cohesion and compatible with Hindu and Buddhist acceptance of contradictions and differences among theories. It is weak on paradigm analysis and weak on theory building, but strong on empirical quantitative work (especially mathematics) and very strong on commentary about other intellectuals. Also central in this style is the search to understand who is the Master of the particular intellectual; what is one's social-intellectual location.

Now let us briefly comment on Indian thinking and then Sarkarian thinking. First Indian thinking at least in the frame of reference of the modern world is comparatively less developed largely because of modern colonialism and the transformation of intellectuals into bureaucrats, the factory model, as well as other problems that correlate with the underdevelopment of the academy. Intellectuals that do become leaders leave the Indian soil and assimilate into alternative intellectual styles. Nonetheless, historically it is weak

at the empirical proposition level, but very strong at the level of theory development, much like the Teutonic style. Thus there are six orthodox and three heterodox schools (and the three alternative more recent schools, Islam, Liberalism and Marxism). While in Teutonic thinking, there is only intersubjectivity within schools, in Indian thought, there is intersubjectivity between all the schools thus allowing for an agreement on the overall project, individual enlightenment, moksa.

Finally, lineage is central. Who is one's guru? Whose guru was he? While in Germany it is the Professor at the top, in India it is the guru. Although the liberal social science model is changing this to some extent, nonetheless the deeper hierarchical, if not feudal, structure continues with the listing of innumerable degrees after one's name commonplace. The attempt to gain legitimacy from "degreedom" partially relates to the colonial legacy (cultural inferiority) and partially because it is the guru who has respect, not the pandit.

At the same time, there is a compatibility with the colonial British aristocratic style (hierarchical and conservative) and the Brahmin intellectual style (hierarchical and conservative). Entrance into this world is limited by birth, the appropriate schooling and the appropriate fields. Thinking outside the arenas (myths, interdisciplinarian) is discouraged. It is above all a style of tradition and authority.

But in general, in the Indian context, while at one hand there is a perceived intellectual inferiority in terms of the modern world, at

the same time, there is also a belief that only India has what is ultimately significant; the assertion, that it has all been already said. The Vedas, it is commonly asserted, contain all knowledge for past time and future. A correct reading can indeed lead to understanding nuclear energy and man's landing on the Moon. There is thus a glorification of time past where all knowledge was available. This was Satya Yuga, the era of Truth, not the present Kali Yuga, the era of materialism and grossness. Concomitantly, there is a hope and a search for someone who can regain the Vedic glory and bring India back to center stage.

In the meantime, the Indian style constantly evokes past commentaries, past sutras, and one establishes one's own linkages, legitimacy and credibility by commenting on them. In this sense it remains static and can be described as underdeveloped, particularly the social sciences, since that space is occupied by philosophy and religion. A science of society mirroring a science of the natural world has yet to develop. From the modern social science view, the regime of astrology, the world of endless cycles, the propositions lacking evidence, yet enduring through tradition continue to live on. The style of this old world comes through in the proposition par excellence in Indian thinking: it is the sutra. A short phrase in sanskrit which states a basic truth. Shiva Shaktya'tmakam Brahma, or cosmic consciousness is one but has two aspects: a cognitive and a creative dimension (Sarkar 1967, 1). Following the sutra is the purport, a brief explanation of the sutra. The Indian intellectual, especially the wandering yogi, does not need to know the complex

theories or empirical data; rather he can memorize thousands of sutras and simply recite and interpret them at the appropriate speaking engagements. These sutras then form the data packages for the intellectual as well as the yogi.

Sarkar remains in this style as well. His book on cosmology, Ananda Sutram, is spoken in the sutra form (and then written down by his students). Moreover, it is just not the content of what is said that is important but the sounds of the words themselves for they are in the ancient Sanskrit. Reciting the sutras affects the basic chakras of the body and in itself leads the mind to the subtle. Remembering the sutras then places one in a spiritual and intellectual context: one remembers the truth, the body feels the sound of the truth, and one speaks the words of truth. Language then is not simply referring to the spiritual, rather it is ontologically "vibrating" at the same level of the truth. The word then is truth, not a construction, nor a referent. It participates in the real.

Commentary on past intellectuals is different from the Saxonic, Gallic, Teutonic and Nipponic style of intellectual interpretation (quoting sources, writing reviews of others); it is a commentary on intellectuals of long past, not of the present. Finally real knowledge is either practical (that is industrial and leading to increased efficiency and wealth) or spiritual and thus available from the gurus and the other wise men. These wise men in turn are placed in various schools of thought which coexist and eventually the gurus are memorialized as enlightened souls--their words are remembered for what they have achieved as they have realized the soul. The truth packed

in sutras can then be legitimately remembered and recited over and over, for that which is stated by someone who has left the lower levels of mind to the higher levels must be speaking the ancient truth, the primordial truth, the first truth.

Sarkar, too, speaks this style. He does not write, but rather speaks constantly with students who record his utterances. He quotes and speaks of times past. In addition, unlike the Teutonic or Gallic or Saxonian, he speaks counter to the intellectual tradition, speaking often more like Mao asserting that intellectuals are parasites. Especially in his analysis of the Vipran era, he argues that most theories of intellectuals should be judged on their impact on human welfare: did the theory lead to material prosperity and spiritual realization. If not, the theory is worthless. The jugglery of words, central to the Gallic style, is ridiculed by Sarkar, as a game of the ego. A favorite story is that of intellectuals and devotees in front on a mango tree. The intellectuals analyze the tree (counting, dividing, theorizing on the beginning, the middle and the end of the tree), while the devotees simply eat and enjoy the bliss of the mango fruit. Intellectuals then waste their lives in petty arguments at the expense of their larger duty. Ultimately for Sarkar, the style of the intellectual must be that of working for the masses, creating theories to aid in human development, and finding ways to transcend the intellect. For him, intellectuals who are not associated with social service work, with some effort outside of their mental activities, develop an enlarged sense of self-importance and arrogance, forgetting that it is the Cosmic Entity that is the ultimate knower, and that the

minds of intellectuals are in comparison small. Their intellects are imprisoned in the wall of ego, in their own creations: unaware of the external material world or the internal spiritual world. Their intellects are in need of liberation. His counsel is to know oneself and thus know everything. One might conclude here that Sarkar's project is anti-intellectual, but perhaps like the Chinese he is reacting to Mandarin/Brahmin rule at the expense of the workers and others. However, it is an attempt to place the intellect in the larger spiritual model of knowledge and praxis. The intellect now becomes a tool for social transformation, not the study of knowledge for its own sake, or for personal aggrandizement. His book Neo-Humanism: the Liberation of the Intellect (a remarkable title in itself) develops this placement of the intellect. What Foucault has done for the body; shown how it has become medicalized, bureaucratized, domesticated and made docile by power and professions in various forms, Sarkar does for the intellect. Sarkar shows how the intellect has become imprisoned by various monumental historical structures: namely, egoism at the center (the world as an extension of the self), the personal family, geo-sentiment (one's place of residence and one's nation, which leads to geo-politics, geo-strategy, geo-economics and so forth), socio-sentiment (associations in group, gender, ethnicity, ideology, or religion) and then humanism (humans as the measure of all things, the planet exists primarily for humans). Outside the bounds of concentric circles is neo-humanism, a spiritual humanism based on the principle of social equality; a respect and dignity for all forms of life, humans, plants and animals. The

greater the liberation of one's intellect, the greater the empathy one has with all life, the increased desire for social welfare and increased levels of undifferentiation as well as a reidentification of the self. At present, however, the intellect remains in an ego-politics with the goal of maximizing self-interest instead of collective welfare. When the intellect is totally liberated then it can reflect pure consciousness perfectly without any other intervening sentiments and identifications. The intellect then is free, no longer in ego-politics, not in the center of all these circular prisons, but outside of itself.

Returning to our epistemological model, if we view his texts, they are certainly strong on theory and paradigm analysis and weak on empirical indicators as one might expect in the Indian style. The style is macro with a great deal of commentary on other Indian traditions. Finally, its structure remains hierarchical with intuition and service above with intellect below. Even though he speaks of the need to develop the intuitional intellect which can benefit humanity, he discourages the creation of philosophical schools; rather as per the Indian episteme, the goal is the realization of the self. Sarkar simply adds in the social service and revolution dynamic and thus makes the intellect goal driven and the intellectual style a mixture of praxis, acceptance of spiritual authority and intuition in terms of epistemological hierarchy.

Yet this preference for action at the expense of analysis, since Sarkar has already provided the theory, has obvious dangers. We are then not surprised that his most prolific student, Batra, has written

numerous books on Sarkar with not one comment that is critical, that is doubting, that is testing. He seeks not to look for that which is not explained, for a politics of exclusion, but rather he seeks to convincingly prove the all embracing nature of Sarkarian thought. He seeks not to critique the text but to uphold it. For example, in Batra's writings on Sarkar's social cycle, we find perfect symmetry between history and Sarkar's theories. There are no anomalies, exceptions, or apersonal interpretations; rather there is a perfect matching between the world of theory (totally expressed since Sarkar speaks from the intuition of macroconsciousness) and the world of sense perceptions, time and place. India and other civilizations--all civilizations!--miraculously every other civilization, culture, society, or nation state have followed this pattern perfectly; even while an alternative reading of Sarkarian thought shows Sarkar arguing that the universe is open and that space, time and observer damage our ability to see things as they are in themselves and given Sarkar's willingness to speak of exceptions to every rule. But, for Batra what is remembered is not social theory, not the context of discourse, nor the construction of discourse, but the search for data that proves once and for all that the truth has arrived, and India has regained Vedic glory (notwithstanding, Sarkar's privileging of the Tantric, practical tradition). Weaknesses in the theory--the role of artists, periods in history where a trading community has dominated, or moves in power that appear out of order--are reordered.

Our reading of Sarkar, however, is different. His commentary on Salman Rushdie is indicative. For him, PROUT's position is to

counterattack through logical arguments thus allowing the truth of the situation to show itself rationally. Rushdie should never have apologized to Khomeini and Khomeini was wrong to criticize, no less issue a death sentence without reading The Satanic Verses.

While it can be argued that there are various strains of anti-intellectualism in PROUT culture (students primarily writing to uphold the texts of Sarkar), the goal is not against the intellectual discourse per se, but against the vertical spatiality of where the intellectual places him or herself. The intellectual discourse has its secret codes, claims of universality, often implicit authoritarian structures, and in general, in the present age exists to serve the vaeshyans. Moreover, the nature of the intellect itself leads itself to cynicism and nihilism, to philosophies that are intelligible in the rarefied atmosphere of theory, but--to continue this spatial metaphor--do not touch the earth of hunger and the hunger of earth. Just as capitalists make properties their own, intellectuals make knowledge their own: they hoard it, misuse it and then place themselves in inclusive categories forgetting that the intellect is a gift to be used for the people and that moreover, one day this gift will disappear in the personal oblivion that is death. Thus, Sarkar's effort to liberate the intellect.

This vertical intellectual structure is countered by Sarkar with a horizontal approach wherein the only qualifications needed for the obtainment of real knowledge, the realization of the self/Brahman, is a human body. A developed intellect, various degrees, professional positions are not needed for eligibility. The solution is a

benevolent intellect guided by spiritual principles. Indeed it was this benevolent intellect that, for Sarkar, led to the invention of spirituality. It is this benevolent intellect that Sarkar places as one of the most important categories in his theory of leadership. The Sadvipra has a pure intellect, guided not by sense perceptions, not by authority, but by intuition: an intuition unlike the theoretical of the Vedas, but a practical, historically developed intuition of the Tantras.

Finally, the narrative of Sarkar remains within the intellectual style but speaks not from the position of the Brahmin, but the guru. He is commentary oriented, strong on paradigms, and weak on empirical theory, but strong on empirical action. The intellect is placed then in the context of the body and spirit; in the context of the Sarkarian model knowledge and purpose; the central purpose of human existence as self-realization and the creation of society where this can be optimized.

We will now conclude this chapter and compare Sarkar to Indian thought itself with an attempt to make some clear distinctions. Our guiding question is: is Sarkar part of the Indian tradition, and if so, is he orthodox or heterodox? If heterodox, will he become yet another guru, important for a brief period, and then forgotten shortly thereafter?

HOW IS SARKAR INDIAN?

Western thinking does not divide itself into heterodox and orthodox schools. Rather Western philosophical history is the victory

of one paradigm over another: for example, the Church over the scientists, the idealists over the materialists, the rationalists of the enlightenment over the Christian, and Marx's historical materialism over German idealism. The division of heterodox and orthodox is useful within fields in terms of the cycles of which ideas have currency, but not within the entire history of Western thought itself. Rather Western thought begins with the Greeks, and then is traced linearly upwards until the present economists/developmentalists and their models of progress. In general, it has been atomistic-deductive, progressively linear and obvious as to who is included in the faith and who is excluded. Heterodoxy is not stated as such, rather it is placed in the category of the primitive and the irrational, often the Asiatic. The Orientalism of the past two centuries has in fact created a mirror opposite in Islamic and Indian thinking; that which was normal in the West could not to be found in the East; rather the East was the site of the abnormal (Said 1979). But it was not given the real category of heterodox, for how could it be given the linear model. It could not be included in the authoritarian inclusionary model of Western science; rather it was thrown out of the bounds of the real, rational and normal, except as a time past when men and women were ruled by nature and mistakenly took the powers of nature as the powers of gods. The history of the West from the West's own perspective can be read as history of the ego. The super-ego was then the Christian church and the East, the Id.

The history of India, however, cannot be framed in this model. Rather it is the history of the Fall of Man, from the Age of Gold, to

Silver, to Copper and now to Iron. It is the transcendence of the spirit into the body and the final imprisonment of the soul in the body. The promise of the future lies in knowing that what-is, is from the very beginning to the very end, a cycle and that what lies ahead is a golden age. The initiator of the golden age remains in doubt, but this doubt is not the doubt of the empirical question: will it be a planned economy or a market economy; rather it is the doubt of patience, of waiting for redemption, of waiting for the fruition of untold penances and sufferings, of wondering if it is Indian nationalism, American liberalism, Soviet Marxism, Gandhism, the Brahmo Samaj, a returned Krsna, or an avatar yet to be named.

This history, however, is met with an alternative history and future; for the new faiths of natural science, liberal capitalism, social science and Marxism promise an end to the cycle and a beginning of upward economic and political progress--a possibility of creating a world without karma, where all flourish through following their dharma. While it might not be the moksa of the masses, the grand enlightenment of the millions falling backwards into hitherto unimagined samadhis, it still promises an era where corruption is gone, wealth is here, and the vested interests (a classic Indianism) are forever vanquished and the equality originally promised by varna, from each according to his duty, to each according to their need (not to each according to their hideous karma) is available.

The history of the Indian episteme as we have developed it, is inclusionary philosophically, but exclusionary at the level of power, caste and class. Thus, Islam, which attacked power, caste, and

class, did not dent Tantric and Vedic philosophy, although it could be argued that the emphasis on equality and fraternity found in Sarkar, and others, is picked up from the Islamic influence. Indian thought has been philosophically inclusionary as the larger project has been the same. All the schools have been either Ideational (the real is the idea or the Diety or a totality embracing concept of Being) or Idealistic (inclusionary of both ideational and sensate perspectives). Only Carvaka has been through and through materialistic, and that school is often dismissed with quickly. Marxism, however, has been more difficult to dismiss. PROUT cadres, among others, argue that only a socialism that is spiritual and thus part of India's history, whether popularly constructed or scholarly/elite constructed, can solve India's moral, economic and political problems.

In Sarkar's numerous articles but especially in Namami Krsna Sundaram (1981) and in his "Views of Other Faiths," (Sarkar 1987b: 3) he attempts to locate the various schools and then to place himself within these. The faiths he chooses are the six orthodox and three heterodox, as well as Marxism. His location of Marxism in "Faith" is that he argues it is an ideology, albeit an incomplete one, in that spiritual practices are not an integral part of its text and actions; moreover, it privileges one class at the expense of others; it is not a true revolution for all the classes.

The primary question of the Indian schools is the nature of Being. Is it singular or dual? And, if so, is there one mind or many minds? Is the energy that creates the universe more important or less important than consciousness? Does mind emerge from basic fundamental

factors or is a reflection of cosmic mind? Is the self concrete, an expression of various forces, or an illusionary reflection of the real?

Sarkar's approach is two-fold; the first is to theoretical argue with the Indian schools by searching for various contradictions or conditions which expose a fundamental flaw as well as to expose the implications of these philosophies on the economic and spiritual well being of the masses. He is especially critical of what has become the dominant school, Shankaracharya's Vedanta. Specifically, its assertion that only Brahman is real and the world is illusion, with maya as the force that creates this illusion, in itself also unreal. First, is the problem of understanding maya: if it were creating an illusion, how could it be real itself; if it was real itself, then Vedantic monism becomes dualism. Second, is the problem of the cruel world of escapism a philosophy which denies the material world creates. Sarkar quotes a story about a loyal Mayavadin (one who supports the view that the world is unreal) who is in Kashi (Varnasi) a place famous for bulls.

The Mayavadin began to flee at the sight of the approaching bull. A logician happened to be standing nearby. He addressed ...[him] saying [Well sir, if you say that this world is unreal, then the bull is also unreal. Then why do you run in fear? The Mayavadin] would not accept his defeat in logic. He replied, "My running away is also unreal!" (Sarkar 1981, 80).

In terms of the structural implications, those who are beyond maya then become holders of special truth and privileges that others steeped in maya do not; moreover, all economic gains, all gains to the body and to the mind find themselves not situated on a plane of

significance, but as fundamentally false and thus not important. The costs to society of a totally ideational society wherein only the Absolute idea is real and all else is a mirage can be cruel, to say the least, from the Sarkarian view. In addition, Sarkar points out other weaknesses in the Vedanta cosmology such as the inability to explain the evolutionary development of unit minds. In contrast, he asserts that his position is that the world is a changing phenomena not a mirage or a false phenomena. Sarkar also says: "Simply by playing on words and thereby confusing the people, a section of so-called learned people may derive intellectual pleasure, their intellectual thirst may be quenched, but the human heart remains unsatisfied" (Sarkar 1981, 92). And:

One cannot escape these realities by resorting to philosophical rigmarole. It would be a great blunder if the great potentials of the jivas (individual souls) is underestimated. It is incorrect to say that all these jivas have come out of nothing. As I have already said, something cannot come out of nothing, and nothing cannot come out of something. Something which exists will continue to exist through undergoing metamorphosis. Similarly nothing that does not really exist can never have an expression. All of you feel that you are carrying some warmth of life, some life force in you. You feel that you have a mind, that you have so many feelings and sentiments, hopes and aspirations, pains and pleasure--so many susceptibilities and sensibilities. ... These are not burdens, but the bliss of joyful living. The value of humanity goes unrecognized in this [Vedanta] philosophy (168). (emphasis added)

Thus for Sarkar, the Vedanta (and other related perspectives) negates the sufferings and the joys of humanness. His project, however, is a spiritual humanism that embraces not rejects suffering and joy. For him, there is no maya except that of change; there are simply forces that lead within and forces that lead without.

Sarkar also places the various Buddhist schools with Vedanta for they too deny the existence of the self and they too deny the existence of Absolute Being. Within the devotional discourse, he refers to life of the Buddha and the spiritual lessons one can gain from Buddhism positively; he questions the belief in the transmigration of the soul asking what indeed is migrating if there is no self. Buddha's silence as to the existence of God is explained by arguing that Buddha was asserting that God is beyond the mind, or supramental.

Also, Sarkar differs from the Buddha in the centrality of dhukha, sorrow. Sorrow is a relative truth for Sarkar as it is the mind which experiences it. Sarkar divides and analyses the numerous schools of thought within Buddhism, attempting to explain how the self is articulated, the self appearing to be concrete because there is a continuous flow of waves in a "quick succession of ...creation and destruction" (Sarkar 1987b, 3: 67). He is especially critically of the Shunyavada (nothingness school of Buddhism) as it leads to a type of cynicism wherein the end all of life is a state of nothingness, utter and total nihilism. In contrast is Sarkar's view where the soul completes its journey through the realization that the individual self is indeed the cosmic self. Thus, Sarkar is neither atheistic, nor uncertain about God, rather Being is central to Sarkar's ideology. Indeed, it is the rational. The rational is Consciousness but Consciousness is inexplicable.

But, at least, Buddhism is practical--among the reasons why the Buddha was successful is that he spoke to the common man, used common

language, and provided a concrete way out of suffering--while Vedanta is utterly theoretical, although all its proofs of God are metaphorically based on the material world, the so-called world of illusion. Sarkar's counters this theoretical orientation with his own Tantric perspective. Tantra is based on observations of the material from which theories of existence are derived. They are not based on "intellectual extravaganza" (Sarkar 1987a, 6: 18). Indeed, this is Sarkar's criteria of a good theory and thus a good science; practice prior to generalization. For him, Indian thinking suffers from this overly theoretical approach. It remains imbalanced.

So many theories have been expounded through out the history of India. ...Many soar[ed] high without having any concern for the practical plane. ...In medieval India, many scholars of Nyaya [of Gautama not Kanada] uselessly researched year after year the question whether the oil is in the pot or the pot is in the oil. This has nothing to do with the real world. Some people may wonder why there was not more development in Pathan India, inspite of a high population of scholars. The reason is that Nyaya philosophy, the philosophy divorced from [the practical world], had too great an influence on life (Sarkar 1987b, 6: 18).

In the Sarkarian model most theories are incomplete in that they do not speak to the physical, mental and spiritual planes. A good theory must deal with all these planes. In fact, it is this epistemic principle that Sarkar later uses to develop his social cycle. What is true at the level of the natural world and the individual world is also true at the level of the social. There is a congruity between the observable laws of the individual (breathing, cycles of rest and movement, ups and downs, life stages) and in the natural world (seasons, cycles of pause and speed) and the social world as well (rise and fall of nations, periods of growth and then contraction).

It is only at the level of the spiritual where the cycle completes itself and the self finds it rest in pure consciousness.

This emphasis on observation is characteristic of all the Indian schools except Mimamsa and Vedanta. Yet according to Indian historian Romila Thapar, it was the Vedanta that came to be dominant in the Indian discourse, internally and by the Orientalists (Thapar 1966, 162). We then should not be surprised that Sarkar spends a great deal of textual space attacking the notion that only Brahma is real and the world is illusion and associated arguments that indeed the Real is pure nothingness.

But he also rejects Carvaka as Carvaka rejects the transcendental dimension, the soul, supreme consciousness, karma and indeed, the entire Vedas. For Carvaka, mind arises from the material factors: water, air, fire and earth. In addition, only perception is accepted as a form of knowledge. In addition the approach to life is surprisingly modern. Sarkar summarizes the Carvaka view like this:

"As long as you live, you should live in joy and happiness for we do not know what happens after death. As long as one lives in the world, one should live in comfort and happiness. One should even eat ghee by incurring debts, for there is neither heaven nor the reactions to actions, nor Atman or soul, nor the world beyond death. After the body is cremated, how can it be born again" (Sarkar 1987a, 6: 65).

The Mimamsa school is also rejected by Sarkar since it developed as a reaction to the fear that the Vedas were being rejected. Mimamsa focuses on rituals, believes that heaven and hell are not metaphors but real empirical places. Inasmuch as the after-world is real, Mimamsa posits that sacrifices will lead humans there. Finally, the vedas are considered outside of history; they are eternal. This then

is the classical Brahmin viewpoint. For Sarkar, rituals are thrown out for meditation; heaven and hell become states of mind; the Vedas are used for their educational value, but they are rejected as the supreme authority. Indeed, the whole Sarkarian approach is an affront to the classic Brahmin priests, from Sarkar's acceptance of the material world, his attack on caste, his criticism of vipran Indian rule, his attempt to build a non-theocratic but spiritual society. As contentious from the Brahmin viewpoint is Sarkar's refusal to accept the nation-state as a community, and thus his refusal to enter the "India will arise" discourse.

Sarkar also rejects the Nyaya formulation as it is ultimately dualistic; individual being and the supreme being will always remain separate, their unification is impossible. Thus, Nyaya is fundamentally dualistic theism. In addition, while it takes a common sense approach to language, with language simply describing reality (reality as extralinguistic) Sarkar takes a symbolic approach to language with language attempting to express the ultimate Idea, but failing. Language participates in the real in that it is a reflection, albeit incomplete reflection of the real. Sarkar does not go as far as the Buddhist position, where language constructs the real.

The Vaishesika school, often paired with Nyaya, also is dualistic and theistic in principle. Both schools are atomistic in their orientation, rejecting forces, and positing that atoms combine to create air, earth, and the other elements.

For Sarkar, the building blocks of life are microvita, but these are not concrete atoms, rather they have a degree of consciousness and can be manipulated by higher levels of consciousness as well. In addition, the basic structure of life is ultimately pure consciousness itself. Microvitums are its emanations.

Sarkar gives more textual space to Sankhya and Yoga. Sankhya is essentially atheistic (although a God as controller was later added on to gain adherents and solve various contradictions). According to Kapil, its founder, the world is made up of twenty-four basic elements. There is a basic dualism between body and mind with consciousness only being imminent in individual souls, not independent or outside of unit minds. God is the catalyst agent which sets creation into place. For Sarkar, Sankhya is defective because there is no cosmic consciousness, only individual consciousness and thus no place for bhakti. Moreover, consciousness remains only a witness with no attributable and personalizable properties.

Sarkar's critique of Yoga is similar. A major difference between Sarkar's tantra and Yoga is that in Yoga the desires of mind are suspended, that is, the self is in a state of hibernation, thus allowing a state of perception of bliss. For Sarkar if there is total suspension, who is there to perceive? In Sarkar's Tantra, the self (a flow of knowledge, or a flow of existence, or desire) is not suspended but channeled towards Being. Witness-ship then moves to the next level of existence until ultimate witness-ship is unification with pure consciousness. In Sankhya and Yoga, enlightenment is only available to those who can perform penances, while for Sarkar through

bhakti the mind becomes fixated on its goal and thus realization is possible.

As to Jainism, the other heterodox school, Sarkar sees it is impractical, especially its view of non-violence. The Sarkarian approach is vegetarian, but it accepts that all life is struggle and argues that Jain attempts to monitor one's breathing to avoid the killing of microbes is nonsensical. In addition, Sarkar is more "rational" and claims to be scientific. While the Jain approach is far more probabilistic. There are, for example, seven truth possibilities for every statement. (1) Maybe x is; (2) Maybe x is not; (3) Maybe x is and is not; (4) Maybe x is inexpressible, (5) Maybe x is and it is inexpressible; (6) Maybe x is not and it is inexpressible; and (7) Maybe x is and it is not and it is inexpressible. The richness of the above thinking has led Pratima Bowes (1982), among others, to argue that this view, the quality of may-be-it-is is central to the entire Indian construction of reality. Reality is then multifarious and its nature expressed in many ways. Reality then can only be partially known. Sorokin (1970) has taken this view and used it to argue that all social systems must transform since they only express a portion of reality (its ideational, idealistic, or sensate attributes). While Sarkar does not comment on this aspect of Jainism he would criticise it for its atheism and fear that the multiple reality view could degenerate into unnecessary intellectual-talk instead of necessary spiritual-talk. The main argument for Sarkar with respect to Jainism is its ethics of non-violence, again for Sarkar, an ethics which is ultimately

impractical. As mentioned earlier a theory must deal with the practical world to be of use in the long run, for it to be materialized.

The texts that Sarkar uses to differentiate are Indian texts and while he criticizes them, he remains within the Indian episteme. He speaks to the Indian tradition, but through his alternative model and his social movements intends to radically revolutionize it. Sarkar keeps the goal of moksa, of truth as bliss, of karma, of cycles, varna (historically as ideal type or color of mind) of the guru, of the redeemer, of philosophy as human therapy, of the symmetrical relationship between the natural, social, individual and cosmic worlds (as above as below; as within, as without) of the relationship between individual self and cosmic self, the three approaches of devotion, action, and knowledge as well as the epistemological avenues of sense-perception, authority, reason and intuition, but rejects absolute monism, rejects the dualism of Sankhya and Nyaya, rejects the materialism of Carvaka, rejects jhat (or caste), rejects the various atheistic approaches, rejects Yoga and other approaches that exclude bhakti or that recategorize the spiritual to the technical or sacrificial, rejects the privileging of sorrow, and rejects the schools of nothingness.

Finally, Sarkar reinterprets karma, reinterprets varna, develops a balance between the individual and the collective, articulates a balance between the physical, mental and spiritual, reinterprets violence, develops a structural approach to poverty and inequity,

reinterprets the cycle of creation, and develops new theoretical constructs such as microvita and new-humanism.

Sarkar clearly places himself in the Indian project we have attempted to outline. In many ways he is square within it; in other ways he is radically outside. And although presently he is not a son of India (seen as controversial and primarily as a guru not as a philosopher), if we learn anything from Indian history, it is the ability of the Indian view to take the revolutionary and radical and make it part of its doxa, as heterodox or as orthodox.

Sarkar, notwithstanding his neo-humanism or his spiritual socialism (his influence from Marx) or his view of progress (liberal influence) or his view of equality (Islamic) by speaking to the Indian tradition and privileging the views of Shiva and Krsna, is at once attempting to recover the truth of the self; the truth of tradition, and at the same time is attempting to transform Indian thought to make it spiritual, rational, scientific and ready for the 21st century. Foucault described Marxism as a fish in water in the 19th century, Sarkar can be described as the same for the late 20th century, but given the history of the Indian project, to place a temporality on his boundaries would be faulty.

But the above has been a positive reading of Sarkarian thought, we have left silenced some of the most obvious problems. It is noteworthy that Sarkar describes his project as scientific, rational, while others are irrational and dogmatic. His philosophy is comprehensive and practical, while others are limited and overly theoretical. His path includes devotion, action and knowledge, while

others only include one of the above, or are overly sentimental, escapist and dogmatic. Silenced also is the problem of having the centerpiece an ideology of the transcendental and thus putting it outside of history and thereby outside of debate and dialog. Is this not bringing back vipran rule, theocracy, or Sorokin's Ideational system? Finally, Sarkar reject's authority, yet his whole approach places himself as an authority. And while Shiva and Krishna are perceived as great originators and bringers of dharma, the analogy to himself creating a new cosmology are obvious. Moreover, although he is critical of the avatar theory, his own theory of taraka brahman--albeit meant as a devotional concept--simply restates the avatar theory itself. And although he attempts to take the Indian tradition outside of itself by using varna as central to his theory of social change, he allows for the possibility of the reinscription of caste, even though he utters and practices against it. By asserting theorems which can only be accepted on Sarkar's "divine" authority he reinscribes the belief in authority instead of the realization of the self. And by accepting the Indian concrete self, the atman, he regresses and reifies a self the Buddhists and post-structuralists have done so well to temporalize.

To our question is Sarkar Indian, we can but answer, he is, and of course, given his attempt to revolutionize the project, he is not. This "both: situation perhaps makes him ultimately utterly Indian. When we compare him to other civilizational projects, we will examine if he is more than Indian, or solely a product of Indian thought, practices, and discourses. Certainly his cosmology uses the language

of Indian thinking, not the concepts of the Greeks, the Romans, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and Modernity. He does not speak to the Western project, except to remind one that democratic theory, atomic theory, and other perspectives began in India. Nor does he speak to the Chinese, Japanese, Pacific Islander and Islamic, except to call for a spiritual universalism based on a progressive socialism grounded in planetary ecology and the meeting of human needs and rights. But, perhaps that is enough for one man.

Notes

1. This, of course, is a recent category in itself developed by Muslims to differentiate themselves from those who had not yet converted to the true religion.
2. It is not incidental then that Sarkar named his organization Ananda Marga, the path of bliss.
3. The work of Ashis Nandy, Rajni Kothari and others of the Center for the Study of Developing Societies as well as the Subaltern Studies project are exceptions to this.

CHAPTER 4

SARKAR AND THE INDIAN CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

While the previous chapter situated Sarkar in the Indian episteme, this chapter will focus on the Indian construction and to a minor extent the construction of Indian history. Our textual strategy is to understand Sarkar's theory of history and change within the context of various Indian theories of change. This chapter specifically will overview a range of classical, idealistic, nationalistic, modern and critical theories of history in comparison to Sarkar. We will focus on exemplary writers such as Buddha Prakash and Sri Aurobindo and compare their efforts to Sarkar's. We will then engage in what we might call caste-talk, the theory of varna (mental color or group mind) and its role in understanding history and Sarkar. From this we will move to the next chapter where we will examine Sarkar's prose, the textual narrative of his theory of history. This will examine the style and structure of his theory, the various stages and the demarcations: in general, we will continue the process of developing "a feel, a touch, an eye, and hopefully a taste" for his project. This analysis will not be exhaustive, the original texts from the Bengali are now available as are Batra's interpretations and others by PROUT students. While these are useful, they have concentrated largely on its application and validity rather than on the categories he privileges and the texture of his prose.

These two chapters will then place us on a springboard from which we can jump into a crosscivilizational comparison. This comparison will then frame the final chapter wherein we examine Sarkar's theory of order in the context of positivist, interpretive and poststructural attitudes.

CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY

We are concerned with the various sites from which Sarkar could have written his theory of history. Our question is what are the prime Indian constructions of history? Does Sarkar choose from these? Does he create his own? Does he take a few perspectives and then leave others? How does he differ from Indian historiography? Our main task is not to delineate a history of India, but rather the way history has been put forth in discourse, although we will use Indian history as our "data."

There have been numerous interpretations of Indian history. There is the "Hindu" model, the nationalist model, the critical model, the recent Subaltern, the Marxist model, the Islamic model, the theistic model, the Orientalist model and recent multivariable hybrid approaches such as those by Buddha Prakash, Sri Aurobindo and Romila Thapar. The discursively dominant model is the idealist, theistic model drawn from the Gita. This has served as the departure point for Indian theories of history. In addition to this model, the other dominant model has been Hegel's and Marx' developmental model, or the classic Orientalist models. The rest have largely been commentaries on the traditional dynastic history style with various calls for more

nationalistic history, or less nationalistic history; attempts to be less idealistic or more idealist. Romila Thapar's A History of India remains, however, the modern classic. This work traces the social movements, the dynasties, and the philosophies and thus develops a balanced approach. What she primarily privileges is the historical narrative and so her history is a modern history, which while Indian and written sensitive to Indians, comes from the dominant linear, evolutionary, actor oriented Occidental social science episteme. It thus leaves vague the question of structure or the problem of periodicity in history explained only as a meaningless division of time, as inappropriate grand theory. The most recent critical approach is that of the Subaltern group which springs from the works of Gramsci, Derrida and Foucault and writes a history of the dominated, the subaltern. The Subaltern writers consciously do not privilege a philosophy of history perspective; rather, they prefer to search for the ways in which power has suppressed, oppressed and hidden the narratives of peasants and workers. They seek to hear the voices of the poor; voices that have become silenced by accepted forms of historical evidence and by dominant notions of what is considered significant. Finally, they remain undecided toward the issue of structure vs. practice, that is, the grand scheme versus the micro occurrences; the teleological versus the day to day history. Using exemplary texts from the above narratives, we will then locate them in the Sarkarian format of four types of history; intellectual history, economic history, worker's history and dynastic history.

CLASSICAL TIME

To begin with, classical, or, perhaps better, traditional Indian thought follows a cosmological dimension to time.

Hindu thinkers had evolved a cyclic theory of time. The cycle was called a kalpa and was equivalent to 4320 million earthly years. The kalpa is divided into 14 periods and at the end of each of these the universe is recreated and once again Manu (primeval man) gives birth to the human race. At the moment we are in the seventh of these 14 periods of the present kalpa. Each of these is divided in 4 yugas or periods of time. The Yugas contain respectively 4800, 3600, 2400, and 1200 god-years (one god-year being 360 human years), and there is a progressive decline in the quality of civilization (Thapar 1966, 161).

Besides the size of the numbers, cosmic time is distinct from historical time in that certain numbers have magical properties (again in the classic episteme, numbers participate in the the real, they are not mere representations) and in that there is an end to time. Thapar characterizes this total orderliness, however, as unreal, meaning absurd and unbelievable and not modern. From the classical world, time had to relate to the consciousness and the natural/social worlds since the entire universe was mathematically perfect. Now insofar as there is no end to time, there is a regeneration of time, brought about by the redeemer. Vishnu, Krishna or some other god takes birth to terminate the inequities of kali yuga. While Thapar (1986) believes that this redeemer was not taken seriously as evidenced by the lack of millennial movements as compared to the Judeo-Christian tradition, other Indian philosophers take the redeemer quite seriously. A redeemer comes, sets the world right, but then the natural process of decay and degeneration continues, until the redeemer returns. Sarkar's own order appears to be a 3500 year cycle: Shiva was alive

7000 years ago and Krishna 3500 years back. Is it time again, according to this pattern?

Mircea Eliade in his The Myth of Eternal Return takes a slightly alternative reading.

What is important to note in this avalanche of figures, is the cyclical character of cosmic time. In fact, we are confronted with the infinite repetition of the same phenomenon (creation-destruction-new creation), adumbrated in each yuga (dawn and twilight) but completely realized by a Mahayuga. The life of Brahma thus comprises 2560000 of these Mahayuga, each repeating the same phases (Krta, Treta, Dvapara, Kali) and ending with a Pralaya, a Ragnarok ("final" destruction, in the sense of a retrogression of all forms to an amorphous mass, occurring at the end of each kalpa at the time of the Mahapralaya) (Eliade 1971, 114-115).

This end is then a return to a beginning from which the cycle starts again.

In addition to the metaphysical depreciation of history--which, in proportion to and by the mere fact of its duration provokes an erosion of all forms by exhausting their ontologic substance--and in addition to the myth of the perfection of the beginnings ... what deserves our attention in this orgy of figures is the eternal repetition of the fundamental rhythm of the cosmos: its periodic destruction and re-creation (Eliade 1971, 115).

What then is the way out? The first is to wait for the redeemer and while waiting to increase one's life chances or pleasures by following one's destiny and by doing good works: dharma and karma. The second is to escape the whole cycle of cosmic time and move to a point outside of time--liberation. This could be at the ontological level of the self actually undergoing a sort of alchemical transformation and becoming eternal or a type of perceptual change in which nothing is feared, all is embraced, and thus liberation is achieved.

Sarkar uses the cyclical notion of time in his social cycle, uses the notion of the redeemer but appears to keep it at the perceptual

level: as a way of knowing, devotion, bhakti, but then he reifies it by pointing to an apparently real 3500 year cycle. Batra (1988) again resorts to the perfection of numbers in his various cycles--30 year cycles and 7 year cycles. Buddhist time, in general, follows the same pattern as well. However there is a difference that is more similar to Sarkar than to the traditional Indian model. Buddhist time like Christian or Islamic time has a beginning. It is the death, the Mahaparinirvana, of the Buddha. "Because of the claim to the historicity of the Buddha there is a single, central point to which all events relate chronologically "(Thapar 1986, 376). And here we see even more ismorphism with Sarkarian thought,

Change within cosmological time is emphasized further by the cyclic movement of time taking the form of a spiral, in that the cycle never returns to the point of origin: and a spiral if fully stretched can become a wave, if not a linear form. The rise and fall within the cycle purports constant change and even the fall carries within it the eventual upward swing of the cycle (Thapar 1986, 376).

For Sarkar too there is a beginning to history. At the level of the theory of Brahmachakra--the cosmic cycle of creation--history is endless and indeed beginningless. But humans have an evolution, and there are times of degeneration where great personalities change the world; they begin new ideologies which cause new waves of ideas, which lead to new changes. At truly desperate times, historical redeemers are born. But it is just not one redeemer as with Buddhism or Christianity, or Islam, rather, there have been two already. At the root personal level, the model is cyclical, since only spiritual progress counts. Sarkar's preferred world however is a spiral, wherein every phase of exploitation is reduced, or in traditional

Indian terms, the (kali) yugas decrease in time, while the other satya or krta (golden) yugas increase. The wave pattern remains one of Sarkar's favorites. In this sense he speaks ancient body-talk as his metaphors are all of the body; indeed, the notion of yuga in itself comes from the life cycle of the personal body.

But his spiral at the level of the group, the social, is different from the ancient Buddhist spiral; it is more than a cycle since time has a beginning. The Hindu cycle can never become a spiral for time is beginningless, thought itself is beginningless. For Eliade, "The conception of the four yugas in fact contributes a new element: the explanation (and hence the justification) of historical catastrophes, of the progressive decadence of humanity, biologically, sociologically, ethically, and spiritually" (Eliade 1971, 118). Eliade even sees the basic theory as "invigorating and consoling for man under the terror of history" (118). For now, man has information that he is to suffer in this epoch and thus must either resign himself or take the opportunity to enter the spiritual path and escape through sadhana (struggle to achieve liberation). With periods the cycle is broken down: it becomes accessible, thus allowing for transcendence.

As with Sarkar's use of Indian philosophy we see how he uses Indian history as a point of departure and then attaches a new range meanings to it--some additive and some organic. His social history is cyclical as well. But the cycle must be approached from vantage points. As mentioned earlier from the cosmic view of Creation, it is endless. There are two parts to it. The first is the "downloading" of consciousness and its binding into matter; the second is the unbinding

and the reawakening of consciousness (the sector which Western evolutionist theorists spend a great deal of their textual space on). But there is no natural or rational progress since with every technological change there are new social problems created. Every change is a change in frequency which alternatively leads to a disturbance in the field of waves. New technologies increase and reduce choices; they expand and they limit; they solve old problems and create new ones. Real change is change that leads to a reidentification of mind in an alchemical transmutation of mind. For Sarkar, and the Indian project as a whole, real change is that which ends the cycle, calms the final wave.

Sarkar uses time in different ways. There is the cosmic cycle at one level, the generation, degeneration and regeneration of time; at another level, there is the individual escape from time and entrance into no time or infinite time. And there is the social level wherein exploitation can be reduced through social transformation, thus allowing for individual escape from time.

In a short talk titled, "In Kali Yuga, Strength Lies in An Organized Body," (Anandamurti 1987) Sarkar speaks to the classic division of Indian time, that of the four yugas, krta, trreta, dvapara, and kali. The first era, krta is redefined as satya yuga. In this golden age the attainment of the atman is the cherished goal. The following passage gives us a sense as to what he sees as important distinctions.

Regarding the right to do spiritual practices, they would not discriminate between anyone, not even between friend and foe. They tolerated everyone. They would even give special opportunities to their sworn enemies to learn spiritual

practices. In this regard, they never lost their collective spirit" (Anandamurti 1987, 7: 65).

This is, without a doubt, Sorokin's ideational era.

In the Treta Yuga, or the silver age, instead of the attainment of the soul, the mind itself becomes more significant. For Sarkar, there was some degeneration (from spirit to intellect), but in general the larger collective harmony continued and in battles they "never harmed great scholars or learned people in any way" (65). This would be Sorokin's idealistic, dualistic age, where the real is described in a both-and metaphysic, spiritual and material. Alternatively, using Indian eschatology--not Sarkar's--one might call this the age of the Brahmins.

However, because of the differences in views (in spirit there is unity, in intellect there is difference) and disagreements the next era began. Of importance again is the organic relationship between the eras: they emerge from each other. Naturally.

Due to these differences, there was a further degeneration and humanity entered the Dwapara Yuga, the so called Copper Age. People became more body oriented. At the least provocation they would annihilate their enemies. It is evident that body-oriented creatures are more degenerated than mind-oriented creatures" (66).

This would be phase one of the sensate era in Sorokin's terms, or Sarkar's ksattriyan era. Phase two is the dark age of destruction, Kali Yuga. The present age is Kali Yuga, the iron age, or Sarkar's shudra era. "People of this age are food oriented and grossly materialistic. Eating plays such an important part in their lives that, if there is a shortage of food, they think they will surely die"

(66). This era is hightened by an individualism which runs counter the collectivism that is needed to solve the global problematique. "This requires a collective, organized effort following the spirit of 'in the olden days the gods used to share their food'" (67).

Instead of the four ages, one might use the three binding forces to develop a theory of history: tamas or static, rajas or active, sattva or pure. History starts out in sattva, then degenerates to rajas and finally lapses into tamas. It then begins again. This coincides with Sorokin's sensate (tamas), rajas (idealistic-dualistic) and sattva (ideational).

Sarkar, however, does not use these historical eras, or phases in a person's life, rather the division of the real into static, active and pure, are simply forces that are always acting on humans. Moreover, Sarkar asserts that he does not believe in the division of time into Krta, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali Yugas, "although I do admit that there is some truth in the underlying spirit" (67). They are useful in judging what phase one's own life is in and more important they are useful not as predictive theory, but as devotional-inspiration discourse. For Sarkar, the key is for one's own life to enter a golden era and secondly for the world to enter a new era. For Sarkar, a new Satya Yuga is about to reemerge in which people will once again be soul orientated. Thus the cycle of history will be reasserted. However, instead of relying on a dialectic, a natural flow to the next era as Indian thought naturally would, Sarkar resorts to collective human agency. "The Satya Yuga will start as soon as you implement the socio-economic ideology (PROUT). By your collective

efforts let Satya Yuga be established on this dusty Earth as soon as possible" (68).

For Sarkar the traditional view is significant largely as a toll that leads to individual and societal action; his is a radical reading of Indian thought. Thus it is useful in its description of the decline of spirit into mind and then into matter, collectivity to individuality, and justice into injustice. Far more important is the notion that after the dark age, there will be a return to the soul. The cycle will continue.

RETHINKING THE YUGAS

In his exemplary, "The Hindu Philosophy of Life," Buddha Prakash (1958) takes the classic Indian division of time and uses it not as a personal metaphor or a call to action, but applies it to history itself. The tale of the yuga for Prakash is an empirically accurate rendering of history that must be explicated.

For Prakash, history has two aspects; the first is "the ascertaining of facts on the basis of a critical and scientific investigation of the evidence left by the past," (Prakash 1958, 494) and the second is the finding of correlations and interconnections among the facts thus established" (494). And thus while we wait for a history that is inductive in character, Prakash immediately makes a move to the philosophic reminding us that the Hindu view of history is first process oriented and organic (like a seed sprouting into a tree whose development is dependent on the environment and the potentiality of the seed). Secondly, it places cosmic forces first, as in the Gita

where "the role of the individual is only to act as a means to execute his will" (497).

Thus,

Hindu philosophy ... is something which develops of itself in an autonomous manner transcending and carrying in its sweep the individuals and participating in it. ... historical evolution is a flow and convergence of impersonal or transpersonal forces, which are capable of being expressed in organic or biological images (497).

History is an interaction between the cosmic, the social and the environmental. But, echoing and perhaps influenced by Hegel, "this interdependent development of human spirituality and material development finds its expression in a series of individuals who chance to be at the points of vantage that qualify them for their respective roles" (497).

History then is impersonal and transpersonal, but it happens through individuals and behind the backs of individuals. But, instead of Sarkar's varna derived social cycle, Prakash takes seriously the division of the real into Krta, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali. These eras are essentially interpretations of a divine moral order; a structure which decays over time. Prakash, however, does not fix mathematical immutability to it, rather the duration of the ages depend on the actions of human beings, thus structure and agency. Here, we have a noteworthy comparison to Sarkar, as he too, in his social cycle does not assign time spans to the particular eras, rather the duration of the cycle is agency affected.

Prakash further articulates the Krta to Kali cycle using Jain theory. In this there are six periods: (1) the period of great

happiness, (2) the period of happiness, (3) the period of happiness and sorrow, (4) the period of sorrow and happiness, (5) the period of sorrow, and (6) the period of great sorrow. On the cosmic level, this is the day and night of Brahman. Progress: Degeneration. Eternally.

As with other narratives of Indian philosophy, the texts are based on the metaphor of the body. Prakash quotes the Aitareya-Brahmana, a Rigvedic text, wherein Indra says:

the fortune of a sitting man is static, of an idle man becomes still, of a sluggard sleeps and of a moving man moves forward. Kali is sleeping. Dvapara is shaking off (of the sleep), Treta is rising and Krta is moving. The moving man gets the honey and tastes the fruit of the Ficus glomerata. Look at the glory of the sun who never stops moving (499).

The biological model is associated with the psychological and then the social. It is also associated with the cosmic, Consciousness is first asleep, awakens, and then actively creates the universe. This is an extension of the sattva, rajas, and tamas model, although Prakash uses the words of awakening, active and sleep, instead of pure, active, inert/static. For Prakash, "there is a unique harmony and symmetry between the tendency of an individual and that of a group of them" (500).

Prakash next develops his various ages, Kali becomes sleep, Treta and Dwapara become the age of awakening, and Krta becomes the age of activity. In the age of activity people are active and form government through the union of social contract. Government is strong, popular and legitimate. Upward mobility is natural, institutions are open allowing people to express their urges. In the age of activity, there are developments in science, philosophy, technology and art. And, of course, consistent with the spiritual

nature of the Indian project, when the people as a whole are active, they are moved by a faith which leads them to creative activity.

"When they cease to be active that faith dries up and gives place to escapism and apathetic indifference" (501).

From an age of activity, an age of sleep emerges. Here government is dictatorial existing without active popular support, institutions are closed, the social horizon narrows, cultural expression is stunted and an atmosphere of imitation with respect to philosophy and technology develops.

And when people struggle to be active, to assert themselves in political affairs, to make the social institutions mobile, to render the arts and humanities creative and to treat religion as conducive to social good, the 'age of sleep' passes into the 'age of awakening.' (501).

The structure of change is cyclical, the process is organically dialectical and there exists a unity of discourse at individual, social and cosmic levels.

After developing the theory, Prakash then applies his theoretical scheme to the data of history: the events and trends of Indian, Western and Islamic civilizations. We will simply summarize his main points of transition. Indian history can be seen to be active prior to the seventh century. Its economy was expanding and "when tyrants ascend the throne, they are disposed, when royal dynasties detract from the norm of conduct, they are overthrown" (502). However by 647 A.D. with the death of Harsa, religious intolerance and tyranny increase, arts and philosophy lose their innovativeness, "castes grow tight, contact with the outside world is shunned, religions preach escapism and a sense of weariness broods over the people" (502). Islam establishes its hegemony in 1198 and even though there were spurts of

awakening, India for Prakash remains asleep and dominated. The awakening begins with the suppression of the 1857 "mutiny" against the British. The awakening is concluded in 1947 with independence. "A glance at modern independent Indian reveals the jazz and buzz of a new age of activity that is attaining its full momentum" (503).

While Prakash operates from the biological/spiritual metaphor of sleep-awakening-activity, it is the political discourse that is central for Prakash. He appropriates the traditional spirit-mind--matter decline and rearticulates in the language of modernity. Prakash attempts to fuse the traditional territorial state-centered model of history with the idealistic model of history. Unfortunately, there is no attempt to explain the economic exploitation, poverty, hopelessness in India today. Awakening is simply nationalism; activity becomes industrialism. This runs counter to the Sarkarian view in which India is in Kali Yuga at present: the dark age of materialism.

Prakash's history of Europe begins with the age of activity as reflected in the ancient Greeks and their contributions to science, art and philosophy. By the beginning of the Roman empire, the age of sleep sets in. The common man is exploited, and "Caesars appear as gods incarnate and compel the people to worship them as such" (503). Christianity does not change any of this as tyranny remains. The age of awakening begins when the Islamic thinkers bring Greek thought to Europe and revitalizes the Western project. "As a result, there was the Renaissance, the Reformation, the progress of science, the great conquests of the ocean and the discovery of new lands" (503). The age

of activity begins again with the French revolution and continues today.

In China, the age of awakening dawned in 1911 with Sun Yat Sen, in Islam with the Westernization of the Middle East through leaders such as Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Again the age of activity is represented by the rise of nationalism, industrialism and the scientific revolution. Every country and culture follows this pattern. While it appears that Prakash is arguing that history perfectly represents these stages, in his conclusion he moves a step back. There he asserts that these stages are not empirical laws; rather, his aim is to show that a moral dimension must be given to the natural process of history. To Buddha Prakash, the Hindu philosophy of history stresses

the moral aspect of the historical periods besides their chronological conception ... the way in which this view was possible was the belief in the rise and fall of virtue (dharma) as the basis of the succession of ages. When virtue (dharma) was once accepted as the basis of the periodic arrangement of history, the freedom of human will and effort followed as a corollary (505).

What is important then is not the actual stages, but the synthesis of natural history and moral principles. Moreover, these moral principles are not divine, that is, outside of human creation, but rather they inhere in human actions. But the divine, as we have developed in the previous chapter, can be located within and without human consciousness, thus, there is a moral structure to the universe and humans create and interact with it. In general, Prakash takes the classical model of Indian history from the Gita and applies it to world history. But unlike Sri Aurobindo who presses the role of God

and the avatar in history, Prakash remains focused on the periods of history. Sarkar, also, uses the Gita metaphor (that of avatar) but situates it in the devotional discourse, not the empirical one. Moreover, Sarkar follows the classic Gita division of the four varnas, but makes them central to his theory, not peripheral introductions. However, both function as naturals. In the Gita, Krishna evokes varna to remind the reader that there is natural in history; that man has a duty. Sarkar uses this concept philosophically to remind one that although there is will there remains a deep structure.

Like Prakash, Sarkar, too, represents historical narratives as primarily educational, as a way of illustrating deep moral dilemmas and principles; however, he adds a dimension of the vision of the future (progressive spiritual socialism) and while he uses the biological discourse to explain his theory--the breath, the life cycle, hills, waves, and the body--he takes this not as metaphor but as the real. His stages become in some fashion, laws. But laws in the Indian episteme are perceived differently than the laws of the western social sciences for truth and knowing are constituted differently, as we noted in the previous chapter, and as we will develop in chapter 7. Like Sarkar, Prakash does not bother to focus on the historical narrative; the data seems almost incidental. The categories of description are far more important. Indeed, as empirical events they are highly contentious from a variety of viewpoints. What is central is how one age follows the next and how progress is cyclically situated.

For Sarkar more important than the narrative of events or the problem of the periodicity of cycles, is the silencing of the stories of suffering. Sarkar's history is a tale of the inhumanity of humans, of their attack on each other, of their ability to punish and mutilate the weaker among them, of their creation of theories and economies to nourish a few, while justifying the silent destruction of the tongues of the majority. His story is a story of the betrayal of ideals by each succeeding layer of leadership; each coming to power, promising much, achieving little and then using military, cultural or economic power to stand above, yet always hoping, in fear, that those who supplied strength, legitimacy and work would not suddenly and certainly tear the wealth from their bodies and palaces.

For Sarkar, every age has periods of activity, sleep, and awakening. But these categories are not eras in themselves. In addition, activity need not always be good; for example, imperialism and other "isms" come about through great concerted activities.

Both, however, emerge from metaphors of the body, of what is immediately seen. Compare this with the approach of the modern, Occidental Sorokin who develops his system not from the body, but from rational thought. His first question is: What is the real? The answering of the question forms his divisions of history, perception and self.

But Prakash's is not the only interpretation of Indian history; there are other significant versions as well. Staying within the traditional, body-spirit view, contemporary Indian philosophers Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and K. Satchidananda Murty offer useful

idealistic/theistic (their self-categories) descriptions. For Radhakrishnan, history is a meaningful process.

Those who look at it from the outside are carried away by the wars and battles, the economic disorders and the political upheavals, but below in the depths is to be found the truly majestic drama, the tension between the limited effort of man and the sovereign purpose of the universe" (Radhakrishnan 1967, 40-41).

History is teleological. It is abstract. Existence affords man the possibility to continue the awakening process and differentiate the eternal from the temporal. "The soul has risen from the sleep of matter, through plant and animal life, to the human level, and is battling with ignorance and imperfection to take possession of its infinite kingdom" (Radhakrishnan 1967, 41). The purpose of history then is to recover truths and discard falsehoods; what is, exists, so that humans can "attain mastery over it and reveal the higher world operating in it. The world is not therefore an empty dream or an eternal delirium" (41). For Radhakrishnan, suffering finds meaning in the subjectivity of the individual and his or her attempt to give an idealistic, spiritual meaning to it, or more correctly, to find the meaning sequestered in suffering.

K. Satchidananda Murty articulates why history must be cosmic. With a cosmicentric view, "We are freed from humanism, localism and parochialism" (Murty 1967, 44). The sovereignty of the subjectivity of man is thrown out, the locale of history is shifted from cultural history, national history, civilizational history to world-as-history. For Murty, history is the expression of the divine in space-time. The individual observer is removed. This truth is the message of every

religion, Occidental, Oriental or Indian. When pressed as to the finality of this process, Murti again stays his ground and responds that this is an anthropomorphic question. "God has nothing to realize. ... For Him, no aim, no purpose" (44-45). To explain the why of creation, again the Gita is resorted to. We are told that it is the play and sport of God, meaning that it is a dance that humans cannot understand, for ultimately as long as we remain humans we cannot know. Only by becoming Being, the Real, can we know. Once there, however, we cannot communicate in a language that is intelligible to others, since the "language" of Being is not human based.

Thus no progress for humanity as a whole is possible. But unlike other Indian writers, Murti does not look backward to a previous historical golden age. Unlike Sarkar, he does not posit a future golden age. Rather the lesson of history is to turn inwards.

Both Radhakrishnan and Murti take the macro perspective, they remove humans from agency, except insofar as they reidentify with the soul. Two of the implications of this view are obvious: a Vedantic type lack of concern with the material world and a rejection or unconcern for technology since it has not increased happiness or the moral nature of humans. While Sarkar begin with this view, that progress is essentially spiritual, he counters with a blueprint for an alternative material construction that makes the possibility of the realization of the real more likely. More possible. In this sense Sarkar's history is closer to the more recent critical perspectives of History--the Marxist and the Subaltern. In this critical view, the goal of history is explicitly to change the present. It is not the

rendering of myths, it is not the repetition of genealogies, it is not the noting of that which was recorded in texts that still exist, rather it is the uncovering of structures and practices that make possible an alternative tomorrow and, indeed, an alternative yesterday. Moreover, Sarkar takes a macro perspective that explicitly attempts to explain the movement of forces, ideas, and matter through time. It is not a mere categorization of stages. The stages relate to each other in more than a perchance spatiality. Finally, Sarkar's model attempts to place all Indian constructions of history in their temporal positions; a placement we will investigate once we outline other interpretations of Indian history.

AUROBINDO AND GOD IN HISTORY

Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950), influential philosopher, activist and exemplary for our own comparative purposes in understanding the Indian construction of history, takes the Gita model of history and melds it with the Hegelian and Nietzschean models; that is, the placing of God in history and the centrality of the superman. Aurobindo begins with the idealistic view but dislodges the maya of Vedanta thus allowing a role for humans and economic/social development in history. Yet this role is not from the viewpoint of humans.

When we withdraw our gaze from its egoistic preoccupation with limited and fleeting interests and look upon the world with dispassionate and curious eyes that search only for the Truth, our first result is the perception of boundless energy of infinite existence, infinite movement, infinite activity pouring itself out in limitless Space, in eternal Time, an existence that surpasses infinitely our ego or any ego or any collectivity of egos, in whose balance the grandiose products of aeons are but the dust of a moment and in whose incalculable sum numberless myriads count only as a petty swarm. When we begin to see, we

perceive that it exists for itself, not for use, has its own gigantic aims, its own complex and boundless idea, its own vast desire or delight that it seeks to fulfill, its own immense and formidable standards which look down as if with an indulgent and ironic smile at the pettiness of ours" (Aurobindo 1967, 361).

Thus, for Aurobindo, behind the "confused torrent of events and personalities or a kaleidoscope of changing institutions" (Varma 1960, 33) lies the Supreme Being. Aurobindo asserts that "the history of the cycles of man is a progress towards the unveiling of the Godhead in the soul and life of humanity; each high event and stage of it is a divine manifestation" (Varma 1960, 34). While this establishes the cosmic perspective, the question remains: what forms does Consciousness use to express Itself in the material world? In the Gita, the form is the individual; each person is but an instrument. Aurobindo, however, borrowing from Hegel, not only assigns instrumentality to historical individuals but also to groups, associations and collectivities. Nationalism--specifically Third world independence movements--itself now becomes part of the divine drama. It becomes an extraordinary event that represents the will of Consciousness in creating a better human condition. Thus God for Aurobindo not only works through avatars such as Krishna, but works through nationalistic movements and other associations as well.

But if all history is the expression of the Divine, then why are some events, associations or structures privileged over others? Moreover, if creation is but Divine expression, then how is human suffering explained. This classic question has had numerous responses. The Vedantist response is that suffering is an illusion, merely a matter of perspective. Alternatively, the Occidental response

has been the location of the cause suffering in man, in choice. God then for both the Vedantist and the Occidental does not cause suffering; maya is to blame or man's choice is to blame. Choice, then, becomes karma in the Indian worldview. There is suffering because of unknown actions by the self in this or in previous lives.

Aurobindo eventually recurses to a technical position with respect to the problem of evil. The choices to him are twofold. First is the devil, but as Thapar has brilliantly stated, "The fundamental sanity of Indian civilization has been due to the absence of Satan." (Thapar 1966, 15) The second is redefining maya, illusion, as ignorance. Writes Aurobindo. "It is often God's will in us to take through the mind the bhoga of ignorance, of dualities, of joy and grief, of pleasure and pain, of virtue and sin, of enjoyment and renunciation" (Varma 1960, 37). At the level of collective action, it is imbalance that leads to evil; it is the ego that perhaps begins in God's light but then goes too far. The ego become consumed by itself and not by any higher purpose. But ignorance leads to possibilities to learn and thus perform penances and eventually good karma might result. In this way Aurobindo then defines God's purpose as that of learning and teaching.

The classic Indian response from the Gita is similar. Humans are only instruments. Morality is no longer a ground for action and the yogi who has accepted the divine acts in the flow of the divine, the wills are merged, thus only that which God deems is possible. In the cosmic march of history suffering then is incidental. It is real, but useful in that suffering leads people back to the truth. In either

case, there is a larger purpose and pattern that should not be seen in human terms. Humans exist to fulfill that purpose. But in this classic view, there is no mention of associations or God working through collectivities. There is simply the rise and fall of dharma.

On this point Sarkar takes quite a different tactic. Given that the real is perceived from different levels in different ways, problems arise when there is an attempt to engage in discourse-travel, understanding one level from the vantage view of another. While there is a larger purpose, ultimately it is unknowable. Yet at the same time, to see history totally from the perspective of the individual (God as within the inner self, the atman--paramatman symmetry) leaves out the larger cosmic drama, forgets the role of past lives in causing the present, and finally forces one into locating purpose in family, group, community, race, nation, social group, or religion--all spaces which limit and bind the intellect. In this sense Aurobindo takes a risk that Gandhi, for example, was unwilling to take. Gandhi could afford to use the divine in politics at the level of metaphor and the level of strategy, but Aurobindo as a philosopher could not do the same. He had to work out the philosophical implications for such a view. He had to work them out given his view in the absolute, his view of the Gita and his associations with various movements. But this view of Spirit in associations could not be found in Indian texts, thus his recourse to the Germanic texts, in Hegel.

Returning to Aurobindo's division of ignorance and knowledge, Sarkar takes a similar tactic, but defines it as vidya and avidya. Introversion and extroversion. Introversion leads to increased

clarity, to action that is mediated by compassion not passion, from the desire for social equality. Extroversion leads to sin or the misuse of spiritual, mental and physical resources. It is a view which privileges individual rewards. And gain, suffering in this model becomes an asset as it is used to argue that it makes a people stronger. Gandhi uses this as well to justify the least-violence movement. Evil now becomes located in self not in a concrete entity, thus allowing for what appears to be an utterly agencyless model to suddenly allow will. And yet, when convenient, Sarkar and Aurobindo (and Gandhi) can move to the layer of the absolute, wherein every action is purposeful. What that purpose is can be defined in different ways. The safest way to define it is that it is unknown, thus purpose cannot be appropriated, and reality made less authoritative and more negotiable. Sarkar alternatively uses the different ways of knowing to find purpose: intuition, reason, sense-perception, authority and bhakti. Yet he is also authoritative at least metaphorically, for the taraka brahma has perfect knowing of the real.

Aurobindo takes an alternative route, again borrowing from Hegel. For Aurobindo, divine determinism implies the "Godsent leader" (Varma 1960, 41). "This is the greatness of the great man, not that by their own strength they can determine great events but that they are serviceable and specially forged instruments of the Power which determines them" (42). The hero thus emerges in critical periods of history and brings on the next stage in human evolution. The hero is the agent of the active part of Consciousness, Prakrti or Kali. While

for Hegel, the hero is unconscious, for Aurobindo he or she is conscious.

For Sarkar, too, his sadvipras--intellectuals motivated for the greater good and grounded in spiritual consciousness--are conscious of their role and the drama unfolding around them. They are used by Consciousness, but as consciousness is also inside them, their ego can move with this Desire or back away from it. For Aurobindo, however, at a certain state there is choicelessness. Krishna gave Arjuna no choice: the cosmic drama demanded that he fulfill his role and engage himself in battle at Kuruksetra. There was no choice. Now Sarkar, understanding the political dangers of a cosmic amoral view applied to the world, attempts to balance it with an appeal to rationality--humans must follow reason. Reason, however, is defined as that which leads to self-expansion, not that which is solely a logically derived principle. Here Aurobindo stays at the abstract level.

By attempting to frame the divine in history, Aurobindo can then easily justify the French revolution as an act of God with Mirabeau, Danton, Robespierre and Napoleon serving their parts. Napoleon is finally destroyed by Kali for putting his ego first and forgetting the greater historical cause of nationalism. For Sarkar this would be an irrational reading. Only that which is outside of boundaries can be ultimately rational. The nation-state as an organizing entity is not a necessary part of human evolution. God does not prefer any particular political structure over another. But for Aurobindo Napoleon did serve God.

Thus Aurobindo takes the model of the Gita--Krishna conversation with Arjuna--and uses it to justify the battles of other cultures and other world-historical figures. Again, Sarkar differs; his history does not privilege world-historical figures, only Shiva and Krishna are given special status and then only for the specific period of time they lived and ultimately only from the view of the devotional discourse. Sarkar moves in and out of different discursive spaces; either he stays at the rise and fall of dharma or he stays at the level of structure; at the fall and rise of particular classes, or he moves to the individual level at the struggle of the self to realize itself and to serve humanity. Now Aurobindo applies his theory to Indian nationalism as well by asserting that nationalism cannot die for it is a creation of the divine will. What follows from that is an India constructed as the chosen people. Indians had suffered and now were casting off their yoke ready to fulfill their destiny of bringing spiritual light to the world. Sarkar again avoids the location of a destiny in a specific people; no particular group will bring about a renaissance. Revolutionary activity--spiritual and political--abides in those who are willing to suffer and challenge the present irrespective of various sentiments such as nation and religion. Aurobindo believes India will lead the world in the future because of her spiritual legacy. The rise and fall of nations in the long run can be traced to their spiritual state. Its recent problems are because India has not been following her spirit enough. From this association of the spiritual and national destiny, Aurobindo develops a theory of the rise and decline of all nations.

Aurobindo uses this perspective to develop a general theory of the rise and fall of cultures. For him all cultures traverse three periods. The first is the period of formation where the fundamental practices emerge. In the second phase, the structure develops. In the third phase, there is decay and disintegration. At this point there can be a renaissance or a slow decline. In India the formative period was the Vedic period; the development phase was the Epic period; and now, India appears to be in decline awaiting a renaissance. In this theory Aurobindo does not directly follow the classic end of Kali and return to Krta. Rather, the culture can fall into disintegration and collapse. The highest possible integration is where the nation follows the Spirit. But there need not be only one divine nation per epoch as with Hegel. There is no such hierarchy with Aurobindo.

Sarkar does not locate the progressive and the good in the nation. Writing at a time when the nation-state is already established (if not declining) and indeed oppressive of minorities and individuals, Sarkar finds the good in revolutionary cultural, linguistic, local economic movements and in a spiritual globalism (in fact in spiritual universalism). Aurobindo writing at a time when the Indian nation needed to theoretically buttressed resorts to the Gita and Hegel for help. Their differences at one level can then be explained by the events of the time.

The last aspect of Aurobindo's philosophy of history that is useful for us to understand him and Sarkar is the notion of the superman. Vishwanath Varma in his The Political Philosophy of Sri

Aurobindo (1960) juxtaposes East and West titling one essay "The Superman, the Vibhuti, the Avatara, and the Philosopher King." Varma describes Aurobindo as taking various Western concepts of leadership and putting a direct Yogic interpretation to them. For Aurobindo, the Superman is one captured by divinity, not solely rationality. He is not power, but divine, following the natural flow of cosmic mind. He is not the great military leader, but the man who is forced to transform because of his meeting with the inexpressible. This definition of leadership is similar to Sarkar's in that these leaders are not incarnations of the divine, but resultants of concrete historical conditions. Yet they are part of the unfolding of the human drama, the next stage for humanity. Aurobindo wrote, "Either man must fulfill himself by satisfying the divine within him or he must produce out of himself a new and greater being who will be more capable of satisfying it. He must either himself become a divine humanity or give place to Supermen" (Varma 1960, 417-418). But while Sarkar looks toward a society where exploitation is replaced by the just sadvipra administration of government, Aurobindo calls for nothing less than a Yogocracy. In this interpretation, Aurobindo downplays the power of Hegel's historical figures since ego is paramount in them, Nietzsche's transcendence of man is accepted but this transcendence is divine, not of the individual ego.

Generally, Aurobindo begins with an absolutist spiritual view of history, places God in history, explains suffering by inner ignorance at the level of the human and individual learning about God. From the level of the absolute, Aurobindo sees divinity acting through the

associations such as the nation-state and finally through a spiritual community of supermen, through whom the cosmic mind can act.

Certainly Aurobindo's system is massive and synthetic, but he is exceptionally weak at structure, remaining at the level of the ideal. It has little explanatory value (in terms of the events and trends of history), but nonetheless useful in understanding the type of thinking that emerges from pressing and extrapolating the Vedic model. Sarkar, too, attempts a synthesis and also is profoundly influenced by the Indian classics. However, instead of Hegel and Nietzsche, Sarkar looks to different Europeans, namely, Marx and the Marxist notion of structure, class and exploitation. But like Aurobindo, by resorting to a sadvipra or a superman, he falls out of the liberal camp of democratic politics--a politics that has attempted to move God outside of history and move science and technology inside history with balance coming from the opposition of many interests (pluralism and interest group theory). But this balance is rejected by Sarkar as yet another attempt by the capitalist class to keep a structure or varna active long after it has served its usefulness.

But especially hazardous for Sarkar is the writing of history with a concrete God that is not a metaphorical God, but a God that is represented as real and not a functional theoretical tool, but rather an actor with omnipotent agency in history. The hazard is that this God can easily become appropriated for once God is introduced there must be a vehicle for his talk and actions. Whether it is the prophet, the nation or other associational forms, as long as it moves out of God solely as presence or inspiration then the danger of

interpretation, of power, of conquering, of defining and extracting becomes increasingly and ominously everpresent. God in History cannot help but become ideological. Is the alternative then to leave God outside of history or present but only at the level of emotion, of poetry, of conscious metaphor; that is, in poststructural language, at the level of God-talk--concrete at the cosmic but internally subjective at the individual level?

However from a broader poststructural view, one need not be worried only about God, for all "history" is interpretation. God in history is simply one authoritative definition. Conversely one might impose an order of science and rationality, or of a self-interest market model. There must be some order to history to make our world intelligible. This ordering cannot help but be, once available, appropriated. Who will appropriate it and how then becomes the far more crucial question. This is Foucault's question. Aurobindo, however, is not interested in this question. Sarkar is. His history is an answer to the question of how the real is interpreted and appropriated at the expense of other interpretations and interpreters. Like Foucault his question becomes not so much of developing a scheme of God in history, but more of the price of history. Not solely content with analysis, Sarkar develops a way of economizing the price, of reducing the price of history. But in the process, one can critically ask does Sarkar not raise the cost of history again by imposing yet another transcendental model that can be appropriated by other than the harbingers of good-will?

USING SARKAR'S MODEL IN INDIAN HISTORY

Can Sarkar's social cycle be applied to Indian history? Sarkar, unlike Prakash and Aurobindo, does not attempt to do this, but Batra does. Batra does not care for questions of epistemological price. His effort is to fit Sarkar's theory to Indian history. He applies Sarkar's theory to the Aryan civilization leaving aside the older Indus valley civilization given the lack of evidence for that culture. The Aryan Vedic period, beginning around 1500 B.C. when they invaded the Indus valley inhabitants (the Dasas), is for Batra the first Ksatriyan Era. This was a society of clans each organized around a warlike male or group of males. Initially caste was more a general category, based on "like father, like son" instead of a means of political and economic inclusion/exclusion. Females in this society still retained a level of rights, possibly as there were still vestiges of matriarchy. As the Aryans expanded and established an empire, the superstructure became composed of warriors and eventually priests. By the end of the Brahmanas, Batra believes that the cycle had shifted and India was now in Vipras era. True power was ideational and in the hands of the priests. It was then that the caste system developed, although the Ksatriya remained as top. Peasants now had to support priests and aristocrats. However, at the same time there was a philosophical explosion of new ideas, largely the perennial philosophy of the Upanishads. With the invention of money there was increased trade. Eventually merchants gained in power and became the most respected class. This was the Buddhist era, from 700-400 BC. This era also saw the development of the Sangha. Central in its

expansion was the purchase of land and construction of temples. To Batra, there was little intervention from the State and a sort of free market prevailed. The authority of the Brahmins decreased, and that of wealthy merchants increased. Wealth became concentrated with the Nanda dynasty who were particularly oppressive. As we might predict with Sarkar's cycle, next is the worker's evolution or revolution leading to a new centralized state. Batra's interpretation of Indian history naturally follows Sarkar's model. Thus Chandragupta Maurya lead a worker's revolution in 324 B.C.

This then starts the next warrior era. It begins to decline with Asoka's death in 232 BC. With the power of the kings after Asoka in decline, the Brahmin's power increased. This was also the time of the writing of the Manu-Smriti which celebrates the power of intellectuals. By the third century B.C., Batra describes a new capitalist era which lasts until Samudra Gupta. The decentralization of the polity that occurs in capitalist eras ends and the polity becomes centralized. Power is centralized but rights increased.

The Gupta period is seen as a golden age for Indian, a spiral continuation of the structure of the Mauryan times. With the death of Harsha in 7th century there is a decline of the Ksatriyan era. For Batra, the 9th through the 10th century is the onset of another Vipran era, largely because of the writings of Shankaracharya. The next period sees a rise in the power of landlords, not traders or merchants, and thus a rise in Feudalism which Batra takes to be the Vaeshyan era again. The weakness in the polity makes it easy for the Muslim invaders to colonize India. What follows is an evolution into

an anarchic shudra era. Finally, with Alauddin Khilgi, the Ksattriyan era begins again. Power is centralized in kingship and the era of the warriors continues until the spiritual synthesizer Akbar begins a new Vipran era. Power passes to vipran ministers and kingship declines. The British period marks the next capitalist era, which, notwithstanding Independence and India's socialist efforts, continues today. This in the near future is to be followed by a new centralized polity, but with the intervention of Sarkar's ideology one which will regain the economic and human rights of the exploited as well as increase the spiritual, intellectual and material wealth of the nation. Thus, India is in the final stage of the third cycle.

From a critical view, there are numerous problems with Batra's interpretation. Huge spans of history are covered in one era with little evidence of the spirit of the times and with little effort to deal with problems in interpretation either at the level of epistemology or at the level of conventional readings of Indian history. Batra is especially weak on the role of the shudras in history and on their efforts to create the next era. The new king to be, whether Chandragupta Maurya or Sumudra Gupta, is privileged. Nonetheless, Batra provides an alternative reading to the cycles of Indian history. Now, for example, one can trace the classic battle between brahmin and king and include the merchant as well.

ANCIENT, MEDIEVAL AND MODERN

In contrast to Batra's macro approach, most Indian historiography has not been concerned with the history of epistemes, or paradigms,

nor with the theory building enterprise itself. Indian historiography has largely been concerned with middle range and micro theory. It has been a project of various empirical and classification approaches, rather than of deep structures or patterns. But nonetheless an implicit structure has emerged. While the traditional idealistic or spiritual view is that of the life cycle of the soul and body, the usual or dominant historiography has been a classification of history into three periods. These are ancient, medieval, and modern. Ancient is seen as Hindu, medieval as Muslim, and modern as British. These categories are natural derivatives from the dynastic interpretation of Indian history, largely as a result of the discovery of India by British and European scholars. According to Thapar,

Those who were most directly concerned with India in the nineteenth century were the British administrators, and the early non-Indian historians of India came largely from this group. Consequently, the early histories were 'administrator histories', concerned mainly with the rise and fall of dynasties and empires. The protagonists of Indian history were the kings and the narration of events revolved around them. The autocratic king, oppressive and unconcerned with the welfare of his subjects, was the standard image of the Indian ruler...As for actual governing, the underlying assumption was that British administration was in fact superior to any known to the history of the subcontinent (Thapar 1966, 17).

Therefore, instead of the cosmic cycle of Krishna, of the Gita, the linear evolution model of industrialism was adopted. Indian history was placed in a development scheme with England ahead and India behind. The history was not one of the epics, nor of the philosophical schools, but of constructions of those rulers who managed to domesticate time and worker and thus somehow were isomorphic to the British perspective. The Indian could not have his

own theory of history, since there was a larger theory of social evolution in which all Indian theories would find their place. Alternatively, Orientalism attempted to glorify the mystical, the romantic, the erotic and exotic in Indian practices and thought. India was now pre-history and Europe became history. Even Marx did not escape this or more aptly especially Marx did not escape this. India was the child with Britain the adult. In Marx's theory of progress, "Childhood innocence serv[ed] as the prototype of primitive communism" (Nandy 1983, 12).

India to him always remained a country of 'small semi-barbarian, semi-civilized communities' which 'restricted the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition' and where the peasants lived their 'undignified, stagnant and vegetative life.' 'These little communities...brought about a brutalising worship of nature exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in the adoration of Kanuman [sic], monkey, and Sabbala, the cow' (Nandy 1983, 13).

Given this, it was possible for Marx to state that "whatever may have been the crime of England she was the unconscious tool of history" (13). In the scheme, the first stage in Indian history was a sort of primitive communism, then Asiatic Feudalism, then British rule. This rule was imperialistic, but necessary to set into motion capitalism. Once capitalism matured, India could then become socialist and then eventually join the communist community. Unfortunately, India, instead of becoming a mature capitalist society, became a peripheral society and a colony to the European core.

Nonetheless, the sequence is the same: ancient, medieval, and modern. Modern for Marx meant capitalism then socialism, for liberal writers it meant capitalism in various stages (pre-growth, take-off, growth) or agriculturalism to industrialism. Prakash too follows this

line of reasoning, as he assigns the present as a golden age of activity, instead of the traditional view of the present as Kali. However, he gives a more sympathetic reading by calling the Indian mutiny of 1857 an awakening.

Looking at the same division but from the viewpoint of the history of philosophy, that is a view that is primarily based on the Indian episteme but overlaid with an Occidental historical, linear narrative, we can break up the division from a slightly different angle. The ancient system can be divided into four stages. The first is the Vedic (6000 to 2500 BC) where Indian thought moves from polytheism to monotheism and then to philosophical absolute monotheism. The second phase can be seen as the Epic period (600 BC to 200 AD). This is the Mahabharata, the Dharmashastras, the Ramayana, as well as the beginning of Buddhism and Jainism. The next era is the Sutra (100 BC to 600 AD) where the six schools of philosophy are developed. The final era, which continues today, is the scholastic where the role of philosophy is to comment on the original systems. It is only a few rare individuals who have attempted to start their own systems; Aurobindo, for example, from the spiritual perspective and M.N. Roy from the Marxist perspective.

Alternatively, David Kinsley (1982) in his Hinduism calls the first phase the Formative period. This to him is the Vedic period (2500-800 BC) with the writing of the Rigveda dated at 1200 BC. This is generally the real as represented in ritual and sacrifice with a strong role for the priests. The next stage is the Speculative period from 800-400 BC. This is the telling of the Upanishads where Indian

thought becomes clearly associated with the desire for moksa and renunciation becomes a central theme in Indian culture. Following this from 400 BC to 600 AD is the Epic/Classical period when the Mahabharata and Ramayana were both written. The Dharmashastras as well were written at this time.

It is in this literature [Dharmashastras] that the definition of the ideal society as varna-ashrama-dharma, the duty [dharma] of acting according to one's stage in life [student, householder, spiritual life and renunciate] (ashrama) and position in society (varna) is arrived at (Kinsley 1982, 16).

His next era is the Medieval period (600-1800 AD) known not for Islam as the Indian historian would write it, but for the development of the six schools and the rise of Tantra. Sarkar, of course, would place Tantra 7500 years ago. He does not use the division of time based on the birth of Jesus Christ refusing to enter into that discursive space. However, he would agree with Kinsley's redefinition of Tantra. "The Tantras ... often criticize established religious practices and the upholders of these practices, the Brahmins" (Kinsley 1982, 19). The Modern period from 1800 to the present is characterized by the Hindu revival of the 19th century (Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna, Brahmo Samaj) and the Independence movements as well as the introduction of the Indian worldview to European and American society.

There is, however, no attempt to search for a deeper order to history. There is no teleology. Nor are there any ruptures in thought as Foucault might search for. Rather thought is seen as one continuous flow from ancient to present, forgetting that the context for a particular thought might have dramatically changed.

Other than Sarkar, Prakash, and Indian Marxist interpretations and to some extent Aurobindo, there have been few attempts to place Indian history within an evolutionary, theoretical scheme; that is, a theory and philosophy of history--macro-history. Indian history either has been classified by philosophical eras or dynastic eras, the Nanda, Maurayas, Guptas, Moguls, the British and the recent Nehru/Gandhi dynasty. There have been few attempts to search for the causes of change beyond that of the power of kings. Indian history has no meaning or pattern, only its philosophical schools have meaning and that as an escape from history. In this regard Sarkar stands out as radical break, a rupture from past Indian thinking. He finds--imposes--a pattern, but not based on an import from Marx, but rather a local knowledge pattern, and one that is, as Indian thinking claims to be, universal.

But Sarkar is not the only one to critique the history of Indian historiography. Among those, K.M. Panikkar writes from an avowedly critical position.

The study of local dynastic histories, without reference to the conditions of Indian as a whole has led us to the exaggeration of local patriotism which is one of the most dangerous tendencies today. ...It is time we also discarded finally this attempt to build our history on monarchs and dynasties, and viewed it from the point of view of the evolution of the Indian people (Pannikkar 1967, 35).

To him, the fascination with the Aryans has led to the Aryanization of the country and of history. What is needed instead is a history of India that looks at the social evolution of Indians.

This search for a pattern is further developed by D. D. Kosambit. To him Indians need to take seriously the charge that India has had

some episodes but no history (Kosambi 1967, 37). The way out is a study of the means and relations of production. But this need not be Marxist or European, especially with Marx' belief that India has no history, that it is not part of the progressive movement of power, technology, and structure. Indian history must concentrate on changes in technology and the resultant changes in power between classes.

The more important question is not who was king, nor whether the given region had a king, but whether its people used a plough, light or heavy, at the time. The type of kingship, as a function of the property relations and surplus produced, depends upon the method of agriculture, not conversely (Kosambi 1967, 40).

The philosophy of India, its classics, its culture cannot be divorced from the objective economic conditions. In a passionate quote, he reminds us that:

The subtle mystic philosophies, tortuous religions, ornate literature, monuments teeming with intricate sculpture, and delicate music of India all derive from the same historical process that produced the famished apathy of the villager, senseless opportunism and termite greed of the 'cultured' strata, sullen unco-ordinated discontent among the workers, the general demoralization, misery, squalor, and degrading superstition. The one is the result of the other, the one is the expression of the other. The most primitive implements produced a meagre surplus which was expropriated by a correspondingly archaic social mechanism. This maintained a few in that cultured leisure which they took as a mark of their innate superiority to the vast majority living in degradation. It is necessary to grasp this in order to appreciate the fact that history is not a sequence of haphazard events but is made by human being in the satisfaction of their daily needs (40).

Jawaharlal Nehru in his Glimpses of World History develops this Marxist analysis as well. To him real history must be the history of progress; of how humans overcame challenges and struggled against the elements, just as today they must struggle against economic inequity. His project was to fuse the nationalist spirit with the international proletarian spirit within the context of an objective science of

history, a science of life. But Nehru did not remain within the confines of Marxist thought. He was clearly additive in his thinking.

Marx's general analysis of social development seems to have been remarkable correct, and yet many developments took place later which did not fit in with his outlook for the immediate future. So while I accepted the fundamentals of the socialist theory, I did not trouble myself about its numerous inner controversies. ...Life is too complicated and, as far as we can understand it in our present state of knowledge, too illogical for it to be confined within the four corners of a fixed doctrine (Nehru 1967, 48-49).

A statement typical of the Indian episteme; one which we would not expect a Reagan to state as his guiding philosophy. Assuming Sarkarian thought does become the model of Indian thought in the next century, we can but assume that this pattern will continue. The overall stages will be used. Predictions that are incorrect will not change faith or use of Sarkar's intuitional science or his theory of evolution. Just as we can see with Nehru, 19th century European thought had infiltrated the Indian episteme making words such as struggle, progress, and science current and valuable in discursive transactions, we can expect the same appropriation of Sarkar's cosmology, if it gains currency.

While Nehru uses Marx's language to speak to a history of India that is class based, K.M. Munshi attempts to develop a nationalist interpretation of Indian history. Indian history should be about how the Indian nation has been created. All forces, economic, cultural, geographic, political, philosophic, spiritual must lead toward the creation of a collective will. Indian history, for Munshi, has been the history of foreign invaders, of Alexander, of the Sultans of Delhi, of the British. The occupation of India is only matched by the

occupation of Indian history. As a true nationalist, Indian history must not show how "she underwent foreign invasions, but how she resisted them and eventually triumphed over them" (Munshi 1967, 34). Thus the unit of analysis now becomes the Indian people themselves; independence then becoming the fitting crown to Indian history. Agency moves to the nation-state, not to a particular varna, an episteme, class relations, technology, or the people. But his is not a mere rejection of foreign culture, but how Indians have absorbed the invaders and made their ideas their own while at the same time keeping their original authentic selves. This to him is Indian history.

Of course, Romila Thapar and others critical of Orientalism do not believe India has been that successful at all. India may have achieved nationhood but her history and her present is still perceived through the eyes of 19th European century writers. India and her history as created by the West is one that is essentially centered in kingship and mysticism (as in superstition).

In the imagination of Europe, India had always been the fabulous land of untold wealth and mystical happenings, with more than just a normal share of wise men. From the gold digging ants to the philosophers who lived naked in the forests, these were part of the picture which the ancient Greeks had of the Indians and these images persisted throughout many centuries (Thapar 1986, 15).

But when Europe prospered taking its place as Core in the emerging world capitalist system and India concomitantly declined taking its place as periphery, India became less known for its gold and spices (they had been exappropriated) and more for its poverty. And as Europe rejected the classical world and embraced the modern, it created its opposite in India and the Islamic world. Europe became rational and

progressive: India mystical and regressive. The West had a balance between civil and political society; India, instead of institutions and government, had only the caste system (civil society) while China had only the state (and Islam perhaps neither state nor civil, but the worst of both, "oriental despotism" and a backward religion). While Edward Said (1979) has brilliantly developed this argument for the Islamic world, Ronald Inden (1986) has recently attempted the same for India.

In Inden's article "Orientalist Constructions of India," he places much of the blame on Hegel. It was Hegel who took the Vedantist interpretation of Indian philosophy and made it into the hegemonic one. As with Marx, India for Hegel was prehistorical for "History is limited to that which is an essential epoch in the development of Spirit (Inden 1986, 425). Prehistorical people for their own good must enter history. According to Hegel, "the English, or rather the East India Company, are the lords of the land: for it is the necessary fate of Asiatic Empires to be subjected to Europeans" (426). But the paradox for the West has been why has India retained its own self while having been conquered? In Vishwanath Prasad Varma's brilliant Studies in Hindu Political Thought and its Metaphysical Foundations, he writes the following summary:

In [Hegel's] dialectical scheme of historical evolution, while China represents understanding, India represents phantasy and sensibility. China, so to say, marks the beginning of oriental history. But the Chinese are in the condition of legal immaturity. ...Contrasted to China, India represents the growth of idealistic philosophy. It has, certainly, a conception of spirit (Geist) but it does not develop into an idealism based on rational concepts. Its idealism is rooted only in imagination. China represents the spirit at the level of sleep. But although India typifies the awakening of the spirit, it is not the full

rational awakening. Consequently, instead of deliberate efforts at the formation of distinct concepts, in Indian thought, one only finds profuse imagination, dreaming and fancy (Varma 1974, 379).

Consciousness thus maintains itself in "pure abstract sameness," according to Hegel (379). The real remains overly imaginative with no concrete manifestations in great historical figures nor in a developed state. Of course, here Hegel was responding to the hegemonic position of Vedantic philosophy: the other schools were far more observationally, empirically and practically oriented. This lack of development of the rational State has led to the conquest of India, over and over again. For Europeans, this was to be India's destiny until it could finally be molded into German rationalism, or later into British empiricism.

Ashis Nandy, in his The Intimate Enemy, attempts to understand why India has this central paradox; why she has been conquered yet managed to retain its ancient culture. Nandy takes this as paradigmatic of the Indian response. While the Aztec priest would die and lose his culture, the Indian Brahmin would accept the foreign culture, yet transform it so in the long run, by defeat he could be victorious. By compromising, by being weak and passive (in the minds of Orientalists) he arrested the psychological victory--the Indian did not become a heroic enemy that the West admired. He did not internalize the value of the victor. Rather he stayed outside of this discourse, "Better to be a comical dissenter than to be a powerful, serious but acceptable opponent" (Nandy 1983, 111). There is no fear of loss of identity, for the self, as we have argued, is constructed differently. That which is eternally real can never be colonized.

And in the long run, it is the cowardly Indian who, in his passive resilience, will be victorious.

Nandy's writings like Foucault argues that every interpretation has a cost, a price that must be paid. Victory has a price as does victimhood. "Orientalism" ultimately then is a price that the West pays. Of course, India too pays the price in terms of what Sarkar calls psychic exploitation. Indians see themselves as a less real representation of history and the real, while the West sees itself as a more truthful representation of progress. The way out for Ronald Inden is for historical scholarship to place itself in the context of a multiple view of the true perspective, decidedly an Indian perspective. Among other goals, this has been the effort of this study. However, Inden would object to the casting of the Indian episteme in spiritual terms, or with what he would call, societalism, that is using varna as agency in history. This to him forgets that caste is a product of kingship, not something inherent in Indian thought. It is only Orientalist constructions that have placed caste and other abstractions prior to individualism. But here he misunderstands the Indian episteme, forgetting its unity of discourse. He criticizes Orientalism and its construction of Indian history, yet he does so from the epistemological viewpoint of modernity. Ultimately, the problems he raises for the Orientalist discourse are problems for the West, not for India, Although deconstructing Orientalism is useful, it is far more important is develop alternative interpretations of Indian history and global history, thus aiding in the process of finding the way power hides in various interpretations.

As important is how the West has been constructed in India: as a land of gold, sex, and individuality, but with no culture, history and spirituality. People with money, but not quite refined yet.

Another way out of not being subjected by the history of the dominator, of the discourse of domination, is the Subaltern project (Guha 1988). Here the purpose is not to create a new structure, a new pattern of history, rather its aim is to write Indian history from the view of the dominated classes, not the elite or the colonial. This is the history of the class that has had its perception of itself penetrated by the interpretation of others, that has only spoken through the recorded narratives of others. This is then not a nationalist history against external forces, for domination can occur within nations or peoples as well. This is the history of workers and peasants and how they have constructed the great movements, the great changes of history. In the words of Ranajit Guha:

[This is] no history of ideas, no calmly olympian narrative of events, no disengaged objective recital of facts. It is rather sharply contestatory, an attempt to wrest control of the Indian past from its scribes and curators in the present ... And if there can be no actual taking of power in the writing of history, there can at least be a demystifying exposure of what material interests are at stake, what ideology and method are employed, what parties advanced, which deferred, displaced and defeated (Guha 1988, vii).

Influenced by poststructural thought, Subaltern studies intends to supply the missing narrative of Indian history. It is not the official story, but the development of a new story which aims at plainly stating the price of the dominant historical narrative of the nation, of dynasties, of schools of thought, of philosophies. Thus, there is not one India, but many Indias. Not one interpretation, but

many interpretations. It is a change in the site of history, an attack on the evidence of history, an attempt to denaturalize Indian history. It is an attempt to see the world from the view of the subaltern classes; to not ascribe their actions of courage, of defiance to a larger will, to an other agency. Historiography then becomes strategy, a way of taking back consciousness. But it is not simply an attempt to relativize history, to move to a position of epistemological relativity; rather there is a clear will to politicize in Subaltern writing. Subaltern studies is an effort to avoid a . historical amnesia toward those who have suffered in the production of dynastic or philosophical histories. Subaltern studies is not a move to a higher level of generalization, rather it is a remembering of memory.

THE SARKARIAN OVERLAY

An attempt to close the above contextualizing of Indian history can be done with the use of Sarkar's own categories. Just as there are four types of mentalities, structures or types, we can construct four types of history. First, there is the shudra history, the project of the Subaltern group. It is done however not by the workers themselves but clearly by intellectuals. Second, there is then ksattriyan history: the history of kings and empires, of nations and conquests, of politics and economics. This is the history of the State. This is history of great men and women. Third there is vipran history. This is the philosophy of history. This is the development of typologies, of categories of thought, of the recital of genealogies, of the search

for evidence, of the development of the field of history itself. This is the attempt to undo the intellectual constructions of others and create one's own, of deciding is their one construction or can there be many constructions. And fourth, there is vaeshyan history. This is the history of wealth, of economic cycles, of the development of the world capitalist system, of the rise of Europe and the fall of India.

Sarkar' s own history attempts to write a history that includes all these types: peoples, military, intellectual and economic. Marxist history also is broad. While it is directly located in economic history, it is written for the shudras, but warriors bring about the Marxist State but it is an intellectual who created the type of discourse.

These types of history are certainly interlinked, and of course, as history itself has been a discourse owned by intellectuals, history should be vipran heavy. Alternatively, one can use a model to talk about diachronic (through time) history using the dichotomies of individual/collective and intra/inter. Most Indian history has been intra/individual (biographies and genealogies) as well as inter/individuals (comparative elite history, a comparison between the various Moguls). There has been little emphasis on collective/intra (deep structures and processes) or inter/collective (macrocomparative history). While Sarkar develops deep structures, he is weak on comparative macrohistory with little effort to trace the structure of the social cycle though various civilizations. Batra simply applies the cycle to each unit of analysis, but does not take the next step in

comparing the development of the units to each other. Sarkar's excellence is that he uses structure but not from an Orientalist view; it is a local knowledge perspective that moves to the universal. Moreover, it manages to provide a framework in which histories of each group are possible--of workers, kings, intellectuals, and of economic forces. And at the same time it provides a framework for a history of structure at a point in time, through time; within and across cultures as well.

SARKAR'S IDEAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

Before we develop Sarkar's history of history, we will summarize Sarkar's essays "What Should History be Like" and "Let History be Rewritten," as they articulate his views on the ideal historiography. For him, past history has privileged kings and monarchs--the dynastic model. "If the chronicles of history merely describes who succeeded to the throne and when, who plundered the neighboring countries or kingdoms, and who became a minister, they will be of no important what so ever, nor, indeed, of any interest to the common masses" (Sarkar 1987a, 4: 63). But history is not only Ksattriyan. "Similarly, the history of the Vipra era is full of praises for the glorious deeds of the Vipra leaders, and the history of the vaeshyas contains an abundance of stories about the wonders of the vaeshyas" (67). History thus is interpretative and purposely written to validate a particular mentality, a "particular vested interest" (67).

Sarkar believes history should be written about how humans solved challenges. How prosperity was gained. "History ... should maintain

special records of the trials and tribulations which confronted human beings, how those trials and tribulations were overcome, how human beings tackled the numerous obstacles to effect great social development" (64). History then needs to aid in mobilizing people, personally and collectively toward internal exploration and external transformation. Thus history should be a "resplendent reflection of collective life whose study will be of immense inspiration for future generations" (66). True history is about value.

You should remember that in human society nobody is insignificant, nobody is negligible. Even the life of a 100 year old lady is valuable. In the universal society she is an important member--she is not to be excluded. We may not be able to think that she is a burden to society, but this sort of defective thinking displays our ignorance (Sarkar 1987a 7: 45).

Sarkar's own history is meant to show the challenges humans faced: the defeats and the victories. His history shows how humans were dominated by particular eras, how they struggled and developed new technologies, ideas, and how they realized the atman. It is an attempt to write a history that is true to the victims but does not oppress them again through no attempt at providing a vision of the future. His history then is clearly ideological, but not in the sense of supporting a particular class, but rather a history that gives weight to all classes yet attempts to move them outside of class, outside of ego, and toward neo-humanism.

Sarkar's history then attempts a balance between spiritual idealism and social structure and develops a model to locate the various approaches to history.

SARKAR'S THEORY OF HISTORY

We will now summarize Sarkar's own theory of history. As argued earlier, it has different components; central is the role of the spiritual, the role of four varnas, the dynamics of history, and the role of leadership in creating an alternative future.

The key to Sarkar's theory of history is that there are four types of people and four epochs in history. Each epoch exhibits a certain mentality, a varna. This varna is similar to the concept of episteme, to paradigm, to ideal type, to class, to stage, to era and a host of other words that have been used to describe stage theory. Sarkar alternatively uses varna and collective psychology to describe his basic concept. He writes, "Human history is made by the collective urge of collective psychology" (Sarkar 1987a, 7: 44). This then is a reflection of desire, of the basic nature of mind. It is social desire. There are four basic desire systems. The four varnas are historically developed. First the shudra, then the ksattriya, then the vipra, then the vaeshya. The last era is followed either by a revolution, by the shudras or an evolution into the shudra era. During the final phase of the vaeshyan era, all the other varnas become shudra in terms of their economic standing. All are exploited mentally and economically by the capitalist class, even though their varna, the way they approach the world, remains either shudra, vipra, or ksattriya. Now this order is cyclical, but there are reversals. There can be a counter revolution in any era. From vipran to ksattriyan or a counter evolution. Both are short lived in terms of the natural cycle since both move counter to the natural developmental

flow. But in the long run, the order must be followed because it is natural and historically derived.

History has been the natural flow of this cycle. By natural Sarkar means evolutionary. That is, at every point there is a range of choices, once made the choice becomes a habit, a structure of the collective or group mind. Each mentality with an associated leadership class comes into power, makes changes, and administers government but eventually pursues its own class ends and exploits the other groups. This has continued throughout history. In Human Society, Sarkar speaks of one cycle which has passed, but in other articles he implies that different nations have followed many cycles (Logan 1988). His unit of analysis begins with all of humanity, it is a history of humanity, but he often refers to countries and nations. Batra (1978) in his interpretations refers to civilizations, borrowing from Toynbee.

The relationship to the previous era is a dialectical one; an era emerges out of the old era, because of the old era. Thus history moves not because of external reasons, although the environment certainly is a factor, but because of internal organic reasons. Each era comes to its limit, becomes false, and then the new group comes in, to use Sorokin's (1970) principle of limits. The metaphysic behind this movement is for Sarkar the wave motion. There is a rise and then a fall. In addition, this wave motion is pulsative; that is, the speed of change fluctuates over time. The driving force for this change is first the dialectical interaction with the environment, second the dialectical interaction in the mind and in ideologies, and then the

dialectical interaction between both, ideas and the environment. But there is also another motivation: this is the attraction toward the Great. The individual attraction toward the supreme. This is the ultimate desire that frees humans of all desires.

Clash, conflict and cohesion with the environment lead to the Shudra era becoming the Ksatriya; and then clash, conflict and cohesion with ideas leading to the Ksatriya becoming the Vipra; and then the dialectical clash of environment and ideas leads to the Vaeshyan era. The attraction to the great is the solution or the answer to the problem of history. It results in progress. For Sarkar, the cycle must continue for it is a basic structure in the mind but exploitation is not a necessity. Suffering can be reduced or ended by placing the sadvipra, the intellectual who has qualities of all the varnas but works for the benefit of the whole, in the center of the cycle. Sarkar's metaphor uses the life cycle of the body and nature and the ancient wheel, that is, technology. Thus, there is the natural and there is human intervention. There is a deep structure and there is choice. It is Sarkar's theory that provides this intervention. He legitimizes this theory partially by his neo-humanistic ideology and partially by appealing to the Indian belief in extraordinary leadership, in the knowing abilities of the guru. Sarkar's theory of varna is an empirical claim, a claim of reality correspondence (within the context of the Indian episteme as argued previously). The sadvipra thus acts from the center, attempting to continue a permanent class revolution, not in the sense of Trotsky who meant that it could not just stop in one country, but

in the sense that revolution must be forever, since humans have both vidya and avidya, introversion and extroversion. Humans are in essence desire. There is a range of desires which presently constitute humanness--fifty at the present level of development. These can lead humans toward power, control and fear or toward justice, compassion and love. Without periodic and systematic revolutions, the new era promised by every group will swiftly turn into an old era of exploitation. For Sarkar, the four types are natural and thus must continue. But the apolitical administration of power must not become the abuse of power. Politics must continue but it must be a politics of negotiation and economic, cultural and human development, not one of extraction of wealth from the many to the few, not one that denies human's intellectual rights and spiritual potential. This then is Sarkar's theory of PROUT where he develops a theory of ownership: everything is owned by consciousness, humans can only "rent" it. In this preferred future vision, there must be basic guarantees of human rights and basic needs. These are to be increased through the economic dynamic which results from the increased use of physical, mental and spiritual resources. The use of these resources must be based on the desire for the collective good, not the good of any particular individual mind or particular environment. Finally, individual initiative must be rewarded preferably in the forms of advantages that again lead to increased public good. An increase in the wealth of those that are advantaged must correspond with an increase in the wealth of those who, although all their needs are met, are proportionally less well off. This system, however, can only

occur, at present, through a shudra revolution. PROUT then is the future for the world; a new alternative political economy. In addition, based on other trends such as internationalization and the globalization of problems, the appropriate governing body would be a world government but with strong regional linguistic, cultural, economic bodies and associations. Indeed, it is these local movements that are at the heart of Sarkar's movement to create a new society. From these movements and his various organizations, he intends to create leadership that has the characteristics of all the varnas and is benevolent. Again, the shudras are controlled by the environment. The ksatriyas control the environment. The intellectuals control the environment and the other two varnas through understanding, not power. They theorize and develop answers to questions of meaning and thus use these theories to increase their life chances for themselves and their progeny. The last class--the vaeshyans--uses the environment, not conquers. It turns all the classes into resources for its project. The environment becomes not something that one is dominated by, not something one conquers, not something one theorizes about, but something one commodifies, uses to increase one's life chances, through accumulation and investments.

Sadvipras have all these qualities but again use them for the other. That they might use it for their own class is not investigated by Sarkar, since they are outside of the cycle. They will not exploit or transform it into another Marxist ksatriyan rule, or as the Muslims and the Christians become a priestly class, they will not transform entrepreneurship into predatory capitalism or make science

and technology into yet another tool of class, or become experts beholden only to their own interests. Rather they will represent the interests of the whole. Or so hopes Sarkar.

He believes they will not exploit because they will undergo revolutionary training, spiritual training. And while Sarkar posits a structural theory of mentalities based on the interaction with the environment, he remains in the spiritual rise and fall of dharma model. Humanity has suffered enough and now it is time for the next era. This is the revolution that he is to bring about. This new era is not about the end of rational man (modern man) as Foucault and Nietzsche have written, Indian man was never modern man, rather it is about the continued evolution of humans toward Cosmic Consciousness. And it is not about a new "race" of supermen who transcend man himself, nor is it about Aurobindo's divine man, or De Chardin's divine man; rather it is closer to Gramsci's organic intellectual: activist, self-reflective, and critical of class. Sarkar, however, adds a spiritual dimension in terms of the concrete practice of spiritual disciplines which empirically change the individual mind and leads to the resultant ethical changes--the yamas and niyamas.

Thus, Sarkar believes his contribution is revolutionary in that it is outside of the cycle. It is not attempting to support any one class: the workers (communism), warriors (monarchy, force), intellectuals (liberalism and various utopias), or acquirers (capitalism). It is an attempt to transform this classic structure and develop a classless society where unity is based on the spiritual ideal, the unity of humanity and nature. Thus Sarkar presents an

alternative Indian construction of history which coherently uses the spiritual, the critical, the structural, and the historical facets of Indian historiography but envelops them to create a new theory.

VARNA AND CASTE

In order to understand Sarkar's use of varna--especially important given its centrality--we need to deconstruct his use of varna and place it in the context of the various meanings of caste in Indian thought. Once this is done, once we are aware of Sarkar's construction, then we can examine his prose and his writing of history.

Caste, like death, is ubiquitous in the Indian context. One's practices cannot but be framed within the discourse of caste. Indeed the modern history of India as deconstructed by critics of Orientalism shows how caste has become the definition of Indian society. Caste is the agent of history; the agent of leadership and of economic decisionmaking. While rulers and philosophies may come and go and economies may rise and fall, caste remains. In Capital Orientalist Marx writes:

The simplicity of the organization for production in these self-sufficing communities that constantly reproduce themselves in the same form, and when accidentally destroyed, spring up again on the spot and with the same name--this simplicity supplies the key to the secret of the unchangeableness of Asiatic societies, and unchangeableness in striking contrast with the constant change of dynasty (Varma 1974, 44).

Instead of market and State, caste is eternal. Kingship and other Indian political institutions have been dismissed by the Orientalist. From the outside caste has been perceived as "both the cause and

effect of India's low level of political and economic 'development'" (Inden 1986, 403). As mentioned earlier, to Hegel this meant that India was ahistorical. It was a people, but had no State, thus no rationality nor any possibility for freedom.

The alternative Orientalist view has been what Inden calls the romantic India; not the irrational people outside history, but the spiritually evolved people whose entire culture is essentially idealistic. The romantics take the features that the rational-utilitarians find backward and praise them. The romantics search for a greater unity, a larger myth to explain caste. Joseph Campbell, for example, represents caste not in political and economic language but in spiritual mythic language.

There is therefore in Hinduism an essential affirmation of the cosmic order as divine. And since society is conceived to be a part of the cosmic order, there is an affirmation, equally, of the orthodox Indian social order as divine. Furthermore, as the order of nature is eternal, so also is this true of orthodox society. There is no tolerance of human freedom or invention in the social field, for society is not conceived to be an order evolved by human beings subject to intelligence and change, as it was in advanced Greece and Rome and as it has in the modern West. Its laws are of nature, not to be voted on, improved upon, or devised. Precisely as the sun, moon, plants and animals follow laws inherent to their natures, so therefore must the individual [follow] the nature of his birth, whether Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra or Pariah. Each is conceived to be a species. And as a mouse cannot become a lion, or even desire to be a lion, no Shudra can be a Brahmin; and desiring to be one would be insane. Hence the Indian work 'virtue, duty, law,' dharma, has a deep, a very deep reach. 'Better one's duty ill performed,' we read, 'than that of another, to perfection.' The Greek or Renaissance idea of the great individual simply does not exist within the pale of the system. One is to be, rather, a dividuum, divided man, man who represents one limb or function of the great man (purusas) which is society itself (Inden 1986, 434).

The metaphor of the body is the classic representation of caste. A late hymn of the Rig-Veda provides a mythical origin of the castes:

When the gods made a sacrifice with the Man as their victim.
When they divided the Man, into how many parts did they divide
him?
What was his mouth, what were his arms, what were his thighs and
his feet called?
The brahman was his mouth, of his arms were made the warrior.
His thighs became the vaishya, of his feet the shudra was born.
With Sacrifice the gods sacrificed to Sacrifice, these were the
first of the sacred laws.
These mighty beings reached the sky, where are the eternal
spirits, the gods (Thapar 1966, 39-40).

In this view then caste is divine. Natural. The first law.
Sarkar, as we might expect, has this to say about the vipras and their
creation of caste.

At other times they [Brahmin priests] resorted to blatant
falsehood and said: 'These are the commandments of God. Those
who contradict these commandments will be damned to eternal
hell-fire ... Your eyes will develop cataracts and your throat
will contract goitre if you don't read the scriptures and pray to
God every day ... If the offerings made to God touch your feet,
or if you do not touch your forehead after handling consecrated
food, you will develop leprosy ... It is God who has made caste
divisions.' (Sarkar 1987a, 15: 16).

The alternative reading of caste is racial. But even within the
racial discourse, there are many readings. Thapar writes that the
Aryans were composed of the three classes, not castes: the
warriors/aristocracy, the priests and the common people. Profession
was not hereditary, there were no rules limiting intermarriage, and
there were no taboos on social practices such as eating. It was thus
an economic/social division of labor. Caste emerged with the
interaction between Aryans and the local Dasas. The first caste
distinction was thus between Aryan and Dasa, with the Aryans being the

twice born class (birth and then caste status). The Shudras resulted from the Dasas and those of mixed Aryan-Dasa origin.

According to Thapar, at first the warriors/kings were on top (as Sarkar would argue) and later when the priests recognized the power assigned in caste, they put themselves on top. Thus, the above hymn and Sarkar's commentary. Thapar, thus, places caste in a historical significance narrative, thought to have developed first from class, then from race, and finally through class/caste power struggles. Eventually, the earlier divisions were secured through actual taboos and over time varna became of little significance, while jhat, sub caste became extraordinarily important in the day to day life of Indians. Vertical mobility became almost nonexistent and movement through the hierarchy was only possible for the jhat as a whole, not for a sole individual. In this sense both schools of Orientalism, the Europe as superior and India as mythically spiritual, touch on real interpretations of the caste, but they do not historically trace it, and thus do not notice the similarities of caste with class; that is, with the division of labor, wealth and power. With structure.

Central to the question of caste has been the "great conundrum of Indian social thought: whether the Brahmin or king had precedence" (Dirks 1987, 10). To speak to this question, Thapar again takes a decidedly historical view. For her, we must first examine when caste or the political state was primary and then examine the respective role of varna.

We can understand historical consciousness and thus the history of caste by looking at the various type of societies that existed in

India. In lineage societies where descent and birth was the main form of social ordering, then one can argue that caste was primary. "The evolution of varna stratification is rooted in the lineage-based society of Vedic times (Thapar 1986, 357). Therefore, one could argue that in lineage societies caste or religion was primary as Louis Dumont (1979) would assert. In State societies, kingship--or what is conventionally seen as the political--is primary. In these State structures, the Brahman thus not more powerful than the Ksatriya. But this political, historical interpretation of caste has received far less attention than the religious by Orientalists and modern historians. Caste as class or as deep structure or as understood from Galtung's cosmological analysis has little currency.

In lineage societies history is myth. It not only records but creates the totality of the past (Dirks 1987, 58). In state societies, history is the story of dynasties. The king and conquest. In addition to history as myth and history as the rise and fall of dynasties, Thapar presents a third form of history. This is chronological history. She dates this from Buddhist times when the Sangha developed. This is the post-Gupta era where history did not simply narrate the lives of the Buddha but also "described the building of monasteries, the amassing of property, and the rights to controlling these" (Thapar 1986, 374). This to her is externalized history. For Thapar the form of historical consciousness changed significantly through time. Mythic consciousness decreased in importance over time; kingship became more important than questions of caste; and finally ownership increased in importance.

Thapar thus moves toward Sarkar's understanding of caste, as forms of knowing the world. For Sarkar there are different epochs in Indian history and different stages. Caste comes about largely in what he calls the Vipran era. To stay in power, the Brahmins reified caste, alternatively putting themselves on top, and then the Ksattriyans on top, when their own power base was threatened. That is, agreeing to movements in the structure, but keeping the structure which guaranteed them, like a bureaucracy, eternal economic advantages. Not just for themselves, but for their future generations.

Here it should be remembered that the words shudra, vaeshya, ksattriya and vipra have not connection with the Varn'n'shrama oriented social order of the old Hindu society. Those who became vipras by virtue of their intellectual power in order to perpetuate their vested interests, declared the vipras an hereditary caste. Out of a little compassion (actually, we should not call it compassion at all as their ulterior motive was to employ the ksattriyas to their own advantage), they gave the next highest status to those vanquished ksattriyas, who had sold themselves out and surrendered at their feet (Sarkar 1987b, 5:22).

Thus, for Sarkar caste was a creation of the Brahmins who then used myth and scripture to normalize their location in the social order. Those who see caste as the primary tool for understanding India forget that India has gone through various epochs with power located differently in each epoch.

Fundamental to Sarkar's project is his attempt to overthrow caste. But he here is using caste as jhat, the various rules of marriage, relationships, privileging that exist in India today.

But overthrowing caste is as essential as overthrowing communalism, nationalism and other boundary structures. Caste

violates the essentials of a good society. It is unjustified economic privileging not based on any contribution to the social good.

For Sarkar a good society comes must have the following components: peace (through spiritual practices), unity (a common ideal, a casteless social structure, and no capital punishment), and social security (no economic exploitation based on gender, race, and class, with wealth considered the property of the universe). The project then is not simply to transform a particular social formation called, caste but to transform the privileging of various vertical structures. His aim is to transform caste and class relations into a new social formation, not one based on classifying humans according to their trade or their capacity. To him this is the oldest vice: dividing people up so as to gain benefits. His way out is the spiritual approach yet at the same time the basic functions embedded in caste are useful; that is to serve, to develop the mind, to confront adversity and to engage in economic activity. The goal then is to develop a society through structures and practices that are horizontal in nature.

But while Sarkar remains unclear how many cycles there have been in Indian history, speaking at times of more than one, at times of just one, Batra's history clearly has numerous cycles. Thus, for Batra, the post-Gupta era is the Vaeshyan era, therefore, we should not be surprised that it was not warrior, or Brahmin, but merchant who was at the top. Again we should not be surprised that the type of history being written changed, for historical consciousness changes with each epoch.

Then the caste system as a power structure was an attempt by a particular varna to exploit other varnas. Sarkar specifically attempts to distinguish between his use of varna and the classic use of varna. Among other strategies, he changes the English spelling and instead of Brahmin he uses the word vipra. Unfortunately, varna meaning mental color in Sanskrit remains his description of his structure. However neither ideal type, episteme, paradigm, nor color appear to satisfactorily capture the essence of varna. Yet using the term varna simply reinscribes the classic caste system and confuses the reader. More useful would be the interpretation of varna as related not to caste, but as related to collective psychology, or group mind, group desire. Varna now translates as fundamental group desire no longer as a social division of labor, or caste, or myth.

Galtung (1981c) takes a civilizational perspective examining time, social space, and social relations. For him all civilizations have vertical relations in that there are steep differences in power and privilege. He explores how exploitation is carried out at levels of meaning (how the real is constructed), war (who must fight for the State), labor and wealth. He develops five classical caste systems. Feudal Europe with nobility (landowner and military) on top, clergy below, burghers (traders and merchants), peasants (workers) and a fifth bottom highly marginalized group of gypsies, Arabs, jews and women. The Feudal Chinese model has the shih (nobility and scholars) on top, the nung (farmers) a step below, then the kung (artisans), the shang (merchants) and finally the fifth group of nomads, barbarians and women. Japan's Tokugawa system had the shi (samurai, military,

low nobility) on top, the no (farmers) a step below, the Ko (artisans) lower, the sho (merchants) next and the dowa-chiku, the foreigners and women at the very bottom. All these are seen as castes since they follow rules such as endogamy, commensalism, and, "of course, 'like father, like son" (Galtung 1986c, 143). In addition, the system India had was more explicit and because of the Aryan invasion had the notion of pollution. The structure of verticality continues today with capitalists-bureaucrats and intelligentsia on top (Sarkar would agree wholeheartedly for the end of the Vaeshyan eras finds intellectuals enthralled by the Vaeshyan mentality and thus fitting in their structure). For Galtung, the key is looking within cosmologies and searching for structure. Traditional merit was derived from birth, while the equation today is education. Each cosmology has vertical and horizontal relations, each orders the world differently, with various real human and social costs.

Rajni Kothari (1970) in his Caste in Indian Politics reminds us that caste is one among many ways of ordering the world; in engaging in politics. Politics is about the negotiation of power and meanings. While the modernizers want to rid India of caste, they forget its relationship to order. Indeed, they want to rid India of politics, and thus replace it, with an alleged value free, non-privileging, economics. Here Kothari moves toward the poststructural view which defines politics not as the competition over resources, but of the ways in which the world is ordered, more precisely the ways in which order is ordered. In this way caste is neither seen as apolitical, outside politics, nor is it seen as reactionary in the sense of

damaging class politics. Kothari also reminds us of jhat, the myriad associations, relationships, and lineages that are what is perceived as caste. The traditional category of varna rarely is intelligible. The question in India is what is your jhat not what is your varna.

Now Sarkar wants to replace caste and class with an alternative spiritual, socialist structure. His strategy for this is politics in the sense of creating an alternative discourse, perhaps even cosmology, and through his organizations creating a new society from concrete day-to-day living experiments in social reform. His history then can be seen as a way to delegitimize any particular power structure, to situate it in change, and thus damage its normalizing power. Thus, his various epochs. And thus, varna is varna and it is not varna.

Sarkar uses the various constructions of Indian history but attempts to develop a broader, more general overlay that consumes them. At the same time, he calls for a history that listens to the voices of the exploited and that tells the stories of the challenges humans faced. Finally, Sarkar reinterprets varna and uses it to develop a cyclical and linear theory of history. The prose of this theory constitutes the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

SARKAR'S PROSE OF HISTORY

We will now review Sarkar's The Human Society wherein he articulates his four-stage theory of history. For the reader that already has a sense of Sarkar's theory and the particular prose he uses to construct it, or who would rather personally read Sarkar's The Human Society, this review should be passed over. Our strategy here will be summarizing his theory with a special eye to the style: the language and the metaphors. In this regard we will quote extensively, letting Sarkar speak for himself.

MOVEMENT OR STASIS

As with the ancient Greeks, Sarkar starts with an analysis of motion asking which is fundamental, movement or stasis. He concludes that both are inextricably related to each other such that every entity (person or society or cosmos) goes through periods of motionless and then movement. True stability for the person is only possible once the roots of the mind (desire) have been extinguished. Within the world of relativity, however, every action is systaltic. Every movement has expansion and contraction phases; velocity and motionless. They are characteristics intrinsic to what-is. However, the relative world realizes itself not through achieving a state of total unity (pure consciousness) but through the relativity of movements. In this world of movement, true individuality is

impossible given the varied desires of other people, because of society; it is only possible in the spiritual world. The motivation or desire appears to be the real units of agency. For example, "The vibrational fluctuations of the resultant motivity of the various motivities that can well be called the motivity of the social order are somewhat shorter than those of the unity. It is this shortness thereof that paves the way for evolution or revolution" (Sarkar 1967, 6). Therefore, by increasing one's wave length of mind, one can cause change. One's identity changes. In addition, "When the waves of the unit mind lag behind those of the cosmic mind or move toward opposite directions, we call it the downfall of the unit. When they move at a par with the latter, we call it the natural movement of the unit-mind and when they travel faster than the latter, we call it advancement or progress" (Sarkar 1967, 5). For Sarkar, as we might expect given his situation in the Indian episteme, the universe has a natural flow; an internal movement toward cosmic consciousness. Vidya increases one's flow and avidya leads one against this internal flow. Spiritual practices increase the natural speed, while engrossments in the material world reduce the natural speed.

Just as humans die when there is no new vital flow during the pause phase--"the length of the state of motionless is adjudged as death only when the old structure is unable to hold and appropriate the vital force of motionless"(7)--societies die when there is a loss of identity between phases. Hence, Egyptian civilization died because of the overwhelming strength of the Islamic flow. And Islamic civilization expended its "energy" with the conquest of Egypt ("it had

to ingest the thoughtwaves of Egyptian culture") and thus could not conquer Europe. To maintain its own structure, it had to resolve the various cultural, political and economic conflicts that arose once it conquered Egyptian civilization. There was a period of pause which changed the Islamic flow.

The metaphor Sarkar uses to describe this process is that of the break or the spatial form of a series of rolling hills. Besides expansion and contraction, onward movement is based on pause. It is this rest that allows the next phase. There does not exist--except at the level of the infinite--any continuous uninterrupted linear straight line function. This is true for all levels of the real. For example, economic trends must follow a cyclical pattern in the Sarkarian metaphysical scheme. But the peaks and valleys of the cycles can be managed; for example, with respect to economic cycles while there are also periods of expansion and contraction, a depression is unnatural, symptomatic of a grave imbalance in the distribution of power, resources, capital and labor.

THE SHUDRA ERA

From his metaphysical assumptions, Sarkar takes the next step and describes the origin of his first collective psychology, his first way of knowing and viewing the real. This was the shudra mind, which must be distinguished from the shudra class of capitalist era where all the classes function economically as workers, although their mental posture might be different. In Sarkar's language, "When the waves of the unit mind try to maintain adjustment with the waves of crude

matter without attempting to assimilate them, the unit mind gradually becomes crudified" (Sarkar 1987b, 5: 1). The shudra mind is dominated by the material world and takes it to be the ultimate reality.

The Shudra society was a loose collection of individuals. "As conjugal relations were based on relationships of the enjoyer and the enjoyed, no sense of permanence or humanism was involved" (1). And:

Shudras live for material enjoyment. To put it plainly, the life of a Shudra is based essentially on gross materiality, preoccupied with sensual pleasures. Ideology and logic have little meaning for them. Of the three divisions of time--past, present, and future--only the present is important for them. They have neither the time nor the desire to think about the past or the future (2).

The main emotional characteristic is fear and the desire to gratify the sensual mind. Thus they follow animism and other forms or worship. "Like merciless nature, survival of the fittest is the main feature of the Shudra society, which recognizes no pit and compassion for the weak" (3).

This is a significantly different reading than those that argue that the past was a golden age of plentiful resources with little conflict, or a type of ancient pure communism. Rather, it is a world of individuals existing for themselves against the environment. Sarkar speaking about shudras in general paints them as a non-creative class, best suited for mechanical laborious work. However, society was not brutal.

Life was brute and non-intellectual. Nature was the direct abode and physical strength ruled the day. The strong enjoyed at the cost of the weak, who had to surrender before the voracity of the physical giants. However, the sense of acquisition had not developed in them and they worked manually and there was no intellectual exploitation in that age. Though life was brute, it was not brutal (Sarkar 1978a, 80). (emphasis added)

THE KSATTRIYA ERA

But the mind can also triumph over matter.

At the embryonic stage of the human race, when the sense of humanity arose out of animality, human beings...found only two paths open to them--the path of inertness through constant obsession with thoughts of materiality and the path of triumph of material[ity] and the path of Ksattriyahood (Sarkar 1987b, 5: 1).

Sarkar defines this mentality as one that conquers the environment. "Those even struggling individuals who have acquired the right to direct matter at will are called ksattriyas" (4). While a shudra stops in front of a mountain, a ksattriya will conquer it. What of the classes yet to emerge; how would they negotiate a mountain?

A vipra will chart it, explore, attempt to understand its relationship to rivers and built various theories of nature. A vaeshyan will see a resource in front of him or her and find ways to convert matter into more matter, to convert into resources that can be used for the future and for other types of matter--luxury items, for example. What is now commonly called economic development.

The ksattriyan sees only matter in front of him or her. Here Sarkar does not, as Western writers do, attempt to translate matter into its other form--military technology, whether the ax, the spear, the sword, the gun, the missile, or the nuclear warhead. Sarkar's history is not a technology-led theory.

All is matter in different forms which the warrior uses to control the world. But while ksattriyas engage in conquering, they did however begin the evolutionary development of humanity. Now how did the two classes relate to each other? "The greatness of the

ksattriyas--their prowess and valor--struck the shudras with wonder. The cowardly shudras of feeble intellect humbly submitted to the bravery and spiritedness of the ksattriyas and accepted their superiority" (5). But when order is formed there is an exchange of rights and duties, of hierarchy and solidarity. "The ksattriyas for their part took over the responsibility of the safety and protection of the shudras by virtue of their valour and got a lot of work from them" (5) in return.

The strength of the ksattriyan leads to the exchange of work for protection, for in this society protecting the distressed and dependent is of considerable honor. It gives value to the self and indeed is part of the construction of the self.

Protection for work was the basic social formation. At the top were those who had physical and technological power, the ability to make, in Sarkarian language, matter a slave of mind. In addition, this ordering of labor and group mind can be seen as natural considering the classic Indian episteme or the classic Western feudal arrangement. Sarkar's prose is a matter of fact story, not an analysis or hypothesis building, but written more from the perspective of a television docudrama of human history, except that within the Indian episteme, it is Sarkar as guru who is directly perceiving this historical narrative.

This evolutionary step is what Sarkar calls socio-psychic mutation. As with other places in his text, what this means (either through definition, comparison, analogy) remains unattempted. It

appears to refer more to the idea that a new field of behavior was developed from the level of the social to the level of the psychic.

Sarkar's ksattriyan era was first matriarchal and then patriarchal. This partially resulted from the development of the family, the decreased role of females and their consequent dependence on the male. Much of the emphasis on marriage resulted from the male desire to perpetuate the legacy of heroism and wealth accrued by the ksattriyans to their children. Phallic worship is a representation of this desire for an increased population largely so as to increase the number of potential soldiers. In later times, as viprans are apt to do, this symbol of fertility was reinterpreted in religious language and made to be a sign of purusa and prakrti; of shiva and shakti.

But while the greatest of the ksattriyan leaders are forever remembered (Alexander, Genghis Khan, Napoleon) shudras "come and go unnoticed and unsung, having little impact on life" (9). And while in his recent books, he comments that future history will be written around the common man, in this 1967 tract, he writes that "alive or dead they mean nothing to collective humanity" (9). Most of them are engaged in pursuits that privilege only themselves, they "look upon everything as an object for their own gratification and run after one and all with greedy eyes" (9). They will not impact the world and deservedly so for they only work and run after matter, never conquering it, or understanding it, nor using it to create more matter, to construct value. Sarkar certainly does not glorify the worker. Ksattriyan society brought them protection and a social order which stopped the anarchy of war, and even though power was

centralized, the quality of life, in many ways, improved. Indeed with every social order, Sarkar sees points of general good and areas of fantastic exploitation.

Now the development and numerical expansion of ksatriyas leads to the Ksatriyan era. This society is defined by its domination by those of Ksatriyan mind; Sarkar does not make problematic the issue whether the society as a whole is different from all its members, whether it consists incrementally of its members, or a function of group mind. We must turn to Pitrim Sorokin and other much more rigorous sociologists for clarification, but in defense of Sarkar, he believes his role is to present the general theory and leave it to the intellectuals--who delight in such tasks--to work out the analyses, the minor points. It is outside of the Indian construction that we must go to for a microscopic empirical analysis of macro-structures and functions. Even with the voluminous works of Aurobindo, there is little detail, little application of the general theory to specific "empirical" (in terms of the dominant discursive formation) historical events, trends and process. Minor details in Indian thought are ignored for more important are the fine philosophical points. And where there is fine historical detail it is outside of any grand theory framework.

Sarkar's varna can also be differentiated by how time is perceived. Shudras live only in the present while ksatriyas live in the past and present. "Without bothering their heads about the future repercussions of their deeds, they jump right into the licking flames of a fire, leap from the lofty precipice of a mountain and run in

pursuit of planets and their satellites with rockets" (10). The past serves as a feedback mechanism for future decisionmaking: it provides them with inspiration and a record against which they must seek revenge. Viprans exist in all three times, past, present and future. But the future time of the vipran is different from the future time of the vaeshyan. For the vipran the future is often transcendental: always ideological, related to the Idea. For the vaeshyan, the future is related to resources, to investments and to savings. In fact, it is the ability of the vaeshyan to use the future, to commodify it, that gives him or her superiority over the other types.

But returning to the Ksattriyan era, Sarkar argues that government administration grew from the clan Father to the king so as to avoid internecine battles. The final centralization of this development is what Toynbee has called the universal state: one ruler, highly disciplined, with a strong emphasis on territorial expansion. Because the world is at the end of the vaeshyan era, Sarkar can but predict a new global superstate with expansion in two areas: outerspace and innerspace.

The dictatorships of present "communist" societies in this theory are seen as prototypes of the original clan Father and then later King structure. Whether the world government of the future will be of this type is unclear although Sarkar's preferred sadvipra society is closer to an oligarchy.

This ancient Ksattriyan society was significant for Sarkar in that it was the first unified social system with its own logic. And

like other social systems the elite of the system continued to uphold and expand the system long after its evolutionary use.

Through this system perhaps the chariot of rapacity may tread upon the weak with unabated speed, perhaps the hunger of millions of people may provide opportunities for one person to live in plenty and abundance, or perhaps instead of fraternal relations between human beings the relationship of rulers and ruled may be established, but nevertheless it is a system after all. Regardless of its merits and demerits, it is the characteristic of the ksattriyas to try and make it stand (15).

THE VIPRA ERA

From the Ksattriyan era grew the Vipran era.

Ksattriyas want to rush forward with an all-conquering attitude. In ignorance they challenge their opponents to battle without ascertaining the strength of the adversaries, with the result they often have to leave the world prematurely, mauled and mangled. The history of the ksattriyas is one of blood not of the light of intelligence. In that history there is valour, high spiritedness and gallantry, but not clarity of vision or wisdom--not the support of any subtle intellect. That is way after the continuation of the Ksattriya age for some time, intellectuals began to control the ksattriyas by dint of their keen intellect. Persons of intellect told the ksattriyas to look where they had never turned their eyes before, and kept explaining to them what they had never understood (16). (emphasis added)

Eventually power passed on to the hands of the viprans from the ksattriyans. There was a change in varna and concomitantly in the elite. Through mythification--by creating truth claims in which Brahmins were to be worshipped--the vipras consolidated their power. According to Sarkar, even when monarchs ruled, most often it was the chief minister who held real power. The kings were mere puppets while normative power was in the hands of the intellectuals. For example in Indian history, Chandragupta was a puppet to his minister Canakya. The polity was divided into two: the religious order and monarchical

structure. Power was transferred, although not so obviously, for much of the wealth remained with various kings. Kings that tried to exert their previous powers were removed by the vipras.

This transfer was as in all transfer of powers--in Sarkar's worldview--one where the previous varna had no idea of the horrors ahead.

The most amusing part of [the Peripheric Evolution, the cycle] is that after the unprincipled Shudra age when the Ksatriya age came into being, the Shudras took this as a great blessing. The brutal side of the ksatriyas or the image of their rapacious exploitation did not enter their vision. Similarly, when all the power of the ksatriyas was sold to the vipras, at the time the ksatriyas did not even realize that they were being sold and that they were gradually getting changed to slavery. And then again in a later period when the vipras sold themselves to the pelf of the vaeshyas--when Sarasvatii (the mythologically goddess of learning) was made a slave of Lakshmi (the mythological goddess of wealth)--the vipras at first did not realize that their value was going to be measured in terms of money (17).

The next era uses what appears to the strength of the previous as its weakness.

The power of speech and intelligence of the vipras are much subtler than the physical strength of the ksatriyas, and that is why the vipras do not find any difficulty in enslaving the ksatriyas brawn by circumstantial pressures. Those who establish themselves by a blatant display of power are sure to have vanity. This weakness of the ksatriyas derived from power was employed by the vipras to their advance through their intelligence (19). (emphasis added)

This use of opposites is echoed in the Mahabharata. "Alas, having defeated the enemy, we have ourselves been defeated ... The ...defeated have become victorious ... Misery appears like prosperity, and prosperity looks like misery, Thus our victory is twined into defeat" (Nandy 1987, 20). In this way, although Sarkar's history is at one level intended to be a true representation of the real, it is

also a moral educational tract reminding those in and out of power that success is but the last rung on the ladder of failure (Batra 1988). Power, in this classical view is short lived, for it is of this world, of the ego, of avidya. Ephemeral.

Thus Sarkar's cycle. Each collective mind is dominant, a new way of knowing the world evolves which changes the various social, political, economic and power relations and while solving a particular problem--the need for order, the need for victory, the need for understanding, and the need for wealth--the previous classes or classes are then enslaved in the new order. The need for justice then begins the cycle anew. As the cycle progresses, the next new Ksattriyan era keeps the same structure as the previous one since the basic collective mental structure is the same--expansion oriented, disciplined, dualistic--but now that it is at the next level of the cycle, it keeps the learning of the previous cycles with it. As an example, communist nations have a strong sense of the future, a carry over from the vipran and vaeshyan eras, as well as a result of the ideological impact of a vipran ideology. In this regard although some things change, the deeper structure remains the same.

Although Sarkar gives some indications how each era transforms into the next era, his use of terms such as the ksattriyas or the vipras does not make necessary distinctions within the varna between the different types of vipras. Differences such as leaders versus followers, artists versus teachers, groups and individuals who have more than one mental wave, more relevant to him is simply the distinction between vidya and avidya intellectuals, that is, the moral

discourse, not the social science discourse. His distinctions between a ksatriya and the ksatriyas or ksatriya leadership and finally the structure of ksatriyan society remain undeveloped. Another question unanswered is at what level do various individuals represent the true varna. While these questions must certainly be contextualized by the Indian episteme--impersonal agency, use of opposites and dialectics in the sense of the strong points becoming the weak points; victors become vanquished--unfortunately Sarkar remains unclear even in his own terms of theory as an asset for spiritual and social development.

Sarkar's chapter on the Vipran era takes up most of the narrative of his The Human Society. Instead of physical struggle there is mental struggle. But society is not totally ideational in this world although the real would certainly be described in mystical, absolutist terms, to once again borrow from Sorokin. Rather, as with every other varna, there are numerous aspects to each class. Vipras want to enjoy the glory of victory as well, but they also find ways to place the ignominy of defeat on to others.

In addition, "the ego of vipras" (Sarkar 1987b, 5: 20) leads it to sensuous enjoyment and the accruing of material wealth. However this is not the end all for them, they also wish to amass psychic resources. But while some vipra's develop a pinnacled intellect; that is, one that touches the spiritual realm and is thus inventive and can be progressive, "most vipras are parasites, busily engaged in amassing objects of enjoyment with the help of others' crude strength'" (21). The path of the intellectual is not direct as it is with the other previous varnas; rather it is crooked and hypocritical with very

little honor. Indeed here Sarkar faithfully follows the classic Gita degeneration of morality theme. Dishonesty increases in every era until it reaches its apex in the Vaeshyan era. Following its advent in the origination of the Ksattriyan era, there is a regressive decline of basic goodness until a shudra revolution reinstates honesty, thereby beginning the cycle again.

While the ksattriyas enter into an exchange relationship with the workers, and enslave those whom they conquer, the vipras continue their unbalanced--overly intellectual life--"by sucking the vital juice of others like parasites" (23). Just as increased use of physical powers develops the body, increased use of mental power develops the mind. However, in the case of vipras this only increases their parasitical tendencies. While in the beginning there is an openness to ideas, by the end any broad mindedness is totally lost. The Ksattriyan go from protectors to enslavers, the vipras from the pinnacled intellect (benevolent) to the parasitical intellect.

In between Sarkar's exegesis of the Vipran era, Sarkar develops what might from an empirical perspective be considered possible indicators. His thesis is that there are people who truly represent their varna, who are really intellectuals and then there are the intellectuals who come to that position because of heredity. This is the same for the other classes as well. Thus at the end of each era, there develops an increased number of false ksattriyas, vipras and vaeshyas. "The ksattriyas and vipras...realized that since nothing in the world is unchangeable, their predominance will also come an end some day due to their lack of capability" (24). That is why the

classes "give more importance to hereditary rights than personal merit and individual capacity" (24). For Sarkar, kings desire their sons to keep power, intellectuals want their descendents to command respect and power, and corporate heads want their families to continue the tradition notwithstanding the personal merits of the individuals. Each, of course, uses his class site to privilege offspring. But eventually the true representation of varna declines. Ibn Khaldun --whom we will feature in the following chapter--observed the same phenomena. Speaking to what Sarkar would call the Ksattriyan era, he argued that over time the royal power would weaken exceedingly. By the fourth generation, the unity and solidarity derived from the struggle with the elements had turned to laziness and expectation of power without the consequent training and correct mental framework. At this point the dynasty is weakened from within or taken over from outside. While Sarkar does not speak of decline within ksattriyan or viprans cycles, clearly he is speaking to the same phenomena--the decline of a particular power elite, ruling elite. Once varna becomes caste, that is, reified, then the cycle must rotate for oppression peaks. Thus:

it is impossible for these unworthy people to preserve their power. These were the opportune times when power passed from the ksattriyas to the vipras and later on, from the vipras to the vaeshyas. And when the predominance of the oppressive vaeshyas became intolerable in the society, the general mass opened up a new chapter of the social cycle through direct revolution (24).

Returning to possible indicators, Batra has argued that since the collapse of the US markets in 1929, the capitalist economy has been saved for its natural shudra evolution or revolution by these fake vaeshyans, intellectuals who use the theories to continue a system

that is bound to end. They have simply prolonged the process by more than a half century. But as we learn from his The Downfall of Capitalism and Communism, this elongation of destiny is about to end with the next stage ready to erupt. One can look at history for indicators of a passing on of power from the founder, or as Ssu-Ma Chien (Watson 1958) has called the sage-king to the tyrant. From the Buddha to the Sangha or the routinization of charisma to use Weberian language (Etzioni and Etzioni-Halevy 1973). For Sarkar this degradation of power, this degeneration of natural varna to a false consciousness is inexorable and unstoppable. The role of the sadvipra is to intervene at this time and revolutionize the cycle, such that order, invention and wealth creation are maximized and enslavement, dogma, commodification minimized.

Now, Sarkar is clear in not oversimplifying these classifications. Just because a particular locale is moving through the vipra era does not mean there is no territorial expansion. Rather:

the vipras, being fully aware of their physical and mental weaknesses, allure them with food and money, or with slogans of hollow idealism, and force them into a war of immense destruction. Thus, in the Vipra-predominant age, the ksattriyas meet a tragic death while the diplomatic Vipra ministers get triumphant ovations (Sarkar 1987b, 5: 25).

To Sarkar "history is not concerned with how many soldiers died in the battle field or how many people while facing the cannons saw their golden dreams fade into darkness" (25). But when the political leader dies, "flags are flown at half mast, and marble statues are erected at important points in public parks" (25).

Sarkar's language for these types of intellectuals is direct and from the moral discourse. "All the great war-mongers, the pompous

politicians of the world belong to this satanic brood of Vipras"(25).

This is especially true today in the vaeshyan era.

These wicked vipras, these agents sheltering under the capitalist vaeshyas, have lead and are leading millions of people along the path of death and destruction. These fiendish vipras continue to offer oblations into the firepit of the vaeshyas' demonic lust. Neither the shudra mass nor the warring ksattriyas are responsible for the plight of millions of homeless refugees around the world, or the piercing cries of the mothers, wives and children of the soldiers killed in battle, or the licking flames of communal and racial riots, or the sectarianism, provincialism, nationalism and casteism prevalent today (25).

He continues: "The responsibility lies with the vipran diplomats who, out of petty selfishness, have instigated such monstrous brutalities. This meanness, this fiendishness of theirs, makes a mockery of their intellect as it stages the devil's dance in the graveyard" (26).

Sarkar's site of discourse again is clear.

Surprising then that Buddha Prakash can speak about this age not as the age of Kali but that of progressive activity. And it is not so surprising that Sarkar can conclude that humans have failed at building a decent society in the past few thousands years; that real progress is only possible in the spiritual realm given the human tendencies to violate others.

Viprans then come in various guises: many as priests, some as philosophers, some as diplomats, and presently many as technocrats. Particularly in India, Sarkar asserts that appropriating the world after death, they increased their income in the material world. It was this that Marx objected to, religion used to sedate the masses. The creation of mantras, gods and demons all served to empower the vipras. However, at the same time the belief that "service to the

vipras was the stepping stone to the attainment of celestial bliss" (31) was "instrumental in the stability and building of a society" (31).

The creation of order and unity are central to Sarkar's notion of the good, although they must be contextualized by neo-humanism, yet order through history creates during the Vipran era, for example the possibility for spiritual development and internal inspiration.

Those shudras, ksattriyas or vaeshyas [and vipras] who trod the subtler path gave spiritual inspiration to the human race and molded spiritual philosophy. From this group genuine Sadvipras had emerged in the past, emerge in the present and will continue to emerge in the future. While criticizing the vipras we must not forget that the pinnacle of mental development, human fraternity, universal outlook and material development [or the ingredients of a complete ideology once we add a dominant text and spiritual leader] were the outcome of the Vipra era (32).

However, notwithstanding some bright moments, most philosophical treatises were mere justifications for privilege. Humanism did not increase, and most importantly the position of females declined dramatically. While in the Ksattriyan era, especially the first part of it, women were equal to men, by the Vipran era they are but servants becoming mere objects of male enjoyment. They lost their spiritual privileges, their role as clan mothers and their role as intellectuals. According to Sarkar, this was the beginning of prostitution. "Few keep count of the millions of women who wept and sobbed themselves to death in the darkness of many a sleepless night. They were leveled flat like the soft earth under the administrative steamroller of the vipras" (37). All rights were stripped from females, while only a few females managed to regain some rights. Elsewhere, Sarkar has argued that females themselves gave certain

privileges and rights to men in a sacred bond of trust that was immediately violated. To regain them, force is necessary for "nobody gives anybody rights on a platter. One has to establish one's rights by dint of one's own force and power" (35).

In Sarkar's entire historical scheme each varna creates a new order and then spend its energy maintaining that structure. "Whoever wanted to make large or small changes in the social structure [female or male] in the interests of the people, only broke their heads against the hard rocks of the social edifice or had to hammer its strong walls with their clenched fists" (37). While the oppressed greeted these reformers, the ruling elite were less amenable. Among those who attempted to recreate this order, Sarkar mentions Krishna, Buddha, Mahaviira, Mohammed, Mahaprabhu Caetanya, Rammohan Roy and Ishvarchandra Vidyasagar. All these leaders attempted to overthrow the vipran order; they all attempted to increase the rights of minorities, females, the elderly; and each tried to develop not the principle of egoism but that of social equality. The result was that each was brutally attacked. "Even personalities like Lenin, Bernard Shaw, M.N. Roy and others, who have been regarded as modern moral leaders were subjected to severe criticism and false propoganda for their revolt against prevalent dogmas and superstitions" (39). At these times, when a new ideology emerges, the usual lack of unity among vipras transforms to a unity against the new ideology. They support social change unless their own class is threatened, then they attack mercilessly. Each new vipran group oppresses the new. For example:

In the Medieval Age fanatic Catholics uses to burn non-Catholics or infidels alive. Many an obstinately orthodox Mulla or Muslim priest decreed that killing a Kafir or infidel was not a sin. The orthodox Sanatanists, a section of Hindus, tried to murder Lord Buddha. During the reign of Bimbisar, power Buddhist monks used to oppress the Hindus. Both the Hindu Brahmins and the Moslem Mullas were equally spiteful of Mahatma Kavir" (61).

But Sarkar is not disheartened by this; rather he resorts to karma and the moral discourse in giving relief from his history of the betrayal of human dreams. While Sarkar was in jail he wrote this 1977 New Year's Day message: "The struggle between the good and evil forces terminate in the latter's rout. This you have seen, are seeing, and will see as well (Anandamurti 1982, 43). And:

The humans of today are possessed of spirited intellect and accomplished wisdom. They are keen to advance with rapid steps shattering the shackles of dogmas. They will no longer be entrapped by an illusion of opportunism. The rays of a crimson dawn of a new humanity on the eastern horizon have started weaving textures of colors on their eyelids and in the finer cores of their minds. For those who have been dreaming so far to keep humankind imprisoned by dogmas, their days are numbered, their blissful dreams are being shattered to pieces (Anandamurti 1982, 48).

For Sarkar there are real principles in history, among them is the hypothesis that every new ideology is tested and if it survives this challenge, it flourishes. At the same time the lesson from the history of vipras is clear as well. Each new vipran ideology destroys the old order and then often creates a new one that degenerates until a new order is created. It is the rise and fall of truth, shall we say. Sorokin (1970) would say it differently. Each truth is only a part of the real. Over time it exaggerates and that which is denied then affirms itself. Thus society becomes overly ideational, next after becoming dualistic; it exaggerates, becomes materialistic and returns to ideational.

The control of truth is how vipras privilege themselves and their world.

"Where intellectual and technical literature failed to convince the general people of the greatness of the vipras, they produced a countless number of awe-inspiring, colorful legends ... warning the people at the same time that non-observance or questioning their truth would inevitably land them in a frightful inferno (Sarkar 1987b, 5: 41).

The real was represented not at the level of physical, but as an expression of the world of Idea. Food, instead of providing basic needs or strength, became an offering for the Gods. And of course "a sizeable part of the offering destined for the sacrificial fire found their way into the coffers of the vipras" (42). This is what Sarkar in his later writings would call psycho-exploitation.

Psycho-exploitation leads to the construction of a self that perceives its own self as inferior to the superior self of the dominator. This to him is far more deadly than the classic economic exploitation, for it is the psychic exploitation that keeps the other classes from rising and overthrowing the ruling class. This psychological exploitation is essentially cultural exploitation. As Sarkar has written in his The Liberation of Intellect: Neo Humanism: "It is proper for human beings to struggle for political freedom, for social emancipation; but if their cultural backbone is broken, then all their cultural struggles will end in nothing" (Sarkar 1983, 55). God was put forth in discourse as a way to accumulate cultural and ideological power; the interpreter of this sign becoming then the authoritative sign, from which only he could grant limitless "celestial bliss ..or the horror of endless perdition in hell" (Sarkar 1987b, 5:43).

However, in the previous Ksattriyan era God was constructed differently.

The ksattriyans ... religiousity were the result of their infatuation for greater and great acquisition and expansion. In other words, they thought that by having faith in God they would receive a lot of the world's wealth for their gratification. ...The vipras ... thought spirituality would give them such uncommon powers that they would be able to grant boons to the people and do good to those who would give them a fat share of their wealth. The vipras thought spirituality would earn them the power of cursing and harming people and that people would offer baskets brimming with commodities at their feet for their enjoyment out of fear and devotion" (58).

In Sarkar's reading, "God bore the footmarks of the vipras on His chest" (59).

In addition, each class tries to build memorials to itself in the hope of stepping outside of time, space and person/observer. However, for vipras, they are often unrecognized in their particular era.

Sarkar explains this by asserting that

"attraction towards the old is inherent in human beings, so whenever any new thing is presented or introduced by any vipra genius, the rest of humanity ... cannot take it with equanimity. They cannot adjust with such a new rhythm of movement. In fact, they stick to their old strain" (46).

Thus the attacks on new intellectual ideals.

But intellectuals exist in different spheres of time. Past, present, future and transcendental time. Most, however, exist in the past and in the transcendental future. In addition, they excel at creating philosophies that privilege the mind. But again there are moments of genius. For Sarkar, these moments include government by constitution and creation of societal discipline based on universal concepts of morality. Efforts to move rule back to the ksattriyan kings were, as we might expect from Sarkar's grand theory, counter

evolutionary or counter revolutionary. The era of centralized government cannot come again until after the shudra revolution or evolution.

The Vipran era is less unified and less disciplined than the social formation of the Ksattriyan era. However, vipran society has greater social ideals (albeit not followed) and greater individualism. But there are more wars in the Vipran era.

The great wars and bloodshed that took place in the world as the result of the Ksattriyan lust for domination waft into insignificance before those that took place in the Medieval Age at the direct or indirect incitement and instigation of the vipras, the standard bearers of faiths and religions (54).

For these wars are fought without the traditional Ksattriyan rules and conventions.

A veritable stream of blood flows in the world, but not even a scratch bruises the body of the vipra ... vipran history is one of ingenious treachery. In that history there is intensity of intelligence but not nobility. Their ... cowardice and ingratitude--and also cleverness--are fouled with the stench of selfishness" (63).

THE VAESHYA ERA

But this cowardice and more importantly, this desire for subsistence without labor "eventually turned them into parasites of the vaeshyas" (59). Accompanying this desire for wealth without labor was overconfidence.

Overconfident of their own presence of mind, the vipras do not take the future into account, and so there is hardly any effort on their part for accumulation. They think that conditions will continue according to tradition. But this overconfidence becomes the cause of their own ruin. When real danger comes, their presence of mind fails to cope with it and they have to sell themselves to anyone having any kind of means and resources. With the capital of their wealth, the vaeshyas of lesser intelligence start bossing the vipras (64).

But there is another reason as well for the development of the next era, Sarkar's version of social evolution. "During the Vipra-predominant era those who used to lose in the battle of wits, valour and physical abilities, tried to find some other way for their self-preservation and the establishment of their prestige in the society" (81). That is, they constructed a self that would still meet basic needs of recognition. "The special kind of emotional clash which these efforts awakened in their minds was responsible for the development of their money-making intellect" (81). Thus, with the other avenues of success closed, various individuals opted for money making and then in times of crises, the very intellectuals who had humiliated them, had to go to them for loans and jobs.

The last reason for the development of the next era is again intrinsic to the vipran mind.

Intellectual development and discourse can hardly foot the bill in the world of reality. The vaeshyan finance does somehow solve the problem and the vipras get an opportunity to go about their vocations with a light heart. But vaeshyas never invest without self-interest. Their ulterior motive is to establish themselves over society, and this brings about the end of the Vipran era (66). (emphasis added)

Sarkar does not resort to external variables to explain the transition into the next era. It is not new technologies that create a new wealthy elite that can control the vipras, rather it is a fault within the viprans themselves. Moreover, it is not that they did not meet a new challenge, they did not as Toynbee would write, respond appropriately. Rather, Sarkar's reasoning is closer to Khaldun and other ancient/classical philosophers. They create a theoretical world, use it to take care of their needs, but when changes come, they

are not prepared for they themselves have degenerated. These changes might be the technological (new inventions, discoveries of resources, lands and labor) but they are not the significant variables, rather it is the mindset of the vipran him or herself that leads to his or her downfall. The new era proceeds from the previous on. Indeed Sarkar places the discoveries which one might commonsensically associate with the Vipran era in the Vaeshyan era, for the intellectuals who create these new wonders are but workers for the accumulators of capital. "They are mostly dependent on the pittance of the vaeshyas for food and clothing" (66). Or as Marx and Engles would say it, "The Bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-laborers" (Marx and Engles 1975, 36). Indeed, much of the section about the Vaeshyan era is reminiscent of The Communist Manifesto. The style and the content of the prose are remarkably alike.

The vaeshyans keep their power through the very forces of the previous eras. In Sarkar's words "The funny part of it is that the vaeshyas, buying the vital force of the ksattriyas and the intellectual force of the vipras on the strength of their money, establish themselves with the help of these very forces and thus keep the ksattriyas and vipras enslaved for a long time" (Sarkar 1987, 5: 71).

With capital, the vaeshyans dominate the viprans, and the viprans use their efforts to aid the vaeshyans in amassing wealth. The

intellect and methods for "the evasion of taxes, blackmarketing, smuggling, adulteration of food and medicine or inflating figures of profit by bribes" (64) are provided by the intellectuals. "In the vaeshya predominant society such vipras, like the shudras and the ksatriyas are nothing but sequacious hacks and drudges" (64).

In the new era the intellect of the vipra remains active, but not for its own class, but for the creation and development of theories that aid the capitalist class. "So the very day when the vipras submit to the vaeshyas, the Vipra age dies, though not the vipras themselves. The blood-sucking vaeshyas get volumes of philosophical books written and truth tackfully and artfully perverted and distorted with the help of the paid vipras" (65). The main role of the intellectual then becomes system justification. "Attempts are made to portray those who oppose the vaeshyas for their self-preservation as base and vile wretches" (65).

Thus the cycle continues: exploiter becomes exploited. But with the advent of the vaeshyan there are now three classes to use against each other, to extract different types of labor.

How does Sarkar define the vaeshyan? While the other classes might want to enjoy matter, the vaeshyan wants to accumulate it. They want to possess matter. But not just matter, they want to possess the other classes and individuals, not just as tools for production, but as objects for their own pleasures. However, the vaeshyan does not use theoretical schemes in his or her appropriation of matter, unlike the vipra who must first theoretically justify. The intellect of the vaeshya sees the world through the eyes of avarice and greed. "They

even look at the mental and spiritual world through the eyes of the trader" (75). There is little desire to develop the pinnacled intellect, rather at best their religiousity is derived from a fear of God, a carry over from the previous era.

Sarkar places this description in the language of Indian metaphysics. The vaeshyan are rajasik and tamasik; meaning they are active and inert. They are defined as active because of their efforts and inert because of their focus on matter, the environment. But the location of agency is not the individual but the mind which is immanent in self and environment, in the social ecology. For Sarkar once the money making intellect is developed, it has its own logic.

For money they can sacrifice all scruples about vice and virtue, right and wrong in a moment. Thus in order to save [the other classes] their money, the only prop of their influence and authority, must be snatched away from. It would, however, be wrong to suppose that by dispossessing the vaeshyas of all their money, the problems will be solved. Inspite of their being divested of all their money, their money-making intellect will still remain (77). (emphasis added)

Thus, the alternative for Sarkar is to create a social structure in which their intellect can be channeled and not used to exploit the other groups in society.

The exploitation that began thousands of years ago continues even more forcefully in the Vaeshyan era: honesty and other values defined by the ancients continue to degenerate, unity continues to decrease, excessive wealth leads to "debauchery on one hand" (79) and "poverty forces women" to prostitution on the other (80). The level of exploitation takes an astronomical jump in the Vaeshyan era. "Social humanism gradually fades from their minds as they turn into bloodsucking leeches"(81). And: "In the history of struggle, if the

role of the vipras is one of parasitic dependence on others ... the vaeshyas are murderous parasites of the social who want to kill the main tree by sucking out all its sap" (78). They are thus in contradiction with their own goals; to prosper they must exploit, but eventually they destroy the entire system, thus making exploitation impossible. But like the intellectuals, the capitalists know that they are parasites. As the Vaeshyan era continues, "they grow desperate under the intoxicating spell of accumulation" (81). They "bloat their stomachs with the vital juices of others ... forming a vicious circle of their own" (79). What can one expect but "a horrid picture of hell" (79). Or, elsewhere, as Marx has written, "veiled by religious and political illusions, [the bourgeoisie] has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation" (Marx and Engles 1975, 36).

For the vaeshyas the preferred governmental system is democracy. Under a democracy, the economy is easier to control as are the other classes. In a democracy the vaeshyans use the viprans to get themselves elected. Under a dictatorship or an imperialistic administration, the populace will support the leader as long as "they do not do anything serious against the public interest" (Sarkar 1987b, 5: 64). Thus, for Sarkar no political system is intrinsically better than any other one. Primary is varna, the dominant discourse, the way of dealing with the world. Now during the Vaeshyan era nationalism emerges. This is not the centralized monarchy of the ksatriyan era, nor the vipran ideology of the nation-state, but rather a global economic imperialism, which Wallerstein (1983) and others have called

the world capitalist system. One world economy with many nation-states, with capitalists using the nation-state for advancing their own accumulation projects or denying access to other capitalists. In this system, "the boot-licking vipras wield sufficient authority," (67) but for Sarkar the finance minister is always a true vaeshyan. The intellectuals remain as planners and as civil servants, but the accumulation and accounting of wealth goes to one who is first of all an accumulator of wealth, not ideas.

And when intellectuals organize to change the system through the use of the divide and rule strategy, they are kept in their place. The rebel intellectuals are defeated by the intellectuals who work for the capitalists and by the military and police force of the capitalist state.

Here Sarkar departs from the classic Hindu image of the the vipra as the head, the shudras as the feet and the ksatriya as the arms, by placing the vaeshya not as the thighs but as outside the person or machine. They provide the machine with energy and then extract labor from it. It exists to perform labor and can be thrown away once the capitalist is tired of it.

Just as power is controlled by the elite of the particular varna, the responsibilities are also theirs.

Whatever ills are perpetrated in the society are in a great measure created by the vaeshyas themselves. To fatten their bank balances, the vaeshyas create an artificial scarcity of consumer goods such as food, clothes, etc. and make huge profits in the black market. Those who cannot afford to buy high priced food and clothes are forced to steal and commit armed robbery and through other shady ways to meet their basic requirements (79).

Again, this passage is Marxian. "In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity--the epidemic of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism" (Marx and Engles 1975, 40). But it is not the capitalists who are apprehended for any illegalities. "The rich vaesyans slip though the trap on the strength of their wealth" (Sarkar 1987b, 5: 7).

Things to the vaeshyan have no--what Sarkar calls--practical value. They have accumulation or hoarding value. The practical value of things decreases as the Vaeshyan era continues: money loses its mobility and the disparity of wealth continues to increase. "The vaeshyas are always in a minority because worldly wealth is accumulated by the few at the cost of the many" (76) Eventually, of course, "when these bands of slaves [the other varnas] [are] unable to tolerate the exploitation any more, [they] desperately leap into a revolt," (76) and the Vaeshyan era ends. "It takes a long time for the downtrodden mass to realize that the vaeshyas are the parasites of society, and that is why a tremendous effort is needed to sound the death bell of the Vaeshya era" (76).

It takes a long time due to several reasons. First, real wealth is created by the capitalists. "Whenever efforts are made to raise the living standard in national, economic and social life, capital becomes a necessity whether it comes from within the country or from outside" (83). Wealth must have a controller. This is the vaeshya. If it is used appropriately, it can increase the standard of living

for everyone; if it is dominated by the state or the individual or the corporation, then only a few will gain.

In addition to the economic advance of the developed countries, the system is difficult to dismantle because it has taken the vaeshyas a long time to build it. Thus, "under such circumstances, to expect that they can be moved by entreaties and supplications or that they will suddenly take the path of the renunciate wearing nothing but a loin cloth is utter lunacy" (87). Thus, for instance, for Sarkar the absurdity of the Indian Bhudan movement.

Third is the ability of capitalists to give to charities so as to satisfy various interest groups. Fourth is the development of the fake vaeshyas. These are intellectuals who are influenced by the capitalists and work to keep the capitalist system going.

They drag out the vaeshya legacy to the last days of vaeshya dominance, [but] they end in utter ignominy and humiliation. In order to carry on with their rapacity unchecked and uncurbed, they also try to employ all other intellectual endowments, apart from their economic intellect, for economic exploitation, and finally even seize the power of the state by whatever means necessary. ...The entire society gets pulverized under that cruel grinding machines (82).

To save money for their descendants, they not only continue to exploit the entire society, "but also hoard large amounts of unutilized capital" (82). Obviously, Sarkar is talking about intellectuals such as Ferdinand Marcos. Finally, it is arduous to succeed in this revolution as one must defeat the vaeshyans and their various followers in the other classes. "Those who want to strike a blow at the vaeshyan framework have to confront all three vaeshyan slaves, the vipras, the ksattriyas and shudras" (88). For example, the vipras now exploit others for themselves and for the vaeshyans as

well. Thus, the ideology of fatalism, and thus comments according to Sarkar by Marx against religion, for he understood that it had made them "impotent and dispirited by instigating them to submit to a vicious circle" (89).

But while the opposition is stronger, so is the suppression. It is stronger because it takes more effort to maintain the structure. To maintain the ancient ksattriyan social formation all that was needed was superior physical strength and then allegiance from other warriors. Now in subsequent ksattriyan eras instead of simply physical strength other factors come into play: numerical strength and the use of military/police are more significant and eventually technological strength in terms of offensive and defensive weapons are critical. The move from the ancient Ksattriya era to the Vipra era was natural in that they, the ksattriyas, to continue the structure of dominance had to learn new skills. The Hero had to go to the sage and later the strategist. "Subsequently, this learning was not confined to use of arms only and extended to other spheres, such as battle craft, medicine and forms of organization and administration, so essential for ruling any society" (Sarkar 1978b, 2: 136). The dependence on intellectual strength led to real power passing on to a new class which eventually becomes aware that it is a class, albeit it fights among itself in the arenas of religion, philosophy or ideology. But intellectual exploitation is more difficult to maintain as the intellect can easily develop through equal access to knowledge centers. Thus, the development of caste systems, feudal systems, and other "false consciousness" schemata to maintain power. For Sarkar,

this continued extraction of wealth and Self resulted in the development of communities which dealt only in goods. Eventually producers and traders became the ruling elite. This abstraction is even easier to learn and thus requires greater effort to maintain its structure. Indeed, ideology and military are necessary to maintain the economic structure for without it, labor would work for itself not for capital. In each case the ruling elite becomes smaller and smaller with the worker base of capitalism being the largest and the monied top the smallest. At this phase all become shudras in terms of economic class, even if in terms of mental wave they are distinct. Again as Marx would say.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proleteriat (Marx and Engles 1975, 33).

But this vaeshyan exploitation finally ends. "The oppressed and tortured people who are reluctant to succumb to such a ignominious death rise in revolt. The shudra revolution [thus] takes place during the period dominated by the dishonest vaeshyas" (Sarkar 1987b, 5: 82). Possibly because of the concentration of wealth even the capitalists have a difficult time earning money. Thus, "the vitality of the Ksatriyan era surrenders to the intellectuality of the Vipran era, and the intellectuality of the Vipran era gets lost in the monetary figures of the Vaeshya era,"(83) which gets overthrown once all the other classes have become shudras by economic class. While the evolutionary model is by definition more gradual, the shudra revolution is violent and dysjunctive.

They become desperate and one day they, the blind, conscience-shorn, mind-bereft public pitilessly break the Vaeshyan edifice to pieces. They do not contemplate the whys and hows of their act, nor how the society will be reconstructed after the destructive uprising. They leap into struggle merely for self-existence. They think that since they cannot live at all, let the end of life come nearer. During this reckless revoltion the mental state of the vipras, vaeshyas and ksattriyas remains the same. It is then useless to expect any humanism from them (85).

Or again in Marx' words. "They direct their attacks...against the instruments of production themselves; they destroy imported wares that compete with their labor, they smash to pieces machinery, they set factories ablaze..." (Marx and Engles 1975, 43).

This then is the shudra revolution where the cycle, the wheel, rotates forward once again, and so returns to the Shudra era. At this point among the objections, the obvious one is that revolutions do not always occur when is exploitation its at its peak. There are other variables; for example, the argument that revolutions occur when there are collective unmet expectations, a change in needs; frustrated expectations. Galtung, among others, argues that "revolutions are structurally conditioned but not predetermined," (Galtung 1978c, 3: 313). For him,

The idea is that true revolutions are directed against vertical interaction and feudal interaction structures, that they have their origin among the groups that are most highly frustrated by these structures [workers, peasants, females, barbarians, outcastes], the rank disequilibrated groups and certain segments of underdog groups, the organization of either and of the contact between them is indispensable, and once these conditions are present then non-structural factors such as ideology, charismatic leader, frustrated expectations, precipitating incidents and new cooperation patterns, will be among the final ingredients sparking off the revolution (313).

While this is not the place to develop his thesis, the main point is that Sarkar's theory initially appears to be overly simple. While one might defend it by arguing that Sarkar is speaking from far above, sighting the large waves, the vast movements of ideas and structures and epistemes, nonetheless, severe exploitation is not a useful predictor of revolution.

But Sarkar is sensitive to such criticisms. For Sarkar, oppression, as defined by poverty, inferiority complexes, and the inability to realize the true self, are necessary factors, but not sufficient factors. In his words, "it would be futile to expect the revolution just because it was the ripe time. Conditions relating to place and person are also important factors" (Sarkar 1987b, 6: 1). These conditions are the various variables that Marx and other sociologists have attempted to describe.

In the last chapter of his Human Society, Sarkar does give us two social indicators. These are the viksubdha shudra, or the discontented workers. These are the labor leaders, the intellectuals who are trying to dismantle the system, Gramsci's organic intellectuals, or the value oriented intellectuals the American Right finds utterly distasteful. They are the vipras and ksatriyas who have been forced into a laborer existence and are self-conscious of their class.

...revolution will be brought about by vipra-minded and ksatriya-minded shudras, and for this a lot of effort and preparation will have to be made by them, They will have to suffer a lot, sacrifice a lot and fight against the opposing groups and doctrines. ...The vanguard of revolution, the ksatriya-minded or vipra-minded shudras will have to learn discipline, take proper training for the revolution, build their character, and become moralists (Sarkar 1987b, 6: 2-3).

The other indicator Sarkar gives us refers to violence. For him bloodshed is not inevitable. If the majority of the discontented shudras are ksattriya-minded or if their martial influence is dominant, revolution does occur through sanguinary clashes ... Bloodless revolution can only occur if the number and influence of the Vipra-minded among the discontented is very great (5).

Unfortunately, "popular emancipation is blood soaked" (5).

SARKAR'S SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

Sarkar's effort is to transform these disgruntled individuals into a new type of leadership, the sadvipra, one which will continue the revolution permanently across borders and space. While to explain this concept he does not use any developments in leadership theory he does develop an impressive list of qualities of the ideal leader.¹ The sadvipra is a bodhisattva of sorts, willing to construct a self that has all four classes--servant, protective, intellectual and innovative--and highly evolved spiritually, but outside of the fame, power, lust and wealth matrix. While he speaks for a non-violent revolution, a revolution even if it is violent is more preferable than a a slow evolutionary process into a society where capitalists have their power reduced.

The qualities of Sarkar's desired leadership are primarily moral, although the ability to labor, fight, calculate and account are crucial as well. The qualities he takes directly from classic Indian texts, the yamas and niyamas and include; not causing suffering through thought, word or actions; actions and words with the aim of helping others; nonstealing; simplicity and only acquiring those things that are required for basic needs; commitment to the unity of

consciousness; inner contentment; purity of thought and body; willingness to struggle to achieve the goal; and understanding the essence of spiritual texts. Sarkar's sadvipra must moreover be verstaile.

The sadvipra is not an inactive witness. He is an active participant to see that no person or class exploits the reset. For this, he may have to resort even to physical violence because the sadvipra will have to strike at the source of the power which is tending to become the exploiter. In case the ksattriya class is becoming exploitive, the sadvipra may have to resort to physical force and in an age where the intellectual or vipra class is dominating, he will have to bring a revolution in the intellectual field. In case the vaeshyas are dominating, the sadvipra may have to contest and win elections because the vaeshyas class rule by democracy and the democratic set-up enables them to accumulate undue gains (Sarkar 1978b, 2: 141).

While the sadvipra concept is a natural outgrowth from the Indian episteme and the Indian construction of history, and from Sarkar's theory itself, Sarkar does not entertain the notion of the sadvipras becoming a class in themselves, or given his reading of history as incredibly oppressive and unjust, of tyranny and tradition, on becoming the new oppressor but at a level previously unimaginable since they contain the abilities of all classes. Superleadership can lead to super exploitation. While one knows that he speaks from the spiritual perspective as does Aurobindo or De Chardin and thus is seeing this in the context of a new society, nonetheless given his believe that the cycle/spiral shall continue endlessly, why not the sadvipras becoming part of the class they are trying to overthrow? For Sarkar, they will not become a class, rather the sadvipras will become the ksattriyans after the shudra revolution and then disappear to reappear when the ksattriyans become exploitive. But where will they disappear to? This, of course, is another way of stating the

classic question of who will guard the guardians? While the democratic method attempts to find a way to pit the classes constantly (checks and balances) against each other, Sarkar believes the capitalists simply use it for the economic expansion. In the ideal world

Sarkar believes "if the Sadvipras alone had the right to vote, there would be no difference between the real world and the heaven of imagination" (Sarkar 1987b, 6: 5). Again this is not Plato philosopher kings, or Nietzsche's superman, they are sadvipras primarily because of their willingness to struggle and suffer. It is the Hero institutionalized within grand theory.

But Sarkar does not enter a critical discourse with respect to the sadvipra, except that he argues for a group of sadvipras sharing power, not a one sadvipra rule. Moreover, this is not a theocracy to him, since morality cannot be legislated; rather it can become one in a particular age, especially the Vipran era.

Sarkar, thus is not giving us a rigorous theory; rather, he speaks from a mountain, yet from the view of the oppressed, but not any particular class; he is surveying history, story telling, using history to articulate his preferred world. But he is not only story telling; these are laws that he is describing; laws that when deconstructed are compatible with the Indian episteme, from his theory of consciousness. Just as consciousness follows a cycle, becomes bounded then reemerges from matter, becomes human and then finally becomes unbounded and realizes its authentic but unalterable self, the

social cycle too follows a clear cycle. Attempts to move it backward through counter revolution or evolution (from vaeshyan to vipran, Iran, for example) go against the natural and thus are short lived.

And:

The world is a transitory phase or changing phenomena with the scope of Cosmic Mind. It is going in eternal motion and such a motion is the law and nature and law of life. ...Hence no power can check the social cycle of evolution. Any force external or internal can only retard or accelerate the speed of transition but cannot prevent it from moving (Sarkar 1978b, 2: 139).

Again, the social, biological, individual and spiritual all exist in a unity of discourse that cannot be broken. But given that the real ultimately is beyond good and bad and that humans desire a world without exploitation--oppression is historical but unnatural--it is possible to manipulate the structure such that rulers administrate, not extract.

But the ages themselves will continue. The thesis of the Ksatriya age will be countered by a sadvipra antithesis leading to a post-revolution vipra synthesis. Forever. Simply said.

Sarkar as he tends to do ends his work with an image, in this case the classic utopian image, reminiscent of socialist language, but spiritualized by Sarkar. To his classic The Human Society it is:

The downtrodden humanity of this disgraced world is looking to the eastern horizon, eagerly awaiting their [the sadvipras] advent with earnest zeal. Let the cimmerian darkness of the interlunar night disappear from their faces. Let human beings of the new dawn wake up on a new world" (Sarkar 1987b, 6: 8).

Notes

1. Sarkar presents the following as some necessary qualities of the spiritual revolutionary. They are translated from Bengali. In English the text comes out in the male gender; for "he" include "she" as well. We quote at length:

1. He should always think in terms of Ideology and collective interest and never in personal terms. Generally a stroke of difficulty, a blow to personal prestige or position diverts one's attention towards oneself, thus forgetting the great ideology. This feeling may be either positive or negative but it preoccupies a large portion of man's mind and thereby creates too much self-consciousness which makes a man lazy and vocal. He chats about himself, his difficulties and his relations with the persons surrounding him and incidents. He loses balance of mind. In short, he thinks all the time about himself, forgetting his Ideology and task.

2. He should never criticize anybody. The tendency for criticism comes only due to lack of ability and patience to withstand difficulties. It is sometimes only due to false personal vanity or sense of prestige wounded by someone that one criticizes others. If you point out some mistakes of a pseudo-scholar, for instance, he loses his balance and becomes angry.

3. He should always try to please his co-workers through his actions and behavior. Words cannot convince them. People can only be convinced by actions.

4. A dull brain cannot be a revolutionary. He should be put in the most adverse and difficult circumstances and should be left alone to come out of them by his own efforts.

5. If any point of differences arises, it should be solved tactfully and with cooperative zeal. No use of grumbling over it. It will just worsen the matter.

6. There should not be any attachment with any individual. He should love all but should never have unnecessary sympathy for anybody in particular. Some persons try to create tender feelings in the heart with ulterior motives. A revolutionary has to be aware of them.

7. He should be guided by his own conscience and should never yield to others' opinions. He should hear all but follow what his own conscience says. The leadership of a great organization is constituted by only one person. There may be ranks inbetween. A revolutionary has to obey his immediate superior, yet for details and for checking the morality of his superior, he should never lose faith in his conscience.

8. He should never think about his power or position. But he should be aware of the importance of his fate and the method of the best utilization of his power, position and faculties.

9. His mind should be cool and calm every moment. He should never react to any stimulus immediately, though he should keep proper knowledge of his environment. To have a cool and calm mind, one needs spiritual practices. Without the strength of mind achieved through spiritual struggle, nothing can be done.
10. Never lament any loss. Try and make up the loss suffered with double strength. Be optimistic even in the most adverse circumstances.
11. Before starting any scuffle or fight, assess your strength. But if calamity comes, don't worry. Face it with patience.
12. Don't be moved by others opinions. Try to judge them on an objective basis. Don't be disturbed by what others are saying or thinking about you. Opinions are something outward. Be brave, make yourself strong, disciplined and fearless.
13. If there are any anomalies, don't criticize. But try to remove it by proper action immediately.
14. Live by principle (yama and niyama). One who deviates cannot succeed despite his best efforts. Stick to your decisions but be careful while taking a decision.
15. A revolutionary should always think about Ideology. Not a single moment should be wasted in: (a) useless thinking, (b) useless gossip, (c) meaningless action.
16. No one wants to tolerate the hegemony of others. Let no one get the impression that you want to keep one under your leadership. He should accept your leadership due to love and dedication.

These were made available to me through a personal letter from Acharya Prasadanda Avadhuta, January 12, 1990, upon reading an earlier draft of his chapter.

CHAPTER 6
COMPARING SARKAR

INTRODUCTION

The task for this chapter can never end. The task is to take the essence, the central themes of Sarkar's thinking, and place it in the context of other grand thinkers. We do not intend to move within Sarkar's culture, the Indian episteme; rather we intend to move out and enter other epistememes, other methods of constructing past, present and future. Our methodology is simple. We search for similarities; for differences. Are Sarkar's contributions unique and unprecedented or have others entered similar domains and found like or different conclusions? Can understanding these thinkers aid in understanding Sarkar's theory, the purpose of this effort? Can they aid in understanding what Sarkar's theory is missing; what is needed; what is weak or not clear?

Central to this task is answering the question, why compare? We touched on this in the second chapter. We compare--through history, across epistememes and cosmologies and from writer to writer--so as to distance. To take a step forward or backward in space and time so as to better understand the object of understanding. In this distancing we can find similarities and differences. We understand something not only in its own terms, but in an alternative context. We see not only what it is, but more importantly what it is not. How it is defined and how it is not defined. Through comparison we also engage in an empathetic understanding: we move closer and search for similar

efforts, for universalities in thinking and for peculiarities. We thus distance and gain proximity.

Our intention in this chapter is not to move toward a general theory of macrochange, but simply to place Sarkar in the context of other significant macro thinkers. We ask how does Sarkar enrich their theories of change, of the the transcendental, of the stages of history and of the structure of power; and, how do their theories enrich Sarkar's? By doing this we implicitly privilege Sarkar's theory in a greatness (or guilt depending on one's view of macro, grand theories) by association discourse. But we are not entering this project to uphold the text of Sarkar, to place it outside of space/time, outside of criticism; rather we seek to locate areas of weakness and, where possible, to suggest improvements. As we have argued in previous chapters, Sarkar's work can be best understood as a political asset and to a lesser degree as a general hypothesis originated from intuition and in need of support from the various empirical and applied social science perspectives. Its weaknesses are unexplored; the comparison we hope to do will find some of these and suggest various answers to them. We support by comparison and then from a critical position.

WHOM TO STAND WITH?

The thinkers with whom Sarkar can be compared are potentially endless. Our effort is to choose some that are similar in their approach, to choose from outside his tradition and to choose thinkers that can augment his theory. We are specifically concerned with

thinkers that have a clear macro theory of history. We will include thinkers who can aid us in understanding his theory of leadership and elite rule. Some of these thinkers are invited for dinner in that they specifically relate to Sarkar and many will be invited for tea but not for dinner in that they show up to contribute a sentence or two, a thought or two, and then disappear via the back door. With the dinner guests we will be more exhaustive in our comparisons; with the tea guests we will be more brief. While ideally the style of this chapter should be an intercivilizational and interepochal conversation between authors, we will remain within the third person narrative using the language of social science commentary.

First we will set the stage or the dinner table to push this metaphor. We will use concepts in the social change discourse borrowing largely from peace researcher Johan Galtung (the macrohistorical approach), systems scientist Irwin Lazslo (basic patterns), and philosopher Eric Voegelin (the types of truth and the immanentization of the spiritual in history).

Eric Voegelin is especially useful as like Sarkar, he is concerned with the entire humanity, with the self-interpretation of Being and with the way history has moved through history. His insights will add to Sarkar's. At the same time we will reintroduce Foucault, who will be our ahistorical gate crasher--as he is prone to be--arguing for an alternative politics of history that searches not for transcendental continuities but for temporal dysjunctions. At the same time, we will also examine his history of epistemes and make some preliminary comparisons with Sarkar especially as it relates to

Foucault's notion of the changing nature of the rational and of punishment for those who move outside this nature. Dutch social scientist Fred Polak's monumental research on the image of the future (optimistic and pessimistic images) and the ways that humans have historically dealt with the real will be our final arrangement. This will set the stage for the first guests.

From Chinese historiography we will invite Ssu-Ma Chien and Chang Hsueh-Cheng. Ssu-Ma Chien's historical approach is dynastic, thus at one level dissimilar to Sarkar, but like Sarkar he is concerned with the rise and fall of virtue. Moral discourse is an integral aspect of historical discourse: it cannot be and should not be separated. Among others, Chang Hsueh-Cheng's contribution to Chinese thought is the question of how the tao functions in history. Also central to Chinese thought are the concepts of the natural and of balance. This is a harmonious way of the world, the movement in and between yin and yang. For Sarkar too. Moving from Chinese historiography, we will examine Ibn Khaldun's thought, especially his Muqaddimah. Khaldun, perhaps the founder of modern sociology, sees history as the rise and fall of asabiya or unity. His is a general theory of the rise and fall of civilizations. We will give Khaldun more textual space, a dinner guest who will stay the entire evening, as his work still remains the prototype for other cyclical theorists (wherein the rise or expansion in itself causes the fall or contraction), especially the numerous European thinkers who come after him. Like Sarkar his theory is cyclical; like Sarkar his own life was politically tumultuous, and like Sarkar he speaks from a spiritual perspective--Khaldun from Islam

and Sarkar from Tantra. Moving from North Africa across the Mediterranean we will juxtapose the stages of Vico with those of Sarkar. Both have four stages: for Vico the ages of Gods, Heros, Men and Barbarian; for Sarkar the social cycle. And although they are not stages, but borrowing from Vico, phases in an on going river, both exist in a social science that is outside the present positivistic tradition. Vico historically so; Sarkar consciously so.

After the humanistic science of Vico, we examine the positivist science of Comte. It is Comte who ends the cycle and articulates a finality in history. Hegel follows neither as a dinner or a tea guest, but as a guest who saw history too seriously; who was invited out of politeness, but took the invitation seriously and stayed for the entire evening. From Hegel we attempt to understand the problems encountered when the absolute is taken concretely. Sarkar moves in this direction with his theory of Taraka Brahma, but appears to stop short of disaster but smack into messianic political activism, useful for mobilizing the masses and myth creation/generation, but potentially disastrous for a self-critical utopian theory. From Hegel we then move directly to Marx. It is Marx who should, with Sarkar, cut the main dish as both present a theory of history with, we believe, the expressed intention to change the future. Both present grand systems; Sarkar is more comprehensive, but Marx is far more detailed and scholarly. As this event has been constructed by other writings on PROUT we will summarize, not gorge. But we will use his forerunners, Gramsci for understanding of the organic intellectual and Wallerstein for his analysis of the future of the world system, albeit

as with Braudel merely in passing; more like chutney than dinner or tea. After Marx and his development of elite theory, we will continue this analysis with Pareto and Mosca. Both Pareto and Mosca provide a more rigorous treatment of elite theory than Sarkar cares to give us. Sarkar's work improves with their language, specifically, the notion of the circulation of the elite. After our elite theorists comes Spengler, who like Sarkar, forecasts the end of the modern world. In addition, Sarkar and Spengler have other similarities such as the role of money-spirit and the different classes. We conclude with Toynbee and Sorokin. Both Toynbee and Sorokin are used throughout this text. Coming in on dinner conversations, commenting during tea, and in general attempting to translate the world into their language. But while Foucault might impertinently spill tea on our Indian carpet thus making problematic the ground of our thought, Toynbee and Sorokin wish to be heard and to add their worldviews to our own. Toynbee is significant to us because of the similarities of his universal state and universal church with the Ksattriyan and Vipran eras, and Sorokin for his vast cultural rhythms and for his analysis of limits. Sorokin in many ways comes closest to Sarkar and is someone Sarkar can learn from in that Sorokin adds to the richness of Sarkar's theory. Needless to say, both of which augment Sarkar's work. Indeed there is enough here for a general theory of macrohistory. At the end of the chapter, we will attempt to point future discussions with respect to leadership theory from which Sarkar could gain in presenting his theory of the sadvipra. There is no dessert.

TOOLS

All meals have utensils; we are not without them as well. Galtung (1990), among others, uses the following as points of departure in interpreting theories of change. He focuses on historical processes and on causes and mechanisms. In terms of historical processes, he asks: are they linear, meaning that the critical changes are irreversible and that evolution is progressive? or are they cyclical, meaning that the history has a rise and fall or expansion and contraction pattern in that the more things change, the more they stay the same? Or are they spiral, meaning that the shape of history folds back on itself in that there is progress in some areas and cycles in other areas or meaning that the cycle of history can be intervened, socially adjusted. Thus, it is both linear and cyclical. Or is history transformational, meaning primarily with respect to the future that what will be will be ahistorical such that it cannot be understood with respect to the present, that is, it is neither linear nor cyclical but dysjunctive.

In addition to the shape of history, it is important to ask are the variables that move or pull history exogenous (outside) or endogenous (inside) the model, or some version of both/and or neither. That is, how do the causes and mechanisms of history operate. Finally, is one's theoretical articulation ideographic (a unique case, one unit of analysis with many explaining variables) or nomothetic (repeated cases, many units of analysis with one variable). Also useful is the study at one point in time or through time, synchronic or diachronic. For our purposes, macrohistory is through time with often one or two

essential variables usually attempting to explain one unit of analysis. Some attempt to follow the unit, a civilization for example, and compare it to another across time, but that is rare. Sarkar does not attempt this. Batra attempts to apply Sarkar's theory to various civilizations, but does not entertain a cross space/time comparison. Macro thinking is nomothetic and diachronic. It is the search for patterns through time and space. As with Sarkar, most of the macro thinkers we are concerned with believe they are writing a science of the past, present and future; a science that functions irrespective of observer. It is not a humble enterprise analyzing, for example, the history of a particular village, or even one nation; rather it is an analysis of totalities, of an all encompassing theory.

Critics such as Karl Popper (1957) point out that such an effort misses too many significant details, removes choice and contingency and privileges structure over human agency. But for the macrohistorian, individuals are important but they exist in larger fields that condition their choices: epistemological, ontological, economic and cultural. One might speak about preferred futures as modern futurists attempt to, but these preferences exist within certain structures: biological (of the brain), epistemological (the historical possibilities of what is thinkable), social (one's own culture and its history), technological (the material and social ways that one might express thoughts), economic (the ability to express in terms of having an identity and personal wealth so as to choose and not be a victim of structure). The macro view is also concerned with systems as a whole. Sorokin develops a typology of these systems: (1)

unrelated, (2) related because of spatiality, and (3) related because they have an axial principle. It is the system related by an axial principle that is of interest to him; here the parts of the system related logically to the whole and there is a deep isomorphism between the individual, the collective, the physical and the mental. The meaning structures are apparent once the system, the cosmology or episteme, is understood as a whole. In the macro view size, structure (for example, vertical/horizontal or feudal/bureaucratic arrangements), relations (person to person; person to nature; person to society) are significant.

Macro thinkers are rarely useful to the present as they represent change. Cyclical theories in particular are seen as pessimistic by the elite and the core nation and the core civilization. From the view of the individual, cyclical theorists are seen as disempowering since structure prevails over agency.

Staying within the linear/cyclical, endogenous/exogenous model, Galtung (1990) identifies Weber, Spencer, Comte, Durkheim and Parsons as endogenous and linear. Khaldun, Vico, Pareto, Sorokin, Spengler are endogenous and cyclical. Hegel is linear and exogenous (the spirit as an outside force impacting history). Cyclical and exogenous is a rare occurrence although Marx when he speak of prehistorical societies speaks from that view. Toynbee is cyclical and has endogenous and exogenous aspects. Braudel as well as Wallerstein have linear/cyclical and endogenous/exogenous elements. Marx has linear/cyclical (spiral) dimensions when he speaks about the society to be. Ssu-Ma Chien is clearly cyclical and endogenous as is Chang

and other Chinese thinkers, for the tao works in history not as an outside factor. Sarkar speaks from the spiral perspective. History is cyclical but through his preferred future sadvipra society, it will become a spiral reaching higher heights of the satisfaction of essential desires. At the same time, Sarkar's theory is mostly endogenous--the new phase comes on because of the previous phase) yet at the same time the role of the spiritual is at times an exogenous factor (the taraka brahma and the spiritual emanations of microvita). The natural environment, geography, also plays a role; events such as Sarkar's predicted polar shift will lead to an increased spiritual society as the shift will affect the electromagnetic fields of the world (Sarkar 1987a, 7: 53). Given the Sarkarian episteme, a shift in the poles would alter the solar system, the earth, the planet's ecology and thus ultimately the the thought waves of humans. This changing event will aid humans in becoming more meditative and will as well lead to an ice age in the long run. But by then humans will be able to move to other planets. A rare but cyclical geographical event such as the polar shift could fundamentally transform society. Sarkar believes geography, Braudel's (1972) long duree (the long time), plays a role in history and the future. However, from the spiritual view geography is stable but as it is ultimately but a reflection of consciousness, its stability is dependent on other factors.

Returning to our mini discussion on macro thinking and thinkers before we begin the various comparisons, and before the dinner begins, let us wander among some other ways to structure macro thinking.

Irwin Laszlo in an article titled "Footnotes to a History of the Future" (1982) identifies some the key patterns. There is (1) circular movement, (2) circular movement that rises or descends, that is, toward utopia or dystopia (the cycle with direction) (3) linear movement either negative or positive and (4) jagged movement with stops and starts; forward leaps and fallbacks.

The circular pattern is exhibited in Ssu-Ma Chien's theory of the rise and fall of virtue, Khaldun's rise and fall of asabiya (unity, solidarity), Sorokin's Ideational, Idealistic, Sensate super rhythm, Sarkar's social cycle, Vico's cycle, Spengler's culture/civilization cycle, and Marx's historical societies.

The Helix or Coil (cycle with direction) is the classic fall of man view (from the golden age degenerating to the age of materialism and then returning to the golden age with this pattern perpetually repeating itself). Associated with this pattern in the Indian context is the influence of the God-man at the end of degeneration. Thus there is structure, but also agency, albeit a superagency. Laszlo places Hegel in this Helix structure, but the present, instead of the site of degeneration, is the site of the high point of civilization, the Germanic state. The linear model is the classic western model of increased rationality, economic progress, urbanization, secularization, national integration and modernization. Spencer, Durkheim and Weber have been the classic proponents of this historical march. But there are also spiritual linear perspectives as well. The fall of man from Heaven to Earth without redemption is one example. But history can be constructed with the ascension of man.

For example, Teilhard de Chardin saw history as a movement toward God. God pulled all toward Him. The technological changes of modernity for Chardin were leading toward a compression of information, a noosphere; a place of shared spiritual information and insight. Sarkar, too, when speaking of the spiritual uses the linear metaphor. For him the cycle exists at physical and mental levels, but as the spiritual level can assimilate these other levels (that is the curvature of reality can be transformed into the unity of the Spirit) there exists higher and higher levels of progress.

Laszlo's ideal pattern is the systems science perspective. Here there is a cycle and linear direction as well with the accent on progress. The long term trend is toward complexity, differentiation, increased size, improved use of energies and the ability to store and access various energies.

This has been the pattern from the stone ages to the modern period with only the middle ages as a reversal in the long term trend. The trend is thus directional but there are periods of stasis and periods of movement. These long periods, however, are increasingly punctuated by frequent periods of revolutionary transformation. These trends become disrupted by chaos. It is not a mere cycle or mere Helix; rather there are dysjunctions.

These periods of change, of chaos, however, do not lead to the reoccurrence of the past as with cyclical theories; rather a new order comes in, and what results are new levels of complex structured systems; greater in size and with an improved capacity to access, store and utilize energies and maintain themselves. The cyclical part

of Laszlo's pattern is unclear, but for cyclical theorists these chaotic periods bring on the cycle again, albeit at a new dialectical level (for Sarkar and Marx, but not for Khaldun and Ssu-Ma Chien). For Galtung, what is missing in the systems view is the expansion/contraction dynamic. The middle ages were not a reversal but an integral dimension of Occidental cosmology, the West in its contraction mode.

With the above gloss of macro thinking prior to proceeding on to the actual comparisons, some assumptions should be explicitly stated. First, where a thinker stands to a great degree conditions what he sees and stands for. For example, Khaldun's life is similar to his historiography: both follow a rise and fall pattern. Khaldun wrote in the final stages of the decline of the Islamic empire and thus developed a sophisticated theory of disintegration. Hegel, writing at the zenith of Prussian State, developed an alternative perspective, outside of the decline discourse. Sarkar, writing from the horror that is Calcutta, develops a cyclical theory with an exit based on Indian spirituality.

Implicit in the relationship between the author and the text he creates is that all history is interpretative. Moreover it is often elitist and certainly male. The voices heard are those that have been written (historical evidence); little of it is oral. The macro perspective then is not less objective than the traditional historical view, of say the Vienna Circle, which argues that history is merely one event after another. The meaning of history is but an imposition. Indeed, the communication and the intelligibility of existence is but

interpretation. In this the macro view aids in making sense of the apparently fragmented and unified (again, showing our bias for order in history) events, images and trends.

Next, each historical thinker must make some metaphysical choices. In their language these are not choices but truths. Sarkar is certainly not immune from this. Useful are the choices that Eric Voegelin gives us (1987). History is cosmological; that is, it reflects the harmony of the deeper order that pervades throughout the universe. This, of course, is the view of the classic European episteme, Vico's Age of God, and the Indian episteme. Next is the anthropological/philosophical discourse with history primarily understood from the psyche, from the intellect; the perfection of the heavens is not a necessary condition. Last is the soteriological; this is history from the viewpoint of the Godhead, the divine. Here history is created by the transcendent through his grace, through his relationship with the finite.

From the view of most macro historians, once there is a pattern, then there are laws. These can be based on a cosmic order, or based on a theory of order where the natural is waiting to be discovered, or based on a revelation by a transcendent. Thus, once a transcendent is created in history, it must have a way to speak. Hegel spoke through the great leader and the perfect state (or in Sarkar's language: the vipran desiring the ksattriyan disciplined society); Ssu-Ma Chien spoke through the sage-king, while Khaldun manages to keep the transcendent more as a sign of textual respect. Allah gives his blessing to successful projects, but only after the fact. In the

Vedas, history is evolutionary and speaks not just through one figure but through the many who are enlightened. These many are then placed in a system of hierarchy from the avatar to the guru. Significantly, the prophet is not the sole source of prophecy. For Sarkar, history is spoken through the collective mind of the particular group and history is reharmonized through the great spiritual leader.

The metaphysical choices are then the following: (1) all historical actions are a result of a transcendental will; (2) only those actions at points of crises or chaos (fall of virtue, dharma, righteousness) are historical actions (this is the view that God begins history, then disappears, but reappears in a variety of forms when things get worse; God reappears because of His omniscient knowledge or because of the call of the masses); (3) real history occurs despite one's own apparent free will. There is a deeper agency happening behind one's back; (4) history occurs through the actions of the Royal Family or Royal King--rulership comes from a divine mandate. The leader is somehow more conscious, in touch, harmonious, or reflective of the real than others; (5) history acts not through a religious transcendent nor through royalty, but through the magic of the marketplace, through the natural and rational meeting of the needs of various individuals; (6) history acts through the most developed state or the most developed empire; (7) history acts through world figures, the Great woman or man (either as sages, as kings, capitalists, warriors, or other configurations); (8) history acts or can be understood through natural physical and social laws. These laws can be eternal, epoch contingent, derivative from previous laws,

linear, dialectical, idealistic, materialistic or dualistic. A corollary of this view is that history, or future, can be understood specifically through intellectuals; (9) history moves through the image of the future, the ideal state that draws and attracts people to act; (10) history occurs through the call of the divine or the Great or in anthropological perspectives through needs (the natural and the rational).

FOUCAULT AND THE REAL

Prior to deciding how the real speaks, one must decide what the real in fact is. Is the real "physical" or "spiritual" or is it both. In his The Order of Things and Archeology of Knowledge, Foucault gives us not the traditional continuities of grand theory; rather he moves outside of this frame and gives us ruptures, breaks in history, in which the very way in which things are known changes. Thus, history is now problematically placed within a politics of the natural and the real wherein epistemological possibilities and the problem of intelligibility take precedence. Thomas Kuhn writing from an apolitical history of science perspective develops the same notion but believes that the transitions from one historical era to the other occur rationally through the interaction of various communities of intellectuals (Shapiro 1981). Thus while science and history are contextual this changing context is still rationally derived. Apolitical. For Foucault this transition in the constitution of knowledge is political in the sense that the naming of something as truth is a political utterance. His history then becomes a history of

ways of knowing, epistemes. Speaking of traditional macrohistory,

Foucault writes:

For many years now historians have preferred to turn their attention to long periods, as if, beneath the shifts and changes of political events, they were trying to reveal the stable, almost indestructible system of checks and balances, the irreversible processes, the constant readjustments, the underlying forces that gather force, and are then suddenly reversed after centuries of continuity (Foucault 1972, 3).

But this history of continuity has been replaced by epistemological acts and thresholds. Here the notion of order, of "man" and of the "natural" undergo fundamental changes. These epistemological thresholds

...suspend the continuous accumulation of knowledge, interrupt its slow development, and force it to enter a new time, cut it off from its empirical origin and its original motivations, cleanse it of its imaginary complicities; they direct historical analysis away from the search for silent beginnings, and the never-ending tracing-back to the original precursors...(Foucault 1972, 4).

Once history ceases to be a continuous flow of knowledge, where the present is ordered differently from the past in that knowledge of the past often merely gives us a shadow of the present, historiography is made irrevocably contentious. Interpretive. Thus, all that is left is to examine the cost of various interpretations and as well to demarcate, when possible, the ordering of order. Thus:

the great problem presented ... is not how continuities are established [the linking of dynasties, the analysis of the variables that lead from one era to the next] how a single pattern is formed and preserved [Sorokin's super rhythm, for example] ... the problem is no longer of tradition, of tracing a line, but one of division, of limits; it is no longer one of lasting foundations [virtue as for Chinese historiography, for example, again] but one of transformations that serve as new foundations, the rebuilding of foundations (5).

This is the search not for a new grand theory based on a concrete eternal, but a theory that contests the ground of knowledge itself.

Thus Foucault, unlike Sarkar, is not seeking to discern the true.

...it is a discourse about discourses, but it is not trying to find in them a hidden law, a concealed origin, that it only demands to free; nor is it trying to establish by itself, taking itself as a starting point, the general theory of which they would be the concrete models. It is trying to deploy dispersion that can never be reduced to a single system of differences, a scattering that is not related to a single system of differences, a scattering that is not related to the absolute axis of reference; it is trying to operate a decentering that leaves no privilege to any center (205). (emphasis added)

Of course, at the same time as Foucault decenters he creates an intellectual discourse; the type of decentering one would expect in the end of a Vaeshyan era; one that would not survive the disciplined and ordered Ksattriyan era to be, in Sarkar's terms. But Foucault's intellectual discourse is not traditional since he takes reason and turns it back on itself--he limits reason, making it one way of knowing among many. In this way Foucault is similar to the Indian. The yogi does this as well. The mind is watched and that which is watching is watched as well until there is a breakthrough into an alternative discourse, into an alternative way of knowing. Reason and the real become suspended only to return when the experience must be made intelligible to the "self" (or at least the reasoning self) and to the other. But here the yogi (Sarkar and others) part company with Foucault. For Foucault:

the role of such a discourse is not to dissipate oblivion, to rediscover, in the depths of things said, at the very place in which they are silent, the moment of their birth (whether this is seen as their empirical creation, or the transcendental act which gives them origin) it does not set out to be a recollection of the original or a memory of the truth. On the contrary, its task

is to make differences: to constitute them as objects, to analyze them, and to define their concept (205).

Thus we can see how although Sarkar and Foucault are similar in their search for alternative ways of knowing, of their understanding of discourse, given Foucault's move away from the transcendental, we might expect their social theories to be radically different. For Foucault does not intend to create a new history or theory of history; rather

... the essential task was to free the history of thought from its subjection to transcendence. For me, the problem was certainly not how to structuralize it, by applying to the development of knowledge or the genesis of the sciences categories that proved themselves in the domain of language (langue). My aim was to analyze this history, in the discontinuity that no teleology would reduce in advance; to map it in a dispersion that no pre-established horizon would embrace; to allow it to be deployed in an anonymity on which no transcendental constitution would impose the form of the subject; to open it up to a temporality that would not promise the return of any dawn. My aim was to cleanse it of all transcendental narcissism, it had to be freed from the circle of the lost origin and rediscovered where it was imprisoned; it had to be shown that the history of thought could not have this role of revealing the transcendental moment that rational mechanics has not possessed since Kant [in the Occidental perspective, that is] (203). (emphasis added)

Thus Foucault's project, unlike the macro thinkers which we will preview, is not to take cultural totalities and impose them on history--"whether worldview, ideal types or the particular spirit of the age" (15). Rather, he seeks to take a total history such as Marx's or Sarkar's or Sorokin's that seek to write on the face of history--the stages, the ideas logically related to a single axis (spirit, technology, dialectic)--and transform them into a series of dispersion. Said differently, Foucault's aim is to search for the

spatial figurements of power that lie hidden in the these larger grand theoretical project.

Paradoxically Foucault's epistemes can be seen as a grand theory, albeit one where the causal connections are purposefully not made so as to keep the theory disjunctive. Also paradoxically Foucault's epistemes resemble Sarkar's varna, although they use them in different ways and they arrive at them in different ways. This is most obvious in Foucault's Discipline and Punish and The Birth of a Prison. In these we see the ways in which humans have imprisoned change throughout history. Foucault traces the way that the rational has been defined, as well as how the types of punishment inflicted on those outside the rational have changed.

The control of the rational and control of punishment for Foucault is a demonstration of power. In Sarkar's Shudra era there is no authoritative definition of power. There is no authoritative discourse save the biological, survival. Discourses to construct the real are forming. Eventually, the dominant discourse becomes that of the warrior. In the warrior era, the key was the King, the sovereign. The power of the King was inscribed on the body of victims. Given the biological discourse, it was the body that was central, not the mind or spirit. Through the might of the body power was shown. By punishing the body, the King showed his power and thus order was kept. This is Sarkar's Ksatriyan era. Those that were considered insane, however, were exiled for they had no obedience for the King, thus the exiled ship of fools. Rationality was defined as the willingness to obey. Once this was transgressed, humans were relegated outside of

the newly formed civilization; they were thrown outside of the known discourse.

But in the Vipran era rationality and punishment underwent tremendous changes. In the Vipran era, the key sign was the priest, not the king or prince. Here punishment was limited to the confession. The transgressor had to admit to the truth; the body was punished and tortured so that the soul could be saved. There had to be a cleansing so that truth could persevere. There could be no exile since God's eye were everywhere. Leaving the discourse as with the ship of fools would not solve the problem; there would be no confessional. God had been offended; the individual must repent. Truth was thus defined in terms of fidelity to God, in terms of good and bad. It is the moral discourse that characterizes the Vipran era.

In the Vaeshyan era rationality is defined by work. Idleness is madness to be controlled and modified. Prison was there to shape men into laborers. "As it was initially conceived, penal labor was an apprenticeship not so much in this or that trade as in the virtues of labor itself. ...Pointless work, work for work's sake, was intended to shape individuals into the image of the ideal laborer" (Foucault 1980a, 42). As one might expect, the prison was constructed in the image of the dominant understanding; it was to make man into a machine, to place him directly in the means of production.

While the above is a mere gloss, it does show some important similarities in the content of their thinking and adds a new dimension of research for Sarkar's students; that is, the question how rationality is defined in each era; and how those that step outside

the bounds of the rational are punished. As Foucault has shown, this rationality and the punishment that ensues changes dramatically from era to era.

Thus for Foucault the critical question is how is the real real, not why is the real real; and therefore what is the cost for the particular interpretation, constitution of the real? This in one sense continues the Marxian effort of asking how is the real used to dominate and control, but while Marx would uphold the material basis of society, Foucault would, if he is true to himself, not be willing to place the material above the spiritual, ontologically, that is. Khaldun's question posed in this language, would be how is the real used by a dynasty to gain power and rise? His answer is that of asabiya. Sarkar, here more like Marx than Sorokin, begins not with the intellectual question of what is real, but rather with the question of the gaze. What is it that is immediately seen, the environment, and how does one negotiate this reality: by being conquered by it; by conquering it; by understanding it; by theorizing it and in many cases making it ultimately real or unreal; by using and investing it; and in the ideal sadvipra situation, by using it in its proper balance. For Sarkar, there is an underlying unity in these various ways of knowing, for Foucault, there is none, except insofar as they are different epistemes.

Foucault adds a significant tool for our analysis of macrohistory. It is problem is the unit of analysis. For him the central unit is not the civilization, the culture, Being itself, a dynasty, a people, race, a world economy, a cultural ecology, a global

ecology, the spirit, the individual, but the way that subjectivity, or knowing itself is constructed. For Toynbee, this was not problematic; clearly the unit was the civilization; aborted and successful civilizations. The comparison between success and failure of a civilization led him to his theory. For Sorokin, the problem was finding a logically coherent unit; his was the super system with the logical unity of meaning, behavior and materials. Sorokin's question is how is the question of the real related to societies; it is a structural question, not problematized as to the role of author, 'text and interpreter, as Foucault would do. For Sarkar it is the group mind and consciousness. For Voegelin the unit of history is Being and its self interpretation. For Hegel it is Being interpreting itself through the state and great figures. For Aurobindo it is Being through the rising nation-states and the various enlightened ones. For many recent feminist thinkers, it is gender that is the key unity. Again the question of the unit of analysis is an effort to find how the way in which history speaks to us is constructed. For Foucault all the above are constructions that stabilize the self and do not contest the way in which the self itself is created by practices and discourse. Discourse not only limits the possibilities of the objective, but also creates the subject as well. Again, the Sarkarian response to this entire Foucauldian exercise would be that Foucault is a predictable product of the end of the capitalist era: intellectual chaos. His thinking, however, is necessary for the reconstruction to come in the Ksattriyan era, wherein the vaeshyan structure destroyed by the other classes is rebuilt.

POLAK AND VOEGELIN

Alternatively, Fred Polak would privilege the image of the future. To him this is the key variable in social theory. What is the civilizational image of the future? This, like Sorokin's construction, serves to integrate society; it is the core. For Polak there are a range of possible constructions. His ideal type has two elements, the eschatological and utopian. According to his main interpreter and student, Elise Boulding, "The eschatological, or transcendent, is the element which enables the visionary to breach the bonds of the cultural present and mentally encompass the possibility of a totally other type of society, not dependent on what human beings are capable of realizing" (Boulding 1971, 30). And, "the second element in the ideal type image of the future is humanistic utopian, or immanent element which designates men as copartners with nature (or God) in the shaping of The Other in the Here-And-Now" (30). The ideal for Polak is the balance between the transcendental and the immanent, what Sorokin calls the idealistic, mixed type of society. For Sarkar this would be the balance between materialism (capitalism and communism where only matter is real) and Brahmanism (where only God is real). Both distort the real. Either God has been primary or man has been primary. To understand the tension between the spiritual and its presence in world history, Eric Voegelin is instructive.

According to Voegelin, this has been the crises of the West in the past few centuries, the misrepresentation of the eschaton of Christianity by Gnostics and the creation of a historical immanence that has led to the positivistic movement (Comte), the communist

(Marx and Lenin) and national socialist (Hitler) and the liberal (Smith among others). It was the reinterpretation of the trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, into ancient medieval and modern that has "led" to similar trine constructions by Comte, Marx, and Hitler. Western civilization has accentuated the material, immanent factor too far and has been caught in the paradox of rising (technology and better material conditions) and falling (wars, colonialism, imperialism, moral decay) at the same time. The victory of immanence has been the death of the spirit (Voegelin 1987, 131). For Voegelin this is what macrohistory is about. "Voegelin wants to understand history as men themselves participatating in history have understood it" (McNight 1978, 103). This is the interpretive perspective outlined by Vico, not the positivistic view desired by Comte.

[Voegelin] is interested in the consciousness of particular men grappling with the problems of existence and with symbols they use to express their understanding of what it means to be human. The drama of humanity...consists in man's quest for the truth of order, a truth that 'has to be gained and regained in the perpetual struggle against the fall from it (McNight 1978, 103). (emphasis added)

We see this theme in Sarkar, Ssu-Ma Chien and other ancients as well as Sorokin. There is a rise and fall of truth or the fluctuation of systems of truth. For Voegelin the immanentization of history is the cause of the decline of Western civilization. Immanentization leads to a position where history has a final epoch and where truth is certain. This is the view of positivists, Marxists, Nazis and liberals. Christianity, for Voegelin, stands in opposition to this view, for the essential Christian belief is in the uncertainty of truth. History to Voegelin is a spiritual decline. From spiritual

faith to enlightenment to humanism to secularism has been the pattern of decline. The modern period can thus be characterized as a belief in the end of the cycle, in the irreversibility of the path of linear history and progress. From the spiritual view the cycle ends outside of history, in the transcendent. But with the immanentization of history, history now has a worldly end--the liberal assertion of the end of ideology, the communist state, or the thousand year Reich. For Voegelin,

The death of the spirit is the price of progress. Nietzsche revealed this mystery of the Western apocalypse when he announced that God was dead and that He had been murdered. The Gnostic murder is constantly committed by the men who sacrifice God to civilization. The more fervently all human energies are thrown into the great enterprise of salvation through world-immanent action, the farther the human beings who engage in this enterprise move away from the life of the spirit. And since the life of the spirit is the source of order in man and society, the very success of a Gnostic civilization is the cause of its decline (Voegelin 1987, 131).

This to Sarkar is the cycle, the ancient principle that success in the world leads to failure. Real progress is only possible at the level of the spiritual; Sarkar's task is merely to make the spiritual view more available to humanity by constructing structures wherein the needs of the world, food and identity, can be met.

Galtung, however, with his emphasis on cosmology would assert that Voegelin understands part of the macro picture, but is missing a critical ingredient. It is not the bastardization of Christianity, but the playing out of the Judaic-Christian cosmology that is the problem. It is a natural process. Part of the expansion and contraction of the West. The expansion phase uses the Christian eschaton as its structure: the workers of the world become the chosen

few, Marx, Lenin and (fill in your own) become the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. All are inimical to nature, to females, and to the colonies. Voegelin's contribution is showing the descendance of the spirit into history and matter from 12th century Joachim of Flora to Comte, to Hegel, to Marx, and Hitler. It was Joachim who made the third stage, that of the Holy spirit, the final third realm. But while Joachim of Flora saw this as a spiritual stage, eventually it entered the world. Suddenly history had a finality, and thus humans could be sacrificed for this finality.

Clearly, the balance Polak calls for between eschatology and immanence has, if achieved, been ultimately disastrous, for in the search for the final perfection of humans, the cycle of nature, and the very cycle of humanity itself has been forgotten.

Specifically, the Gnostic fallacy destroys the oldest wisdom of [hu]mankind concerning the rhythm of growth and decay which is the fate of all things under the sun ... To every thing there is a season, And a time to every purpose under heaven: A time to be born and a time to die" (Voegelin 1987, 166).

But for Polak, Voegelin's view is only one view. There are others that have been historically used. He distills five major orientations towards the Other.

1. Life cannot be purely transitory: there must be something more enduring. Man hopes for future grace.
2. Life cannot simply end in imperfection. There must be an Other realm which man can enter.
3. Life should not be transitory and imperfect. Man rebels out of despair, but without hope.
4. Life is not as it appears to be. This world is an illusion and the essential reality is veiled from man.
5. Life does not have to be the way it is. Man can reform and recreate the world after any image he chooses (Polak 1973, 2).

This, as we will see, is a less elegant model of Sorokin's ideational, idealistic, sensate (and types of skepticism which cannot serve to integrate society). But Sarkar is not captured by Polak's five orientations and Boulding's four imaging patterns. The world is perfect and it must be reformed by man and it is transitory and there is future grace or transcendence. While the Indian episteme might favor one of these orientations, Vedanta, in particular would opt for the fourth. Sarkar moves from Polak's first image to the fifth, mixing the transcendental and the human agency/creation and provides a metaphysic (agreeing with Chardin) wherein humans become co-creators with the force of Life. Also difficult to classify is the perspective Chang Hsueh-Cheng and Ssu-Ma Chien who arguing from the Chinese perspective show that the sage can do what is natural, what is balanced and allow the tao to work with and through him. Nonetheless it is a useful typology, albeit phrased in Western language, to keep in mind as we review the different macro thinkers.

From this typology, Boulding develops four historical imaging patterns.

1. Essence optimism combined with influence optimism. The world is good and man can make it better.
2. Essence optimism combined with influence pessimism. The world is good but it goes of itself and man cannot alter the course of events.
3. Essence pessimism combined with influence optimism. The world is bad but man can make it better.
4. Essence pessimist combined with influence pessimist. The world is bad and there isn't a damn thing man can do about it (Boulding 1971, 31).

Again this is useful but does not capture the perspective of Sarkar and indeed other macro thinkers. For the world can be neither good nor bad and there can be divinity and choice; and there are

different levels in which one can speak to this. The Indian episteme, especially the richness of Jain epistemology, allows various both/and choices at the individual level, and as Sorokin would advise, there are stages of history where there are mixed societies in which the real is seen as both material/spiritual; fixed and changeable; wherein optimism and pessimism can both exist. Nonetheless, Polak and Boulding provide us with analytic tools for better understanding Sarkar.

What Polak does add of great significance is the notion of the image of the future to the perspective of macrohistory. The society with a rich image of the future rises; without a vision of the future then the civilization declines, argues Polak.

Cognizant of the image of the future, the pattern becomes not only an effort in which one can then predict tomorrow but create as well the possible society or the possible person, or find a way in which the individual and/or collective can harmoniously move with the discovered pattern. For the modern systems thinker, Lazslo prefers, once the pattern is found, then like the stock market, it will change, since there will be increased information for humans and as such will change the balance of the choice/structure equation. For the cyclical theorists, the only advantage information can give is humility in the face of the cycle of dynasty, ecology, virtue, dharma, asabiya and spirit. Sarkar, of course, makes the division within his cycle of administration and exploitation. With ideal leadership the cycle can be maneuvered but as it is fixed (either as a law, or, as Sheldrake would argue, a morphogenetic field) it can not be changed.

The above has been an introduction to macrohistory and macro thinking with comments about various macrohistorians and their thinking, especially recent thinkers such as Foucault, Voegelin and Polak. Now that we have opened with the present we will return to the past and the thinking of Sarkar and two exemplary examples of Chinese thinking chosen for their cyclical theory and their reading of the spiritual.

SSU-MA CHIEN AND CHANG HSUEH-CHENG: VIRTUE AND THE TAO

Ssu-Ma Chien (145-90?BC) is considered the grand historian of China. His still classic work the Shih chi or Records of the Historian is an attempt to place history in a philosophical narrative consistent with the Chinese way of knowing. As with Sarkar, Khaldun and other macro thinkers, Ssu-Ma Chien aimed to "examine the deeds and events of the past and investigate the principles behind their successes and failures, their rise and decay" (Watson 1958, viii).

Our effort is to summarize his thinking interposed with other Chinese philosophers, particularly Chang Hsueh-Cheng, and then compare and contrast the Chinese macrohistorical perspective with Sarkar's.

In contrast with Indian macrohistory where the past may be exorcised, the Chinese historian must deal with the problem of historical order in China's long past. Every writer must place himself next to Confucius; he must take or reject (or a mixture of both) the Confucian worldview. Every Chinese philosopher must deal with the basic data of Chinese history and thought: the dynasties, the great men, and the tao.

Ssu-Ma Chien takes the Confucian ethic of virtue, morality, respect for family and authority and uses it as a guiding principle for his historiography. But while he takes the above principles, he rejects Confucius' linear evolutionary theoretical structure. For Confucius the first stage was Disorderly, "with its anarchy, continuous warfare, primitive conditions, lack of efficient social control (Sorokin 1970, 375). The next stage was of Small Tranquility, characterized by the institutions of family private property, egotism, social instability (375). The third stage was that of Great Similarity "marked by social order, almost common property, mutual benevolence, and reverence" (375).

However, while he disagreed with Confucius' general theory, he kept within the Confucian spirit believing that the historian was not simply to record, but to teach the sovereign, to raise the level of morality of the people. Burton Watson writes speaking of Chinese historiography generally and the Shi Chi in particular: "History is a mirror of mankind in which the reader may look at the men of the past and observe their fortunes and misfortunes, and from this observation come to understand the fortunes of his own age" (Watson 1958, 137).

The Chinese historian also did not attempt to write an objective science of history nor was this considered possible. The author's personality was part of the historical effort. Even if laws were found, there was no attempt at disinterest; rather, history was through and through involved and thus normative. Sarkar, writing from the Indian episteme, continues this process. He too writes his history based on what has gone before. Both must speak to past

schools of Chinese and Indian thought respectively. The ancients must be honored and spoken to and from.

Ssu-Ma Chien particularly saw himself in a lineage of historical writers. A properly instructed writer could recreate the world. Ssu-Ma Tan, Ssu-Ma Chien's father, believed, for example, by adding to Mencius' theory--that every five hundred years a true sovereign would arise--that a new writer could arise as well to change Chinese history. First was Confucius, then the the Duke of Chou, and now five hundred years later, the father hoped that perhaps it would be Ssu-Ma Chien. The Indian awaits for the avatar, the bodhisattva or Sarkar's sadvipras but the Chinese awaits either the just monarch or the learned scholar to bring virtue and tao back to society. Clearly this is an alternative model of the cycle of the universe, of leadership and of balance, with greatly different political implications than those of the West; there one either waits for Jesus or for Godot.

Ssu-Ma Chien like Confucius and other Chinese operates from the cosmological episteme (Voegelin language) or the classic Indian episteme. As above as below. There is a unity of discourse wherein what happens in the cosmos, occurs in the natural physical world, and develops in society as well. Within and without. The sage can discern these fundamental patterns thus allowing humans to live in harmony with the natural. But the natural in this view is not always in balance, there is disharmony as well which must constantly be righted. This is the Chinese Yin and Yang similar to Sarkar's vidya and avidya. This is the principle of dialectics wherein there is a unity of opposites. Central to this classic view is the notion of the

transformation of quantity to quality. Once there is order then a new relationship can emerge in society. With order (the people thinking together, children and females knowing their place, and subjects and rulers following their's) a new level of existence is possible. This principle is also applicable to the mind. Once the mind's thoughts are ordered, a new self can emerge. With concentration, personal transformation is possible. Without this ordering one remains at a primitive level of mind. Or in Taoist thought with ordering, a non self can emerge and by doing nothing (in terms of the reference of the old self in which there is strife and disorder) everything can be done.

This classic worldview has become current through modern interpretations such as Fritjof Capra's The Turning Point which uses this principle to explicate the coming global transformation from yang values (expansion, sensate, male, industrial) to yin values (cooperative, spiritual, female, and post-industrial). For our purposes the key comparative link is with vidya/avidya and yin/yang; both operate from similar spiritual ways of knowing. For Sorokin, as we will develop further later, this is the cycle of Ideational and Sensate and for Galtung expansion and contraction.

THEORY OF HISTORY

The context then for Ssu-Ma Chien's theory is the Confucian focus on virtue, the classic cosmological episteme, and the dynasty as the holder of virtue. For Ssu-Ma Chien it is the function of the

historian to prolong goodness by preserving its record, for good endures and evil destroys the doer.

Moreover, unlike Western thought ancient Chinese thought did not recognize a datable beginning to human history.

Their conception of time [like Indian time] is astronomical; time is a series of cycles based upon the movements of the planets and stars, the heavenly governors as the Chinese call them, and such cycles may presumably be conceived as extending indefinitely into the past or the future. The dates, then, of human history are recorded in terms of the years of rulers, who are the mortal counterparts of the Heavenly Governors (Watson 1958, 4-5).

In the Indian condition the dates are assigned by the Vedas. In Islamic history by the Hegira. In Christian history by the birth of Christ. Western history is dramatic; there is a particular event from which time begins or that the new world begins. History that is based on the stars can never have any real beginning or end, for the stars continue moving, forward and backward. But Indian history has both timelessness and time; there is the time of the cosmos and the time begun by a dramatic event, the birth of the transcendental in the plane of the world. For some of Sarkar's students, this is the beginning of Ananda Yuga, the era of bliss.

What of the pattern of history for Ssu-Ma Chien? While Khaldun looks to the strength of the Bedouins as the beginning of new dynasties and Sarkar looks for a unifying or negative distancing sentiment (the image of the enemy outside) in the context of the Ksattriyan era, central to Ssu-Ma Chien is the belief that each dynasty begins with a sage king of superlative wisdom and virtue (Yu of the Hsia and Ch'eng T'ang of the Yin) and each dynasty closes with an unspeakable evil and degenerate monarch (Chieh of the Hsia and

Chou of the Yin): Between the good and evil are just a list of names of rulers (5). The unit of history is thus morality; the universe has a moral structure which ultimately prevails.

This cycle then begins again when a new sage overthrows the tyrant and a new house is set up. But the pattern is not always so simple. It is, according to Watson, "varied in the middle, as in the case of the Yin dynasty, by the appearance of worthy rulers who restore for a time the original virtue of the dynasty in an act called revival or restoration (6).

This pattern as with other classical writers is no more than a reflection of the basic most fundamental observations of life--that things come into being, they grow, reach a peak, and then in various formulas decline, until they die. All heaven and earth are characterized by this waxing and waning.

Ssu-Ma Chien's task as he saw it was simply to arrange the accounts of the early dynasties and feudal states in such a way that this pattern of growth and decay could be most readily perceived. He was reinterpreting history so as to make it easier to follow virtue. Thus there was a natural order; good history made this order more intelligible.

While Khaldun uses unity/solidarity (the dynasty that stays united, does not indulge in luxury, and remembers its nomadic existence stays in power), Ssu-Ma Chien uses the concept of merit. As Burton writes:

An integral part of his accepted pattern of the virtuous founder and the evil terminator of a ruling family is the very old concept of te or merit. Te in this case has more than its later meaning of virtue, imply rather a kind of mystical store of power

set up by the sage ancestor of the family. This power, or achievement, kung, or blessing, tse, flows from the ancestor down through his heirs, bestowing upon them in turn power and good fortune in their rule. But like all other things of creation, this ancient deposit of merit is subject to the law of decay. As the years pass, the power wears thin and the succeeding rulers sink lower and lower into evil and incompetence. As the Chinese historian describes it, the power or the "way" (the tao) of the ruling family declines. At this point it is still possible for a ruler, by applying himself to the practice of wise and virtuous government, to restore the waning power of the family. But if no ruler appears who will undertake thus to replenish the original store of power and merit, the reservoir will eventually run dry and the family will be destroyed by other families who are ascending in the cycle of power (7).

There are thus two central aspects to his theory. The first is the pattern of rise and fall, growth and decay, waxing and waning. This is related to the moral order and thus there is the pattern of the rise and fall of virtue. For Sorokin interpreting Chinese macro thinking, this is "parallel with this cycle of a dynasty, [is that] the people are virtuous and happy when the dynasty is rising and attaining its zenith; and they become violent and degenerated when it declines. And so does the whole cultural ... life" (Sorokin 1970, 375) Instead of yin and yang, Ssu-Ma Chien remembering Confucius, uses chih and wen or solid qualities and refinements.

Next each dynasty can be understood by its moral characteristic. Good faith for the Hsia, piety for the Shang and refinement for Chou. As each dynasty declined, its virtue was transformed into a fault. Good faith became rusticity. Piety becomes its opposite of superstition. And refinement turns into hollow show. The natural become unnatural, and the harmonious becomes imbalanced. But why does a dynasty decline? And why does it rise up again? This is intrinsic to the model: it declines and rises because that is the nature of men,

of nature, and of the cosmos itself. The learned sage has discovered this nature by watching the self, men and women, and the natural world.

As for Sarkar, transformation is possible. Ssu-Ma Chien articulates ways to restore virtue when it is in decline. But Ssu-Ma Chien does not believe in a return to an ancient golden past. This school of Chinese thought he rejected. The role of the scholar was to advise the government (as Ssu-Ma Chien did; he was a secretary of the emperor).

History to him was a constant process of growth and it was impossible to think of returning to some static golden age of the past. What was possible, however, was the creation of a new golden age in the present by a wise application of the moral values appropriate to the times (Watson 1958, 143). (emphasis added)

Indeed, Ssu-Ma Chien believed that the future could best be created by learning from dynasties that were troubled not by the golden ages of the past. It is in disharmony that learning comes about. For Sarkar this is rephrased as struggle leading to individual and societal growth.

Now as we can see there are some fundamental similarities between Sarkar and Ssu-Ma Chien. Both use the cycle, the notion of virtue and speak from the classic episteme (although Sarkar writing in this century has access to various historical epistemes). Sarkar and Ssu-Ma Chien are also similar in the emphasis on the sage-king in starting dynasties. For Sarkar this is the perceptor needed to start a new ideology.

But the differences are enormous as well. Sarkar's history is not solely dynastic. To him there are dynastic periods and there are

intellectual periods. In the Chinese Vipran era real power was in the hands of the Confucianists (and others) who emphasized merit and scholarship, not might and the divine mandate of heaven.

RETHINKING CHINESE HISTORY

How might Chinese history look when it is reinterpreted from the Sarkarian view. Using Batra's approach one could reorganize Chinese history with many cycles. The fall of the Chin and the rise of the Han (who were of a lowly class, shudras) would be a ksattriyan revolution. This is followed by the establishment of Confucianism (the Vipran era), and then the subsequent rise of the merchant class, which the vipran Confucianists thought little of. An example illustrates of this division between intellectuals and merchants.

In the later Han most of the official posts were filled by men who had secured their jobs on the basis of scholastic achievement. The pursuit of learning, particularly Confucian learning, became the concern of all members of the upper class; even emperors and empresses were students of the Classics. The merchant class, that had begun to be powerful and important in the early Han, was degraded to the position almost of social pariahs and the ...literati class became the unchallenged leaders of society (Watson 1958, 37).

Continuing our overview of Chinese history, the merchant era is followed by the Mongols who create another Ksattriyan era. Eventually the British would come in bringing on a Vipran and then a capitalist era. Maoism is then another Ksattriyan era. The stage is set for a new Vipran era with a strong democratic/spiritual/intellectual ethos. Sarkar, of course, would see one long cycle with Buddhism and Confucian influences representing vipra eras. Batra would see many cycles with expansion/political centralization peaking in Ksattriyan

eras. In this model the rise of the merchant class or the external economic imperialists primarily the British represent Vaeshyan eras.

Sarkar's four class division provides a useful tool in understanding past and present China; among other things the distaste of the ksattriyan communists of the intellectuals can be seen in a proper historical perspective. Of significance is that Communism from the Sarkarian position then becomes part of the social cycle; a natural part of China's history, not an extrahistorical event, although its ideological strength in terms of Sarkar's factors in his theory of civilizations needed for a healthy civilization is great. Communism, for example, has a leader, text, socio-economic theory, and to some degree a social outlook (although this is not universal enough), but it is missing spiritual practices and spiritual ideology. Thus it will over emphasize the material world and eventually decline.

Alternatively, Mark Elvin (1973) argues that China's past is divided into three phases: early empire, middle empire and later empire. Appropriately his beginning chapter title captures the thesis of his work: "The Formation of the World's Largest Enduring State." In Sarkarian language, ksattriyan from the beginning to end. At the same time one could argue that Chinese history is essentially vipra: it is the intellectuals who have held realy power throughout the ages. Finally, Chang Xie (Galtung 1990) uses Ssu-Ma Chien cycle of good faith-piety-refinement to argue that the next stage in China's future will be one of refinement. Using Ssu-Ma Chien's basic model, we could also argue that the Maoist dynasty has now become its opposite. Its piety (the meeting of basic needs, cultural pride and unity) has now

been transformed into evil and thus the dynasty will end or a new sage ruler will lead it to its next era. Sarkar would assert that the next revolution will be led by a sage/intellectual of sorts. The Ksattriyan era is almost over, for him.

The above historical overview, however, can be faulted for placing theoretical construction over the rich data of history, for reifying their stages. Sarkar and Ssu-Ma Chien should be used to understand historical changes, to move back and forth between data, theory and values, not to force the data into prior theoretical understandings.

Summarizing, unlike Sarkar, Ssu-Ma Chien does not resort to Gods (Shiva or Krishna) or the spiritual in his theory of history. There is no transcendence. This is not a theory of the tao in history. Humans create history: man is the proper study of history, not the spirit. The sage does not play a direct role in creating an epoch as with Sarkar. Although Sarkar uses the sage-king notion to develop his concept of the sadvipra, Ssu-Ma Chien's sage-king is closer to Plato's philosopher-king than Sarkar's spiritual revolutionary.

In contrast is the historiography of Chang Hsueh-Cheng who adds a spiritual dimension to Chinese history. Specifically he asks the question as to the role of the tao in Chinese history.

CHANG HSUEH-CHENG AND THE TAO IN HISTORY

Chang Hsueh-Cheng (1738-1801) wrote during the second half of the eighteenth century during the Manchu dynasty. From Sarkar's view the Manchu dynasty can be seen as a ksattriyan attempt of unification

after the factional strife and the peasant rebellions of the Ming era.

The influence of the Manchu era led Chang to hold the ideal of the powerful state in high regard. Much of his reading of the tao in history is focused on its relationship to the State. The crux of Chang's theory is that when government is separated from learning then the tao disintegrates. As Li Kuang-ti (1642-1718) had argued, "the tao and government had been united in the persons of sage-rulers; later, with Confucius and Chu Hsi, Heaven entrusted the tao to sages outside the state" (Nivison 1966, 18). And in reference to the Manchu government, "the government and tao [are] again [to] be united, for now knowledge and action, government and learning, were again one" (18). There is thus a unified order, without factionalism, in which the tao is whole again.

This search for a strong state and the tao's location in it can be seen as the classic Confucian utopian vision.

This utopian vision saw human society as the perfect family, where each member would play his part without enticement and pressures to advancement, where 'men's minds would be composed' in their quest for virtue, where there would be 'no corruption of empty works,' where none would be subject to extravagance of speech and composition,' and none would 'strive for honor and advantage.' This ideal envisioned society as a harmonious organic unity (67).

From the liberal Western view, this is implicitly authoritarian, for truth comes through competing interest, not through the wisdom of hierarchy, respect and order.

We find this notion of society as a family in Sarkarian thinking as well, although he uses the concept for a theory of distributive justice; nonetheless the similarity is significant.

Society is like a company of pedestrians going on a pilgrimage. Suppose one among them is attacked by cholera, do the rest go on their way, leaving him behind? No, they cannot. Rather, they break their journey at the place for a day or two, relieve him from the disease and help him to acquire strength in his legs. Or, they start out anew, carrying him on their shoulders. If anyone runs short of his subsistence, others give him their own. Together, they share everything with all. Together, they stream ahead, singing their leading chorus. In their eagerness to go ahead with others, they forget their trifling differences which in their families might have led to negative exchanges and court cases, even down to three generations ... society is like ... a batch of pilgrims gathering a strange power of mind in traveling together and with its help, solving all the problems of their individual and social life (Sarkar 1978b, 2: 114).

The essence of Chang's work is his writing on the tao: its rise, integration and disintegration. Like most historiography, Chang looks for that which is eternal in human history. For him, it is the tao. (for Sarkar the tao is the transliteration of the word "tantra" changing from tan to taon then finally to tao [Prasidananda Avaduta, personal communications, 1990]). When man came into being, the tao existed in man himself, but he was unaware of it. "The tao began 'taking form' in human history with the first human family and continued as population increased and human society became more and more complex" (Nivison 1966, 140). According to Nivison, for Chang, "the tao is therefore the basic potential in human nature for living an ordered, civilized life, a potential that gradually writes itself out in history and actualized itself in what man must come to regard as right and true. That tao is thus seen in human moral order" (141).

The tao lies embedded in and behind the historical process. It is the why behind events and processes. But Chang is practical. The tao is not the possibilities of what could be. It is not an ought condition. The tao is understood in its evolutionary process. The

tao is distinct from matter but they are inseparable. This is very much like Sarkar's concept of Consciousness and energy, distinct but inseparable. However, for the Indian Sarkar consciousness can be known by the god-man, by the enlightened one, while for Chang there is no such being; rather the tao is seen from the natural unconscious actions of ordinary persons. Thus, the sage knows the tao, not because of devotion, but because he watches the ordinary people; ordinary people who have humility and greed, yin and yang.

This tao becomes expressed through the meeting of historical needs. As needs arise, they are met. But common people meet these needs blindly. They do not know what they are doing. The sage, however, by watching the yin and yang, the ebb and flow, of every day life can see the workings of the tao, and thus can respond and create appropriate institutions and laws. Thus, there is choice but there is also structure. The actions of the sage are modified by the particular historical conditions. The evolving problem of man's life and the accumulation of solutions from sage to sage is the tao taking form. Is this Toynbee's evolutionary principle of challenge-response? or is it similar to Sarkar's physical and mental clash?

But the tao and the sage are not the same. Again, according to Nivison's interpretation of Chang,

The tao is so of itself, and the sage must do as he does. Are these things the same? They are not. The tao does nothing and is so of itself. The sage see what he sees and must do as he does. One may, therefore, say that the sage takes the part of the tao; but one may not say that the sage and the tao are substantially the same (145).

Thus, while in the Indian episteme, there is a unity of consciousness between individual and collective souls such that a

person can become the ideal, in Chinese and Chang's thought that distinction cannot be broached.

The tao also does not function in an Hegelian sense either. There is no historical cunning which uses great men to advance the cause of history. For Chang, the sage takes the part of the tao, but they are its free agents, not its unwitting pawns.

Unlike the Hindu context in which Brahman descends on humans, "the tao does not incarnate in a sage" (145) The sage's actions are limited by the historical conditions. The sage's creations are not eternally valid, nor are his utterances the tao itself. Again this differs from Indian thinking in which the words of the guru can be seen as the words of Brahma himself. But while history can be understood from the meeting of needs, needs quickly become desires. This for Chang and others is when the tao is lost, for the critical distinction is between the natural and desirous. In the natural, the tao thrives, government is good, and people are virtuous. In the desirous, the tao disintegrates, government factionalizes, and people do not follow the classics. There is disharmony.

Confucius transmitted the tao by keeping alive the wisdom of the ancient kings. In doing so he

simply considered that the tao of the ancient sages and kings cannot be seen and the Classics are just the material embodiment of this tao which can be seen. The classics then are not books that expound the tao but the matter (chi) that exhibits it, for the tao can no more be abstracted from the material world than a shadow can be separated from the shape that casts it (151).

Thus, while consciousness for Sarkar exists independent of matter, except in the absolute sense in which consciousness is but an aspect

of matter, for the Chinese it is through matter that the tao can be understood. The unity of discourse is not found in the unity of the atman-brahman relationship but in the relationship of the tao to the material world. The tao is seen in rivers and mountains, not in the complex psychological states of tantra and Buddhism.

Contrast this to the Western notion of the Divine which exists outside of time, space and individual. Chang's tao is Sarkar's Saguna Brahma (God in the world); however at the same time Sarkar has a Nirguna Brahma (God outside the world, the formlessness from which form emerges). Chang, by placing the tao in the world (as an evolutionary principle of sorts), misses this dimension. But this is not endemic of Taoism for the tao that can be spoken is not the real tao, that is, the real tao exists outside of discourse, outside of the world. Chang, however, does not use this prediscursive tao.

The Tao thus acts in history. It acts through the sage. The climax of this tao in history was the Chou state (1122 BC). The Duke of Chou was the last sage ruler, or in Sarkarian language, it was rule of the spiritual led viprans. Later, the tao disintegrated as philosophical states factionalized and each attempted to hegemonize ideas. Each attempted to appropriate the Tao. With the intellectualization of the tao the unity of heaven, state, family is broken. "As different paths of thought more and more divide, the tao is more and more lost sight of" (152). For Sarkar, this is the beginning of dogma, wherein spirituality is appropriated at the loss of the personal experience of consciousness or, in Maoist terms, where

what remains is the chatter of intellectuals, the valueless passing of gas.

The difference between Chang and, for example, Hegel (who too uses God in history) is that Chang's tao does nothing, needs nothing, in no sense uses mankind to realize itself (292). In this way, the tao is transcendental but evolutionary. It serves as an evolutionary principle, but also a guiding ethical principle, similar to Sarkar's prakrti or the active doing dimension of consciousness. Chang's contribution is the articulation of a guiding principle that does not slip into an appropriation of power.

Now Chang too has a cycle, but given that he is dominated by the vipran worldview, this cycle has three phases: philology, literary art and philosophical speculation. The pattern of learning, artistic talent and understanding continue endlessly through history, with the breakdown of philosophical speculation (factionalization also creates rich ideas) then leads to philology again. Different humans become attracted to different types of works. At the collective level, each dynasty expresses each type of learning.

Chang's tao begins unified and then as the State (governance) and learning are separated, that is, as the role of the sage diminishes, the tao disintegrates. But unlike the Indian pattern the degeneration of Brahman, from satya to kali, from gold to iron, Chang believes this is a degeneration of unity and virtue. The role of the intellectual is to restore this balance for through the sage the tao can take form. The writer must not allow any tendency to become imbalanced (the Chinese ancient version of the modern checks and balances system of

governance). Like Sarkar, and unlike Hegel, and unlike linear, evolutionary theorists, the "present" then is not the ideal state, but a state of imbalance that must be restored to balance. For Chang this is accomplished through the understanding of the tao (by the sage); for Sarkar, this is through spiritual realization and selfless service to humanity. Both Chang and Sarkar, however, concluding distance themselves from Western democrats, that the the unified state is ideal, for a centralized polity in touch with dharma or virtue can best keep the various fashions or tendencies (of intellectuals, merchants, warriors, barbarians, and others) from creating havoc.

Chang's effort then is to take the ideational Taoism and attempt to place it in a sensate context, and thus develop a mixed system. By placing the tao within time and within specific dramatic events--the Chou dynasty, for example--he breaks from most Chinese thinking in which time is timeless. However, like Sarkar, he finds historical events in which dharma or virtue reigns. Yet at the same time, both attempt to keep reality discursive, Chang reminds us that the tao cannot be spoken and Sarkar reminds us that consciousness cannot be expressed. Both take a "both and" view of structure/agency; history and God. Both take a cyclical view of history, and both present the possibility for a new future, although this is more comprehensively developed in Sarkar.

Both Ssu-Ma Chien and Chang Hsueh-Cheng are fundamentally similar to Sarkar in that they present cyclical theories. Ssu-Ma Chien focuses on virtue, while Chang is interested in understanding the role of the tao in history. Sarkar places the ideal future in the hands of

a centralized polity based on spiritual leadership and Ssu-Ma Chien and Chang come to similar conclusions. Their ideal polity is one where government and learning is unified and where the sage learns from the people. In Sarkar's language, they accentuate the vipran tendencies in society, but those of the exploiting vipras not the service oriented vipras. Indeed, Chinese history can be seen as alternating power between the warrior and intellectual classes. At present the struggle continues with China on the verge of the next phase of the social cycle; a phase which for Ssu-Ma Chien and Chang is another one in the long cycle of history, hopefully one where virtue rises and the tao is unified in history.

How would Ssu-Ma Chien and Chang respond to the efforts of Sarkar? Our sense is that they would see his effort as continuing their project of understanding the reasons behind history so that virtue and goodness can rise and evil can be censured. They would be delighted by his use of the sage as a future model of leadership. Chang would stress that while the people look to the sage for advice, the sage finds the tao in the unconscious actions of the people. Likewise, they would find some agreement in Sarkar's notion that the human adventure is ultimately about governing evolution, increasingly taking the functions of prakrti into the minds of humans. They would also, we believe, not object to Sarkar's division of humans into different classes, although they might be tempted to include the category of foreigner or people outside the varna. But given that these thinkers all emanate from a cosmologically unified discourse, we should not be surprised at the similarity in thinking. All three have

as their main project the return of harmony and balance to a world that has privileged expansionist materialism at the expense of natural mind and divine life or the life of the tao.

This next section will continue the comparison process but move from Chinese historiography to the thinker that exemplifies Islamic philosophical thinking. This is the work and life of Ibn Khaldun, who like Sarkar, is a cyclical theorist, spiritually inclined and who also wrote at the end of a major era. What follows is an exegesis of Khaldun's theory of history and a comparison of Sarkar with it. Specifically we will focus on Khaldun's concept of asabiya, the jewel of his thought. We will be more specific with Khaldun than with other thinkers in that his model remains current (although it has now unconsciously been translated into the language of the positive sciences).

IBN KHALDUN AND SARKAR: THE MAIN COURSE

Writing at a time of the disunity and the decline of the Islamic empire, the horrors of the plague and the conquests of the Mongol Tamerlane, Ibn Khaldun (732-802 AH or 1332-1406 AD) sought to understand the rise and fall of civilizations. Like Sarkar, and unusually for his time, Khaldun's history is not merely descriptive, nor genealogical, nor a defense of a particular civilization--it does not seek to glorify Islam. Rather, Khaldun searches for the causes behind historical actions and movement. His is an attempt at a science of history. And again like Sarkar, Khaldun distances himself from contemporary and historical thinkers of the time by rejecting the

theory that history is a degeneration from a previous era of perfection. Khaldun also rejects the cyclical regression view of the ancients in which prophecy leads to caliphate, then to unjust kingship, then finally to a return to prophecy. Sarkar appears to use this classic model in his rise and fall of dharma model wherein either the taraka brahma takes birth to right injustice and return humanity back to truth. Mencius, Ssu-Ma Chien and others, as we have seen, used this model, although they did not define the routinization of charisma as declining from caliphate to kingship. Indeed, Toynbee in his classic study, writes that because of the instability of the kingdom (the inability of the creative minority to respond appropriately to external and internal challenges), the kingship state can lead to a higher stability than that of caliphate or empire, which then, as it becomes oppressive, leads to the forming of a new church, potentially a new universal church. Thus the Toynbee equation becomes civilization growing from various challenges, then leading to a universal state, and finally a universal church emerging from within. Obviously, an equation similar to the Ksattriya-vipra transition.

Now while Sarkar laments at the inequitable distribution of power in history and the writing of history, Khaldun laments at the banality of most historiography. To him most history is simply about how "people settled the earth until they heard the call and their time was up" (Khaldun 1967, 5). Khaldun's aim is to discover "[t]he inner meaning of history, [which] involves speculation and an attempt to get at the truth" (5). Specifically, it involves the "subtle explanation

of the causes and origins of existing things, and deep knowledge of the how and why of events" (5).

As with other macrohistorians, the pattern of Khaldun's own life is critical in understanding his theory of change and his predictions for the future. His own life is isomorphic to his historiography. Khaldun moves from political escapades, intrigues and efforts to maximize power to his own person, to efforts to play the role of learned advisor to kings and potential princes, and then finally to a distanced academic wherein he is not concerned with personality, nor with particular tribes and religions, but rather with the consistent forms or variables that stand behind them. With structure. Sarkar, of course, is far more purposeful in his career, being a student, serving in the army, serving in the railways, beginning a mystical school, transforming it into a spiritual organization, developing a theory of history and a theory of distribution, and then forming an organization to fulfill his entire civilizational program.

Khaldun, however, unlike Sarkar does not develop a history of Being but distanced himself from the prevalent theological discourses of the time. There is no separation as with Sarkar of devotional-mythic writing and critical historical writing. Khaldun's is not the project of finding how Allah is influencing the course of history. God to him is a figure that stands in the background providing inspiration and individual purpose and is used in his text most often to begin a passage--'May God take care of us and of you ... in the same way He takes care of those whom, as He knows in His prescience, He will make happy and guide a right"(206)--or as an after

the fact explanation. It was Allah's will. God remains in the absolute. For Khaldun what is significant about God is that through religion, the sign of God, human can increase their unity or asabiya and thus provide the basis for their rise in power. God is placed in structure and process; the group that has God will have unity and will ascend in power not the group that has God will ascend because God prefers them.

PERSONAL HISTORY: THE RISE AND FALL OF FAMILIES

Ibn Khaldun was born in Tunis on May 27, 1332. His family history was that of scholars and statesman. The Ibn Khaldun family played an important part in the civil wars in Seville in the 9th century and held high posts in the subsequent Umayyad, Almoravid, and Almohad dynasties. In 1248 just before the fall of Seville and Cordoba, they moved to the northern coast of Morocco. Ibn Khaldun's father was an administrator and soldier who eventually devoted himself to theology, law and letters. In 1349 the Black Death struck Tunis and took away both his father and his mother. This event was not lost on Khaldun. Ibn Khaldun's personal life followed the pattern set by his family. Khaldun spent time in government but by 1357 the Sultan Abu Inan suspected his loyalties and threw him in prison. Once the Abu Inan died, the wazir Al-Hassan ibn Umar reinstated him.

The next eight or nine years, which saw much strife between the Merini and Hasfid dynasties in North-West Africa, were the most precarious in Ibn Khaldun's restless career. On the fall of Abu Abdallah, Ibn Khaldun raised a large force among the desert Arabs and entered the service of the Sultan of Tlemcen. A few years later he was taken prisoner...(viii).

Khaldun next entered a monastic establishment where he wrote the Muqaddimah finishing in 1377. He moved to Egypt where he served as a judge and applied the idea of asabiya to Egyptian history. But the ups and downs of life did not end for next his family died in a shipwreck in 1384.

It is not surprising then that he choose to write about the rise and fall of dynasties, their actual causes, and concludes that history is cyclical. Making this similar point, Mushsin Mahdi has concluded that

[t]he picture of the Islamic world during the fourteenth century as depicted by Ibn Khaldun, and for the most part substantiated by other sources, was one of general decline and disintegration ... Western North Africa, where Ibn Khaldun grew up and spent fifty years of his life before going to Egypt, was the worst part of the Islamic world in this respect. It presented him with a spectacle of chaos and desolation (Mahdi 1957, 26).

Sarkar also writes in what he perceives as one of the most desolate times for humanity: physical poverty, intellectual extravagance, and spiritual cynicism; a world dominated by the twin demons of capitalism and communism on one side and religious dogmatism in the form of non-universalism on the other side. While it is not the end of the Islamic world, it is certainly the end of the Western world, if not the entire world of modernity as we have known it in the last few hundred years. Sarkar, too, while not involved in the politics of dynasties is involved in the present day version, the politics of social movements and their attempts to transform the discourse of power, from state power to community, individual and spiritual power. His has been a struggle with the Indian government, spending time in prison and, like Khaldun, finding his loved one

distanced and his organization destroyed, and then finally rebuilding it. We should not be too surprised at the numerous similarities in thought. Sarkar writes with the intellectual history of the past few centuries, and substantially develops the Khaldunian approach.

THE PRIMITIVE-CIVILIZATION-PRIMITIVE CYCLE

Khaldun begins his historiography with the state of nature. He finds two types of culture: that of the primitive and that of the civilized; the rural and city. They are near opposites of each other, with bravery, morality, unity, strong kinship ties and respect for parental authority describing the rural and cowardice, fragmented economic and social ties, and individualism describing the city. But they are not unrelated; groups start as nomads and as they rise in wealth they construct or conquer cities, but in cities with increased economic activity and size new relationships emerge. These lead to a concentration on leisure and sensual pleasures which then leads to the breakdown of the city. Thus nomads are not genetically more pious; rather it is culture that emerges in a given environment which creates the context for the different meanings and behaviors of city and nomadic life.

Asabiya begins with the ideal person in nature, the Bedouin nomad. "Man seeks first the bare necessities. Only after he has obtained [them] does he get to comforts and luxuries. The toughness of nomadic life precedes the softness of sedentary life" (Khaldun 1967, 12). The Bedouins or Sarkar's ksattriyans are more courageous because they have to be. Living in the desert requires such behavior,

while those in the city resort to governmental laws and regulations and thus destroy their "fortitude and power of resistance"(95) Through environmental adversities, desert people develop increased solidarity. With compassion and the desire to protect those of the family, group feelings--asabiya--continues to grow and consolidate. However, intertribe conflict leads to numerous wars and anarchy.

Once a superior solidarity emerges within a group, it tends to subdue lesser solidarities and bring them under its control. The result is a greater solidarity that unites the conflicting factions and directs their efforts to fight and subdue other groups. This process of expansion and unification continues until a point is reached when the newly formed solidarity is able to conquer the dominions of a civilized state or to establish new cities and the institutions characteristic of a civilized culture (Mahdi 1957, 199).

The group with the strongest unity rules other groups. From kinship, kingship emerges. Kingship leads to the desire for more power and the tribe expands its population and size, accumulating power, riches and leisure. Kingship or Royal authority is considered a necessity so as to avoid groups fighting, to give social cohesion. Thus, kings provide a superordinate authority. According to Khaldun, "he [the king] must dominate them and have power and authority over them, so that none of them will be able to attack another. This is the meaning of royal authority" (Khaldun 1967, 47). Besides kinship, religion provides asabiya. It creates new loyalties and a new solidarity. Indeed, religion mixed with blood loyalty in the context of just royal authority creates a formidable unity of mind and purpose, the ideal civilization.

Now for Sarkar, Khaldun is accurately describing the shudra to ksattriyan transition phase in human history and the rise and fall of

ksattriyan power. Unity is essential, but it can be developed not only from the desert, but from being outside of the center. It can be, as Ashis Nandy (1989) has recently elaborated, in the shaman as well. For Sarkar, this asabiya can be developed in the various social and spiritual movements, for, although existing in the city, they do not exist in the city of materialism and capitalism. Sarkar would take Khaldun's desert/city differently and treat them metaphorically. Elsewhere, William Irwin Thompson has developed this tension as the central rhythm in history.

When one believes in an alternative vision of history ... he is stepping outside the city to see a pastoral vision in which the office building and the universities do not obscure the archaic stars ... Those left behind in the city define themselves as responsible and sane and see the wanderer as a madman. The wanderer defines himself as the only sane person in a city of the insane and walks out in search of other possibilities. All history seems to pulse in this rhythm of urban views and pastoral visions (Thompson 1971, 214-15).

Sarkar does not go that far. Within Tantra the process of wandering occurs in the mind irrespective of the city/rural distinction, although certainly tantric monks reside in graveyards and thus develop a vision of the world that hangs precariously on the edge of sanity. But Khaldun uses the desert model to develop a collective identity through which power is appropriated; spiritual identity is not problematic for him, it exists within and through Islam.

UNITY OF DISCOURSE: THE FINITE AND INFINITE

Like Sarkar, the episteme that Khaldun thinks from has a unified discursive field, although Khaldun, given his Islamic influence, places man at the center with nature below and God above. What

happens to the individual, happens to the group, happens to a city, and happens to a civilization. Individuals follow a birth, rise, adulthood and decline cycle as do dynasties, cities and civilizations. Only God stands above, but although everything is per his will, he does not privilege one group over another. Rather those groups that stay courageous, whose followers give leaders legitimacy, and who construct themselves as one people, last over time. Others find their fortunes decaying. When fortunes decay, those who have the strongest group feelings, the primitives (Bedouins) come back into control and power, thus continuing the cycle. In addition, Khaldun separates God and the world. Although individuals can attain various levels of spirituality, it is the tension embedded in choice that gives rise to the various alternative futures, not the will of the spirit. Said poetically and philosophically by Lenn Goodman:

What answer then has Ibn Khaldun to the problem of values and of God in history? ...the laws of human and social nature (if not those of human existence) bring men into conflict, cause them to overstep. In the dialectic of history each man in his society pursues what may seem goods (and partly be such) which lead both to virtue and to vice (in a partial sort of way) and bring in their train, or rather contain, their own retribution and their own reward. For societies, as for individuals, crime and punishment, virtue and reward are inextricable from one another. ...every empire or horde [must] live the life which is in its nature and die the death which is of its nature (Goodman 1972, 269-270).

But this finiteness is unacceptable to man. Man seeks to expand through "group feelings," through identification, in family, clan, dynasty and empire. While this is similar to the classic search for the Infinite, it has a structural basis in Khaldun's theory for it covers all relations, it bonds. For Khaldun,

The true answer to the problem of evil (and of failure) in history was to be found in the tragic finitude of men and all that they create, a finitude at once noble and degrading, which God in His wisdom and grace bestowed upon men and nations, allowing them to live and causing them to die through a nature of their own. In the end it is God that is eternal (Goodman 1972, 270).

In Khaldun's words:

He is all powerful and nothing in heaven or on earth is impossible for Him or escapes Him. He raised us up from the Earth and gave us breath, let us live on earth as nations and tribes, gave us our portion and sustenance from the earth. The wombs of our mothers and our houses were our shelters. Food keeps us alive. Time wears us out, and our fate, which us been fixed in the Book, comes. But He endures. He lives and does not die (270).

Thus as with Sarkar, humans are rational and have choice for most discussions. True at the level of the absolute, only He endures, but this absolute does not infringe on the world for Khaldun, and for Sarkar it only infringes when righteousness has degenerated to a point wherein nothing can be done by humans themselves. But again as we have suggested, Sarkar moves back and forth--with little attempt to resolve his various theories of history--between the language of the philosopher and the language of the guru. There are times when only realizing the infinite matters, but by and large, the purpose of his theories is to construct a world wherein the infinite is made more accessible. Human suffering is a result of a

defective social order ... this state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue. The structure of inequality and injustice must be destroyed and powdered down for the collective interest of the human beings. Then and then alone, humans may be able to lead the society on the path of virtue. Without that only a handful of persons can possible attain the Supreme Perfection, but it would be extremely difficult to lead the whole community with quick speed to the Supreme Being (Sarkar 1978b, 2: 17).

For Khaldun this state is possible with the Bedouins; in civilization the external force eventually takes over and the dynasty declines.

Again this is quite different than the choices, for example, Hegel constructs, epochs later. For Hegel, "world history exhibits the development of the consciousness of freedom on the part of the spirit, and of the consequent realization of that freedom" (Walsh 1960, 143). History in Hegel's view works behind the back of individuals, that is, there is Providence and reason to all events; it is the spirit expressing itself in History (Manicus 1987, 86-96). Moreover, this spirit expresses itself in world history through states. Thus history has a notion of progress, but it is a particular notion, one nested in the State. And every nation has a peculiar contribution which it is destined, in its turn, to make to the process of world history. Furthermore, this progress is facilitated by great individuals, the Napoleons. They are the chosen instruments of destiny. For Hegel, his Prussian State was the will of the spirit, the finest expression of freedom.

Khaldun did not privilege a group because they were at the zenith of its civilization as the group chosen by God, although certainly he was partial to the earlier Islamic caliphate. But Khaldun's questions are not moral ones; nor does he try to construct a vision of an ideal tomorrow. He is a diplomat historian, closest perhaps to the Chinese grand historian Ssu-Ma Chien.

RISE AND FALL: UNIFICATION AND FRAGMENTATION

Khaldun's focus is on the fundamental laws of history. Again, the central concept is group feeling, unity. The word literally means the fibre or sinew by which a group is held together. It is that which binds people into effective groups. Once this concept is understood, we can understand history for the laws of group identity are the laws of history.

From a contemporary perspective, Joseph Campbell has similarly written in his The Masks of God:

The rise and fall of civilizations in the long, broad course of history can be seen to have been largely a function of the integrity and cogency of their supporting canons of myth, for not authority but aspiration is the motivator, builder and transformer of civilization. A mythological canon is an organization of symbols, ineffable in import, by which the energies of aspiration are evoked and gathered toward a focus (Campbell 1968, 4: 5).

Instead of aspiration, the term is solidarity at the horizontal level, legitimacy as given by the people to the king, and protection and the meeting of basic needs as provided by the king/clan. When asabiya is strong, there is legitimacy; when it is weak, then dynasties fall, empires are conquered, and a new group with a stronger asabiya rises.

In his section on the disintegration of dynasties, Khaldun describes how dynasties lose their asabiya. With fights in the inner group, the ruler eliminates and humiliates the contenders--legitimacy is destroyed. What results is a new but much weaker group feeling. This hastens further decline. Eventually, people who do not share in the group feeling of the elite take charge, but their commitment is

not that strong and the dynasty is split and can be easily overthrown. In addition, with expansion more funds must be paid out to the masses and with luxury, group feeling decreases. Thus, to deal with crises, rulers pay out more money. This is in sharp contrast to the beginning of the dynasty, when it had a desert attitude--with no extravagant expenditures, a sense of royal authority and a spiritual bond with leadership

But luxury is not always the downfall. Khaldun is far more sophisticated than that. For example, in the beginning of a dynasty luxury actually leads to increased group feeling and royal authority as it brings on more children. The population of the leadership expands. It is only in subsequent generations that the non-productive elite become problematic and brings on their own decline. For Sarkar (as well as Mosca and Pareto whom we will come to) this is true for all elites, ksattriyans, vipras and vaeshyas.

Dynasties, cities and civilizations have clear stages. "Through the conditions that are peculiar to a particular state, the supporters of the dynasty acquire in that stage traits of character such as do not exist in any other stage. Traits of character are the natural result of the peculiar situations in which they are found" (Khaldun 1967, 141).

"The first stage is that of success, the overthrow of all opposition, and the appropriation of royal authority from the preceding dynasty" (141). Thus the new group does not have to start all over, it has learned from the previous. In this stage, the ruler is benevolent and does not claim all authority for himself. In the

second stage the ruler consolidates power and makes himself the sole executive, so as to exclude others from their various claims of royal authority. At this stage, according to Khaldun

[there is] kindness to subjects, planned moderation in expenditure, and respect for other people's property. Nothing at this time calls for extravagant expenditures, Therefore the dynasty does not need much money. Later comes domination and expansion (luxury) caus[ing] increased spending. It calls for the increases in soldiers' allowances and in the salaries of the people of the dynasty. Extravagant expenditures mount (Brown 1871, 27).

But before the decline there is the third stage wherein "the fruits of royal authority are enjoyed: the things that human nature desires such as acquisition of property, creation of lasting monuments, and fame" (Khaldun 1967, 142). It is in this middle stage that the kingdom is prosperous, unity is high, expenditures medium, the army loyal, the ruler just. In the fourth stage, the ruler imitates the previous ruler and becomes conservative, not departing from tradition and thus making the mistakes of the previous cycle. Then, in the fifth and final stage, there is waste and squandering. He loses legitimacy. This is the stage of senility and the dynasty is destroyed. "[A]t the end of the dynasty ... crippling taxes weigh heavily upon the people and crush their incentives...when they compare their costs of the production and the taxes they must pay with their income and see what little profit there is in trade and business they lose all hope" (Brown 1971, 32). "A general apathy and hopelessness," argues Khaldun, "steal over people when they lose control of their own destinies and become dependent on others. Such a dependent people will be conquered by the first fighting tribe they encounter" (Brown 1971, 28). Also at this time the elites--government officials and private

individuals--leave the city with the wealth they have amassed.

Thus dynasties rise, consolidate power, expand, grow old, become senile and then die. This rise and fall is the rise and fall of unity, identity and legitimacy, or in one word--asabiya. New dynasties emerge at the periphery among provincial governors or among rebels with a stronger group feeling. However, the new dynasty comes to power not through sudden action, but through perseverance. Battle after battle, eventually the senility, not to mention the pestilences and famines of urban centers, bring it down. And of course, then, the new dynasty will take on the cycle of the previous one; it will rise and fall.

But before the end, there is a rise again.

"Group feeling has often disappeared (when the dynasty has grown senile) and pomp has taken the place it occupied in the souls of men. Now, when in addition to the weakening of group feeling, pomp, too, is discontinued, the subjects grow audacious vis-a-vis the dynasty. At the end of a dynasty, there often also appears some (show of) power that gives the impression that the senility of the dynasty has been made to disappear. It lights up brilliantly just before it is extinguished, like a burning wick the flame of which leaps up brilliantly a moment before it goes out, giving the impression it is just starting to burn, when in fact it is going out (Khaldun 1967, 246). (emphasis added)

While Sarkar's history is not nearly as in-depth in describing the rise and fall of dynasties, Spengler and Toynbee take Khaldun's ideas and further develop them, the notion of the Indian summer in particular to describe the false rise. In addition, Toynbee advances Khaldun's concept of the leadership by the creative minority which eventually becomes a dominant majority. Like Khaldun, it is leaders from the internal proletariat or the external proletariat that bring on the new leadership. But while Khaldun refers to religions as

increasing the fibre of unity, for Toynbee, a universal religion is one of the bonds that the internal proleteriats uses to construct the new civilization. In addition, Toynbee adds the notion that in the integration phase the leadership successfully resolves the challenges posed, while in the disintegration phase an opposite cycle begins wherein failure leads to more failure. The questions are not Sarkar's as he does not present us with a theory of the rise and fall of civilizations, although he does present us, as we shall shortly see, a theory of the ingredients necessary for a successful civilization, or ideology.

THE TIME OF DISINTEGRATION

Khaldun also gives us indicators in generational time. Khaldun's hypothesis is that dynasties last four generations. At the level of the family, nobility and prestige follows the same pattern.

"It reaches its end in a single family within four successive generations ... The builder of the family's glory knows what it costs him to do the work, and he keeps the qualities that created his glory and made it last. The son who comes after him had person contact with his father and thus learned those things from him. However, he is inferior to him in this respect, inasmuch as a person who learns things through study is inferior to a person who knows them from practical applications. The third generation must be content with imitation, and, in particular, reliance upon tradition. This member is inferior to him of the second generation, inasmuch as a person who relies upon tradition is inferior to a person who exercises independent judgement. The fourth generation, then, is inferior to the preceding ones in every respect ... He imagines that the edifice was not built through application and effort. He thinks that it is something due his people from the very beginning by virtue of the mere fact of their descent, and not something that resulted from group effort and individual qualities (105-106).

The family thus revolts and finds a new leader. The new leader then grows, while the man of the fourth generation continues to decline.

Khaldun gives an interesting example of this. The children of Israel were told by God to go forth and conquer. But they did not. Instead they wandered forty years until a generation had passed away, and a new one that had not witnessed the humiliation by Egypt could take over. Moreover, this new generation was strengthened by adverse desert conditions, developed asabiya and consequently could accomplish the destined mission ahead.

Dynasties follow the same pattern lasting on the average three generations or 120 years (three times forty, the age of maturity). The first generation "retains the desert qualities, desert toughness and desert savagery" (137). They live on basic needs, their unity and their desire for more goods keep them active and vital.

Under the influence of royal authority and a life of ease, the second generation changes from the desert attitude to sedentary culture, from privation to luxury and plenty, from a state in which everybody shared in the glory to one in which one man claims all the glory for himself while the others are too lazy to strive for glory ... The third generation, then, has completely forgotten the period of desert life and toughness, as if it had never existed. They have lost the taste for the sweetness of fame and for group feelings, because they are dominated by force ... They become dependent on the dynasty and are like ... children who need to be defended (177).

But this last generation continues the show of courage by having contests and extravaganzas, but their courage, for the most part is gone. In the final generation, they are overcome by a group with more solidarity.

Among others, again Tarde and Toynbee use the principle of imitation to write of the rise and decline of civilizations. For Sarkar, imitation occurs when a different varna adopts the color of the dominant varna. Thus, whatever the evils of capitalists, they

still create new products and technologies that lead to a certain societal dynamism, to economic growth. Their greed becomes imitated by the other classes who are unconcerned with the risks and politics of growth. They simply imitate, hoping to make profits, usually when the downswing of the particular economic cycle has already begun. In addition, in the Vipran era, warriors become devious moving away from their learned courageous behavior. Thus, imitation again leads to a general degeneration.

Now for both Sarkar and Khaldun, the causes of historical change are endogenous. What causes the rise, leads to the fall. External factors are important but not essential. The cycle remains: primitivism, civilization, kingship and absolute power, leisure and functional economic relations, disintegration, and primitivism again.

However, Toynbee--deeply influenced by Khaldun--takes an external approach to his history. At center stage is his theory of challenge and response. The civilization's creative minority often rises to meet the challenge. Once the creative minority becomes exploitive it perishes or is taken over. For Khaldun the creative response is dependent on the particular stage of the family, dynasty, city or civilization. If it is in an earlier stage then it can be successful. In the later stages, then there is too much luxury, warriors fight for salary, not for religion; thus the response would not matter. But the royal authority for Khaldun eventually translates into the universal state of Toynbee. This is the unified centralized kingdom where discipline is high and power is centralized.

Sarkar's approach is again similar to Khaldun's. Khaldun begins with the necessary physical and natural environment that gives rise to civilization, and then moves to asabiya; Sarkar too begins with the natural environment. This is developed in his discourse titled, "The Future of Civilization," in The Supreme Expression (1978b). Both individuals and society are dependent on three factors, existence, development and Bliss (asti, bhati and ananda). Asti is material existence and its requirements (shelter, food, clothing, education, and medical facilities). For the development of a group of people, the following factors are needed: (1) spiritual ideology--the philosophy of self and consciousness, a theory of meaning and its origin, (2) spiritual practice--a way to experience the ideology at the level of the person, a process by which the ideology can be empirically realized (3) socio-economic theory--a theory of the distribution and growth of value, the allocation of values, goods and services and a theory of what and how wealth is created (4) fraternal social outlook--that all are existentially equal and that all come from the same supreme spirit, basically some ethic of solidarity, the larger the outlook the greater the chance for civilizational growth, (5) texts--theories written from the point of view of authority so as to serve as consensually agreed upon points of reference, which provide meaning and inspiration and finally, (6) perceptor--here Sarkar means that each society for its development must have a founder, someone who can show the way. Again a consensually recognized founder from which texts, ideology, and practice find their unity. Now all these are necessary, as for example without spiritual

practices, the spiritual ideology would become colonized or controlled by a dominant group. The practices keep the ideology alive centered in agency, in the individual. However, without a spiritual ideology, there would be no basis for understanding shared experiences. With social outlook the problem of an internal or external proleteriat is eliminated, at least conceptually, for all partake and participate in the universal project. This is the the Islamic concept of fraternity, but not just in the Western sense of humans, but the inclusion of animals, plants, and other types of entities. The six spokes as Sarkar refers to them are necessary for a successful civilization. When some of them are missing, the civilization can degenerate. Sarkar uses his analysis not only for civilizations, but ideologies as well. Islam as we can see has many of these categories while Buddhism is weak at socio-economic theory.

For true development all these factors must be there. A socio-economic theory without fraternity is no use as it would advantage some over others; spiritual ideology without sadhana would be no use, as the spiritual tradition would become autocratic and colonized by a particular priestly class; moreover, without the practice the personal realization of truth would remain missing. Now why does he emphasize scripture and perceptor. Most likely these two provide continuity; they provide inspiration and give a society focus; they provide a coherent center.

Civilizations die because they are missing particular factors. Other civilizations colonize civilizations but in the process lose their own vibrancy--thus the Islamic wave became weakened after it had

absorbed Egyptian civilization and thus was unable to conquer Europe. And Sarkar argues that Roman civilization was lacking in social outlook (slavery), lack of "proper socio-economic theory had generated a kind of a fascist mentality. Those rolling in luxury from free labor became indolent. Naturally, they were defeated by a stronger and more strenuous force" (Sarkar 1978b, 2: 99). This appears very similar to group feeling, especially when defined as unity, identity and legitimacy, the way we interpret Khaldun to mean it.

Those groups that have these factors will lead them to Ananda or Bliss, a society where individuals live in peace and justice, and where spiritual development is possible. He uses the term bliss to denote not only a bright future, but to denote the spiritual. "The real progress is only spiritual. In the spiritual field, due to the absence of reactive momenta (desires and past experiences which impact the mind) there is no clash, there is only forward movement, and this is the nature of true progress" (105).

Now instead of dynasties, Sarkar provides an overall framework. But in the warrior era, unity (discipline, social order and hierarchy) is the key; it is an era of gallantry and heroism, of the protection of the weak and the poor, as well as the butchery of other nations and tribes. It is this era, that Khaldun, from the Sarkarian interpretation mostly wrote. Thus, his emphasis on group identification.

But like Sarkar, Khaldun points to the usurpation of power by intellectuals in the decline of dynasties:

when royal authority is firmly established in a particular family and branch of the tribe supporting the dynasty, and when that

family claims all royal authority for itself and keeps the rest of the tribe away from it, and when the children of (that family) succeed to the royal authority in turn, by appointment, then it often happens that their wazirs and entourage gain power over the throne. This occurs most often when a little child or a weak member of the family is appointed successor by his father or made ruler by his creatures and servants ... Eventually, it becomes clear that he exercises the control, and he uses the fact as a tool to achieve royal authority ... All actual executive power are believed (by the child ruler) to belong to the wazir. He defers to him all these things. Eventually the wazir definitely adopts the coloring of the leader, of the man in control ... Once a dynasty has fallen into the hands of the Wazirs and clients, it remains in that situation. Rarely is it able to escape from it, because (such control by others) is mostly the result of living in luxury and the fact that the royal princes have grown up immersed in prosperity. They have forgotten the ways of manliness [the desert ways] and have become accustomed to the character traits of wet nurses, and they have grown up that way. They do not desire leadership (Batra 1980, 114-115).

The wazir (intellectual) then "even though he exercises full control ... He disguises his control under the form of a ruler's representative" (Batra 1980, 116). There is a difference however. For Khaldun there is no era of the wazirs. Khaldun is merely showing the decline in royal authority through his theory of generational decline. With asabiya weak, kingship is appropriate by other forms of power not based on unity; the power of the wazir in this case. It simply marks a phase in the degeneration of royal authority from true leadership to a false leadership. Sarkar, in contrast, writes about the epochal change from warriors to intellectuals, the usurpation of military power by normative/cultural power. For Sarkar this is the loosening of the royal power to ministerial power; from one person rule to oligarchic rule.

But useful for Sarkar is Khaldun's definition of royal authority. Royal authority is considered a necessity so as to avoid factional

fighting, to give social cohesion. Thus, kings provide a superordinate authority. According to Khaldun, "he must dominate them and have power and authority over them, so that none of them will be able to attack another. This is the meaning of royal authority" (Khaldun, 1967, 47). This is the meaning of Sarkar's Ksattriyan era.

Interpreting Sarkar from the Khaldunian perspective, Sarkar six spokes are simply the ingredients of asabiya. The dynasty that has all these points will last and rule long, for it will have religion and this is the factor coupled with Bedouin rugged strength and simple ways will lead to continued power. But for Sarkar instead of the simply ways of the Bedouin, central are the simple ways of the yogi (non-accumulation of material possessions, non-attachment to power and ways of the world). But Khaldun's brilliance is that he asserts that the process of power building in itself leads to a decline in asabiya, for over time initiative leads to imitation, hardwork leads to laziness, military strength for sake of family leads to military strength for sake of money. Thus, over time the structure in itself disintegrates. The process is endogenous and cyclical. Khaldun has two types of power, royal authority and religious, but generally leaves out economic power as an independent variable, merely arguing that rulers should treat merchants well. If Khaldun were able to critique Sarkar, he would argue that Sarkar's unit of analysis remain vague (sometimes he speaks of civilizations, sometimes of ideologies, sometimes of countries, sometimes of collective/group mind) and he is weak at his understanding of royal authority, the end all of all collective actions.

Sarkar takes the identifications that Khaldun uses for his theory, from family to clan to dynasty, and relocates them in a new ethical theory. These identifications are part of the problem, what is needed is a theory that is not grounded in geographical, social, religious, or ethnic identities, rather the self must be freed from all limiting identities. These notions of unity enslave the intellect in the final analysis. Sarkar comments: "Due to the bondage of various types of exploitation and tyranny against the intellect in the physical sphere, the human spirit bursts out, writhing in suppressed agony" (Sarkar 1983, 70). These are but the dogmas of the mind.

But then how does Sarkar define the nation and other identities? Here Sarkar uses Khaldun's notions of asabiya and develops it along the lines Benedict Anderson (1983) has used for his explanation of the nation-state as essentially an imagined community. In his "To the Patriots" Sarkar develops his own theory of unity. Immediately Sarkar dispels the classic interpretation of nation--"similar manners and customs, similar model of living, similar traditions, racial similarity, religious similarity" (Sarkar 1987b, 4: 29) And: "linguistic similarity is not an essential factor in forming a nation either" (29). While these play a vital role, they are in themselves insignificant. "It is sentiment and nothing else that creates a nation" (31). Thus nationhood resides in emotional perception, in feelings. To argue his position he develops an alternative history of India which follows a dialectical rise and fall of sentiment approach similar to Khaldun's asabiya.

Initially based on a different variables (environment, "race," conquest) groupings (nations) form. When the particular group exploits another group, a movement against the exploiting group starts. Two or more identities or then formed: exploiter and exploited. This unit changes depending on the theorist and the type of exploitation (class, ethnicity, caste, religion, gender, color, for example). Eventually there is absorption or one is victorious. The unity derived from the sentiment against the exploiter ends. For Sarkar each nation goes through numerous episodes of unity and disunity. It is unified when it has a sentiment. This sentiment is the key, however. But for Sarkar the sentiment needed today is an anti-economic exploitation sentiment, against the global capitalist system, in general. This sentiment can be used to develop local, regional self-reliant unity and thus develop solidarity. The USSR and China both successfully used this strategy (and now finds themselves in the situation of being perceived as exploitive by their own republics, provinces and social groups).

However, even an anti-exploitation sentiment will disappear once the cause of exploitation is resolved. Thus what is the answer for human unity. As with Ssu-Ma Chien, Chang, Khaldun, Vico, Spengler, Toynbee, Sorokin and others the answer is spiritual (unlike Marx who believed that once labor was free, man would be free and the State would not be needed):

Along with the theory of spiritual inheritance [property owned by the cosmos], one Cosmic Ideology will have to be adopted and that ideology is that one Supreme entity--the Cosmic Entity--is the goal of all living beings. This spiritual sentiment will keep human beings united for all time to come ...No other theory can save the human race (45).

Thus unity rises and falls. Eternal collective unity can be formed only through a shared theory of the spirit and a shared theory of property: that is, a theory that has all the spokes. For Sarkar, it is this that will provide the best future. Sentiment, thus, in becomes the critical political asset, the resource that can unify. An anti-exploitation sentiment is Sarkar's preferred with the universal spiritualism sentiment as the ideal unifying force: a spiritual kinship that includes all beings and entities, animate and inanimate.

Returning to Khaldun, we see that like his personal history of rise and fall and rise, presents us with a history of the rise and fall of civilizations. History is cyclically; moved by endogenous forces. The key to history is social unity and solidarity. It is this and the search for basic needs that lead to royal authority and the development of the State. State power is held as long the elite are innovative, fair and unified. But with size and civilization, lethargy, cruelty, impiety, and sensuality develop. Instead of kinship, functional relationships become paramount. Instead of unity, there is fragmentation. Eventually the group feeling breaks apart and those with a stronger group feeling rise and take state power. They too then follow the same pattern. While God does not work in history, the notion of God provides unity to the people who have faith. It is this faith that leads to strength and victory.

Khaldun's works form the basis of much of present sociological thought. In addition to Sarkar, one can find his thinking in Comte (the creation of a science of society), in Weber (the routinization of charisma and the politics of bureaucracy), in Spengler (the biological

life cycle applied to society), and in Marx (the town and country distinction), among those who use a rise and fall of model of power. His theory of unity and decline through lethargy and his theory of the decline of familial generations are so profound that they have become part of our common social understandings.

As Khaldun developed a discourse but was forgotten, Sarkar too has developed a new ways of constructing the world such that his work will be used as an asset irrespective of the correctness of his various theories, they will be used to frame new questions. In summary, both their works have a great deal of similarities: positive as to the future, cyclical, endogenous variables to explain change, (although they include external variables such as climate, plagues, polar shifts) spiritual in approach, but not Hegelian in upholding the State, stress on unity as the or among the fundamental factors of change, personal lives that were filled with success and tragedy, and both wrote at the end of epochs. Both also see in the decline phase of a civilization the rise of materialism, lethargy, luxury; both believe theirs is a universal history for all time and space, both are critical of spiritual traditions around them (Sarkar at the priests who control through ritual and caste: Khaldun at the soothsayers who try and comfort), and both write a history through time. Finally, both stress religion or spiritual ideology as leading to great dynastic (civilizational) strength. Sarkar, however, writes a history of mentalities, Khaldun of asabiya. They write in different eras and stress different aspects of history and political theory.

ISLAM AND THE FUTURE

As we did earlier with Chinese civilization, we will offer some comments on how Sarkar and others might construct the future of the Islamic world. Batra (1980) has argued that Islam is moving into the Vaeshyan era and thus will be the center of democracy, decentralized government and entrepreneurialism. Present Iran, then, is simply a counterrevolution against the capitalist developmentalism of the Shah. Conversely, one might assert that there was a true monarchy in Iran and now the vipran clergy has taken over. Khaldun is more instructive. For Khaldun, Iran can best be understood as a decline in asabiya. The rulership lost its mantle, not from heaven, but because of misuse of resources, because of luxury, and then someone, as Khaldun would predict, from the provinces (Khomeini) came in and took over the leadership. He started a new dynasty which if it were the 14th century would take, most likely, a hundred years to dislodge. From Khaldun's perspective, the Saudi Arabian dynasty is past its prime and potentially ready for usurpers. On the other hand, Toynbee or Galtung with his expansion/contraction phases for cosmologies might argue that while Christianity is about to enter a contraction phase, Islam is beginning a long term expansion phase, the inter Islamic developments are simply the working out of who will lead this phase and what type of power it will be: normative-ideological, military, economic, or labor/worker.

From a Sarkarian view, first, the task is to determine which era it is in, a task possible, second and most important is to reconstruct

Islam such that it is neo-humanistic in its orientation; that is, its unity is based a global anti-economic exploitation sentiment, and then a global spiritual sentiment. The struggle invclved in doing this project will develop the asabiya needed to manage the planet for a long time to come.

ENTER THE WEST

We will now move from a discussion of Khaldun and Islamic thought, to one where the central Western writers will be introduced. Some of these have already been presented and given the numerous choices before us, we will not examine them in the same depth as we did Khaldun. Rather we will take and shape to further compare and contrast Sarkar. We will begin with Vico, develop Comte and Hegel then settle down with Marx and Gramsci. From there we will examine the elite theories of Pareto and Mosca and then conclude with Spengler, Toynbee and Sorokin. We will attempt to locate their key thoughts, again, with the view of understanding Sarkar better, putting forth his theory in the context of other thinkers.

VICO

Vico can be seen as a turn that the social sciences did not make. His was an attempt to develop an alternative, a new science to the developing natural sciences. This social science must be different since it includes men, it includes their self-interpretation of the world. Therefore, the methods of the natural sciences should not be used for the social sciences. This was the view of the

counter-enlightenment, that the meaning of a particular situation could be understood through empathy, imagination, and intuition. In this view the objectivity of the natural sciences was not an appropriate model to study humans, since humans are reflective beings and not only discovered the world but in their discoveries constantly reinterpreted the world. Now in the Indian context, there was no necessity of this counter enlightenment as there was no enlightenment of scientific rationality. Rather the first enlightenment was that of the Vedas, with the counter-enlightenment of Buddhism. The issue was not the nature of inquiry but the construction of the self and its relationship to the cosmos. The radical division that the Europeans underwent was a non-event in India (in Indian cosmology and its historical epistemes), rather Indian history can be seen as the politics of the construction and deconstruction of the self. There are times when it is material, times when it only spiritual. Sarkar's reconstruction attempts to locate it in both simultaneously arguing for a self that is eternal and finite. Commentary in Indian thinking has always been an appropriate form of knowledge; intuition has never been banished except in Carvaka. Carvaka, however, unlike the culture of Western cosmology, did not become hegemonic.

For Vico, humane sciences were superior to natural sciences since they were about and through men. Moreover, as Marx would later assert in Capital: And would not such a history be easier to compile since, as Vico, says, human history differs from natural history in this, that we have made the former and not the latter?" (Marx 1952, 181). History then is the account of man and woman's construction of his and

her own character. History then as in the Indian case is interpretation. But then this is not to say that it does not follow certain observable patterns.

History shows us how we have formed ourselves. Precisely Sarkar's observation. The fourfold division of power is not so because it came from the mouth of Brahma, the mythological interpretation, but rather because it developed in history through the interaction of humans with the environment and with each other and ultimately with consciousness itself. According to Robert Brown in his The Nature of Social Laws.

Vico thinks of his new science as a detailed account of the necessary, that is law-governed, evolution of human history. Once we understand the pattern into which providence works that history, we can deduce the presence in it of certain large-scale sequences, and the repetition of certain cultural stages (Brown 1984, 161).

Thus, laws can be constructed without resort to a natural science construction of the objective. One can be credible and correct and not be part of an enlightenment science project. Marx saw this as well and created a materialistic science linking the objective with the interpretative and eventually with the utopian political stance (in terms of recreating the future).

Vico attempts to find that which is common in all humans, irrespective of locality. To him these are various triplicates, no doubt patterned after the classical Christian division. These are "the ideas of numen (God, his providence, religious rites and institutions), the idea of the necessity to restrain passions (the institution of marriage), and the idea of the immortality of the soul

(the institution of burial) (Attila Faj 1987, 25). These beliefs form civil society. They are necessary conditions without which organized societies could not be maintained. They developed to counter early humankind which was ferocious, ambitious, and avaricious. Based on these commonalities, various ages or stages are possible, alternatively the imaginative, the heroic and the reasonable, or the age of Gods, Heros and Men. "Every nation is subject to such a cycle from its rise to its fall and its rise once again. It is in the presence of this inevitable cycle which allows us to deduce the presence of the general features of each stage from the existence of the previous ones" (Brown 1984, 165). Like Sarkar who posits basic types of personality, characteristics of humans, once accepted the rest of the theory follows naturally and logically. Again according to Brown, for Vico,

the cycle is inevitable because the customs and institutions which human beings produce in order to meet their basic needs have predictable consequences, social and psychological. The reason why these consequences are predictable ... is that certain features of human character have lawlike connections with certain types of customs and institutions (165).

Vico's new science reveals these to us, just as Sarkar's new interpretation of history reveals the laws of the cycle, the law of the six spokes, among other universals.

The ages themselves can be seen in different ways. At one level, Vico simply takes the classic decline of humans from the spiritual golden (Gods) to the silver (Hero) to the copper (Man), and then the inbetween iron age (Barbarism). The cycle then starts again with the Age of Gods. From an epistemological view, in the Age of God, only God is real, in the Age of Heros, the leader challenges this

construction and becomes the Great Father, in the Age of Man, humans then construct the world self-consciously placing themselves in the center, and in the Age of Barbarism, reality itself becomes deconstructed, until once again God becomes the really real. Alternatively using Sorokin one can see Vico's ages as the decline from ideational to idealistic to sensate. Using Sarkar one can associate the Ksattriyan era corresponds directly to the Age of Heros, the Vipra with the Age of Men and the Vaeshyan loosely with the Age of Barbarism. But they are not speaking to the same historical divisions (they clearly arrive at them quite differently), both are attempting to capture (or construct) different aspects of the real.

For us more significant than the actual ages is Vico's analogy for change. It is not the body of man (the breath or the arms and legs) nor is it the mountain nor the life cycle of nature, rather according to Attila Faj, it this is the river. Movement. Each stage moves and circle the next. But his law is soft.

The 'softness' of the law means that the successive figures of this roundelay are not necessarily unavoidable and are not independent of any condition and circumstance. Each historical stage streams into the following one and gets mixed with it, so we cannot distinguish them sharply. For a long stretch, the stages and everything that belong to them are mingled like the sweet water of an estuary with the salt water of the sea (Faj 1987, 22).

This soft-hard distinction appears a more fruitful way of understanding the various attempts to demarcate human history. While the modern social scientist might call it sloppy or vague, it is at the same time realistic in that it allows some freedom for history to move. Indeed for Vico, a nation about to enter its new barbarism can be saved by a virtuous monarch. There are escape routes in the

historicism. While this analogy is useful, it differs from Sarkar in that Sarkar has both: movement and pause, both dependent on each other, both cosmological universals.

Vico conditioned or liberated by his Christian upbringing as with other modern writers leaves not only an escape route but a way of transformation. Like Sarkar's spiritual revolutionaries or Marx's proletariats, Vico has his true believers. Just as the ancient "chosen people" averted the decline history, " a similar phenomenon will occur in the future: the hopelessly and tragically recurrent corsi and recorsi will be stopped by Christ's true followers, who will never again let their community or state relapse into barbarism" (22). The cycle is eternal, discovered through intuition and interpretation, but the spiritual allows a way out. Thus, humans can transform themselves and the natural obstacles that they face. But not all humans. This is what the theorist does, points to ways in which those ready for the task can change history, can transform the cycle. But this transformation is different from the project of the Gnostics that Voegelin warns us of, for Vico keeps the cycle, allowing its transcendence through the spiritual, while the humanists, conservatives, liberals and socialists break the cycle within time through the material world. They indeed are the creators of the sensate world.

Sarkar and Vico's similarities is in their method of finding basic human characteristics and then developing stages from them that are cyclical, but which allow exits and escape routes. Moreover, these laws although eternal are soft, in that there are alternatives

routes in them. Vico, of course, stays with the nation, while Sarkar moves about. Sarkar could use Vico's river analogy to soften his notion of laws (a theoretical move that we believe is implicit in the Indian episteme). This would allow more space to move within his theory and use his theory as an asset to reveal the richness of the real, instead of being beholding to one definition of the real. Also the river analogy too allows one to speak of movement yet at the same time the past, since the river is different yet the same at any given movement, an analogy particularly useful for cyclical theorists. Vico is clearly has a cyclical theory of change.

But Sarkar and Vico speak from different eras and epistememes. Vico responds to the end of the classical episteme and the newly emerging scientific one, while Sarkar need not do that. In fact, Sarkar takes the interpretative approach and consumes the physical and natural sciences with them. He goes so far as to argue that laboratory results for investigations in his theory of microvita will be different depending on the spiritual level (their mental state, peaceful, balanced and open to the emanations of the supreme) of the scientist. The best science can then occur with spiritually evolved scientists. Rules and regulations and public testing are important, but what one sees is dependent on where one locates one's self.

COMTE AND THE END OF THE CYCLE

Taking the opposite task: the idea of inevitable progress were, among others, Henri Saint Simon, John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, and the writer we choose to focus on--August Comte. Raised and

inspired not by the spiritual world, but the sensate and the academic world, Comte sees the age of men/barbarism not as a degeneration of history, but as the culmination of progress. This is the victory of Cartesian rationality and the scientific worldview. Comte's intention was to create a science of society and man: sociology and the social sciences in general. In his words, "I understand by social physics the science which has for its subject the study of phenomena considered in the same spirit and astronomical, physical, chemical...that is subject to natural laws, the discovery of which is special object of investigation" (Timasheff 1965, 18-19).

Comte believed that there are natural laws which are progressive and historically derived. "The experience of the past proves, in the most decisive manner, that the progressive march of civilization follows a natural and unavoidable course, which flows from the law of human organization and, in its turn becomes the supreme laws of all practical phenomena" (Etzioni 1973, 14). To him, unlike Sarkar and others, history is unilinear and progressive. It is this way because of the "instinctive tendency of the human race to perfect itself" (17). Or as Herbert Spencer would articulate later.

Progress ... is not an accident, but a necessity. Instead of Civilization being artificial it is a part of nature; all of a piece with the development of an embryo or the unfolding of a flower. The modifications mankind have undergone, and are still undergoing, result from a law underlying the whole organic creation ... As surely as the tree becomes bulky when it stands alone, and slender if one of a group...as surely as there is any meaning in such terms as habit, custom, practice; so surely must the human faculties be molded into complete fitness for a social state; so surely must evil and immortality disappear; so surely must man become perfect (Manicus 1987, 32). (emphasis added)

Thus there is one nature, one process that is necessarily moving toward perfection. For Sarkar there is perfection but only at the level of the spiritual; at the physical and social there are forces in tension with each other; there is good and bad, if there is perfection, it is a zen perfection, perfection as metaphor, perfection as an idea used to accept those things that cannot be transformed. But speaking from the periphery, speaking as an Indian from Calcutta, history has not, indeed cannot be progressive, for the central indicator is the perception of suffering, and that is cyclical, except when the spiritual is touched. Contrast this view with Foucault who would place perfection in historical discourse. "Perfection" is a social construction which ultimately tells us about who we are and how we construct the real. For Foucault there is no site for perfection, transcendental or worldly.

But returning to Comte, Comte believed that perfection was possible, indeed the final stage of history was the positive stage, the earlier stages were mere building blocks. For Comte these clear stages are indisputable. They are natural laws valid irrespective of observer. They are objective. While Ssu-Ma Chien accentuated virtue, Chang the tao, Khaldun the spirit of unity, Vico the mythic, Sarkar the spiritual and the group mind and Marx the economic, for Comte history is primarily intellectual development. The task then becomes that of organizing knowledge. Seeing how it coordinates with person and economy: self and polity. Indeed that was his mission to build a social science that "[would] satisfy the twofold intellectual need of modern societies for order and progress" (Manicus 1987, 64).

This mission was built with the famous three laws, which, when compared with Sarkar give them an alternative reading not found in most analysis of Comte and others that followed the French Enlightenment.

In order to understand the true value and character of the Positive Philosophy, we must take a brief general view of the progressive course of the human mind, regarded as a whole ... The law is this: that each of our leading conception--each branch of our knowledge passes through three different theoretical conditions: the Theological or fictitious; the Metaphysical or abstract; and the Scientific, or Positive.

In the theological state, the human mind, seeking the essential nature of being, the first and final causes ... of all effects--in short, Absolute knowledge, supposes all phenomena to be produced by the immediate action of supernatural being.

In the metaphysical state, which is only a modification of the first, the mind supposes, instead of supernatural beings, abstract forces ... inherent in all things, and capable of producing all phenomena.

In the final, positive state, the mind has given over the vain search after Absolute notions, the origin and destination of the universe, and the causes of phenomena, and applies itself to the study of their laws--that is, the invariable relations of succession and resemblance (Comte 1875, 1: 2).

There are thus three stages with the final stage that of the scientific dominated by reason and empiricism. These stages are evolutionary and represent the development of the social mind and civilization itself. In this Comte can be seen as a sociological Kant for there are different forms of consciousness for every epoch, different forms of knowing. This idea is plainly there in Sarkar as well. Collective psychology or varna is first of all a social phenomena even if it inhabits a morphogenetic field--it represent a group consciousness.

There is further similarity with Sarkar in that the earlier stages of consciousness do not disappear, they remain. This of course

reminds one of Vico's river analogy or Foucault's epistemes. While there is an overwhelming worldview or way of knowing, past societies continue in the present.

The main difference between Sarkar and Comte is the obvious one. The scientific state is the end-all of civilization, the third realm, the end of history. In this way Comte continues the Gnostic project that Voegelin criticizes, the demarcation of history into ancient, medieval and modern. Max Weber, as well, continues with history becoming increasing positivistic and rational, with religion relegated to the irrational. Voegelin describes this as the replacement of the era of Christ with the era of Comte; the Gnostic re-representation of the transcendental with the immanence of scientism (Voegelin 1987, 127).

From a Sarkarian view, Comte is simply addressing different stages in the Vipran cycle as well as presages the Vaeshyan era. Comte thus correctly perceives the degeneration of the Vipran era, however, his history ends too soon. He forgets that the scientific era of capitalism will also have a phase of degeneration. And again while Comte is correct to stress intellectual ideas, but he misses physical clash and the attraction of the Great, although from Comte's view his tendency toward perfection is precisely that desire, although Comte would not state it in Sarkar's language. Indeed Comte would assert that Sarkar's speaks from the theological/supernatural stage. From Sorokin's view Comte is touching on something very real, but misinterpreting it. The theological is simply the ideational super system, while the metaphysical is the inbetween mixed idealistic, and

the positivist is the present sensate. The mistake Comte makes is to confuse the present as the end state, forgetting as Sorokin would remind us, that each system approximates the real, but in its exaggeration over speaks it, reaches the limit of falsity, and then the next system or some mixed version comes into play. This is not so for Comte. History moves in one direction. The final stage is that of positivism, modernity.

Now is Comte's theory of history solely intellectual? No, there are other forces and attributes at work. The theological state is related to the military epoch while the positive is related to the industrial. The metaphysical is a mongrel intermediate stage where the old begins to die and the new is born.

For Comte in the Theological, "all the social relation ... are avowedly and exclusively military. Society makes conquest its one permanent aim. Industrial pursuits are carried on only so far as is necessary for the support of the human race. Slavery, pure and simple, of the producers, is the principal institution" (Etzioni 1973, 18). A precise definition of Sarkar's Ksattriyan era. Sarkar, however, while acknowledging the spiritual pursuits of Ksattriyan era keeps the Ksattriyan and Vipran era separate. There is a real change in the group mind changes. Comte, privileging the role of social mind and ideas, does not see or feel the need to separate the two.

Now as with Sarkar, the eras are related and proceed from each other. For example, in the later theological state, there was a notion of natural laws since there was the category of "miracle" meaning that which transgressed the natural laws. In the earlier

state, there are no miracles since myth, magic and the physical coincide; it is a world literally of gods and goddesses. Moreover, the speculative activities of the ancient state, created the possibility of a special class of individuals who could contemplate the meaning of the universe. This led to the development of an intellectual culture and further progress for humanity, although eventually they sank into mental lethargy. The vipras became parasitic exploiters. Control of the spiritual world was linked with control of the physical. "Such then was the moral operation of the theological philosophy--stimulating Man's active energy by the offer, in the midst of troubles of his infantine state of absolute empire over the external world, as the prize of his speculative effort" (Comte 1875, 137).

For Comte initially the theological worldview brought progress, but eventually theology began to suppress the mind. "Instead of uniting men, which was its proper function at first, it now divides them, so that after having created speculative activity, it has ended with radically hindering it" (139). These words were echoed by Chang earlier. Where there is unity, the tao is present. When philosophers take the truth and divide it, factionalism develops, the tao disintegrates. For Sarkar, too, the correct path is toward synthetic philosophy, not analytic, for the synthetic unites, while the analytic divides. The ultimate in synthetic is the spiritual. For Sarkar, after the positive and its numerous benefits, once it exploits, there is a return to the theological-military--a spiritual inspired ksattriyan society. But Comte does not conclude this. "The function

of reuniting, as of stimulating and directing, belongs more and more, as religious belief declines to the conceptions of positive philosophy, which alone can establish the intellectual community all over the world on which the great future political organization is to be grounded" (139). Indeed, Comte's analysis shows the decline of the theological and the rise of positive with the inbetween metaphysical phase of the philosophers.

This third positive phase is not one of the military, but one of science and industrial activity. Reasoning and observation overthrow imagination. "All the special relations have gradually established themselves on industrial bases. Society, taken collectively, tends to organize itself in the same manner, by making production its only and constant aim" (Etzioni 1973, 19).

Moreover, this trend of industrialism, science, individualism would continue well on into the future. Comte's various predictions have led futurist Burnham Beckwith (1982) to rank him as one of the original futurists; his work as one of the original efforts to predict the future.

For Comte knowledge can help men see the real, and thus control it as well. This was the final positive epoch where knowledge would continue to increase, a science of history and future would flourish, and the theological would lie moribund.

While in the theological, the priest controlled the transcendental future, in the positive modern, science would be able to foresee and modify the future. The will of the spiritual sovereign was now to be in the hands of the modern subject--Man. Indeed, man is

created in the modern world as a true subject, before he existed alongside the cosmos and nature, but in the modern world, Man now stands apart, the subject and object of the world (Foucault 1973).

Thus, with Comte we have a unilinear trend (law) from theological to metaphysical to positive and at the same time from God to man and from military to industrial. These stages grow from one another and they are progressive. Within these stages, however, we have a rise and decline. Each brings on progressions (in relation to the end state) and then the dysfunctional begins wherein the next stage appears, leading finally to the positive stage. As with the theories of other linear macrohistorians, this positive stage, since it is the final stage of history, exists outside of history although it emerges from history.

While the broad stage is linear, there are cycles within the progression. From a Sarkarian view, Comte has much of it right. Correct is the natural and deterministic progression from military to industrial (ksattriyan to vaeshyan) and the rise and then decline of the vipran era and the emphasis on the social mind in history. In addition, he was correct in pointing to the development of dogma within the theological approach, but where Sarkar makes the distinction between actual spiritual practices, Comte remains at the social level and thus denounces the entire religious approach. In contrast Sarkar keeps the spiritual and attacks the religious; placing himself in this universal spirituality and others within the religious sphere.

In addition, from Sarkar's view Comte is incorrect (only seeing one level of the real) in his assertion that the modern positive era is the final stage of progress. Among other problems, the implications of this view, as outlined by Voegelin, are disastrous. With the end of the cycle and the adoption of the linear evolutionary model, racism is inevitable since now there exist advanced and backward societies. We should then not be surprised at the following comment from Comte. "We must study exclusively the development of the most advanced nations, not allowing our attention to be drawn off to other centers [to] any independent civilization which has, from any cause whatever, been arrested, and left in an imperfect state" (Comte 1875, 151). Once perfection becomes a worldly criteria--placed in the material discourse--then social space can be divided into modern and primitive. The modern can then judge the undeveloped and as Nandy (1987) reminds us claim not only to understand themselves better, but the primitive as well. There is nothing to learn from them undeveloped. They exist to be transformed, altered and patterned after the perfected society. In this case, this perfect society is Comte's rising technological and capitalist West.

As Comte writes: "It is this selected part, the vanguard of the human race that we have to study; the greater part of the white race, or the European nations--even restricting ourselves, at least in regard to modern times, to the nations of Western Europe. When we ascend into the remoter past, it will be in search of the political ancestors of these peoples, whatever their country may be" (Comte 1875, 151).

This mistake was made by other progressives, including Spencer, Marx and Hegel, but not by Spengler and Sorokin. Marx, of course, by speaking for an oppressed class managed to remove himself from the racism of Comte. Hegel by using the notion of progress and laws with the notion of the spirit commits Comte's error as well. Sarkar skirts on the edge of this. By calling for a new class outside of class he creates yet another possibility of a privileged class that can control the laws of nature, yet by keeping the cycle he avoids speaking from outside of history. Indeed, it is these types of theories that have lead Karl Popper (1957) to savagely attack the poverty of historicism, for it freezes the future in the past, privileges structure over agency, determinacy over indeterminacy, and in the final analysis leaves man alone in a universe of conflicting laws.

Finally, like other macrohistorian Comte too speaks with an arrogance, a sense of finality. "Social science has with all its complexity passed through the theological state, and has almost everywhere fully attained the metaphysical; while it is nowhere yet risen to the positive, except in this book" (132). For Comte the truth has been discovered, now science can continue to develop it. Sarkar, speaking from entirely different episteme, does not have a unilinear progressive worldview to shape his. Sarkar's lives in different times: spiritual, seasonal, and quantitative. And unlike Aurobindo, who placed time in the nation-state, Sarkar does not place emanation in nation, rather he speaks for a global synthesis. Writing after the French revolution and the American revolution, but before the Soviet, Comte could speak of the new modern era. He could speak of progress.

And yet while Comte argues against the Catholic (vestiges of the theological state), in fact, he comes out as conservative. St. Simon is the Father, while Comte is the Son, and Science is the holy ghost. The Europeans are the privileged people above and outside the intellectual and physical world of nature. The other continents are there for man to transform in the image of the trinity. Man remains central and God has stepped down.

Writing much later, Spengler, influenced not by the expansionist phase of western cosmology, but the contraction phase and by the horror of the positive state, would write not of the rise of the West but of the upcoming decline.

HEGEL, HISTORY AND THE SPIRIT

With Hegel (1770-1831) the notion of progress continued, but progress was now not only reflected in the material world but also in the history of the spirit. For Voegelin this is the continuation of the project of the immanentization of the Godhead in history. While we touched upon Hegel earlier, we will now further articulate his ideas. Although both believe in progress, Hegel stands in sharp contrast to Comte in the sense that Comte rejects the notion of the spirit in history, but Hegel moves this idea to center stage. In Hegel's words, "If it be allowed that Providence manifests itself in [animals, plants and isolated occurrences--miracles] why not in Universal History" (Manicus 1987, 87)?

History for Hegel is a drama on a large stage. He wants to explain history, "to depict the passions of mankind, the genius, the

active powers, that play their part on the great stage" (87). Now for Sarkar, the mystic, he would not use the word passion except as an attribute to transcend. Rather, Sarkar's ideal history is one that shows how individuals have braved challenges, but these are not the challenges of wars, rather these are the individuals' challenges of understanding fear and the challenges of reducing both the poverty of the intellect and of the physical world.

In general, Hegel has three important ideas of use to us. According to Manicus, first is "the idea of Freedom as the telos of history" (96). Secondly, "Hegel's empirical concern is with the realm of thought, the ideas, beliefs, or more generally, the culture and the 'spirit' of a State. These are embodied in institutions, to be sure and thus we cannot overlook institutions. But we investigate them so as to discover the norms, values, goals and beliefs that people live by, to grasp what motivates them by virtue of their institutions and their role in them" (96). Third, is "the mechanism of historical process are to be found by philosophy--in the dialectic of the idea" (96).

For Sarkar the telos is spiritual realization: movement towards consciousness. His empirical concern is with changing the material conditions of society so that individuals can pursue the absolute representation of the real--pure consciousness. Finally, the mechanism of history is spiritual dialectics, his the theory of collective psychology, the metaphorical rise and fall of dharma, and the rise and fall of the sentiment that creates the nation.

For Hegel and Sarkar it is not just the spirit that is active in history. Humans, too, make history. Individuals make history but not the way they intend to, but because of the cunning of reason. History has its own purpose, individuals play out this purpose. According to Manicus, first, "in their effort to 'develop themselves and their aims in accordance with natural tendencies, human beings 'build up the edifice of a human society; thus fortifying a position of Right and Order against themselves'. Here, Hegel stands smack between Rousseau and Marx. For Rousseau human are born free but everywhere live in chains, for Marx, human history begins at just the point where individuals collectively control the conditions of their lives " (87-88).

For Sarkar, humans are not born free--their historical desires--instincts are with them, as are their samskaras, desires from previous lives. Moreover they are born into a particular structure which frames the possibilities of what they can do or not do. For Sarkar history begins not with humans, but with the imbalancing of the cosmic cognitive principle and the appearance of the first desire that began the universe. But this is at the cosmic level. At the historical level there are the social forces which condition and create the various selves, specifically the ideas of the various epochs. But there is also the individual level of choice in that every human can decide to move toward the spirit or away. Sarkar begs the question or the conflict between choice and structure by opting for a both/and strategy. The question in itself can be answered in different ways depending on the level of reality in which one is asking and answering. From the view of pure consciousness, there is

no choice for there is no individual mind, nor space and time. At the individual level there is choice although it is constricted by structure and history. At the level of the social there are clear historical laws that societies move through, although even here there are alternatives. These laws operate in nature and once begun cannot be changed or transformed by Consciousness. Karma and other laws of nature are inescapable. Sarkar does not need a historical cunning, there is only historical ignorance.

For Hegel Providence works by means of the unintended consequences of our acts. Historical changes go on according to Hegel "behind the backs of persons" (87).

But most significantly is the location of history. For while individuals provide the 'energy' for historical process (88) according to Hegel it is "in the history of the world, the individuals we have to do with are Peoples; totalities that are States" (88).

Thus history takes place inbetween states. According to Manicus "pre-state people are only on the margin of world history, ultimately subject to the acts of those entities which, by virtue of their size and organization, are capable of affecting the processes of world history" (92).

For Sarkar world history is the history of the collective mind as it is expressed in the material world by individuals, that is, in their efforts to use mind to conquer, understand, and economize the material world. For Sarkar there are three forces essential factors that cause change; attraction to the Great, conflict with the environment and conflict with the minds (dealings with the material

world and dealings with new ideas). The State is not a force of agency, rather it is the battle ground of the various classes and the various types of power: economic, ideological and military. The nation for Sarkar is a type of sentiment that is strongest when there is ideology or a mutual enemy. Sarkar's history of the nation is a history of the collective mind, of the group sentiment. It is the sense of oppression or injustice that unites and creates a people. In this sense a history of the State, as Hegel would have, would be a useless history for Sarkar for the State is not a concrete association, it is ever changing. The State is simply one association among other historical associations. Hegel's privileging of the State is simply a ksattriyan history. This ksattriyan emphasis becomes clearer in his upholding of world historical conquerors.

According to Manicus, a further implication of Hegel's view is that only individuals who are leaders of states are capable of influencing history (93). The National security state is the consequence. Hegel saw the state as an integrated system of institution rather than an aggregation or an aggregation of individuals acting in consort to satisfy individual interests as Hobbes does or as Saikar might.

Indeed, by placing Prussia as the ideal state and then placing other historical states as either outside history or as phases leading up to history, Hegel follows the same developmentalism as Comte does. But while Comte locates the finality in positivism, Hegel locates it in the modern German State. Suddenly this State becomes the image for other states, and as in the Christian code, it becomes the chosen

State, with the message of the spirit of modernity now to be passed onward to other less modern, less imbued by the spirit, States. Aurobindo, as mentioned earlier, takes this idea but subverts it, finding the spirit conscious in the nationalistic movements against the old European states.

For Manicus, Hegel's philosophy is a realism in the sense that the empirical, the phenomenal is concrete and is the manifestation of the Idea, the abstract, which is nonetheless real. As Charles Taylor says, "Hegel's idealism, far from being a denial of external material reality, is the strongest affirmation of it, it not only exists but necessarily exists" (96). There is a reality which transcends appearance and that appearance is a manifestation. But this reality is Idea. Manicus again quotes Taylor: "Absolute idealism means that nothing exists which is not a manifestation of the Idea, that is, of rational necessity" (96). For Sarkar the rational is real. But Consciousness, when humans attempt to locate it in themselves becomes illusive and mysterious, indeed mystical, outside of the understanding of sense perception. Consciousness is not functional nor instrumental. The yogi cannot use it for ego or nation building, and if he does, there will certainly be a fall after the rise.

Hegel felt the fundamental purpose of philosophy is the overcoming of opposites. Division and opposition present themselves to the mind in different forms in different cultural epochs. Between soul and body, subject and object, intelligence and Nature. The fundamental interest of reason is the same, namely to attain a unified

synthesis. For Sarkar these opposites will exist forever. They are part of the very nature of existence.

Their philosophical differences are more apparent in how both Sarkar and Hegel perceive the Absolute. Writes Frederick Copleston in his A History of Philosophy, for Hegel "the absolute is the totality, reality as a whole, the universe. Philosophy is concerned with the true and the true is the whole "(Copleston 1963, 170). The absolute is subject, what is its object. Itself. Thought which thinks itself, self-thinking thought. Copleston remarks,

in saying that the Absolute is self-thinking Thought Hegel is obviously repeating Aristotle's definition of God. But Hegel is not thinking of a transcendental deity. The absolute is the Totality, and the Absolute is a process, the Absolute is a process of self-reflection. Reality comes to know itself, it does so in the human spirit (171).

This is similar to Sarkar's thought, although for Sarkar prior to the absolute as thought is the absolute as pure awareness. From pure awareness the absolute crudifies into the next level of reality, Cosmic Mind. Cosmic mind then crudifies into nature. Cosmic mind is similar to Hegel's notion of the absolute. That their positions are different can be expected. For a philosopher like Hegel it would be expected that the absolute would be reason, while for a mystic like Sarkar, the absolute could not be mere reason, rather it would have to be indescribable, only locatable through bliss.

W. Walsh in the The Philosophy of History also presents a useful reading of Hegel. He writes. "Idea is part of a super-triad, of which Nature forms the antithesis and Spirit (mental life) the synthesis. The Idea, to be fully itself, demands concrete embodiment, which it finds by 'externalizing' itself as Nature and 'returning to' itself as

Concrete Spirit" (Walsh 1960, 141). Thus the spirit does not descend into matter as in traditional mythology, or Consciousness create matter as with Sarkar; rather Hegel views spirit-matter as part of a dialectical relationship.

STAGES OF HISTORY

This dialectical relationship is also evidenced in Hegel's theory of history. It is here that we find a more interesting contrast with Sarkar. Philosophy of history, for Hegel, is part of the philosophy of Spirit and the problem which confronts its exponent is that of tracing the working of reason in a particular empirical sphere.

While Sarkar argues that most history is ideological history, written to aggrandize a particular class, be it kings and warriors, capitalists and corporations, priests and ministers, history should be about how individuals dealt with challenges and how they resolved them. History should be about how structures created human suffering, and how humans fought back. History should be a people's history. For Hegel, ordinary historians confine themselves for the most part to the narrative of contemporary events, a few paint history on broader canvas, but all in all they simply try and write the facts. For Hegel, according to Walsh, the historian must, "illuminate history by bringing his knowledge of the Idea, the formal articulation of reason to bear upon it, striving, in a phrase Hegel uses elsewhere, to elevate empirical contents to the rank of necessary truth" (143).

According to Hegel in his Lectures on the Philosophy of History, "World History exhibits the development of the consciousness of

freedom on the part of Spirit, and of the consequent realization of that freedom" (Walsh 1960, 143).

In the Oriental world despotism and slavery were the rule; freedom was confined to a single man, the monarch. Here, from Sarkar's view Hegel is simply reading a particular stage of Oriental history, the Ksattriyan era. In the next stage of civilization, despotism becomes impure. Power becomes shared by monarchs and priests, exactly as Sarkar would write it. According to Brian Shetler:

India takes the despotic rule that succeeded in China and built a vast religious superstructure on it that at once preserves it and transcends it ... Indian religion is an attempt to overcome the insecurity, suffering and bondage of despotic rule ... Thus, the despot is not a single person but all of nature, under which a political ruler must also labor. The Brahmanic priests and later the Buddhists priests enjoy higher standing than the political rulers as authorities on what are the duties of the political ruler (Galtung 1990, 10).

But these two civilizations still exist in prehistory. It is only in the Middle-East with Zoroasterianism and then in Judaism that history begins. History begins here as Freedom extends from the despot or the priests to supernatural laws. Again for Shetler, "the despot can be deposed of by anyone following the commands of this supernatural order" (10).

History continues in the Graeco-Roman world with freedom claimed as a right of citizens, if not all individuals, including slaves.

Writes Walsh,

This process has been completed by the Germanic nations of modern Europe, who have accepted the Christian principle of the infinite worth of individual men as such, and so have explicitly adopted the idea of liberty, although as Hegel notes, this does not mean they have carried it to full effect in their institutions (Walsh 1960, 144).

It is in the Christian West that history finds its negation of negation, its synthesis. While the French state stopped before it could complete Hegel's dialectic (the synthesis of the rational, the ethical and the spiritual), it is in the Prussian State that all can be achieved. The Spirit can find its true home.

Therefore history has a notion of progress, but it is a particular notion nested in the State. And every nation has a peculiar contribution for which it is destined, in its turn, to make to the process of world history.

This progress is further facilitated by great individuals. Certain men, like Alexander, Caesar or Napoleon are the chosen instruments of Destiny. For Hegel the Prussian State is the manifestation of the will of the Spirit, but why should the plot end there. Walsh argues that it does not, he quotes Hegel as having said, "America is the land of the future, where, in the ages that lie before us, the burden of world's history will reveal itself" (152).

For Hegel then the state is the culmination of history. There is a clear progression from the family, to civil society and then the State. The family is prior society, the members of the family are united by the bond of feeling, love. But the family has its own seeds of destruction, for children pass out of it and become individuals. Then civil society with its institutions emerges in contrast to the undifferentiated unity of the family. Civil society allows for particularity. It is in the State, however, that we find differentiated universality, that is, unity in difference.

The State for Hegel is divine, it is "this actual God" (Copleston 1963, 213). Sarkar, of course, does not see the State or any political formation as idea or a particular expression of divinity except insofar as everything that is an expression of divinity. Moreover, the mistake that Hegel makes is believing that there is a hierarchy of States and that States too go through a cycle. Even in Hegel's own terms one can describe a history where the idea of freedom moves through a dialectic. One does not need a spirit which moves from empire to empire to nation. Nor does one need a history that privileges the Christian West.

But from a Hegelian view, it is Sarkar's notion of consciousness that is mistaken, but understandably so given the primitive Indian episteme. However, Hegel would have agreed with the Sarkarian notion of the coming global world State, for here Freedom could find its finest expression; there would be unity and difference.

Hegel then privileges the State for specific reasons. The well developed state preserves the principle of private liberty. The will of the State must persevere over the will of the individual, and inasmuch as the the will of the state, the universal or general will, is for him in some sense the real will of the individual, it follows that the individual's identification of his interests with those of the State is the actualization of freedom.

But the movement to a global State would most likely include conquest and war. Here Hegel and Sarkar differ, for Hegel rejects Kant's notion of perpetual peace, and argues that war is a necessary rational phenomenon. According to Copleston,

It is in fact for him the means by which the dialectic of history gets, so to speak, a move on. It prevents stagnation and preserves, as he puts it, the ethical health in nations. It is the chief means by which a people's spirit acquires renewed vigor or a decayed political organism is swept aside and gives place to a more vigorous manifestation of the Spirit (Copleston 1963, 218).

For Sarkar war is the darkest blot on humanity's history. War is fought by workers and warriors for the sake of the theories of intellectuals and the expansionism of capitalists. However what is necessary is struggle. But this struggle need not be against another State, as the State is not the end of all existence; one can struggle mentally, or struggle to create new goods that can benefit the people. Without struggle there is death. For Sarkar life is struggle. It is only in the cosmic state of enlightenment where there is no struggle, when the mind has found its existential death in Pure Consciousness. It is not a sorrowful death; it is the death of all deaths, and the final realization of the soul, of its true nature.

OTHER PROBLEMS

The problems with Hegel's work are numerous. We will summarize these again with the purpose of developing Sarkar's thought. Copleston develops some of these problems. One is if any nation rises to the top, then all that occurs is justified by the very fact that it occurs; thus imperialism is easily justified after the fact. The spirit has moved a country to do so. If one nation succeeds in conquering another, it follows that its action is justified by its success.

While an individual leader who conquers others may cause man to suffer, however, from a historical viewpoint his deeds are justified for he accomplishes what the universal spirit requires. Thus the spirit of world history is that which judges all events. According to Copleston, Hegel would remark that he is simply taking seriously the notion of Providence, that God is operating through history (224). This is similar to the notion of karma. What happens was meant to happen, and thus all actions can be justified. But Copleston argues that what is needed is a sense of morality.

Once the transcendent God has been transformed into the Hegelian Absolute and judgement has been made purely immanent in history itself, no escape is left from the conclusion that from the world-historical point of view all the events and actions which form movements in the self-manifestation of the Absolute are justified. Moral questions are then irrelevant (224).

Voegelin, to be sure, would echo this perspective. Hegel falls into the Gnostic trap of misreading the Christian eschaton and placing the spirit concretely in history. In addition, Copleston argues that why should not the goal of spirit be a universal world state or world society where personal freedom would be perfectly realized within an all embracing unity. "Even if Hegel wishes to insist that the universal is manifested in its particulars and that the particulars in question are national spirits, it would seem that the ideal end of the whole movement should be a world federation, representing the concrete universal" (225).

Obviously Sarkar does not approach it this way. He is not trying to show the role of Providence in history; this is not the problem from the Indian view or Sarkar reconstruction of Indian thought. For Sarkar the problem is that of developing a good society, where power

does not lead to exploitation, where humanity can finally take a bit of fresh air away from the sleepless nights of fear and hunger.

However viewing the above criticisms from a sympathetic Hegelian perspective, Phil Carspecken argues that the type of critique we have used for Hegel is misleading in that Hegel was speaking metaphorically. The divisions Hegel makes are philosophical not historical. Hegel's mistake was to objectify this metaphor instead of keeping it in movement, unfixed. Hegel's mistake was to write his metaphor of the Absolute out. But Sarkar's mistake is far more serious for Carspecken.

Sarkar's metaphors ... seem to both claim to represent truth (rather than lead the thinker into an experience of truth) and to guide action so that one can become truth. As representation we have all the claims about microvita, [layers of the mind], luminous bodies, varnas and so on which are certainly claimed to be really true--objective and external to unit beings. Sarkar's own epistemology is a representational, sense-based one. He claims that ideology, as opposed to idea, is fallible necessarily but he does not integrate this useful idea with the rest of his philosophy, much of which is image drawing and action-prescribing. The rest claims to be "true" representations of the world (Carspecken, personal communications, 1989).

From this view since Sarkar has initiated movements and associations to construct this new world of his, his theory is far more disturbing than Hegel's for Hegel's influence remained theoretical, while Sarkar, like Marx, intends to change our material, intellectual and spiritual conditions.

Moreover Sarkar also speaks of God in history, although from the classical Indian episteme. This not a judgmental god favoring a particular group of people, nonetheless, the absolute has entered and for the enlightened person, like Krishna, conventional morality does not exist, for in His (Krishna's) person, all discourses find their

unity. The Sarkarian response would be one that points to the reality of present suffering and the inabilities of various ideologies to speak to them in a way that fulfills the human spirit and the human stomach. Thus Sarkar's response would be based on the real conditions of the present: physical, mental and spiritual.

We will further develop one final important relationship between Hegel and Sarkar. This is the dialectical relationship of spirit and matter. For Hegel the negation is solved with the spirit in the Prussian State. Sarkar believes everything is consciousness and all living entities are reflections of the consciousness (even inanimate rocks to a lesser degree). Spiritual consciousness cannot enter the nation as it is but a human sentiment, a construct. While it is possible to develop a hierarchy of spiritual individuals (Hegel's world historical figures) these are spiritual figures, who find lasting "fame" through leadership as servitude. The nation simply is another sentiment that prevents humans from seeing their essential unity in consciousness. In this way, all human associations are fundamentally instrumentalist. The question for Sarkar becomes which ones can aid in the process of realizing spiritual purposes. Only the family ranks high here since it provides stability and protection. All other unions except those such as the Sangha are constructed as dogmas (although spiritual communities too fall into power). First there is unity, then there is a separation between consciousness and nature. The separation is exacerbated in humans which have the choice of following "nature" or recreating the natural. Most animals and plants do not have that choice but follow their instincts, the

natural. However, this unity is regained periodically with individuals and potentially in the coming spiritual new era. According to Sarkar, as human beings evolve, they move from individual, to mental, to spiritual levels. As Rudreshananda Avadhuta argues in his Microvita: the Cosmic Seeds of Life:

Finally they realize that the responsibility for the care and unfolding of the potentialities of the whole universe is their joint responsibility with the Supreme Creator or Cosmic Consciousness ... Individually, human beings should make efforts to merge their minds into the mind of the Supreme Creator, while collectively they should work for the development and utilization of all of the hidden potentialities of the universe (Rudreshananda 1989, 150).

Walter Truett Anderson in his recent To Govern Evolution presents a similar argument that humans must now consciously govern planetary evolution if they are to survive. Genetics and other technologies thought of as unnatural are now suddenly part of the natural evolution of the species. However, instead of humans becoming managers, Sarkar would privilege a spiritual discourse that humans are co-creators with Prakrti in human evolution. His notion of the social cycle as alterable falls in this line of argument. The natural has been understood and naturally humans can move and evolve with the cycle of creation, co-creating and constructing it for the future within the bounds of the structure of the universe.

Summarizing this section on Hegel and Sarkar, both these thinkers stand fall apart. They differ in their definition of the spirit, of the state, of war, of world historical figures and in terms of approach. For Hegel the spirit is the idea, for Sarkar it is multi-leveled but ultimately inexpressible. For Hegel the State is the finest expression of freedom that resolves the contradictions of

family and institutions. For Sarkar the State is another dogma; however, a world government is needed to balance nationalism. For Hegel war leads to greater human expression, for Sarkar it is the darkest blot in humanity's history, although struggle is the most important characteristic in individual and collective development. For Hegel world historical figures are great leaders, for Sarkar Hegel's figures are but ksattriyans. For Sarkar the key historical figures are the spiritually enlightened ones, those who bring dharma and devotion to the world. Finally for Sarkar, Hegel is too idealistic, unconcerned of the material world, while for Hegel, Sarkar is too mystical and contradictory, for even as Sarkar criticizes Hegel, he uses Hegelian dialectics and calls for a world state. For Hegel, Sarkar is more Hegelian than Sarkar would ever admit.

MARX

Sarkar is also more Marxist than Sarkar would admit. Like Sarkar, Marx attempted to develop a theory to consciously evolve society into progressively fairer material conditions. Begun by Marx (1818-1883) and continued by Engels, Lenin, and Gramsci, this vision attempted to move away from the idealism of Hegel and construct a dialectical and historical materialism that had a vision of the future. Our focus here will not be an in-depth comparison as this has already been extensively covered in the PROUT literature although not the Marxist literature, for PROUT or Sarkar has little if any standing in the Marxist worldview.

The debt to Marx is huge. Every PROUT publication tends to include a section concerning Marx. It has become obligatory to compare Sarkar and Marx. This book in itself has had Marx as a shadow throughout. Sarkar's section on the Vaeshyan era closely follows Marx's theory. Moreover, by calling his alternative theory Progressive Spiritual Socialism (PROUT), Sarkar places himself within Marxist critical thinking and places himself outside of it. He is progressive because history can be changed, because the future is bright, because there are laws, because rationality is central; he is spiritual because the end all of everything is the spiritual; all events and moments must be measured from the spiritual perspective; because his philosophy is not materialistic or idealistic, rather it believes in various levels of reality and finally, Sarkar is socialist because he focuses on the marginalized, on collective self-reliance, limits to the ownership of wealth, and because his ideal society is cooperative in its orientation.

Sarkar himself rarely speaks of Marx. In his lecture on the views of other faiths, he simply asserts that Marxism is mistaken in that it removes the essential differences between people in its quest for equality; it can only thrive in poverty and exploited areas; it has little tolerance for other philosophical points of view; and that, it is essentially violent. Now what is important here is that he includes his comments in his section on the view of other faiths or ideologies; that is, the location of Marxism as a real competitor with Sarkar's own cosmology. Noteworthy is the fact that his students spend entire sections asserting the differences and superiority of

PROUT which again emphasizes the debt owed and the attempt to distance PROUT from Marxism.

In another place, Sarkar asserts the following with respect to Marx.

Centering round a remark about religion by the great Karl Marx, a class of exploiters goes hysteric and raises quite a storm. It should be borne in mind that Karl Marx was never antagonistic to spirituality, moralism and good conduct. Whatever he said was against the then religion, for he had visualized, understood and felt that the then religion had paralyzed man mentally, made him impotent and dispirited by instigating him to submit to the vicious circle (Sarkar 1987b, 5: 89).

Sarkar's message is similar to Marx's. Religions and their emphasis on fate and karma force individuals into social impotency. "Those who try to break the vaeshyan structure and show tortured humanity the path of salvation should advise them to avoid the narcotic influence of religion" (89). In this sense both Marx and Sarkar take off from Comte in their critique of the theological stage of humanity.

Now we will not attempt to summarize Marx and Marxism as this has been accomplished in innumerable books. We will simply point to some similarities and differences and then concentrate on two concepts which clarify Sarkar's thought, namely, Gramsci's concept of hegemony and the organic intellectual.

In his comparison of Sarkar and Marx, Batra points out the following which essentially captures the Sarkarian critique.

Both Marx and Sarkar use a historical method of analysis, both believe in the inevitability of historical patterns of societal evolution, though not in the repetition of events themselves, and both agree that capitalism will be brought to an end by some sort of revolution, although to Sarkar this revolution may be bloody or peaceful, whereas to Marx it will be bloody and violent. Marx calls for the revolution of the proleteriat, whereas to Sarkar it

is the social revolution [or evolution] of the Shudras (Batra 1978, 36).

In addition, Batra asserts that both speak for the workers and peasants. Both believe oppression and injustice can be ended; both argue that it will be ended through struggle, for Sarkar this struggle is spiritual as well as physical, intellectual, and economic; for Marx the spiritual would be critically down played or recast in the mold of humanism given his critique of the clergy. Both accept violence as a legitimate way of ending oppression, both accept non-democratic means of governance; Marxists calls democracy bourgeois dictatorship, while Sarkar, although considering the lessor evils of present political systems still calls representative democracy (when it is devoid of a moral and educational basis, and controlled by clever politicians) "foolocracy: government of the fools, by the fools and for the fools" (Sarkar 1987a, 2:12). In this sense both accept elite rule as beneficial for only it can control the power tactics of capitalists, aristocrats and others. In Sarkar words, "when progressive socialism is established within the framework of democracy, then democracy will be successful" (12). Both accept that real change must be global, not isolated in any single nation, the Trotsky formula of permanent revolution. Sarkar, given the realization and assertion by world system theorists such as Wallerstein (1984) that the capturing of state power by socialist movements has only in the long run strengthened the world system as a whole, has developed revolutionary strategies outside of state politics, including self-reliance movements, ecological movements, spiritual movements, feminist movements and other transnational as well transstatist approaches to

changing the cultural frames of meaning which exhibit the world to us. Revolution for Sarkar is about the rotation of the social cycle and the collective psychology, but it is also fundamentally internal; it is fundamentally cosmological.

Both Sarkar and Marx should have differences. Sarkar comes from a theory of history and school of philosophy that are Indian and thus ideational. At the same time he writes not from Europe but from the periphery of Calcutta. Marx, conversely, wrote a century earlier from London responding to the notion of social progress, the laws of evolution, as well as to Hegel. While Marx may have stood Hegel on his head, Sarkar insists they both sit down in meditation and then move into social action.

The differences are obvious and many; we will simply mention a few. Marx's theory is ultimately unilinear with the ideal future state a higher order of an ancient state where there was no private property and no alienation and division of labor. History is dialectical and here Sarkar is in total debt to Hegel and Marx, although Sarkar does come to it through Tantra. For Marx history is certainly not cyclical, and if spiral, then it is a spiral that abruptly ends once property is collectivized and labor recovered. The purpose of the State ends once this alienation ends. Man is himself again. For Sarkar history is cyclical and the State will be needed forever. The dialectical conflict between

vidya and avidya will continue forever. So the necessity of having police or military force in greater or lesser degree will be eternally felt. Of course with the establishment of a world Government, its necessity will decrease. With the perpetual fight between vidya and avidya, the class rivalry is bound to persist, more or less. Hence, those who fly on the wings of

imagination for sitting idle and living a life in repose on the establishment of a classless society will have to become disappointed (Sarkar 1978b, 2: 87).

There is no final synthesis; the battle between the basic forces in the universe is endless. This is again the fundamental realization of the ancients. It is the fundamental lesson of all mythology: good and evil exist within. This is what leads Ssu-Ma Chien, Khaldun, Voegelin to remain committed to the cycle. It is only in the European Gnostic division of time that evil suddenly ends and the synthesis is achieved, whether through Marxism or liberalism or a futuristic postindustrial version of postscarcity robotism wherein all humans can finally achieve a life of leisure. For the ancients and for Sarkar, the problem of the cycle is unresolvable at the level of the collective, although, at the level of the individual it is resolvable. Yet compassion finally forces individual enlightenment to become of the world, as strategy to gain strength for the collective struggle ahead, until the last blade of grass is enlightened; that is, until never. But the future can be better as a postscarcity society is possible, but the the fundamental conflicts will simply become psychic then. Over time material desires and ego desires will decrease: the external environmental world will aid in obtaining mental harmony. Unlike Marx, for Sarkar the ultimate problem is not private property. While all property from Sarkar's view is nested in Cosmic Consciousness, humans can and should use it for the benefit of all. Tadbhavananda Avadhuta and Jayanta Kumar argue in their brilliant The New Wave.

From a psychological viewpoint, private property is the natural expression of the instinctive tendency to satisfy selfish desires

with no consideration for the needs of others. While the collectivization of private property can eliminate overt exploitation, it can never challenge the selfish, greedy tendencies in the human mind (Tadbhavananda Avadhuta and Jayanta Kumar 1985, 70).

For Sarkar since exploitation is psychological, these selfish tendencies must find gateways into higher values, otherwise the same forms will find more destructive forms--surveillance, apathy, anomie.

Continuing these critical comments on Marxism or actually "vulgar Marxism," the Marxist notion of class misses the notion of collective psychology or group mind. Other sentiments such as religion, the idea, are neglected. In Marx's reconciliation of materialism and idealism, he over emphasizes the material, thus placing Marxism in a paradoxical situation wherein it cannot explain its own origination since it is an idea that has changed social relations, not a new technology or force of production. For Sarkar this is natural for ideologies change the way the world is constructed. Their forms are determined by the particular varna of the era. Thus Islam must be more ksattriyan to succeed, and at the same time to bring on the next era, it must be vipran. Using Sarkar's six spokes of civilization argument, Marxism has a perceptor, Marx; has texts, the Communist Manifesto and subsequent authoritative texts; and has a socio-economic theory, which is, in fact, its strength. However, in terms of social outlook, it is humanist but does not express the needed concerns of plants and animals. It is not universal. Moreover it privileges one class over others, the worker class and is ruthless toward the capitalist class. While rightfully so, for Sarkar, the liberation of all is the task. Thus the capitalist by oppressing the worker

suppresses his or her own spiritual tendencies and thereby becomes in the long run a victim as well. The task is to liberate the capitalist as well. This task is essentially spiritual. It is finding ways to allow the capitalist to enter the deeper levels of mind and conscience. But if this is impossible, then for Sarkar, force can be used. In this sense Sarkar comes out not as process, means oriented as the Buddhist or Gandhian approach. Finally, Marxism is pathetically weak in spiritual practices and spiritual ideology.

Other significant differences are metaphysical, for example; include for Marxism the universe is a constant flux, for Sarkar it is in rest and motion with each association (self, society, civilization) finding inspiration or death at the the point of rest. Also, Sarkar in terms of the actual utopian society would simply limit physical wealth and find ways to maximize the use and distribution of intellectual and spiritual wealth.

Notwithstanding these differences, the prose of Sarkar often is Marxian prose. For example, let us take the the fundamental proposition of Marxism from the Communist Manifesto.

That in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles forms a series of evolutions in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class--the proleteriat--cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class--the bourgeoisie--without, at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles (Marx and Engels 1975, 13).

Easily in Sarkarian language (our words).

In every historical epoch, the collective psychology of the era, and the socio-psychic organizations necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the physical and material history of that epoch and consequently the whole history of humankind (since the awakening of social responsibility and warrior mentality) has been a history of class struggle--contests between humans and nature, between humans and humans, between humans and ideas, and between humans and nature, humans ideas and resources--contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolutions and revolutions in which each class as taken power and then lost power. The history of humanity has been a history of suffering. No class can attain its emancipation--neither shudra, ksattriya, vipra, vaeshya--without, at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles. This is only possible through the sadvipras, the spiritual intellectuals, guided by the Attraction to the Great shall work from the hub of the cycle, allowing each class to progressively administer the whole, but never allowing any class to exploit the whole.

The ease of translation tells us a great deal. Moreover, Sarkar has no problem with Marxian comments such as "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways, the points is to change it (Bender 1972, 155). At the same time, Sarkar would comment that Marx is partially correct when he asserts that "In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven [and] Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life" (171). From Sarkar's view Marx is speaking of the second half of the the cycle of creation, Brahmachakra. But Marx misses the first half when Consciousness crudifies into the Idea (Cosmic Mind) and then into Nature. Thus, Marx is simply incomplete, however this incompleteness is critical as it neglects the higher layers of awareness and consciousness.

Moving to political philosophy how do these two thinkers speak the relationship of power and society? Again we find fundamental agreement when Marx asserts that the ideas of the epoch are those of the ruling class.

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of the material production at its disposal, has control at the same over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it ... Insofar, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch. For instance, in an age and in a country where royal power, aristocracy and bourgeoisie are contending for mastery and where, therefore, mastery is shared, the doctrine of the separation of powers proves to be the dominant idea and is expressed as an "eternal law (183).

For Sarkar, while it is true that ideas of the ruling class are the ideas of the epoch, this is not necessarily so because the ruling class controls the material forces, and normative power is equally important. For example, during the Vipran era, the clergy control the relevant ideas (the shape the construction of the real); they may or may not have direct state power and direct economic power. However, there is an isomorphism between the ideas of the age, the ideas of the ruling class, and the general group worldview. There is an interaction between the ideas of the epoch and the ideas of the elite; both create each other. This interaction is clear to Marx as well. The bourgeois "compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst; i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image" (245). And for Sarkar, each varna does this alternatively; each

creates the world in its own image and then because of its own contradictions, a new way of seeing the world comes into dominance with an accompanying elite, which again reconstructs the real in that image and then makes it natural. For Gramsci, this was hegemony; a cultural force which imposes dominance. Central to hegemony is the consent of major groups in the ideological control of one class over others. While Sarkar hints at this term, it would be useful to further develop it in explaining how the different classes are consumed by the dominant class. Marcia Hansen explains it like this.

The concept of hegemony is important in explaining the complex of relations that are operative in Gramsci's different stages of the relationship of forces, or simply of historical development. Rather than conclude that fundamental historical crises are directly caused by economic crises Gramsci offers that economic crises 'can only create a more favorable ground for the propagation of certain ways of thinking, of posing and solving questions which involve the whole future development of State life' (Galtung 1990, 15).

In this way, the economic moves off center stage allowing cultural-ideological vectors to play an increased role.

Sarkar makes the mistake of detaching the "ideas of the ruling class from the ruling class itself and attribut[ing] to them an independent existence" (Bender 1972, 184). Sarkar's does not emphasize the material conditions of production; the typical mistake of the idealist or the intellectual. They are removed from the real.

[By] ignor[ing] the individuals and world conditions which are the source of the ideas, we can say, for instance, that during the time that the aristocracy was dominant, the concepts honor, loyalty etc., were dominant [as Sarkar does], during the dominance of the bourgeoisie the concepts freedom, equality, etc. [were dominant] (184).

Marx's lasting contribution is his linking the actual forces of production and the power relations in society. This dialectic and his escape from it is his genius.

Both Marx and Sarkar use similar escape clauses from history. Both create theories with adherents attempting to bring about their particular vision. While these theories make for interesting social science research, they also raise numerous questions. While this is not the place to elaborate these, the problem of the Gulag touched on in Chapter Two is worth elaborating. Michel Foucault (1980a) has brilliantly made this point. His question is: what in various texts of Marx and Lenin made the Gulag possible? This question should not be posed in an error was made, but rather what within the discourse made the Gulag all but natural. Moreover, to state the question as everyone has their own Gulag does injustice to the reality of those who suffer. Ashis Nandy (1987), as pointed out earlier, raises the same issue of caste. One can see the violence of caste as an error in India or as a natural derivation from Hindu cosmology. How one chooses to see it is ultimately political. In this way, Sarkar and PROUT can learn from Marxists texts and actions. The obvious location of the "Gulag" is in Sarkar's theory of leadership, which although spiritual--the leader as simple, as servant, as having endured suffering--is at the same time technocratic; it places the burden of monitoring, forecasting, planning and engineering the entire social cycle, the entire future of humanity, on the leadership. While this is placed in an oligarchy of leaders (dictatorship at times, democratic at other times, depending on the particular epoch), the

violence (textual and physical) required to move the cycle is tremendous. The cycle must be interpreted and interpreted authoritatively for its engineering to be possible. It must be interpreted based on various texts of Sarkar, and while Sarkar 's texts are rich enough to allude would be totalitarian leaders, they are broad enough to allow a range of interpretations, among them, to justify population control of the mentally ill, for example (Sarkar 1987b, 13:44-48). The question of definition, Sarkar keeps disappointingly vague. What horrors might be committed by these sadvipras against the other classes is not difficult to predict. The problem of determining who is the sadvipra, the progressive class, and who is the reactionary class, as Marxists have had to endure, is equally problematic. But remembering Foucault and Nandy, the question should not be left for a Stalin to interpret, but rather should be confronted from the outset. As Nandy reminds us, utopian constructions must have escapeways built out of them, so that their definition of the future does not force the closure of an entire generation. Does Sarkar's theory have these? If our comparison with the above writers has merit, it has a few (the notion of the cyclical change in power, personal non-violence, tolerance toward philosophical diversity, the different layers of consciousness, the soft laws of the Indian episteme) yet at the same time, in its lack of clarity between metaphor and true representations of the real, these openings are few, the closures are many. While the cycle provides an escape route, at the same time it provides the closure for Sarkar places the sadvipra in the hub of the cycle, as the controllers. Once the metaphor is

used that way, than only those with complete mind can but be at the center. Also flowing naturally from the Indian episteme is the notion that leadership must be spiritual in terms of actual behaviors and it must reflect the cosmic. That is, this leadership must have access to the divine either as enlightened ones, bodhisattvas, avatars, or to move to the western concept as Nietzsche's supermen or Hegel's world historical figures, or Lenin's vanguard of the revolution (which Sarkar reinterprets as his viksubdha shudras), or the more spiritual ideational interpretation by Teilhard de Chardin. Also problematic are not only the texts of Sarkar, but his own person. Where does he stand? Is he the first sadvipra?

Alternatively and far less ambitious is another useful concept by Gramsci. This is his organic intellectuals. In agreement with Sarkar, Gramsci holds that all individuals engage in intellectual activity, yet various intellectuals play a distinct political role. According to Carl Boggs in his The Two Revolutions: Antonio Gramsci and the Dilemmas of Western Marxism. Gramsci thought

"the more 'advanced intellectuals' would presumably take on a large number of indispensable ideological-cultural projects: subverting the illusions of conventional ideologies, introducing and disseminating critical views of social reality, presenting an alternative vision of the future" (Boggs 1984, 222-223).

This is different from the bourgeois definition of intellectuals as technical experts or learned men of culture. At the same time, for Sarkar, these intellectuals must be willing to work and live with the masses in their material conditions if they want to play a revolutionary role. But the key role of the spiritual intellectual is to aid in liberating the intellects of other intellectuals allowing

them to move past nationalism and other conventional "isms" toward spiritual universalism. Thus, Sarkar and Gramsci's intellectuals must declass themselves and not choose the elitist positions available to them.

In this way, these intellectuals would develop theory from action. "Only through the mediation of such organic intellectuals could an authentic revolutionary subjectivity be realized; they would provide the dynamic connecting link between theory and practice, the intellectual and the spontaneous, the political and social" (223). The problem for Sarkar, however, is that intellectuals see themselves as a special class and suffer from a the psychology of superiority. They forget that the intellect is but a tool of the larger mind. The intelligentsia, moreover, remain aloof from the practical world, and for example, the understandings of workers and peasants. At the same time while he is utterly critical of intellectuals who remain outside of the spiritual realm, and those who use the power of knowledge for their own class interests, he does see the role of intellectuals as increasing social economic wealth. For Sarkar intellectuals who add value to services which increase the collective good should be rewarded. At the same time, the writer, for example must be ready to

fight against the oppositions of thousands of superstitions a man's petty selfishness, his pen may break into pieces, his brush may be compelled to draw only lines of water on the canvas, his theatrical stances may perhaps end in mute gestures, yet his efforts shall not cease. [The writer] has to face humiliation and abuse every moment. But one who is afraid of such things cannot give anything to humanity. One who has no moral courage and no solid ground under his feet cannot provide a soothing shelter of bliss to others (Sarkar 1973, 114).

The responsibility for Sarkar's spiritual intellectuals is high. "The true writer is not only a creator but a sage as well. As the representative of millions and as the architect of society, he cannot forget even for a moment the highest sanctity of his avocation. He is the messenger of the mute masses, the guardian of the society" (116).

Like Sarkar who asserts that out of these intellectuals, a few sadvipras might emerge, not from the heavens but from the struggle ahead, for Gramsci too while he "conceded that intellectual defectors from the bourgeois would play a key role in the early stages of the revolutionary change, he insisted that the crucial force over the long run would have to a 'new type of intellectual' generated through class struggle itself" (Boggs 1984, 224). Both Sarkar and Marx declass intellectuals or reclass them, not necessarily as exploiters but as those who can play a historical role in promoting a new society. This is different from the role of intellectual as great philosopher or solely as critic, rather the intellectual becomes part of the mass and works for the mass. For Sarkar, their effort through organizing and mobilizing is to expose the hypocrisy of politicians, capitalists, and clergy in whatever epoch. At the same time, academic and student associations need to be established to protect the rights of intellectuals and students from the State.

For Sarkar the source of revolutionary intellectuals is obvious. They are the ones who cannot pursue their intellectual abilities because of the capitalist system and they are the ones who have had their spiritual and social consciousness awakened. And at the same time he warns intellectuals.

It is far too easy to talk bit about revolution. Such gasconades--such tall talks may easily strike the listeners with wonder and may also draw applause from them, but to bring about a real revolution is not at all easy. The pioneers of revolution will have to learn discipline, take proper training for the revolution, build their character, be moralists--in a word, they will have to be what I call the sadvipras (Sarkar 1973, 161).

And at the same time Sarkar limits the role of the intellect of the intellectuals, placing it as one step on the path of truth, not the final step, but simply a necessary tool.

ELITE THEORY

The difficulty of transforming intellectuals though is obvious. Thornstein Veblen's The Theory of the Leisure Class articulates some of these. His theory argues that there exist in all societies a leisure class which thrives by plundering the wealth of the other classes. Instead of pride in work, which was the natural state, the class became predatory.

Their work was predatory; they seized their riches by force or cunning and took no part in the actual production of wealth by sweat or skill ... far from being regarded as wasters or spoilers ... they did so with the full approval of the community ...they were looked upon as strong and able (Heilbroner 1969, 209).

Through history there has always been a leisure class with different methods but the same goal. For Khaldun and Sarkar this was a natural degeneration in leadership. Leadership first attempts to be progressive (meeting social goals) then over time it degenerates becoming solely concerned with its own goals. This description exactly fits Veblen's. Each class displays its monuments: the warriors display their conquests (land and slaves), the intellectuals their theories and geo-political victories, and the capitalists their

wealth. Each group seeks to remain the leisure class. Instead of working for the mass, intellectuals and other groups find themselves working to increase their wealth and their leisure time at the expense of the other classes. This is the same for the laborer class, who instead of revolution, seek to gain in material force and join the elites. Yet for Sarkar in the long run, this is impossible, and eventually, conditions create revolution or evolution. But the desire for leisure, wealth, a life of fame, remains part of the natural desires of humans. In the capitalist age this mental malady becomes particularly brutal. For Galtung this leisure class is the superstructure which eventually causes the downfall of the civilization as it increasingly become rigid and unable to deal with internal and external proleteriat. This inability to negotiate terms with the other classes is structural for production and ecology can only support a certain group at such a high degree of consumption, wealth.

Now, in addition to Veblen, whose Sarkar clearly augments Sarkar (and should be implicitly brought in to Sarkar theory) the two obvious writers to compare Sarkar with and who add considerably to Sarkar's project are Pareto and Mosca. When Sarkar states that the Shudra era is to be followed by the Ksattriyan era, the Ksattriyan era by the Vipran era, and the Vipran era by the Vaeshyan era culminating in a social evolution [or revolution] and "In the flow of the social cycle, a class is always dominant." (Sarkar 1982, 166), the obvious comparisons are with Vilfredo Pareto and his theory of the circulation

of elites as well as Gaetano Mosca's theory that in every group or association or structure, there is always a ruling elite.

Now Sarkar is definately speaking of two different things here: the social and psychological characteristics of the era and the characteristics of the class that is dominant in that era. His history is written largely as a history of the movement between eras--at the level of varna or structure. He is less concerned with the movement of leadership within a particular varna. At the same time there is a correspondence between the era and its leadership type. Leadership circulates with varna. Batra in his interpretation of Sarkar tends of focus less on the larger grand model--the super system--and more on the rise and fall of elites.

To further this comparison and to find ways to further develop Sarkar's theory, we will closely examine, first, Pareto and then Mosca. Both writers were Italian, Pareto (1848-1923) lived to see the rise of Fascism and Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941) almost lived to see its end. Politically, they wrote in opposition to bourgeois democracy and to socialism. Pareto grounded his work in economics believing that society is governed by laws which can be modeled by economic equations. On the other hand, Mosca was clearly interested in power and political science, attempting to move beyond the traditionally Aristotelian classification of governments. Pareto's key concept explanatory concept is the circulation of elites, while for Mosca it is the balance of social forces. Two concepts isomorphic to the Sarkarian outlay. However, there are vast differences, specifically, Sarkar's project is spiritual, ecologically humanistic and socialist

while Pareto and Mosca write with, if not a contempt, a suspicion of the working classes. While Sarkar is highly doubtful of the leadership ability of the shudra's, he balances this stance with a concern for the marginalized and an appreciation for individual wisdom, although collectively the politics of shudradom is but mobocracy. With Pareto and Mosca, especially the former, little balance is exhibited in terms of the rights and the empowerment of the marginalized.

PARETO AND THE CIRCULATION OF THE ELITES

For Pareto hierarchy is natural. All societies have elites.

Except during short intervals of time, peoples are always governed by an elite. I use the word elite ... in its etymological sense, meaning the strongest, the most energetic, and most capable--for good as well as evil. However ... elites do not last. Hence--the history of man is the history of the continuous replacement of certain elites: as one ascends, another declines. Such is the real phenomenon, though to us it may often appear under another form (Pareto 1968, 36). (emphasis added)

The word elite is used in two different ways. It is first used as a measure of excellence in a particular field and secondly, used to denote the rise and fall of groupings of power in history. Thus, we do not have the rise and fall of virtue, of dharma, of the tao, of the spirit, of power, but a movement in and out of elites. Now while Pareto uses this term largely for the government and economy, these terms can be applied to science, religion, art as well as ethics.

There can be an aristocracy of saints or an aristocracy of brigands, an aristocracy of the learned, an aristocracy ... of the learned, an aristocracy of the criminal and so on. The totality of qualities promoting the well-being and domination of a class in society constitutes something which we will call simply the elite (Pareto 1966, 155).

Equality for Pareto is impossible; there is always a movement to excellence, to difference, and thus to elitism.

To develop his theory of elites, the key analytic tool Pareto uses are the residues or sentiments or subconscious feelings. For Sarkar, these are simply the various desires in the body, the vrittis that constitute the human glandular system and the various psychic centers. For Sarkar, these include fear, lust, the attraction to the great, passion, envy, doubt, and so forth--the humanistic discourse of the self. But Pareto uses these residues concretely in his theory. He breaks these residues into six classes with two of these classes essential for his theory of elites. The first is innovation and the second is consolidation. Immediately we should be reminded of Khaldun's dynastic model. The dynasty begins with the innovator and then eventually moves to a consolidation phase where it imitates past behavior. As mentioned earlier, most rise and fall theories follow Khaldun's. These residues form the elite, the rest are the mass. The political structure lasts longer if the elites are open to increased upward mobility of others who are high in elite capabilities (as measured by some excellence index), thus allowing a faster circulation of elites. The best societies are those in which the elites circulate the quickest.

Society is harmed not only the accumulation of inferior elements in upper strata but also by the accumulation in lower strata of superior elements which are prevented from rising. If at one and the same time the upper strata are filled with inferior elements and the lower strata with superior elements, the social equilibrium becomes highly unstable and a violent revolution is imminent (159).

Like other grand theorists, Pareto uses the body as metaphor to articulate his theory. "In a certain sense, the social body is comparable to the human body which perishes very quickly if it cannot eliminate toxic elements" (159). The ideal situation is when elites are in rapid circulation and the residues of his various classes are balanced. However, this does not always happen. What results is classic Khaldun, "after victory, the elite becomes more rigid and more exclusive" (86). The children of the elite come into power without adequate talents and thus the elite becomes decadent as this class is no longer composed of the most gifted individuals.

But unlike Sarkar who gives us different social types, Pareto does not. Rather he rests his theory on the classes of residues, specifically, the residues of innovation and consolidation. This division has some similarity to Sarkar's work. The new leadership and collective psychology comes in and is innovative; it solves some problem, meets some struggle or develops out of the previous class, but eventually the class attempts to consolidate power. Each elite then distributes and accumulates different types of power. Indeed, that is one way to see Sarkar's different eras. The new varna comes in and redistributes power and then over time consolidates its power. Eventually it abuses this power and then the next varna comes in to redistribute power.

However, the pattern that Pareto sees is not the cycle, rather the pendulum, power oscillates, moving between one type of residue to another. Innovative residues lead to a new system, but this new elite does not have enough consolidators; that is, individuals willing to

use force to maintain the system. The innovative elite becomes soft.

It speaks rhetorically for humanitarianism, but in fact is brutal.

When an elite declines, we can generally observe two signs which manifest themselves simultaneously: (1) the declining elite becomes softer, milder, more humane and less apt to defend its own power, and (2) on the other hand, it does not lose its rapacity and greed for the goods of others, but rather tends as much as possible to increase its unlawful appropriations and to indulge in major usurpations of the national money (Pareto 1968, 59).

And, "when we speak of the diminishing strength of the dominant class, we by no means refer to a decrease in violence; it even occurs very frequently that the weak are precisely those who are also violent" (70).

Elite rule wherein elites are rapidly circulating is the best governance. Pleas for humanitarian equality have no value, since they would never be enacted. In fact, these pleas only weaken the elite and its various defenses of rights. In the following passage, we see Pareto's interpretation of this.

It should be noted that Buddhism, which proclaimed the equality of all men, has generated the theocracy of Tibet; and the religion of Christ, which seemed especially made for the poor and humble, has generated the Roman theocracy. This was in its turn challenged by a new elite at the time of the Reformation, but since it was not yet entirely decadent, it suffered only partial defeat. The decline of the old elite and its increasing arrogance at the time of the Reformation can be clearly seen in the emergence of the robber barons. As usual, the new elite leaned on the poor and humble; as usual, these believed in the promises made to them; as usual they were deceived, and yoke weighed even heavier on their shoulders than before (87). (emphasis added)

Thus, elites rule for themselves, not for anyone else. As with the non-withering of the Marxist state, Pareto appears to have made a telling forecast.

For Pareto a high degree of circulation promises more wealth, while stasis, for example, as in any caste system, does not allow the best to come forward and take the rightful place as leaders. But the new elite do not come into power representing themselves, rather they claim to represent the people or other legitimate political expressions. Here Pareto is clearly speaking against the socialist parties. Government then does not remain neutral, rather it aids one class over another.

The privileging of the elite has one implication, not a necessary one, but one that certainly is explicit in Pareto. In Pareto's words. "Those who demanded equality of citizens before the law certainly did not foresee the privileges which the masses now enjoy ... Those who demanded equality of taxes to aid the poor did not imagine that there would be a progressive tax at the expense of the rich" (Manicus 1987, 154). And speaking about the ideal distribution of differences, "A consequence of the heterogeneity of society is that rules of conduct, beliefs, morals, should be, in part at least, different for the different parts of society in order to obtain maximum utility for the society" (154). For Pareto there is indeed no evidence that equality is advantageous. To Sarkar inequality is only useful if it leads to more equality. Therefore his political economy has a clear upper and lower limits to wealth accumulation. Rewarding excellence for Sarkar should lead to the social good. Yet at the same time Sarkar's describes shudras as lazy, and prone to their instinctual selves. Linking this to democracy, Sarkar attacks it as a system that local leaders and capitalists can use for their own gain. The essence of

the argument is that votes can be bought, politicians can use the democratic platform for factionalism, and in the long run the best interests of all the classes cannot be maintained. However, he sees democracy in a positive light perceiving it as a progressive revolt against monarchies and present communist military regimes. In countries with high educational levels it is the appropriate form of governance. And until there can be leadership from spiritual, enlightened leaders, "democracy is a preference to other systems" (Sarkar 1978a, 2: 16).

At the same time, Sarkar supports a democratic world government, with a neo-magna carta which essentially guarantees purchasing capacity for all (economic rights); protection for plants and animals, (ecological rights); the right to follow spiritual practices, cultural history, cultural education and indigenous linguistic expressions (spiritual, educational and cultural rights); and lastly basic human values take priority with respect to the above three, for example the saving of life takes priority over a cultural value that favors the taking of animal life.

Thus, he privileges basic rights as a way to deal with the abuse of power instead of locating the solution at the other side of the equation, public representation. Sarkar's begs the public representation argument by first arguing historically that no democracy has ever had true representation since classes are always excluded and the representative actually holds true power (accountability is bought off through normative, remunerative or

coercive power). While he favors economic democracy, politically Sarkar moves toward governmental centralization.

Sarkar's elitism is one that attempts to balance the elites, a concept that Mosca first originated when he reinterpreted Montesquieu's checks and balances (executive, legislative and judicial) governmental design. Conversely, Pareto's elitism is the application of Darwin's survival of the fittest to leadership theory. In this he differs from Khaldun by preferring a rapid circulation of the finest, while Khaldun would prefer a long lasting leadership, one that stays true to asabiya. Sarkar influenced more by human suffering uses elite theory as a way to unmask theories and behaviors which claim to represent the poor when indeed they use the poor as their fodder. Sarkar's history is only elitist (in the critical use of the word) in that the spiritual world has a hierarchical dimension to it. There are excellence and levels of knowledge, but the veracity of these levels is service to the poorest! Instead of the struggle of the fittest, Sarkar uses the metaphor of society as family. The strength of the society comes from how it treats its weakest members. But Pareto should not be seen as favoring the aristocracy of a particular class, rather his attempt is to find a formula in which society can continue to be prosperous.

Human societies cannot exist without a hierarchy, but it would be a grave mistake to conclude from this that their prosperity increases in proportion to the rigidity of the hierarchy. Equally, the changing of aristocracies is advantageous to society, yet we cannot discount the advantages also of a certain stability. Selection should operate within such limits as to ensure advantage to the species without excessive sufferings for individuals (Pareto 1966, 160).

It is this articulation of the balance of social forces that Mosca adds to Pareto's argument. Mosca writing at the same time as Pareto developed a similar elite theory. He too asserts that every government claims to exercise rule from a theory of representation. "...we find that all authority is being exercised in the name of the entire people, or of an aristocracy, or of a single sovereign" (Meisel, 1965, 5). But behind this theory of representation, there are always two classes. In Mosca's words, "The ruling class or those who hold and exercise the public power [who] will be always be a minority, and below them we find a numerous class of persons who do never, in any real sense, participate in government, but merely submit to it: they may be called the ruled class" (5). This ruling class not only controls coercive power but ideological power. It determines the cultural level of the people. However, according to James Meisel,

the ruled mass remains the humus out of which grow leading groups; the ruling class must never be considered as an isolate. Its ideology remains, if not epiphenomenal, an aspect of the total social process until, at some point of class differentiation, the myth of the ruling class obstructs the evolutionary flow and becomes a mere 'class ideology' (21).

When this happens, the ruling class will join to use Pareto's classic phrase, "the graveyard of aristocracies." But from the viewpoint of elite theory this is not tragic for there is always another aristocracy waiting to represent the people. For Pareto given this false representation, the best or ideal system is when there is a high degree of elite circulation such that excellence can find ways to reach governing power so that benefits can accrue to all.

And in Mosca's words, "Political power always has been, and always will be, exercised by organized minorities, which have had, and

will have, the means, varying as the times vary, to impose their supremacy on the multitudes" (136). Only the means change to gain, consolidate the legitimate power change through time, force, fraud, ideological myths. Now this view, while at one level gives an asset to those outside of power by locating all types of power relationships as essentially ruler and ruled, also simultaneously reduces the power of those marginalized by power, for now master/slave and town council/citizen are constructed as identical social formations: that is, elite--mass. From the view of liberal pluralist theory, elite theory misses the dramatic difference between domination and governance.

However, Mosca and Pareto by using the cycle strike at the heart of the Gnostic project, both liberal and Marxist versions. If history is simply the rise and fall of oligarchies, of elite rule, then a liberal democracy or the withering away of the state are but impossibilities. The pattern of domination can but continue. With such a cyclical theory (without an exit, a spiral of sorts, or a notion of spiritual progress) then the revolutionary asset that the Enlightenment gave the workers and the bourgeois and the asset that Marx and Mao gave to workers and peasants is taken back by the aristocracy, for minority rule is the constant. If the minority will always rule then why not continue that structure until its deliverance to Pareto's graveyard of aristocracies. In this way, Pareto and Mosca become neo-conservatives, much as one might read Sarkar as a conservative moralist, yearning for the days when old wise men, when the elders, ruled their respective communities. But, for Mosca elite

rule is not a characteristic of the good society for the class that is ruled provides the ruling class with its means of subsistence. There is no horizontal relationship that benefits all equally here. There is clear exploitation.

Mosca's unique and lasting contribution is in his analysis of the varying structure of the ruling class; a contribution more useful for us than Pareto's innovators/consolidators (or later on, rentiers and speculators). It is in Mosca's contribution that we see further similarities with Sarkar. First, like Sarkar, he reminds us that the era or the class in power cannot be recognized solely by those who hold the supreme power established by the law. For Mosca, "At times, alongside of the hereditary king or emperor, there is a prime minister or a major-domo who wields an actual power that is greater than the sovereign's " (Etzioni 1973, 210). For Sarkar this is most often true in the Vipran and Vaeshyan eras. In the Vipran the ksattriyan king is on top, but the vipra holds power. In the Vaeshyan, the vipra is on top, but the vaeshyan holds power. And in the Shudra era, there is anarchy; the warriors are ready to consolidate. It is in the Ksattriya era that power is faithfully represented by the ruling class of the era. Thus Sarkar's general typology: anarchy (shudra), monarchy (ksattriya), republic (vipra) and democracy (vaeshya).

Mosca's classification, however, breaks as mentioned earlier with Aristotle's (monarchies, aristocracies, democracies), and Montesquieu's (absolutisms, limited monarchies, republics) as well as Herbert Spencer's (militant and industrial states); rather his is a classification of the different types of oligarchies. The first

historical category or social forces that Mosca's develops parallels Sarkar's. In Mosca's view, societies are initially controlled by the warriors and eventually are controlled by the wealthy--Sarkar's in between vipra stage is not used. Besides his description of rule of the warriors, he develops an economic model so as to explain the feudal structure. "As once class became habituated to the practice of plow and spade, the warriors became nobles and masters, and the peasants, once companions, and brothers, became villeins and serfs" (212). Once the warriors gain exclusive ownership of the land (and given that land is the source of wealth) "eventually, if other circumstances permit, a very important social transformation occurs. Wealth rather than military valor comes to be the characteristic feature of the dominant class: the people who rule are the rich rather than the brave" (214). Along with this change is the transformation of the feudal state to the bureaucratic state wherein public authority is used to protect private interests. "Once this transformation has taken place, wealth produces political power, just as political power has been producing wealth. ...if the powerful are as a rule the rich, to be rich is to become powerful" (214). Using Sarkarian like language, but predating Sarkar, Mosca can be credited with describing the shift from Ksattriyan era to the Vaeshyan era. Sarkar, in addition, to the shift of feudalism to bureaucracy would prefer to speak of the bureaucracy as a vipran construct. But Mosca too speaks of the vipras, but not as bureaucrats. "In societies in which religious beliefs are strong and ministers of faith from a special class, a priestly aristocracy almost always rises and gains possession

of a more or less important share of the wealth and the political power" (Mosca 1939, 59). But while priests become a social force, they are not critical in Mosca's theory of history. Nor does Mosca represent the priest as isomorphic with the modern technocrat. For Sarkar that there is no specific political qua government structure for the Vipra stage does not perturb him, it is neither empire nor is it nation-state, rather it a phase wherein power is held by religious authorities. Power comes from guru or pope, irrespective of the political structure. The group mind, the collective worldview, is the independent variable, not government. Government is a reflection of the mentality of the epoch. Power thus is located in collective psychology, in varna, not in a particular government structure.

Now in these stages, ruling classes rise and fall. The reasons for this again are isomorphic with Sarkar's worldview.

If a new source of wealth develops in a society, if the practical importance of knowledge grows, if an old religion declines or a new one is born, if a new current of ideas spreads, then simultaneously, far reaching dislocations occur in the ruling class. One might say, indeed, that the whole history of civilized [hu]mankind comes down to a conflict between the tendency of dominant elements to monopolize political power and transmit possession of it by inheritance, and the tendency toward a dislocation of old forces and an insurgence of new forces (215).

As with Marx, it is this conflict that produces history.

However, what separates Marx and Sarkar from this analysis is their image of the future and their use of political theory for expressively strategic purposes. But Mosca does have an ideal, a preferred polity. Instead of accepting Montesquieu's theory of the best government as a balance of legislative, executive and judicial, Mosca asserts that the best government is a balance between the different social forces.

This is similar to Sarkar, except Sarkar constructs his theory so that each class rules the other in succession. Now what are these social forces. In Arthur Livingston's introduction to Mosca's The Ruling Class he interprets it as the following. "A social force is any human activity or prerequisite that has a social significance--money, land, military prowess, religion, education, manual labor, science--anything" (Mosca 1939, xix). By anything we can assume that these forces change over time as the civilization varies. Ruling classes are different in regards to the number of forces they control. The stability of a regime is measured by how many of these forces it controls and how many it does not control. Again this is a useful concept for Sarkar. To predict (relocating Sarkar to the empirical discourse for the moment) the next era, one would look for indicators that reflect the inability of one varna to control the other varnas; that is, a politics of varna as reflected in representative government (to return to our interpretive posture). However, progress in itself creates new social forces. Or as Sarkar would say it, the new era dialectically emerges from the previous. Thus, instability is natural. Again to quote Arthur Livingston, "Struggle [then] is one of the continuous and never-failing aspects of human life. Social forces, therefore, regularly manifest themselves in aspirations to power" (xix). And then in classic Sarkar. "Soldiers want to rule, and they are a hard group to control since they hold the guns and know how best to use them" (xix). Mosca's theory emerges from this initial question: why is it that the warriors are not in control? Given their control of the means of destruction, the natural state would place

them on top of the other forces. To continue quoting Livingston in his interpretation of Mosca's The Ruling Class.

Money wants to rule and it is hard to control money because most people succumb to the glamour and influence of wealth. Priests want to rule, and they have the weight of ignorant masses and the majesty of the mysteries of life in their favor. Scientists want to rule, and ... they have dreamed of dictators who will establish their technocracy and their 'rules of the best.' Labor wants to rule and would rule did it not always encounter the law of the ruling class and fall into the hands of its leaders (xix).

For Mosca the ideal political system is one where these forces are balanced. If one social force is dominant as in the Sarkarian model then tyranny would result and progress would end, since social forces emerge from progress. Fortunately, there are often checks.

[M]ilitary power is checked and balanced by money or religion; or money, perhaps, checked and balanced by taxation imposed by land; or an obstreperous religious hierarchy checked and balanced now by superstitious sects which group up within itself, now by coalitions of external forces of enlightenment (xx).

But there are moments where is force is progressively balanced, where each person can develop his or her potential, where "the whole infinite potentialities of human nature burst into bloom," (xx) writes Livingston. This is most possible when power is balanced by "habit, custom, morals, institutions, and constitution" (xx) or juridical defense.

History can then be understood by the expansion or contraction of social forces. While for Sarkar, an ideology may not expand because one or many factors are missing (from the six spokes), for Khaldun it is because of unity, for others virtue or force, while for Mosca it is because the proper balance is not kept. Thus, Islam declines because the caliphs failed to resolve the problem of the standing army--generals became independent. But for Sarkar, Islam simply over

expanded. For Islam to have continued its expansion, Mosca would have balanced at least three forces: religion, government by law, and army. But the Islamic polity did not manage this. Thus for Mosca the measure for a successful government then is the balance of social forces as understood by some level of consensus legal authority. Again, Sarkar would agree calling for a global constitution, a neo-magna carta that enforces ecological and cultural rights, the two sufferers of modern capitalism.

In this way, Sarkar comes closer to the theories of these two Italians (associated with Fascist thinking) than with the democratic tradition of Montesquieu and others. For Sarkar, however, the democratic discourse is not incidental, as he bases his model of world government on a checks and balances, lower and upper house division; but varna is about an analysis that is much deeper than government and ruling classes, it is a whole world view, comparable to Sorokin's cultural super system, to a social ontology of the real. Different types of government (again as with Sorokin) are but secondary factors in the larger system. Nonetheless the conservative charges made against Pareto and Mosca have been made against Sarkar in India, notwithstanding Sarkar's attempt to position himself differently, but should we expect otherwise, when Sarkar's ideal polity is often expressed as a dictatorship of the enlightened. Out of context or in context depending how or where one speaks of Sarkar, he falls far from the mainstream of democratic thinking. But Sarkar's democratic socialism is far too slow, what is needed are efforts that quicken the pace of change, which allow elites to circulate and social forces to

balance, to evoke Pareto and Mosca. Democracy is useful, but too often, endemically, the larger capitalist structure and local political leaders imbalance it at the expense of the suffering poor. Moreover, what is important for Sarkar is responsiveness to human needs and the accountability of power; that is, a model of needs representation not representation by ballot. The liberal believes, however, it is the ballot that will eventually lead to the representation of needs. Pareto and Mosca then offer many useful insights for Sarkar, but can be best perceived as a more specific case privileging governance within Sarkar's larger theory. PROUT the movement would gain from examining the implications of a theoretical posture that is strongly critical of the liberal democratic discourse. And of course the liberal democratic perspective would have to fundamentally rethink its site of politics when confronted with a Sarkar from an alternative episteme.

Before we conclude this chapter on grand theory with Toynbee and Sorokin, we will make some minor points with respect to Spengler who too has used Sarkar's notion of social classes. Galtung as well who uses these social types will enter (as he has throughout).

Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) is interesting and useful to us for numerous reasons. Like Sarkar and others, his history is contextualized by a spiritual perspective of life. While he does not go as far as Eric Voegelin's macro search for Being in its self-interpretation or remain solely with a history of power like Pareto and Mosca, rather Spengler is interested in culture. Cultures are the key units of history. "Cultures are organisms, and world

history is their collective biography" (Spengler 1972, 104). His central metaphor is the life cycle--birth, growth, aging and death. "Morphologically, the immense history of a ... culture is the exact equivalent of the petty history of the individual man, or of the animal, or of the tree, or the flower... In the destinies of the several Cultures that follow upon one another, is compressed the whole content of human history" (104).

Borrowing from Goethe, Spengler raises the key problem of the 20th century as that of exploring "the inner structure of the organic units through and in which world history fulfills itself, to separate the morphologically necessary from the accidental, and, by seizing the purpose of events, to ascertain the languages in which they speak (105).

Spengler's history was certainly a far step from Comte. Indeed he specifically rejects the positivistic notion of a science of history based on causality. Rather, like Voegelin, he uplifts the work of Joachim of Flora and sympathetically presents Joachim of Flora's mystical insight of history. And like Voegelin he locates the present problems of the West in the misreading of Joachim's mystical works, in the rearticulation of the transhistorical division of Father, Son and Holy Ghost into the historical language of scientific reasoning, of the Gnostics.

The History of Spengler is not based on truth or falsity, but on levels of insights: superficial and deep. According to Spengler,

We must not lose sight of the fact that at bottom the wish to write history scientifically involves a contradiction. True science reaches just as far as the notion of truth and falsity have validity. ...But real historical vision belongs to the

domain of significances, in which the crucial words are not 'correct' and 'erroneous,' but 'deep' and 'shallow.' ...Nature is to be handled scientifically. History poetically (Widgery 1961, 198).

This is similar to Sarkar and the Indian notion of truth. In this view, there are levels of truth--the seer can see the more profound levels of history and thus illumine the past so that it can teach the people of the present. For Sarkar this teaching would be about the challenges that humans have faced and conquered and about the voices that have been silenced by the ruling classes.

Spengler continues this notion of history as insight by dividing history into two types. The first is the Ptolemaic system of history which is primarily linear, causal and divides history into three phases: ancient, medieval, and modern. This history is Eurocentered and even when European philosophers moved out of the explanatory scientific model (Herder, Kant and Hegel), they remained within the threefold division. However, Spengler presents an alternative Copernican view. He writes,

I see, in place of that empty figment of one linear history ... the drama of a number of mighty Cultures, each springing with primitive strength from the soil of a mother-region to which it remains firmly bound through its whole life-cycle; each stamping its material, its mankind, in its own images; each having its own idea, its own passions, its own life, will and feeling, its own death. Here the Cultures, people, languages, truths, gods, landscapes bloom and age as the oaks and the stonepines, the blossoms, twigs and leaves (Widgery 1961, 194).

But there is no aging of Humankind. This macro unit of analysis does not exist for Spengler. Spengler then asserts, again, countering Eurocentric thought (or an universalizing thought):

Each Culture has its own new possibilities of self-expression which arise, ripen, decay and die to never return. There is not one sculpture, one painting, one mathematics, one physics, but

many, each in its deepest essence different from the others, each limited in duration and self-contained, just as species of plant has its peculiar blossoms or fruit, its special type of growth and decline (194).

Each culture in this sense is a separate person with its own equally valid view of the real. For Spengler culture truly is his unit. And there are many cultures each with its own pattern, each following a general overall pattern--birth, growth, decay, and death. Now for Sarkar the unit is human civilization, not the various cultures in history. Sarkar only separates culture (and thus seeks to recover pre and non-modern cultures) as a political strategy to counter the homogenizing influences of the false culture of materialism. For Sarkar plainly "the sumtotal of the different expression of human life is called culture. Human culture is one and indivisible" (Sarkar 1987b, 8:2). Culture is simply human expression. His ideal is the unified existence of all cultures wherein each can add its own uniqueness thus creating a unity in diversity tension or to use Sarkarian language, such that each culture is like a flower in a bouquet of universal love.

Like Sarkar who makes the difference between culture and materialism or pseudo culture, Spengler makes the distinction between culture and "civilization." For Spengler culture is a unique creation of various cosmic forces which eventually degenerates into civilization, meaning city life dominated by the desire for money. Once this stage is reached then death will certainly follow. Cultures begins not with struggle or unity as with Khaldun, but with the awakening of a great soul. Each culture has a prime characteristic symbol. The classical Greek culture is represented by the body, the

Chinese culture by the tao (the indefinable way) and Western culture is represented by pure and limitless space (expansion). In addition, there are specific types of art, music, literature that reflect that culture. These are the works that define the formative and climax phases of the culture (Thompson 1985) that capture its spirit. It is through art, the unconscious, the myths that create our dramas that we can understand history, not through a scientific objectification of history. In Spengler's words:.

All great creations and forms in religion, art, politics, social life, economy and science appear, fulfill themselves, and die down contemporaneously in all the cultures; the inner structure of one corresponds strictly with that of all the others; there is not a single phenomena of deep physiognomic importance in the record of one for which we could not find a counterpart in the record of every other, and this counterpart is to be found under a characteristic form and in a perfectly definite chronological position (Etzioni 1973, 25).

Each culture then is a vast system in which the parts relate and can only be understood by the larger pattern. Each culture then exists in its own cosmology. Culture understood in this way follows the the ordering of the classic episteme, the Indian episteme, wherein the universe is symmetrically balanced: as above as below, as within as without. The person, the social and the cosmic can be understood as parts of the larger whole; when one dimension is perfectly understood, the whole reveals itself.

Spengler gives us stages for his scheme as well. The first is preculture, the second is culture which is divided into an early and late, and the third is civilization. In the pre-culture stage "there are no classes, no mass, no state, no politics" (Sorokin 1966, 192). This is obviously Sarkar's early shudra phase and Marx's early

communism. These precultures are the basis from which cultures can develop. Why some develop and others don't Spengler leaves to cosmic forces, in opposition to Toynbee who argues for the right mix of challenge and response. The development of culture is characterized by the emergence of two classes, the nobility (ksattriyas) and the priests (the vipras). Along with this class development, is the emergence of the city. However, over time, the culture passes into its late culture phase, wherein the idea of the state and national government are realized. At this point the next class emerges, the bourgeois, or Sarkar's vaeshyan class. According to Sorokin in his interpretation of Spengler, "urban values replace agricultural ones. Money emerges victorious over landed property and values" (193). Also at this time money and democracy are destroyed from within. At the beginning, democracy is controlled by the intellect, soon however, money buys votes. And in Spengler's words, "Through money, democracy becomes its own destroyer, after money has destroyed intellect" (196). Or in Sarkar's words, the vaeshyan destroys the vipran ideal of democracy. The balanced state, as Mosca writes, ends. No longer are the nobility, clergy and bourgeoisie in a unified state. At this stage of civilization, the fourth class develops, the mass. Spengler does not relate this, however, to pre-history, as Sarkar's cycle would. The city develops into the megalopolis, thus size as Leopold Kohr has argued in his The Overdeveloped Nations becomes a critical variable for Spengler. With this size, there is a revolution and anarchy. Clearly, Sarkar's shudra revolution. In Sorokin's interpretation, "just as in the late period of culture, money becomes victorious over

aristocratic politics and values, so now the politics of rude force triumphs over money and the money policies of the bourgeoisie" (194). Once power is consolidated in a Caesar-like rule, a new religiosity develops. This for Sarkar is the next transition from the Ksattriyan era to the Vipra era, although for Sarkar, religiosity can be expressed in other than the conventional religious discourse (ideological); the key point is that it is the intellectual force which dominates. But for Spengler, this is already the end; there is no cycle, simply the last breath of a dying culture. Although as with Khaldun, there is often a brilliant moment in which it appears that all is well, that the culture is in bloom, but in fact death is near. To Spengler this is the present phase of the West.

While the similarities with Sarkar's work are striking--the stages, the spiritual emphasis, the alternative interpretive epistemology of history, the life cycle--Sarkar does not use culture as his key variable. It is not culture which rises and falls. Moreover, no civilization necessarily must die by itself. Civilizations can be regenerated by spiritual forces, or they can be vanquished by external forces if it is weak in some major areas (a universal social outlook, for example). And critically, Sarkar sees the shudra revolution not as a degeneracy of culture, but as a necessary event to balance the social forces again, to end their oppression; to Spengler the mass phase is only indicative of a culture which has passed on to its end phase. The earlier days of the agriculture, of the city, of chivalry, of religious ideas are over. Instead, the money spirit has conquered the culture, and now this

money spirit is attacked by rude force, first in the form of the masses, and second in the form of Caesarism (Sarkar's subsequent centralization of power after the shudra revolution).

Sarkar, while seeing the decline of the West, would argue that this type of analysis is too simple. First, humanity is One and second, a spiritual transformation and a restructuring of the West along spiritual cooperative lines would allow it to regenerate. But the similarities in terms of the ordering of the forces are great. We notice it in Mosca and then in Spengler as well.

While Galtung, throughout this study, has been a theoretical asset, we now synthesize his theory of social types mainly to contrast them with Mosca, Spengler and Sarkar. Johan Galtung (1986) also uses these four classes and asserts that they exist in all cosmologies, but as representations of economic, ideological and military power. The assertion of this power is over the fourth class, the peasants, workers. However, Galtung adds a fifth class, which in general includes the untouchables, the pariahs, the gypsies, and the foreigners (and even the environment). He then reads European history as the successive revolt of first, the aristocracy against the clergy (the English revolution), second, the bourgeois against the aristocracy and the clergy (the French), third the peasants against the bourgeois, aristocrats and the clergy (the Soviet revolution); and fourth, the outsiders against the other four in the form of the Green movement. Thus, the basic types (structures) are there, but Galtung adds a new section, the outcastes. The last revolution for Sarkar is the

sadvipra society, although certainly the similarities between the Greens and PROUT are numerous.

TOYNBEE

Besides Spengler, the two most spectacular macro thinkers of this century have been Toynbee and Sorokin. Batra in his study on the rise and fall of capitalism and communism has already compared Sarkar to Toynbee largely associating Toynbee's universal state, with the Ksattriyan era, Toynbee's universal church with the Vipran era, Toynbee's challenge and response with Sarkar physical and mental clash theories of change, and Toynbee's spiritual Christian vision of the future with Sarkar's own tantric spiritual vision. The main difference between the two is in the units of analysis the use. Toynbee, along with Spengler and others, takes concrete historical civilizations or cultures as his unit (as an important and necessary reaction against the national histories of the time), while Sarkar searches for deeper patterns beyond person, nation, culture and civilization. In the end Sarkar stays with the mentalities of the Indian episteme, while Toynbee attempts to develop a theory of the rise and fall of all civilizations.

Along with the contributions of the authors touched upon in this section, Pitirim Sorokin's stands out as one in which there is a great deal of similarity between Sarkar and himself. Sorokin, in addition to his theoretical scheme attempted to research history and find evidence for his theory. With this final comparison that we will conclude this section on comparative theory.

In Social and Cultural Dynamics and Sociological Theories of Today Sorokin comprehensively critiques previous macro theories of sociology from ancient to modern theories, from class to functional theories. The main thrust of his critique is that these theories have either been unclear as to their basic unit of analysis (civilization, cultures) or have taken on only one aspect of the world (the material) and upgraded it to an entire theory, as in Marxism. Previous writers, then, have not perceived the much larger and deeper pattern.

Besides, Sorokin's masterful critical sociology is his own theory. First he defines culture, then develops the various patterns of this culture, provides evidence of this rhythm in numerous areas--art, music, literature, government, epistemology, economy, family--explains why the pattern is the way it is, and then outlines his image of the future.

The similarities to Sarkar's work are numerous. However, Sorokin is far more detailed in applying his theory to world history than Sarkar or his students are, especially in the data oriented method. However, while Sorokin is outstanding at taxonomy and explaining why patterns rise and fall, he is weak in providing a theory that can be used to change the world. One cannot develop a movement based on Sorokin's work; although one can have a greater distance from the present and if one disapproves of the present stage, then one can eagerly await the next stage. Finally, Sorokin is nowhere as neat in the order of things as Sarkar (in the search for symmetry). The

pattern does not always work; there are times when events change the pattern. Sorokin is less willing to claim that his basic types explain all reality, through all time.

Sorokin begins with the problem of the appropriate unit of study. Toynbee's civilization or Spengler's culture are too functional in their approach. Their units of analysis are not causally related. They are not unified systems. Sorokin would certainly make similar charges against Batra's use of civilizations in his effort to "prove" Sarkar's theory. Against Sarkar, little can be said since he does not clarify these categories in the language of social science, rather the definitions are based on notions of group mind, group thought-waves which become reflected in human expression, or culture. But varna is, as Sorokin would want, essentially causally integrated.

The starting point for Sorokin's analysis is the problem of culture?

Is every culture an integrated whole, where no essential part is incidental but each is organically connected with the rest?" Or is it a mere spatial congery of cultural objects, values, traits, which have drifted fortuitously together and are united only by their spatial adjacency, just by the fact that they are thrown together, and by nothing more (Sorokin 170, 2)?

This then is another restatement of the problem of order in history. For Sorokin the starting definition of culture is simply the total of that which is "created or modified by the conscious or unconscious activity of two or more individuals interacting with one another or conditioning one another's behavior" (2) A sole human being is then not a culture. Culture is interaction and it can be at any level and not necessary high or low culture (Spengler's culture and civilization, for example).

Sorokin then develops a typology of the main ways of cultural organization. The first is the Congerie or spatial or mechanical adjacency. This is ordering the world when there is no logical or causal connection between that which is to be ordered. Second, is the indirect association through a common external factor. The example Sorokin uses here are physical objects present in certain geographical areas. While this has greater unification than congeries, still there remains no functional or causal connection. The third area is that causal or functional integration wherein the parts relate to the whole due to a purpose. The component of a computer on a floor is mere spatial adjacency, but assembled they have a causal connection. At a more complex level, Sorokin gives us the following definition.

Any cultural synthesis is to be regarded as functional when, on the one hand, the elimination of one of its important elements perceptibly influences the rest of the synthesis in its functions (and usually in its structure); and when, on the other hand, the separate element, being transposed to a quite different combination, either cannot exist in it or has to undergo a profound modification to become a part of it (6).

Wall street stock markets cannot be implanted in pre- or non-modern societies. The stock market is functionally related to a modern capitalist society. Most sociological theories, especially modern sociology articulate this level of analysis. But there is a deeper level of integration. This is the logico-meaningful integration of culture. This is where the parts are perfectly related to the whole. They are unified not by function but by logic. It is this level of analysis that best orders the universe. This goes beyond the search for patterns of uniformity found in the causal-functional approach.

Different in nature, but similar in function, is the role of the logico-meaningful method of ordering chaos. Here, however, the

ordering element is not uniformity of relationship between the fragmentary variables, but identity of meaning or logical coalescence. Hidden behind the empirically different, seemingly unrelated fragments of the cultural complex lies an identity of meaning, which brings them together into consistence styles, typical forms and significant patters. If, therefore, uniformity of relationship is the common denominator of causally united phenomena, in the logico-meaningful union it is identity of central meaning or idea (10). (emphasis added)

While the causal method might be appropriate for the natural science, a humanistic interpretative method is needed for history. There is no cultural atom in music or art or any other division of culture. Rather, "it is the identity (or similarity) of central meaning, idea or mental bias that permeates all the logically related fragments" (10-11). Or as Sarkar would assert, it is the mental wave, the collective psychology, the dominant perception of the real. For Galtung this would be cosmology--the irreducible whole which defines the parts; for Foucault it is the episteme--the way in which we know the real and in which this knowing creates subjectivity, "we."

What emerges from congeries is mere description: from causal-functional analyses are explanatory formulas, from the logico-meaning method emerges the reason "which permeates all the components, gives sense and significance to each of them, and in this way makes cosmos of a chaos of unintegrated fragments" (14).

Here Sorokin continues the work of Comte emerging with a similar theological, metaphysical and positivistic division of the real with the middle division a mixed one. For Sorokin, however, history is not linear, rather there is a rhythm, a pendulum pattern, to the cosmos, with time and space never ending. The first description of reality is

supersensory and the second is sensory with the inbetween a "both and" type. Now what are the characteristics of this grand system.

First, every logico-meaningful culture is an integrated unity, second, any change in a given component affects other components and thus the system as a whole. Each system also has a certain degree of autonomy and a certain degree of independence from the external environment. Thus there is autonomy as the system will reject certain external changes (which are not isomorphic to its central meaning structure) and inject other ones. And finally, "functions, change, and destiny of the system are determined not only and not so much by the external circumstances (except in the case of catastrophic accidents), but by the nature of the system itself and by the relationship between its parts" (18). Thus, there is structure and there is choice.

Sorokin devises his grand system by asking the simple question: what is the real? From this he adds the question what are the needs and ends to be satisfied, the extent to which these needs and ends are satisfied, and the various ways that satisfaction is achieved. The question of the natural of reality is answered as either the real is supersensate or material or some version of both. Needs can be sensual or they can be spiritual or a mixed mental. There is also a hierarchy of needs to be satisfied. Finally, needs are satisfied by modifying one's milieu (the external, sensate approach), modifying one's self (internal approach) or some version of both.

Based on these questions, Sorokin deduces and induces that there are two types of cultures, the ideational and the sensate. Both answer the above questions differently.

Each has its own mentality; its own system of truth and knowledge; its own philosophy and Weltanschauung; its own type of religion; its own form of art and literature; its own mores, laws, code of conduct; its own predominant forms of social relationships; its own economic and political organization; and, finally, its own type of human personality, with a peculiar mentality and conduct (24).

But while these two models differ with each other, as indeed they represent the basic philosophical tensions of Western philosophy (and to some extent Eastern as well), "within each culture all the values fit closely together, belong to one another logically, often functionally" (24).

For Sorokin then there are three answers to his basic question of the nature of the real. The first results in the ideational system, the second in the sensate and the third in the mixed idealistic. From the outset the relationship to Sarkar is obvious. The ideational is the vipran era. The sensate is the vaeshyan, and the mixed is the Ksattriyan (where both are present, the battle with the environment and the worship of the other world). The Shudra era is the short time inbetween eras and, in effect, is a transitional phase.

For Sorokin, in the ideational era,

reality is perceived as nonsensate and nonmaterial, everlasting Being; (2) the needs and ends are mainly spiritual; (3) the extent of their satisfaction is the largest, and the level, highest, (4) the method of their fulfillment of realization is self-imposed minimization or elimination of most of the physical needs, and to the greatest possible extent (27).

Again an identical distinction for the Vipran era. But Sorokin distinguishes between two types of ideational culture. The first is

"ascetic ideationalism" where material needs are minimized and indeed the world is seen as unreal. This is the classic Vedantic view. The second is "active ideationalism" closer to the Christian concept where instead of fleeing the world of illusion, the goal is to bring others to the ideational real. There is thus some level of structural societal reform, but usually at the level of faith not at the level of new technologies. The first is contraction oriented, the second expansion oriented. While this second view is close to Sarkar, he would directly link structural change with faith.

The Sensate mentality is defined by Sorokin as the following:

...it views reality as only that which is presented to the sense organs. It does not seek or believe in any supersensory reality; at the most, in its diluted form, it assumes an agnostic attitude toward the entire world beyond the senses. The Sensate reality is thought of as a Becoming, Process, Change, Flux, Evolution, Progress, Transformation. Its needs and aims are mainly physical, and maximum satisfaction is sought of these ends. The method of realizing them is not that of a modification within the human individuals composing the culture, but of a modification or exploitation of the external world (27-28).

Obviously the sensate world is a near opposite of the ideational. The above definition of dilution is useful for Sarkar' theory. For Sarkar his types are often seen as perfect, with the discourse of empirical facts (as constituted by the dominant episteme) stretched to accommodate the type, for example, in Batra's studies. However, learning from Sorokin, we can posit that there can be range or level of the vipra mentality in a vipra era, and there can be range of leadership and class styles as well. This is similar to Vico's soft laws, his humanistic science.

Now as with the Ideational, Sorokin develops different types of Sensate mentality. The first is the active one, fundamentally the

assertive ksattriyan civilization. It seeks to modify the external world through its efficient reconstruction and through technology. For Sorokin, "the great executives of history, the great conquerors, builders of empire are its incarnation" (28).

There is, as one might expect, a passive sensate mentality as well. This view maintains that the sensate world is the only representation of the real, but the world is not transformed through conquering or through technology, rather it is there to be enjoyed since death is near and human existence is short. Given Sarkar's spiritual perspective, this category is rejected as an ideal system.

Sorokin adds a third category, however. This is the "cynical sensate mentality" wherein any perspective is used to gain individual advantage. Values are readjusted to gain ends.

Unlike Sarkar, who does not mix his varna, but needs to, Sorokin admits that there are many possible combinations but these are not integrated except the mixed mentality. Sorokin uses the confusing term "idealistic" for this category, dualistic or mixed describes it better. Quantitatively it represents a more or less balanced unification of Ideational and Sensate with a predominance of Ideational elements. Qualitatively it synthesizes the premises of both types into one inwardly consistent and harmonious unity. In the Idealistic reality is many-sided, with the aspects of everlasting Being and ever-changing Becoming of the spiritual and the material. Its needs and ends are both spiritual and material, with the material subordinated to the spiritual. The methods of their realization

involve both the modification of self and the transformation of the external sensate world.

In this way it is Ksattriyan, but also a variant of the vipran, and sums up Sarkar's project as well--a spiritual based model of the real that includes the material and ecological world, but its base is fundamentally spiritual.

The last mentality is a version of the Mixed type. Sorokin calls this the "Pseudo-ideational Culture Mentality." This construct instead of beginning with the ideational, starts with the sensate. Desires are minimized because of external variables. In general, this is the mentality that emerges when individuals are oppressed as prisoners or during times of catastrophe, or because of cruel regimes.

The brilliance of Sorokin is that he then manages to use this theory to catalog most of human history. Sarkar writing from Calcutta without research assistants (Sorokin hired Harvard graduate students), just marginalized revolutionary youth has taken an alternative approach. Sarkar has created a spiritual and social organization to reconstruct the world in the mentality he prefers, the ideal mixed idealistic system.

Given his definition of culture--the interaction of two or more people--Sorokin uses these categories to locate leaders, groups, families, societies, civilizations and if it were possible aliens.

Now while Sarkar refers to the priestly class in general as the viprans, Sorokin does not always place them there. His model is too sophisticated. For example, in general they occupy the ascetic ideational category and liberation theology members occupy the active

ideational. But during times of decay, the clergy often resorts to various sensate mentalities (the passive or the cynical).

Sorokin proceeds to develop a taxonomy of linear and cyclical patterns in history. He begins by dispelling the argument that there are unique processes, largely arguing that the process of generalization and language preclude the argument of uniqueness. Next he argues that while there are linear trends, they have elements of repeatability in them. More important is his notion of the existence of limits. After a period of movement in one direction, a limit is reached and there is a change in direction, a new stage sets in. Thus, progress as linear unidirectional movement is impossible. However, this does not mean that the cycle is essential either. Sorokin's world is open. Sarkar's, too, for the universe is constantly affected by the thought waves of Consciousness but there are naturals which for human purposes are laws. For Sorokin, "history as a whole, since it is not finished as yet and since the future is unpredictable, we do not and cannot know whether there is any continuous and main trend and any terminal point to which Humankind is being led" (64). Finally, Sorokin argues that the direction and rhythm is regulated by the principle of immanent change, meaning that an organism, a socio-cultural process, changes based on its own logico-meaning structure.

Sorokin continues his work by classifying the fluctuations of the forms of religion, art forms, literature, music, painting, sculpture, literature, systems of truth and knowledge, scientific theories, ethics, family, social relationships, war, government, and internal

disturbances. These categories he places within his overall framework. In addition, he finds other significant rhythms. For example, under government, he finds a logical rhythm between totalitarian and laissez faire societies. But the reasons do not always follow the pattern of his super rhythm. There are exceptions. The ascetic ideational culture will have little use for the State and government, and hence is easily conquered by outside forces or adopts a laissez faire system. The active ideational culture, however, is apt to have a strong government and social body, as in Sarkar's model. Vipran society is often as Sorokin states a religious government. The totalitarian state is a production of Sensate society with its need to expand and manage. It rises with Sensate culture and then declines with it.

Agin, in his section of Theocratic and Secular government again Sorokin finds a cycle, a pendulum. This fluctuation naturally correlates with the Ideational and Sensate.

The concept of Ideational culture implies logically that if, no external circumstances hinder, the government and the intellectual, moral and social leadership (aristocracy) in such a culture must belong to the persons and groups that incarnate, or are supposed to incarnate, in themselves the Ideational values. Since the sensory-empirical values, whether wealth, physical might, sensory happiness, and the like, are only pseudo values to the Ideational mentality, the rich, the physically mighty, the capable organizers of the economic, political and other enterprises in such a society cannot be its recognized 'aristocracy,' its leaders, and its rulers, if they are not backed by the Ideational values, are not their upholders, or are not supported by the group that is thought to be the incarnation of these Ideational values par excellence (474).

Thus, power in the Ideational system must be located with the priests, shamans, or the wise persons, the elders.

Alternatively, "in the sensate culture, with its disbelief in Ideational reality and values, the leaders and rulers can be only those groups which are the bearers, the creators, the organizers, of the most important sensory values" (475). They must be people who organize expansion: territorial or economic, the military (or leaders of criminal gangs) or the wealthy or scientists who create new forms of technology. And in the mixed Idealistic society we would expect to have a variation of both.

Now Sorokin not only develops taxonomies, he also places them in a historical context. For Western civilization, for example, the fifth to thirteenth centuries were dominated by Idealism (vipra). This was followed by six hundred years of Sensate civilization, just as Wallerstein and other world system theorist write. Prior to the Ideational era, there were various fluctuations of Ideational, Idealistic and Sensate. The rise of Rome was a type of Sensate era. Rome's decline began the theocratic Christian era. With the rise of the Sensate world government changed to rule of the wealthy and rule of the mighty, the money spirit and the war spirit.

The central key point for Sorokin is the rhythm, change. His metaphysics privilege change, not the status quo. Trends do not continue in one way. They reverse. Thus, those that assert that the future will see increasing levels of one form of government, for example, democracy, will err. At the same time the theories of the ancients, Plato, Ssu-Maa Chien and others, who argue in a sequence also will err since there is no definite periodicity. In addition, the pattern of change is different in different cultures.

But there are patterns Sorokin continues to find in all areas of thought: he finds fluctuations in linear, cyclical, and mixed conceptions of cosmic, biological and socio-cultural processes. They fluctuate, for the culture fluctuates. Naturally, the Sensate system develops a linear theory of life, of progress. During its decline cyclical theories emerge. Most cyclical theories relate to ideational super systems since they base their theories on the biological, seasonal, life-cycle discourse. Finally, in mixed periods one might expect and one does find mixed, linear and cyclical theories. It is not surprising that Sarkar's is both, linear and cyclical. In recent history, Sorokin finds a significant increase in cyclical theories, one among many, of indicators, of the decline of the Sensate civilization.

We will now further develop the theoretical assertions of Sorokin that benefit Sarkar can most gain from in explicating his theory. There are three main contributions, each of which aids in understanding Sarkar's work or can be used along with it. The first, mentioned earlier, is the theory of immanent change. To come to this theory, Sorokin catalogs how we look at change. First, there are external reasons. These are environmental theories and the positivist efforts to search for independent variables to explain various phenomena. The second view is dialectical or internal--things change because of their own nature. Sorokin takes a mixture of both, "the principle of immanent change of each socio-cultural system supported by the external principle, within certain conditions and limits" (634).

For him, insofar as all cultures act, they change naturally. It would be far more difficult to explain why things do not change. Once the system begins to change, it must deal with its outputs, with its consequences. It must then change. Thus the external world causes change.

But there is internal change as well. Once a system emerges, then it develops its potential; it articulates what it already is. Its destiny is determined by itself, unless it is ended by external forces; however, outside forces cannot change what it essentially is. By definition, the system is this way. It is deterministic since it is expressing its own potential, but since it is its own potential, then in that sense, it is self-determining, and thus, free. Therefore, it is totally determined and undetermined. How a culture unfolds, depends on the milieu and the type of cultural system it is. For Sarkar an era must play itself out, once it emerges as a dominant mentality. However, how it unfolds itself is unknown, thus allowing the role of the sadvipras to change the system, or to reactualize its direction. There is then a both/and and neither/or perspective toward structure and agency, external and internal change.

This is better understood by using the next two hypothesis of Sorokin. The first is the principle of limit. This develops the idea that a system will change in time because of the first principle of immanent change; it would wear itself out, be modified or transformed. In addition, he uses the Aristotelian argument that all objects eventually reach their antithetical poles and thus must change the direction of movement. Hegel, too, is brought in with Sorokin arguing

that since all reality has its negation (Ideational and Sensate), the opposite will eventually emerge thus changing the direction of the pattern. This is concluded by the argument that if a system did not have limits, it would change so much that it would no longer be the same system. It would have to be defined differently. "The limits transgressed, the system disappears" (654). This is true for humans, cultural systems, and other forms. And although humans can adapt, they remain within certain boundaries, for example, they are not birds. There are thus only a certain number of economic organizations (hunters, gatherers, pastoral, agricultural, industrial, etc.), political organizations (monarchy, republic, democracy, etc.), as with truth systems, ethical systems, law, science, types of societies (religious or secular, Gemeinschaft or Gesellschaft) and so forth. While Sorokin continues to refine this, more important to use, is the how of the super rhythm. Why only these three societies, and not more.

Why in the course of the historical unfolding of the Graeco-Roman and Western cultures has its super system twice repeated the triple rhythm of the Ideational-Idealistic-Sensate phases, from the twelfth century BC to the end of the Middle Ages, and after the fifteenth century for the third time entered the Sensate phase, which is seemingly declining at the present time (676).

The rhythm is there because of the principle of immanent change. But why does it reoccur. Here Sorokin warns us this is true for integrated cultures which follow logical meaningful patterns, but, unintegrated do not necessarily follow this pattern.

But why do integrated systems follow this pattern. His answer is metaphysical and functional. For Sorokin, with regard to the meaning

of the real, there are only five solutions: Ideational, Sensate, Idealistic, Skepticism, and Unknowable (knowable in its phenomenal aspect, but unknowable in its transcendental aspect, if it has one). The last two cannot serve to create an integrated culture; no culture cannot exist when the dominant worldview has no grounding in the real; a grounding not possible if the attitude toward the real is skeptical or unknowable at some level. Thus, the first three continue to repeat themselves through history. In Sorokin's words:

Since there are only five main possibilities, two of which are negative and can hardly serve as a basis for a long-existing integrated culture, by virtue of the principle of limit and immanent change, three of these, and two others as subsystems, cannot help being repeated in the integrated cultures that continue to exist after the first run of all the three or five fundamental forms. Hence repetition of these forms; hence our super-rhythm in the history of the cultures studied (678).

But there is a deeper and more important reason. For Sorokin, logically, each one of these systems may be entirely true, entirely false, or partially true and false. If one system were totally true (or perfect), then it could exist forever, since it would be able to fulfill human needs. The problem of existence would be resolved. If they were all totally false, then none of them could have existed. However, historically they did exist for centuries meeting various needs, creating new conditions. Thus, each system is partly true, partly false, partly adequate and partly inadequate.

Only because each of them contains a vital part does it give to its human bearers the possibility of an adaptation to their milieu--cosmic, organic, the social; gives them a minimum of real experience to meet their needs and serves as a foundation for their social life and culture. But because each of the three system has also an invalid part--error and fallacy side by side with truth--each of these systems leads its human bearers away from the reality, gives them pseudo knowledge instead of real

knowledge, and hinders their adaptation and the satisfaction of their physiological, social and cultural needs (p 681).

Over time one system becomes dominant and its false dimension increases while its truth dimension decreases. This is true because once a system dominates, it drives out the truth of the other systems as well. Thus, as with Sarkar, there are four classes which represent a part of the truth but not the whole truth; over time one varna dominates and becomes increasingly false. The varna does not over time represent the needs and desires and adaptation of the people. Eventually the system declines and the society (Ideational, Mixed or Sensate or Shudra, Ksatriya, Vipra, and Vaeshya) built upon it crashes down, and the next era begins. As with Sarkar, the new system then dominates and then it too follows the same path of exaggeration and since this new system now represents falsehood, the next system of the real must take its place. For Sarkar each class represents one dimension of the complete mind as it has evolved. When one dominates, the other minds are suppressed, eventually leading to an imbalanced society. The next aspect of the complete mind asserts itself, and the cycle continues. The ideal system for Sarkar would be one wherein those with complete mind--knowledge of all the systems of the real--through struggle and intuition--limit the time of each system. They would not allow the system to exaggerate for too long. However, unlike Mosca, Sarkar does not call for a balance of all the social forces, rather he calls for the harnessing of the best of each representation of mind and attempts to move to the next cycle once the falsity of the one view become oppressive and suppressive. And given

that each way of thinking corresponds to an alternative polity, we would not be surprised to see a fluctuation of polities as the ancients Greeks and Sorokin have asserted.

For Sorokin, the order, however often, is not eternal. Ideational, Idealistic, Sensate and then Ideational again is the pattern largely because Sensate civilization becomes so tragically false that only the discipline of the Ideational system can replace it. Following the heights of the ideational system, humans then slowly descends to a both and mixed level.

To Sorokin we are at the end of the Sensate civilization with a spiritual ideational civilization to follow. Like Sarkar, he asserts at the end of his magnum opus, "If [an] apocalyptic catastrophe can be avoided, then the emerging creative forces will usher humanity into a new magnificent era of its history" (704). Ensuring that this next era will be magnificent is Sarkar's project. Sorokin's hope.

Sorokin and Sarkar have similar intellectual and personal projects. Sorokin's theory, indeed, adds a considerable deal to the Sarkarian argument and the explanation for Sorokin's theories of the real and of change are equally useful for Sarkar.

One main difference is that while Sarkar has a Shudra era, Sorokin does not. The Shudra era for Sorokin would be chaotic and unintegrated, thus not useful for his theory. It does not last long. What Sorokin forgets is that chaos as a response to the nature of the real is a possible answer. But, insofar as an integrated culture (Sorokin's aim and departure point) cannot be maintained with such a society, it is not a category.

By keeping it as a category, Sarkar delivers an asset to workers and peasants, a deliverance impossible with Sorokin's model. Moreover, Sarkar shows that the end of the Sensate era will not necessarily be a peaceful one; violence, chaotic and structured, is indeed a possibility.

Sorokin is useful to Sarkar for his principle of immanent change, his principle of limits, his theory of the real and the false (the why and how of the super rhythm) and his departing point of epistemology as a categorization of society. Also useful is Sorokin's notion that the stages do not have to exactly fit (the soft laws). There are variations. Finally, Sorokin's categories of congeries, functionally related systems and logical meaningful related systems help explain Sarkar's notion of varna. All in all both projects are isomorphic, Sorokin is stronger theoretically and empirically while Sarkar is stronger in terms of his vision of the future and in terms of the actual application of his theory to the real world of sweat, blood, and smiles.

We finally come to the end of this section on macro thinkers. While each thinker touches upon Sarkar's theory--the forces, the rise and fall, the stages--none of them have stated it quite the way Sarkar has, possibly because of the background from which he emerges. Only an Indian living within the caste system could see the pattern the Sarkar can. Only he could universalize it.

In retrospect the similarities of all these macro thinkers are perhaps more obvious than the differences. All must deal with the same issues of leadership, political economy, the problem of the

absolute, the problem of laws, the problem of the cycle, and the problem of progress. Each one attempts to develop a construction that accurately captures the real, and of course each one focuses on issues that others forget. Ssu-Ma Chien places virtue ahead of other categories. Chang looks at the rise and decline of the tao as government and learning become separated. Khaldun focuses on unity, the village/city distinction, and the rise and fall of dynasties. Vico develops an alternative science that includes the self-interpretation of humans. Comte notices the basic types of Theological, Metaphysical and Positive and places the Positive and the end of history. Hegel finds ways to speak of the spirit in history. Marx sees the dialectic operating in history and develops a vision of the future to end human suffering. Gramsci reminds us of the role of the ideological and the importance of organic intellectuals. Pareto and Mosca assert that power is always controlled by elites; both use social types to explain this phenomena. Mosca, in addition, moves from the Greek and enlightenment model of governance and calls for a balance of social forces. Spengler's history is poetic not scientific. To him each culture has its own history. Western culture is now in the final stages of its life cycle. Toynbee traces the rise and fall of civilization and demonstrates the importance of challenge/response in civilizational growth. He also provides a theoretical scheme to explain empires and religions. While Sorokin develops a three pronged social theory that examines mentalities, he also develops language to explain how change is internal and external to a system. He explains how all systems will continually fluctuate.

Foucault gives us epistemes and discontinuities in history. He also shows us the different ways in which the rational has been constructed. Voegelin provides us a history of how the ancient spiritual was secularized by the Gnostics. His level of history is that of Being itself. Galtung gives us the unit of cosmology and explains to us the revolutions of the modern period.

Moving from the level of grand theory, we now proceed to the critique of patterns and laws. We criticize Sarkar's theory of history from empirical positions, compare it with the Marxian laws of dialectics, and finally place Sarkar's theory within a poststructural politicized interpretation of science and social theory.

CHAPTER 7
SITUATING SARKAR'S LAWS

INTRODUCTION

While in the earlier chapters we attempted to lay the groundwork for the various ways in which Sarkar can be understood, this chapter begins as its point of departure, the actual knowledge claim of Sarkar and then proceeds to find ways to understand this claim, to contextualize it, to theorize it. The question becomes how to deal with Sarkar's social cycle and his claim that it is an "an iron law of nature." That is, Sarkar states the social cycle will continue through time and space, irrespective of observer.

Consistent with the earlier chapter on epistemological approaches, we will attempt to place Sarkar's laws in the positivist-empirical approach, the interpretive-phenomenological approach and finally the poststructural approach. In the first approach, Sarkar's social laws are seen to fit historical reality better; proof of this assertion either comes from rigorous studies of world history or from quantitative studies of recent history. Sarkar's theories then must be operationalized and placed within the social science discourse. The weaknesses with this approach are that the problem of knowing is left unexamined, history is seen as factual and not interpretative, and the empirical is not placed in the context of epistemes. This view ultimately favors the Western, the temporal present, and male gender interpretations. However, intelligibility is clear, knowledge grows steadily, and there are obvious grounds of

comparison; that is, a hierarchy of knowledge and progress is possible.

The second view argues that Sarkar's laws must be understood in the cultural and historical context in which they are uttered. In this case, his laws are not problematic (as they are for the empirical) as in the Indian episteme laws are natural. Quantitative research is inappropriate since history includes humans and their self-interpretation. In addition, his laws must be understood within Sarkar's own criteria, that is, do they inspire action, do they aid in creating a new society, do they allow voices previously silenced to be heard, do they speak for all classes, and does his theory lead to human welfare, satya and to ananda, bliss. The weakness with the interpretive-phenomenological view is that Sarkar appears to argue that his laws are universal and "true" irrespective of place, time, and observer, of interpretation. In addition, in this view truth becomes totally relativized leading to a philosophical position where any theory is as good as any theory--total pluralism.

The third, poststructural approach sees each theory as a regime, as a way of constructing the world. Theories exist in discourse, in ways of knowing which become dominant due to various reasons (technology, power, class, demographics, for example). Important is then how a theory delivers power to various groups and how power travels within and without a theory. Problems with this approach are that the grounds of comparison are in themselves impositions, that is, a local, peculiar will to power, to interpretation. There is no

universal way to argue that structural violence is bad or good in this deconstructionist perspective, for example.

It is in the first approach that most efforts of understanding Sarkar have been located. While Ravi Batra (1978) and others have attempted to uphold Sarkar's theories (searching for empirical-historical proofs), sociologist Phil Carspecken (1990), alternatively, has prepared a devastating critique of Sarkar's social cycle. We will review Carspecken's critique as it is thorough and typical of the type of critique Sarkar can expect from the Western social sciences. At the same time we will attempt to respond to this critique, not by rereading history or searching for additional data, that is, not by entering the discourse Batra and Carspecken inhabit in their particular works, but by arguing that while Carspecken's critique is useful, it itself must be located within a discursive field. His critique is valid within the modern social science epistemic boundaries, but less useful, insightful and inciteful, within the alternative epistemological sites where we have placed Sarkar--the classical Indian episteme and, indeed, Sarkar's cosmological moves, his new boundaries. Finally, we will privilege the poststructural perspective developed where the key to valuing a theory is not so much its predictive value (a good theory need not predict), nor its ability to interpret the world (interpretation is based on the present epoch, our language frames our interpretation), but rather the view that theories are primarily assets delivered to various discourses, disciplines, and various constituted subjects.

In our earlier articulation, we argued that Sarkar's laws can be understood as laws in much the same way that humans have two legs and arms--a basic structure that is given with little malleability. His law is an evolutionary principle justified as it is historical and thus deterministic. It does not violate agency, from the Indian view, since there are given for any system only so many possible structures. For example, there is only a range of possible variations of a polity--democracy-aristocracy-monarchy. Similarly, and this is the key, there are only a few ways of dealing with the environment: either by being dominated by it, by dominating it through the body, dominating it through the mind, or dominating it by manipulating the environment itself. Given this structure and given these motivations, their order is explained, first, through the evolutionary discourse, and second, through the notion that in the second cycle, it is only the chaotic power of the workers that can overthrow the acquirers (led by the intellectuals and warrior workers). However, as this worker power is chaotic and undisciplined, it is natural that the most powerful among the workers would take charge. Overtime, as the warrior mentality pursues its own ends, it too expands and resorts to the control of the environment through the mind. This in turn leads to their own dissolution and the rise of intellectuals. Finally, the overpreoccupation of the intellectuals with mind leads again to a return to the environment (but here as savings and accumulation of capital). The capitalists take power and pursue their own goals of increasing capital and reducing labor costs, until labor revolts and the cycle continues. Each stage naturally emerges from the previous

stage. Using the concepts of history, evolution, and dialectics, the social cycle maintains itself. While this is an excellent beginning, as developed in the previous chapter, the theories of Khaldun, Marx, Sorokin and others add greatly to Sarkar's theoretical position. They develop the way change occurs, the role of the elites, and the level of change, for example.

SARKAR'S LAWS HAVE NO EMPIRICAL VALIDITY

But the site of macro grand theory is not where the critique of the social cycle lies. The present debate within PROUT publications and the theoretical ground with which the debate continues is within what we have called earlier the applied level. Are there historical laws and, indeed if there are, are there proofs of these?

For Batra there are. Batra has taken Sarkar's quadradivisional theory and applied it specifically to Indian, Western, Egyptian and Russian civilizations, arguing that these societies/civilizations have undergone not only one large cycle but many cycles. However, Sarkar appears to argue that most societies are in the final stages of capitalism, while a few have had their worker's revolution and have moved to warrior societies (and recently with the end of communism to vipran, parliamentary societies). Typically these are viewed as the Marxist nations: Cuba, Russia, China and Eastern block nations (which are continuing the cyclical process). Batra, however, has reinterpreted the case of Russia and argued that the socialist revolution was in fact a non-revolution as Russia was not in its capitalist era, rather it was in a long warrior era with power

centralized with the Czar. The martial communist era will soon die out and a new ideology will replace it (obviously PROUT). What Batra does not explore is that perhaps Marxism can be seen as a vipra ideology and that Russia has reverted back to the warrior era and thus a new progressive communism is ahead. Of course, conversely given its emphasis on material satisfaction, it is problematic to assign Marxism an ideational or idealistic status: is it then sensate? Sarkar provides little help here. So far.

In addition, Batra has classified many of the newly emerging nations as warrior. Thus, their polities are centralized not because of the larger world capitalist system (authoritarian state capitalism), but because they have moved from the long term shudra era to a warrior era.

In any case, Batra's conclusion is that Sarkar's theory has not only tremendous explanatory value (explain things better than previous macrohistorical theories, explain anomalies in Marxist theory--why various revolutions have not occurred, for instance) and predictive value (be able to predict the next evolution or revolution). Thus, he locates Sarkar's theory within the Occidental scientific method, that is, to him, Sarkar's theory is more valid, reliable, and precise than other social change theories. Batra does not see the positivist effort as merely one method of knowledge that has now lead to knowledge becoming identical with science as Jurgen Habermas (Giddens 1982) has argued. Thus, Batra instead of making science contentious, argues that Sarkar's theory succeeds on the terms of science and social science itself. We argue that this is the wrong way to go, or

at best, one way to ascertain the truth of something, given the problematic nature of determining causality, proof, and the real, that is, the difficulty in determining the objective truth of anything. For us the empirical view is one discourse among many that is nested in a particular paradigm; one might privilege it in a particular construction, but the gaining of agreement to that position has more to do with the politics of knowledge and language than with the objective and independent basis of the reality discerned.

For Batra, Sarkar gives a better understanding of social change; he explains more of the variance of the data. The data in this case is history itself, as conventionally recorded or believed and as understood in the Occidental model. For Batra, history is not so problematic; there is now finally someone with a complete mind to understand it, to lay it bare.

MARX, SCIENCE AND SARKAR

Batra thus sees Sarkar's social cycle as scientific and presented within the scientific spirit. However, he sees science in the Western context, not as we have argued earlier that science means quite a different idea to the Indian, in any period of Indian history, even the present. Moreover, it is from the interpretive view that we can better understand Sarkar, we assert. For example, the similarities between Marx's view of science, history and truth and Sarkar's are useful. To begin with the empirical is constructed differently. Marx claimed that his knowledge was scientific as opposed to philosophical knowledge which was ideological. Marx's theory was not false, that

is, bourgeois, but indeed a true reflection of real historical states. In Marx's words, "Where speculation ends--in real life--there real, positive science begins: the representation of the practical activity, of the practical process of development of men" (Parker 1990, 25). It was not just socialism but scientific socialism; in Perry Anderson's words, "one governed by rationally controllable criteria for evidence and truth" (Parker 1990, 27). Marx's point is that his theory is based on the practical and the historical not on the transcendental and metaphysical. Moreover, "philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it" (Parker 1990, 25).

Sarkar, too, is concerned with developing not just a spiritualism or a mere socialism but a progressive spiritual socialism based on intuitional science, not merely on Hindu dogmas that offer no logical reasons for its belief system. Sarkar's intuitional science is also scientific in that it can be argued against; it is not to be solely accepted as traditional Indian scriptural authority. He too is opposing himself to philosophy by arguing that a true spirituality is an attempt to transform the harsh realities of the world. For Sarkar devotion to humanity, is devotion to the transcendental, for there are no greater realities than the cruelty of the world: a cruelty that must be destroyed in this era.

And yet like Marx who uses these prior metaphysical categories to make his own distinctions and thus exists within the metaphysical discourse of the period (for example, he uses Hegel's stages of world history with minor reinterpretation), Sarkar too exists within the traditional spiritual discourse (wherein Consciousness is the a priori

focus and the ground of existence, for example). As we argued earlier, Sarkar emerges from the classical Indian episteme. Thus, just as Marxism must absorb the field it hoped to transcend--philosophy--Sarkar must absorb the field he seeks to transcend, Indian metaphysics. For Marx, it is only "when capitalism is overthrown that sense perception can once again prove capable of providing true knowledge" (Parker 1990, 35). For Sarkar, when through proper procedures such as meditation, the deeper layers of the mind are attained, then the science of the world is easily perceived and the glaring inequity of history laid bare so that one can truly transform the world; a world where all can obtain the science of spirituality. But as one might ask, can indeed Marxism be scientific in that since all knowledge is class knowledge and thus incomplete? Moreover, at another level of thought if history is the contradiction between the relations and modes of production and history moves through material forces, how can Marxism explain its own non-material but ideational, ideological affect? The question is equally valid for Sarkar. If indeed a science is obtained by unifying with absolute being and if it is true that humans are embedded in the relative world of time, place and observer, then the gaze seen from the cosmos must become relativized when found in the mind of humans and spoken in the relative grammar and structure of time, place and person. How indeed can it be scientific! in the sense of objective, space, time, and observer invariant. And if the guru and disciple both become deaf and dumb in their inability to express this truth, then why do we find Sarkar producing volumes of talks and books? Indeed, given India's

transcendental intuitional perspective, why are there tracts and tracts, texts and texts, waiting for the eager student? This might be the tragedy of the mystic: the writing of the philosophy betrays the philosophy itself. Phil Carspecken, for example, has argued that Hegel's main error was to write "his philosophy out, the core metaphor [that of the idea that cannot take any form but is immanent in all forms] getting cruder as he did, the motivation to write it out contradicting the motivation necessary to re-experience this insight" (Carspecken 1989, personal communications). Hegel initially may have truly understood the metaphor of God-talk, as he did not hold to any one image of God, while Indian philosophy may speak the language of metaphor but claims that the absolute is just that, independent of our knowing, eternal and ultimately really real.

Again Sarkar would respond, that he writes out his work because of his larger project. His work is scientific and spiritual in that it does not support any narrow interest but the interest of the the cosmos, the "good and happiness of all" not a mere selfish interest. Moreover, it is a better theory because it is more comprehensive (thus echoing Max Weber's criteria for a better, good theory). It is scientific not that it resides in the domain of positivist (prediction/control) tradition, but scientific in the sense that it is systematic, not based on authority (the Vedas or other texts), open to logical criticism, and not based on irrational sentimental, but rather on rational intuition, meaning his theory comes from the spiritual and is translated into the intellectual. Again as we developed earlier, the Indian episteme that Sarkar resides in and of does not separate

science, religion, and philosophy. For Sarkar there can be an intuitional science and a material science: one synthetic and the other analytic. The division in the Western episteme between the natural and social sciences has not occurred or certainly not at the same level: there is no verstehen versus eklarhen: no physics versus psychology. The division between explanation and understanding (Weber and Vico) did not occur in India, rather science, philosophy and religion often remain complimentary ways of knowing the real. For Sarkar and other Indians, science is systematic, and empirically based (at least material science), that is, practical, while religion is authority and sentiment based (the higher forms being bhakti, the lower emotionality and dogma), and philosophy is intuition and reason based. And again, it is not his authorship that is critical, but the ideology that is reflecting and touching the spiritual world--here ideology is the subtle idea, not a false, or particular worldview. New ideologies result from the Idea which then becomes dialectically translated into the material. Similarly, for Marx it was "to win a scientific victory for our party" (Parker 1990, 41). Thus, both are scientific in that they are both universalistic speaking not to a particular group, but to Justice itself. Of course, Marx spoke for the proleteriat, while Sarkar's ideal leader is not part of the cycle, neither proleteriat nor bourgeois neither intellectual nor military, but extracyclical leadership that is outside of the vortex of fame, power, money and lust.

RETURNING TO THE EMPIRICAL

In his article, "Playing the Devil's Advocate" Phil Carspecken¹ is unconcerned with the above placing of science, philosophy and tradition. Rather in that article he is committed to a position of science qua empirical social sciences (from his view for PROUT to succeed it must meet the social sciences on their terms) has argued that there is no historical evidence for Sarkar's theory. There is a whole range of anomalies, unexplained cycles, problematics in operationalizations, and in general theoretical weaknesses. He concludes that belief in the social cycle and PROUT in general is predicated on acceptance of Sarkar as one's spiritual teacher. His social theory is accepted on faith in Sarkar's infallibility not on any evidence of the social theory itself. Thus, his view is that no one can be impressed or convinced of this theory in academia or other spaces where faith in authority is made routinely contentious. In addition, Sarkar's theory is vague (are the classes personality types, structures, ideal types). Alternatively, it is bad metaphysics in that Sarkar believes there are iron laws to history that are unchangeable. As an empirical theory that explains long term processes in history it fails. Carspecken thus concludes that in effect it is but an ideology, a theory developed to justify a particular knowledge and power interest. This is evidenced by PROUT writers resorting to citations from Sarkar to prove a particular point, their unwillingness to question Sarkar's theory, or only criticizing when they have left the PROUT movement and only then not in terms of any historical claims, but in terms of Sarkar's position

as guru, he is the authority.

For Carspecken even at the common sense level, there appear to be basic problems with Sarkar's work, for example, there appear to be more than four types of people. In defense of Sarkar, however, he is not attempting to classify people, rather he is concerned with abstract mentalities, ways of perceiving the real. However, given the symmetrical nature of Sarkar's universe--as per the classic Indian episteme--it is but natural that there exist correspondence of the four-fold structure at the level of the person and society. And at the level of the person, humans tend to fall into these categories, but there are deviations and intervarna movement. In addition, Sarkar reminds us that these are not genetic qualities, but environmentally and spatially induced; they are not based on heredity or a theory of exclusion/inclusion, the classical model of purity based on the Aryan conquering of Dravidians. Sarkar sees it has a historical division of labor which became reified, much closer to what Plato meant in his basic type: philosophers, soldiers and common men or in India, Brahmins ksattriyas, shudras. It is a fundamental and deep human structure which takes different forms through history (the priest becoming the bureaucrat, the king's soldier becoming the State's soldier, the peasant becoming the industrial worker) and across culture. Thus the argument is that these categories are historical and empirically derived; over time they function as structures and as ideal types similar to Sheldrake's morphogenetic fields (which for Sarkar are embedded in cosmic mind). For Sheldrake, recent fields are easily malleable, while more ancient fields have

become deep structures and thus collective habits and are fundamentally unchangeable. Thus, habits are laws but not in the sense of eternally unchanging; new behaviors can lead to changes in these fields of awareness, either immediately starting new patterns or changing the old pattern. Thus even with the context of laws, there is room for contingency.

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, for Sarkar, these operate under a condition of laws that are deep structures and not philosophically derived; that is, from the philosophizing of intellectuals (not from the Vedas, nor deduced), but rather they are laws because they are historical, evolutionary, and empirical (empirical in the sense of practical and inductive and intuitional). These mentalities have not developed because they serve Sarkar's particular knowledge interests, rather they developed as a way to deal with the environment; first by being dominated by the environment and thus living in the present, the shudra; second, dominating the environment through physical strength, dominating the workers and living in past and present, the ksattriya; third using the mind to dominate the environment, the warriors and the workers, and living in future transcendental time, the vipra, and lastly using the environment itself to dominate it, dominating intellectual, warriors and workers by making them like nature--commodities--and thus living in future empirical, quantitative time (accumulation and investments), the vaeshya. Humans were not born with the theory of relativity in mind; modern physics is an evolutionary development. Evolutionary development for Sarkar results from physical clash, the battle with

the environment, intellectual clash, the battle of ideas and ideologies and the attraction of the great, the emanations constantly emerging from the Supreme Spiritual Nucleus, the Macrocosmic entity, to use Sarkarian language. They are empirical in the sense that they can be observed in humans and observed in history. They become laws because they have existed historically. They will remain laws in that this basic evolutionary model continues to repeat itself; it has become a deep structure of humans. They are also laws in that Sarkar exists in a model of knowledge wherein the empirical world is real; the body is real, the natural world is real. Foremost in front of us is the pattern of the lifecycle; birth, rise, plateau, decline, death and then the next cycle; this is the grand theory model used by Spengler, Toynbee, Sorokin and others. The mentalities in the cycle exhibit this function as well. The ancient Indians understood this cycle, but a particular class became dominant and used the model to maintain its own power and absorbed other classes irrespective of the dominant mentality of the individual or group at the bottom level. The social cycle became the caste system. An ideal type, historically and evolutionarily derived, became hereditary and a vehicle for domination by the Aryans of the Dravidians.

Will it then always be a law? Sarkar's notion of truth here is well worth mentioning. For him, it is not rta the facts of a particular situation, but satya that which is stated for the benefit of all. The goal of theory is to produce a state where humans can attain bliss. For Sarkar, these theories are made available at the level that they can be intelligible; they are not the absolute truth.

They will change in time and the humans of the future will reconstruct present theories; they might develop new mentalities and new bodies as well. But until that time when the lifecycle in itself is transformed, when evolution in itself is transformed and new selves are constructed, the social cycle, the four mentalities, the theory of dialectical clash, with Consciousness at the center of all existence remains satya, the truth of welfare for all.

The obvious tension is with Sarkar's distinction between the Cosmic Entity which is eternal and infinite and the universe which is always changing (being influxed by the emanations of the cosmic entity) and dependent on space/time and person, that is, it is relative. Sarkar, unfortunately, does not clarify this tension. We are only left to assume that (1) he is operating under an alternative episteme where this seeming contradiction/tension is tolerated, (2) he is operating under a different episteme, the Indian, where laws can be laws notwithstanding relativity, in the sense that they are analogies, or in the sense that they are models, or perhaps, simple fixations, points of departure, for a universe in flux, (3) he sees the significance of his theory as educational, similar to the poststructural perspective where the value of a theory is in the asset that it gives to a particular economic class or mental class, or other, (4) he sees the social cycle as a deep structure that for all practical purposes is immutable, but that overtime as humans move into space, as they become less grounded in the physical, as the shudra way of perceiving the world decreases, and more progresses more into the psychic, an alternative structure may develop, (5) he defines

relativity not in the politics of real perspective of the poststructuralist, but simply meaning that it changes over time and that humans cannot really see things as they are, but that there still remains a real to be discovered, that is, his view is closer to the a spiritual empiricist view than that of a radical deconstructionist Buddhist view, in that the world is to be discovered not invented, and (6) the Supreme Consciousness is changing the universe (through microvita and other emanations) at the microscopic and galactic level but not at the social level--the real than operates differently at different level, there is constant change and there is structure.

Of course, alternatively (1) one might argue that he does see it as an iron law and is wrong (2) is wrong that the theory is invariant for space and time and observer, but still is contributing an important insight--even brilliant--to present macro history and macro sociology, (3) is clearly ideological and thus partisan in its orientation, (4) it is still unclear if he is wrong or correct given that there is a paucity of historical applied evidence or present quantitative empirical evidence to "test" his theories; that is, we must wait and see, (5) aspects of it are indeed insightful and true (but not throughout all time and space) but the exact order of the changing of the elites is not true, the Galtungian position, (6) one cannot determine if it is true or false given that it is so broad and thus is not a theory in the present definition of what constitutes a sociological and political science theory, (7) it is useful in terms of political activity and useful in terms of recovering alternative ways of thinking, but no theory can be proved empirically anyway as

theories exist in particular discourses or ways of knowing the world from which objects and subjects become constituted, (8) it might be "true" or comprehensive from the viewpoint of Oriental or Indian traditions, but not so for the Occidental, which is linear in approach and empirical, "scientific" in proof, especially since it appears derived from an interpretation of Indian values, assumptions of the real, and Indian history, itself and (9) it is true or useful for Indian history alone, the data from which the theory was derived.

However, the above attempt to search for alternative ways of composing the real in terms of the world as Sarkar sees it, Sarkar's subjective view, would not persuade present Occidental sociologists and those Indian and Oriental ones that have adopted the Occidental cosmology. Nor would the alternative compositions of the Occidental view; they would certainly argue that it is not true. For them, the conventional Academy, the social cycle types are only descriptive not explanatory terms; they thus are not useful to psychology or other divisions of social science (too broad and little predictive value).

Irrespective of how we might interpret Sarkar, Carspecken argues that insofar as Sarkar treats his theory as an iron law of history and insofar as PROUT writers treat it as revealed truth with perfect empirical correspondence, then it should be criticized from the empirical view. Even in terms of social theory, Carspecken continues, varna is not a useful category within varna as well. For example, within most social groups, class, education, income, and ethnicity are much better predictors of future social behavior. Too, with the working class. In terms of history, he also finds historical

contradictions in the application of varna, such as the emerging French bourgeoisie which were more interested in prestige rather than wealth. One could counter by asking were they then indeed bourgeoisie; that is, Carspecken begins with Marxian language and then attempts to relate it to Sarkarian language. Vaeshyan is a different concept with prestige not necessarily that different from wealth accumulation, or alternatively one could argue that the desire for prestige was a precursor for the desire for wealth. Most likely, Sarkar would argue that Carspecken in "Playing the Devil's Advocate" is analyzing the social cycle at too micro a level, a "nitpicking analysis" one might expect from an intellectual speaking from the positivist or from a critical philosophical level. Galtung's metaphor as to the different levels of historical thinking is useful. Most history is written from the ground floor. At the ground floor level, sense observation is critical, the sizes and space between cars is equally significant (and critical for planning and policy research); but at the level that Sarkar is writing, one cannot see the cars or persons in them only structures and deep patterns are perceptible. Sarkar, from his view is narrating a history from way above, yet with total concern for the history of the oppressed; the Subaltern project mentioned earlier.

But the contradiction is that Sarkar's theory is used to describe local behavior and thus must stand the tests of the empirical/predictive mode if it is to be accepted and create the civilizational revolution he hopes for. Our alternative view is that one should not use Sarkar's theory to describe local behavior or indeed nation-state behavior, rather it should be used as one tool

among many to better understand social reality. But for Carspecken, the social cycle is not a useful category at the psychological level or at the sociological level of class analysis.

The social dynamics language of Sarkar's theory are in addition seen as weak in that the metaphor of the social cycle (or revolutionary movements and of short-lived counterrevolutionary movements) must be delineated into measurable and understandable terms. For Carspecken, to even begin to take Sarkar's theory seriously (at least in the minds of academicians and those, we would argue, interested in mid-range empirical theories where issues of validity, reliability and precisions are central) the following questions must be asked.

1. Is it a law, an empirical law? Is there proof of it? Can it be disproved? Sarkar's iron law counters present thinking which sees laws as operating under certain conditions and sees them as not provable (as David Hume has shown that causality cannot be proved as it may always be undermined, the sun may not go up one day). Thus, the universe is open and laws in this view are only long term tendencies which change as other variables change.

2. To prove that there is a law, one has to prove that there exists something called a society. This too is contentious. What is a society? How is different from civilizations? From Sorokin's congeries? From mentalities? From nations? systems? Or is Sarkar speaking of deductive-nomological laws established through observation and induction from which sublaws can be derived.

3. Does the social cycle really explain social change or does

it only organize historical material according to these categories? Moreover, his categories of the dynamics of change are too broad as well. What does physical and mental clash mean? What does attraction to the Great mean?

4. In addition, there is no theory as to why some societies rotate prior to other societies: is it level of exploitation; is it rising expectations; is it class conflicts; is it new means of production; is it the relationship with the world system as a whole?

In general, Carspecken finds Sarkar theory as, first, impossible to operationalize, second, definitions of the various explanatory categories are non-existent, third, the descriptions of the eras do not fit into generally agreed upon definitions of history; fourth, there are anomalies within Sarkar's texts themselves, that is, internal inconsistency; fifth, they have little or no predictive ability; and sixth they are stated in such general ways, that they are impossible to prove or disprove and thus again have little utility value. Thus, the social cycle theory and PROUT itself lacks any rigorous analysis and can only be believed because one accepts the authority of Sarkar, not because of the merits of the theory itself. It is neither science nor philosophy but simply gurudom creating an alternative ideology.

IN SEARCH OF TRUTH

While we do not argue that these questions are trivial--indeed they are very important and debate and research needs to be conducted to negotiate these questions--but for us they are too narrow and

apolitical. For us, both conventional empirical research and an analysis of alternative sites of understanding are necessary. In "Playing the Devil's Advocate," Carspecken does not take the more radical viewpoints of epistemology and philosophy which argue that all positions are interest driven: all are ideological. For example, while Jurgen Habermas asserts that in the communication act there exists the possibility for universal interests, for truth, Foucault at even a more radical level argues that there is no universal and that truth is power. Reality then becomes conventional; with truth becoming a will to knowledge. Thus, in this perspective,

[w]hat makes a science a science, in short, whatever its subject matter, is not its degree of predictive success--prediction is only one important validating device and only one kind of use to which scientific theories are put [for example, the theory of evolution which accounts for the past but leaves the future to "what Monod has called 'chance and necessity'"] but the standards governing its structure and application (Shapiro 1981, 96).

Again to reemphasize the difference between Habermas who attempts to reconcile the hermeneutic interpretative perspective and the positivist empirical perspective, Habermas posits an ideal speech situation that contains "not only the rational attainment of consensus" (Giddens 1982, 88)--as for example with the articulation of Peirce "who argues that scientific truth concerns not [only] the relationship between an isolated observer and a subject matter, but a consensus arrived at through the discourse of many observers where that discourse is not constrained by anything other than the canons of logical procedure and rational argumentation" (Giddens 1982, 88), but also complete mutual understanding by participants and recognition of the authentic right of each to participate in the dialogue as an

autonomous and equal partner (88). Thus, truth is possible but only under specific mutually democratic conditions, where each freely participates in the construction of the real. Foucault takes a much more epistemologically nihilistic position. According to Shapiro,

For Foucault, truth is conventional, as it is for Habermas, but the conventions extend to the constitution of subjects as well as objects and object relations. There is no nonconventional arena exterior to discourse within which subjects can transcend convention and pursue universal interests (as in Habermas's ideal-speech situation (Shapiro 1981, 141)).

Thus, within this perspective a history of science is possible, but not simply a history as Thomas Kuhn would write. For Kuhn paradigms change because of anomalies that appear in accumulation of knowledge. These anomalies then lead to new theories in the context of the rational assent of the relevant community (Shapiro 1981, 147). But for Foucault "ruptures and transformations in knowledge systems" (148) emerge as "a result of changing interests within a society that locate persons in various roles and distribute authority and responsibility differently" (148). Paradigms do not change through rationally assent but through changing political distributions of wealth, power, technology and meanings. Foucault's thus takes a much more politicized view of the history of knowledge. Suffice to say, this more politicized view of science makes problematic any effort to attack Sarkar's theory for not being appropriately scientific. The response from Sarkar is appropriately change your science or enter the political. The response that Carspecken would want is justify to your theory in Occidental models of science. By writing within the empirical discourse Batra too has reinscribed this view.

But Carspecken does make some cogent suggestions in terms of the implications of Sarkar's view which are useful to us in understanding and developing a critique of Sarkar. For example, he argues that varna is a hierarchical concept with potentially disastrous effects. This is asserted notwithstanding that Sarkar's whole theory is based on universalism, dignity for humans and mutual respect and equality and is written in response to the human disaster that is India in specific and the globe itself in general. Moreover, left untouched is Sarkar's own political battles with Hindu political movements; his refusal to work with any group which at any level supports caste (and the numerous attacks by Hindu groups on Sarkar's movements). To Hindus and others, Sarkar is an iconoclast. But Sarkar's motivations and his personal and movement politics are incidental because a hierarchical concept of class is compatible with various structures of inequity, thus his theory simply rewrites hierarchy on the body and mind of persons. It is from the very beginning seriously flawed and dangerous to the task of building a good society: liberty, fraternity and equality are doubtful results when one begins with varna as a central cosmological concept. The theory, by remaining with the traditional caste model although criticizing it, reinscribes it in the long run. Sarkar, however, would object arguing that he sees it as psychological class, not varna as caste. He has simply extended Marx's economic notion of class to a mental level; an extension which as we have argued is entirely compatible with the Indian episteme given its privileging of mentalities as real.

Unfortunately as we have alluded to above, Carspecken speaks from a position of empiricist sociology, and from a position which makes science interest free and a position which takes Sarkar's theory in the context of the Western project. He does not attempt to see it as part of the Indian episteme, as a rupture within the Indian episteme, or a response to British interests and Gandhism. Carspecken does not acknowledge its use value in revealing parts of society that previously were misunderstood; the notion of four classes instead of two, the inclusion of ideational-religious systems as part of power; the notion of the cycle and so forth. In this sense, he attempts to see a grand theory from the micro theory view and then is upset that it is not specific enough or rigorous enough to meet the criteria of a micro theory.

In addition, the phenomenological question as to how Sarkar himself sees his theory is unattempted. In our view, Sarkar sees it in different ways, in our view. In his Human Society, his main effort is story telling, in developing myth and archetypes: the warrior, the intellectual, the acquirer and the worker. In addition, he is not dealing with empirical measurable eras, but with the nature of group mind. Finally, Sarkar's theory can thus be seen as an asset and a resource to various groups. To us this is the key.

Similarly, Michael Shapiro speaking of Marx' theory says it well. "Thus part of the value of the Marxist economic discourse is that political and economic relations meet within it" (Shapiro 1981, 140). When Marx promoted the labor theory of value, he was delivering an

asset to a class of people, not simply trying to build a "better" theory (in the traditional scientific sense). Foucault is explicit about this. "[F]rom the moment of its existence ... [discourse] poses the question of power; [discourse is] an asset that is, by nature, the object of a struggle, a political struggle" (140).

Of course Marx had his own style and his own idea of theory within which his theory was to be judged. In this regard, an appropriate question for Sarkar would be: does his theory follow his own stance as to what constitutes a good theory; that is, does it satisfy his own criteria: is it based on induction? does it educate the people? does it help society's problems? does it deal with physical, mental and spiritual worlds? Are those who put it to practice experienced and able to do so; that is, is there a social movement, a community to put the theory into practice? Is the theory useful not only for the particular moment of inception, but also for periods after it, that is, is it more than a thought experiment suitable for one environment but not for the next? Within these criteria, Sarkar's theory can be "judged" from the viewpoint of consistency to its own measures of what constitutes a good theory. But more important for Foucault and Shapiro is to understand what does a theory do in terms of the way it reconstitutes subjects and objects and the way that it revalues and promotes some interests while silencing others. Thus theory is removed from a knowledge site to a political site, power is laid bare, and inquiry is made possible. This, of course, is Sarkar's goal to recast and reconstitute a new subject for the centuries ahead.

Alternatively, from the interpretive view, which we developed in the previous chapter on grand theory, Sarkar's theory can perhaps be better understood as an attempt to come to terms with deep structures and patterns, much in the way Marx has done, or Sorokin has done with his ideational, idealistic (dualistic) and sensate systems. Sarkar's work is an attempt to provide a guideline to history and a perspective on the future. That is, his theory should be seen from an interpretive view which seeks to enrich our understandings of the world, not argue for any one hegemonic understanding. To understand Sarkar we must be culturally sensitive to his context. Indeed, thinking about the Indian episteme, we would be far more surprised if there were no laws. The universe is orderly, symmetrical with many levels of reality. As there are physical laws, there must be social and spiritual laws. Precision with respect to understanding the real is far less important than telling stories about Reality while having tea in the early afternoon or monks around a fireplace describing their spiritual experiences.

And even from the empirical view, for PROUT supporters Sarkar's work certainly does provide additional explanatory power as well as predictive value, besides being comprehensive, and thus cannot be easily thrown away. It provides a better understanding of feudalism, of Brahmanism, and other idealistic, ideational systems, as Batra has tried to prove (we here would strongly prefer to use the word demonstrate, or suggest). It provides a better understanding of the Tibetan theocracy than either the materialistic, liberal democratic tradition, the institutional, developmentalist model, or the Marxist

or neo-Marxist model. Tibet simply has remained in a Vipran era and has recently been vanquished by either another vipran society or has returned to a warrior era. It provides useful, albeit still unrefined alternative structures in which to understand the structure of power and it provides an alternative perspective in which to see power: neither the material nor the analytic, nor the idealistic. Thus, as with most of science, it is not that Sarkar has little "empirical" validity, but that not enough research has been done.

Our view, however, is that what Carspecken is complaining about is not truly a problem with Sarkar but a problem with contemporary sociology and its move away from grand theory to micro/macro policy oriented data building. For us, the empirical must be contextualized as what is presently considered data is merely the authoritative representations of a particular construction of the real (the liberal materialistic scientific worldview, Western cosmology). Data in our alternative view emerges from theory, from episteme. While Sarkar's works may not always correspond to present notions of the real, the problem may not lie with Sarkar; the problem could be with our reality constructions. Of course, the problem with this argument is that any theory is as good as any other theory since all criteria are local specific and no theory can then speak to any other theory. What is needed is either a recourse to self-criteria (judging the theory in terms of its own criteria) or a grounding in temporarily chosen guide posts (Galtung's direct and structural violence, for example, or Maslow's hierarchy of human needs). For the poststructural the grounding is the power implications of every view of the real.

Finally, this is not to say that endeavors to develop empirical indicators should not be attempted or his work should not be applied to individual societies or nations, but rather his theory should be seen in a different context. Moreover, Sarkar's theory should not be seen as a definitive end to all theory building. If we adopt the Indian model, there are five ways of knowing, four explicit and one implicit. Sarkar speaks from his intuitional, cosmic perspective wherein he intuitionally provides a macro perspective of large deep patterns in world and Indian history. What in the Western context one would call prophecy (this word is not current in the Indian context since the spiritual is available to all, albeit situated in the enlightened ones and in either case prophecy is more pluralistic). This is then accepted by many as authority, yet at the same time Sarkar asks his students to develop the rational/applied basis for these theories, much as Batra has attempted to. In addition, these theories are not meant to stand alone. They work with other theoretical perspectives and can thus be made more rigorous, more analytic by, for example, using insights from other macro-theoreticians such as Khaldun, Marx, Sorokin and others, as we have attempted to do in the previous chapter. Finally, there still exists the possibility to develop empirical indicators for various aspects of the theory. What is given is an incredibly rich but vague story of the human condition, the larger interpretative meaning structure of what has happened and what will happen.

Let us recap the argument of the previous pages and attempt to find alternative placements for Sarkar's iron law of history. Is his law like Newton's law or Einstein's law, useful in explaining unexplained phenomena (giving a completer picture of the world and predicting future observations), but eventually to be overthrown by a new theory? Is it then a social science law in the sense of operating under certain conditions (all things being equal) and in these sense of speaking of tendencies not determinations? Is it a law that assumes that the universe is fixed and unchanging? If so, does this contradict Sarkar's own assertion that Cosmic Consciousness is constantly emanating new spiritual, psychic and physico-psychic phenomena?

Or by claiming that Sarkar's law is an iron empirical law in the sense of natural sciences, is this simply imposing a particular view of knowledge on to the Sarkarian model since Sarkar might be speaking from an alternative view? Or is it rather that Sarkar's metaphysics is best understood from the interpretive model? Indeed, Sarkar is creating new structures while at the same time recovering old and ancient structures that have been hidden and put aside by present materialistic, imperialist, colonial, empiricist, nationalistic discourses. Shouldn't Sarkar's theory then be seen as a great exercise in gigantic story telling that includes epistemology, metaphysics, ontology, sociology, politics and economics? Is it not an attempt to produce a new cosmology with its own social codes; a new cosmology that must speak to its Indian frame of thought yet at the same be intelligible to various Western discourses: liberal, Marxist,

religious. In addition, to the myth oriented story telling perspective, cannot Sarkar's view be better understood from the poststructural perspective which assigns theories to resource grammars and sees them as effort to redistribute meanings, power and wealth. The question there is not one of predictability, but of revealing insights, of showing new meanings, of finding new configurations of exposing power, of analyzing the world; the question becomes how does Sarkar's enterprise add to or detract from present projects. This view ostensibly removes Sarkar from the authorship position, however, placing meaning first in structure and then reader.

The critical view, however, remains and it is that Sarkar's theory is but ideological underpinning for his own power moves--to justify his spiritual society project. The task here becomes to expose the implications of his thought on various categories one privileges such as democracy, non-violence and so forth.

However, to evoke the critical view and then assert that Sarkar's theory is valueless because of its lack of theoretical rigor, or it is overly mystical metaphysics forgets, for example, the history of Marxian thought. Marxism certainly remains current not because its predictions were correct (they were not), not because it is not ethnocentric (it is plainly European and indeed imperialist and Orientalistic in its language), not because of the success of so called communist nations (they have failed on their own terms and only theoretical moves such as by Wallerstein have saved the entire project, that is, by arguing that Marxian socialism has yet to emerge; one cannot be an island of socialism in a sea of capitalism); rather

Marxism is current because it broke with previous theory (German Idealism) and created a new discourse, because it developed a more inciteful and insightful alternative model of conflict and social change, because it brought forth a class oriented model of political economy, because it created new social movements, that much as a great religious project attempted to convert the misguided and build a new world, a heaven on Earth, and because Marx created a politics which spawned a range of new theories, including world systems, dependencia, imperialism. By and large Marx created a new way of seeing the world that led to a new kind of praxis; the empirical (repeatability) verity of his theory was secondary. It is to explain the world and to see it in a new light that is the larger task.

Similarly, our view is that to understand Sarkar one must see him in this type of light, at the universal level but especially in light of Eastern cosmology: his attempt to develop an alternative political economy, an alternative social movement, an alternative theory of consciousness, an alternative rational for spiritual practices, alternative practices themselves, a new theory of history, an alternative model of knowledge, an alternative way of being, and knowing that indeed is Indian, but not Indian (and thus perhaps truly Indian).

The question then is what model should one use to understand Sarkar: the natural science, the social science, the interpretative, the mythological, or the poststructural. However, like Marxism, Sarkarian thought claims to include all these models in an inclusive model of thought. We privilege the poststructural and the

interpretive and place the empirical within the larger text of the politics of knowledge and meaning.

Finally, there is the perspective that the acceptance of a theory is not about modeling at all, but rather about power. A particular discourse becomes hegemonic because it has political resources behind it: remunerative, coercive and normative. Sarkar's discourse, as the Marxian, might become a significant way of seeing the world if it manages to either control State power, or amass ideological power. Here, power is truth and truth is power.

We have stayed at the general level so far. Now, again using Marx to understand Sarkar, we will attempt to better understand Sarkar's laws and their criticisms.

DIALECTICAL LAWS: MARX AND SARKAR

Continuing our analogy of Marx's dialectical laws and Sarkar's dialectical varna, Harold McCarthy (1973) is instructive. He summarizes the basic critique of Marxian history.

The dialectical analysis of history provided by historical materialism is either a great over-simplification and therefore theoretically false, or much too broad to be a significant tool in historical study; and in either case the emergence of a classless society organized in terms of a single world-view is not a logical necessity but at best a speculative prediction or prophecy which not only may be erroneous, but seems quite incompatible with what we know concerning human individuality and diversity with respect to human thought and desired action (McCarthy 1973, 23).

As mentioned earlier, prophecy is one useful way to understand Sarkar, although it is a non-word in the Indian context. For the Western social scientist, the only site for Sarkar is prophecy.

Continuing, in terms of epistemology:

Indeed, since the Dialectical Materialist insists that most of the philosophical ideas of the past are erroneous, and therefore (at best) distorted reflections, he has no sound reason to exclude the possibility that his own dialectical ideas are equally distorted, and hence equally false to the nature of things. Sensations and ideas may reflect, but reflections may also be distorted reflections (23).

The similarity is obvious, indeed, glaring. Of course, instead of false we would change it to the level of the true, but still how can Sarkar be sure that he too is not speaking from less than a totally unconditioned--top of Brahma--level. Others, historically have thought the same, and in retrospect, are now either perceived as false or simply one truth among many. Dogmatism and authority may have clouded his view as well. We cannot place him outside of history as well, irrespective of his location in the Shiva/Krsna cycle.

Thus, critically, Marxism can be but taken as a speculative philosophy, not a science, with Marx as the prophet, the "workers of the world" as the chosen people. For Sarkar, however, there are no chosen people, since his attempt is to stand outside of all the classes; the only one chosen are the sadvipras, but their life is life of leadership as burden, responsibility and sacrifice. He does not stand for any class, for all classes are historically and ontologically bound to become oppressive (the law of vidya and avidya) or Sorokin's principle of limits. But Sarkar is clearly the prophet, PROUT is the party, and at one level his students the chosen people. In this sense articulation of the social cycle as a science is absurd.

How then to understand laws. Let us quote again from McCarthy:

The three Dialectical Laws are not revealed truths; they are not rationally self-evident truths; if scientific laws, they are not

true in the sense in which ordinary scientific laws are said to be true; if hypotheses, they are open to modification and even total rejection, which would mean the subversion of dialectical materialism; if pedagogical instruments, they are conventional only; if speculative principles, they can support a metaphysical interpretation but cannot mediate precise scientific description or historical prediction without serious error or distortion of scientific or historical fact. All in all, they seem to take the place of Divine Providence in Christian Theology, and are just as difficult to support on purely philosophical grounds; and to say that they simply ARE correct reflections of objective reality is mere dogmatism (23).

Again the similarities with the Sarkar's laws and their critique is glaring. And again the response to this type of criticism would be similar for both writers: Marx and Sarkar. While Marxism rejected theism and thus developed a humanism, Sarkar rejects secularism and caste and develops an alternative spiritual Neo-Humanism.

The Sarkarian response to the speculative problem of laws would like the dialectical materialist not make a pure distinction between speculative principles and scientific ones. Certainly, the Indian view as we have suggested redefines these words differently: these rigid dichotomies are not held. Conventional positivist science in itself can be critiqued for similar infractions. How can, for example, Newton's laws be empirically proved; there is no place where every body is isolated from other body, so as to judge his laws of motion. That is, scientific laws in themselves can be judged from the above criticisms, or even more critically from the Foucauldian perspective, who shows them to exist within certain knowledge boundaries. McCarthy's conclusion about the dialectical laws mirrors what we have suggested of Sarkar's laws:

All in all, the Dialectical laws, though not scientific in a narrow sense, are not speculative in the sense of merely conjectural. They are not tautological and do have an important

and crucial function with the context of both scientific and philosophic inquiry. They are indispensable guides to fruitful and significant inquiry (80).

Meaning: they help us see ourselves and our world differently. They point to places of silence that were previously unheard, shadows that lurked outside of our sight, and smells that went unnoticed.

Sarkarian thought too fulfills these requirements within the Indian context and outside of it as well.

Equally relevant is McCarthy's commentary on the notion that the stages are overly simplistic. As we have suggested, Sarkar attempts to place them in an evolutionary model. It is like comparing Marx's theory to Darwin's, in that both are general, both are evolutionary, and both explain much, but leave a great deal unaccounted for. Like Marx, Sarkar looks for patterns, searches for order in a world, and attempts to generate claims as to fundamental reasons for change. Sarkar, like Marx (according to McCarthy), "does not attempt to give us detailed case histories of specific societies but rather provides us with dynamic archetypes, of each of which there will inevitably be, historically speaking, a diversity of exemplifications" (84). The evolutionary model is appropriate--Sarkar titles his essays on the cycle as "The evolution of human society." Like Darwin's theory which in

broad movement outlines, a movement from invertebrates to vertebrates and (within the sphere of vertebrates) from fish to amphibians to reptiles to birds and mammals and most recently to human beings, is a theoretical model which does not as such fill in and automatically account for all details, but is, for all that, an indispensable tool for historico-biological investigation (84-85).

Sarkar is simply less rigorous than Marx and Engels in that his style is different. He is not speaking as an intellectual, nor is he speaking to intellectuals: it is not a politics of footnotes and theory building, rather he speaks as a guru and is relaying his theory to his disciples. In his view, it is up to movement intellectuals--his Renaissance Artists and Writers Association--to translate his narrative for intellectual consumption, and to do it, dialectically and creatively (As Batra has tried to do).

One might also subject Sarkarian thinking to unfulfilled predictions of the future (in the future, it is still too young at present) as with Marx's predictions. But again this freezes the theory and indeed from a Foucauldian position centers the subject. However, insofar as theories speak subjects, then, we can distinguish between thought that is literal (these predictions must happen) and thought that is conditional, given the present state of knowledge (these predictions will probably occur). Sarkar, however, unlike Marx, is more apt to speak from what is commonly called vision or from the Western view, prophecy, since he speaks from a transcendental viewpoint, while scientists speaking for an empiricist viewpoint (and bounded by the phrase, if all things remain equal, or if present trends continue); nonetheless, both make claims about future states. The non-occurrence of these claims in the Marxian case has simply led to refinements; in the scientific case it has led to new theories or to refinements again. We can expect the same in the Sarkarian case.

ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS

Again, we return to our initial quest of situating Sarkar. There are numerous ways to criticize Sarkarian thinking. One is methodological individualism as defined by Karl Popper: "All social phenomena, and especially the functioning of all social institutions, should always be understood as resulting from the decisions, actions, attitudes, etc. of human individuals ... we would never be satisfied by an explanation in terms of so-called collectives" (Giddens 1983, 95). This view would reject the view of cultural totalities or Sarkar's history of humanity, or the Marxian history of class and economic power; Sarkar speaks of non-existent societies, of humanity itself, while indeed it is only persons who exist (although in social situations which structure their choices) or one can move to a societal position of holism and agree that societies exist and indeed they follow certain patterns. The third position is to move beyond and place theory in cosmology (Galtung 1981a). Here one looks not at persons or societies, but the deep structures that give meaning to both, that pattern both society and individual. Cosmology is an irreducible concept and thus laws and agency must be understood in the context of the particular cosmology. Cosmological analysis is an attempt to sidestep the issue of what is primary: mind/body, structure/agency. It is an attempt to look at this cosmology and then understand it through a comparison with other cosmologies. Its weakness is that it does not answer the question of how the particular cosmology became so, for, indeed, this question would place it back in the position of paradox.

Now examining Occidental cosmology, science (natural and social) is primary and is seen as knowledge itself. Alternatively, this division is not made in the Indian context; thus using one to criticize the others in the final analysis is a useless exercise--since every cosmology has its own criteria for the real--although useful only if it aids in learning about one's own cosmology and the differences between both.

Unfortunately, this relativistic view does not aid in social analysis. The other choices are to examine internal consistencies or to structure a range of values (and explicitly declared as such) and then determine how the various theories stand to those. Again Galtung has done this in his various works. We have attempted this to some extent in the previous chapter.

So far we have used the poststructural view as a way to defend the various possible critiques of Sarkar's theory of social change. We have attempted to see his theory on his own terms, as an asset being delivered not to one class, but to all classes, especially those classes who are not in power--for they will have their day--and we have attempted to argue that to understand Sarkar we must place him in the Indian episteme. But a critique not developed so far is to argue that Sarkar and Indian thinking have not had the type of enlightenment that the Europeans had, that is, Indian thought remains backward since the transcendental has not been secularized and made scientific, that is, entered the modern era, or more radically, that Sarkar's theory remains as a modern theory that reinscribes that which it is fighting against.

For example, Robert Brown in The Nature of Social Laws argues that in the classical era there were laws because the universe was controlled by God. God was then the divine legislator and as such, there must be laws for the society as there were for nature. It was incumbent upon men and women to find these laws to better appreciate His majesty. Accompanying these laws were moral laws. In fact, God would issue physical laws to the obedient Nature and to humans in the form of moral laws. Using present language, God was the divine legislator. "The existence of the Christian God ensured the presence of His plan, and the character of that God guaranteed the reliability of the plan's operation and hence the reliability of scientific predictions" (Brown 1984, 12). This coincided with the center-periphery cosmological view of the Occident. The West was part of the privileged land; it was following the laws, the evolution, while those outside the West were in a pre-evolution stage, either behind or like nature to be used and exploited for the larger Christian project.

In this sense, it could be argued that Sarkar's laws are simply the laws of a religious era: India did not experience an enlightenment where the "irrationality" of the Church was overthrown by the "rationality" of the modern subject, the modern state, and modern reason, science itself. Kant, for example, broke with this classical worldview and made man the center of being. According to Richard Ashley, "Not beholden to classical epistemology, modern discourse since Kant has asserted its independence of the classical assumption that "God had arranged a chain of being and arranged language in

preestablished correspondence with it" (Ashley 1989, 264)). The problem with this perspective of the Indian episteme and the Sarkarian discourse is that the Indian god was not outside of the self. God is immanent in self and God is external. There is a unity of being that cuts through the familiar Western problematique. There was no Enlightenment like the Occidental Enlightenment because the problems were different. The enlightenment that did occur, did not attempt to throw off the Indian spiritual worldview; rather it was a Gandhian revival of the truth of the past along with an attack on British colonialism and its commodification, secularization, and linearization (attempting to transform Indian time to Western time) and an attack on the hierarchy of caste. It was influenced by the Marxist call for equality, but it was not an attack on the pre-modern episteme. Gandhi through and through was embedded in the spiritual logos of Indian thought. Gandhism also was a rejection of the modern world of the West: its scientism and its unquestioned faith in industrialism. Sarkar in one sense, although he takes great pains to distinguish himself from Gandhi, continues this Indian enlightenment. He attacks caste, attacks capitalism and communism, but accepts technology under spiritual control (and thus he is not sensitive to the discourse of technology, the social messages encoded in Western technology) and in the context of self-reliance. Thus, Indian enlightenment is about a nationalism becoming globalism, about the spiritualization and socialization of the science and technology fetishism of the West, and it is about the return of the cycle, the laws of history. The Indian era is an assertion that one cannot escape history, that power moves

in cycles, and thus those in the center will one day fall, and those in the periphery will rise. But this modern era of India at least as Sarkar sees it, is not the creation of a sovereign voice of man: rather it is a neo-humanism in which man is part of a larger ecology.

POSTSTRUCTURALISM AND SARKAR: DECONSTRUCTION AND VIPRA-TALK

Of course a much more serious examination than the attempt to place the Indian/Sarkarian view in the pre-modern discourse (and that argues it is prescientific and prerational since India did not have an enlightenment) is that of the poststructuralist which argues against the modern discourse. In a brilliant essay titled "Living on Borderlines," Richard Ashley (1989) following Jacques Derrida takes exception to logocentrism.

"This is the expectation that all interpretation and practice must secure recognition and power by appeal to some identical consciousness, principle of interpretation, or necessary subjectivity having at least two qualities" (261). Two aspects of this are critical: first, there is a

central interpretive orientation--a coherent sovereign voice, if you will,--that supplies a unified rational meaning and direction to the interpretation of the spatial and temporal direction of history. ...second, as a sovereign voice, this principle is itself regarded as a pure and originary presence--an unproblematic, extrahistorical identity, in need of no critical accounting (261).

Thus, there is a voice that interprets history but does not take a critical stance of itself: it does not explain where it stands and how it has come to stand there. This voice then is outside of history yet has a special vantage point of seeing history as it is. This is

the writing of modern history. In addition, the logocentric perspective adopts a narrative structure; one where the ambiguity of history is controlled and order imposed. Stages are developed (Marx, Comte, Sorokin, or Sarkar), ideal types are imposed. This narrative asserts itself

by imposing a central ordering principle whose categories and standards of interpretation are taken to express the essential and timeless truth integrating all of the historical times and places among which it discriminates. It constructs a story in which all time, all space, all difference, and all discontinuity are cast as part of a universal project in which the ordering principle is itself redeemed as necessarily, timelessly, and universally true (264).

Now these are not simply excursions into grand theory, they are also critiques of grand theory by those who stand on the side of science, for they too believe that they are outside of history, they too believe that they stand at a point of "interpretation that is taken to be fixed and independent of the time it represents" (263).

Fundamentally, this practice of logocentrism is based on the sovereignty of "reasoning man" (264). This was the Enlightenment in which man suddenly appeared, according to Foucault. The classical assumption that "God had arranged a chain of being and arranged language in preestablished correspondence with it" was thrown out (264). Man became the maker of language, of history, and of meaning. Through reason man could achieve the age old dream of total knowledge and power. However at this point, as mentioned earlier, modern European man and modern Indian man, separate. For the Indian (at least the ancient episteme, the Islamic, and the modern have features of the old, but have modifications as well) Man and Brahman both exist. Both make the world in an evolutionary dialectic. That is

perhaps why, for Sarkar, the State will always exist, unlike the European man where the reasoning man makes a compact with the State, with man "the source of truth and meaning, the [State] as the site and resources that modern discourse reserves for the exercise of force, violence wherever history refuses to bow to man's reasons" (268). Modern man can only imagine the end of State only at the end of time, when man has achieved total knowledge and freedom, when history is subordinated to man's will, either as the victory of communism, the perfect marketplace, the ideal speech act, or the meeting of all needs. Contrast this with Sarkar's perspective where total knowledge is total individual enlightenment. The State continues to exist for it controls, manages and disciplines the various exploitive tendencies of the group self. There is no end of time except for the self: there is no perfect state: time will never stop for the group, there will always be periods of pause and movement: his goal of total knowledge is to reduce these downswings in a type of macro social engineering of cosmic proportions.

Ashley's perspective is applicable here as well, for it is the sovereign voice that is a source of truth outside of criticism. Sarkar critiques history, shows the desperate plight of workers, females, the environment, shows how each class becomes oppressive and yet, as he does this, he develops a voice of the way out, the alternative where the future lies, where freedom lies, the society where it is possible for this suffering to end. As Ashley writes:

Even as modern discourse criticizes an ideology, a repressive culture, an order of domination, a ritual of state legitimization, or a pathology of social life--regarding it in some sense as imprisoning, false, or ill--modern discourse must

invoke a sovereign subjectivity of man that is taken to be the ultimate origin of freedom, truth, or health. So it is with Marxism's appeal to a dialectical materialist proletarian consciousness, radical liberal's appeals to Christian humanism values, and Habermas's appeals to the universal pragmatics of the ideal speech situation (266).

All this is done by theorists who while critical of other theories from the past, create new voices from reason, unsuspecting that they are reinscribing this logocentrism on their theory.

From a poststructuralist position, it does not matter that this is done only by reasoning "man," it could be believing "man," or the more complex Indian "man," or the process oriented ideal of Buddhism--it is the offering of a solution bound in logocentrism. Yet there are similarities. For instance, the view of Jiddhu Krishnamurti presented in the introductory chapter: man and his search for a solution, a system, a way, is in itself the problem. Thus, "by following a method ... a means through which to know myself, I shape my thinking, my activities, according to a pattern; but the following of a pattern is not the understanding of oneself" (Krishnamurti 1967, 25). It is this search for a position, a method, this sovereignty of the subjectivity of man that is part of the problem of man. For the poststructuralist, what Krishnamurti is not sensitive to is that the problem is not in the system or the way, but the actual construction of the self. More sensitive was the Buddha who refused to locate the self in the eternal or merely in the material. The self was changing and not-changing.

But for Krishnamurti, there still remains a way out to knowledge, to the natural: it is the watching of the self, an attentive watching of the mind, from a position of non-method (non-self), simple

attentiveness. If is this pursued by all or many, there then is hope of a new freedom. For Krishnamurti, it is not the creation of a new structure, but like the poststructuralist, it is a watching of all structures. For Sarkar, however, this remains a type of meditation, useful, helpful, but those in the streets still are homeless, intellectuals still purposeless, and theories still groundless. History, then, while some contemplate on what is real, is actually created by the powerful and the dominant. While the self of history can be escaped theoretically, it still remains at the level of the practical.

For Ashley, Sarkar's works, although unread by him, would be seen as another version of modern man imposing a paradigm of sovereignty on history. Modern reasoning man imposes a totalizing vision on history from a viewpoint that is claimed to be outside of history. History then becomes less unwieldy. For the modern European this point of view of history is reason or science; a point of view of truth wherein all can be seen. For Sarkar, the point of view is the suffering of humans: he can see history because he, himself, is outside of it, although Indian and part of Indian culture; as one who is outside of all the faculties of knowledge (here Indian man steps outside of pure reason)--reason, sense, authority, and intuition--but emerges because of the call of suffering. He is outside of history because history has called him to be so.

While for Western reasoning man, since he

is the origin of universal truth and meaning, he can and must aspire fully to deny his finitude, to transcend historical limitations, and to achieve total knowledge; but since man is enmeshed in history, his very knowledge reveals him in his

finititude, in the sheer facticity of the historical reality that bears down upon him, determines him and limits him in what he can here and now do and know (Ashley 1989, 265).

For Sarkar, this is a false problem. Man correctly identified is infinite, falsely identified is finite. The problem of the sovereignty of man does not appear. System building creates the possibility for revolution throughout and the possibility for purpose and reflection, action and consciousness. But there is a familiarity between Sarkar's system and that of the moderns. There is a real that cannot be questioned, that is, outside of history, and is the source of truth, the vantage point from which all can be seen. For the mystic eventually speaks, and when he does, his assertions are believed to be outside the prevailing modes of knowing. For modern Western man it is reason, for Sarkar, it is the spiritual view. For Ashley, then, if he was to look at Sarkar, he would argue that Sarkar has a ground to stand on, sees history from a vantage outside of history, and although Sarkar remains in an alternative Indian episteme that falls neither in the reasoning episteme of the Modern period or the religious episteme of the classical period, he still posits a truth that is outside contention. Ashley's view is to create a non-place that is not a reaction to a particular structure or paradox and thus does not reinscribe a polarity (mind/body, violence/nonviolence, structure/agency, cyclical/linear), that does not call it what it is fighting against, but a place that is ungrounded, constantly shifting, that is neither asserting nor denying a specific place to reason, and history. Krishnamurti, too, attempts

this, and situates this non-place in the ever attentive mind, always watching and watching this very watching.

Poststructural theory (like cosmological analysis) thus takes the position of undecidability when it comes to central issues in all modern historical analysis, the paradox is that all practices and actions of humans are dependent on structure and that all structures are created by the actions of humans. We highlight modern here, for alternatives to modern epistemes can and do include the actions of non-humans in the forms of extraterrestrials, but more importantly in the forms of Spirit, God, Redeemer or other forms of intervention which at one moment solve the paradox, but on reflection (why does god act, do humans call the spirit, or does it ascend/descend by itself, that is, the relationship of the transcendent and the temporal) cause a deepening paradox. In the modern world, behavioralists take the position that actions are primary and grand theory writers privilege structure. Attempts at creating theories of structuration (Giddens 1982) also decide on a primary and secondary although they attempt to include both. The poststructuralist stays detached from both points, for deciding on either creates a sovereign man, a grounded subjectivity that can then speak from outside of history, that can speak from a ground outside of politics, of time.

Thus, what Krishnamurti calls for in the understanding of the self, Ashley calls for in the understanding and creation of theory. But what Ashley does not examine is that this non-place can also be conceived as a reaction to the place of history; to the historical attempt to ever create a perfect place. While outside of the

enlightenment project, it does privilege the particular epistemology of reason, forgetting that reason too is a particular point, a particular historical development in epistemology. Its theoretical stance too must be intelligible to the dominant ways of knowing if it wants to be heard; thus, even while it attempts to particularize and deconstruct the fixations of science and history, it too falls within a particular mode of knowing, for one, the intellectual project of the West. The question of what comes after postmodern politics also can be asked; will Ashley's poststructuralism be yet another attempt to create a politics of everything which will eventually lead to a new structure even while it attempts to remain outside of agency and structure.

Alternatively, the Indian view attempts to avoid becoming caught in a reification. There is history, but it can be for convenience; there is truth, but it has many levels of interpretation; only Brahman ultimately sees the truth and that truth indeed is inexpressible and inexplicable--the world of man is relative and it is a world in which other entities, beings, energies, other planetary life forms as well as plants and animals exist. Thus the sovereignty of modern man is questioned, for Consciousness itself can intervene. But again this poses the problem previously mentioned as to how (the vehicle) will Brahman act--through the state, structures, great individuals, (or Marx's workers, the capitalists and the divine marketplace)? Moreover, as Sarkar hints through his Shiva/Krishna cycle, this intervention too can become a structure. Thus, while the classic Indian episteme and Sarkar himself do not go as far as the

poststructuralists in ungrounding history, in showing history to be an attempt to speak from a sovereign, nonpolitical place, in granting a space to history that is not concrete, however, by calling, by developing a history that is itihasha (history as education), they come close to what Roland Barthes call for in his "The Death of the Author"--for Barthes the unity of the text, the unity of discourse lies not in its origin but in its destination, in the reader (Ashley 1989, 258). In this death, the history imposed by the author is not critical, rather it is the history read by the reader that is central and primary. But again whether one author or a million readers, the value of the theory still lies in communicatability of man.

Although there are many similarities between the poststructuralist effort and the Sarkarian (we have developed some in the earlier chapters: distancing, nonreification of the self, view on language, end of man perspective), from the view point of the poststructuralist, Sarkarian thought remains a grand design. As Ashley states:

The task of poststructuralist social theory is not to impose a general interpretation, a paradigm of the sovereignty of man, as a guide to the transformation of life on a global scale. In contrast to modern social theory, poststructuralism eschews grand designs, transcendental grounds, or universal projects of humankind. The critical task, instead, is to expose the historicity--the arbitrariness, the political content, and the dependence upon practice--of the limits that are imposed in history and inscribed in paradigm of the sovereignty of man (284).

It is thus a project to uncover politics and not speak from a voice outside of a politics of interpretation; history is never finished and never totally understood.

For Sarkar, however, the poststructuralist view is what one might expect from vipras, especially intellectuals speaking at the end of the capitalist era when old structures are declining and the chaos (physical and theoretical) of the worker's era is arriving. What they do is theorize. Even their anti-theory is but a theory; even their theory of imposition is but an interpretation of interpretation, a product of mind that has glimpsed the deeper layers of the mind, since it has seen the malleability of all, that the real changes are perception, but it has not expanded totally and thus has not experienced empathy with the toil and suffering that is the world today. Krishnamurti finally merely becomes an escapist, neither in bliss nor in revolution, merely calling for an understanding of mind. For Sarkar, this is not new. Merely, vipra-talk. Moreover, while their theories are on the margin, their lives are not: in the context of, say Calcutta, where concrete space to lie at night is problematic, where one knows the world through neither reason, intuition, authority, nor even senses (they have become blunt) but through hope and fear, then only theory, that inspires individuals to break out of the horror that is life, can be of any significance. Poststructuralism, is perhaps useful, to show how Calcutta has become so, how it is interpreted. The final question for him, however, is not the Western Modern question, nor is it the Indian one, but the specific Sarkarian discourse that we have developed; namely, how can the self be spiritually realized, and how can the world as it as be materially transformed.

While this might get a disappointing response from the empiricists, from those critical of Sarkar's laws of social change, from the poststructuralists, and others for either being unscientific, vague, humanistic, or modern, for Sarkar these are all responses from the present. His theory, while outside history, remains for a future to be. Perhaps, the Wallersteinian view places Sarkar best:

A major function myths play is to mobilize people by their (the myths) promise and their optimism. Crushed by the realities of routine, we all hesitate to engage ourselves in political struggle. We fear wasted energy. We fear repression. We fear cutting ourselves off from family and friends. One of the most basic mechanisms that sustains the status quo is always this pervasive fear of the oppressed to break with routine. A revolutionary movement is precisely a movement that calls for a break with routine, that demands sacrifice in the present for a better world in the future. And because the sacrifice is real and immediate, while the better world is in the distance and uncertain, it is always difficult to organize. Myths are an essential element in the organizing process, and in sustaining the troops during the long political battle (Abidi 1989, 9-10).

But the paradox remains. As Nandy writes "yesterday's dissent is often today's establishment and, unless resisted, becomes tomorrow's terror" (Nandy 1987, 13). But without utopian grand knowledge claims, theorists would not be able to mobilize activism; their efforts would be mere intellectual talk. The visions of Sarkar, of Marx, of the prophets, of the Enlightenment are significant because of their grandness. Without their unproblematic representations of the real, of the natural, of the belief that their movements are guided by destiny, they would not have been able to sustain the myths needed for individual and social transformation. Thus the paradox. To change history, texts must stand outside of history, unfortunately it is this very placement that leads to terror. And yet theorists continue to develop grand visions of history and the future based on natural laws.

The sovereignty of man remains.

Restating the above, the question that remains to be asked then is why not call a theory what it is: a myth, a way of seeing instead of the new truth, the new real? But would it then have potency? Would Marxism have potency without the promise of a classless society? Would capitalism have potency without the promise of the ideal magical marketplace, where hard work is perfectly rewarded? Would humanism be successful without the creation of the sovereignty of man and a hierarchy of needs? Can sustained transformation be possible without myth, with solely a will to transform, with solely a politicization of all, and a mythification of nothing? Is truth possible without lies?

We suggest that with regards to Sarkar's social cycle and his other theoretical assertions, while the empirical/applied perspective is important in searching for contradictions, anomalies, deviations from conventional truth and historical data, these conventions change, and that solely placing the social cycle within the empirical perspective might tell us more about the context of the present modern episteme than about a fatal flaw in Sarkar's cycle (or spiral). The theory might get a better response and more insightful critique at a time when grand theory is more acceptable in the social sciences, when a good theory is not defined by its operational, predictive/control axis.

More important is the theory's ability to make voices heard that previously could not speak, to remove the future from the confines of history, the cycle, and to create the possibility for the spiral--an acceptance of structure, but a willingness to transform the suffering

associated with the downswing of the cycle, and to find previous pockets of darkness and illuminate them, to pierce through silences.

Our own perspective is that while the empirical is useful for it too aids in the move from theory to data and back, the comparative is more useful as it places the real in the context of other similar efforts, thus allowing an interdiscursive, civilizational dialog, it is the poststructural perspective that is the most rewarding. Here, theory is seen as an asset, wherein Sarkar's works can be seen as a project to develop a new meaning system outside of, yet inclusive of varna, outside of the Indian tradition, yet emerging from it with its primary emphasis on the removal of human suffering and military, intellectual, economic, and mob exploitation. For ultimately, the asset that Sarkar is manufacturing is a new language, a new interpretation of the real, a new politics, economics, and culture. A new discourse. Perhaps a new cosmology. It is in this context that we choose to read Sarkar's laws of change.

Notes

1. Phil Carspecken sees that particular article, "Playing the Devil's Advocate," as an attempt to incite PROUTists to do better research instead of merely using Sarkar's works as a priori truths. He does not locate his own thinking in the positivist tradition, but has taken that position (and quite strongly) since PROUT research is presently abysmal as the level of empirical research. (Personal Communications, February 1990). Unfortunately, Carspecken does not take the next necessary creative act and ask: how would he resolve the many problems he has raised?

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Our chapters have been long: our conclusion will be succinct. The previous chapters have been a dialog with Sarkarian thought. We have spoken to it, through it, with it, around it, in back of it, across it, below it, and above it. Put in other words, we have contextualized Sarkarian thinking by placing it in a variety of habitats: the Indian episteme; the Indian construction of history; the Chinese, Islamic, and Occidental approaches to macro-history as exemplified by writers such as Ssu-Ma Chien, Ibn Khaldun, Hegel, Vico, Mosca, Pareto, Spengler, and Sorokin, to mention a few; and finally, the various sites of the classical, modern and postmodern interpretation of structure, practice and laws.

Specifically we have presented and represented Sarkar's various theories. His theory of social change: the theory of collective psychology, the theory of the six spokes of civilization, the theory of sentiments, the theory of the rise and fall of dharma and the central role of the redeemer, and his theory of future leadership. We have also looked at his theory of consciousness, the cycle of creation and its balanced physical, mental, and spiritual emphasis. Nested in this is Sarkar's theory of microvita which intends to reconstruct previous mind/body dichotomies. Also salient was Sarkar's alternative political-economy and his various social movements, even though we did not examine these in depth.

Clearly, the most impressive feature of Sarkar's work is its comprehensiveness: theory and strategies. His is no doubt an effort to create not only a new discourse but to rethink Indian thought in the context of the contributions of other civilizations. At the same time, while there were clear differences between the various macro thinkers, they are remarkably isomorphic, similar especially in terms of the problems they face: for example, the role of consciousness, cyclical vs. spiral, and external vs. internal mechanisms. William Irwin Thompson is instructive when he talks about the four-fold structure found in these types of writers.

The model of four seems to be a persistent one; it recalls the rule of four in the Indian caste system [which Sarkar reinterprets], Plato, Vico, Blake, Marx, Yeats, Jung and McLuhan. So many people look out at reality and come up with a four-part structure that one cannot help but think that it expresses the nature of reality and/or the Kantian a priori pure categories of understanding. But whether the structure exists in reality or is simply a projection of the categories of the human mind is, of course, the traditionally unanswerable question of science (Thompson 1971, 78).

In our chapter on laws we looked at this tension as to the nature of the real and found ourselves favoring the cosmological and poststructural approach, asking what are the implications of any interpretation of the real, instead of searching for proofs; proofs that in our mind will always remain contentious. With respect to Sarkar the real costs were best recognized by Homer; your excellence is your fatal flaw, your greatness hobbles you (Thompson 1976, 80). In Sarkar's drive for comprehensiveness has he indeed closed the future? Said in other words by James P. Carse in his Finite and Infinite Games, "The Renaissance, like all genuine cultural phenomena, was not an effort to promote one or another vision. It was an effort

to find visions that promised still more vision" (Hedlund 1989, 23). No doubt Sarkar would object and argue that the essence of his project is cultural diversity, the recovery of frames of meaning hidden and distorted by capitalist pseudo-culture. Moreover, for Sarkar the spiritual revolution is the beginning of vision, not the end; it will allow a vision that is no longer weighted down by the hunger of the world. The comprehensiveness of his theory is there because of the tragedy of what is today, because of the global civilizational crisis facing humanity, and because of the critical juncture that we stand at: the spiritual model is the only defense and the only future.

Briefly summarizing, we started this journey by restating the comprehensiveness of Sarkar's work, specifically his contributions to various fields. We also placed Sarkar's own life within the discourse of myth, leaving open the problem of mythification. The necessity of this study was that other studies had simply attempted to apply his thought to a given area: we, however, have attempted to understand it in epistemic and comparative terms. We have come not only to uphold the text, but to deconstruct it. Next we examined the different ways of seeing Sarkar's texts. The little research already published has been at the level of the applied-empirical. Our effort has been in the tradition of commentary. Our way of seeing the real benefited greatly from the poststructural Foucauldian view. This view is not concerned with the predictive truth of a theory, nor only with a phenomenological engagement, but rather asking what are the implications of the construct, its price so to speak; and how does the theory function in a politics of meaning schemata. This Foucauldian

method attempts to distance by historicizing and by comparing and by whenever possible denaturalizing.

To begin this struggle, we placed Sarkar in the Indian episteme. He speaks to it, compares his thought with it and is derivative of it. However, at the same time he radically modifies it so as to reduce direct and structural violence and create the possibility for an economy stron on distribution and growth dimensions. Sarkar attempts, like other philosophers, to reconcile the idealism-materialism, mind-body debate, settling for a layers of consciousness theory, wherein everything is real, while recognizing that truth has many dimensions to it, thus allowing for an open approach to the problem of philosophical diversity. Truth is real in different ways; the ultimate truth, however, is outside of discourse, unfathomable and inexpressible.

We furthered this discussion by placing Sarkar's theory of change within the context of Indian theories of history. Here again his work is isomorphic--we should not be surprised that he has placed the division of economic, military, ideological, and worker power at the center of this theory--with Indian constructions of history. However, he has transcended the various nationalistic, idealistic, spiritual and Marxist theories and provided a new synthetic overlay. At the same time he stays within the classic model of the rise and fall of truth, of dharma. But Sarkar also provides an alternative vision of the future that is cyclical, yet has a progressive intended dimension to it, largely similar to the avatar and the Marxist tradition. Sarkar's theory manages to meld the rational with the mythic, the

linear with the cyclical, the spiritual with the material, power with transcendence. It is both Indian and not Indian, and thus perhaps at a profound level, utterly consistent with the classic Indian episteme.

Sarkar's work also follows closely the range of other macro-thinkers: with Ssu-Ma Chien and the rise and fall of virtue; with the spiritual perspective of Khaldun and the rise and fall of asabiya; with the humanistic science of Vico; with the macro-spiritual work of Voegelin; with the discontinuous theories of Foucault, with the elite theories of Mosca and Pareto, with the efforts of Spengler, Toynbee, Marx and Sorokin, with alternative notions of power by Gramsci. At the same time, aspects of his work can be found in distance places such as Comte. His prose though follows a Marxist revolutionary style. The theories of these other historians, while differing on some important issues, in fact, fit into Sarkar's history, making possible an effort to synthesize a new model of history that includes many of the variables of all these macrothinkers. This study, however, has left that task for another day.

Finally, while Sarkar claims his theories are natural laws, we believe that by virtue of his epistemic boundaries, he intends this differently than those in the Western notion of law and science. Sarkar does not follow the split in the West between the sciences and humanities, of causal explanation and empathetic understanding. Rather, he remains within the unified discourse of Indian philosophy, wherein science means causality, universality and systematicity. Science is expressly political (engaged in the construction of the

real) here in that it means that which expands the mind toward the infinite and which provides ways to economically and efficaciously reduce human suffering. The Buddha, among others, is a prime example of a scientist, merging intuition, with observational sense-experience, with deductive rationality. Sarkar, however, emphasizes an alternative way of knowing, that of bhakti, or devotional love. For Sarkar good science is good philosophy; a good philosophy creates a good person, which results in a good society; and conversely a good society leads to a good person which leads to a good philosophy and thereby good science.

Our preference has been to look at Sarkar's work as a new discourse, a new way of seeing the world from which we--in the next century--will find our subjectivity and objectivity framed by it. Sarkar's goal is to use theory to give a new asset to individuals who have their spirituality as well as material conditions removed from themselves. He intends through theory and praxis to construct a new self which will radically alter the universe of the future.

To us, his theory, his life, the myths he has created are revolutionary and are both a promise to the future and, exactly because of their brilliance, comprehensiveness and all embracing nature, a danger to the closing of other ideologies and possibilities. Our task has simply been to grapple with the contours of his work, making sense of them and ourselves in the context of the various epistemes and theoretical structures that create the conditions in which we can, indeed, know. Our task has been that of understanding: through commentary, comparisons and critical analyses.

This task has been faced with a tension; the tension between upholding the truth of the text and searching for evidence, however constructed, to place it above others, and the critique of the text, the effort to deconstruct, expose, and lay bare the weaknesses of Sarkar's text. This tension, given our view on the openness of texts and the undecidability of truth within discourse, is not resolved.

On one level we can boldly state that Sarkar's theory is more creative, more inclusive, more holistic than other attempts by macrothinkers throughout history. Within the Indian context, along with Gandhi, he stands out as the premiere thinker of this century, if not the past few hundred years. In the global context he synthesizes philosophy, political-economy, and praxis with a level that goes beyond Marx. His work is elegant and it manages to transcend the narrow Western conception of the real. He, for example, is not caught in the Western problem of understanding and explanation, structure and agency, although our prose has attempted to catch him there, perhaps mistakenly, but such is the problem of writing within a Western discourse. Sarkar's theory also manages to transcend the science-religion problems in terms of evolutionary theory. Moreover, while assertive in terms of its own outlook, by placing it in the Indian episteme it takes a gracious view on the problem of philosophical diversity. There are different levels of truth, and understanding; living in these must be a holistic venture that uses intuition, devotion, logic-reason, sense-perception, and authority. Moreover, his theory, while having a strong hierarchical dimension as might be expected within a spiritual discourse, still remains faithful

to the weak. Sarkar, whatever his critique of democracy, remains a committed humanist, nay, neo-humanist, concerned with plants, animals and humans.

At the same time, the weaknesses of Sarkar are obvious and as mentioned earlier, derivative of his strengths. While some of these weaknesses can be theoretically and practically worked out, others are endemic to the cosmology he has created. As mentioned earlier, they include the reification of the real, the end of visions, the centralization of power, the reinscription of caste, a view of the future that attempts to go beyond traditional limits of what is natural (humans to become gods), and finally they include a more relaxed posture toward the use of violence. Of course from the Liberal position Sarkar's work is simplistic and utter nonsense: it is religious, lacking in supporting evidence, dangerous to individual rights especially property rights, and anti-democratic. Sarkar's work from this view is merely a power move by a cult leader attempting to recover a world that democracy, capitalism and science have rightfully destroyed. From the Marxist view, Sarkar's work is flawed because it is spiritual and thus will eventually serve to further the capitalist hold on the masses. Even though Sarkar intends to balance the spiritual and material, by having an a priori spiritual base, his theory will ignore the material, the real conditions of human life. From the Islamic view, Sarkar's worldview is nothing new. Islam too emerges from a discourse that is unified, spiritually and materially; it too has an alternative political-economy, it too has spiritual practices, and too believes in global fraternity, and it too sees

communism and capitalism as the enemy. Islam, however, does not make the mistake of objectifying God in humans; humans are to worship God, not become God. In general, Sarkar's theory left in Bengal is fine, but made global and popular is dangerous. In any case, democracy or Marxism, or Islam or...will win out and Sarkar's work will be destined to the rubbish bin of History.

We, of course, while sensitive to the above criticisms do not take that view of Sarkar. For us, the true test of Sarkar's theory will not come from efforts such as ours; rather it will result as Sarkar would want from the harsh realities of everyday life, from the ability of Sarkar's PROUT to genuinely transform the material, mental, and spiritual conditions of the world which is ours.

Closing out a text is often accomplished by pointing to the future or by coming to a definitive understanding about a text. Our pointing to the future reaffirms our openness to the possible interpretations of the text of Sarkar. We left much undone. What is the framework from which he speaks about economics? What is his implicit model? Is it neo-classical, or some version of preclassical, or a postmodern view of future economics? Does he position himself with the efforts to create a Buddhist spiritual economics or is his theory of ownership, resources, wants, and the individual and collective different? We have yet to place his thought in the field of leadership studies. How does the notion of sadvipra relate to the recent attempt to develop a science of leadership? We have also been clearly theory driven. There was little attempt to negotiate the world of applied theory, to handle the world of data, past, present or

future. But far more seriously, we have not examined the linkages between the theory and the political movement--PROUT and his socio-spiritual movement, Ananda Marga. We have not attempted a dialog between texts of Sarkar's utterances and the text of those who are shaping the empirical world of tomorrow. We have not placed the movement in the context of other contending movements: the labor movement, the green movement, the Islamic movement, the indigenous people's movements, to mention just a few.

On a more critical self-note, we have not managed to ascertain what indeed Sarkar means by his various assertions. Most importantly, his theory of sadvipra society with these humans of complete mind at the center of the social cycle. Are they like Issac Asimov's second foundation, hidden psychics watching the development of society and secretly maneuvering it? Or is Sarkar really speaking about a permanent revolution? If so, can one theoretical structure create such a permanent revolution? If Sarkar's cycles are indeed large supercultural systems, and if a particular phase lasts hundreds of years, is it conceivable that this notion of leadership would still be available to conduct such a revolution? Can we design future leadership when that future is a not possible until many hundreds of years from now? The questions of a planned leadership based on a theory of social change are at best problematic. The concrete questions to Sarkar's assertions are numerous, leaving us once again to comment that his theory in this regard is best seen as an asset; as a revolutionary mythology that intends to provide a focus, a point of unity, so that individuals will sacrifice their immediate

gratification of desires for a destined tomorrow. But while we have left much undone, we have neither proved nor disproved any hypothesis, our main goal has been accomplished: that of better understanding Sarkar through comparison and criticism. Our goal has been to ask questions, not to definitively nor authoritatively create the world.

Thus our understanding of Sarkar remains open even though we posit that his theoretical moves and his social movements will most likely be among the most significant in the coming century if not centuries. But understanding the "text" of Sarkar is not a finished affair. The man lives and daily creates his and our world anew. While a text can still be open even if the writer of the text (assuming we wish to privilege agency here) is no longer physically here, it is especially open in that the Sarkar lives and thus can respond to the ways in which he has been situated. We do not wait for comments: comments should form their own text or prepare the groundwork for alternative texts.

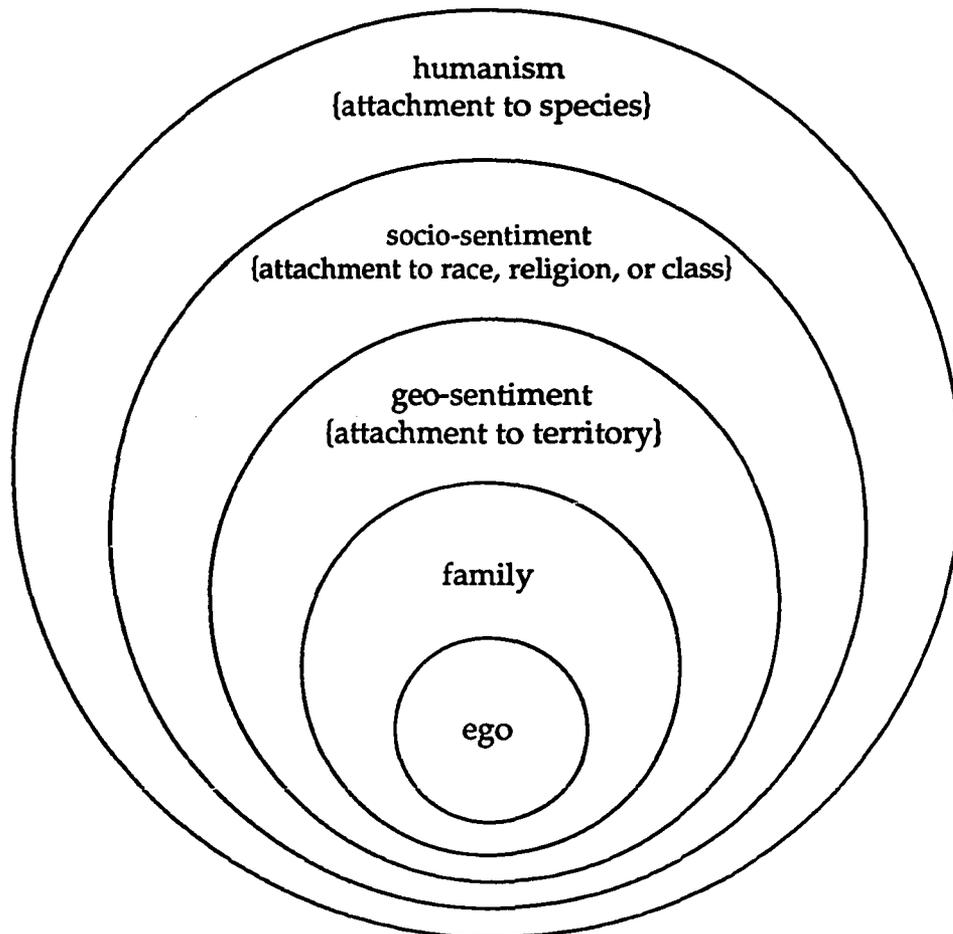
Is there a concluding statement in which we might brilliantly sum our work and thus truly understand Sarkar? No. Indeed such an effort would betray the overall effort of this text. We have entered this text in openness and we leave it in openness, ever awaiting new, infinite and finite, interpretations of interpretations.

APPENDIX

Sarkar's Neo-Humanism **The Liberation of Intellect**

neo-humanism

{love and respect for all beings, animate and inanimate, in the universe}



EPISTEMOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO PROUT

<u>APPROACH</u>	<u>APPLIED</u>	<u>EMPIRICAL</u>	<u>COMPARATIVE</u>	<u>TRANSLATION</u>
<u>PROJECT</u>	Take categories and test them to historical events	Determine Measurable Indicators	Compare with other movements cosmologies, philosophies along various categories	Regroup PROUT into alternative categories
<u>PROBLEMS</u>	Categories themselves are not problematized Subjectivity remains undiscussed	Problem of separation of theory, language and data Problem of validity, data reliability, availability and measurability	Ahistorical Units of Analysis Categories of comparison are themselves part of an episteme	Translation may miss key meanings
<u>APPROACH</u>	<u>FRAMING</u>	<u>PHENOMENOLOGICAL</u>	<u>POSTSTRUCTURAL</u>	<u>PROUTist</u>
<u>PROJECT</u>	Reconstruct PROUT in a new discipline such as Futures studies to gain legitimacy and membership in alternative communities	See PROUT in its language; uncover oneself and society through PROUTist analysis	Deconstruct PROUT; ask how did categories come to be; historicize and politicize	Knowledge is social cycle and class based, thus absolute knowledge can not spoken nor heard. Relative truth associated with human human welfare
<u>PROBLEMS</u>	Discipline also has biases, it is complicit in a discourse, a worldview	Little or no comparison PROUT itself remains uncovered	Privileges Intellectual discourse	Relationship between Absolute and finite (in time, space and person)

SARKAR AND THE INDIAN CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY

<u>CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>STRUCTURE</u>	<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>STAGES</u>
<u>GITA-THEISTIC</u>	Cycle: Rise and fall of Dharma Degeneration and regeneration of History	In times of crises humans are instruments. Otherwise, they have limited Will--Agency in Cosmos	Truth/False/Divine Intervention/ Truth/False
<u>PRAKASH</u>	Cycle Degeneration and regeneration of History	Humans and Consciousness as exhibited in political/ social events (Spiritual/ International Relations model)	Inertia/Awakening/Activity (Kali/Dwapara/Treta/Krta)
<u>AUROBINDO</u>	Cycle	God in nation and great men and other Associations	Rise and fall of nation Neo-Hegelian
<u>NATIONAL</u>	Linear Modernity and Progress	Nation-state	Backward to integrated modern
<u>MARXIST</u>	Cycle: Economic stages	Class: History as ideological	Asiatic/Feudal/British/ Peripheral/Socialist
<u>SUBALTERN</u>	Language and power	Workers/oppressed. History is a political asset	Deconstruction/Reconstruction
<u>TRADITIONAL</u>	Linear	Dynastic	Hindu/Muslim/British/Nation
<u>PHILOSOPHICAL</u>	Cumulative/Additive	Ideas/Philosophers	Vedas/Upanishads/Buddhism/ Islam/Secularism/? and: Vedic/Epic/Sutra/Scholastic
<u>SARKAR</u>	Cycle and spiral	Collective mind and Humans except in crises then Cosmic Taraka Brahma model; History as educational tool and as a political asset for the silenced	Shudra/Ksatriya/Vipra/ Vaeshya/Shudra Revolution-- Sadvipra Society/Shudra....

CHARACTERISTICS OF SARKAR'S HISTORICAL STAGES

<u>STAGE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>POLITY</u>	<u>GENDER</u>	<u>POWER</u>	<u>EMOTION</u>	<u>EXPANSION</u>	<u>EXAMPLE</u>	<u>RELIGION</u>
<u>SHUDRA</u>	Present	Anarchy/ Pure Democracy Decentralized	Cooperation to Matriarchy	Mass Labor/ Directionless	Fear	Population	Prehistoric	Animistic to Polytheism
<u>KSATTRIYA</u>	Past/Present	Monarchy/ Dictatorship Highly Centralized	Matriarchy to Patriarchy	Military Protective/ Coercive	Lust	Territorial	Roman Empire Caliphate	Polytheism to Monotheism
<u>VIPRA</u>	Past/Present/ Transcendental	Republic/ Theocracy Centralized	Strong Patriarchy	Normative Spiritual/ Dogmatic	Cunning/ hypocrisy	Mind/idea	Holy Roman Empire	Monotheism
<u>VAESHYA</u>	Future/Time Colonized	Democracy Decentralized	Vicious Patriarchy	Economic Inventive/ monopolize	Greed	Resource	World Capitalist System	Monotheism to material idolism

1. Cycle is evolutionary based on interaction with environment; shudra is dominated by environment; ksattriya physically dominates environment vipra mentally dominates environment and vaeshya transforms environment into an economic resource
2. Each stage emerges dialectically from the previous
3. Characteristics of the previous stages continue in the next
4. Each stage has cycles of exploitation and benevolence
5. Exploitation has a whole is maximized in the final Vaeshya stage
6. Shudra revolution or evolution then leads to next Ksattriyan era
7. There are however reversals, counter revolutions and counter evolutions
8. Cycle is endless since it is historical, evolutionary and structural, but exploitation can be minimized through permanent intervention and revolution.
9. Stages should be seen as soft laws or through Vico's river metaphor, as story telling, not as discrete blocks of time and space

SARKAR AND FOUCAULT
RATIONALITY AND PUNISHMENT

FOUCAULT

RATIONALITY

PUNISHMENT

SARKAR'S STAGES

SHUDRA ERA

No Authoritative Discourse

KSATTRIYAN ERA

Obedience to King
Authority vested in
Sovereign

Torture
Inscribe Power on to
Body of Public

VIPRAN ERA

Moral Discourse
Good versus Evil

Confessional
Admit Truth so Soul
Can be Saved
Cleansing

VAESHYAN ERA

Idleness is madness

Make work in Prisons
Means of Production
Model--factory.

SARKAR AND MACROHISTORY

<u>WRITER</u>	<u>STRUCTURE</u>	<u>KEY</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>PROBLEM</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
<u>VOEGELIN</u>	Cycle	Rise and Fall of Truth	Being	Immanentization of the spiritual in the world and in history	End of history view (Comte, Marx, Smith, Hitler) misinterprets spiritual metaphor
<u>FOUCAULT</u>	Dysjunction	Construction of the Real	Episteme	How has truth been constructed?	Truth is historical and political, not transcendental
<u>POLAK</u>	Cyclical	Image of the Future	Civilization	Rising societies have compelling vision of the future	Balance between the transcendental and humanistic utopian
<u>SSU-MA CHIEN</u>	Cyclical	Rise and fall of Virtue	Civilization	Virtue can be restored through the application of Wisdom to government	Universe has a moral structure which sage can know. Dynasty begins with sage-king; ends with tyrant
<u>CHANG</u>	Cyclical	Rise and fall of Tao	Tao	Learning and government must be unified or tao disintegrates	The Tao is the natural, the harmonious; it is noticed by watching the ordinary man not by devotion
<u>KHALDUN</u>	Cycle	<u>Asabiya</u> , unity	Dynasty/ Civilization	Why do empires disintegrate? Is there a pattern to history?	With unity, families and dynasties rise; at the top, they lose unity and then decline
<u>VICO</u>	River	Degeneration of History from Ages of God, Hero, Men, to Barbarism	Nation	The human sciences are different from the natural sciences	Articulated soft laws; the centrality of interpretation in understanding history. Spiritual can change history
<u>COMTE</u>	Linear	Progress--Theological to Metaphysical to Positive	Society	To develop a Science of society	End of the cycle and history Progress and Modernity now possible

<u>WRITER</u>	<u>STRUCTURE</u>	<u>KEY</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>PROBLEM</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
<u>HEGEL</u>	Linear	Progress and spirit in the world; Germanic State the final stage of history	State/Spirit	How does Spirit manifest itself in history?	In the State is true freedom is expressed; Unity and Difference
<u>MARX</u>	Spiral/ Linear	Dialectics/means and relations of production	Societies	How to end oppression of workers and create a communist society	Theory delivered assets to a new group of people, yet Orientalist
<u>GRAMSCI</u>	Spiral	Cultural forces/hegemony	Societies	Central role of intellectuals in realizing new society	Expanded Marx to include non-material factors: the organic intellectual
<u>PARETO</u>	Oscillation	Circulation of Elites	Societies/ Residues	How elites and power move in society? What is the best gov't?	Residues include innovators and consolidators
<u>MOSCA</u>	Expansion/ Contraction	Balance of social forces	Society/Power	Why are warriors not in control? What is ideal political system?	Uses social forces--money, priests, labor, soldiers--instead of legislative, executive, and judicial
<u>SPENGLER</u>	Cycle	Biological organism	Culture	Characteristics and lifecycle of each culture; from high culture to decline--how and why?	Cultures have personalities and follow the life-cycle; history is poetic expression, truth is deep and shallow not right or wrong
<u>GALTUNG</u>	Pendulum	Expansion/Contraction	Cosmology	Search for isomorphisms and deep structures within and between cosmologies. How to create peace.	Economic, ideological, military power imposed on people. Four classes with a fifth class outside of structure.
<u>TOYNBEE</u>	Cycle	Challenge-Response	Civilizations	Why do some civilizations rise and others fall? Is there a pattern?	Breakdown of universal state leads to universal church; spiritual vision of the future
<u>SOROKIN</u>	Pendulum	Ideational/Idealistic/ Sensate systems	Integrated Meaning	What is the real?	Sociological approach to grand theory and to explaining change
<u>SARKAR</u>	Cycle/Spiral	Shudra/Ksattriya/Vipra/ Vaeshya/Shudra revolution/ <u>Sadvipra</u> -led society	<u>Varna</u>	Develop a theory of history to increase collective welfare	Cycle has many levels--exploitation phases can be reduced but cycle will continue

SITUATING SARKAR'S LAWS

POSITIVIST-EMPIRICAL

Social laws are true if they fit reality. Laws must be operationalized and tested in history

Problematic nature of knowing is left unexamined; history is seen as factual, not interpretive and the empirical is not placed in a larger political philosophical context. But grounds of knowledge are clear and a hierarchy of knowledge and progress (and control) are possible

Sarkar's laws have no empirical validity
Laws followed due to authority of Sarkar
They neither predict nor explain

Theory as politics reduces knowledge to mere politics

Sarkar's theory reinscribes caste and hierarchy

Sarkar's theory, in that it stands outside of history, can lead to terror--Myths can become lies.

Theory needs refinement or needs to be less ambitious in its claims, less dogmatic

INTERPRETIVE-PHENOMENOLOGICAL

Laws must be understood in the social and cultural context they are uttered

Laws must be understood by the criteria of the theory itself (phenomenological view)

Truth however is culturally relativized and inquiry (politics) is not possible
--total epistemological pluralism

Laws are natural and necessary given the nature of Indian episteme--unity of physical, social, and cosmic

Sarkar's laws internally consistent with good theory--they are based on induction, can transform the world and lead to satya and ananda

Sarkar's theory enriches social theory by adding new variables, new insights (cycle, four structures, leadership theory)

Sarkar's theory should be seen as outside of mere intellectual discourse, empirical or poststructural (sovereignty of man issue)

POSTSTRUCTURAL

Theories must be understood in empirical a political context, in a politics of the real

A theory becomes dominant because of politics (and technology or class or the capturing of State power)

Theories are then political assets which privilege particular interests. The question then is which interests does a particular theory support? and how?

Grounds for comparison are however themselves interpretive impositions

Like Marxism, laws are "true" if they change the world; if they lead to fruitful inquiry; if they rethink old power relationships; and if they deliver political assets to new interests

Sarkar's theories are necessary myths which aid in the revolutionary struggle, in creating the possibility for a new tomorrow

Sarkar theory is significant as it is a new discourse, a way of knowing the real

GLOSSARY

Ananda:	Bliss, state of no-qualities. In its absolute sense, non-discursive.
Asabiya:	Unity, the fibre that binds (central to Khaldun).
Atman:	Essential self. Identical with the Supreme self.
Avatar:	God descends into the body of Man to bring about righteousness, dharma.
Avida:	Basic force that pulls mind outwards toward the material world; from Consciousness toward matter.
Bhakti:	Devotion or the constant state of love. A way of knowing or constructing the world.
Bodhisattva:	Person who stays in the world for the spiritual enlightenment of others. Primarily a Buddhist concept.
Brahma:	Consciousness or God.
Brahmachakra:	Cycle of Creation.
Brahman:	Consciousness or God. In <u>Vedanta</u> as the only Reality.
Carvaka:	School of Indian thought. Emphasizes that the material world is the end all of reality.
Chakras:	Psychic centers which control emotions. At the level of the body they are related to glandular system.
Citta:	Mental plate wherein the real is reflected in mind
Dharma:	The way, inner nature or essential characteristic.
Dukha:	Sorrow, suffering.
Dvapara Yuga:	The copper age in the classic Indian model of time (shaking off sleep for Buddha Prakash).
Guru:	Spiritual perceptor. One who dispells darkness and ignorance leading disciples to bliss.
Itihasa:	History that has educational value.
Itikatha:	History as a factual record of events.

Jhat:	Caste, hereditary division of social value.
Kali Yuga:	Iron age or the age of materialism (age of sleep for Buddha Prakash).
Karma:	Collection of sanskaras. Also fulfilled actions. Also law of action and reaction. Also as action, a way of knowing the world.
Kosa:	Layers of the mind. There are five.
Krta Yuga:	Golden age (age of activity for Buddha Prakash).
Ksattriya:	One who dominates the environment through physical prowess. Warrior.
Ksattriya Era:	Centralized political era that follows Shudra era.
Lokas:	Layers of the body of Cosmic mind. Symmetrical with layers of the individual mind.
Mantra:	Sounds which ontologically represent the real. Used in meditation to liberate the ego and realize Consciousness.
Maya:	Force that creates the illusion of the material (according to Vedanta).
Mimamsa:	School of Indian thought. Focuses on rituals.
Moksa:	The final liberation when individual self realizes the Supreme self.
Nirguna Brahma:	Consciousness without attributes. Unexpressible.
Niyamas:	Moral precepts.
Nyaya:	School of Indian thought. Dualistic theism.
Paramatman:	Supreme soul.
Prakrti:	Nature or the creative force. A basic aspect of Consciousness along with the cognitive dimension.
Puranas:	Mythological stories.
Rajasik:	Active force, one force among three that create the universe.
Rta:	Truth as the facts (specifically in Sarkar's epistemology).

Sadhana: Effort to realize goal, usually a spiritual goal.

Sadvipra: One with complete mind. All the varnas. For Sarkar, the needed spiritual leadership to transform the cycles of history into a progressive direction.

Saguna
Brahma: Consciousness with attributes, God.

Samadhi: Blissful state when individual mind is absorbed in the cosmic mind or cosmic consciousness.

Sankhya: School of Indian thought.

Sanskaras: Potential reaction of desires. Karma in its unactualized form.

Satguru: Perfect guru; world teacher at the social level, ideal teacher at the individual level.

Sattva: Pure, creative or sentient force. One force among three.

Satya: Truth as human welfare.

Shudra: One who is dominated by the environment. Worker. Also type of power, people's power.

Shudra Era: Initial era of human development. Also era of chaos and of revolution.

Sutras: Aphorisms. Just repeating them has spiritual benefits according to the classical Indian episteme.

Tamasik: Crude force, one force among three.

Taraka
Brahma: The door between the Nirguna and Saguna Brahma. Used as a metaphor by Sarkar to arouse devotion.

Treta Yuga: Silver era (rising for Prakash).

Varna: Mental color, collective psychology, way of perceiving the world. Ideal type, paradigm or structure.

Vidya: Basic force that pulls mind inwards toward the spiritual world, from matter to Consciousness.

Viksubdha
Shudra: Disgruntled intellectuals and warrior types who cannot pursue their nature because of capitalist exploitation. They bring on the shudra revolution.

Vijnana: Intellectual way of knowing the world.

Vaeshya: One who dominates the environment by transforming it into a commodity, a resource.

Vaeshya Era: Capitalist era.

Vaisheskika: School of Indian thought. Dualistic and atomistic.

Vedanta: Dominant school of Indian thought. Associated with Shankaracharya. Its central idea: only Consciousness is real, the world is an illusion.

Vipra: One who dominates environment through the intellect.

Vipra Era: Era where political power is often in the hands of the priests. Religious era.

Yamas: Moral precepts.

Yoga: School of Indian thought. Enlightenment through spiritual practices.

Yugas: Era, cosmic time.

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