

Perspectives from India: Theoretical Contributions to Development Discourse

By

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## Perspectives from India: Theoretical Contributions to Development Discourse

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Abstract

July 27, 2005

Institutionalized development theory has existed for sixty years. Throughout this time, two paradigmatic frameworks and a myriad of theories based on an eclectic number of principles, concept, models, and frameworks have emerged to offer explanations of development problems and development dynamics. This paper explores the conceptual and theoretical development models which have originated from India. Three eminent Indian scholars were chosen as the case studies to place under analytical scrutiny to succinctly posit an answer to the thesis question. With the connecting features underlying the works of the three case studies, it is discovered that the area of human development is the most appropriate label for the similar viewpoints which surface from academic Indian development circles. The implications and their consequences are discussed to understand the relationship between the theoretical and practical levels of development and the micro-scale to the larger development picture affecting the human condition worldwide.

## Chapter One

### A Research Framework

#### Posing the Problem

For social change to occur a modification in collective consciousness and action is required. It necessitates a fundamental shift in the boundaries of a thought or a jump in a society's consciousness to invert or transform a culture, a system, or a collective ideology, so as to induce structural change. The epistemological and normative dimensions of development that make up the foundation of this particular field of study may be radically changed through a paradigmatic shift or change. Boaventura de Sousa Santos among others believes that within the field of development there currently exists "an era of paradigmatic transition" (Munck & O'Hearn, 1999: xv). If this is the case then we have the possibility, if not the pre-condition, for a fundamental rethinking of the potential direction of social change.

The objective of this thesis is to examine and deconstruct the central ideas and priorities of Indian development theoreticians. The objective is also to examine principle concepts of development from an Indian academic or scholarly point of view as opposed to the positions and policies of the Indian national and state governments. In this context how Indian scholars, and the institutes to which they are attached, currently and collectively perceive development will be studied. For the sake of analysis, these perceptions will be compared to the priorities and ideas of scholars working within the conventional use of the term 'development' stemming from mainstream or 'Western' development thought and practice. This study will

also explore the economic, social, and political dimensions of what in strategic terms might be viewed as the 'development project' as each of these areas exists under the interdisciplinary umbrella of development studies.

The epistemological assumptions and sources of knowledge, with their accompanying normative or value-based dimensions, create the foundation for theories and models. It is on this foundation that theoretical reflections are ultimately built. From these roots, concepts arise to form an aggregate of critical ideas and structured thoughts or issues. Explanatory structures, or theories, connect these concepts and issues in a logical fashion. A good theory can be defined through two crucial elements. One, it accurately describes a large class of observations based upon a model with only a few arbitrary elements and secondly, it must make definite predictions about the results of future observations (Hawking, 1988).

Given the primary concern of this study - Indian development thought - various questions in this area could be posed. Questions such as: are the main propositions and prescriptions of development by Indian scholars continued within the mainstream paradigmatic framework and how are the dominant concepts and theories central to India's development thought composed and articulated?

To establish and advance an argument on this point, the structure of Indian thought will be the central focus of this study. The aim is to determine if 'development' and its various concepts within Indian institutions have been constructed within the



paradigmatic structure of 'Western' mainstream development thought, and, if not, what might be the structure of this alternative paradigm. In effect, this thesis will examine the proposition that Indian scholarship has made specific Indian contributions to development theory. This area needs to be addressed in order to answer the central question of our study: *Is there a distinctly Indian development theoretical paradigm?* Or are these possible contributions and their suggestions for policy constructed within the framework of the orthodox paradigm that dominates 'Western' thought. In the search for a response to these questions, the dominant 'orthodox' paradigm will be framed in terms of a specific subset of critical ideas used to examine the economic, social, and political dimensions of the development project and how these ideas take the form of concepts, theories, models as well as prescriptions for policy or action. This thesis will not provide the last word on such a large question; rather it provides a platform for future research through setting up the parameters and key concepts for a future and more extensive study.

To this end this thesis explores the conceptualisation of various notions and thoughts of development issues through the perspective of key Indian thinkers. Specifically, the development discourse of three Indian thinkers will be explored and deconstructed, namely Vandana Shiva, Amartya Sen, and Darshini Mahadevia. Through the perspective of these renowned Indian thinkers, the frameworks and pillars of 'Indian development thought' will be brought into focus for comparative analysis. How these priorities and foundational basis of development are constructed and how the suggested theories, prescriptions, and models are inter-connected

requires a specific focus. If veins of thematic commonality exist between these thinkers, the similarities will be articulated. This will lead to reflections on the structural parameters, the body, and the spirit of Indian thought. From this the key question of this study will be answered.

The research hypothesis is based upon the process of Indian development today. India is a living contradiction in terms, and a nation that is firmly lodged in the development debate. Research institutes and scholars, as well as national and regional political bodies and policy makers, are faced with the reality of a nation with a population nearing 1.25 billion people and that is rapidly splitting into two very dissimilar worlds. It is a society striving to be part of the global technological revolution while millions live in poverty; it is a place in which bride burnings are committed regularly yet political seats are reserved for women to assure them a participatory role in local politics. The debates over the conceptualisation of issues of development and development policies are likewise split into two camps: mainstream development vis-à-vis an economically dominant form of progression versus an alternative camp of theories which have grown out of a widespread reaction to the failure of socio-economic development in India over the past thirty years. The following ideas form the argument of our study:

1. Although prominent Indian thinkers individually may have very unique conceptualisations, principles, theories, and seemingly dissimilar suggested prescriptions for India's development, there are commonalities and theoretical themes between many Indian voices in development.

2. A distinctly Indian perspective creates a new collective perspective on national development. This perspective has a specific structure that encloses concepts, issues, theories and suggested models.
3. It is our hypothesis that these thinkers are connected by an underlying epistemology and domain assumptions derived from an attachment to collective values embedded in their shared culture. The domain assumptions are manifest in a common conceptualisation of the overall development problematic.
4. A shared worldview leads to a relatively distinctive if not unique conceptualisation of the development problematic, that is, there exists distinctively Indian contributions to development theory.

Determining the development problematic at a theoretical level is essential in terms of the effective use of time, money, and most importantly, expediting policies that will improve the condition of billions of human lives. Theories and principles of development, stemming from development analysts, regularly become policy and are implemented to affect people's lives on a very real level. Questions pertaining to whether the perception of development within India academic circles can be understood as a specific development paradigm is key to understanding how development is defined in India and ultimately what the future of development in India may look like.

When caught up in the dilemmas of development on a day-to-day basis, it is easy to forget the voices of the academics and thinkers of the time. Yet, it is they who have laid the foundation for describing and prescribing societal definitions and pushing the boundaries of what is considered social change. There is currently a pre-eminence and dominance of Western thought and a resulting bias in development; the examination of non-western paradigms, including new models and concepts, are

important if imperialist tendencies of the most powerful are to be subdued. In an era in which the monopoly of information and its circulation are not uncommon, exploring and expressing alternative theories in the field of development are essential.

Global change has affected the economic, political, and socio-cultural spheres in India. Consequently, new areas of study have opened up within development theory by leading scholars and research institutes in India; many of those who currently write to a mass audience in the context of globalisation and the effects it has upon India in its variety of forms. There exists within this literature an array of development theories, descriptions, and prescriptions. Within the nation, there are various Indian scholars and publications that are not published internationally and who contribute to the field of development. For example, the Centre for Development Studies in Thiruvananthapuram and the Social Science Research Facility in Kottayam in Kerala, the Institute on Equity and Development at the Gujarat Vidyapith and the Centre of Environmental Planning and Technology in Ahmedabad in Gujarat, the Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology and the Institute of Social Sciences in New Delhi, and the Centre for Social and Economic Change and the Institute of Rural Development in Bangalore. This is a handful of the myriad of research institutes dedicated to the field of development and whom each produce publications in which current Indian development issues are discussed along with suggested theories and models for future policy making.

While discourse on economic development is a significant aspect of these various research institutes, development and its social, political, and cultural dimensions are also explored. With the objective of producing theories and analysis of empirical data on development within their respective states, various research institutes and development scholars are involved in exploring new theoretical models and implementation of development. Using historical analysis and conducting current research, each institute is responsible for producing information in which governments can integrate into policies. As stated in the mission statement of the Centre for Economic and Social Change in Bangalore, currently Indian research institutes are “dedicated to interdisciplinary approaches to analyse critical issues affecting the transformation of economy, polity and society”(Institute for Economic and Social Change, 2004:1).

### **Mainstream Development Models**

Mainstream development and its various principles and models stem from western ideals and are implemented through western-biased policies rather than nationally relevant development. The basis of knowledge and the embedded values are fundamental factors to the specifics of mainstream development; these ideas and goals stem directly from the developed world. India, in reality, is implementing development concepts, principles and theoretical models that are born of the orthodox liberal development paradigm. It is definitely not a mode of development that is working well for the poorest of India. It is, however, the role of academics, and the research institutes and universities they work with to articulate and speculate on the

direction society is headed. Even if ideas are not implemented into policy, the understanding of the origin of these ideas can further the collective knowledge in which direction development is taking in a country such as India.

The response to the failure of the existing models and methods of development to alleviate the immensurable suffering of billions of people in the past sixty years, from 1944 to 2005, is a changing tide in respect to the study of development. This is indicative of those people who live within the countries that are paying the greatest costs. As mentioned above, overarching development is often equated with economic development. If paradigms of this nature are shifting, articulating this transformation is both important and essential.

Our research rationale is grounded in the significance that development thinking in India may be placed in a new paradigm. With India's population of over one billion people and one of the fastest growing economies in the world, understanding how this growth and change are perceived will add significantly to development literature. But if in fact, development thought and practice in India derive from one of the existing paradigms of development, this too is important to establish. That is to say, we have to ask: Are the thinkers or intellectuals of India included in the same category as the government policy makers?

## Theoretical Framework and Structural Definitions

- **Paradigms**

A paradigm is a widely accepted perspective of a particular discipline at a given time. It defines the parameters of accepted knowledge including what will be observed, the content of knowledge, the overall methodology, and what information and questions are identified as important. Paradigmatic structures also indicate the key evaluative tools within disciplines, cultures, and the world at large. The definition of a paradigm goes beyond the one, as Diana Hunt (1989) uses, as any *group of theories* that “have commanded the support of a significant group of scholars . . . have generated further theoretical development following their preliminary articulation . . . have also, in one form or another, been applied to practical activity, for example, to policy formation” (p.4).

This research utilizes Thomas Kuhn’s definition of a paradigm. Kuhn identifies the concept of a paradigm as far more complex than a simple evolution or group of accepted theories. A paradigm is more than simply a worldview but instead a widely recognized intellectual framework to provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners. Kuhn states that a paradigm is the belief system that underpins puzzle solving within a discipline (Sardar, 1999). Paradigms are so persuasive that even when evidence arises that will disprove or falsify a component of or the overall paradigm, it is not uncommon for key questions or changes to be unconsciously avoided. Even when there is a crisis, people continue analysing and

practicing within the paradigmatic parameters “rather than breaking with that worldview and adopting another” (Wilbur & Jameson, 1995:2).

In order to remain consistent with Kuhn’s ideas, this paper will assume that a paradigm has three main features:

1. It provides a meta-theory which serves to explain many other theories
2. It must be accepted by a community of practioners
3. It must have a body of successful practice, exemplars, that are held up as ‘paradigms’ in practice.

(Sato & Smith, 1996).

Kuhn was the first to articulate the concept of paradigm. Although he was speaking in the context of the natural sciences, this definition has been applied to numerous disciplines including the humanities, education, and the social sciences. Paradigmatic frames enclose theories, assumptions, concepts, principles, and prescriptions and determine theoretical and operational models through the parameters they set.

A paradigm leads to institutionalization based on a particular set of ideas. What makes Kuhn’s works original is the unique perspective and significance of the *understanding of history*. Within a paradigm, one is simply building on data, achievements and foundations to push forward in order for a discipline or ideology to evolve; linear progress is the cumulative product of past achievements. Anything



outside of the conceptual and instrumental scope of the paradigm is seen as irrelevant to “normal” research in the development of the theory. Kuhn views history as being shaped by the social behaviour of those shaping the culture. He states, “the continuation of a form of culture implies mechanisms of socialization and knowledge transmission, procedures for displaying the range of accepted meanings and representation, methods of ratifying acceptable innovations and giving them a stamp of legitimacy” (Sardar, 1999:31).

This theory is evident in its operational form if we look briefly at the frequent use of statistics to determine reality in today’s world. This seemingly objective and logical science of numbers in fact “incorporates worldviews, goals, and social values: those unique ‘cultural DNA’ codes that underlie societies, their traditions and visions for the future (Henderson, 1996:106). Scientists or mathematicians, or for that matter, development experts, are not discovering new truths but are puzzle solvers in an established system of beliefs and assumptions.

Paradigmatic frameworks are powerful and persuasive. Principles of a paradigm often derive from an overarching ideology that claims to represent the truth. Rather than an objective search for the truth, it is more like an argument in which the conclusions, evidence, and judgement of that evidence is all predisposed to prove particular claims and to perpetuate the mindset of the existing paradigm. As stated before, a field such as statistics, even if repeatable results are found, can be criticized not because of the answers found but because of the questions asked. Statistics traditionally are viewed

as value free; however, to alleviate the power of numbers to analyse life, it must be asked what is being analysed and what are the normative dimensions underlying the interpretation of results.

A paradigm is constructed upon a solid foundation of normative values and societal assumptions and is located in the epistemological dimension of knowledge. Within this structure, concepts and their particular analysis – conceptualisation – explanatory narratives or theories, overarching themes, problems, solutions, debates and definitions as well as theoretical and operational models are found.

The concurrent roles of Indian development institutes, structure and authoritative apparatus are articulated through Kuhn's viewpoint that "research is a product of a complex interaction between a research community, its authoritative tradition, and its environment" (Sardar, 1999:31). It is not reason and logic that are the sole criteria for advances in knowledge. Scientists and their ideas are not necessarily logically superior but simply products of the society and its history.

In 1979, Muslim scholar Hossein Nasr's seminal work *The Encounter of Man and Nature* argues that there is a western and non-western paradigm of science. What separates the two perspectives into dissimilar paradigms is the *conceptualisation* of nature. Conceptualisations of various ideas and factors ascertain whether a transformation or shift of a paradigm has occurred.

Although there may be similar concepts in various paradigms, it is essential to ask whether these concepts and issues are founded on the same epistemological and domain assumptions or are alike merely on a superficial level, with different meanings. For example, a concept such as 'participation' is found in various disciplinary fields. However, examining the concept of 'participation' solely within the sphere of development illuminates its array of denotations. Therefore, it can be asked whether the various definitions and meanings of popularly used concepts have a common or similar epistemological basis or derive from a different categorical framework. This study will explore the development problematic, the ensuing theories and suggested prescriptions, from the perspective and lens used by some of India's prominent development thinkers.

Paradigmatic shifts occur only rarely. Scientifically, the last paradigm shift was delineating the scientific structure to the perspective of Einstein's relativistic viewpoint from the Newtonian-mechanistic perspective. As stated above, internally within a paradigm, models exist that create realities from which concepts emerge. Although one may think that the incommensurable realities of a paradigm would translate into a conscious paradigm shift however this is rarely the case. An abandonment of the former paradigm transforms it into an embedded cornerstone in the new mindset. This may bring to mind the phrase 'standing on the shoulders of giants'. The framework of a paradigm changes from within while still working within the same superstructure, however, now with different conceptualisations. For example, international development includes foundational concepts such as participation and power. A paradigm shift would denote a difference in the way these

ideas are conceptualised; it is not that new concepts would necessarily be introduced but rather how these familiar concepts are perceived. The change in these concepts alters underlying research, alternative pathways of theory and experimentation, new standards of evidence, and innovative research techniques.

The transformation of a paradigm often occurs when abnormalities can no longer be evaded; it is then that changes begin to take place. The malfunction of mainstream development theories, policies and models are evident in the increase of absolute and relative poverty of developing nations worldwide. The United Nation Development Programme's 2003 *Human Development Report* states, "For many countries the 1990s were a decade of despair. Some 54 countries are poorer now than in 1990. In 21 (countries) a larger proportion of people are going hungry. In 14 (countries), more children are dying before age five. In 12, primary school enrolments are shrinking. In 34, life expectancy has fallen. Such reversals in survival were previously rare" (p.34).

Although mainstream development agencies may not be conscious proponents of one particular development paradigm, institutions such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) fall under the auspice of mainstream development; many would argue this unconscious use of the dominant development paradigm may be a indication of the hegemony of orthodox development discourse today. The North South Institute's case study on 'Poverty Reduction at CIDA' states "CIDA documentation and interview responses lead to various conclusions: beginning with an underlying acceptance of the importance of following a neo-liberal, open

economy, global integration model, CIDA's programming priorities set the stage for a combination of economic, social, political, and gender narratives" (Leal, 2000:5).

- **Development**

In the context of this thesis, 'development' is defined in terms of a specific set of improvements, the amelioration of degradation and human immiseration, and a corresponding change in the structure of economic, social, political or cultural practice. Structural changes are required to bring about desired improvements in any given state of socio-economic conditions. A systematic reflection on the various structural dimensions of development, with a continuity of connection to the macro level is crucial. Development concepts are vital to constituting criteria for identifying, if not measuring, such dimensions.

Two widely accepted paradigms in the field of development are orthodox liberalism and political economy. Indeed, development theory and policy in regard to economic development are generally categorized within one of these two frameworks. As a point of fact, "most of the political and theoretical postulates in the field of development were elaborated within the limits of orthodoxy" (Veltmeyer & Petras, 1998:21). It is within this paradigm that the popular theoretical frameworks *liberalism* and *structuralism* exist as schools of thought.

Development theorems, theoretical models and prescriptions for policy and action are generally constructed within a paradigmatic framework of domain assumptions.

Although the component parts of development theory are habitually framed in

economic terms, in essence if not in reality development has a political core. It is also built solidly upon elements from the social realm of development. Development theory, regardless of its ontological or epistemological roots explains “existing conditions as well as the outcomes and impacts of development firstly identify their structural sources and secondly inform analysis and direct the implementation of prescribed policies” (Veltmeyer, 2003:1).

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The emphasis of a shift in development priorities or indicators points towards a new development framework. The United Nation’s ‘Human Development Index,’ (HDI) at first glance, may signify a new approach to development. The HDI indicators move beyond a nation’s economic accumulation and include ‘green’ indicators, the health of a nation’s citizens, gender equality, life expectancy, educational attainment and basic purchasing power. The main weakness of the HDI is its basis within the context of the mainstream development paradigm. As “it still employs economic methods to aggregate diverse elements usually using traditional weighting to come up with a ready-made, eye-and media-catching analogue of GDP,” it can be criticized for existing within the western biased development paradigm in which pre-determined priorities are given to particular spheres of life (Henderson, 1996:124).

Van Pieterse (2001) critiques the definition of mainstream development from the perspective of post-development. He states that most people, policy makers, and development analysts assume that development is teleological, economically based and premised on the notion of progression or evolution. In effect, he claims that it is

these three notions that make up a particular development paradigm. However, the perspective of this thesis is that that development is universal in the sense that all nations work towards a progressive state, whether it is in a particularistic or universal notion of development; it is defined as a field of study with five potential spheres which are the economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological realms. That is, this study accepts the premise that the concept of development exists in all societies and cultures although it may be defined differently or in fact, is present within different paradigms. If development is defined as enhancing the human condition, whether it is on a political, economic, or socio-cultural basis, then it is difficult to argue that not all nations are interested in pursuing this concept. This research assumes that the notion of development exists in India as it does elsewhere in the world.

Amartya Sen (1996) differentiates between different perspectives of development. He states that one view of development is deeply reliant and influenced by the foundation of economic growth which leads to “a rapid and sustained expansion of gross national (or domestic) product per head,” while the other perspective of development is that of a process “that enhances the freedom of those involved to pursue whatever objectives they value” (p.1).

It is this former definition supplied by Sen that will be used in this thesis to define ‘mainstream’ development. For the purpose of this thesis, the term ‘mainstream development’ will be used interchangeably with the phrase ‘orthodox liberalism’. This includes theories, policies and practices widely accepted by bilateral and

multilateral development agencies. They include IFIs such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; development agencies such as DFID, CIDA, USAID; many international and domestic non-governmental agencies; and national governments; most of which currently and actively participate in the global development project.

### **Research Methodology**

Providing a systematic approach in order to answer the research question using identical criteria for each case study will work towards a sound examination of the evidence which will prove to be verifiable and reliable data. This study of the thinking and discourse of three prominent Indian development scholars takes the form of a careful deconstruction of their published work supplemented by in-depth semi-structured and probing interviews, together with a secondary analysis of available academic studies.

The selection of scholars was based in part on their prominence in academe—that is, their international reputations for contributions to theoretical discourse on development and practice--and in part on the fact that they have no relation to each other either academically or personally. It appears that as individual scholars that they have constructed and advanced their ideas independently of each other. Thus, their ideas and associated theoretical constructions can be viewed as representative of more than one modality of Indian thought on development—that is, as a range of independently constructed, albeit commonly constructed, ideas.



This research is a starting point in answering the thesis question. Each case study is critical of development and influential via scholarly works. They were selected for these reasons. Additionally, they comprise a small sample of development scholars focusing on different areas of Indian development. Mahadevia looks particularly at state-wide development with an emphasis on Gujarat, Shiva examines national Indian development, and Sen India development in the global context.

To find a commonality among each of these people's contributions, our analysis will be based on what in Foucaultian terms might be viewed as 'archeology' – digging into a text or discourse in search of its underlying epistemological structure or inner meaning (Foucault, 1969).

Popular writers, as well as academic institutes, have produced an increasingly large amount of information on globalisation, development, and its consequences to increase the knowledge about the effects of policy emanating from international financial institutions and national governments. And although there are numerous prominent development analysts in India, such as Kothari, Chaudhary, and Joshi, the thinkers used to represent and deconstruct Indian development thought in this thesis are Amartya Sen, Vandana Shiva, and Darshini Mahadevia.

The major portion of my research is based on primary research, that is, discourse analysis of documents prepared by the authors of the ideas that are the focus of this thesis. Data in support of the thesis are collected by means of semi-structured

interviews and extensive secondary research of their respective works, with a focus on their seminal writings. Other important data for comparative analysis are found in regional journals and newsletters such as *Social Scientist*, *India Today*, *Outlook*, *Frontline*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, *Critical Asian Studies* and *India Economic and Social History Review*. These may be found in library archives within the research institutes. Also, newspapers and magazines on development issues by academics or local organisations in the area will be reviewed and analysed. The data so collected will be compared and triangulated with interview data.

Document searches will also include secondary sources, including academic articles from local research institutes and papers written by members of local development agencies. From this data, I will expect to find how development is perceived in the area in relation to the stated criteria. A historical search of development of India will be conducted. The evolution of the collective mindset to development will be the goal of such a search.

### **Thesis Structure**

The thesis is organized as follows:

- **Ch.1. A Research Framework**

The first chapter sets out the key points underlying the research context, the study's rationale, thesis question and hypothesis, and thematic set-up. Structural definitions are offered in order to set the theoretical parameters of the research. Definitions for

the following concepts permit an understanding to where this paper is located in the grander theoretical history of debatable concepts. The concepts elaborated upon are: paradigm, theory, and development. Some of those who contribute to this literature include Kuhn and Sato. Although the various understandings of development will be expanded upon in chapter two, Amartya Sen's definition of development will be offered within this first chapter. His explanation is one that does not rely solely on economics as a cornerstone of development. The chapter concludes with an overview of the research methodology employed in the thesis and a brief summary of the study's findings.

- **Ch. 2. Paradigms of Development: A Comparative Baseline**

As the overall research focus is the identification of alternative development paradigms, Chapter 2 will focus upon articulating the currently accepted schools of thought. The chapter includes an exploration of the construction and central arguments of the two development paradigms – orthodox liberalism and political economy. This exploration is important as a means to setting up an interpretation of differences in concepts, theories, and suggested models of both paradigms and, in addition, to offer a historical analysis of the institutionalization of development practice. To present an alternative framework of reference for development thought, and to articulate an argument in support of my thesis, I will also reconstruct what in the literature is presented as an alternative or 'new' development paradigm. This 'paradigm' is argued to be an innovative way of thinking outside the limitations of the two dominant paradigms in the mainstream of 'Western' development thought. This

is in support of the argument related to both a paradigm shift in western development thought and to present an alternative framework of reference to Indian development thought.

- **Ch. 3. History of Indian Development**

Chapter 3 provides the historical context which lies behind current perspectives on development in India. This chapter provides a historical analysis of social change and large-scale macro-developments in India, a tumultuous history resulting from the colonisation of 'the princely states of India' by the Mughals followed by the British. This historical account will lead into a narrative that seeks to reconstruct and account for post-colonial developments of India as of 1947. Important developments in India's history will be provided, including Jawaharlal Nehru's and Mahatma Gandhi's specific ideas of a distinctly Indian form of national development. A description of both the colonial and post-colonial eras will take the institutionalization of development within India into account; this includes the integration of neo-colonial policies and values stemming from world economic powers. This Chapter will conclude with an explanation of where India is currently situated in regards to development thought and associated practice, with an overview of the major theoretical and policy designers of the past sixty.

- **Ch. 4. Indian Development Theorists: Their Voice and Writings**

The fourth chapter will detail the findings derived from field research conducted in India. As noted in my discussion of methodology used to construct this thesis, the

data is derived from three major sources of information: Vandana Shiva, Amartya Sen, and Darshini Mahadevia.

#### ▪ **Ch. 5. Discussion**

In Chapter 5 common threads between the three Indian thinkers that form the centrepiece of our study will be identified in addition to the paradigmatic structure of their central ideas. Emphasis will be placed on the points worthy of specific attention that are indicative of a unique approach to development theory and practice.

Additionally, this Chapter will articulate how and where these key concepts fit into the larger and existing schools of development theory—how they compare to and differ from Western thought; that is, how distinctive and paradigmatic is the development thinking articulated by the three scholars studied in this thesis. This Chapter concludes with an overview of the normative and prescriptive nature of the ideas advanced by of such findings in order to establish a relationship to the macro development picture in India over recent years.

#### ▪ **Ch.6. Recommendations and Implications**

Suggested recommendations for future research will also be presented in this chapter with a discussion of the potential implications and consequences of the research findings.

## **Conclusion**

The objective of this research is distinguishing possible emergent theoretical paradigms from India. We do not assume that the three case studies examined in this study are automatically indicative of the large community of scholars within India. However, our findings indicate that there are several connecting principles found in the underlying dimensions of each Sen, Shiva, and Mahadevia's work to make a preliminary assessment of a possible Indian school of development thought. Regional Indian development fits firmly within the alternative development paradigm and particularly within the realm of human development. The reality of development in India has influenced each of the examined scholars to induce similar solutions to the same problems.

## Chapter Two

### Paradigms of Development: A Comparative Baseline

The ability to identify distinctive contributions from India relies on holding the theoretical positions of the case study against a standard reference point. We begin with an introduction to the intrinsic importance of theory for both analysis and practice. This is followed by an overview of the historical basis of development theory today and then a decade-by-decade presentation of development thought from the late 1940s, the point of time at which 'development' was constructed as a project of national development as well as an object of academic study.

Within the following examination of the two principal development paradigms, and a more in-depth review of the existing schools of thought, additional analysis is provided on the conceptual differences between perceiving development as a process or project. Also one major school of thought within each paradigm will be examined more fully. Dependency theory will be reviewed as a core component of the political economy paradigm and alternative development will be discussed as a major school of thought of the orthodox liberal paradigm. Dependency theory will be discussed in terms of a reactionary school of thought, although western based, to the dominant modernization tactics of development in the first several generations of institutionalized development. This is in essence, what the research hypothesis claims to be the case in terms of Indian development – a reaction to western-based development theories.

Alternative development, often argued as an entirely separate –and third- paradigm, is in fact an offshoot of the orthodox liberal perspective. Existing simply as a branch of orthodox development, it is situated within a new realm of vocabulary and has appropriated post-modern development and grassroots development concepts.

However, there are a multitude of theories that may be categorized under this label which are distinctively different from the conventional use of such a category over the past twenty years in development circles. A discussion of orthodox liberalism and its internal debates within the last three decades will provide a thorough examination of this development paradigm and the schools of thought that constitute it.

### **The Critical Need for Development Theory**

Although some may not make a direct connection of theoretical contributions to ‘real world’ events, it is theory that forms the root of change. Theoretical critiques and debates surrounding the realm of development stem from the initial dreams of the 1940’s for a politically and economically integrated world through to the operationalization of models that have resulted in the current era of economic globalisation. As Munck and O’Hearn (1999) state in the preamble to *Critical Development Theory*, “development theory seeks to account for the uneven pattern of development worldwide and to recommend measures to overcome underdevelopment” (p.xv).

To construct and deconstruct development theory is to forge connections between a multitude of micro-issues to the larger picture of development in its many forms and



on a global scale. To analyze the dynamics of developmental concepts with a connection to structured thoughts or issues, systematic observation and empirical data are also required. These elements are also essential to the research process. These crucial components of research are realized only through the use of theory as the foundation and building blocks of thought. Structured 'explanatory narratives' or theories categorize and connect these various thematic issues and build a logical account on which to hang them. In 'A Critical Assessment of Development Theories' Martinussen claims that "it must be demanded of a theory that its ontological and epistemological assumptions are explicitly stated, (furthermore) the lack of indication to the fundamental conceptions of reality, of the nature of society, and how this reality can be analysed and comprehended in many development theories is a serious shortcoming" (Martinussen,1999:346).

For those who are aware of these limitations, explanatory narratives are extremely beneficial. Theories permit the clear recognition of ontological constructs and an understanding of underlying assumptions and normative values. Within the development debate, theory and empirical evidence are ultimately meant to modify each other through an inherently dialectical relationship. From this integration of thought and action, we can construct better or more probable models. Consequent analysis furthermore becomes a systematic examination of tacit assumptions, prior commitments, value preconceptions, hidden political advocacy or agendas, and the ability to anticipate the implied consequences and the etiology of the particular issue or model. From this foundation grows a structure in which to examine data with the

ultimate goal, however far reaching, to discover Truth. From this is derived the ability to design policy to bring about change (O'Malley: 2004).

Granted, theories are only partially true; it is in their very nature to explain only specific issues or perspectives with limitations that often translate into oversight of externalities through a process of normalization. It is simply near-sightedness to remain married to one theory or a group of theories within one particular school of thought. Martinussen (1999) states the ability to pick from a number of diverse theories within development assists in the dispelling of the "widespread tendency to assume a kind of universal applicability and validity" in development, namely within its disciplinary core, economics (p.346).

Critiques and debates exist internally and as an analytical interchange between the distinctive developmental paradigms and schools of thoughts. Delving into the structural components of a paradigmatic framework, frequently ideologies are created as a forceful sum of principles, concepts, and models. The ideologies often contain self-referential axioms which collectively have the effect of making their core theories unfalsifiable. Therefore, paradigms through the very nature of their perspective limitations restrict analytical scope, ideas, and propositions. The epistemological factors, research boundaries and unspoken externalities determine the major differences between theoretical paradigms. Often when an aspect of study does not theoretical acquiesce to an existing paradigm or ideology, this feature loses its strength though ridicule or the insidious power of peremptory dismissal or complete

oversight. It is the political utility of a theory as opposed to its explanatory power that often governs what information is exercised and built upon as fundamental concepts. Additionally, ideologies are not so much concerned with explanation as with driving action. Munck and O'Hearn (1999) assert that development theory, in some respects, has reached levels of ideological dogma. As a systematic process through which other peoples are dominated and destinies are shaped by western ideas, development theory has been elevated to the height of natural law, objective reality and evolutionary necessity.

Tucker (1999) critiques the realm of development theory as a Eurocentric construct. The underlying assumptions of initial development theory are taken for granted and escape critical scrutiny through the use of reductionist historical analysis based on the experience of European societies and have since evolved to the status of universals. It is claimed not only has the west historically controlled development through its economic and technological might but also, and very importantly, through its power to define. Theory, as in the case of development theory, must be closely examined for the internal dynamics and functions because there is clearly a potential threat, as Sardar (1999) notes in 'Development and Locations of Eurocentrism', that "the problems of Eurocentrism, and hence the problem of development is the problem of knowledge" (p.60).

The socio-economic and political ideas of a development paradigm serve as moulds for policy stances that reflect societal epistemologies. The theories and models behind

paradigmatic themes are essential to analytically comprehend the operationalization of development thought through “the testing of these propositions against the known facts which shape the process of knowledge-formation in the field and the state of theoretical knowledge” (Veltmeyer and Parpart, 2004).

### **Epistemological Underpinnings of the Traditional Historical Analysis of Development**

Viewed as a field of study that came into existence in the advent of WW II, it is accurate to define existing development knowledge as arising from the 18<sup>th</sup> century enlightenment and its ideology of liberal and radical change in the nature of society – and economic progress. The values of laissez faire economics, which form the basis of development policies in the liberal and neoliberal tradition, were the culmination of various scholars defining thoughts and ideas within the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Adam Smith and David Ricardo’s revolutionary ideas of laissez faire capitalism formed the predominant economically based ideas of development. These values were manifest in both theories and praxis related to the improvement of society and synthesized into a mass economic, political, and social modernization project. The values reflected in this theoretical project were economic progress operationalized to promote economic growth, a search for equality with a growing emphasis on equity and social justice, and the political development of society characterized by a significance value on freedom and democracy.

Thinkers within the age of enlightenment pronounced capitalist economic models as the most advantageous route to creating an improved society. The idea of progress within the 18<sup>th</sup> century “associated projects to create a better, more just, and modern society via processes of industrialization and democratization” with an emphasis on evolution, equality and individual freedoms (Veltmeyer & Parpart, 2004:40).

### **The 1940s - The Creation and Advancement of Institutionalized Development**

For Wolfgang Sachs (1992) and his theoretical colleagues, Truman’s Inaugural Address, the ‘Four Point Plan’ was the moment of distinction as the birth of development. It was this speech, made in 1944, which catalyzed the formalization of development into a specific disciplinary field of study. Leys (1996) in ‘The Rise and Fall of Development Theory’ states that several paramount reasons coalesced to establish the structure of emergent orthodox ‘development theory.’ As a geopolitical project, new theories could be employed as a method of control through their very strong practical orientation that provided grounds for immediate action in order to retain power over countries which had the potential to shift towards socialism as a viable alternative to free market principles. Also, the Bretton Woods agreement, as a newly emergent financial and trading regime, was introduced as a response to this potential problem, and to ameliorate the conflict between the two existing superpowers – the USA and the USSR for the control of global resources – in favour of the Western mode of development (Leys, 1996).

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank were created in response to the destruction of Europe as a consequence of World War II and as a solution for the growing need of austerity measures to protect the global economy. The World Bank was originally established to help in reconstruction of nations and amelioration of economic and political instability as a consequence of World War II. The IMF was to initiate and encourage international trade within a peaceful and economically stable global economy though supporting developing nations, including those destroyed by World War II, who was unable to administer their balance of payments by way of financial aid and unification of its member's monetary policies (Bretton Woods Project, 2004). These measures primarily were an effort to stabilize commodity prices, to reconstruct and develop Europe, and promote international economic cooperation.

The creation of the Bretton Woods institutions signified the institutionalization of formalized development as a project of the developed world as an attempt to construct universal principles and goals of development under which to envelop all nations under one style of economic and political future. Plans included the creation of the International Trade Organisation which laid dormant until the 1994 the World Trade Order was given life. Each of these economic institutions, which began operating in the late 1940's, made up the base for the proceeding field of development and the formal termination of overt political imperialism.

### **Received Development Paradigms: Internal Debates and Critiques**

The majority of development concepts, propositions, and models can be categorized under one of the two accepted paradigms: political economy and liberalism (in both its classical and more recent versions).

Within these two paradigms, eight distinct theoretical schools were constructed (i): growth/modernization (ii) Latin American structuralism; (iii) growth with equity, reformulated in the notion of 'structural adjustment with a human face' and ECLAC's productive transformation with equity; (iv) the political economy of development and underdevelopment, i.e. dependency and world systems theory; (v) new political economy in the form of neo-classical and rational choice models of economic and politics; (vi) the new international political economy; (vii) people centred forms of 'another development'; and (viii) post development, including post structuralism and post modernity (Veltmeyer, 2003). Although debate exists as to the number and range of schools of development thought, for the purposes of this thesis these eight schools will be taken as representative.

### **Defining the Nature of Development and Underdevelopment**

Both the political economy and orthodox liberalism are competing paradigms and yet they share similar traits. They are:

1. Ideas of development equalling progress;
2. Theories of development and underdevelopment;

3. Derive from western thought;
4. Argue that development is occurring through the process of reflection of developing nations following in the footsteps of development nations

Although development may have a political nucleus, within the two major paradigms the economy is the operative framework. Orthodoxy works within the institutional disposition of the capitalist system, and political economy is based on an alternative analysis, which is oriented towards an alternative system: socialism (Veltmeyer & Petras, 2000). Traditionally, both categories focus on a specific form of economic development which prioritizes modernization and growth of a society from traditional or pre-capitalist to a highly capitalist society. The fully capitalist society is characterized by mass consumption as a major indicator that a society is highly economically and socially developed. Development translates into 'progressiveness' and all societies can be measured according to where they are placed within this linear measurement. As stated by Wilbur and Jameson (1995), orthodox liberalism's "implicit goal of development appears to be the creation of societies that replicate the political-economic system of the U.S.: a private enterprise economy combined with a representative democratic political structure" (p.4).

One predominant difference between the two paradigms is the contribution of theory to the structural framework of the ideal society and through what specific policies the particular societal model should be operationalized. Questioned is the problematic of what improvements are required for development and what are the changes required



to reach these objectives. This infers a divergence in fundamental normative components of the two paradigms. Correspondingly, as Wilbur and Jameson (1995) write in 'Paradigms of Economic Development and Beyond,' a principal component in which the two paradigms differed is found in their definitive theories of development and underdevelopment.

### **Political Economy: The Emancipation from Oppressive Structures**

The political economy paradigm arose in the 1960's as a response to the glaring failure in development to which it offered an alternative mode of analysis. The paradigm is comprised of multiple theories and propositions within it but the most notable principles within this paradigm are derived from Marxist theories and Neo-Marxist theories such as dependency theory. The political economy paradigm examines how economic growth was brought about within nations. Issues such as pre-determination of the power structure established by global and domestic elites and a concern with who held power and control were key elements to the debate. This was an identifiably different paradigm from the orthodox liberalism due to its proposed models to attain revolutionary change that would bring about a new - and socialist - political-economic system. Within this paradigm, "theorists of development and underdevelopment saw economics and politics as an integrated system, the one presupposing the other" (Veltmeyer & Parpart, 2004, p.18).

Political Economy includes schools of thoughts such as Latin American structuralism, Neo-Structuralism, Radical Political Economy Structuralism and Dependency

Theory, and the sociologically driven World Systems Theory; most theories are grounded in structural analytic philosophy including Marxism and neo-Marxism. Latin American structuralist theory was a major influence on the theories which emanated from outside of the Western world namely dependency theory.

Scholars working within the intellectual framework of the political economy retain leading authority on the concept of underdevelopment. Underdevelopment is a prevalent concept within the structuralist and dependency explanatory narratives due to the focus of analysis on development-related conflict stemming from concentrated power. The consequent theoretical positioning is a stress on the underdevelopment of the majority of the world's nations. The emphasis on underdevelopment has led to a strong focus on the project of ongoing development rather than speculated ends. It is the contradictory nature of the highly consumptive orthodox liberal development structure between the theoretical and operational elements which is predicted to implode. Both structuralism and dependency theories are a reaction against the popular orthodox modernization and growth theories found in the 1950' and 1960's. Proponents of this paradigm view underdevelopment as a deliberate and historically conditioned process stemming from the relationship between the north and south. Sardar (1999) states that the polarization critique epitomized in dependency, and later world systems theory, of the 1960's grew from " a fundamental denial of the linearity and potential generality of the process of development, at least under the prevailing capitalist social system" (p.59).

Rooted in capitalism, this specific variety of structuralist believes the problems that lead to underdevelopment are numerous. Underdevelopment is, in part, a consequence of capitalism entering into developing countries through the transfer of large foreign businesses. This translates into a lack of crucial factors that could lead to development such as competition in the domestic market, a lower economic surplus in comparison to a potentially large social surplus (this would lead to economic stagnation) and the growth of a strong middle class, which could displace the financially wealthy elites who make up a minute percentage of the population. Rather, the decision-makers within developed nations form relationships with powerful elite classes within developing nations. This leads to policy makers pursuing paths of self-interest rather than endogenous development that benefits the non-elite or relatively powerless people within a developing nation.

Critiques of theories of underdevelopment derive mainly from scholastic schools that are based on free-market principles. Neoliberal development models are built upon the assumption that all individual entities, whether this is a person or a nation-state, are rational actors who have equal opportunity for growth and development. It is assumed that any underdevelopment within a country is derived from internal structural or conditional problems rather than the apparent discrepancy between theory and reality of the free market.

### **Orthodox Liberalism – Modernization to Globalisation**

Theories found within this paradigm began with modernization and growth theories in the 1950's. Development of national economies was prescribed as a method to stimulate economic progressiveness and social development with the ultimate goal of mass consumption measured by per capita income. Orthodox liberalism has two major branches; they are laissez-faire and government regulation. Both categories focus on a specific form of economic development, which prioritizes modernization and growth of a society from traditional or pre-capitalist to a highly capitalist society. All societies can be measured in terms of development according to where they are placed within this linear measurement. Orthodox liberalism's "implicit goal of development appears to be the creation of societies that replicate the political-economic system of the U.S.: a private enterprise economy combined with a representative democratic political structure" (Munck & O'Hearn, 1999, p. xiv.).

Theories surrounding state modernization assumed that the basic functions of capital such as investment, savings, and entrepreneurship would result in capital accumulation and industrialization strategies. Hirschmann, Rostow and Rostenstein-Rodan cited chief factors critical to growth such as technology, structure of investment and capital were essential to domestic and international development. In Critical Development Theory, Tucker (1999) argues that orthodox development came to hinge on the certainty of an universal modernity with "westernization gaining the status of an universal goal and destiny with failure or resistance subsumed under the

category of 'tradition', an essentially pejorative term which denoted divergence from the generally norms of reason and progress" (p.7).

Tucker (1999) cites Freire who also wrote about the inherent contradictions when using modernization and development as interchangeable concepts. Freire states, "it is essential not to confuse modernization with development. A society which is merely modernized without developing will continue – even if it takes over some minimal delegation of decision making – to depend on the outside country. This is the fate of any dependent society as long as it remains dependent...the basic elementary criterion is whether or not a society is a 'being for itself'" (p.6).

The two branches of orthodox liberalism differ in their theories concerning state intervention in the market. Laissez-faire economics promotes a system with an absence of any form of government interference within market mechanisms as to allow it to work freely. Currently, the pillars of economic globalisation, which include liberalization, deregulation, and privatization, are cornerstones of the laissez-faire economy on a global scale. One obstacle to laissez-faire economics was the 'non-rational' behaviour by actors within the economic development process. State regulated and planned economies were intended to help overcome these obstacles.

State regulated economies were the standard model in many countries worldwide from the late 1940's to the early 1970's. Regulation of labour, health and environmental standards within the workplace, the public control of utilities and

services, and mechanisms to control international and domestic finance were several of the responsibilities of governments in this form of economy. However, serious problems arose. For example, although the GDP of countries were rising, there was neither a decrease in the rate of poverty nor an increase in development or equality. The trickle-down effect of both the laissez-faire and state-regulated systems did not seem to be working; basic needs were not being met. Many analysts began creating new development theories; in a study of 43 non-communist developing countries, in “the post World War II period, while economic growth proceeded, the share of the bottom 60% fell relatively and in poorer countries the income of the bottom 40% had fallen absolutely as well”(Wilbur & Jameson, 1995: 26).

In retrospect, theorists realized that problems arose in part due to the neglect of sectors such as agriculture and this had resulted in an urban bias of development; it was the elites of a country who had incorrectly defined what was best for the poor. The failures of the orthodox liberalism paradigm were recognized through the malfunctioning of the predicted trickle down effect of economic growth. This growth was only benefiting the elites or wealthiest people of a country; there was also a growth in social structures that reflected these inequalities.

Regulationism was critiqued as non-economically beneficial model vis-à-vis high long-term profits. Theoretically, any lack of custom sovereignty, superficial and conditional income distribution, and the non-rationality of citizens were to be reversed via compelling people for the necessity of modernization while opening up

space for the state to integrate its own entrepreneurial ability and knowledge to fill that vacuum. This theory did not serve as useful once implemented.

‘Growth with Equity’ was introduced as a solution to the shortcomings of orthodox liberalism. Growth with equity was designed with seven key strategies as vital components; they included meeting basic needs and the restructuring of both domestic and international institutions economically, now otherwise known as the ‘New International Economic Order’. Although, Growth with Equity grew out of reforms of the orthodox liberal paradigm, it had one foot in the political economy paradigm as it had a “tendency to endorse policies that supplant markets and delivers goods and services directly...this moves it closer to the political economy paradigm” (Wilbur & Jameson: 11).

Schools of thought, which were constructed from the culmination of three decades of the orthodox liberal paradigm, were Basic Needs Approach, Alternative Development, and New Political Economy which includes the revival of neo-classical economic development policies.

### **Checkmate: Beyond the Two Paradigms**

By the 1970s, development thought could be put into three main categories. One was the revolutionary approach. Within this approach Marxist structuralism, neo-Marxist dependency theory, and radical political economy were theoretical frameworks in understanding the reality of development and each provided various subscriptions to

the problematic lying within development. A second major area of development was what had stemmed from the mainstream discourse in the 1950's and 1960's. To stave off revolutionary action, theories such as basic needs and later, alternative development were added to the mainstream development discourse. The 1970s were a decade of expanding the cultural dimensions of development.

The third sphere of development was found in what is considered the mainstream ideology of today. After the financial crisis in the late 1960s, many policy makers and theorists rejected mainstream ideas of state regulation for development. Reactions included internationalization of banks, large loans to developing countries, a deliberate opening up of markets in developing nations to resolve the problem of the overproduction of goods in developed nations, and a push for deregulation of state economies. This has evolved into the dominant neoliberal ideology that is the basis of mainstream development discourse and policy today; many people currently refer to this as globalisation or the New Economic Model. The neoliberal school of thought domineers through its sheer and expansive growth. Often cited for the change in the economic structure is the oil crisis of the 1970s, however. That alone did not elevate neoliberalism to its current status. The reaction to the lack of predicted profits from the preceding decades of government regulation led to restructuring of international capital; this in turn redefined the role of the state on a global scale. The collapse of the Keynesian state was accompanied by, if not the result of a counter-revolution in development thought and practice (Toye, 1993). This counter-revolution translated into the deregulation of prices, decreased state subsidies and compressed wages,



devalued national currencies with the additional of new stricter monetary policies from the Bretton Woods Institutions and a liberalized economy. Neoliberalism redefined economic policy and the mainstream conception of workable theoretical development models in addition to the operationalization of development policy (Veltmeyer, 2004).

The dominance of this model of development beginning in the late 1970s and the weakening of 'radical' theories of development due to overwhelming critique led to a crisis of the concept of development or the 'development impasse' in the 1980s. This theoretical impasse has been attributed to seven crucial changes with the operational and epistemological spheres of development:

1. The gap between rich and poor was increasing with an increased questioning and decreased faith in current development strategy;
2. Developing nations were increasingly concerned with short term goals of debt repayment with the consequences of less emphasis on intermediate long term goals;
3. Socialist inspired trajectories were removed from agenda;
4. Development strategies were deemed environmentally unsustainable;
5. Increased stress on global strategies in lieu of national policies;
6. Developing nations experiencing decreased heterogeneity;
7. Advancement of post-modernist rhetoric

(Veltmeyer, 2004)

Munck (1999) argues that there was no real theoretical impasse in the 1980s but simply a “longstanding hegemony of the modernization approach since the 1950s which had been challenged by the dependency approach in the 1970s” (p. 197). This led to the confusion between ideas of the ‘development of under-development.’ The lack of harmonious global development led to a belief in the break of Marxism with theoretical and political coordinates of the modernization paradigm.

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However, as noted in the list above, it was not just the complexity of theoretical debate that had occurred in the preceding decade between the two development paradigms that can be held responsible for the impasse in the 1980s. A mixture of new developmental issues, operationally problematic, and the advancement of new rhetoric all contributed to an abeyance in advances in development theory.

Development theory has correspondingly advanced as new development models and policies have been introduced since the late 1980s. In reaction to the failure of many mainstream development projects, post-modern propositions have attempted to fill the gap in development theory while older, more credible theories and development schools of thoughts have developed more fully. Wilbur and Jameson (1995) attribute the apparent lack in new theory to the failure of institutionalized development policies due to the remaining emphasis on economic development and the relative evaluation of these qualities as being determined by the paradigm they exist within often reaching the status of an ideology rather than a falsifiable theory.

In recent years, unregulated international financial capital, viewed as a tool for development by some and as an explanation for underdevelopment by others, has been one of the mainstream avenues for development. International capital flows and other neoliberal fundamentals such as privatization and liberalization have been several modes to attain development. Within various paradigms, agents of development range from community based organizations to non-governmental agencies to international financial institutions and multinational corporations.

Alternative methods of development are conceptualized and practiced in a different way than mainstream development today. Although 'alternative development' stems from the mainstream development sphere in which people, in theory, have more of a participatory role, there are also responses to the failure of development that exist outside of the formal development project. The past two decades have embraced a focus on ecologically sustainable development and more recently a driving emphasis on globalisation in its various forms. Conceptual models of development continue to include community development approaches, the basic needs approach, delinking of developing countries from developed ones, and a postmodernist emphasis on development founded on local knowledge and wishes. Responses include various forms of resistance; they may include social movements, a rejection of the formal development project, alternative modes of analysis, and a growing civil society opposed to mainstream development practices.

Throughout each decade, development theory has been articulated and prescribed differently according to various perceptions and daily realities locally and globally. However each stage of theory, up to this point, however, has been “rooted in the reshaping of development economics to reflect the agenda of the west” (Sardar, 1999: 53).

### **Regional development theories**

Particular development theories are regionally based. As articulated previously in this chapter, dependency theory and its resulting concepts and models grew from a regional perspective on development. Mother to the centre-periphery model, dependency theory still provides a very useful guide to analysis – and “for the construction of theory capable of grasping and explaining the dynamics of regional development in the current context of societies and economies” (Veltmeyer, 2004: 3). Understanding development in terms of regional perspectives rather than the conventional universal perspective vis-à-vis western based theories assists in a systematization of alternative ideas about the development project and “in analytical terms, it can be used to categorize entire or specific groupings of nation states such as ASEAN, Southern Europe, the Pacific or Atlantic Rim, and Latin America and the Caribbean” (Veltmeyer, 2004: 17).

### **Indian Regional Development**

As Martinussen (1999) states, “research over the past 20 years has uncovered significant real changes (including) the further differentiation among developing

countries regarding their conditions and possibilities” (p.351). This shift from a purely economic to an increased endogenous viewpoint is true for India. However, it is not equal to the same extent and overt effect that dependency theory has had in terms of strengthening current development paradigms and receiving a point of recognition that has led to critique, debate, or evolution of its internal theories and principles.

There has not been a great deal written about particular India national development theories that differ greatly from the established schools of thought; there is certainly not one well-recognized ‘Indian-style development’ acknowledged within conventional development circles. An articulation of a particular regional or national school of thought is not apparent. In terms of Gandhian development, it can be argued although Gandhi did revolutionize India, there are as many critiques of his work as there are supporters within this nation. On a national level, particularly in the context of economic development, his ideas have never been exhibited through national policy.

Desai argues there are three competing visions of Indian nationhood; these three visions arguably are in essence a particular promotion towards a significantly unique mode of development. Firstly, there is the Nehru vision of secularism, socialism and non-alignment that is now suffering a widespread decline if it is not already dead. Secondly, there is the BJP Hindutva vision which is currently in ascendance. It is non-secular, non-socialist and ideologically uncomfortable with foreign capital. The

third vision is the confederate nationalist that is deeply embedded in caste, language and religion. It is secularist and dirigisme if not socialist. Desai views this faction as disproportionately large in India's political and intellectual life (2002).

Of course, India's fundamentally diverse nature has permitted a multitude of external development models which when operationalized have taken on the flavour of an Indian development style. However, due to India's reality as the existence of hundreds of small nations within one, a model that is successful in Tamil Nadu in the south of India may not be commensurate and be destined for failure in the northwest of the nation. This is because religion and culture plays a foundational and definitive role in the Indian reality; religion and culture vary vastly from one state to the next. It is also a result of decentralized politics and the ability for states to vary in their economic structure. As Das (1999) states, "the enormous size of the country, its cultural, ethnic and religious traditions, its paucity of communication, and variety of climate, geographical and socio-economic activities, make nation-wide solutions incomparably difficult to devise and implement...and its progress of socio-economic development among major states is not uniform" (p.1).

In contrast to dependency theory, India has not developed a particular geo-political response to the west; it is Latin America's close physical proximity to the United States that in part helped birth this reactionary school of thought. India is vastly different from Latin America due to its cultural diversity. Latin America is by no means a homogenous entity but it does share similar traits on an economic level. From state to state, Indian economic development is home to some of the world's

poorest people and ranges all the way to technology centres in which millions of people have become upwardly mobile moving from the lower societal strata to a middle class standing. India has extremely disparate cases of development success and failure. Dependency theory is formed on an economic rebuttal to mainstream development's orthodox liberalism and fits nicely into the political economy paradigm. In contrast, there is no one specific reactionary Indian economic theory to refute mainstream development. As is articulated in chapter three, India did take on particular economic policies in its first three 5 Year Plans in which 'the Middle Way' was a route to remaining outside of Cold War politics. It was in these years that both principles of modernization and socialism congruently existed. As Meghnad Desai succinctly states:

“In its first phase lasting just over three decades (1947–1980), India's economic policy was driven by a model of national self-sufficiency. It was built around, indeed pioneered, an Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI) strategy. It also chose (and this is separate strictly from ISI) a capital intensive programme hoping that matters of employment creation, consumer goods supply especially food grains would take care of themselves. Political developments in the mid and late 1950s forced a situation in which the Planning authorities had to reverse the neglect of agriculture. The Green Revolution which occurred by accident in the 1960s corrected the earlier urban biases of the Second and Third Five Year Plans but the poor performance of the manufacturing sector — in terms of inefficiency, excess capacity and low quality — persisted in both the private and public organized sectors. The growth rate was low relative both to early aspirations (Bombay Plan for instance) and to the rates achieved by other countries. This was the so-called Hindu Rate of Growth. 3.5% per annum and 1.3% per capita. Over this period 1947–1980, India's political life exhibited a lot of stability and a solid, indeed unique achievement among post colonial polities in creating and sustaining a vibrant political democracy....” (Desai, 2002: 2-3).

There are certainly Indian models that attempt to promote its practices and theories as operational on a national level i.e. Gandhian rural development. As seen, India has

adopted many development schools in practice, with an emphasis on sector-based schools: theories around peasant economies, Gandhian development, rural development, Keralan model of development but there is nothing that has to this point provided a congruency for the entire nation. The fact that India has not disintegrated from this apparent lack of unity on a theoretical front is countered by its democratic foundation. As Desai (2002) states, “in one sense India is super stable and very resilient against drastic reform, social or economic. The strength of India’s democracy vouches for its super stability” (p. 9).

Underlying Indian theories on development is the prevailing and authoritative influence of religion. The weight placed on religion has played a definitive role in the cultivation and evolution of Indian culture; namely, the three prominent philosophical systems that have influenced the nation; Buddhism and Hinduism manifesting in samkhya and Advaita Vedanta approaches (Tripathi, 1988: 318). It is this different model of reality that has lead to a infrequent discussion on definite Indian development theories. In comparison to the western model in which the individual is perceived as rational, calculative, governed by self-interest, driven by the instinct of self-preservation and controlled by environmental events, the Indian man or women has a different idea of reality. They are none of these principles stated above and furthermore, rather than individual development, they view themselves as ‘participating in unity with all things and incorporate their identities based on relationships with each other. The universe is sentient and change vis-à-vis development is a non-linear process of cause and effect of the same phenomenon and



not separated as in the west. Time is viewed as cyclical and non-linear. (Hofstede 1980; N. Pande and Naidu 1986; S. Pande 1968; D. Sinha 1986; JBP Sinha, 1980; Triandis 1987; Tripathi, 1988) The area is further clarified in the discussion of the research findings.

### **Incorporating Indian development theory**

In India, as in many other countries around the world, various principles, concepts and prescriptions for development have been conjectured upon and debated, formulated into theoretical and operational models, and implemented at the level of national policy. In order to understand whether they are groundbreaking paradigms of development or, in actual fact, a school of thought or discipline located within an existing paradigmatic framework both the principles and models need to be examined on a working level and through epistemological and normative lens.

The non-Western world of India does not implicitly denote a non-Western theoretical and analytical approach to development. This field has been held in the grip of Eurocentrism for centuries and this cultural perspective has claimed a hold on the past and present of Indian development. Within this grip of dependency, “it is the categories of thought that have their origins in colonialism, modernity, and post-modernism which have been internalized by Western as well as by Non-Western thinkers, scholars, and writers” (Sardar, 1999: 47).

India's contribution to development would have to remain uniquely non-Western to form an original perspective on this field. To define a scholarly contribution from this developing nation will require a starting point from the intrinsically Eurocentric definition of development. Due to existing development theory's foundation, which is turgidly grounded in the cultural specific history of Europe and the compartmentalization of academic disciplines, this springboard of theory has in essence contributed to an us v. them mentality. Development is a standard to measure the non-West by the West (Sardar, 1999: 47). Opposing voices include development academics and thinkers that articulate new and alternative structural definitions of development. As Roy (1999) states, the definition of development within India is seen by many of those in a position of political power as a "war between a modern, rational, progressive force of 'Development' versus a sort of Neo-Luddite impulse – an irrational, emotional 'Anti-Development resistance fuelled by an Arcadian, pre-industrial dream" (p.10). Perhaps there is the potential of altering the ontological viewpoint of mainstream development thinkers and the dominant definitions of development by a widespread expression of differing notions of change by this 'irrational' and 'emotional' resistance, which is growing in India.

At this point of development studies, theories created in the western world dominate the definitive existing theories. However India, as the world's second largest country in terms of population, has contributed to operationalized development through its resistance, its policies, and its mark on nations surrounding it geographically. Historically, India has undergone multiple collective experiences with colonial

powers which inherently changed its economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions. From these historical conditions, analysis has emerged on current development policies and thoughts within and their respective schools of thought. What the theoretical contributions are, either indirectly or as an unequivocal influence on development, will be discussed in detail through the examination of the historical process of informal and the subsequent institutionalization of development within India; followed by the examination of key Indian development scholars.

### **Connecting the Dots**

The idea that both development paradigms and each school of thought find a commonality in that it represents one mindset – that is a Western frame of reference with the power to define development. There are several elements which are found in each area of development theory which must be articulated in order to allow a comparison of the research findings to the standardized viewpoint in existence today.

A capitalist framework is one defining concept. Although there is debate over the level of restriction or regulation to be placed, each formal school of thought promotes a capitalist economic system. The finances of an economy are left in the hands of individuals rather than controlled by the state as in a communist system. The route to social and political change may also vary between liberal reform and systemic revolution. However, each school of thought relies on the capitalist and economist system as a foundation to development. Two indications of this capitalist perspective

is the predominance of wage labour in many developing nations and the continuation of allowing land to remain privately owned.

The role of the state within each school of thought also plays a major role. With the exception of small tributaries branching off from the Alternative Development school of thought, the state directs development through the advancement of policy initiatives and enforcing legislation towards development, frequently based on financial conditions in this current era of globalisation.

Each school of thought recognizes the power of extra-governmental organizations such as international financial institutions, global development agencies, national non-governmental agencies and the power interest groups and community organisations. There is recognition of the hierarchy of global economic and political power implicit in each school of thought.

## Chapter Three

### History of Indian Development

After a brief review of the literature in terms of contemporary development theory, we now turn to a summary of the historical events which have shaped modern India. The antecedents to India's era of current political independence and institutionalized development will be presented along with significant points in Indian history which have influenced the various theories and practices of development today.

Historical perspectives are prisms through which we translate past events of both conceptual ideas and real life outcomes. What is viewed as history consequently affects what is widely accepted as truth and knowledge for a notably significant segment of a society. In many cases, there are those who disregard analytical thought for a rather easier view vis-à-vis maintaining a confidence in the 'lessons of history' as irrefutable proof for whatever point of view he may be advocating (Historian's Handbook, 1964).

Critical evaluation of past events permits an increased understanding of the rationale behind present day development theories. Following the decipherment of the epistemological dimensions of the interpretation of a historical event, the patterns of chronological occurrences and the methodological examination of the facts can offer an analysis of the contextual location of a particular historical event. This resulting analysis can be further expounded upon with critiques and additional modified interpretations of the particular event.

Therefore, an understanding of India's dichotomous past, which includes both tumultuous and illustrious eras, is required. With a specific examination of its key thinkers and varying conditions within the socio-political and economic structures of power, the rationale behind many modern day Indian contributions to development theory will be illuminated. Without such discussions, the connection and unity of current scholars to past intellectual movements and theories, both of which shape present day development, are squandered. As Levitt stated in her keynote address to the Canadian Association for International Development Studies, "there is no meaningful study of 'development' without a study of history....it makes no sense to study 'development models' as intellectual abstractions, without institutional context, as if development options were unconstrained by domestic, social, and economic structures or international power relations" (Levitt, 2003: 557).

It ought to be noted that this paper is taking the approach of a western enlightenment based historiographical mode of historical analysis. This is a conceptually linear approach of analysis based upon the continuous dialectical and synergistic process based on a rational and comprehensive reassessment of events. Ironically, Indian perceptions of history may not typically follow this train of analysis but that is the subject of another paper.

### **The Worlds within India**

As Arundhati Roy (1999) states in 'The Greater Common Good', India is a giant poverty-producing machine (p.11). India is positioned at this precarious and

pernicious point in its latest phase of a long and distinguished history. Each state and region has suffered specific privations and have also celebrated development throughout the ages and therefore it is not possible to illustrate within this brief chapter the 'history of India' without serving it a great injustice. As an infinitely diverse nation – on economic, political, socio-cultural, and historical scales, this chapter will focus on an overview of the ebbs and flows of India at large.

India was not a politically unified country until its independence from Britain in 1947. Within its nascent beginning as an independent nation, India was once again fragmented to form separate countries. In 1947, India was partitioned into India, Pakistan, and East Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> This disintegration can be compared to the divisive nature of pre-independence India; within the period of the British Raj, the Queen Empress Victoria recognized over 560 Princely States within India<sup>2</sup> (India 1000-2000, 1999).

India has many unifying characteristics in addition to its multiple distinguishing features – a tribute to its reputation of a paradoxical nation that cannot easily be defined. It is a country of many cultures; it boasts 18 official languages and hundreds of unofficial languages and dialects, hundreds of previously powerful kingdoms, six major religions, thousands of sub-cultures, religious sects and caste divisions, as well as diverse histories spanning from state to state. Sufficed to say, the 'history of India' is not easy to articulate in brief. Indian knowledge is similar to its geographic

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<sup>1</sup> In 1971, East Pakistan became Bangladesh

<sup>2</sup> Raj translates from Hindi into 'rule'

locations; it has historically been alienated from both the non-Indian world and also from other regions and localities in India. However, throughout its recorded past several characteristics of the overarching society remained firmly entrenched throughout the country. For example, caste and duty to it was the root of most local economies and was widely accepted as a societal structure that was and is “the prevailing and long-standing custom [which] held sway in all fields of human activity – social, cultural, economic” (Desai, 1999: 1).

What unified Indian culture and society throughout the ages was the strength of its primary religion: Hinduism. Although numerous imperialist rulers have influenced Indian thought, religious books such as the four Aryan Vedas, the Mahabharata and one of its ‘sub-plots’ the Ramayana have played key roles in Indian thought on the philosophy and theoretical models of development. Based on the two core ideas of universal order and the integrated integrity of all forms of life and ecological systems, one can find a connection between religious influences and the various eras of development theory. In ‘Development of Indian Economic Thought’, Desai (1999) states that “Indian society was a closed society with its own value-system, traditions, and institutions which it had inherited from centuries past and which continued their existence with only some minor changes, if at all, due to external factors like foreign invasion or changes of dynastic rulers” (p.19).

To give a simplified indication of the various influences upon Indian thought and policies, there follows a list of the major channels of knowledge, which were



assimilated into India over the past two thousand years. It is important to note that after the religious crusades of Christian Europe and the antagonistic pitting of the major religions vis-à-vis east versus west, had physically ended, it was then that the 'clash of civilisations' really began to take effect via the fundamentally more influential and insidious intellectual crusades of European superiority. This mindset has continued to entrench itself through the ages up to the present day.

These external forces, listed below, were countered by numerous internal Indian resistance groups. Also listed below is a sampling of some of the more powerful of these factions; all of who fought against the degeneration of particular aspects of Indian culture, political subjugation, economic exploitation and culture oppression.

#### **External Invaders**

1 AD: Kushanas  
 454/495 AD: Hunas  
 637/712 AD: Arabs  
 987 AD: Mohammed of Ghazni,  
 1175 AD: Mohammed of Ghor  
 1296 AD: Alaud-din Khilji  
 1556-1770 AD: Babur and subsequent Moguls  
 1510 AD: Portugese  
 1651 AD: Dutch  
 1574 AD: French  
 1689 AD: East India Company

#### **Internal Resistance**

300-888 AD: Pallavas of Kanch  
 550-757 AD: Chaulkyas of Badami  
 760-1142 AD: Palas of Bengal  
 757-973 AD: Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta  
 850-1276 AD: Cholas of Tanjavur  
 916-1203 AD: Chandelles of Bundelkhand,  
 973-1192 AD: Chahumanas of Ajmer  
 974-1060 AD: Parmaras of Malawa  
 1110-1327 AD: Hoysalas of Dwarasamudra  
 1118-1199 AD: Senas of Bengal  
 1136-1565 AD: Vijayanagar Empire  
 1627-1680 AD: Sivaji

(India 1000 – 2000, 1999)

The Mughals' appearance in India marked the end of the period of rule by the Delhi Sultanate. For centuries, Mughal royalty ruled the majority of India with an emphasis

on the integration of Indian religions and traditions while introducing new ideas of political, economic, and social rule into the Indian psyche. This shift to inclusive political, economic, and social activity continued for three hundred years. Bringing in administrative reforms and widespread policies based on religious tolerance permitted Sikhism to form as one of India's newest major religions.<sup>3</sup> The systemic incorporation of religion and tradition into economic and political arrangements was entitled Din-I-Ilahai and introduced by Mughal emperor Akbar in the 1580's. Through the use of universalist principles, "Akbar unified Hindus and Muslims into the single nation of Hindustan, framed by uniform legal, administrative, and taxation systems" (Baker, 2001: 19).

Underlining the eventual collapse of Mughal rule were policies stemming from 17<sup>th</sup> century Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. He had abandoned the policy of religious toleration implemented by his predecessors and with the goal of extending his rule to southern India, he weakened his empire with the consequential wars which ensued. Although the Mughals officially lost power in 1858, many historians note the effective date of their decline was 1707.

The decline and official termination of Mughal rule in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was underpinned by the clash of colonial commercial interests by the French, English, and Dutch in India. Although the Dutch initially seized power of the Indian spice trade, the British East India Company quickly took the lead in this lucrative venture. With

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<sup>3</sup> As an amalgamation of Hinduism and Islam; a major cornerstone of this religion was a reaction to and rejection of the caste system.

Robert Clive leading the British forces in the Battle of Plassey, in the name of the East India Company's administration, they took control of Bengal using a furtive method – that of international trade between Britain, India, and numerous European nations and colonies.

### **From the British East India Company to the British Raj**

Although Britain did not officially rule India politically until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the East India Company first advanced into India through the spread of its economic tentacles. This resulted in economic dominance of India and of its nationals. Many historians claim Britain saved the Mughal-ruled India from further decline blaming the Mughals' lack of political proficiency and economic inefficiency for this deterioration. In fact the epoch of Mughal rule predominately resulted in beneficial structural constructs and “boasted highly sophisticated, fully functioning market and economies of their own” (Baker, 2001: 84).

Clive commonly known as the ‘conqueror of India’ was indicative of the common British mindset viewing India as nothing more than a lucrative colonial conquest. It was Warren Hastings – Governor of Bengal – who symbolizes an era of Indian history in which Indian knowledge, philosophy, and development reached a new stage of assimilation within a global context. In contrast to Clive, Hastings believed Britain had no right to interfere with Indian religious customs, practices, or law. He was “convinced that Europe and Christendom held no monopoly on civilisation and that prejudice was the fruit of ignorance,” and with this viewpoint he ushered in an

era of a newfound fascination of India by British society (Baker, 2001: 88). Hastings admired Mughal Akbar's history as an outsider who had constructed a widespread and revised viewpoint of Indian development based upon religious tolerance and the "assimilation of the best aspects of Hindu society" (Baker, 2001: 88).

Hastings's contributions to India still resounds today. His involvement included initiating the gathering and sponsoring of Brahmin pundits to codify, in Sanskrit, the basic tenets of Hindu law in order to determine what these, for the most part unwritten, laws were. He also commissioned the publication of Code of Gentoo (Hindu) Laws and the creation of the first typographic fonts in Bengali. Additionally, he apprehended the British control of all Bengali revenue and court systems and returned this power to native Bengalis. Hastings also banned private trade by East India Company employees in staple products and overhauled the justice system to allow its basis to rely on regional and local Hindu or Muslim codes. He also attempted to terminate the maltreatment of people within Indian villages and the corruption of allotted money by East Indian Company employees in part by setting up systems of protection for the peasantry from widespread abuses by the British and Europeans at large. Most importantly in the context of this paper, Hastings along with his fellow 'Orientalists' studied Indian philosophy, culture and linguistics in-depth. Through decades of work, the Orientalists "would explore every aspect of Indian culture and civilisation voraciously digesting every ancient text that could transmit knowledge about the subcontinent's history, philosophy, science, linguistics, religion, art, flora, fauna, and topography" (Baker, 2001: 90). From this work, historical

analysis of the evolution of Indian knowledge and the struggle for regional development was systematically evaluated and articulated. For example, William Jones's 'Asiatic Society' made some of the first connections between Sanskrit, Greek and Latin, claiming all three languages were inherently linked and sprung from a common source which no longer exists.

It must be noted that the Orientalists were later dismissed by their future contemporaries such as the Victorian Britons on the premise of idealist romanticism, Christian evangelists who made accusations of falsely attributing such advances to a non-Christian society, and much later by modern-day critics such as Edward Said who stated that the Orientalist's "knowledge was assembled, structured, and deployed to perpetuate colonialism's hegemonic power in the East" (Baker, 2001: 105). He continues his critique stating that "Orientalist studies were developed in the West as a way of coming to terms with the Orient in a manner compatible with the European Western experiences....and (was) a corporate institution for dealing with the Orient [and] a western style of dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient," with the implication that racist tendencies were a key component to the Orientalist's epistemological approach (Baker, 2001: 105).

Others argue that rather than the existence of an intellectual imperialism which distorted India's learning by usurping its education and subjugating India's history to an oppressive and western mindset, it was in fact a multi-cultural approach which is claimed to have played a crucial role in India's emerging and unified cultural identity

in the past two centuries. Regardless, the age of the Orientalists was essentially terminated as Victorian values grew in strength and by 1857 it had disappeared when the East India Company was vanquished and replaced by official British rule. Using the British East Indian Company as the ostensible proof for the 'First War of Independence' or the 'Indian Mutiny', the responsibility for the governing of India was officially transferred to the hands of the British Parliament in 1858. It was at this time that most western European nations were encouraging a massive colonial push around the world which included British India.

This ushered in the era of the British Raj which extended from 1857-1947. Overt racism and imperialist conquest were marked features of this time. Internal divisions based on race and cultures were perpetuated in this era. Newly annexed kingdoms emerged under colonial rule. Former services provided for Indians were halted and goals of development were neither initiated nor desired by the British. For example, after taking power, the British parliament passed the Madras Compulsory Labour Act of 1858, popularly known as the Kudimaramath Act, mandating peasants to provide free labour for the maintenance of water and irrigation systems (Shiva, 2002).

Socially, such symbols of British power came into existence. A case in point was the abolishment of traditional customs such as ruling British Governors of a state visiting regional royalty. This tradition was inversed by demands that local kings and rulers were to pay homage to the British Governors in their homes and offices. Likewise, Governor General Dalhousie implemented the 'Doctrine of Lapse' which entitled him to "annex directly to British India any native state that did not possess a direct male

heir on the death of its ruler. This utterly defied Hindu inheritance law, which had for thousands of years allowed a monarch to name the successor he thought most appropriate by adopting him as a son” (Baker, 2001: 228).

As previously stated, the political and intellectual work which had directly affected and been assimilated into the Indian mindset were dismissed as romantic notions of idealist utopians. Although there can be no argument to an egalitarian society beforehand, official British rule reversed development based on equality and social development. The years of the British Raj not only attempted to conquer India politically and economically but also culturally through an infiltration into the minds of Indians with notions of western supremacy based on Christian values, racial superiority, and perspectives of development grounded on principles which promoted inequality and exclusion. As Tucker (1999) states, ““the concept of progress came to be forged in evolutionary terms.... cultural racism which based its judgement of superiority and inferiority on essentially ethnocentric norms, thereby labelling other cultures as inferior. The Eurocentric concept of rationality was regarded as universal” (p.4).

### **Resisting the Raj: Intellectual Defiance of Indian Thinkers**

The years of the official British Raj were directly related to the basis of colonialism worldwide: capitalism. Raw resources and materials from nations such as India were essential for the large scale production of manufactured goods and secondly, as a potential new and expanding market in which to sell these goods profitably – two

elements crucial for this economic system to survive. India was in fact one nation that Marx predicted with hopefulness that capitalist colonialism would envelop.

The economic and political conquest of countries like India effectively halted the traditional indigenous economic institutions. The British Raj pushed India into economic decline and increased the gap between economic cleavages in a country which was previously on par with the more economically developing nations within the global context. However, economically, politically and intellectually, “the new economic and political revolutionaries of Britain and France set about changing the world and the way in which it was perceived. With time, their worldview came to be intuitively self-evident and was believed to be universally valid. As such it provided a conceptual and moral basis for colonialism and imperialism....this was the period of the emergence of the modern economy, of the modern state, and of the concept of universal sovereignty in the form of liberal democracy. Like the earlier Europeans who saw their mission as Christianizing those parts of the world that they conquered, the new, modern Europeans saw themselves as missionaries with a universalizing mission. This mission was modernity” (Tucker, 1999: 4).

Countering the British influence were various individuals and groups of Indian thinkers and social activists. The Theosophical Society and the Arya Samaj, the latter founded by Dayanand Saraswati in 1857 are two examples, and arguably symbols, of the alternative perspectives and philosophies behind Indian’s future approaches to development. Conceptual issues and questions leading to the fundamental



construction of development models were discussed extensively within these newly forming groups of intellectuals.

In reaction to British imperialism, not only various philosophers emerged with possible answers to the crippling of India; economists and politicians also emerged with ideas based on alternative in order to progress with India's future. Theorists include Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was a Bengali philosopher and political thinker who was a proponent of universalism and is, in fact, a key influence on Amartya Sen. Other activists include Hom Bhabha who re-conceptualized the history of India, Vallabhai Patel who eventually became the chief political organizer of independent India and worked beforehand in consolidating all of India's princely states, and P.C. Mahalanobis, one of India's chief architects of its centrally planned economy after independence. Swami Vivekanada, a famous Indian spiritual philosopher and scholar, spoke widely of India's development viewing it as a nation that had been involved in a period of degeneration for the past 1000 years due to its lack of harmony and strength due to its many invaders. Of course, it was also within the era of the British Raj that the future first prime minister of India began his political activism: Jawaharlal Nehru. He gained a reputation for deciphering India's history and designing its future with alternative perspectives to the mainstream western viewpoint notably with concepts such as political non-alignment and the 'middle way'.

Many of the reactions resulting in this new intellectual scholarship were built upon the British advancement of an overall doctrine set in motion via European Christianity ideology. The Christian community worldwide by and large formed a newfound unity of its various sects and denominations founded upon common issues and principles i.e. viewing Christianity as synonymous with progress. Likewise, Hinduism became synonymous with the definition and identification of being Indian. The term 'Hinduism', originally a slang term used by the British became commonly used to describe this religion's various castes and sects under a universal name.

It was at this time that Max Weber introduced his ideas surrounding the 'Protestant Ethic', reproaching nations such as India for contributing to its economic decline rather than as a result of imperial conquest. In India's case, the major religion Hinduism, he proposed, led to people being "preoccupied with spiritual concerns and karma theories [which] sapped the initiative of the individual. Protestantism (on the other hand) stressed that man determined his own destiny by the light of his conscience; this inspired him towards the dynamics of capitalism like hard working frugality, self-discipline, and personal enterprise" (George, 1999:126).

The new widely accepted epistemological dimensions of Christian superiority lead to an elimination of Egyptian and Mesopotamian history as the origin of knowledge and was replaced with such academic treatises published by J.F. Blumebach of Gottingen University. His argument placed Caucasians at the top of a racial hierarchy,<sup>4</sup> and

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<sup>4</sup> The word Caucasian stems from the name of the Caucasus Mountains in Europe as the birthplace of man, as opposed to the valleys of Nile and Euphrates in Asia/Africa.

scholars deduced from his theory that the Caucasus and Persian/Indian ranges were home to a single Indo-European language family. These people were thought to be the precursors of the Aryan race. India was 'the exotic ancestor of Europe' and Sanskrit was the foundation of Egyptian civilization derived from the described Aryan-descendants Indian Brahmins. The use of the title 'Indo-European' was first used in 1816. T.J.S. George proposes that the elaborate hierarchy of the caste system which worked upon the premise of superiority of particular sects of society may have been part of reason that Europeans chose India and not Egypt as precursor to European superiority (George, 1999:132).

It was within this political and intellectual context that Mahatma Gandhi was introduced to the British colony of South Africa. He dedicated over a decade to working on behalf of the Natal Indians in terms of socio-economic and political justice before he committed the remainder of his life to the creation of an independent India. As a humanist, Gandhi had been inspired by both Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. He did not agree, however, that economic progress was the necessary precursor to social progress. As machines and economic progress based on industrialisation were both real and symbolic invasions of European life, they came to be viewed as representative of European power in its many forms. Gandhi disagreed with the fundamental premise of western economic thought which encouraged the satisfaction of unlimited wants and continually raised the material standard of living,

“therefore, constant pursuit of wealth are the goals of mankind... you cannot serve God and mammon is an economic truth of the highest value”<sup>5</sup> (Desai, 1999:184).

He proposed a holistic approach to development stating economic theory must include qualitative factors as well as its conventional quantitative basis. He stated, “I must confess, that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and ethics...economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation are immoral and therefore sinful. Thus, economics that permits one country to prey upon another are immoral. It is sinful to eat American wheat and let my neighbour down for want of customers” (Desai, 1999:186).

Gandhi rejected larger structural theories such as Marx’s ideas on class conflict and the English school of classical economics. His philosophy for achieving development in India included the extensive encouragement of traditional, rural, and self-sufficient communities that emphasized adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, and work for all people. Sustainable employment techniques included the creation of manufacturing local handicrafts, medium and small-scale industry such as paper and soap making and for the unskilled tanning. The emphasis on various skills, which were easily maintained on a community level, was to ensure an egalitarian society. Gandhi, along with Dadabhai Naoroji and M.J. Ranada attributed the existent widespread rural poverty to the long and exploitative British rule over India. He stated, “famine, as we know it today, is the creation of British rule...” and continued

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<sup>5</sup> Mammon was originally a Syrian term for money but later became a name of a demon to represent the personification of money, greed, and corruption. This name was first used by Christ.

with “the test of orderliness in a country is not the number of millionaires it owns, but the absence of starvation among the masses” (Desai,1999:188).

Standing on the shoulders of former Indian philosophers, he used the Bhagavad-Gita as his foundational philosophical platform. The four respectively united ideas of Purushartha: Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha were expanded into the concept of Sarvodaya.<sup>6</sup> Sarvodaya is the promotion of welfare for all people and is based upon the principle of non-opposition to interests and ideas. The concept of Sarvodaya encourages political structures based on socialist values and self-governance, principles of non-violence and self-sufficiency, and an economic system which depends on the least interference from the state. Gandhi also promoted decentralisation of political authority in order to demolish the existing restrictions on individual initiative and freedoms.

As one of Gandhi’s prime supporters, Jawaharlal Nehru became the architect of independent India playing a key role in designing the underlying guiding principles of development. The new India was to be founded on a socialist democratic political basis, secularism, industrialisation - which was a major break from Gandhi’s philosophy, an insistence on growth and a philosophical adherence to concepts of

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<sup>6</sup> **Dharma:** Work towards the stability of society, the maintenance of social order, and welfare of mankind  
**Artha:** Acquisition of wealth  
**Kama:** Earthly desires  
**Moksha:** Deliverance of the soul from bondage

non-alignment and Panchsheel.<sup>7</sup> Nehru was impressed by Soviet planning and their techniques for rapid economic development through the expansion of capital goods industries. He agreed with “Fabian Socialism [which is a] gradual transformation of capitalist society into a socialist society, collective ownership of basic and heavy industries, equitable distribution of income and wealth and preparing the people through education and persuasion for gradual and peaceful transformation of capitalist economy into democratic socialism” (Desai, 1999: 231). Nehru’s famous speech on the eve of India’s independence regarding its ‘tryst with destiny’ included the goals of ending poverty, ignorance, disease and inequality.

### **The Emancipation of India**

August 15, 1947, India acquired its independence from Britain. As the first nation to be freed from colonial rule, India’s chief political and economic engineers embarked on what became one of the largest and all-encompassing constitutions in the world. Prohibition of all discrimination based on a person’s caste, gender, religion, race and ethnicity was the foundation to developmental directive principles of state policy. The constitution articulated goals for the development of all people including economic and social guaranteed rights i.e. a national minimum wage and subsidized health care respectively (Lal, 2000).

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<sup>7</sup> 1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty  
2. Mutual non-aggression  
3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs  
4. Equal and mutual benefit working relationship  
5. Peaceful co-existence

What is noticeable about Nehru's policies was the deliberate attempt to circumvent dogmatic or extreme ideological frameworks; rather he promoted embracing flexible policies. The 'Middle Way' of private and public sectors existing in conjunction with each other to ensure an encapsulation of the advantages of both capitalist and communist structures while dismissing the disadvantages of both systems. For example, Nehru promoted both village and cottage industries while also encouraging large-scale industries. As Nehru stated he was "willing to accept whatever 'ism' was necessary as to allow the organisation of economic life to conform to the principles of justice to the end that may secure a decent standard of living...and all branches of material and cultural life of the people, each part of the comprehensive programme fitting into the others" (Desai, 1989: 236).

Development policies implemented by Nehru's government were underpinned by principles of social equality and government intervention. As a socialist democracy in the era of modernisation, state ownership of key industries, industrialization, and harnessing natural resources were dominant principles in order to create growth. Through the creation of various resolutions, economic development was the foundation of the massive project of development in India.<sup>8</sup> The public sector, relying on both nationalization of services and the extensive input and contribution of the private sector, grew rapidly in the first two decades of independence. Measures to stabilize the growing structural imbalance and a growing top-heavy bureaucracy were enforced i.e. licensing controls. The Five Year Plans evolved with the changing face of India. Although the first 5 Year Plan (1951-1955) concentrated almost solely on

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<sup>8</sup> Industrial Policy Resolution 1948 and Industrial Policy Resolution 1956

modernization and growth of India's economy, the following 5 Year Plan placed an additional emphasis on social development i.e. stress on equal distribution of income to disadvantaged people with the additional goal of creating self-sufficiency in food grains by the mid 1960's (Indian Child, 2005).

Politically speaking, India had its major successes as the world's largest democracy as well as its failures in its newfound independence. Within such a large civil service, corruption became apparent through the growth of large underground economies popping up in various sectors. Development, once the fodder for intellectual debate, now laid in the hands of the same men who were now firmly entrenched in the realm of policy.

Within a relatively short time after independence, India was involved in political power struggles with China which culminated in a short war in 1962. Political energy was also invested into supporting resistance from East Pakistan's against Pakistan culminating in the a war of liberation to form independent Bangladesh. India also was deeply involved with facing and resolving the negative social effects of the Green Revolution in the late 1960's.

New farming technologies and conditions indicative of Green Revolution technologies were mandatory introductions as a condition of accepting external loans from international financial institutions. In the 1970's and early 1980's, India's socio-economic sphere was occupied with the same dilemmas as many other developing



nations of that time. In response to the increasingly ossified approaches vis-à-vis international institutions, the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plans all maintained flexibility towards development policies. Global changes included the modifications in the structure and operation of global trade, the assault on labour in form of capital through uses which included the weakening of labour union power with additional rights granted to corporate enterprises, the rise in crude oil prices, and a compulsory spending in the direction of a form of development that would provide a 'return'. In India development expenditures reached nearly R1.9 trillion in these years – 90% of expenditures were financed from domestic sources<sup>9</sup> (Indian Child, 2005). These changes drastically affected India's socio-economic development in which money previously allotted to social services in previous years, allocated these resources to the transportation and communication spheres as opposed to grassroots social services which were responsible for providing access and long-term opportunities to basic needs. These expenditures for transportation and communications comprised 17% of what formerly went to these latter expenses. Rather than the intended goal of using public savings to finance these areas, the ruling Indian National Congress Party relied on conditional loans from foreign banks (Indian Child, 2005).

In 1991, market based reforms under the auspice of the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programme became the new economic foundation of the Indian economy and development policies. The 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (1992-1996) included three general goals. They were:

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<sup>9</sup> In 2005, 1.9 Trillion Rupees = \$43 Million USD

1. Diminished size of public sector by selling off failing/inessential industries while a corresponding encouragement of private investment in sectors such as power, steel, and transportation.
2. Economic priority given to agriculture and rural development
3. Sought to renew attack on lack of basic needs i.e. literacy, potable water

(Indian Child, 2005)

The target growth in GDP for the 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year plan was not met, reaching only 5.6% from the previous 5% of the 7<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. This may have been the result of the apparently contradictory natures of the first and third goals listed above. Predictions for latter Five Year Plans called only for a 4% increase. An interesting point is that the implementation of economic reforms in the early to mid 1980's, while India was still heavily involved in public sector investments, exceeded predicted growth of 5.1% to 5.4%. (Indian Child, 2005).

Although India has a rapidly growing middle class, currently numbered at over 300 million people, poverty for the poorest percentage of the population is also increasing, both relatively and absolutely. In India, consumption by the middle and upper classes has risen, alongside the poverty of the poorer castes and class while the availability of food is rapidly decreasing for the latter sector of society. With a population of over one billion in 1997, 39.9% of these people consumed an amount of food worth approximately \$5.07 (U.S.) a month or less (Sainath, 1999:348). This places them under the official poverty line as defined by India's Planning Commission. Access to

food, access to means of production, to land, and to housing is becoming increasingly difficult to secure for the lowest economic strata of India's population. Not only are the costs of living increasing but also wages and employment opportunities are decreasing.

Under the current Structural Adjustment Programmes, India has repaid the World Bank \$478 USD more than it had originally borrowed. Yet the designs of development due to particular financial conditions and the ever-increasing 2 million plus NGO's within India all exist within an era in which over 200 million people have no access to potable water, 300 million are illiterate, 32% or 350 million people live under the poverty line, 50 million children are not in school, 1.25 million children did not live to see their first birthdays in 2003, and half of the nation's children are malnourished<sup>10</sup> (Roy, 1999; Menon, 2004).

Although the Indian government is financially indebted to international financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and USAID, both the current and previous national leading parties, respectively the Congress Party of India (CPI) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), naturally enough desire to be characterized as a 'have' nation rather than a 'have-not' nation -- 'have-not' defined as a nation that is economically dependent on foreign direct investment, loans and overseas aid. India seeks to join the ranks of nations such as Canada and the United States in membership of the G8 as well as the Security

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<sup>10</sup> Increase of people in poverty from 26% in 1991. Poverty line marked as living on under \$1 USD per day.

Council of the UN. In order to attain the economic power needed for such acceptance, India's philosophy is fast economic growth is a required pre-requisite while declining international aid. In June of 2003, the Government of India announced that "it would move away from accepting government-to-government bilateral assistance directed to Central and State government entities from a number of donors, including Canada" (CIDA, 2003).

Currently, mainstream development in India includes economic development vis-à-vis the liberalisation of national borders in the context of international trade. This has permitted the introduction of genetically modified and large-scale agriculture through foreign multi-national companies into India. A mass remodelling of formerly public enterprises into privatized entities includes sectors such as health care, public housing, energy, electricity, steel mills, banking and infrastructure development such as roads and big dams. This last area of development includes the construction of controversial large dam projects such as the Narmada Valley Sarovar Sardar Dam and Maheshwar Dam. The annihilation of fixed trade barriers corresponds with the ensuing economic deregulation which has allowed foreign interests such as multinational companies Cargill, Monsanto, Pacgen, Bayernwerk, Siemens, Ogden Energy Group and the HypoVereinsbank of Germany to enter into India in the name of development. For example in 1996, a comprehensive economic reform program was set in place in the Indian state of Gujarat in order to restructure the public sector and to promote private sector participation. This project received the Asian

Development Bank's approval of a US\$250 million loan and an US\$850,000 technical assistance grant (Asian Development Bank, 2004).

Development in India today, on a national level, is based on a neo-classical stream of thought although many theorists in India today either oppose or expand upon such basic existing and operationalized principles of policies of development today. As Roy states, the era of Gandhi and Nehru have past and India needs new development heroes – ones that do not rely on the inherent morality of those in power. Under the aegis of western domination and the consequential influx of financial and political conditions *inter alia* liberalization and deregulation of the economy and the good governance agenda, the Indian government and its vast bureaucracy have adopted the various principles of conventional and western-based development. From development concepts to analytical tools and models, the Indian government has established the newest framework of development thought as a circumambient result of its financial loans. As Tucker states, “as a worldview, the West is the dominant outlook of the planet. Thus Eurocentrism is not simply out there – in the West. It is also in here – in the non-West. As a concept and a worldview, the West has colonized the intellectuals in non-European societies. Eurocentrism is thus just as rampant and deep in non-Western societies as in Europe and the USA: intellectuals, academics, writers, thinkers, novelists, politicians, and decision-makers in Asia, Africa and Latin America use the West, almost instinctively, as the standard for judgements and as the yardstick for measuring the social and political progress of their own societies. The non-West thus promotes Eurocentrism, both wittingly and unwittingly, and colludes

in its own victimization as well as in maintaining the global system of inequality” (Christobal, 1989).

Development, or globalisation, has changed lives for the better and for the worse in India. The dynamics of rapid economic growth has generated large concentrations of wealth, with benefits accruing to a new economically dominant and associated middle class. But at the same time the number of people mired in poverty has also increased. Indeed, the poor have suffered immeasurably via the newest models of development. What must be taken into account is the mass protest of the many groups from below who are fighting against the current definition of development. The struggle by marginalised and disempowered people to defend their life-spaces, their solidarity and reciprocity, their diversity and self-reliance, their autonomy, identity and dignity in the face of the global market, is the struggle to construct and defend a particular *meaning* or conceptualisation of development and its components.

### ***Time Marches On***

Though a historical study of development, India’s fluctuating and ever-changing development philosophies are brought to the surface. The synthesis of ruling government development policies, whether it is the British Raj, the BJP, or the Congress Party, is in a relationship with countering development philosophies and the thinkers behind them. It is the government’s choice to integrate or reject them.

Structurally, India has undergone immense changes due to the evolving and underlying principles of development. It is essential to understand the analytical

process in order to fully integrate contemporary development theory with the alternative history of heterodox development thought. As Angeles writes, “development studies cannot just serve as a substitute for the kinds of development theories that rest upon a strong understanding of history, a specification of the objects and subjects of historical change, and a strategic conceptualization of economic and extra-economic programmes on how we might get there. Any branch of study that wishes to avoid theory, much less history and praxis, is bound to the dustbin of oblivion” (Angeles, 2004:7).

Professor Deepak Nayyar, Vice Chancellor of New Delhi University states that India is in an operationalized development paradigm crisis. He says, “that though the old economic paradigm of the first three-four decades of independence has been abandoned, no new paradigm has replaced it.” He believes that the economic reforms carried out since 1992 therefore constitute an ad hoc series of measures without a clear framework (Economic and Political Weekly, 2002).

## Chapter Four

### Indian Development Theorists: Their Voice and Writings

In order to determine the answer to our thesis's primary question, Is there an unique Indian development paradigm?, a prior question must be answered: Are there unique Indian approaches to development theory. To explore the possible answers to these questions, three well-known and prolific writers on development theory from India were chosen as the major case studies: Dr. Amartya Sen, Professor of Economics at Harvard University; Dr. Vandana Shiva, Director of Research at the Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology in New Delhi; and Dr. Darshini Mahadevia, Professor at the Centre of Environmental Planning and Technology in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Each of these individuals provides insightful and unique perspectives to development particularly in the context of India. Interviews and secondary source research are the main research tools employed for gathering the necessary data. Secondary sources consisted mostly of seminal works in the form of peer-reviewed articles, and books supplemented by newspaper articles. It ought to be noted that none of the three case studies have worked in direct conjunction or collaboration with each other.

This chapter will examine the issues, concepts, and explanations of the particular areas each scholar prioritizes in the context of international development and India. The connections between each scholar, their particular approaches, and how this



translates into shared ideas will be discussed in the next chapter. After the empirical data is presented for each scholar, ideas on what is particularly Indian about Sen's, Shiva's, and Mahadevia's perspectives on development concepts, issues, and explanations will be respectively offered.

### **Amartya Sen**

Influenced by social choice theory, principles of rationalism and tendencies towards universalistic approaches, Amartya Sen has made major contributions to development particularly in terms of development economics. After winning the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998, Sen has continued to write a number of comprehensive works which focus on the variables used for evaluation of development policies and practice. Through this lens, he has offered alternative tools for analysis.

'Development as Freedom', hailed as one of Sen's seminal works, delves into various explanations of his conceptual viewpoint of development. Within his works, Sen provides case studies using India as a central reference point. Originating from the former Indian province of Bengal, now Bangladesh, Sen's education and lion's share of experience in development issues are rooted in India first and foremost. His major influences include Bengali Tagore and Jawaharlal Nehru, Aristotle and Adam Smith.

#### **▪ Issues of Economic Development**

Sen views the major hindrances to successful development as directly commensurate with the lack of freedoms that exist in many people's lives today. There is a desperate need for a new form of evaluation and assessment for development; Sen proposes

alternative evaluation tools that are based on a perspective of the enhancement of freedoms and the consequent removal of unfreedoms. Speaking within the economic realm of development, he contends it is not simply the free-market system under which of most of the world's population lives today which attributes to the present state of widespread poverty but in fact it is the lack of freedoms that frequently occurs within this system that leads to the various development problematic. Currently most forms of freedoms involved within this global economic free market system cannot be pursued due to artificially constructed structural problems. For example, former Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Juan Yew proposed and implemented the denial of basic civil and political rights in exchange for the advantageous promotion of economic development. In opposition to the 'Lee Thesis' that Prime Minister Lee articulated, Sen sets out the major flaws within this theory. One major issue contributing to the global development problematic is the emphasis upon some variants of the Lee Thesis exist today and rest upon a lack of integrated freedoms of most people. The type of perspective, which creates such a path of development, must be abolished in order to comprise instrumental and effective practices and evaluations of development. Sen has spent the past thirty years working towards the amelioration of such a limited view of development. He proposes solutions to issues of income and distribution as well as the appropriate ways of measuring development variables i.e. the poverty measure as not just as a number of poor but in Sen's calculations as the extent of poverty itself.

The focus of the conventional and current evaluation method of development relies upon the assessment of the current market mechanism on a results-based scale i.e. incomes or utilities yielded by markets. Take for example the areas of environmental preservation and public healthcare. The market currently does not have the indicators nor, more importantly, can it factor in the various elements within the market mechanism unless a commodity can be bought and sold in. Processes of normalization of such non-commodities exist only as externalities within development formulas. In fact, some of the most important contributors to human capability may be hard to sell exclusively to one person at a time but rather are consumed together as a mass rather than separately (Sen, 1999).

Sen views markets as inherently important and critiques those on both sides of the broad theoretical divide. There are those who unquestioningly support the free-market system and those who unabatedly critique the system; both camps often overlook the underlying issues. Sen labels the conventional form of development based on mass-consumerist economics the 'opulence' view of development, and views its "focus (as) uncompromisingly on the growth of incomes. However while classical economic theorists from Smith to Stuart Mill did indeed write a great deal on the growth of real income per head, the income as one of several different means to important ends, and they discussed extensively the nature of these ends" (Sen, 1996:1).

Sen distinguishes between alternative views of development such as his approach and the mainstream and widely accepted 'opulence view' of development through the

usage of non-conventional indicators. He proposes that the 'opulence view' allows culture to play no role other than a purely instrumentally one, and is utilized solely to promote rapid economic growth. In contrast, the approach he advocates entitled the 'capability' or 'freedom' approach permits people to acknowledge the role of social values and cultural mores via public discussion and through the freedom for an individual to pursue his or her own development.

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Sen states that the market mechanism, which is so pervasive today, has become set into global society's ethos as more of a dogma than a theoretical model open to criticism. Many institutions and individuals overlook the economic system's qualifications rather than permit an ongoing examination of the structural components. One set of prejudices has given way to another – and opposite – set of preconceptions. As Sen (1999) writes, "yesterday's unexamined faith has become today's heresy and yesterday's heresy is now superstition" (p. 111).

#### ▪ **Issues of Political and Social Development**

Issues within the realm of political development within Sen's works revolve around the area of pursuing and implementing democratic models. He argues that public discussion is often overlooked as a crucial dimension as a means and an end to development. Although they are not viewed as essential elements in mainstream development, democracy and its various cornerstones i.e. public discussion are crucial in creating opportunities for people. Development requires enhanced democratic and political rights to allow their instrumental and constructive roles to

shine. Political development leads to greater overarching change to affect social and economic advances as well as providing a means to pursuing an ever-increasingly democratic structure as an end in and of itself. Inequalities are built upon each other and remedies that include a more focused public action and democratic structure are required to counter growth of this kind.

Sen argues the crux of the development problematic lies in the attempts of institutions to produce a salient and all-inclusive antidote for a variety of particularized problems. Although these problems may spring from the source, the desultory attempts to modify structural issues have not resulted in any progression in terms of global development. Rather, these ineffectual 'solutions' become an additional challenge to overcome in order to militate against the rising stagnation of development practices today. One area that is distinctly important and is often overlooked in the creation of development policies is the widespread problematic of women's issues. As Sen states, this a problem which "can move from one type of gender inequality to another. We have to look beyond the predicament of women and examine the problems created for men as well by the asymmetrical treatment of women" (Sen, 2001:36). He continues to argue in 'The Many Faces of Gender Inequality' that the etiological linkages can be significant and inequalities of various natures often foster one another. It is the awareness of the linkages between inequalities which begins to touch upon roots of solutions to underdevelopment and development.

In terms of development priorities, Sen concludes gender equality is a crucial issue for examination. This issue plays a significant role in the continuation of widespread poverty as there are a number of disparities between the genders: mortality inequality, natality inequality, basic-facility inequality, and special-opportunity inequality, all of which contribute to the present and corrosive state of development. Sen uses gender as a prime example to incite a contextual framework in which many development issues work in tandem to produce symptoms which eventually double back to become issues themselves. This is a prime example of seemingly incongruent and yet inherently linked development issues. The problematic surrounding gender inequality is not a homogenous phenomenon but is instead a collection of symptoms derived from unequal development based on a lack of freedoms for many people. This circular dynamic is indicative of the perpetual nature of underdevelopment within numerous nations. Additionally, he argues that the lack of prioritization of healthcare and basic education are key factors to the deficiencies in development in both MDCs and LDCs. Moreover, in the context of LDC's, the need for public policy initiatives in order to create social opportunities is crucially important.

- **Conceptual Foundations**

Sen posits that a modification of the current theoretical structure is required in order to overhaul current policies in development. There are two distinctive concepts that he proposes as fundamental elements for a new type of development. Firstly, he argues for the crucial need of the integration of the various tenets of development that are divided both theoretically and operationally in order to compose one overarching

and inclusive system of development. Development needs a many-sided approach which includes the participation of governmental structures, market functioning, intra-governmental institutions, and non-government institutions along with politically aware individuals. His conceptual model of development rejects a compartmentalization of the numerous and diverse processes of development as well as the search for a single all-purpose remedy. An example of this latter issue is found in the rhetoric of proponents who suggest 'opening the market' as the singular answer<sup>2</sup> to all development issues. Rather, an integrated and multi-faceted approach, with the objective of making simultaneous progress on various fronts, includes different institutions which reinforce each other (Sen, 1999).

The second conceptual distinction Sen proposes is the process of expanding opportunities for people. To achieve this, he proposes combining extensive use of the market with the development of social and political opportunities as a foundation to a comprehensive approach in order to emphasize individual freedoms. The 'freedom' or 'capability' approach is the foundation upon which Sen builds a new approach to development. He categorizes freedoms into five major spheres which are instrumental to the success of development: political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, and protective security. Sen's conceptualization of development depends on all of these freedoms working in conjunction with each other. He traces the concept of capability back to Aristotle with particular emphasis on his reference to the functioning of a person and the alternative

combinations of functioning from which a person can choose.<sup>11</sup> The notion of capability is essentially one of freedom. Individual freedoms are directly affected by the structural components of development. Desai states that Sen reinterprets freedom not just as market choice but rather as an element of life that has something to do with people's capabilities and which involves choice in a deeper sense. Through this philosophical construct of economic, political, and social development, many commentators state he has effectually satisfied the toughest standards of theoretical rigour while constructing a new approach to development (Desai, 2001).

- **Explanation of Conceptual Foundations**

<b>FREEDOM APPROACH</b>	
<i>Means</i>	<i>Ends</i>
Principal means	Primary end
Instrumental role to development	Constitutive role to development
Overall development objective based on continuous broadening of social, political, and economic freedoms	Substantive freedoms or individual capabilities in its various dimensions are inherent components to development
Effectiveness of freedom approach founded upon free agency of individuals	Provides evaluation tools to measure level of success of policies and projects
Principal determinant of development	

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<sup>11</sup> Aristotle's definition of human functioning was based on the sequence of things and the state of being a person achieves



Sen views freedom as a concept which provides more than a procedural role or a simple explanation of the ability to pursue individual liberties. Rather, freedom plays an inherently constructive and instrumental role to development. In its instrumental role, freedom increases an individual's opportunity to extend their capabilities and secure basic needs. Freedom as an end is found in its constitutive role as providing an overall development objective of extended political, economic, and social freedoms; this relates to the importance of substantive freedom in enriching human lives.

Substantive freedoms include the ability to avoid deprivations such as starvation, under nourishment and able to enjoy access to literacy and uncensored speech (Sen, 1999). This model is a circular one in which the means leading to the end leads to increased freedoms to provide additional opportunities. The view of development that Sen has espoused includes respect for all human rights, highlighting civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, as an inherent and constitutive part of development, not as a contingent aspect, nor even as simply an instrumental dimension. In his understanding of development, human rights and development could not be separated (United Nations Development Assistance Framework, 2005).

This particular view of freedom engages the use of various societal freedoms which permit an individual to decide and act upon actual opportunities that are presented to him in various political and socio-economic circumstances. These freedoms will allow a person to pursue life-sustaining opportunities which are not ordinarily accessible in current development models. Similarly it is the same political and socio-economic dimensions under a different set of conditions in which unfreedoms can

arise through an inadequate process of freedom or insufficient opportunities.

Unfreedoms include such scenarios as violation of voting privileges, lack of accessibility to education or employment, or a lack of ability to alleviate a high chance of premature mortality.

As opposed to the opulence view of development, the application of the broader capability or freedom approach involves “specific hypothesis about the values people have reason to cherish. This approach, which is based on people’s values, differs from the radical a priori judgement implicit in the ‘opulence’ view of development. If, given the choice, people would rather have longer and more disease-free lives with more autonomy rather than a higher level of GDP per head, the ‘effective freedom’ view of development can be applied to their case, but not the ‘opulence’ view of development” (Sen, 1996). Sen states in ‘Development as Freedom’ that “capability deprivation is more important as a criterion of disadvantage than is the lowness of income, since income is only instrumentally important and its derivative value is contingent on many social and economic circumstances”. The opportunity for freedom extends itself beyond the primary means of permitting an individual to attain particular development needs. Furthermore, there is an increased comprehension within open discussion that although two people may have the same demand function, it is incorrect to assume that each person has the same relation between commodity bundles and well-being even if one person is ill or disabled. Capability deprivation is more important as a criterion of disadvantage than is the lowness of income, since

income is only instrumentally important and its derivative value is contingent on many social and economic circumstances (Sen, 1999: 131).

The concept of freedom is widely discussed, especially in an era in which political manoeuvring and economic justifications are centred on such a word. However, Sen has formulated a distinct definition to which he attributes various principles as his primary theoretical building blocks. He theorizes that freedom is central to both the process of development for two separate yet equally important reasons: primarily it has an evaluative function that allows an assessment of progress calculated foremost in terms of whether the freedoms that people have are actually advanced. Secondly is the effectiveness component of freedom. This element views the achievement of development as thoroughly dependent on the free agency of people (Sen, 1999). Sen's view of development is very much 'agent-oriented' and not that of people as just passive recipients of the benefits of cunning development programmes.

Continuing with Sen's emphasis on the interconnected nature of development, he dedicates much of his work to this issue. In order to evaluate development issues that occur on a daily basis around the world, the extensive interconnections between political and economic freedoms need to be registered in the notebooks of policy makers. Sen states the intensity of economic needs add to rather than subtract from the urgency of political freedoms. The pre-eminence of political and liberal rights points economic development in the right direction. It is primarily of direct importance that humans are associated with basic capabilities; secondly, the

instrumental role of freedom enhances these very rights; thirdly, the constructive role is required in the conceptualisation of 'needs' i.e. understanding economic needs in a social context (Sen, 1999).

Sen proposes that all dimension of development are connected through the concept of freedom. One form of freedom often leads to another. For example, a social freedom such as education often leads to economic and political freedoms. The latter often in terms of enhanced opportunities to participate within the market structure and the political freedoms stemming from increased awareness surrounding rights to participation, free speech etc. Both these economic and political freedoms can work in conjunction with each other enhancing increased social freedoms while diminishing certain unfreedoms such as premature death due to symptomatic elements of poverty i.e. lack of nourishment or potable water. Development "can be seen as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. Focusing on human freedoms contrasts with the narrower view of development, such as identifying development with the growth of gross national product, or with the rise in personal incomes, or with industrialisation, or with technological advance, or with social modernization" (Sen, 1999: 3).

The integration of Sen's development concepts and the resulting theoretical model seeks a complementary relationship between various institutions to permit structural reform particularly between market and non-market organisations. A focus on these different institutions--*inter alia* the market, democratic systems, the media, public

distribution systems--requires an integrated approach to allow an evaluation of what institutions can and cannot do in combination with other development bodies. It is in this all-inclusive perspective that the different institutions can be reasonably assessed and examined (Sen, 1999).

Sen offers a counter-argument to the critique by those who see themselves as 'financial conservatives' and frequently express scepticism of human development based on principles of capabilities or freedoms. As an inclusive and integrated approach, there is little rational basis for the inference that human development is neither efficient nor cost-effective. He argues, "the benefits of human development are manifest and can be more fully accounted by taking an adequately comprehensive view of its overall impact. Cost consciousness can help to direct human development in channels that are more productive – directly and indirectly – of the quality of life, but it does not threaten its imperative interest....financial conservatism should be the nightmare of the militarist, not of the schoolteacher or the hospital nurse"(Sen, 1999:145). Sen continues by stating that it is an indication of the topsy-turvy world in which we live that these latter professions face constant fear of funding and budget cuts to compensate for the betterment of the livelihoods and workplaces of the former.

In today's neo-liberal model of development, he explains many commentators cite Adam Smith as its ideological father. Although this is correct, the same authorities frequently overlook Smith's proposals for a form of free-market capitalism that

follows along the same vein as Sen's capability approach rather than the neo-classical system of today. As mentioned beforehand, today's mode of neo-classical economics often leaves behind unexamined elements in the name of this oft-unquestioned faith in the current capitalist system. Sen cites various instances in which Smith is habitually misrepresented today; Smith was in fact concerned about the needs of individuals and promotion of community benefits in order to achieve overall development. As Smith states "for a very small expense the publick can facilitate, can encourage, and can even impose upon almost the whole body of the people, the necessity of acquiring those most essential parts of education" and continues to argue "the proposal of any new law of regulation of commerce which comes from this order [free, open, and competitive market] ought always to be listed to with great precaution, and ought never to be adopted till after having been long and carefully examined not only with most scrupulous, but with the most suspicious attention" (Sen, 1999: 123).

Sen (1999) adds an appendage to these statements by arguing that in terms of economic freedom "efficiency considerations thus supplement the argument for equity in supporting public assistance in providing basic education, health facilities, and other public (or semipublic) goods" (p.129). To deny the freedom to participate in market transactions is a denial of one of the most basic and fundamental freedoms and is a major failing on society's part. This fundamental recognition is prior to any theorem we may or may not be able to prove in showing what the culmination outcomes of markets are in terms of incomes, utilities and so on (Sen: 1999).

For generations, limited indicators of development i.e. GNP have enjoyed star status as the basic tenets of measurement and assessment of development. However like Smith and Aristotle, two of his key influences, Sen is concerned with replacing human freedoms for the rather more superficial and narrow development indicators of today. Sen cites other theorists such as Marx and Peter Bauer to emphasize his unease with the epistemological underpinnings of development models currently used by most large-scale development institutions. Marx who stated, freedoms “induce a replacement of domination of circumstances and chance over individual by the domination of individuals over chance and circumstances,” shared the reasoning behind this concern. Bauer, author of ‘Dissent on Development’ argues “I regard the extension of the range of choice, that is, an increase in the range of effective alternatives open to the people, as the principal objective and criterion of economic development; and I judge a measure principally by its probable effects on the range of alternatives open to individuals” (Sen, 1999:289).

The conceptualization of development depends on each of the five major categories freedoms previously listed. Sen criticizes the emphasis at the 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights, at which nations discussed pushing economic rights to the exclusion of political and social freedoms. In Sen’s opinion, this compartmentalized view of freedom will not ameliorate the current state of development as it “depends crucially on open public debates and discussions” which are reliant on political liberty and civil rights (1999: 158). Such freedoms also include access to political participation vis-à-vis the opportunity to participate in influencing

the direction of political change and structural determinants such as social and economic arrangements i.e. education and healthcare infrastructure. A direct role of political participation within this context allows people to define both new and traditional values which are sought to partially construct the framework of development. Additionally the enhancement of social opportunities is a direct result of public discussion and social participation. Thus, these socio-politico variables are central to policy-making within a democratic framework.

The 'freedom approach' framework can also be utilized in public policy analysis. Democracy and political freedoms are not only valuable in themselves; they also make a direct contribution to public policy (including health care) by bringing failures of social policy under public scrutiny. Sen (2004) states in his article 'Passage to China' that the strength of political freedoms is reflected in Kerala's development achievements by combining democratic participation with radical social commitments. His point is illuminated by the link between public communication and health care can also be seen in the terrible effects of the secrecy surrounding the SARS epidemic in China, which started in November 2002 but was kept secret until the following spring.

In short, the features of this approach are: combining ethics and economics, broadening the information base to what is development, recognition of differing values across peoples and groups, possessing a multidimensional objective, and involving people as participants and agents in part to scrutinize and hold accountable



sites of power and consequential policies and choices. Sen proposes the objectives of economic development are to take the condition of human beings as indicator for success or failure and the expansion of human capabilities.

Promotion of social development includes increasing accessibility to public services; such efforts have been analysed to prove “there is every evidence that even with relatively low income, a population that guarantees healthcare and education to all, can actually achieve remarkable results in terms of the length and quality of life in the population” (Sen, 1999: 13). For example, in Kerala, which has placed social development as a high priority in its development policies, have evinced that both boys and girls are measured at a 98% literacy rate. In comparison in Orissa, a state overwhelmed by natural and man-made disasters, displays a literacy rate of 68% for boys and 39% for girls (Sen & Dreze, 1997: 17).

In ‘New Issues, New Perspectives: Implications for International Development Studies,’ Angeles places Sen in a class of post-economics theorists. This is the categorization of a group of economists whose ideas are built on the resurrection of universalist arguments based on a positivist position in order to demonstrate how particular development interventions might improve the quality of life of the poor in developing countries. Through a more vigorous application and merger of development issues with other ‘factors’ or ‘missing links’ in development that are institutional, social, political, and cultural in focus, economists such as Sen “believe that there are real material conditions in the world today that warrant change and that

the international development should do something about it, partly through re-examining its own institutional, practical, and policy failures in the past” (Angeles, 2004: 63).

- **Sen and Indian Development**

Sen’s universalist view of development is rooted in the current condition of India’s development. Currently the central issue in India is the expansion of social opportunities available to people. This implies the necessary removal of counter-productive regulations and ineffectual bureaucratic controls. Using freedom instrumentally would permit decentralized political bodies to play more of a decisive role in the direction of development. Although the decentralized political structure seen in the resultant Panchayat Raj exists, it is the economic priorities of national and most state governments that affect the governing of these local formalized governmental organizations.

Politically the capability approach addresses issues presently existing in the infrastructure of the Indian national government; issues for which many criticisms exist and are blamed for the atrophy of nationwide development policies. Due to the vast diversity of Indian state government platforms and regional cultures, Sen (2001) suggests that all-encompassing economic principles which often focus on material prosperity and GNP need to be widened into larger perspectives which include cultural and social influences. He states that “it has been strongly noted in other contexts that the states in the north and the west of India generally have given much

more room to religion-based sectarian politics than has the east or the south, where religion centred parties have had very little success. Of the 197 members of the Indian parliament from the BJP as many as 169 representatives were elected from the north and the west.<sup>12</sup>

Additionally the nature of local politics is notoriously riddled with elitist tendencies of internal governmental bodies. This has in turn led to the creation of number of far-reaching unfreedoms such as political immobility and social stagnation in terms of status and increased opportunity for employment. The ruling cultural and religious traditions in India “may have added to the political problem (of development)” and has led to high discrepancies of equality, egalitarianism, methods for ensuring basic education, and healthcare to all (Sen & Dreze, 1997: 15). There are ancient and modern biases which reflect the prejudices of class divisions as well as of traditional cultures.

What policy makers and politicians may regard as evident cultural freedoms such as ideological subscription to constructs which promote the lack of gender equality or negative treatment of the environment may often be a consequence of the lack of political freedoms. Such freedoms would permit people to participate politically within a democratic framework to discuss cultural norms and mores within which to design regional development policies and projects. The exercise of freedom is mediated by values, but these values in turn are influenced by public discussions and

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<sup>12</sup> As of 2001

social interactions, which are themselves influenced by participatory freedoms (Sen, 1999).

The nationwide literacy rate, for example, is marked by various state's remarkably low statistics on basic education with as previously mentioned a 30% literacy rate for females in Orissa. The average national literacy rate for women is 37 % and 64% for men (Raj, 2005). The lack of freedom to access basic education is a crucial area of development that is frequently overlooked by development institutions and policy makers. Education is a key influence of change. Sen states in 'Beyond the Crisis: Development Strategies in Asia' that "wide dissemination of basic entitlements (through education and training, land reform, and availability of credit) have broadened access to the opportunities offered by the market economy. Also, in such cases the chosen design of development included a deliberate combination of state action" (Sen, 1999: 7).

Sen posits many policy makers from the West view the productivity of international trade as the most influential factor to the success of development. He adds that this theory is extremely limited. Through the use of 5 year plans, India's left wing commitment was apparent though the first generations after independence. The middle way of a mixed economy led to commitments that revealed the benefits of education ad various other basic needs. The rethinking towards the market resulting in SAPs in the 1990's has led to a decline in this development as well as genuine development indicators in terms of the measurement and evaluation.

As the world's largest democracy, the freedom approach is desperately required for application within India; a situation which many view as a development nightmare. The state leadership of Kerala has been a bright star in a dark night due to its vigilant commitment to social development based on access to freedoms such as education, healthcare, and political participation and awareness. Emergent from the lessons of this left-wing leadership, of both past national governments and Kerala's government, were the success of an integrated approach to development which focuses on an individual's freedoms and the consequential capabilities. The consequences of focusing on human development have led to an increased quality of life and additionally facilitate economic and industrial expansion (Sen, 1999). India, with its massive neglect of public education, basic health care and literacy, was poorly prepared for a widely shared economic expansion; the freedom approach is essential for establishing itself as a nation that takes care of its people.

### **Darshini Mahadevia**

- **Issues of Political and Social Development**

Mahadevia is primarily concerned with development in terms of people's political participation and environmental issues. However, she views the various and expansive development issues arising in India and globally as comprising an inter-related web of commensurate concerns. As the world's largest democracy, Mahadevia asserts that India is in dire need of social stability which ought to be demonstrated through democratic political structures and mass participation by the people. However this is currently not the reality of development in India.

The increasing intensity and occurrence of environmental disasters in India is a key issue to its state of development today according to Mahadevia. The unintentional creation of underdevelopment in India is exacerbated due to the changing social structures of the economic and political reforms in India. These changes are part and parcel of the various symptoms of financial conditions agreed upon under SAPs. Mahadevia argues the increase in the privatization of natural resources and former public industries are resulting in the degradation of government responses to natural disasters and environmental responsibility. Additionally, these disasters i.e. famines are occurring more regularly due to structural conditions that have resulted in detrimental environmental conditions which support further natural disasters. It is these superficial constructs resulting from governmental conditions that are the focus of Mahadevia's foremost criticisms within the context of development.

Local level famines have aggravated issues of food security, access to water and other directly linked basic needs for many people in India. In northern India, within the last decade, four major droughts have occurred. Before the privatization of water, the national and state-level governments managed droughts much more effectively with money reserved for disaster relief and pre-emptive measures taken to accommodate potential rain shortages. Now if there is reduced rainfall, there are water shortages. As a consequence of the water shortages, food deaths and various other health problems occur. Drought as an indicator of current development success signifies an abeyance in sustainable and effective development policies in India. What once were regional

adversities have ossified into major catastrophes as a consequence of social conditions brought about by economic and political reforms.

Anti-freedoms such as increased inaccessibility to resources directly relate to the lack of basic needs. Mahadevia argues the chief issues of development in India today stem from a lack of these basic needs. This affects people's freedom in opportunities of employment, education and healthcare. These particular development issues have arisen because of 'anti-freedoms' – one consequence of current economic conditions. She states, "now, most countries of the South have become part of the global economic system through conditions and development model imposed by the multi-lateral funding agencies under the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP)...some adverse impacts are expected because SAP has meant privatization and commercialisation of infrastructure including social sectors, de-legislation and some withdrawal of the State from the welfare responsibilities under the guise of decentralization and people's participation" (Mahadevia, 2004).

Due to the limited conceptualization of various development models *inter alia* 'sustainable cities', programs, which address poverty alleviation and decentralization of governmental structures, development agencies have failed to include variables in such ostensibly all-encompassing development models. As a result as Mahadevia states, "there is no synergy between these various efforts, and the lack of convergence in thinking and in action reduces their cumulative impact" (Mahadevia, 2001: 253).

- **Conceptual Foundations**

Two key concepts in Mahadevia's approach to development are political, economic and social balance and conceptual inclusiveness. In her proposed model, these two ideas play a central role. The importance of balance for her is viewed as an imperative principle in political, economic, social, and cultural development to ensure stability in each of these spheres as well as in connection with each other. In this context, Balance is defined as equilibrium within the realms of development. It is a fundamental requirement for development in India: a nation of minorities. Inclusiveness is closely connected to the principle of balance but must be defined as a separate concept to permit an appreciation of the individual significance of both ideas. Inclusiveness is the deliberate integration of the various structural tenets of development to promote a mutually beneficial interdependence of each area. Secondly, inclusion also denotes the incorporation of people of all social strata into the development process.

Mahadevia's particular conceptual approach is a variation on the 'sustainable cities' approach articulated within development circles in India. Based on synergistic inclusion of all elements of development, 'sustainable cities' emerged as a key element of the larger concept: sustainable development. 'Sustainable cities' is a conceptual amalgamation of a number of independent processes. For Mahadevia, 'sustainable cities' connotes a consideration of the underlying economic, social, and political causes of poverty or social exclusion and is built upon four pillars (Satterwaite, 1996: 32). These are:



1. Environmental sustainability
2. Social equity
3. Economic growth with redistribution
4. Political empowerment of the disempowered.

These four dimensions have to be addressed *simultaneously* within the process of development. One dimension cannot be considered more important than others.

Examples include economic growth over political empowerment or the environment; or environmental issues over social equity and so on. (However,) that is happening in reality because of the fragmented and sectoral approach to sustainable development” (Mahadevia, 2001: 246).

The conceptual enhancement Mahadevia has proposed is a result of the limited models that currently exist for both theoretical and practical advances in terms of this model. She states the “the conceptual arguments and evidences from India presented suggest that very little work exists on conceptual and practical fronts with regards to ‘Sustainable Cities’ in the South...the limitation of accepted ‘sustainable cities’ concept, operationalized through programmes like SCP, is that it is viewed as an environmental concept and is techno-managerial in nature and all other efforts, i.e. participation, decentralized governance of urban environment” (Mahadevia, 2001: 247).

Included within her conceptual framework are the principles of inclusion of all people and each dimension of development to work in conjunction with each other. A

commensurability of theory, practice, and the various spheres of development including political and socio-economic realms need to be evaluated as component, rather than separate, parts of the overall development problematic. More particularly, these four pillars have to be *simultaneously* addressed in the development process, programmes and projects. She states, “for example, environmental programmes can have linkages with employment and poverty alleviation and social equity programmes. Micro level programmes should have synergy with macro programmes. Political empowerment has to be at all levels and not just local level as envisaged by the current urban governance approach. Environmental sustainability is not just managing the environment but also appropriate development models that do not generate unmanageable waste”(Mahadevia, 2001: 259).

Mahadevia critiques the structural restrictions in which sustainable synergistic holistic development models exist in India currently. Ineffectual policies are a result of the lack of understanding and more importantly implementation of this conceptual tool for operationalization and analysis. She states “national initiatives in India, such as poverty-alleviation programmes and decentralization, are not viewed as falling within its (Sustainable Cities) framework. As a result, there is no synergy between these various efforts, and the lack of convergence in thinking and in action reduces their cumulative impact” (Mahadevia, 2001: 253).

An additional criticism is formulated from the existing conceptual organisation of sustainable development. It is theoretically centred on the teleological endeavour of

the expansion of capital. This is an endeavour which is based on internal contradictions; for example, the resulting unsustainability induced by the encouragement of limitless growth. Development, currently, in Mahadevia's (2001) opinion takes a very much techno-managerial approach rather than a holistic and inclusive one.

- **Explanation of Concepts**

As mentioned previously, the concept of balance is a determining force in Mahadevia's work. She argues balance is needed for national and regional political and socio-economic stabilization. Even within a slow political or economic growth process, balance is needed to maintain a firm structure on which to initiate development policies and projects. In a region built upon ethnic and civic nationalism of multiple social, religious, and political cleavages, fragmentation is not uncommon. Internal divisions often generate ineffectual processes of development. A balanced approach to development is essential to counter these hindrances to ensure success of sustainable development policies. Through her critique of current development practices, she implies various beneficial elements that would extend from her proposed approach. A quick overview of the conceptual foundations of the revised Sustainable Cities approach.

### **1. Environmental Sustainability:**

*Official Efforts:* Legal Initiatives; Sustainable City Programme (SCP); Infrastructure Projects; and Environmental Management

*Spontaneous Actions:* Legal Initiatives; Protests for Environmental Protection;  
Community-based efforts; Private Sector Initiatives

## **2. Social Equity:**

*Official Efforts:* Affirmative Policies

*Spontaneous Actions:* Rights Movements

## **3. Economic Growth with redistribution**

*Official Efforts:* Poverty Alleviation; Housing and Shelter Programmes

*Spontaneous Actions:* Community-based programmes for addressing poverty

## **4. Political Empowerment**

*Official Efforts:* Urban Governance Decentralization

*Spontaneous Actions:* NGO-led capacity building activities

These key concepts establish the basis of Mahadevia's inclusive approach through marking the key areas of development to be included in the 'Sustainable Cities' approach. She criticizes the current limitations in development policy and theoretical frameworks on both an Indian and international level. She cites that "the UNDP has been criticized for being 'economistic', having ideological underpinnings (as human development is expected in a global system where the North dominates the South) and not having truly engendered the development process" (Mahadevia, 2004). She

continues to cite other scholars who also criticize this apathetic approach as an attempt to skirt the issue of an existing power structure at global, national, and local levels. She also assesses the national government's attempts to achieve sustainable development within the existing structures; the same structures Mahadevia argues prevent true bottom-up, participatory, holistic and process based development initiatives. Mahadevia states the widespread avoidance of truly participatory and inclusive development by self-interested development partners from global to local levels do so for the beneficial assets they gain through perpetuating current unequal power structures (Nicholls, 1996).

However it is not only the formalized channels of development which are narrowed in scope due to disorganized and ineffective models. It is also the lack of connection between the various groups within the sphere of civil society which defeats the latent potential global development might achieve. She states, "the protest movements or resistance to the prevailing development paradigm are just as important but do not act in synergy. Development activities are generally fragmented and seldom touch the structural issues. The protest groups which are engaged in political action, do not convert any gains into policies and programmes for concrete development work. In short, there is fragmentation, lack of synergy, and a dichotomy between protests and spontaneous development initiatives, and also among these initiatives. There is therefore a long way to go in making bottom-up urban development sustainable" (Mahadevia, 2001: 253).

If the political participation of particular ethnic groups and essential forms of development continue to be rooted in the philosophy of exclusion - a result of globalization Mahadevia argues - without a countering ideology, there lays a distinct possibility that large sections of a population may support the annihilation of an entire group of people due to the competition over scarce resources and loss of life spaces. An example of this was the communal rape and massacre of 20,000 Muslims in Gujurat in 2002 which left an additional 53,000 people without homes or livelihoods. Hindu fundamentalist BJP leaders, immediately before a state election, incited the three months of riots (Mahadevia, 2004).

The current form of globalisation, Mahadevia states, does not necessarily lead to exclusion but it is inherently built upon principles of competition. The operationalization of such a principle is seen in the exploration by global capital into new investment opportunities which in turn leads to the exclusion of particular social groups from the spoils along with decreasing life spaces. This invasion of the 'other' brings a perceived threat of invasion and issues arise around competition amongst local groups and holding particular social or religious groups responsible for the socio-economic and political decline (Mahadevia, 2004).

Inclusion is essential for balance as to ensure a stable foundation on which to place development projects. Mahadevia views the development vision of the poor and marginalized urban sectors as chief participants in urban policy making. She states development processes, programmes, and projects need to be multidimensional and

multi-sectoral. The term 'inclusive' implies the inclusion of all citizens and dimensions of development and the convergence of thinking and action of different aspects of development in a holistic manner. This is the only sustainable way in which to address the major concerns listed above and the only way in which to achieve sustainable human development. In other words, development and empowerment of the poor have to take place in such a manner that the environment is protected. If the urban environment deteriorates, it is the poor who are most affected. The role of the government, especially the local government, is in part to ensure that synergies are built between development programmes and their various stakeholders – government and civil society, micro and macro level institutions and so on (Mahadevia, 2001).

An inclusive balanced approach which incorporates dimensions of development beyond economic growth and political conditions enforced from external influences i.e. good governance agenda would include the interests of the poor and disempowered. To challenge the existing structure that is built upon the inequalities of opportunity and the geographical and conceptual areas of development would be a significant measure towards a more sustainable model of development (Mahadevia, 2001).

- **Mahadevia and Indian Development**

These concepts discussed above directly derived spring from Mahadevia's grounding in the study of Indian development policies and theory as does her proposed model.

In the first two decades of independence, Jawaharlal Nehru positioned India as a nation as one that identified with neither of the superpowers. Officially they promoted the Indian identity as one of non-alignment. In the era of the cold war, India established itself as a third force and promoted its leadership as an example of the 'middle way' for newly independent former colonies. Balance was also sought in the economic sphere via a mixed financial approach vis-à-vis adoption of mass industrialization and a strong public sector while incorporating private enterprises into the plan for a strong national economy.

As a distinct theoretical approach, India adopted the mixed economy in the early 1950's. Two dominant paradigms comprised the approach: Marxist and capitalist. Injected into the development policies of the first generations of post-independence development were principles of the Gandhian legacy which ensured the creation of rural industries, subsidies and protection. This attempt of balancing varying and divergent approaches is cited by many Indian scholars, including Mahadevia as the root cause of problems today. For example the operationalization of the Marxist paradigm would inevitably have nationalized the land but the Indian government allowed land to remain in private hands. In contrast, China and Russia's land was socialized and brought into direct social state control. The consequence of this was India's largely rural agrarian base which needed very radical land reforms remained in pre-independence status as land reforms were not implemented unless political movements demanding the push for these reforms forced this process.<sup>13</sup> This occurred in West Bengal and Kerala due to the strong Marxist movements which did

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<sup>13</sup> In the 1950's, 90% of the Indian population resided and worked in rural areas



redistribute land from the private to public hands. In the other non-Marxist states, feudal structures remained in control of agrarian politics and economy. Consequently, the agrarian economy is as similar to the structure of land ownership which has existed for hundreds of years. So although there had been modifications to the method to achieve economic growth i.e. state subsidies which were introduced as part of mixed economy model, the redistribution of land did not occur. Mahadevia critiques the mixed economy as extending itself only as far as setting up public sector units for goods industries and infrastructure. This meant all public transportation, trade good transport, air transport, electricity, coal, steel, iron ore, mining and other natural resource development were public sector industries but structural indicators of macro development reforms i.e. land distribution did not follow.

Currently, statistics of those under the poverty line range from 25-32 % of India's population with 85% of those who are agricultural workers. Some of those men and women are landless. India still has a large agrarian base at 70% of the national population yet out of 455 million acres of cultivatable area in the country only 4.5 % has been distributed to the poor (Mahadevia, 2004).

Internally, the approach to politics, which has evolved over time, has been an exercise of balance. Political parties have recognized the need for non-extremist platforms in order to appeal to the majority. This requires maintenance in the balance between the numerous groups and subgroups within India. Extremist policies will not result in success in a nation which hosts thousands of castes, 8 major religions, 18 official

languages plus hundreds more of unofficial dialects, and regional groups with their own customs and beliefs. In a country of minorities, regional political parties have developed from this diversity. Although 80% of India's population is Hindu, it is important to note there is no one type of Hindu. As mentioned in chapter three, the term 'Hindu' originated as slang to identify all Indians involved in the loose categorization of a particular style of worship. No particular group composes more than four to five percent of the population. An example of the failure due to political imbalances is the BJP's unsuccessful attempt to create a Hindu majority in India. At no point in history have excessively slanted perspectives based on religion succeeded in Indian politics.

Ignoring the lessons of history, however, in numerous regions many political parties have attempted to experiment with asymmetrical policies favouring particular castes and ethnic and religious groups over others. A commonly recognized factor which halts inclusive development is the power play between the local elites. Some marginalized people may benefit from the globalization project but for it is the dominant social groups of the region who benefit mostly. Through the exclusionary actions these local power dimensions alter what could be a balanced political, social, and economic process of development.

The political and economic balance Mahadevia proposes has the ultimate result of social stability. Although there are conflicts in India, Mahadevia states that nothing has rocked India as has occurred in many African countries in terms as conflict which

completely destabilize a nation. To place more weight on one aspect of development than another, excludes the required stability which ensures a sharing of the spoils of development with everyone (Mahadevia, 2004). India has numerous cultural and ethnic groups which are internally divided. Therefore if one social set is found to be benefiting while others suffer, this often leads to violence.

In the global context the government does not recognize the need for balance. Mahadevia posits that they have exchanged balance for the rapid adoption of policies which represent economic globalisation. There are, however, adequate internal forces that want to bring in a balanced approach to development. Various human rights groups are pushing for an inclusive approach to development which views economic development as just one aspect in providing people with the opportunity of development. This internal balancing act, Mahadevia states, is needed to be a constantly adaptive act at every point. An example of the failure behind unbalanced policies and rhetoric was observed in the 2004 national election when the BJP lost what was to be a landslide victory. The BJP had used within its development rhetoric the exaltation of the 'India Shining' campaign which proved a massive imbalance between the government's perspective and official edict on development and the state of development in India in reality. This 'Potemkin village' built upon a grand façade to disguise the true state of India's development led to a massive loss of national seats for BJP and consequently its position as India's majority government.

In response to India's economic and de facto political relationship with global development institutions, international banks, and MDC's, it is the people within India vis-à-vis both formally recognized and unofficial interest groups that compose concrete opposition to the imbalance of government policies. In the world's largest democracy, the ultimate result of the political contradictions brought about globalization is observed in people's participation. This participation seeks to force the national government in the prioritization of balanced development policies. It is the neutralizing effect of opposing forces which will ensure the balance of development models and policies.

In Mahadevia's opinion, it is this political resistance and slow economic growth that will guarantee a more balanced practice of development which is required for sustainable development of India. However, fast economic growth is a key principle of neo-liberalism and is currently a widely accepted standard in which to conduct the business of development in India. It is once again the democratic values and practices brought together through the interconnectedness of various groups in India who merge ideas and work together to protest and suggest alternatives to neoliberalism which has resulted in a less than complete integration of India into the global economy.

On the environmental front in India, balance is a concept which is essential for success. Any slight de-stability can lead to hunger deaths. This is a result of environmental issues at the local level including environmental degradation and

decline of food security in a region. Currently, there are strong extra-governmental forces like the powerful farmer movement against electricity reforms in Gujarat.

### **Vandana Shiva**

#### **▪ Issues of Knowledge**

Shiva is primarily concerned with the epistemological dimensions of current development models. A principal result of the conventional theoretical assumptions in development rhetoric is the lack of inclusion. In particular, Shiva is concerned with the exclusion of various spheres of development and people from all social cleavages within the development process. Pointing at reductionism as the existing paradigm of science today, she states that science is our current foundation of knowledge in all areas of life including development theory and practice. She argues “far from being an epistemological accident, reductionism is a response to the needs of a particular form of economic and political organisation. The reductionist worldview, the industrial revolution and the capitalist economy are the philosophical, technological, and economic components of the same process” (Shiva, 1993: 24).

Through artificially constructed categories of development, the realm of development theory has taken on segregated fortes which are separated by the subjective boundaries of values versus non-values. Issues, concepts, and ideas that are considered to be of value become prioritized economic and political theorems. The concept of development stems from economic science – a branch of “modern science (which) is projected as a universal, value-free system of knowledge, which by the

logic of its method claims to arrive at objective conclusions about life, the universe and almost everything” (Shiva, 1993: 22).

Originating as Enlightenment Values and the acclaimed Scientific Revolution, Shiva determines the implicit values and information used to form current development policies is a creation of ‘Western Man’. Deliberate subjugation on a structural scale was created by this new scientific enquiry under the guise of generating universal benefits. Mass subjugation of women, non-Caucasians, non-Western nations, and the environment became a factor in the “conceptual diminution, of man inherently connected to nature, (as) a cornerstone to the project of colonization and capitalism” (Shiva, 1993: 266).

Shiva characterizes modern Western patriarchy’s special epistemological tradition of the scientific revolution as reductionist because of two major reasons:

- It reduced the capacity of humans to know nature both by excluding other knowers and other ways of knowing
- By manipulating it as inert and fragmented matter, nature’s capacity for creative regeneration and renewal was reduced...primarily the ontological and epistemological assumptions of reductionism are based on uniformity, perceiving all systems as comprising the same basic constituents, discrete, and atomistic, and assuming all basic processes to be mechanical.”

(Shiva, 1993: 23)

It was the wide acceptance of this enlightenment philosophy which created issues of compartmentalization and diminished concepts of an interconnected world which was capable of sustaining all life in a process of regeneration. The paradigm of

reductionist science separated various areas of development on principles of duality. Shiva uses the example of Hobbes' compartmentalization of society through the conceptualization of an assembly of social atoms, activated by antagonistic interests. Framing the new and enlightened society on opposing interests has resulted in today's neoliberal economic theory as promoting competition and self-interest as the impulse of all economic activity. Shiva (1993) goes on to explain that "Darwin 'discovered' a similar principle in nature. Accordingly, the symbiosis, the interconnections that nature and sustain life are ignored, and both natural evolution and social dynamics are perceived as impelled by a constant struggle of the stronger against the weaker by constant warfare" (p.6). The resulting technocratic approach to development helped materialize "a deception inherent in divided and fragmented knowledge, which treats non-specialist knowledge as ignorance and through the artificial divide, is able to conceal its own ignorance" (Shiva, 1993: 6).

The duality of development knowledge today is based upon epistemological assumptions of scientific reductionism which are "related to its ontological assumptions: uniformity permits knowledge of parts of a system to stand for knowledge of a whole. Divisibility permits context-free abstraction of knowledge, and creates criteria of validity based on alienation and non-participation, which is then projected as objectivity. Experts and 'specialists' are thus projected as the only legitimate seekers of and producers of knowledge" (Shiva, 1993: 24).

- **Issues of Development Epistemology**

The underlying normative and epistemological assumptions that comprise the foundation of development thought reduces the importance of individual agency and rather leads to a reliance on experts which eventually perpetuates the cycle of dependency on outside forces and further underdevelopment. The compartmentalization of not only the arenas of theory and policy but within the subset of various structures of development is “central to this domination and subjugation (as) an arbitrary, barrier between ‘knowledge’ (the specialist) and ‘ignorance’ (the non-specialist)” (Shiva, 1993: 22).

The emphasis on economic development derives from the importance placed on scientific inquiry and a reductionist approach. The internal separation of the various dimensions of the private sector, as well as the barrier between that and the public sector, is a result of and evaluated by the maximization of profits regardless of social and ecological costs. Shiva submits reasons to how the mainstream development paradigm has evolved into such an ineffective approach. She states, “firstly it focused on a model of progress derived from western industrialized economies, on the assumption that western style progress was possible for all. Development, as the improved well being of all, was this equated with the westernization of economic categories – of human needs, productivity, and growth” (Shiva, 1993: 70). She views this style of ‘catch-up development’ at both micro and macro levels of development as a colossal failure. Although there is a theoretical emphasis on equality with development rhetoric, she posits there is a neglect of true equality



occurring globally. The cost of global development with promises of world peace and justice translates into the right for private sector enterprises to exploit local ecology, communities, and culture. These are local victims of global interests. She states “the cultural perception of prudent subsistence living as poverty has provided legitimization for the development process as a ‘poverty removal’ project. ‘Development’ is a culturally biased process destroys wholesome and sustainable lifestyles and instead creates real material poverty or misery, by denying the means of survival through the diversion of resources to resource-intensive commodity production (Shiva, 1993).

As the infringement on individual freedoms, which enable survival expands the growing inequality via the unequal distribution of privileges and access to power to natural resources amongst people is an increasing priority in Shiva’s list of issues. Additionally, the lack of freedom for people and community’s to preserve traditional and often more sustainable ways of living is a key consequence of today’s development paradigm. The commodification of a culture and subcultures promotes the loss of the traditional structure of a culture and rather “local cultures are deemed to have value only when they have been fragmented and these fragments transformed into saleable goods for a world market”(Shiva & Mies, 1993:12).

Shiva criticizes the basis of the concepts and categories of current economic development and natural resource utilization which have been “raised to the level of universal assumptions and thought to be successfully applicable in the entirety

different context of basic needs satisfaction for the people of erstwhile colonies – independent 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries” (Luxemburg, 1984: 211). Capitalist growth cannot survive without colonies; whether in the past through political means or present via economic power.

- **Conceptual Foundations**

The conceptual framework, which Shiva proposes, is culminated in the ‘subsistence perspective’. One of the main dimensions of this perspective is basing economic activities on new and interconnected relationships to both nature and amongst people. The aim of economic activity within this approach is not to produce an ever-growing mountain of commodities and money - wages or profit - for an anonymous market but the creation and re-creation of life. In other words, the objective of global economics needs to be the cultivation of satisfying fundamental human needs through the production of use-values and not by the purchase of commodities.

The subsistence perspective does not work in conjunction with catch-up development as that is neither possible nor desirable (Shiva, 1993). Rather it works with a less economically based model and insists on the synergistic foundation of all life and the concept of a political structure that puts everyday practice, experiential ethics, and the consistency of development means and ends in the forefront. In contrast to the current growth oriented model and industrial consumerism, the subsistence perspective works on the principle of liberation. In particular, it is based upon the liberation of females from oppressive structures and the liberation of nature. Inverting the relationship of

men and women is not the solution as the struggle between the oppressed and oppressors will remain.

Two key components of this perspective are as follows. Primarily, one component is the balance of the various spheres of development through the enhancement of the interconnected and symbiotic nature of development theory and practice through the decompartmentalization of society. Secondly is a diminishment of the currently emphasized antagonistic nature of the economic system. This perspective is a response from Shiva's critique of the mainstream development project. The system that is currently in operation is a divisive, standardized, atomized, homogenized and segmented structure rather than a system built on the appreciation of the diversity and variations in cultural expressions today.

As a strong proponent of inclusion and symbiotic relationships within development, a key concept that Shiva proposes as a foundational component to the subsistence perspective is freedom. In this sense, freedom denotes liberation from dominating power structures and exclusionary processes. Freedom in Shiva's opinion means moving beyond the mainstream idea of transcending the 'realm of necessity' of material goods to a deeper understanding which includes developing visions of freedom and happiness within limits of necessity. She perceives freedom as different from the traditional definition of emancipation. She states, there is a "contradiction between the enlightenment logic of emancipation and eco-logic of preserving and nurturing natural cycles of regeneration...the (traditional) concept of emancipation

necessarily implied dominance over nature (including human female nature)” (Shiva, 1993).

As a necessity based perspective, freedom is viewed as an interconnection of various freedoms which permit the inclusion of all people as beneficiaries of sustainable development policies. It does not concur with a form of freedom that allows one individual’s freedom to infringe on another person’s freedom or the freedom for the environment to thrive in a sustainable manner. She states, “freedom *within* the realm of necessity can be universalized to all, freedom from necessity can be available to only a few” (Shiva, 1993:6).

- **Conceptual Foundation**

The current and mainstream development paradigm has resulted in the exacerbation of worldwide poverty because of its ineffective analytical tools and lack of a truly global perspective. One example is the success-failure rate of a nation’s development based upon exclusively financial indicators such as GNP. Secondly there is no space for qualitative factors such as ecological destruction, lack of individual opportunity, quality of life, or infant mortality and thirdly “indicators such as GNP take place through the market mechanisms regardless of whether or not such activities are productive, unproductive, or destruction” (Shiva, 1993: 71). Separating these ‘externalities’ through a process of normalisation into disconnected categories is a chief reason for the rising level of unsustainable development policies. Shiva argues that “the conventional paradigm of development perceives poverty only in terms of an

absence of western consumption patterns, or in terms of cash incomes and therefore is unable to grapple with self-provisioning economies, or to include the poverty created by their destruction through development”(Shiva, 1993: 71).

Although Shiva rejects the homogenization process resulting from the world market and the dualistic division between superstructure and base and “the preservation of the earth’s diversity of life forms and of human societies’ she is adamant about not discounting the economy and focusing solely on culture. She states that “not all cultural traditions can be seen of equal value; such a stance would simply replace Eurocentric and andocentric and dogmatic ideological and ethical universalism with cultural relativism” (Shiva, 1993: 11). To encourage development framed on cultural relativism allows a plethora of negative factors to enter to the equation. This would imply policies which could devolve power to a community level which would have no influence beyond the local region. It could result in individual cases of morally supine customs, violence, and financial and social biases from governmental institutions which exclude some communities and include others. Accepting cultural relativism is to accept policies which would divide and conquer. It is the antithesis of where development ought to be heading (Shiva, 1993: 11).

Development needs to be redefined within India and other developing nations. The subsistence perspective views development as identifying the difference between subsistence and deprivation. Shiva states, “it is useful to separate cultural concepts of subsistence living as poverty from the material experience of poverty resulting from

dispossession and deprivation. Culturally perceived poverty is not necessarily real material poverty: subsistence economies that satisfy basic needs thru self-provisioning are not poor in the sense of deprivation. Yet the ideology of development declares them to be so because they neither participate overwhelmingly in the market economy nor consume commodities produced for or distributed through the market, even though they might be satisfying their basic needs through self-provisioning mechanisms” (Shiva, 1993: 272). She continues by stating, “in the usual development discourse these needs are divided into so-called basic needs’ (food, shelter, clothing et al) and higher needs such as freedom and knowledge” but there is no such division (Shiva, 1993:13).

The subsistence perspective promotes participatory or grassroots democracy not just in political decisions but also in regard to all economic, social and technological decisions. Development requires a multidimensional or synergic problem-solving approach due to the recognition that various power structures and structural issues cannot be ameliorated in isolation or by a mere technological fix. Development theory and practice demands a new paradigm of science, technology and knowledge. Instead of the prevailing instrumentalist approach which is dominated by reductionist science and high forms of technology, the subsistence approach is ecologically sound, feminist, and works in tandem with science and technology through a participatory action with the people. It is an approach which diminishes the deification of science and approaches it in a more objective manner. Shiva states that “while science itself is a product of social forces and has a social agenda determined by those who can

mobilize scientific production, in contemporary times, scientific activity has been assigned a privileged epistemological position of being socially and politically neutral” (Shiva, 1993:272).

The lack of inclusive connections and linkages in development are chief concerns for Shiva in a world that is built on compartmentalization through the use of scientific based categories. This translates in widespread approaches for evaluation and analysis for development policies. Shiva utilizes the particular cases of gender and the environment to reveal the importance of inclusion and connection within development practice and theory.

She ultimately views the development problematic as a result of conflicts over natural, and scarce, resources. At times it is overtly revealed that the conflict is over vital resources while at other times these disagreements are masked as ethnic or religious conflicts by those in power. The system of privatization, enforced under the auspice of globalisation, is exacerbating poverty and is viewed by Shiva, as an extremely non-democratic process. Economic systems with central control over resources and decision induce a culture of insecurity aggravated by the further destruction of the means of production and resource rights – often sources of cultural identity. Within the political realm, the electorate when placed in such a contentious social scenario of reduced goods, land, employment and the consequential social problems, are often manipulated into voting along party lines which play upon segregation of social groups such as race, religion, and ethnicity (Shiva, 2002).

In tune with her emphasis on the operational practicality of these connections, Shiva contributes evidence on the struggle of sustainable development in the example of the conflict over water. However her conceptual framework of the subsistence perspective can also be seen from a wider point of view as well. She states in 'Water Wars,' "a coherent framework for a just and sustainable water-use policy can evolve only when there is a dialogue between the movement against dams, the movement against the ecological hazards of intensive irrigation, and the movement for water rights" ( Shiva, 2002: 82).

- **Connections to India**

Within India, the various development problems are symptomatic of policies based upon the mainstream knowledge base which Shiva has noted. The practices arising from the rapid foray of economic globalisation has resulted in a rise in communalist politics. This indicates a growing imbalance of development policies which favour particular religious or cultural groups. On an environmental front, India has been affected through the privatization of natural resources including water, minerals, and forests. Additionally the big dam projects which have been occurring since 1950 have become a major emphasis of Indian development policy. Since the early 1950's, over 50 million people have been displaced due to big dam projects constructed in the name of development. Shiva (1993) asserts that "in India, the magnitude of this sacrifice of ecological and cultural refugees is only now becoming evident....over 40 years of planned development, the planned destruction of nature and society no



longer appears negligible; and the larger ‘national interest’ turns out to be embodied in an elite minority without roots” (p.99).

Shiva uses the example of the Baliraja Dam in Khanapur as evidence of the fruitfulness of a subsistence perspective. Local people are utilizing the “integrated, synergic approach in which the key elements are:

1. Social organisation of the people
2. Recovery of their subsistence knowledge and skills
3. Active participation in the development process
4. Serious attempt to change structures of social inequality and exploitation
5. Critique of mainstream science and technology and the development of locally based, ecologically sustainable alternatives
6. Effort to end further privatization of the commons, and instead, a move to recreate community control over common resources like water, sand, trees etc.

(Shiva and Mies, 1993: 311).

In response to the environmental and social degradation brought about by new financial and political obligations under the auspice of globalisation, groups within civil society have resisted the government’s push to further privatize and commercialize the commons i.e. water, air, waste, soil, forests. The underside of such policies leading to underdevelopment in India is apparent in the political and social protests attempting to promote a new mindset and practices which include a fostering of common responsibility for these elements and demands their preservation and regeneration (Shiva, 1993).

Shiva views the imperialism of western knowledge as the common mindset in government circles in India currently. However, she believes this dominance is

countered by structural contradictions. Political and economic policies which so negatively affect millions of Indian's socio-economic and political lives each day has resulted in a growing aggregate of various social cleavages which are in asseverate protest of the changing face of India. She believes the synthesis of all Indian development philosophies ultimately possesses the undertones of Gandhian inspired principles and it is these principles of resistance and inclusion which have the most hope of defeating the common perspective and practices of development in India presently.

## Chapter Five

### Discussion

In this chapter we will examine the conceptual foundations which underpin Shiva, Sen, and Mahadevia's ideas and which have consequently led to similar perspectives of development. The genesis of each scholar's ideas lies in India's particular development problematic and reality. Issues of culture and consequent widespread theoretical mindsets within India will be examined in this area. Angeles (2004) states in 'New Issues, New Perspectives: Implications for International Development Studies' four interrelated factors are positioned as key thematic categories of emerging ideas in development theory. The thematic categories examined are the actual historical conditions and events that force development theorists to adjust their concepts and analysis; influences of various epistemological traditions in social science research which have informed competing theories and paradigms in development studies; the organisational and institutional arrangements within the 'development community'; and fourthly, a look at the paradigmatic shifts in development discourse which have occurred both in response to changing material conditions leading to parallel shifts in framing development problems and explanatory justifications for new policies (Angeles, 2004).

The chapter will end with the prescriptive and descriptive elements of a number of key points relevant to the broader picture of development. The major theoretical features of Indian development are considered from a global perspective in order to judge their applicability to development as a whole. Ultimately, any proposed

principles, concepts, theories, and models must relate back to the structural dimensions of development; in this case to theory, as to secure a applicable and relevant place within the nature of development.

### **Mutual Insights of Development**

Below is a list of the shared concepts proposed by Mahadevia, Sen, and Shiva. There are six key connections which emerged from the research conducted on each of the individual's works. Of these six, the first five of these points will be carried forward as possessing have a significance worthy of our attention. They are:

**Critique: Development epistemology.** Epistemological foundations of conventional development theory are flawed due to its grounding or misinterpretation of the Cartesian-Newtonian model of reality as the ideological basis of development knowledge.

### **Proposed Alternatives:**

**Defining Principle #1: Systems theory.** Interconnectedness. The nature of reality needs to cross-over into development theory as to ensure a non-compartmentalization of the various tenets of development.

**Defining Principle #2: Freedom.** This concept is defined differently from the current and conventional understanding. It is the crucial underlying principle of successful, sustainable, and universal development.

**Defining Principle #3: Equilibrium/balance and inclusiveness.** These two principles are essential in the implementation stages to ensure processes of development are founded upon stability and genuine democratic processes.

**Defining Principle #4: Universalism with a twist.** Proponents of determining universal approaches to development with arguments for the existence of common values to be used for determining development theory and operation. However the usual connotation of universalism as another term for modernism does not apply here.

**Insignificant connections:**

**Structuralist approach.** Each scholar works through a structural approach to development theory and policy.

**Explanation of Major Concepts**

The explanation for the first five points will begin with a brief description of the least important element that connects each of the three case studies: the structuralist approach. Although the structural grounding of each scholar is interesting, this is not a noteworthy finding.

- **Structuralist Approach**

Each of the three theorists views the overarching development problematic primarily as a consequence of structural conditions. They perceive ‘development’ a defined

project that works within a system more as a deliberate project than a naturally occurring process based upon conditions which perpetuates the current state of underdevelopment in many nations. Each scholar rejects the notion of cultural relativism, substituting it with a belief that economic and political forces the conditions of global and domestic development. It is these structural components that determine development policies. Each of the three scholars encourages a structural reformation rather than revolutionary change in order to redefine the direction of development. Each proposes an approach which includes the identification of development as a definitive structural composition in need of a gradual foundation and systemic reformation. For this reform to occur, both development theory and policy require modification. Each scholar prioritizes a particular realm of development while situating it as just one structural component of the entire system. Using this lens, Sen looks particularly at gender issues, Mahadevia at environmental issues and Shiva at both of these areas of development in conjunction with each other. Sen states “there is a need for the development of an alternative system of institutions and codes with its own logic and loyalties that may be quite standard in the evolved capitalist economies, but that are relatively hard to install suddenly as a part of ‘planned capitalism’” (Sen, 1999: 264).

## **Major Research Findings**

### **Critique: The epistemological convictions behind mainstream development policies**

In Chapter Four, we demonstrated that each theorist presented to demonstrate that each theorist highlights the epistemological foundations of mainstream development as providing the origin of its inherent flaws. It is within the roots of the poisoned tree that the numerous failures of development originate. Each scholar postulates that through the use of reformist measures, the systematic practices of development may be altered; beginning with a rejuvenated study of the implicit understandings upon which development is based.

The approaches of Sen, Mahadevia, and Shiva are a reaction to the fixed ideological foundation of present mainstream and widespread development; albeit their critiques vary in intensity. The current neoliberal organization of development is established on the premise of classical economical theories and enlightenment based scientific assumptions including free market practices and reductionist approaches. The underlying assumptions and normative dimensions of this particular mindset have drastically influenced development theory and institutionalized practice for the past sixty years. Each of the case studies provides empirical evidence towards new approaches that aim at incapacitating what some label the “intellectual tyranny” of the western viewpoint of development; the form of development that currently dominates development institutes and governments. Each scholar has proposed approaches that work to further development theory through a non-western lens in order to ameliorate

both tacit and explicit problems of this domination of knowledge. Each approach attempts to solve the intrinsic problems found within the presently accepted development ideology through combating the inherently unsustainable and exclusionary processes in existence today.

The sources of information for Shiva, Mahadevia, and Sen's responses are the current principles of current development practices. Development as economic growth, cultural modernization and Westernization are the underlying concepts that each theorist disputes. These concepts translate into theoretical and operational models that often end in destructive patterns of development practices that have led to the underdevelopment of regions. Models which have been put into practice using development vis-à-vis economic globalisation have resulted in indicators using national GDP to evaluate success rates; liberalization, privatization and deregulation as key goals, are simplistic and artificial tactics for development. Each case study critiques this approach to development as having being built upon a dogmatic interpretation of the values of the Cartesian-Newtonian model of reality. They do not discount rational enquiry but critique the biases that have been formed out of the Enlightenment values upon which development is based today.

The concerns of each case study, extensively discussed in the last Chapter, in terms of the epistemological basis of development theory and practice today must be reiterated with a specific focus on the Newtonian-Cartesian view of reality. Galileo and Descartes' theories on reality in the 18<sup>th</sup> century were the building blocks for



Newton's mechanistic view of nature. Galileo relegated qualitative factors to the realm of subjective mental projections. As a consequence, science is not connected theoretically to ethical or moral issues. This provides an inherent dichotomy between the issues of development and scientific formulas.

Although this may have provided assistance to scientific enquiry, people such as Mahadevia, Shiva, and Sen argue although development is traditionally based on scientific disciplines, this approach fragments it into constituent parts and neglects the interplay and interrelated nature of reality. Development analysis requires ascertaining the influence of the constant flow of interaction with the numerous internal systems to the overall structure. Each of the case studies implicitly argues qualitative research, which does include calculations of standard quantitative externalities, is arguably the solution towards successful development as opposed to rigid proposals as Galileo's. As mentioned in chapter one, initially, most development projects were designed on the basis of economic theories such as Alfred Marshall's Principles of Economics and Vifredo Pareto's Optimality Principles, as if they were analogies to physical principles such as Newton's laws of Motion (Henderson, 1996). The scientific verifiability of economics was questioned as nations struggled in the 1940s for national liberation and decolonisation.

In 2005, the ideology stemming from the Enlightenment has been exacerbated by ideological misrepresentations of classical economic concepts and theories. Sen cites in a number of his writings examples of the common misrepresentation of classical

economists, namely the ‘father of the free market’ Adam Smith. For example, Smith is often cited in reference to the rationale for abolishing social safety nets and basic welfare programmes when in reality, he wrote in favour of such public interventionist measures and was in fact against the social arrangements at the time known as the ‘Poor Laws’ – notably different in its functioning and objectives. Sen quotes Smith as writing “the proposal of any new law of regulation of commerce which comes from this order [free, open, and competitive market] ought always to be listed to with great precaution, and ought never to be adopted till after having been long and carefully examined not only with most scrupulous, but with the most suspicious attention” (Sen, 1999: 123).

Yet as the neoliberal form of development has led to the hypothetical virtues of market mechanism, these ideological normative dimensions are so pervasive that the questioning of standard assumptions and lack of qualifications seem unimportant. Sen (1999) states, “one set of prejudices has given way to another – opposite – set of preconceptions. Yesterday’s unexamined faith has become today’s heresy and yesterday’s heresy is now the new superstition....and the need for critical scrutiny of standard preconceptions and political-economic attitudes has never been stronger” (p.111).

In addition, Shiva critiques the current basis of development knowledge as a crisis which must be reorganized for sustainable and equitable development to take place. To avoid repetition of the last chapter, Shiva’s (1993) main critiques are summarized

in the following excerpt taken from 'Reductionism and Regeneration: A Crisis in Science':

The concept of development stems from economic science a branch of "modern science (which) is projected as a universal, value-free system of knowledge, which by the logic of its method claims to arrive at objective conclusions about life, the universe and almost everything" (p.22).

The third evidentiary example is found in Mahadevia's critique of the western dominance of development knowledge. She supplies evidence that the east has begun to rebel against western intellectual power vis-à-vis development theory, specifically that of the United States. Mahadevia (2004) states, "India's official policy and foreign strategy is to look to the east rather than the west. In development, the U.S. was the dominant knowledge base but now has lost its face globally, it is no longer the dominant power."

It is the inflexible nature of the enlightenment based ideological foundations which form the basis of development policies and practices today that concern each of the case studies. Western domination manifested in economic globalisation, de facto control of global politics, and the onslaught of cultural commodification are a result of the inherent beliefs and hierarchical and compartmentalized structure of the current development reality. Mahadevia, Shiva, and Sen each argue it is this belief system with its far-reaching tentacles that is in desperate need of reformation.

### **Proposed Alternatives**

Each of the following four defining principles are proposed by Sen, Mahadevia, and Shiva in response to their collective critique stated above.

- **Defining Principle #1: Systems theory.**

The first defining principle, a systems theoretical perspective, is a direct response to the critique of development's epistemological dimensions.

Systems theory, otherwise known as general systems theory, is in fact a framework rather than an explanatory narrative. It is concerned with the description of a system; the original focus was on biological or natural organizational arrangements. The integrated whole of a system derives its essential properties from the interrelationships between its parts. Focus is placed on the interrelations and interdependence of the parts rather than the parts themselves. These relatively new ideas of a natural order based upon a synthesis builds on modern physics' viewpoint of energy patterns of the subatomic world; a world which is an inseparable cosmic process interconnected in a complex web of relationships (Capra, 1982).

Constructed upon the multiple layers of systemic structures within a larger order, the organization consists of smaller parts and act as parts of the larger whole. A stratified order is exhibited "and there are interconnections and interdependencies between all system levels, each level interacting and communicating with its total environment" (Capra, 1982:4).

### **Rejoinder to the emphasis on compartmentalization and quantification in development thought**

In contrast, reductionism is the science of compartmentalization and reductionist science is at the heart of underdevelopment. Systems theory addresses the normalization of 'externalities' that emerge from the interconnected dynamics of development in reality. Each theorist promotes an adaptation of development theory to ensure a non-compartmentalization of the various tenets of development; this is in part made certain through including qualitative factors into the construction of development theory. Compartmentalization occurs not only between various theories and development policies but also within the various spheres: economic, political, social, cultural, and religious. Institutionalized political divisions, economic stratification, and rigid categorization of social groups are included in this process of compartmentalization. Every tenet of development is a system within itself but each of these systems are inherently interlinked to "form an intricate web of relations involving the exchange of matter and energy in continual cycles" (Capra, 1982:4).

In the world of science, a major paradigm shift occurred with the introduction of Einstein's theory of relativity, a theory that was in stark contrast to the absolutism of Newtonian laws. As the general social climate became influenced by notions of relativity through the enormous prestige enjoyed by physics at that time, the social sciences, including development studies, were in turn affected. This can be seen in approaches based upon the integration of qualitative components into research methodologies and more holistic schools of thought and practice. Shifting the perspective of development theory from only one area of development such as

economics, each of the case studies promote new approaches which methodically address concerns of unanticipated side effects such as political, economic, and social exclusiveness.

The commensurability of the epistemological, normative, and operational dimensions of development policy are crucial for sustainable and long-term success. Shiva (1993) states in terms of the core principles of systems theory, that there must be an resolve to encourage “the practical and theoretical insistence on the interconnectedness of all life, on a concept of politics that puts everyday practice and experiential ethics, the consistency of means and ends, (placed) in the forefront” (Shiva and Mies, 1993:8).

the study of the area of development has become a fairly simplistic process because of the compartmentalization of issues. However, each case study argues for qualitative *and* quantitative factors as methods of research to provide working indicators and methodologies to determine how development policies are impacting the lives they have been designed to assist. What is lost in simplicity is made up for in long-term effectiveness and efficiency. Theory’s goal is to example one area in detail and often sheds a discriminating light on it. Yet, as important as that one piece of the whole is, without a integration of the connected spheres, the entirety may suffer.

Sen’s approach works upon a process that “cannot yield a view of development that translates readily into some simple formula of accumulation of capital, or opening up of markets, or having efficient economic planning. The organizing principle that places all the different bits and pieces into an integrated whole is the overarching

concern with the process of enhancing individual freedom and the social commitment to bring that about” (Sen, 1999: 297).

- **Defining Principle #2: Freedom.**

The concept of freedom is the second definitive point upon which each of the three case studies build their response to the failure of current development policies.

Freedom builds upon system theory and provides another direct response to their critique of development epistemology. Sen is most well known for his ideas on freedom, however both Shiva and Mahadevia also view freedom as a fundamental component for a new construct of development.

Freedom is a term tossed around quite frequently in the global and domestic political sphere. To establish a view on freedom from a non-western standpoint is additionally important due to the tacit assumption by many that freedom is a solely western concept. Sen (1999) states, “there is clearly a tendency in America and Europe to assume, if only implicitly, the primacy of political freedoms and democracy as a fundamental and ancient feature of western culture – one not to be easily found in Asia” (p.232).

Each of the three scholars view freedom as both as an intrinsic role to development: a foundational role to the means or process of development. They also perceive freedom as an end to development for both evaluative and definitional roles. Freedom is defined differently than the idea of liberty, often implying economic freedom,

which derives from the Enlightenment; a definition often assumed in today's current global situation as an instrumental concept. Although freedom has an instrumental dimension, this is not the end of its usefulness for development purposes. As opposed to the conventional view of development, the application of the broader capability or freedom approach involves specific hypothesis about the values people have reason to cherish. This approach, which is based on people's values, differs from the judgment implicit in the 'opulence' view of development. Sen (1999) states "the relevance of the deprivation of basic political freedoms or civil rights, for an adequate understanding of development, does not have to be established through their indirect contribution to other features of development (such as the growth of GNP or the promotion of industrialization). These freedoms are part and parcel of enriching the process of development" (p.37).

An effort to create a holistic approach to development theory and practice implies a different concept of freedom; one that is concerned with an emphasis on the mutual benefits of the connection between different types of freedoms. The culmination of extending the process of freedom is apparent through encouraging access to political decision-making and the freedom for an individual to decide upon what opportunities he considers important (rather than evaluating freedom solely on economic liberty). The inclusion of people in the process of freedom is a foundational point that indicates, "the universalism that stems from their efforts to preserve their subsistence – their life-base – is different from the Eurocentric universalism development via the enlightenment and the rise of capitalist patriarchy" (Shiva & Mies, 1993: 13). This



separates the three scholars from the conventional and 'utilitarian' approach to freedom.

Development is not an issue only for 'developing nations'. It will have to occur globally in a number of directions. Shiva (1993) states, "decolonisation in the north is also essential because processes of wealth creation simultaneously creates poverty, processes of knowledge creation simultaneously generates ignorance, and processes for the creation of freedom simultaneously generate unfreedom" (p.264).

- **Defining Principle #3: Equilibrium/balance and inclusiveness.**

These two principles are closely related in the context of each of Mahadevia, Shiva, and Sen's works. Balance is required with development practice, policy, and processes to ensure political and socio-economic stability within a nation. These various forms of stability are crucial for the creation and maintenance of sustainable, long-term, and endemic development within any nation. To generate political and socio-economic stability, a politically inclusive democratic system is vital. Deliberate promotion of legitimate democratic political processes, which includes the involvement of people at the local level in the definition and determination of development, begets a sound foundation on which to build development practices and policies. Inclusion permits a healthy process of freedom based development policies.

Political stability is accomplished through inclusion of participatory social and ethnic groups of an area. Economic and social stability is promoted. In contrast, social

exclusiveness and the consequently imbalance in political participation is venomous to a nation's development. India is the world's largest democracy and is literally a nation of minorities. No ethnic, religious sector, or cultural group comprises more than 4-5% of the population. Statewide and nationally, a balanced approach is essential to appeal to the electorate which vary drastically in economic, cultural, and political needs. Hence, political extremism based on religious fundamentalism or xenophobic rhetoric simply excludes too many people from the political system creating protest and eventually, a prompt demise of any political party based on such a platform.

Currently, each of the three case studies are concerned with various regional groups, growing in strength, whose political foundations are grounded within religious extremism. This trend is contributing to regional instability. The continuing issue of local elites who dominate the economic and political spheres of a region exacerbates this problem. The elites are frequently members of higher castes therefore this leads to an exclusion of lower caste Hindus who seek inclusion in the various forms of development occurring in their community. Shiva states, "Given the way our representative democracy has been perverted, and is depending so much on money with no regulation of how much money gets spent and where the money comes from, there constantly builds up a spiral such that the closer you are to industry, and the more you are industry, the more money you can mobilize to get yourself into power and the more favours and deals and private-public partnerships you can strike to make the industry of which you are a part bigger so that the next time round it can finance

you even more against your opponents who might have far more popular backing but don't have the mobilizing capacity for elections, given that votes today are bought not mobilized" (Shiva, 2004: 8 ).

The dominance of elites is a systemic issue that a genuine inclusionary process of political participation by all people would revolutionize. Political participation brings local values into the development process. Mahadevia points out that "the term 'inclusive' implies the inclusion of all citizens and all dimensions of development, the convergence of thinking and action and of different aspects of development. This is the only sustainable way in which to address the major concerns listed above, and the only way in which to achieve sustainable human development" (Shiva, 1993: 254). Inclusion also denotes positing cultural factors as integral components of the existing structure.

Each case study argues to change power structures. This is not to be misinterpreted in a simple inversion of power. The priority of each theorists to promote inclusion of men and women, ethnic, religious, and political groups of all social strata in the development process determines that each views development as a "very much agent-oriented view" and not that people are just passive recipients of the benefits of cunning development programmes (Sen, 1999).

Sen speaks about the various forms of inclusion with an emphasis on the need for all people to participate in the economic system if they choose to do so. His capability

approach argues for the inclusion of all people in the various forms of development. This is crucial to the formation and sustainable maintenance of development structures. Often a person's inclusion is based on his or her social and economic status. If he has fallen prey to an instrumentally significant factor such as low income or an intrinsically significant aspect i.e. a handicap that leads to social exclusion and/or low income, the individual is more likely than not to be deprived of economic or political opportunities. This exclusion due to someone's lack of capabilities is a self-destructive cycle and is antithetical to development. On a political level, inclusion is not only justified but proven indispensable maintains Sen (1999), quoting Frank Knight, that through public discussion, "values are established or validated and recognized through discussion, an activity which is at once social, intellectual and creative" (p.274). From this Sen postulates that public policies are dependent on people's values and the understanding and interpretation of the demands of social ethics and justice.

- **Defining Principle #4: Universalism with a twist**

The form of universalism each scholar speaks of is a principle that is reliant upon following a freedom-based approach. It is universalist because each theorist promotes an approach that is neither gender nor region-specific. They are built upon principles that do not know cultural limitations for the most part; cultural relativism is not the goal of development for any of these case studies. They each agree that an exclusively inward looking analysis of India and what is particularly useful for Indian culture is ultimately inimical and destructive. Furthermore, it does not lead to

furthering development for other regions. (Mahadevia, 2004; Sen, 1999; Shiva, 1993).

All three theorists share the common perception that a rejection of excessive cultural relativism to determine development for people is critical. However each of them agrees the theory, analysis, and the role of development is not a purely scientific endeavour that calls for a fixed approach. This will ensure a disastrous outcome of worldwide homogenous development theory, practices and policies. However, an approach based on unadulterated cultural relativism has many negative effects. Endogenous, culturally specific development with no connection to global structure makes it less adaptable to change on a global scale. In his chapter 'Culture and Human Rights' Sen (1999) states that his seminal work 'Development as Freedom' is "informed by a belief in the ability of different people from different cultures to share many common values and to agree on some common commitments. Indeed, the overriding value of freedom as the organizing principle of this work has this feature of a strong universalist presumption" (p.244).

The form of universalism each speaks about is novel. They argue for universalist-based conceptual models that do "not deal in abstract universal human 'rights' but rather in common human needs which can be satisfied only if the life-sustaining networks and processes are kept intact and alive" (Shiva, 1993:13). This definition can be continued with an emphasis on the 'symbioses or living interconnectedness' both in nature and in human society as the only guarantee that life in its fullest sense

can continue on this planet. These fundamental needs: for food, shelter, clothing; for affection, care, and love; for dignity and identity, for knowledge and freedom, leisure and joy are common to all people, irrespective of culture, ideology, race, political and economic systems and class (Shiva, 1993: 255).

Both Mahadevia and Shiva view development as possessing universal dimensions requiring universal answers. Neither of these two theorists suggests a cultural relative<sup>2</sup> slant to development to supersede the use of universal values. Both debate the values that are currently cited as 'universal; this provides an additional critique for both scholars. Shiva and co-author Marie Mies (1993) write in their introduction to *Ecofeminism*, "In the dominant discourse the 'global' is the political space in which the dominant local seeks global control, and frees itself of any local and national control. But, contrary to what it suggests, the global does not represent universal human interest but a particular local and parochial interest which has been globalized through its reach and control" (p.9). They continue to state, "however, it is essential to be beware of simply up-ending the dualistic structure by discounting the economy altogether and considering only culture or cultures. Furthermore, not all cultural traditions can be seen as of equal value; such a stance will simply replace Eurocentric an andocentric and dogmatic ideological and ethical universalism with cultural relativism" (Shiva, 1993:11).

The concept of enhancing freedoms is a universal ideal. The point at which these theorists diverge from the conventional definition of universalism is found in their

definitions of freedom and the handling of culture within their approaches. Each criticises the current commodification of culture within most developing nations. Attractive sectors of the culture are chosen as favourable while other areas are ignored, mostly by Western nations. Yet, a culture is rarely valued in its entirety. This lack of worth extended to cultural mores and norms are exhibited in global development policies through a diminishment of survival of particular aspects of a society.

By universalist values, Mahadevia, Shiva, and Sen do not denote modernism as many advocates of universalism do. They each place a significant importance on customizing development to a culture. Within freedom-based approaches, aspects of culture may continue and others dwindle contingent upon the decisions of the people who are members of a particular society. There is a human dimension to culture and it has an important role in the articulation of development theory. However, culture is often sought for utilitarian purposes. This can be contrasted with each of the case study's work which views culture as an area of development that has the capacity to work towards enhancing particular freedoms of people to allow them to make collective decisions which are often influenced by culturally normative characteristics.

### **Significance of these connections**

The significance of the outlined points lies in the distinctive perspective from which they derive. The fact that development is not viewed by Shiva, Mahadevia, and Sen

as a solely economically based process that is contentedly situated in a neoclassical framework is not original nor that significant. What is significant is the correlation between the three theorists to establish very similar responses to what they consider to be the same major concerns of development today. Although each individually promotes a unique and different approach, the concepts within are remarkably similar.

The research of each case study resulted in an emergence of similar principles based upon a structural approach to development. Each concept builds upon the last. For example, take a systems theory epistemological basis and place a conceptual model framed by a freedom approach around it. Place the principles of balance and inclusiveness inside as major cornerstones. Place the entire structure in the context of their particular definitions of universalism to permit an encouragement to a sensitivity and adherence to cultural mores and norms.

Each case study can be labeled a liberal reformer within the current economic system in today's era of globalisation. Factors such as private property, wage labour and the role of the state in development are, for example, consistent with the liberal reformist movement within alternative development circles. The perspective each of the three case studies takes on these elements is reflective of the theoretical parameters they work within. None of these people are radical structuralists working towards systemic revolution although each of them agree that development is characterized by an inherent global hegemony; this collective viewpoint labels development as a



mechanistic project. Each of them views an extensive role of the state and non-government political and economic institutions, as well as social and environmental, as crucial to ensuring successful and sustainable development. These factors firmly locate them within one of the two existing paradigms.

### **Evaluation and assessment**

The syntheses of the three approaches are important. Each provides an alternate to evaluating development practices which are standardly based solely upon a scientific approach. The GNP of a nation or the rate of investment has been empirically proven to be an inappropriate form for assessing the success of development for people. Rather it is useful for providing rapid statistical analysis of a nation's economic growth rate. Economic growth does not automatically denote development. What these theorists have attempted to provide is an overarching form of analysis and evaluation of development practice while also designing a new epistemological basis with a focus on the connections and non-compartmentalization of the numerous areas of development. A revised style of implementation will increase functionality and freedom for the people it was designed for. As Shumacher (1972) states in 'Small is Beautiful', "development does not start with goods; it starts with people and their education, organisation, and discipline. Without these three, all resources remain latent, untapped potential" (p.140).

Each case study offers an approach in which a number of variables can be applied. Rather than using traditional methods on which to base policies, each scholar

provides case examples of particular issues such as gender equality, food security, and environmental preservation, amongst others within their particular approach. This permits a lack of the traditional biases which we often find within the reasoning of development policy makers. Each approach relies on the reality of development. Each case study argues that it is practice that determines the path society will take and although this reality may stem from theory and its operative principles,

The whole as greater than the sum of its parts is a key principle adamantly argued for this distinctive epistemological dimension of development. It focuses on development as a structure not to be divided for theoretical or practical purposes. There is “nothing that says social and physical reality is laid out as defined by the disciplinary structure of the Western knowledge system. The idea that reality is compartmentalized as ‘physics’ and ‘sociology’, ‘religion’ and ‘politics’, ‘law’ and ‘ethics’ is not based on some universal axiom; rather, it is a product of the worldview of the West. When the West wanted to reduce physical reality into smaller and smaller parts, remove each part from its context, and then study it as an artificial construction, it called the process ‘physics’...”(Shiva, 1993: 50).

Specifically, each scholar calls for a reorganization of dominant values for development; this is a significant modification made upon today’s development. An examination of each scholar brings the principles of equity and entitlement to the forefront. These two concepts connect the research to the larger theoretical model they collectively propose de facto. The culmination of each of these scholar’s ideas

permits endogenous development to occur while remaining connected to the larger development picture. In a systems theory based approach, culture will remain a foundational element of decision-making; this is possible through an apparatus stimulated by an emphasis on freedom. Allowing cultural dimensions, based upon a balanced and inclusive society, to determine development is a alteration which allows the mobilization of the efforts of people to identify the cultural heritage, materials and human resources and constraints and to plan and realize an integrated development unique to its socio-economic setting (Tripathu, 1988).

Freedom for a community, region, or individual requires an integration of the different elements of development while also remaining firmly located in a position of continual interaction within the global structure. This interaction although influenced by the structure will permit people to decide on the best course of action for its nation. Rather than implementing similar political and reforms worldwide, a flexibility based on freedom will be established. It is significant that each of the three case studies values an inclusive and balanced structure as key to sustainable development above all other principles as they are intrinsic to sustaining a freedom approach.

Shiva, Mahadevia, and Sen are not so much interested in establishing particular theories but rather, approaches to the development for people. They do this by promoting alternative perspectives of development rather than a critical look at specific policies. It is the structure of development which they are concerned with in

its evaluative, methodological, and teleological roles. The irreducible nature of all reality is motion and each of these theorists attempts to combine the symbiosis of development with use of inputting variables that allow for the fluidity of the nature of development. As Schumacher (1972) asks, “could it be that the relative failure of aid, or at least our disappointment with the effectiveness of aid, has something to do with our materialist philosophy which make us liable to overlook the most important preconditions of success, which are generally invisible” (p.138).

### **Relation to existing schools of thoughts**

A school of thought within the realm of development has several identifying indicators. What connects various theories to the same school of thought include:

1. Normative dimensions;
2. Epistemology;
3. Methodological analysis;
4. Related teleological perspectives;
5. Similar historical viewpoint;
6. Comparable models for operationalization

The categorization we will use is borrowed from the article “The Development Project in Theory: A Review of its Shifting Dynamics” (Veltmeyer & Parpart, 2004).

- **Category A**

The geopolitical project of modernization and growth. The thematic parameters of this category are structural, usually ideological, based on economic growth and progress, industrialization, and adoption of western modernity i.e. cultural and institutional practices. This includes both modernism from capitalist and socialist

centrally planned political and economic structures. This theoretical model directed analysis and inform government policy for the first two decades of institutionalized development.

- **Category B**

People centred approaches. The left of centre sphere aimed for systemic change; an example of this is found in dependency theory while right-of-centre development manifested into theories of global free trade. Liberal reform also occurred in part to dissuade revolution. An example of the development policies popular in the 1970's included basic needs and growth with equity. An emphasis on indigenous populations grew within this group of theories.

- **Category C**

Neo-liberalism vis-à-vis structural adjustment programmes (SAP) became a chief component of the new world economic order. SAPs with a human face, political decentralization due to a reformation of a neo-liberal agenda were pushed after the formulation of a new partnership with ECLAC. The private sector was later introduced into new approach to development. Additionally, alternative development in the form of grassroots initiatives was forming from indigenous models. In reality, there was more practice than theory aside from a general critique of top-down development stemming from this arena that many people heralded as a new paradigm. Alternative development pushed women, environment, sustainable livelihoods, and issues with the power structure to the forefront. Other than the critique presented in

chapter two of alternative two, another major oversight was the lack of acknowledgement that what was demanded for the poorest often would have to be given up voluntarily by the richest.

- **Category D**

Post-structuralism

Seemingly, Shiva, Sen, and Mahadevia relate most closely to the alternative development camp and within the thematic divide of category C. Category A and D are too extreme in the context of the case studies focused upon in this research. Plucking values from the west and setting them down in developing nations through a non-structured development is apparent in postmodernist rhetoric. It is not grounded within structural determinism and is certainly not the viewpoints of any of these scholars.

The connecting features of the capability, subsistence, and sustainable cities approach may be hastily placed within the alternative development arena. However, alternative development has many internal divisions. These scholars are not located within a post-modernity perspective or a community development approach. The connecting features, in fact place these approaches within a thematic area of development theory that is built upon and associated with a different method of analysis within the alternative development school of thought. Each approach attempts to respond to dire need for alternate methodologies towards development research and innovative

evaluative practices. Each theoretician defines political and socio-economic spheres through the use of firm conceptual boundaries; these include both statistical indicators and empirical evidence in the form of both qualitative and quantitative datum. They exist within this school as the group who works towards the redefinition of development goals and works towards the creation of new methods to evaluate and promote societal change in order to modify the development project. This sphere focuses on human development and welfare.

As such, the case studies are located in a very specific area of this area of development theory. This area is based solidly on the advancement of alternative theories and implementation styles. As Hettne (1999) states, “though perhaps attractive at a superficial level, the theories of ‘anOther’ development leave a lot to be desired at the theoretical level. For all the talk about ‘academic’ imperialism in relation to mainstream development theory, its critics are immune to the same criticism” (p.201). Hettne himself admits that his search for an alternative development model takes him back where he started, that is, in the ‘developed’ world.

Alternative development frequently does not offer any substantial approaches. It often does not answer the underlying problems that affect many of the cultures within developing nations today. It relies on a stance of post-modernity in which each culture must design its own development without thought to the internal problems this would create based on notions of inequality, imbalance and exclusion. Secondly, linkages to the larger global picture of development are not articulated. So it must be

guaranteed that although each approach connected through similar principles may fall under the umbrella of alternative development, one must be careful not to categorize it with the high percentage of theoretical drive that is built upon in this school of thought. Each of the case studies emphasizes sound theoretical models, conceptual frameworks, and critical examination of a development policy's epistemological foundations. Alternative development is simply not a fixed enough area of development to designate a place for these research findings. In contrast, these three scholars propose an alternative all-inclusive structural perspective.

### **Human Development Paradigm**

Human development falls under the alternative development school of thought. It is a development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs (Regional Environmental Action Learning, 1987). As the above question indicates, a new focus on development relies on a major emphasis of the non-economic factors of development. Shiva and Mahadevia both concur on extracting data for design and assessment of development from the non-economic realms of development as well as the economic sphere. Human development is a combination of ecological economics, sustainable development, welfare economics, and feminist economics (Absolute Astronomy, 2004). Both the measurement and optimization of development is enhanced with additional significance placed on independent variables seen in each of the case studies work. For example, the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) measures factors which include poverty, literacy, education, and life expectancy. It is a standard



means of measuring well-being (UN Human Development Index Encyclopaedia, 2004).

The following is a definition of human development as articulated by Indian scholar Seeta Prabhu. She says:

“The human development paradigm stresses the importance of the acquisition of knowledge and income. It emphasises these as ends. The basic difference between the human resource development paradigm, which looks at acquisition of education and health as a means to something else (such as to the improvement of productivity etc.), and the human development paradigm is that the latter looks at these as ends because people are valuable in themselves. The human resource development paradigm is individual centred and acquisition of health and education is mainly the responsibility of individuals. The state therefore acts as a facilitator. In the human development paradigm, public responsibility for ensuring the enhancing of capabilities is extremely important and hence public provisioning is given greater importance. When you are talking of democracy and human development and the links between them, state responsibility is implicit. There is a large responsibility placed on the State for provision of not only our basic needs, but on enhancing capabilities”(Prabhu, 2002: 8).

It is the “human development paradigm” within which each of these scholars fits.

First off, methodologically each of the theorists provides an alternative perspective and methodology to researching and evaluating research. These case studies are in a generation of development theoreticians that emerged from a deep dissatisfaction with the way in which development is traditionally measured. For example, Sen speaks specifically about a call for new indicators such as income more as a means than an end for development assessment. In the early 1980's, about a decade before human development had reached the status of a recognizable realm of development, there was what many labelled a theoretical impasse. As opposed to an impasse, it was

a widespread recognition that a paradigmatic crisis was underway and a ground-breaking and new understanding of development was needed. This permitted a temporary abeyance in the continuation of constructing conventional development theories. Schuurman claims, it was the “strong normative orientation of development studies that made it difficult to separate theories from paradigms...it was more fundamentally an epistemological problem in development research, and a crisis in political action or strategies in development work” (Angeles, 2004:62).

Human development is not specifically an Indian idea. Others such as Mahbub Ul Haq, who led the first UNDP Human Development Report in 1990 and Paul Streeten works extensively within this realm of development. However, the Indian contribution to the human development movement has been extremely significant. There have been a variety of responses from within the country in trying to take the debate further with a vibrant response to the human development reports. There are very few countries that understand the paradigm, discuss the issue, and include indices, as India does (Prabhu, 2002).

The focus of assessment within the parameters of human development - cultural and structural appraisal, universalism, and interrelatedness of development's numerous independent variables - work in close relation with Sen's emphasis on freedoms and capabilities, Shiva's subsistence approach, and Mahadevia's overhaul of the Sustainable Cities model. The cry for a new development paradigm with reinvigorated forms of assessment (which include moral evaluations of development

practices), innovative tools pulled from both the qualitative and quantitative sectors, a reformation of the current global economic structure, and a focus on an individual's quality of life each connect the case studies to the human development approach. As Bin Shari states, "development is viewed as a process of liberation of both society and individuals from poverty, deprivation, dependence and exploitation. This interpretation of human development is important because of the way it interprets the role of culture" (Bin Shari, 1997: 1).

This evidence is consistent with Mahadevia's perspective particularly viewed in her reappraisal of the 'sustainable cities'. She states that Agenda 21, originally a holistic look at environmental issues has gone beyond ecological sustainability to include other dimensions of sustainable development, namely, equity, economic growth, and people's participation, with an emphasis on inclusivist, broad-based and bottom-up development. Human development is redistributive and just, empowering, and environmentally sustainable (Mahadevia, 2001).

### **Affective factors of Indian development**

We will now investigate the genesis of the connections between the three case studies. In order to do this, the reality of development in India must be articulated. This reality is influenced by the practice of development and its application within the context of Indian culture. Although India is a nation built upon diversities, there are overarching similarities within India's development project. These similarities are

reflected in the particular approaches of Sen, Mahadevia, and Shiva work on development.

The unique historical circumstances and current development practices of India have led to an adaptation by theorists to adjust their concepts and analysis. At “the heart of this failed model (of development) is a deeply materialistic view of the purpose and fundamental nature of the individual and society” (Toward a Development Paradigm for the 21<sup>st</sup> century). India is an example of how most major civilizations have constructed expansive concepts which have laid the foundation for the societal structure. These concepts also contain the directive forces in which potential and innovative changes to the development project today. For example, “both the Islamic concept of *taskiyah* and the Chinese concept of *kongsi* not only open totally different universes of discourses but could provide a basis for the emergence of new, distinctively non-Western disciplines.<sup>14</sup> They provide a good indication of what could easily replace the increasingly superfluous notion of development” (Sardar, 1999: 60).

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<sup>14</sup> Taskiyah: viewing development as a society as a tree and the various societal activities as branches – scientific, technological, economic, educational, managerial, organization etc as of that tree. To maintain balance and life of the tree, a equal focus on each tree must be preserved. Growth requires preservation of moral and environmental integrity, cultural strength and the practice of such concepts as *ijma* (consensus of people), *shura* (cooperation for the good), and *istislah* (public interest).

*Kongsi*: notion of partnership, societal concerns and economic growth – a partnership of people based on egalitarian political system – open scrutiny and criticism.

### **The Practice of Development in the Indian context**

It is the practice of development that influences scholarly debate and suggestions for government policy. Practice and theory are in a synergistic relationship in which they influence each other. The contradictions between the two permit the emergence of ever-growing ideas, complete with principles and models in development debates.

The ideas of the three case studies have surfaced from the application of development in India. Particular problems materialize due to the cultural relevance and particular relationships of India to the global economy and international financial institutions, multi-lateral and bi-lateral political agreements and relationships, development agencies, and non-governmental agencies. The empirical application of theory must be catered to India's particular development reality for it to make sense and to be successfully operationalized.

The knowledge base upon which Indian development theorize borrows from many schools of thought along with cultural elements and trial and error through development practice. There has been a strong Marxist scholarship in India over the past sixty years with a further emphasis on human development. In practice, India once again proves its dichotomous nature by providing a focus on socialist methods yet also concentrating on neo-classical principles.

### **Culture**

Scholars such as Lawrence Harris state development is a state of mind; it is the values and norms that underpin institutions of society that promotes development. The myth

of development, stemming from the west, has been elevated to a realm outside of culture and rather the dominating western culture has been left largely unquestioned by policy institutes and related government departments. However, culture influences the underlying epistemological and normative dimensions of development theory and practice in a fundamental manner. It is this influence which must be examined to understand if reality is shaping development or vice versa.

There are many opinions on the influence of culture on development. From Samuel Huntington's views on the major and distinct civilizations of the world defined largely by religion: Western, Hindu, and Islamic to Weber to Hayek to Nehru and Sen. While Huntington continues to perpetuate the phrase 'Hindu civilization' within the context of his 'clash of civilizations' thesis, it was Weber who stated that religion determined the values of a society and the diverse cultural meanings with an insistence upon the fundamental causal role of 'material' factors in influencing the course of history" (Parsons, 1976: 2). In 'The Protestant Ethic' he characterized Hinduism as a religion and social structure that is pre-occupied with spiritual concerns and karma theories which sapped the initiative of the individual. In contrast, Protestantism stressed that man determined his own destiny by the light of his conscience; this inspired him towards the dynamics of capitalism like hard working frugality, self-discipline and personal enterprise" (George, 1999: 126).

F.A. Hayek argues that modernization does require westernization and he maintains that the market economy requires cultural underpinnings in the form of a set of 'modern' values based on individualism. However it is neither westernization nor

modernization that is sought by many theorists concerned with development in India. Sinha argues that ethnic identity; common culture and shared historical experiences are the ingredients of a nation and “it should be noted that due to enormous diversity it is risky to talk of Indian or even Hindu values and dispositions. Yet, in spite of much diversity there are common strands that run through its cultural, social, regional, linguistic, and other divergences” (Sinha, 1988: 32). Nehru took these claims one-step further arguing development ought to be sought through a cultural lens while remaining in the structural realm. Nehru claimed that all of the Indian ethnic groups wore the distinctive mark of India yet most recently, Sen (1999) argues that there are “no quintessential values that apply to this immensely large and heterogeneous (Asian) population, none that separate them out as a group from people in the rest of the world” (p.233).

Yet, *Indian* culture has influenced the development project through its identifiable application in the larger development picture. As Sardar argues, culture and its subsections such as religion is the least examined realm in development theory and knowledge today (Mahadevia: 2001). It does influence people in determining their priorities, key conceptual issues and binding principles in development theorizing and practice. “The cultural dimension is central to any consideration of this process of domination. It is in the sphere of the production of meanings and ideas that we find the cognitive and normative foundation of this process. This cultural discourse provides both the motivating force and a legitimization of the relationship between those nations that saw themselves as ‘advanced’, ‘civilized’ and ‘modern’ and others

whom they labelled 'backward', 'primitive' and 'traditional' - the Other" (Mahadevia, 2001: 247).

As an example, scholars like Pederson argue the concept of inclusiveness is originally a non-western ideal and in particular an Indian one. As opposed to the 'western' *individual* who is rational, calculative, driven by self-interest and self-preservation, this is traditionally not the case for people in India. Rather than a society based on individual development, India is one that is described as 'participating in unity with all things and its identification is based on relationships with each other in a fundamental manner; there is a foundational dependence among inter-family relationships. The universe is sentient and conventionally change and development are viewed as non-linear; cause and effect are a part of the same unified phenomenon. Pederson (1979) says non-western societies do not see people as integration of personality functions but higher and lower functions, non-west not individual but operates towards goals as "participatory in an unity with all things" (p. 317).

In practice, the principle of integration which Nehru promoted has evolved into the distinct Indian model of balance and inclusiveness. The Indian polity and economic structure is characterized by unity in diversity. For example in the golden age of capitalism - 1950' and 1960's - rapid development was based on the social peace between labour and propertied/employers not only in India but also in the West. It is the dichotomous nature between de facto western rule and Indian culture that leads to



the riotous protests, growth of interest groups, and heightening religious fundamentalism today.

### **Research Thesis**

The three case studies and the linkages between them have been placed within this context of the thematic divides articulated by Veltmeyer and Parpart and the eight accepted schools of thought.

We can now ask: What do Indian scholars contribute to development theory? and Is there a distinctly Indian development paradigm? In trying to answer these research questions we will use the criteria stated in Chapter One to assess the proposed contribution of Indian scholars: namely, that it provide a meta-theory which serves to explain many other theories; that it be accepted by a community of practioners; and thirdly, that it have a body of successful practice and exemplars that are held up as 'paradigms' in practice (Sato & Smith, 1996: 60).

The research surrounding these three case studies does not uncover enough evidence to categorically provide proof the theories conform to the first criterion. They are not a meta-theory and do not emerge solely from India. In terms of the second criterion, the three case studies provide approaches which exist within larger development parameters – that of human development. There are practitioners who accept and implement principles of this form of development. This research does stand up to the third criteria in that it does provide case examples of human development and each of

the approaches as being proven empirically to work. In the case of the sustainability approach and sustainable cities, there are cases of both approaches applied successfully in practice.

The criterion most strongly proven is the second one. By examining the conceptualisation of development within India by the community of development scholars, this research is simply at a starting point to determining if India has its own development paradigm rather than leading to a definite or overarching conclusion. Although the three case studies, Mahadevia, Sen, and Shiva do advance principles stemming from both the political economy and orthodox liberal paradigms, they fall under the human development paradigm for a substantial part of their postulations.

Although prominent Indian thinkers may individually have very unique conceptualisations, principles, theories, and suggested prescriptions for India's development, there are commonalities and theoretical themes between many of voices in development. It is most important to state that although together these principles form a significance in terms of focus of Indian scholars, none of these principles is derived solely from India. Systems theory, balance and inclusiveness along with equity and entitlement, freedom, and universalism are certainly not Indian ideas. They are arguably derived from other cultures around the world. However, together they form a distinct perspective. It is a mutual perspective, which derives from an Indian perspective on the development of the nation, which creates a new collective perspective. This outlook has a specific structure that encloses concepts, issues,

theories, and suggested models. It is the underlying epistemology and normative dimensions which connect each of these thinkers. It is these common conceptualisations of the overall development problematic and proposed solutions and the glaring juxtaposition to the interpretations of development stemming from the dominant global development paradigm that serves to demonstrate a uniqueness of thought. These three scholars advance ideas which stem from the Indian development experience but this does not categorize their ideas as substantially Indian. What emerged from this research is the beginnings of a regional theory emerging from India. In future research, a broader sample and different methodology will bring us closer to understanding a definitive answer to this research question.

Human development was first articulated by a scholar from former India – Pakistan and although they are closely related geographically and culturally, there is not enough evidence to advance the idea that any of these scholars has provided anything beyond an enhancement of the human development paradigm. Although they do not construct a particular school of thought stemming from India there are definite thematic lessons from which to learn. Rather than competing paradigmatic structures, this research supports the idea that there are thematic shifts in the approach to development (Veltmeyer & Parpart, 2004). Researching each of the case studies has proven just this.

There is a particular Indian perspective when articulating development theory and practice. The empirical translation of human development into theoretical models as

well as the practical version of the orthodox liberal and political economy paradigms evolve into a particularly Indian style of development. This is in spite of the financial and political conditions placed on the nation.

### **Research Findings: Descriptive Dimension**

Human development as an approach expands the study and practice of development. An important aspect of human development is the emphasis placed on integrating all dimensions of development into the analysis. It is not solely based upon western norms and theoretical underpinnings. It is markedly different from the traditional standard measurement of the non-West by the West (Sardar, 1999).

The United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) relatively recent human development index is a new standardized measurement of development. The theoretical and operational dimensions are directly related through the measurement of a nation's development achievements through the use of both quantitative and qualitative factors. The Human Development Index (HDI) released each year by the UNDP was initially based on three basic dimensions of development. The original indicators were:

- A long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth
- Knowledge, as measured by the adult literacy rate and the combined primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrolment ratio
- A decent standard of living, as measured by the GDP per capita.

Added to this were:

- Considerations regarding political freedom and human rights

- Human development for women as well as men
- Environmental sustainability
- Citizen participation and opportunities to affect the political decisions in society

(Martinussen, 1999, p.38)

From this list, it will be noted that Sen, Mahadevia, and Shiva each promote an epistemological and methodological approach to development that surpasses the original indicators of the HDI approach and are more in line with the second and expanded list of indicators. A criticism cited in chapter one must be noted here once again. The main weakness of the HDI is its basis within the context of the mainstream development paradigm. As “it still employs economic methods to aggregate diverse elements usually using traditional weighting to come up with a ready-made, eye-and media-catching analogue of GDP,” it can be criticized for existing within the western biased development paradigm in which pre-determined priorities are given to particular spheres of life (Henderson, 1996).

The UNDP agrees that development is the enlargement of people’s choices. In India the Human Development Reports (HDR) from the UNDP have been widely debated, contextualized, and adapted to the Indian experience. Amartya Sen was a chief architect of the HDR’s that emerged in the early 1990’s. Sutcliffe states the first HDR was a retort to the World Bank’s focus on development and the philosophy behind it “was Sen’s notion of development as the expansion of the capacity of human individuals to live fulfilling lives” (Martinussen, 1999: 138).

**Research Findings: Prescriptive Dimension**

The implications of a new 'school of thought' or perhaps a paradigmatic shift for development, viewed through the lens of human development are vast. Exchanging the conventional practice and evaluative process for development with human development signifies a fundamental change in the perspective and process of development. Based on more than quantitative factors, as seen primarily in the economic dimension of a nation, and a switch to measuring development by the freedom or capability of an individual is a radical course of action. It requires a new development epistemology that holds various propositions for those interested in the future of development.

Prescriptively, the three approaches by each Mahadevia, Shiva, and Sen hold a world of change for both developing and developed nations. Each proposes ideas which concur with chief characteristics found in human development. This form of development on a macro scale would enhance the political and social dynamics of development while retaining an importance, rather than ideological adherence to economic facets. Although human development may not be as advanced as several of the case studies ideas, it holds within its nature, notions of holistic development, cultural relevance in decision-making, and inclusionary processes. As UNESCO suggests, the "concept of endogenous development needs to be suitably modified so that a society may develop not only along its specific features, cultural and structural but also develop into an effective system which can cope with global changes" (Sinha, 1988: 327).

A replacement of the dominant system today by an approach structurally directed at the macro level while retaining flexibility to allow cultural mores to play a role at the micro level also requires revolutionary political changes. The hegemony and political dominance of the vision of the West makes it extremely difficult for alternative perspectives to thrive. The dominant system “centred view must be replaced by what Gregory Bateson has called double or multiple descriptions” as far as development paradigms and dominant analytic themes (Bin Shari, 1997). Mishra and Vasen state an area such as human development on a mass scale would lead to an institutionalization of an idea of development that views it as “a midline position, seeing the seemingly opposed paradigms as complementary rather than antithetical” (2004: 1). Development must be underpinned by a conceptualization of culture as a dynamic and contested process. It must not abandon political economy approach but intermix culture to transcend the limitations of text-bound literary theory and the political evasiveness of Eurocentric postmodernism. It must be remember that it is in fact “politics that is at any given time the reflection of the tendencies of development in the structure, but it is not necessarily the case that these tendencies must be realized” (Shiva, 2002: 191).

It is the influence of the prevailing Anglo-American style of capitalism that permeates the Washington-based international development industry. The US Congress and US Treasury can exercise an effective veto over what are perceived to be ‘socialistic’ deviations in the management in the management of the IMF and the World Bank (Polanyi Levitt, 2003). The globalized neoliberal model has introduced its own

particular definition and meanings of development and has consequently embarked on a project which is increasingly displacing people of sustainable societies (Leal, 2000).

Presently, despite the progress made in the conception of human development, most economists and politicians still take for granted that development merely concerns economic growth, maximized efficiency, increased production, and consumption.

Underlying this idea is the implicit assumption that all people share the same destiny, that they are essentially oriented toward the maximization of material goods and that this is what ultimately motivates them (Bin Shari, 1997).



## Chapter Six

### Recommendations and Implications

#### Recommendations

One of the more important suggestions stemming from this research is one that has been reiterated by many development theoreticians. It is of utmost importance that a new model of development is designed and implemented. This model must be based upon the synthesis of freedoms, the interrelated nature of the dimensions of development, and a new perspective of development. The current development model is not just ineffective for the developing world but also for the sustainability of the developed world. There is a need to consolidate the contradictions between ideology and methodology to make development work. Nations need to design development policies based upon cultural relevance to ensure social and political development while retaining a tight economic and political connection to the international community. It is a balance of autonomy and integration that is required for this new model to work.

As present day economics is 'fragmentary and reductionist', the social fabric in its entirety is tossed to the wayside as an externality at worse and issues of secondary importance at best. A new development model, based initially on the most basic of human development characteristics, would be a step in the correct direction to avoid increased ecological disaster, social discontent, political and economic poverty, corporate and social crime, the death of cultural traditions, and global conflict.

Secondly, development needs a new basis of knowledge upon which to build a workable model. Included within this issue of knowledge is a question of the power structures existent today in localities, regions, nationally, and globally. It is the power struggle that must be wrestled with in order to secure a setting in which people must be open to viewing conventional development as a product of western culture rather than as a natural process. It is the fight over knowledge that underpins development that is the crux of this development debate and many others like it. As Tucker (1999)<sup>46</sup> claims, it is “important to emphasize the unequal relations of power in the production of knowledge, and to acknowledge the important role of the development discourse as a central part of the process of domination, it is also important to recognize that attempts to improve or ameliorate the images and perspectives in current circulation will in the long run be unsuccessful if nothing is done to change the economic and political structures of domination” (p.24).

Thirdly, there needs to be a workable answer to address this crisis in perception. This entails the articulation of connections between the existing epistemological standpoint, the normative principles and the current operational models of the various theories. It is not a matter of constructing another ideological stance with dogmatic principles that in essence include only particular concepts as the ultimate values and goals. In this case, many values and forms of knowledge are pushed to the sidelines as normalized externalities or secondary priorities, which may be addressed after the ‘important’ issues have been answered. Political and social directives must be included in this flexible model. Freedom, balance, inclusion, universalism, and the

interrelated nature of development must become priorities for a new development model. A genuine desire for human development would be transmitted vis-à-vis political backing and financial funding by international and national institutions. Presently, many states view development as a responsibility and not as a duty. A re-conception of what development means and who has a legal duty to it has to be established to ensure a workable model that is held up to scrutiny to ensure accountability from elected officials and private interests. The state, corporations, civil society organisations, and the international community must be involved to ensure a sustainable success of a human development model implemented on a global scale.

### **Implications for development theory based upon regional divisions**

The evolution of regional and national development theories have widespread consequences for the future of international development, particularly in terms of institutionalized development evident in international development agencies, international and domestic NGO's, private sector development, and the legions of western-based international information mediums which have weaved their tentacles around the world. A regional division of development schools of thought most fundamentally acknowledges regional differences, heterogeneous cultures, diverse knowledge bases, and a plethora of non-western methodological tools to ultimately understand what the solutions are to underdevelopment and to define development. As stated in 'Beyond the impasse: new directions in development theory', "even

where structural conditions and types of external impulses are relatively constant, behaviour of actors can take a diverse range of forms” (Schuurman, 1993: 18).

In this paper it is a classification of Indian theories that is explored but this study can be applied to any region around the world. An explicit acknowledgement of the existing schools of thought as based on geo-political sectors or regional concepts, theories, and epistemology induces several interesting potentialities towards the future of development. Put simply, if such a theoretical divide was operationalized through a changing perspective mindset and a deliberate shift in the proposal and practice of international policies the consequential changes would most fundamentally restructure the terms of the current global power structure. Theory directs analysis. This type of division could translate into a dramatic change in development.

There are three paramount spheres, which fall under this rather large theme of power, that are illuminated when delving into the prospective of regional taxonomies: its related epistemology, the economic relativity of the west to the rest of the world, and political manifestations of development theory. Additionally, an articulation of the destructive elements of identifying and operationalizing development on a solely regional basis must be articulated.

### **Epistemological Perspectives**

The growth and decline of particular and formalized development theories accepted wholeheartedly in the West are just a fraction of the overall development of theoretical models and conceptual issues. For example, while the impasse in development theory was occurring in the 1980's, in part as a consequence of the super succession and the cementing of the neo-liberal camp into the forefront of development practice and ideology, empirical studies of development themes continued in the LDC's 'with an emphasis on empirical research' (Schuurman, 1993: 1).

In the West, the accepted and operationalized development theories and their ostensible opposition are found in the reactionary schools vis-à-vis Marxist schools; however, as argued throughout this paper, both mainstream and reactionary development theories are Eurocentric. Marxist and neo-Marxist schools i.e. world systems theory, dependency theory, and modes of production theories, all under the umbrella of the political economy paradigm, may articulate and propose alternative perceptions of development, yet, the west remains the definitive reference point for discussion, epistemological basis, and teleological ends. Opening up this limited spectrum of thought permits a widening of the global understanding of development. As Martinussen states, "it no longer constitutes good practice to claim universal validity for proposed theories" (p. 352).

The limited thought processes and mindsets within LDCs, which have been perpetuated through global economic and political conditions, would prove to be

grounded in quicksand, specifically the idea that there is one universal truth. The recognition that development institutes have been perpetuating a sense of false consciousness through development frameworks would be brought to light. In the Gramscian sense of a war of position, the West and the two paradigms and eight schools of thought that this paper has articulated would fall under the auspice of a regional school open to criticism as cultural imperialist and epistemologically specific; the positive elements would retain a western label. It is the current homogeneity of western knowledge that has led to the global trend of the withdrawal of the state and the increasing impoverishment of low-income groups (Schuurman, 1993). Slicing the meta-discourse with theories from LDCs would increase power politically, economically, and on the level of knowledge dissemination. It is this mainstream and western discourse that is historically and epistemologically rooted in the dialogue which legitimised slavery, genocide, and political colonialism; this is argument enough for a shift in the thinking of development.

Delving into regional development themes with one eye always on the global development framework could lead to a new organization of development discourse. Theories could focus on structural elements rather than the current trend of identifying and posing ideas around the strategic areas of development (Veltmeyer, 2004). Currently, as Martinussen critiques, theory constructions of most development tools do not have an explicit disclaimer or statement ontologically. The same can be said for epistemological and methodological positions, political priorities, normative dimensions, and the exposure of the assumed model of reality (Martinussen, 1999). This leads to a lack of understanding in how to firmly classify various theories

beyond a simplistic categorization based upon its commensurability with western thought. For example, although Marxists attempt to propose a significantly unique view towards issues which underlie development, they are accused as perceiving their posited model towards a progressive form of society as an ideal type and attempting to identify reality with the model (Schuurman, 1993). Through a focus on regional development theories, a logical and commensurate consistency may emerge that will assist theory into furthering research rather than vice versa.

If development theory were categorized into regional divides, rather than unswervingly comparing a LDC to the West, there is the lifting of this limiting viewpoint to a wider assessment of one 'non-western' region of the world to another. An increased acceptance of regional empirical data would lead to an examination of development trajectories in a far more specialized manner. Furthermore, the teleological perception that the west is the archetype of development will be diminished to allow new conceptions of development to emerge on a global scale.

### **Political and Economic Relevance**

In political terms, the recognition that development is a western concept will compel an overt acquiescence that its movement into non-western societies reeks of imperialism. It also explicitly recognizes that the 'Third World' is not a homogenous entity. Currently, LDC's are assigned a less powerful and proactive, politically and economically smaller role based on decentralized political functions. Recognition of more than one perception of development would alter this doomed direction. To

regard an autonomous and sovereign nation with respect to its particular cultural dynamics will permit an institutionalised acceptance of the “heterogeneous social structures, marked differences in the various countries policies/implementation, as well as the very different positions of the developing countries within the international system” (Martinussen, 1999: 351).

As stated in Chapter one, development is defined in terms of a specific set of improvements, the amelioration of degradation and human immiseration, and a corresponding change in the structure of economic, social, political or cultural practice. Structural changes are required to bring about desired improvements in any given state of socio-economic conditions. Ultimately, this modification of power in the political arena would set the stage for the “redressing the imbalance of power between the 20% of the worlds population and the 80% who collectively require a substantial increase in the production and consumption of material goods and basic services” (Levitt, 2003: 575).

The historical decoding of economic conditions in LDCs and the interplay between them would be one economic consequence of a widespread acceptance of western theory as a regional school of thought. However, at least on a superficial level, the negative consequences outweigh what positive actions may emerge. Economically, a division along the line of regionalism would divide rather than unite the world.

Although the perception of development would benefit on many levels from less homogeneity, there is a crucial need for a conceptual and practical structure to remain



firmly in place for the exchange of resources, for the spread of technology and most importantly the dissemination of knowledge. The technology transfer between countries will remain strong if they remain connected in economically viable relationship based upon commensurate development theories. The point of current criticism of global economics is not that there is a global economic structure; rather, it is the skewed political dimensions based on unjust and entrenched elements of power than reduce development to a limited and often farcical concept. From the beginning of institutionalised development theory for major segments of many developing nation, basic needs have been met but only in particular sectors of society. In the lower socio-economic strata it is not the same case and “with the current per capital growth of 1.3-1.6%, it will take another 150 years for 3<sup>rd</sup> world nations to achieve 1.2 the per capita income of western countries, and that is without taking into consideration the sometimes negative growth figures of the 1980’s” (Schuurman, 1993: 9).

### **Negative Consequences of Pursuing a Regional Development Theoretical Framework**

One of the most obvious and ravaging consequences to grow from an emphasis on defining development theories based on regional differences is in the potential non-commensurability of the emergent development concepts and models. This will wreak havoc on the commonality of one development language which everyone can identify with and base their contributions with a foundation of similar definitions and understandings. A development language is defined as identifiable classifications,

understandable methodologies, and commensurate modes of perception. In a specifically Indian only typology, East Asian only typology, or western only typology, there would be no corresponding conceptual terms. This will lead to a post-modern approach to development in which people do not speak the same language and can argue equal validity of any idea under the vast and all-encompassing umbrella of 'development'. Furthermore, development would be submerged into a realm in which it was a different generational phenomena as well as a geographically specific occurrence. Of course, semantics will always play a role in the use of definition and understandings and prevent agreement on universal, distinguishing definitions; however, the commonality of language is on a much more fundamental level within the context of a 'similar development language.' (Johnson, 1993).

In India, there is a vocabulary built on the Gandhian style of development which the west has scarcely heard of; from this lack of acknowledgement, it is not difficult to imagine how impossible it is to incorporate this unknown language into mainstream development rhetoric. It is a reversal of this lack of incorporation on a global scale that must take place. For example, dependency theory emerged as a reaction to the modernization and growth theories popular in the first two decades of institutionalized development. As helpful as this school is in identifying the conditions, rationale, and solutions to Latin American development and underdevelopment, it is regionally specific and therefore can only be applied to regions such as Zimbabwe or Sri Lanka in simplified terms and application. An interrelated language is needed for worldwide development in which the numerous

international actors on both a global and domestic scale can work together efficiently in order to pursue mutual benefits. Particular nuances are important to include but a commensurate universal development is essential to sustainable social change.

A post-modernist approach is built on nothing more than a shaky foundation, through its lack of structural theories or connecting features, and utterly dismisses the meta-narratives and theories that have emerged throughout history to explain the conditions and questions which underlie the quandaries of development and underdevelopment. A common framework is needed to contain the various models of reality set forth; an entirely incommensurable perception leads to an unwieldy system. The deficiency in global connection and more importantly, a lack of emphasis on historical achievements and failures would undermine the concept of development as a means and an end to ameliorating the immiseration of the human condition worldwide. Without a sense of historical materialism or the juxtaposition of historical events with the unintended consequences, how can the world progress in whatever way development is defined? Historical examination allows for critical decisions to be made on a cultural level which can accept or reject traditional cultural norms and mores in order to progress with the nation's specific goals of development.

Without a connection on a structural level, it is a slippery slope to the illogical world of post-development rhetoric. A lack of connection also opens up the door to biased development goals and assistance in terms of particular nations accepted into the 'inner circle' of those worthy of financial support with connections made between

developing and developed countries. Also, internally the proverbial bias between urban versus rural development will grow stronger. There needs to be a logical, connected, well-defined idea of development accepted globally to alleviate poverty. Schumacherian tactics of attempting to build self-contained rural villages with no linkages to the outside world can lead to multiple worlds within a nation that all can claim equal validity although some may use exploitative tactics or infringe upon universal rights with no consequences.

Without similar plans for development accepted globally, development may translate into temporary solutions for particular nations in dire straits in order to keep their heads above water rather than working towards cooperative, democratic, and sustainable development. Today's world is growing increasingly smaller; it is egalitarian international institutions and increased connections that are crucial for worldwide development; the answer does not lie in creating islands of isolated and wholly self-sufficient development communities or regions. This leads to social exclusion and furthermore, is simply a reversal of the oppressive power structure with the simple difference of being rooted in the micro-levels of development. This is not practical, not probable, and not possible for development in a sustainable way.

A breaking down of societal rules or anomie is the opposite of where the world ought to be headed in order to create a unified and egalitarian global system. For example, on environmental or human rights fronts, a non-collective front will lead to more rapidly declining ecosystems or an increase economic exploitation or political oppression for individual people. Too much division and fragmentation into non-

commensurate theoretical propositions makes it next to impossible to identify general trends and patterns of correlation (Martinussen, 1999).

### **Positive Implications of Pursuing a Regional Development Theoretical Framework**

To conclude, the positive implications of permitting regional development theories breaking ground in terms of the new categorization of development theory are important. Remaining firmly rooted in the events of their history, later the object of close examination, the successes and failures of geographic regions will lead to specific definitions and political priorities in the field of development. An emphasis on historical perspectives with interpretative specificity while remaining in the larger context of a similar global framework through regional development theories would answer a need for the 'cross-fertilization between testable theories' (Sklair, 2002). As Moore states in 'Development Discourse as Hegemony,' in regards to development concepts, "the best way to observe how they have taken on varying ideological moorings is to assess them historically, relating them to political-economic and ideological eras" (p.3).

Mixing micro-level praxis with meta-theories through such cross-fertilization would permit the emergence of meso-level schools of thought. It is this mid level theory construction that relies on a structural flexibility on which development theories can find a common ground. A focusing on phenomena between structures and individual actors, as the thematic proposition of this paper, is the golden mean of development;

no dogmatism and a flexibility in terms of categorization and a solid linkage between seemingly disparate ideas is crucial in both development theory and practice (Martinussen, 1999).

As stated throughout this thesis, socio-political aspects of development and cultural elements are desperately needed for inclusion in development theory. An acceptance of more than one development epistemology would exist in the practical realm as a tool towards cultural acceptance while continuing to connect nations through the commonality of technology, open political systems, and a global economic relationship, whatever form that may take. Through the institutionalization and operationalization of regional development theories while reducing western theory to just that would allow cultural elements to emerge as key factors in the decipherment of how and what manifestation of development should take. As Schuurman states, “culture as a creative process that must be studied in locally oriented research” (p.15).

Goal determinants through recognizing western development as not universal but a regional ideology would work towards a more objective and value free world. This would work well towards the successful implementation of positive, sustainable, long-term, practical, and operational strategies. Opening the realm of knowledge and its application would allow the physical growth of development institutions, in both the policy and scholarly sense to surface worldwide. If the myth of development were to be diminished, “the deconstruction of the current hegemonic discourse of development in itself opens up new possibilities” (Tucker, 1999: 22).

## **Conclusions**

The preceding five chapters have systematically set up an examination of the theoretical contributions from three Indian development scholars. As stated in chapter five, there is no particular Indian paradigm for development. However there are particular contributions that enhance the existing school of thought of 'human development'. Some scholars place human development in a category labelled as a new paradigm as contrasted to the mainstream orthodox liberal and political economy paradigms. Each of Sen, Shiva, and Mahadevia are firmly located in this 'new paradigm' or school of thought through advancement of particular approaches which are characterized by similar conceptual foundations and reactionary responses to conventional development theory and practice.

The rationale for this research lies in the realization that India, the largest democracy in today's world, is developing economically and socially at the macro level, yet is falling into a cycle of continued underdevelopment for tens of millions living at the micro level. With over 1.1 billion people currently living in India, development of any percentage translates to the amelioration of poverty for exorbitant amounts of people.

The devil of development theory is in the details. Although Indian development scholars may be quickly categorized as additions to the alternative development perspective, assumed only because they do not fit nicely into the political economy or orthodox liberal paradigms, this research has taken a step back and examined the

evidence with a final answer to where these three particular case studies fit in. A small sample such as this is nothing more than a starting point for future research. It is, however, an important point to note that human development is becoming a central point of research with alternative methodologies, evaluative tools, and a unique epistemological basis for many scholars in India. Each case study has provided influential works in which development practices have worked in a synergistic manner with the respective theory. Pronouncements of a new conceptualisation of development, the manner in which knowledge is organized, and a decompartmentalization of the various disciplines to allow an equal handling of the various tenets of development is conducive to a new method of analysis, innovative practices, and a fresh perspective of the definitional components of development.

As Gandhi stated, poverty is the worse form of violence; this is true for each individual suffering in miserable circumstances today and on a global scale on which just a few people compromise the human condition. To work towards the amelioration of development conditions today brings the world one step closer to peace, security, and cooperation.



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## Appendix

## Interview Questions

1. Is there a distinctly Indian theoretical perspective on development? If so, what is it?
2. Are there unique contributions stemming from India to development theory? If so, what are the major conceptual foundations, epistemological dimensions and normative aspects to this contribution?
3. Do the various cultural values and norms of India call for a particular style of development?
4. Do the cultural values and norms of India affect the development policies that are initiated by the government and theory from its scholars?
5. Does the prevalence of the major religions within India connect to the scholarly ideas of development which are articulated?
6. Do religious beliefs affect the foundational approach to historical interpretation of development?
7. Between various Indian perspectives are there overarching connections?
8. Do articulations on development from India connect to any existing mainstream schools of thought?
9. In your particular work, what scholars and schools of thought influence your ideas – both Indian scholars and on a global scale?
10. Would you consider India to be dependent on western concepts of development in the areas of theory and policy?
11. What are the historical influences on development theory from India today?
12. Do policies formulated directly after Independence affect India's condition today?
13. What are the major principles underlying your work?
14. Why do you focus on freedom/subsistence/sustainable cities approach?
15. How has the development problematic or conditions in India influenced your work?
16. What do you see as the major missing ingredients in Indian development?