Design in India: in its paradigmatic or pre-paradigmatic state ?
An Indian response.

Introduction:

This paper is an attempt at a sociological interpretation of the present state of design in India, based on a major premise that (i) a certain abstraction of our historical, economic and political background is required to understand the fundamentals of any design paradigm; and (ii) that any such interpretation when disengaged from its historical context can only rob the understanding of one's own design culture of its essential substance and legitimacy. I believe that this kind of a perspective to the understanding of our prevalent design creed or ethos could be crucial to the very determination of its development because the changing relationships between politics, economics, environment and development have implications for the role of design and the industrial policy of a country, and one understands that the two are closely tied up with one another. This suggested level of approximation for our discourse is, in its turn, assumed to be intimately tied up with our design paradigm which broadly represents a sum of factors that are not necessarily connected with design in an immediate discernible way nor necessarily form elements of its direct offshoots; but instead, often constitutes a sum of factors that are hidden at the subtext level and which could appear quite unconnected and irrelevant if not considered in the abstract. The major reference points in our search for a design paradigm have been three existing categories of writings --- the first category being small in size but significant in substance and quality, and generally quite erudite in character that have emerged from the research efforts of scholars (Coomarswamy, Vatsyayana and others) whose broad preoccupations have been with trying to come to grips with the colonial and post-colonial idioms of our cultural identity. Essentially modernists at heart but not 'design' practitioners in the modern sense of the term, these scholars have contributed in a very significant way towards anticipating the middle-class 'kitsch' and bastardisation of our culture in its evolution over the post-Independence years. The second broad category of writings considered useful towards understanding our design paradigm belongs to the practitioners and pedagogues of design in India and have arrived sporadically with the initiation of 'design' as a profession as well as an academic discipline over the last two and a half decades; these writings are complemented further by those that occasionally appear in the media and which more or less rely for their substance on the thoughts/thinking of these very practitioners. A third set of writings comprise the ones that have originated outside India, and which help us to place design in an international perspective of space and time. Through these writings we have allowed ourselves to comprehend western design historicity in pre- Bauhaus, Bauhaus through the eyes of Gropius, Morris, Itten, Feininger, Kandinsky and others; the Hoschule Fur Gestalten (HFG) at Ulm through the writings and designs of Bonsiepe, Maldonado, Sottsas, Shire, Pasquiere and others; British design tradition

articulated among others by Sir Misha Black; American design tradition as articulated by Pulos, Papanek, Tebbitt among a host of others; Japanese design tradition as articulated by Kohei Sugiura, Sori Yanagi and by others. It is our observation here that the suggested level of approximation (of discourse) that could allow us to trace the roots of our paradigm is inherently lacking in the second set of writings on design because this set of authors have the dual duty of having to first give shape to an incipient profession, only now beginning to get its bite, and then to record the movements and the contours of their profession. Therefore, while these writings are fairly informed in character, they are otherwise mostly preoccupied with highlighting specificities of concerns of the individual designer and his/her product; the methodologies to be used, innovated or abandoned in designing industrial and communications products; the idiosyncrasies of the marketplace where the players are the sponsors of design (viz., the capitalist entrepreneur and in a few instances the state) and its end-users (viz., the consumers); the consequences of the state's intervention via its public sector undertakings in initiating and executing crucial design experimentations such as the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and then allowing these expensive results to freeze in bureaucratic indecisions and political expediencies; the maze of state guidelines and dictates that make R & D investments a prerequisite for the private and the public sector industry, and by the same steam of contradiction envelopes these investments in such restrictive procedures that end up translating our existing R & D setups into more of a mandate rather than any potential or actual nerve centres for technological impulses and innovations, that we today know are so patently linked up with present-day competitiveness of product-marketing. The concerns outlined above usually revolve around particularisations and specificities of issues, and while it is not our intention here to undermine the need for explicating the above-mentioned sets of concerns, the emphasis in bold text here is on a definite need to comprehend whether in order to remain informed and valid, the above categories of concerns must form part of a wider framework of analysis; and whether along the line somewhere, in the absence of the same, these issues could actually begin to lose focus or bite because they lack the very bedrock upon which are built the necessary conditions for the dialectics that eventually help to tie up the compelling issues internal to design with factors that are 'external' to design.

We therefore, arrive at the need to underline why factors that are 'external' to design merit our consideration, and why for the purposes of our paper, this factor will hereby be considered contributory or restrictive towards the growth of design. First of all, design itself is an important matter for consideration for, in Black's opinion " a single manufacturer may scrape along by following always in the well-known footsteps of others, but a country cannot develop unless it is prepared to innovate as well as duplicate" and he cites the example of the Japanese here. As an extension of this viewpoint there are several reasons why factors external to the immediate operatives of design should assume significance. Foremost on one's mind is the thought that design represents one of those rare disciplines or undertakings that has tremendous outreach in terms of

its influence and which integrates in its ideal-type, movements and concerns of every conceivable political colour and ideology -- ranging from the fight for eco-rights through the creation of green products (CFC phasing-out, recycling and so on) and green packaging, which is beginning to include a no-packaging creed; to the assertion of reproductive rights that forces the communications industry via the media to sensitise itself to devices that best communicate emergent feminist and post-feminist imperatives such as pro-choice situations or the choice of the woman regarding when and how she wishes to adopt contraception or how much of the onus of protecting herself should lie on her shoulders alone; to gay rights, that have awakened entire market-possibilities for products based on the aesthetics and functions considered exclusive to the needs of that community (Queer design as a parallel of Queer cinema); to third- world solidarity issues that are increasingly beginning to set the agenda for a radical reconstruction of existing definitions of Eurocentric and Anglo-saxon notions of growth and development- and a process that promises to alter the perception of the felt-needs of third world countries, as well as a potential overhaul of entire product-profiles of these countries consequent to and as a function of a decision-making belonging to its own people. And since these are the countries that are incidentally being targeted as the future markets/launching pads for communications, consumer and capital-goods products of the West, the concept of third world or South-South solidarity insofar as matters related to the choice of products and their designing is concerned can no longer remain on the backburner nor outside the control of these user-nations. These are only some of the several frontier areas and issues that are expected to shape the designer's imperatives for relevant and appropriate designing; just as other cultural and sub-cultural issues are known to have affected the designer's world in the past, and the deep past (such as the Industrial revolution, its dehumanisation and depersonalization effects; mass-production and Morris's 'back to basics' credo of the arts and crafts movement and so on). Even at a lower level of approximation, there remain issues whose dynamics are usually restricted at a level internal to a country. One of this, of particular relevance to our design setup, is the fight for the exclusivity and control of our aesthetics by the traditionalists vis-a-vis the fight (for its control) by the so called 'progressive' forces (and by their own logic 'modernist' elements). The fascism underlying these battles sometimes reaches a pitch that exposes the doctrinaire positions of all these parties concerned. Eventually, a design paradigm would seem a fair arbiter of such matters.

II

Design paradigm its meaning and its need:

Before attempting a more detailed assessment/analysis of the propositions intended for this paper, it could be necessary to first ascertain the definition of 'paradigm' and our *etre de raison* for the necessity of one in order to understand the various dimensions of design irrespective, at the moment, of the question/issue of whether a design paradigm actually exists in India's design context or whether it does not. In our use of the term 'paradigmatic' we have been overwhelmed by Thomas Kuhn's usage (of the term) in his seminal work

"The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" (1962), which is notoriously ambiguous for harboring twenty-two distinguishably different senses of the use or the employment of 'paradigm'. And yet, the lowest common denominator of interpretation for a pre-paradigmatic state could be roughly equivalent to "a situation in which battles about fundamental issues are still chronic." Very broadly, a design paradigm is expected to serve the purpose of providing a framework for the dialectics of fundamental and post-fundamental issues that are as yet unresolved and whose resolution is eventually expected to yield an abstract blue print for "correct" designing. Our paradigm (construction) must contain the ability to analyse and restructure real life design situations by means of a system of abstraction (including models, equations and so on) that must typically signpost potential pitfalls and merits within the existing designscape; and set up future directions for design pedagogy and applications. I should like to think that designing as a creative activity, consists of a grammar that is universal; and apart from the specific socio-economic exigencies of space and time belonging to a given geo-political area such a grammar/syntactics could allow the emergence of a common sense of output from designers, irrespective of the time or area-specific problematiques that they are otherwise constrained with. Therefore, even assuming that such exigencies play a greater role in one's design output than any universally laid out set of syntactic codes do, one would still be interested in decoding such syntactics and in using them to their maximum potential, rather than marginalise their role altogether. Without such a framework, instances of successful design will merely remain one-time bubbles that have burst their future potential for emulation; and by the same logic instances of prevailing design failures untranslatable into future design successes. The need to conceptualise these errors could veritably work towards an optimization of design efforts and resources, where otherwise such efforts could remain at sub-optimization levels. In essence, therefore, one is really looking for an exclusive simplicity of concepts rather than their refinement; hence the task of paradigm-construction need not appear to be as daunting as it is usually considered to be, also given the fact that we are presumably at the exploratory point of the paradigm curve and possess neither the advantages nor the disadvantages of pre-laid boundary conditions. Some specific reasons why design understanding could assume substance by overlaying it on a design paradigm would be the following:

(i) design that is devoid of lucid critical consciousness will always lead the design community to evade contingent reality. A description of these three terms is necessary here: (a) critical consciousness is something that is meant to work both at the level of the ecological and the social; and in the instance of our country and its likes, may be interpreted on an extended plane of the aesthetic and the didactic, since we are just beginning to integrate ourselves into the modern worldwide conceptions of design; (b) design community would comprise for our purpose, creators and their intermediate users (who are being seen as operatives) as against their end-users (who are the consumers). (c) contingent reality for our purpose, would be a tendency to avoid translating the design will into action.

(2) A second imperative for our paradigm construction is rooted in the hope

that in the event of a paradigm becoming operative, ideological debates currently maintained at the level of polemics or the descriptive and usually non-dialectical, might find a chance of a foothold in a framework of understanding that does not necessarily confine itself in its scope and utility to binary categories of the modern/traditional, good/bad, international/ethnic, secular/vernacular and so on. Instead, a strongly defined paradigm could have the potential to offer both "morphostatic" as well as "morphogenetic" processes, that contain attributes considered synonymous (respectively) with notions of preservation (as in morphostatic) and innovation (as in morphogenetic) (Maldonado, 1970, p 55). These processual attributes conveniently represent the simultaneous (if not successive) needs for preservation as well as innovation of ideas -- that are ultimately the concomitants for any outputs in terms of products.

III

Propositions in outline:

In the course of unveiling our thoughts, this paper will attempt the following: an analysis of design in our country by means of a set of three propositions that move in their levels of abstraction progressively downwards from (i) proposition one that examines our design situation in global perspective, in the process highlighting the merits of using our own historical specificities (of situations) as a measure of our attributions of success, as against any overt dependence on (the use of) imitative models bred on alien grounds or under alien circumstances that might provide pointers but never the working details; to (ii) proposition two which asserts that in spite of the need for the contextualisation of our design, there is yet another level where one is required to apprehend certain universal experiences and forces of action that might not immediately resonate with our own experiences, but which nonetheless hold universal validity for all or most design situations and whose understanding could be vital for honing the very specificities outlined under proposition one; to (iii) proposition three that maintains that a knowledge of the above universal forces and experiences could in their turn, give rise to a set of factors absolutely generic to space and time; and whose recognition will enrich one's grasp of historical realities and the forces of historical determinism as well as the immediate and current practices and concerns related to design, and by extension of this logic, enhance the ability to construct scenarios (rife with) static or dynamic possibilities -- all this assessment placed on an axis that does not, at the same time, derail us from our given respective positions or imperatives of our given (assumed) universe of significance. So, while propositions one and two apparently contradict one another, they actually help to signpost two ends of a continuum, whereas proposition three attempts to veer us (inwards) towards introspection in order to allow a conscious exposition of inner contradictions that have arisen out of our own problematiques, such as those embodied in the existing North-South equations that are epitomised not merely in the economic gap between us and the developed nations but right here, quite tragically in the concurrently existing pre-industrial and post-

industrial economies of India. We expect that proposition three will force one to delve into the obtaining reality that also includes asking ourselves whether we do not need what someone else needs, and explore pathways that effectively lead to a harmonious reconciliation of these contradictions; and eventually (may be) set the pace for the designer to broaden his worldview whereby he at least sees a direct need to evolve means/instruments to iron out such harsh, socially disruptive dichotomies that appear in the rhetorics of festering wounds and incurable malaises. Because ultimately the designer's professional reality situation is only embedded within this larger universe of reality, not outside it.

IV

Propositions in detail:

1) <u>The first proposition</u> underlying our discussion refers to the ascendancy/primacy gained by Western nations as a function of certain specific forces of circumstances entirely unengineered (i.e., quite outside the control of these nations) and as a function of distortions of their prevailing historical conditions, and which are not likely to repeat any more precisely on account of our (as well as their) altered historical, political and technological circumstances; and hence <u>any attempt to use the historical process/backdrop belonging to these nations as a measure or prototype of our own design understanding could be quite misleading</u>. Implicit in the above proposition is the need to understand some of the dominant influences that the West came under. Two factors that directly shaped their "pattern of working and living"(Pulos, 1983) and which indirectly moulded the basic imperatives of their industrial designing (and which by inference cannot hold relevance for our own contexts) were (i) "the depersonalization of human relations whereby machines and the products of machines increasingly became technological intermediaries between people". This is notwithstanding the fact that countries like ours in the South have ourselves faced the consequences arising out of the depersonalization of human relations. However, while the sourcing of this has been the same, viz. the Industrial Revolution, the underlying political and economic dynamics have been quite apart in character from the one that had set into motion the depersonalization currents in Western society. Theirs were a direct consequence of the Industrial Revolution, ours were mutated by the intervening forces of colonisation and the inevitable consequences of our lack of control over our own resources; and (ii) the anchoring in the West of all notions of success in mass-production, a belief on which the Western economies got themselves kicking ahead. Both the above factors (depersonalization and mass production) were historically entrenched in the prevalent War-I laden conditions of Europe (with its several frontlines and combat zones) and the United States of America (which turned out to be an industrial and economic beneficiary of the War on account of its non-involvement). Basically, it was a situation where many of Europe's own factories had to be closed down and had to remain that way for a period of time, at which point, this unfortunate but inevitable force of circumstances translated itself into net gains for America in terms of an effective transfer of the supply potentials(for America) of the entire European demand for industrial and agricultural requirements. This effective transfer to the U.S. economy of entire

horizons of marketing possibilities, that left the world's markets open to American manufacturers, might be considered as earmarking a single-most important impetus for the promotion of manufacturing and related industrial designing in America --- a fact of matter quite unparalleled in dimension/scale anywhere else internationally in time or space (except perhaps on much smaller scales). This large-scale alteration in the existing demand-supply situation also imperatively introduced mass-production methods in a manner that revealed to Americans the awesome capabilities of the mass-production concept, making "Henry Ford's production lines the prototype for other factories producing war material." (Pulos, 1983). The relationship of mass-production to industrial designing arises from the fact that mass-production methods concomitantly introduced into American manufacturing setups progressively more refined techniques as well as "improved tolerances and production controls", each one of these aspects potentially relating itself into industrial design problem-solving situations. For us, our historical realities were never overshadowed by the world wars, since our colonised status had effectively taken away our control over the use and movement of our resources. Since we never had combat zones, the only way we were affected was through the priority movement and withdrawal of certain resources as a function of another country's survival strategy and which were always presented to us as a matter of 'fait accompli'. America's 'mass production' blues or the Continent's fight for survival were distant entities for us. We had no manufacturing and therefore, we had no industrial designing. When we began these in the fifties, we did so under vastly different historical, socio-economic and political realities. For us, on the other hand, singularly important lever that determined the outcome of our product development through the sixties, the seventies right into the eighties has been the 'indigenisation' of process and materials(Balakrishnan, 1994). All things considered, indigenisation was not such an unfit component of the prevailing development paradigm of the sixties when the partial closing of the economy was intended to be a palliative for our infant industries, in an environment where the terms of world trade were never quite considered favorable to the South. Our industrial policy just formulated by the end-fifties, was guided by a dominant paradigm that no southern economy had industrialised adequately without building a solid indigenous industrial base, typically with its own technology; a home market and a strong infrastructure. At least for those times, such a strapped economic regime had managed to find consensus even among big business interests encrypted in the Bombay Plan (FN). This is something the Latin America countries had failed to do in their post-colonial period --- with the kind of painful results for all to see; and this is something that the Japanese model incorporated into its development strategy --- discriminating protection, import substitution and a powerful thrust to develop technologies often against the dictates of the world market. However, while at first glance it would seem that indigenisation and design as a function of innovation made magnificent partners, and additionally considered fairly concomitant with the prevailing plan-policies that had envisaged the industrialisation of various sectors in various stages (sixties - heavy engineering; seventies - light engineering; eighties - telecommunications and so on); what on closer glance becomes transparent is that our trajectory of

product development has not been able to assimilate simultaneously with indigenisation and related innovation practices, "the principle of beauty as a natural by-product of functional refinement", and hence the 'East European' styled products (Balkrishnan, 1994) that flooded our retail outlets during all these past years. One might, therefore, stop here to ask the following question --- why is it that indigenisation has not translated itself into a factor that might have defined our design paradigm? And one might simultaneously conjecture that perhaps design in our context has remained a dependent variable and indigenisation an independent one, where it should have been the reverse like this: example one: the sanctity of our environment is dependent on good design (and not vice versa); example two: indigenisation as a force of success is dependent on good design, ---and on intervening variables such as innovation. Experiences elsewhere suggest that once the exigencies of circumstances carve out through their products a certain design ethos, subsequent political dynamics begin to lend certain colours to these products, making the associated design ethos absolutely unassailable and niched in the lap of those times.

There are yet other compelling reasons apart from us not possessing the same initial stimulus that allowed industrial designing to gain grounds in the USA, to remind us of why we may not allow ourselves into the all too pat methodology of anticipating parallel situations to be used as the only pointers for apprehending our own reality. Typically today, we are in a situation that roughly replicates certain aspects of the consumer landscape of the early American decades of the thirties when Henry 'you can have any colour so long as it is black' Ford started getting outpaced by Earl and General Motors through their introduction of color-variations and greater styling. Although the rudiments of our own consumer landscape are reminiscent of those times, what might not translate itself into a force that had the potential to unleash into America "more permutations of cars than there were atoms in the universe" (according to a 1965 Yale University scientist) is the baseline factor of our own economic doctrines, imperatives, priorities that must obviously reflect in the available choices of products, or the lack of "common sense" positions or even crusading ideologies that were visible on the American landscape then; and which do not find favour on ours largely on account of the basic exigencies of our political and social climate. Also for us, manufacturing and marketing have seen a lot of state protectionism, opening up today into semi-state protectionism. For the U.S., these never existed in the way it did in India. It seems difficult, therefore, to assimilate with any conviction the fact of the automobile public-sector undertaking, the Maruti Udyog's loud announcement through current advertising space, of its millionth car rolling out of its factory premise as any matter of real achievement, given the protectionism it has enjoyed over all these years since its inception. The question of any design - intervention during this period to improve upon the defects of the Maruti car seemed a non-starter because of the monopoly on which the product had positioned and sold itself and the technology tie-up underwritten by the Suzuki of Japan. Today, things are changing. Now there are the spluttering of other vehicles on the consumer landscape that makes the matter of consumer choice less of a mockery. Even the slight opening up of the market place now makes

available the questions of better styling, colour variations, price advantages -- heralding at last an effective entry of the designer into the factory. And since American manufacturers faced no such impediments in terms of biases of state patronage at that time or even now, design received a certain positioning as one of the several functions available for leveraging the consumer's taste and his motivation and his subsequent decision to buy a product; a fact of matter that cannot be expected to repeat in our setup, even if the current forces moved at an exponential pace. And most importantly, although the trends of the American thirties and forties echo similarities with those of India's nineties , the comparitivity or the parallels end there. The ball games, the players, the rules are all otherwise quite different . We do not possess their protestant work-ethics, nor that certain level of incorruptibility that makes business a pleasure; nor the freedom from government intervention in matters of availability and mobilisation of resources (land, labour, capital, entrepreneurship, information); and as a fact of economics, protectionism invariably always working in favour of big business by eliminating effective competition. (Bombay Group's response here in footnotes; and finally, the biggest bane of a strapped economy, visible in its non-competitive, underutilised, and inefficient setups)

2.Our second proposition is based on axioms that might be considered universally applicable (as much in Western as in non-Western contexts). One of these axioms is related to Moholy-Nagy's dictum that "design is an attitude of mind" transmuted by technical proficiency, the same dictum finding confirmation in Misha Black's assertion that design is no more or less that a " a search for perfection in an imperfect world"; even the Kenyan designer Odoch Pido, in his discussion on the culture and design ethos of the Maasai tribe in Kenya, maintains that "one of the fundamental attributes of design is that it is creative", and therefore, instead of striving for any singular definition of design because such an endeavor is usually made difficult by the creative nature, it is more important that the universal parameters of design are well "understood, translated and practised" with the necessary adjustments/ allowances made for the designer's "environment and socio-cultural settings". According to this African designer, this attitude itself might help to "preserve the creative and versatile attributes of design". What perhaps requires contextualisation instead might be the way one decides what constitutes the "imperfections " for each one of us. One factor, central to most of our concerns seems increasingly clear, which is the designer's role in assuming a certain level of concern for the " condition of our environment and the capacity (or assumed capacity) for aesthetic discrimination." Which well implies that the designer must uphold an attitude to employ his design skills towards improving the environment and not towards desecrating it. Hence our next proposition represents the following: that "design is, or should be a moral act undertaken within the constraints of the political, economic and social system in which the designer lives and works." To a very great extent this amounts to Ruskin's dictum that "whatever is morally wrong can never be economically right". This scathing indictment fit for our own times, must necessarily go towards forming at least a part of the support structure or the

value-base for our design paradigm. Once such a value base is absent or is nebulous, design as a purposeful activity is very likely to get marginalised or thrown outside the peripheries of the most significant of movements. So, depending on whether one wishes to make design a substantial activity or a mere cipher one ought to get around to working on the above proposition with some seriousness.

Our third proposition relates to our current problematiques, and ways of resolving these at least in theory so that one gets along. A major thrust of this paper, therefore, rests on the premise of the proposition that an effective design paradigm is one that emerges from or closely follows those paradigms of development that are considered appropriate for its country. The two are considered inseparable because design mirrors attitudes, culture specificities and aesthetic traditions that are in turn, determined by its people's socio-economic imperatives.

A central theme to a nineties paradigm of design for India must obviously consider 'globalisation' and the ways it is likely to color global politics, economics and culture during the remaining part of the decade Since globalisation implies ways and means of gaining competitive advantage for a nation, it becomes a precondition for locating and understanding sub-systems such as design, culture and so on. A discussion on globalisation is also expected to help crystallise some of the necessary conceptual parameters of our paradigm emerging development paradigm Therefore, prior to parading the conceptions of design already existing in Europe, the U.K., the U.S., Japan and so on --- one will first attempt a brief understanding of the broad economic and political bases of operation of the market and the state in an international framework and then work out our design scenarios against each of these.

1. First and foremost, globalisation calls for renewed equations between the state and the market. Hence, what is the market ? In a sense, 'market' may be considered to be an abstraction, a regulatory apparatus that can be an effective regulator only when this impersonal force is beyond manipulation by any individual or organisation to determine prices. In Galbraith's assessment (in the Annals of an Abiding Liberal), the modern economy is no longer a single competitive and entrepreneurial system.

Instead, it is 'bimodal' where the whole production task is divided into two parts, one part consisting of a few large firms that are infinitely large and the other made up of many small firms that are infinitely numerous. And, an inescapable consequence of the development of large firms is that price-making ceases to be competitive and impersonal (The Bombay Group seems to be an example of just such a conglomeration). Instead, the large firms gain the essential power to make their prices. Be that as it may, it becomes necessary to stay on the side of caution while espousing the market.

2. In the present context of an overhaul of trading and other sub-systems and the transnationalisation of economies, a redefinition of the role of the state in markets has become imperative, and is reflected in the World Bank's

preoccupation with this theme in its 1991 World Development Report. Without the much-needed analysis of cross-country experiences with market reforms, the dominant view that emerges in this largely prescriptive report is that the state should support rather than supplant the market by investing in infrastructure and human capital (in terms of skills upgradation and social-sector investments); and then let the market function. This apparently helps in the efficient use of resources through technological change (which is a market-intervention factor) and the development of human capital (which is a state-intervention factor) --- the two in effect, allowing for higher growth (GDP, per capita etc.) as well as for equity (which is encoded in distribution of incomes). What this picture of wishful thinking does not overly consider is that, since the state is required to do the social sector spending, and to that extent as well as in others (policy-making and so on) the state supplements the market, market-decisions begin to get taken by bureaucrats and politicians (and of course, by big business as mentioned earlier). Hence, a note of caution on the dangers of the overuse of state intervention.

3. The post-war years of development that relied excessively on savings and investment, surpluses from agriculture, import substitution, and a dominant role of the state in economic activity, cannot be relied upon as a model for our future development; because, the truth in certain quarters is that most of the extra growth in per capita incomes of 1.5% to 2% per .annum in the nineties has been on a/c of the efficient allocation of resources and not necessarily from the high saving rates of the past 40 years.

4. That, high saving and investment rates or poverty eradication have been achieved under diverse socio-economic systems: (i) with command economies having done extremely well on both counts, but have experienced inefficient use of resources on a/c of slow technological advances (obviously as a result of state restrictions on innovations and ideas) and in spite of investments in human capital; (ii) with India having achieved relatively steep saving rates, which have risen to their present levels during the not particularly "market-friendly" years of the 60s and the 70s; and yet stagnated during the relative economic liberalism years of the 80s; (iii) with China's steep acceleration in agricultural growth from 2.5% per annum in the pre-reform years, to 7.2% per annum in the 80s, not on a/c of any measures launched by reforms (except by the introduction of responsibility system in place of communes and some market flexibility at the cantonal levels); but by the fact that there existed during pre-reform, large capital formations coupled with its inefficient utilisation resulting in a tremendous slack that got catapulted in high agricultural growth during the reform years, and quite unrelated to any specific economic measures of the reform eighties. Hence, the same model may not be emulated for India since we have had no slack nor the high capital formations. (In other words, economic reforms per se will do nothing so significant for our rural sector); (iv) even under varying combinations of glasnost (political) and perestroika (economics), one finds the same outcomes in terms of a country's development. In other words, development is by no means assured nor impeded by a democratic polity. Drawing from varying instances of the relationship of a democratic polity to its country's

development, we have on the one hand the lack of democratic polity as a positive function of development as in dictators Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore or in Chung Hee Park's Korea or in Deng's China (which has had no glasnost but some perestroika); we also have democratic polity as a negative function of development as in India which has had too much glasnost and no perestroika; we further have the example of Japan right from its Meiji opening up since the 1868s up until now --- a period that has seen the gradual introduction of both glasnost and perestroika, and the self-evident results in Japan's picture of development, or even in the U.S. which has had democratic polity as a positive function of the development process. Perhaps, what works out to be a truer indicator of effective development is a certain level of 'social consensus', which according to the World Development Report (1991) "helps governments to establish legitimate authority to government" especially with reference to very basic areas of functioning such as with taxation and allocation of public spending. It probably explains, therefore, why China and Korea have advanced with the aid of perestroika but minus any glasnost, where India has not in spite of glasnost right from its early years of political birth. It also confirms why Japan, had advanced, in spite of its Meiji-styled glasnost. Since 1868 by injection of large doses of modernisation coupled with restoration of political and economic rights. The lowest common denominator some how seems to be social consensus, which must be wrought among four major areas of resistances --- the bureaucracy, the politicians outside power, the intellectual elite and the big business.

5. In the context of globalisation it might also be worth considering the 4 factors that Michael Porten advanced in his book ' The Competitive Advantage of Nations' (1990), as functions of achieving competitive advantage for a nation and whether we have these or we lack in these. Why Porten's view is considered of particular relevance for this paper is his view that " a nation's prosperity does not grow out of its natural endowments, its labour pool, its interest rate, or its currency's value as callssified economics would insist, but it grows out of the capacity of its industry to innovate and upgrade.