

occupational categories; they sometimes marked unexplained differences within such categories as "Boya peons," and they apparently justified the inclusion of a number of drawings of Hindu dramas, where the clothes were costumes in a more modern sense of the term. Nevertheless, the drawings were clearly about far more than clothes, and portray colorful illustrations of people and customs of the Carnatic as observed in the Mysore survey.

CANONIZATION

The list of castes and groups that found their way into Mackenzie's portfolio reveals a rather different ethnographic sensibility from that which subsequently became canonized in the gazetteers and handbooks of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first drawing is of a Jain at Kancipuram, not surprising given Mackenzie's claim to have been one of the first Europeans to note the importance of Jainism in ancient India. There are two portraits of royal personages, one a sad reminder of the death of kings—a portrait of the ancient "Rayeels of Beejnagur" (Vijayanagara)—the other a fine picture of a court scene labeled "Visit from the Rajah of Goodicotta at Devasamodrum."⁴ The political ceremony of the court was elegantly depicted, with the flywhisks and other symbols and protocols of the residual political authority of a Deccan chieftain prominently displayed. There is also a portrait of "A Boya of Rank," a member of the royal caste (and a relation of the royal family) in Chitteldroog.⁵ Many of the earliest drawings are of "peons," the court servants and soldiers of the local chiefs, or palaiyakarars.⁶ Most of these retainers were themselves attached to the court of Chitradurga, one of the first districts surveyed by Mackenzie, and a kingdom for which he collected an unusual number of royal family histories and traditions. In each picture, the caste of the peon was given, but caste identity was clearly seen as subordinate in importance to the political position of the individual. Court officials, such as one Brahman revenue officer, were also included as examples of the kinds of political personages that populated Mackenzie's Deccan. Gurus and itinerant holy men were also featured prominently.⁷

CASTE—A SYMBOL OF DIFFERENTIATION AND IDENTITY

Caste appears as an important marker of difference in the context of occupational categories such as barbers, basketmakers, and palmists—when, that is, caste and occupation were interchangeable categories.⁸ Caste also figures in drawings of Brahmans of various descriptions, including a number of official court Brahmans, a picture of a physician, and a lyric portrait of "Brahman women" washing clothes in the Tungabhadra River.⁹ In addition, a number of miscellaneous castes were depicted, sometimes alone, sometimes in groups. One picture is of a Kurumbar, a Kanarese caste of itinerant shepherds who took their caste name from the woolen blankets they wove.¹⁰ Another picture is a miscellaneous joint portrait of a "Committee or Banian," a man by the name of Madaveran of the Baljawar caste, and a Canara Brahman.¹¹

The drawings also provide stereotypic portraits of wrestlers, bards, and merchants.¹² The domestic household is seen as an important ethnographic unit, as portrayed in a composition of "A Family employed in their Domestic Occupations." "Another picture is of two village watchmen, who had charge of protecting the property and inhabitants of a Deccan village; another two wooden, and undescribed, "figures at Jaggannath."¹³ There is a rather fine portrait of a Canara Reddy, which in spite of a certain lack of proportion depicts the spare dhoti, upper cloth, and turban of the gentleman with careful detail. Yet another drawing of "Ramchurn, a Rajpoot by caste," shows rather more attention to the facial features than most others, perhaps because this is one of the few figures identified by name as well as social position.¹⁴

DRAWINGS ON TRIBAL GROUPS

The drawings that look most typically ethnographic—by the anthropological standard set later in the century—are of tribal groups sketched in Orissa, mostly by Mackenzie's assistants in the years when, as surveyor general, he worked out of Calcutta.¹⁵ These are drawings of such groups as Gonds, Marias, and Bhils, but interestingly there is nothing in these pictures or in their general place in the collection of drawings to reflect the early anthropological preference in India for groups separated from the mainstream of the

Indian peasant population and referred to specifically as tribal. Equally "ethnographic," perhaps, is a picture of a group of young Brahman girls performing various dances at an annual festival in the northern Deccan.¹⁶ The inscription below the picture provides details of the festival, its significance, procedures, and participants. There are also a number of scenes from Hindu dramas, as in one picture of a Hindu drama drawn from the *Ramayana*.¹⁷

PERCEPTIONS OF THE SOCIAL ORDER

The distribution of types and characters reveals a good deal about Mackenzie's perceptions of the social order. First, Mackenzie was aware of the importance of the contemporaneous kingdoms and their political hierarchies- the portraits of former and present rulers were illustrations of Mackenzie's sense of the political history of the Deccan. Mackenzie collected hundreds of family and local histories that documented the importance of the local chiefs, whose form of rule he obviously believed to be crucial to understanding the traditions and customs of each area as well as the disposition of rights to land and other local resources. Thus it is seen that court scenes, local (mostly revenue) officials, and the "peons" who were the retainers, court servants, and soldiers with whom the surveyors no doubt had a great deal of interaction. Second, Brahmans figured importantly in a number of guises. Not only were Brahmans important court officials (as well as priests) but many of Mackenzie's trusted Indian assistants were Brahmans, and when they went out collecting local texts and traditions they invariably began their search by contacting local Brahmans. The Brahman women washing clothes or bathing presented opportunities for indulgence in picturesque modes of drawing, complemented by the inclusion of light romantic poetry penned in under the pictures. Gurus and traveling holy men were not only eminently picturesque; they were also the perceived embodiment of India's spiritual wisdom. The occupational groups, from barbers to astrologers, were viewed as being particularly important to the definition and organization of the caste system, but perhaps they revealed more for the British in relation to turn-of-the-century convictions that rural India made up of myriad village republics, each with a fully functioning and self-sufficient system economic organization. The other illustrations documented, sometimes randomly, the kinds of groups that were identified as fundamental to the organization of Indian society, necessary to the objectives of the British in India, and/or components of the exotic landscape that made India such a compelling place in the imaginary world of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europeans.

POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DECCAN

Both in the absence of any kind of systematic and autonomous sense of a "caste system" and in the concentration of pictorial attention given to characters who reflected the political landscape of the eighteenth-century Deccan the residues of India's late medieval feudal culture and society- there are major differences between Mackenzie's vision of India's ethnography and that which became canonized by the end of the nineteenth century. Mackenzie's vision may have provided some of the necessary tools of documentation and description for later colonial delineation, but his attention to individuals as well as types, political figures as well as castes, occupations as various as barbers and wrestlers-all worked to render his anthropology fundamentally different from the encyclopedic science of the Castes and Tribes Surveys. Whereas these later surveys were rigorously antihistorical, Mackenzie's ethnography was still at least in part subservient to the historically grounded contingencies of early British rule, which had not yet completely erased Indian history and replaced it by colonial anthropology.

Nevertheless, the drawings of ancient kings and royal retainers do not fully capture the vitality of these figures as they emerge in the historical documents collected by Mackenzie. Instead, the drawings make the heroes of local chronicles look like the picturesque survivals of a vanished feudal order, now metonymized in a series of ethnographic evocations of costume and color. Even though Mackenzie's ethnographic sensibilities were embedded in his larger historical project, the drawings ironically signal the curious end of this project. For the first time, Indian history is itself made to look picturesque, an aesthetic anticipation of the ethnographic state.

END NOTES

1. *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, New York: Dodd, Mead, 1899, Vol. 2, p. 253.
2. Archer, Mildred , *British Drawings in the India Office Library*, 2 vols. (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1969).
3. *Ibid.*, p. 535, fol. 71.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 537, fol. 64.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 537, fols. 25-28.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 536, fol. 41.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 536, fol. 36. *Ibid.*, p. 536, fol. 46.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 537, fols. 80,67,66.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 535-37, fols. 12, 15,44,48,79,35.
10. *Ibid.*, p.536, fol. 46.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 536, fol.44.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 536, fols. 32,33
13. *Ibid.*, p. 535-37, fols. 61, 18, 8, 21
14. *Ibid.*, p.497, no.868.
15. *Ibid.*, p.496, nos.857, 858
16. *Ibid.*,p.537, fol.65
17. *Ibid.*, p.537, fol. 82.