



## **The Indian Renaissance: India's Rise After a Thousand Years of Decline**

*Sanjeev Sanyal*

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## **The Indian Renaissance: India's Rise After a Thousand Years of Decline** Sanjeev Sanyal

India's recent economic performance has attracted world attention but the country is re-awakening not just as an economy but as a civilization. After a thousand years of the decline, it now has a genuine opportunity to re-establish itself as a major global power. In "The Indian Renaissance," the author, Sanjeev Sanyal, looks at the processes that led to ten centuries of fossilization and then at the powerful economic and social forces that are now working together to transform India beyond recognition. These range from demographic shifts to rising literacy levels, but the most important revolution has been the opening of mind and the changed attitude towards innovation and risk. This book is about how India found itself at this historic juncture, the obstacles that it still needs to negotiate and the future that it may enjoy. The author tells the story from the perspective of the new generation of Indians who have emerged from this great period of change. Published and distributed worldwide by World Scientific Publishing Co. except India, UK and North America

## **The Indian Renaissance: India's Rise After a Thousand Years of Decline Details**

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## **From Reader Review The Indian Renaissance: India's Rise After a Thousand Years of Decline for online ebook**

### **Nidish says**

Starting off from a cleverly highlighted bird's eye historical review, the book builds up a very well woven story: everything good about India has come from a free market. I should confess that the book convinced me, at least for a couple of weeks after reading it.

The book is extremely well written and too nearly no effort to turn the pages. ighly recommended.

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### **Vikash says**

Sanjeev Sanyal's appreciation of Indian economic history its rise, decline and reemergence make for a good read.

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### **Himanshu says**

Not as interesting as his latest work ie the land of seven rivers

Positives:

Talkes about the middle class of India and how it grew and hhow it wil grew

fossilisation of ideas ( Kolkotta being an example )

India's demographic divident and how primary education and blue collar jobs will play an interlinking part in it

Negatives

Quite obsolete and needs a updatation ( its of 2008 period)

repetitive at some places

some times come as boring and one has to force through pages in between though in the last 2-3 chapters it catches up and pick up pace.

over all a good reading . My rating would be 3.5/5

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### **Sanjeev says**

Being a recently selected and appointed civil servant, I must say, it feels as if I was reading the economic

survey of the Govt of India while reading this book?

Critics of the neo-liberal school of thought say that, the people of today have the advantage of hindsight when they retrospectively put the Nehru-Mahalobanis model in the docks.

Frankly I believe both the schools of thought have merit. It just totally depended on the acumen and foresight and the risk taking ability of the men at the helm of affairs, who macromanaged the INDIAN financial policy at the wake of independence.

The harrowing experience of imperialism did leave an indelible mark on the INDIAN psyche for sure.

All in all it's a good book for laymanese understanding. Especially because of the comparative picture painted comparing India wth the global powers of today, and also giving the path which India will follow to its greatness.

It drives home the point for sure, something which I've heard from many people and firmly believe too-that in the coming decade or two, my country would be a force to reckon with?

I liked the penultimate chapter especially, 'How India will Change'

It's a small and precisely written book. For people of academic, historical and nationalistic tilt, I wud suggest-Go for it?

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### **Tarun Tiwary says**

Brilliant. For a newbie like me the explanation of socio-economic factors leading to certain fate of a city or Nation as a whole really amazed me and created further interest into the subject. Analysis are lucid and interesting. No disappointment at all.

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### **Anand Rai says**

It was written in 2008. So many things have changed since then so this book needs a second edition. Many people have problem with first chapter and they stop reading after that. A friend of mine who is preparing for UPSC stopped reading after reading the statement that "Aryan Invasion Theory has largely been debunked". And she told me this that she couldn't read it any further. I tried to convince her sending her bunch of science papers and I was able to partially convince her that our History books are not necessarily right but that also was accepted with lot of reluctance. Tells the extent of brainwashing has been done in the name of teaching history and this trash theory has been made part of our history.

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### **Abhishek Desikan says**

The Indian Renaissance is the tale of India's economy. Although Sanjeev Sanyal has written some excellent books on India from a historical and geographical perspective, he is an economist by profession, and his first book shows us that it's his forte as well. After a brief look at how India collapsed from being the country

with the largest share of GDP in the world to one of the lowest, he centers most of the book around the liberalization reforms of 1991 as the focal point and the watershed moment in independent India's history, considering it more important than 1947 itself.

While a lot of people are aware of the impact that liberalization has had on the Indian economy not many are aware of the causes which led to it. The author walks us through this phase commonly known as "license raj" and how it stifled productivity, growth and fostered an inward-looking and narrow-minded outlook among the citizens. He also rightly identifies that the socialist policies implemented during the years from '47-'91 might have been a knee-jerk reaction of distrust of the outside world due to centuries of colonization but their seeds were long sowed long ago going back a 1000 years to the time of the first invasions and settlement by Turks and Afghans, followed by Mughals. Eventually the tri-facto of Balance of Payments crisis, the Gulf War and investors pulling out funds forced India to open up the economy. In doing so, India burst free from its shackles, leaving behind a 1000 years of decline to rise again.

The chapters on how India grew from strength to strength in three phases were the most enjoyable to read especially for someone like me who lived through these times. We get a sense of how everything from private airplanes to cable TV, and nuclear weapons to the advent of the internet took place.

Another major focus of the book is on the great Indian middle class and how they shaped and continue to shape India's progress on various fronts. We get a detailed outlook on how the middle class grew with the help of the tertiary educational institutions, on the myth of primary and secondary institutions not growing rapidly enough, how the IT services sector is powered by this white-collar middle class and exchange of ideas and thoughts on a global scale.

This book came out in 2008, and I can already see a lot of the predictions and assertions the author has made have played out accurately. We learn about the "Asian model of growth" and how countries like Japan, South Korea, Thailand and the latest entrant China have all grown rapidly due to their population demographics hitting a peak over the last 50 years, a lot faster than their European counterparts did during the Renaissance. India is poised to enter this peak in the next 20 years and has the added advantage of already having an educated middle-class and being a global player.

Of course, all is not rosy and we need to be primed to generate the manpower with the necessary skills and resources to steer us through this peak period. This involves changes at the policy level, a responsive and expansive judicial system and most of all to continue being open to new ideas and attitudes. The story of Kolkata's rapid decline from being a center of arts and culture to its current state is elucidated to make us aware of how even the best-equipped places may not always succeed.

Most of all I loved the optimism and confidence the author portrays throughout the book. India is on the cusp of being a world superpower, and it is the energy and dynamism of its working population which will enable us to fulfill our potential.

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### **Vineet says**

Turned out to be a little too verbose and monotonous.

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## **Sylvester Kuo says**

Being not familiar at all with Indian history, this book was quite a good read. Sanyal outlined the fall and rise of India and how socialist control accelerated the decline of India, it wasn't until the early 90s that India began to see improvement in standard of living and economic growth.

It is a good book to stock up examples of how capitalism is the only way to eliminate poverty and achieve prosperity, but the writing was inadequate and disengaging.

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## **Arpit Bansal says**

A well researched book on state of economic affairs of Indian subcontinent in past 1000 years and subsequent shift in economy of the country post liberalization in 1991 along with the road map to becoming an economic superpower. The author tries to establish throughout the book that "To take advantage of the world, one needs the right attitude towards innovation, change and risk-taking" with numerous anecdotes from history of India and the world. It is this attitude that lead to the decline of the most prosperous land on Earth a millennium ago and indeed it is the same attitude that has put India steadfast on the path of becoming the largest economy in the world in years to come.

The book begins by painting the picture of Indian economy before the decline which started after 1000 AD. Being the biggest contributor to the world GDP in that era, the Indian society also gave rise to yoga, algebra, the concept of zero, chess, plastic surgery, metallurgy, Hinduism, Buddhism etc. highlighting the golden period of the stable and developed society. Subsequently, with the onset of closed mindedness and colonization, the economy fell from 29% contributor of world GDP to less 4% at the time of independence despite being the hub for raw materials and fertile land all through this time.

Little did the independence of the country help to boost the economy. With Nehru's Fabian Socialism and Mahalanobis' closed economic model based on a mechanical view of the world, the state worsened to just 3% of the world GDP. With a current account deficit climbing up to 10 billion USD, the country was finally forced to open its doors for the outside world in 1991.

With liberalization setting in, License Raj was abolished and the country witnessed huge increase in new enterprises. Y2K provided a perfect platform to the talents involved in tertiary sector and the sector grew at an unprecedented rate overtaking contributions by primary and secondary sector. Indian software and services industry become popular across the world and attracted huge foreign investment leading to steep increase in salary for the people engaged in the sector.

However, this lead of increasing disparity in the society since other sectors could not catch up on the earnings which necessitated systemic approach to tackle the scenario. The revolution in primary education which started around this time ensured that more people could come out of agriculture and join the industries. With intent towards boost in infrastructure and the country on the path to become the youngest in the world for a period of around 20 years till 2040, the stage is set for India to embark on a journey to rise as an economic superpower .

Towards the end, the book highlights the need of institutional reforms to harness maximum profit from this scenario. With smooth functioning of system of checks and balances at various levels, Indian market will

attract more business which will further empower people financially feeding in the customer base for the growing market. As Sanyal puts it, "However, it is an opportunity that India still needs to actualize and its success will depend to a large extent on the choices it makes".

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### **Ashok says**

Excellent analysis of India's past and future based on clear socio economics

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### **PRAMIT RASTOGI says**

#### **Fresh perspective!!!**

A good book to make sense of the rise, fall and now the current rise of India. Sanjeev Sanyal's writing is thorough, yet easy to read. Look forward to reading his other books.

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### **Kaustubh Kirti says**

Sanjeev Sanyal presents a small but powerful description of how the Indian history would be recounted 50 - 60 years down the line. 1947 was the year when the country woke up to freedom however the poverty and malnutrition still plagued the country at large. Hindu rate of growth and the license raj prevented the economy to breathe. The common man had limited options even when it came to cars. This was the time when Rao and Manmohan were forced to open up the economy to meet the balance of payment crisis in 1991. Sanjeev Sanyal has beautifully described the entire situation and what actually led to this condition.

It was not just the policies of Malnabis and Nehru which were to blame but with the vigour they were followed in the country. In pursuit of growth through socialistic measures the country compromised its string of entrepreneurs and little businesses. Private sector was considered as a taboo and what little survived of private houses were only the big houses. There was not enough space for common man to become rich.

1991 changed everything. It was renaissance in true sense. As the book uncovers the same through various facets. In order to elaborate the changes the author has described the changes phase wise till 2008. Sudden jump phase, moderate and the growth phase. The phase concept is good. However what is even more interesting is how would the author comment after 8 years in 2016 when we have seen the ill effects of globalisation and today's capitalism is under a litmus test today !!!! Good read. While readin I could relate to many of the social problems mentioned and dealt with in detail. TO some extent this book is like NIllekani's Imagining India.

THe book takes you through 1991 to 2008 and then asks you what next? 1991 told us that globalisation can work however the seeds and fruits would only help us as long as we responsible bear it and utlise it for common good.

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### **Chirayu Batra says**

I read two books of Sanjeev Sanyal back to back. His books will definitely give you a sense of pride about your country with a very optimistic outlook. This book explains how different factors such as demographics, culture, attitude, innovation, risk-taking capability, service sector growth etc. are contributing to India's growth trajectory. A special emphasis on the power of Indian middle class has been put and explained at length. It is a simple read, will improve understanding of various related factors and provide a big picture of economic growth patterns.

A recommended read.

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### **Eddie says**

Well thought-out and an extremely well articulated book.

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