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POLITICAL SCIENCE

SEMESTER III

COURSE NO. POL-301

MODERN INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

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1.1 INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT : EVOLUTION IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- V. Nagendra Rao & Rajesh Kumar

STRUCTURE

1.1.0 Objectives

1.1.1 Introduction

1.1.2 Evolution of Indian Political Thought

1.1.3 Medieval Indian Political Thought

1.1.3.1 Manu and Kautilya

1.1.4 Medieval Indian Political Thought

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1.1.6.2 Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari*

1.1.7 Let us Sum Up

1.1.8 Exercise

1.1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Know the broader trends in ancient and medieval Indian Political Thought;
- Comprehend contributions of Manu and Kautilya to ancient Indian political thought;
- Identify broader contours of Medieval Indian Political thought with reference to Hindu political thought on state, government, sovereign, varna and laws;
- Understand the contribution of Islamic texts to medieval Indian political thought, particularly of Barani and Abul Fazl contributions.

1.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Indian Political thought involves three related issues of nation, nationalism and national identity. In other words, the ideas are constructed, nurtured and developed within a social, political and economic milieu that can never be wished away in conceptualising social and political thoughts. What is most determining in the entire process is the organic link with a particular reality that always leaves an imprint on the construction of ideas.

Indian social and political thought is contextual. Hence, a unilinear explanation of its evolution can never be tenable. Ideas metamorphose in response to the milieu contributing to their germination. Under colonialism, the role of the alien power seems to be a significant determinant in the articulation of the ideas which can be either be oppositional or supportive of the regime it creates.

1.1.2 EVOLUTION OF INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

India has an ancient civilization comparable with any other great civilizations on Earth. The rich political traditions, ideal practices and humanistic principles that guided the society, state and community in pre-modern India have become benchmarks and reference points in providing a direction to the modern political thought that essentially began with the renaissance and reform movement of 19th century India. Hence, to better understand the political thought that emerged in the modern times in India, it would be appropriate to begin its study with a quick reference to the political traditions and ideas that emerged in the Ancient and Medieval India. Thus in the current introductory lesson, you will be studying

in brief about the evolution of Modern Indian Political Thought with reference to ancient and medieval thought.

1.1.3 ANCIENT INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

Ancient Indian Political Thought flourished right from Vedic period India and had its peak when there were no evidences of Western Political Thought. Ramayana, Mahabharata, Kautaliya's *Arthashastra* are epitomes of Indian Political Thought. It can be said that there were hardly any equivalent to Mahabharata and *Arthashastra* in Western Political Thought. The presence of such epics amply proved that Indian Political Thought was very rich and there was no dearth of such writings which contributed greatly in the growth of Indian Political Thought.

According to Beni Prasad, the branch of knowledge dealing with State and Government in Ancient India had no single and fixed designation. If in the Dharmashastra and Dharmashastra works (Smritis) it was called *Rajdharma*, in the Mahabharata it has been designated as Rajasastra, Dandaniti and also Arthashastra. The Panchtantra in its opening verse calls this branch of knowledge as Nriksastra.

According to Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, the history of ancient Indian political thought is the story of great minds. Manu and Kautilya, the ancient Indian thinkers have given us their rich political and administrative ideas and policies. Manusmriti holds a position of pre-eminence in the Hindu literature. It is the oldest and well-known smriti. Manusmriti or Manava dharmashastra is a "work of encyclopaedic scope."

According to Dr. U N Ghoshal the ancient Indian Political Thought can be classified as following: the first phase is the Vedic Age which roughly covered period from 1500-600 B.C. and the Brahmanas and Principal Upanishads were the hallmark of this period. The second phase covered the period from 600-325 B.C. and it is marked by the emergence of three distinct lines of thought. One of them is Dharmashastra School of which Dharmashastras are a continuation; the second is the Arthashastra School, and the third is the one introduced by Buddhist thinkers.

Ghoshal says that all three lines of thought differ greatly in their outlook and approach. The third phase which spans the Mauryan empire and its successors is the period during which

Kautilya gave a classical exposition of the teachings of Arthashastra school, and in the sphere of Dharmashastra tradition there appeared the smritis of Manu and Yajnavalkya, and the two great epics, The Ramayana and the Mahabharata. According to Dr. Ghoshal, the next period is that of the Imperial Guptas and their successors, and lasts from 320 to 800 A.D. During this period there were works like Nitisaar of Kamananda and the Brahspati sutras, and the works of Jain and Buddhist writers. The last phase covers the period from 800 to 1200 A.D. marks the end of ancient period and the transition to medieval ages.

1.1.3.1 MANU AND KAUTILYA

Manu was one of the most original thinkers of ancient Indian political thought. Most of the commentators on ancient Indian thought are of the view that Manu belongs to fourth century B.C. Manusmriti is a storehouse of information on the social, judicial and political life of that period. It contains social obligations and duties of various castes of individuals in different stages of life. The Manusmriti is the most authoritative work on Hindu Law and presents the normal form of Hindu society and civilisation. So, it is Manu who gave the stamp of sanctity and permanence to the socio-political institutions of the land and provided the first code of civil and criminal law.

According to Bhaskar Anand Saleore in their writing, Ancient Political Thought and Institutions, Kautilya's Arthashastra is another great work on ancient political thought which was probably composed between 3rd-2nd Century B.C. Kautilya was the great Prime Minister of Chandragupta Maurya. Kautilya's Arthashastra is primarily a work on the art of government. In his political and administrative ideas, the focus of attention was the king. According to his philosophy, for the smooth running of administration and for the welfare of the people, the king had to be conversant in the four Vedas and four sciences of government (Anvikashiki, 2 Trai, Varta and Dandniti). Kautilya's administrative and judicial structure was hierarchical in nature. As for justice, he emphasised on the principle of equity and immediacy. As for law and order, he believed that law was a royal command enforced by sanctions.

Although political speculations in ancient India are older than Manusmriti and Arthashastra yet in the absence of written records it is difficult to trace the political and administrative ideas of the thinkers of pre Manu and pre Kautilya period. So, Manu and Kautilya are

responsible for tracing the history of ancient thought prior to them. If one compares Manu and Kautilya's works then it can be said that Manu was a bold departure from the latter. Kautilya's Arthashastra itself cleared that Manu was his predecessor and he followed the concept of the state given by Manu. Manusmriti referred to the sacred character of the laws in the four castes and four orders to the ancient customs and duties of the king while Kautilya did not condemn the moorings of the ancient Dharmasastra but he added new political institutions and also interpreted some existing ones. He also mentioned the relative importance of the sacred law and the state law but he put greater stress on the state law while Manu adopted the sacred character of the law.

Manu made it clear that it was trayi (Three Vedas) that kept the mind steady and firm while Kautilya laid more emphasis on Anvikashiki (Philosophy). Although Kautilya followed the idea of the state of Manu but the nature of the state was not the same. Manu was concentrating more on problems like the duties of Varnas, the purity of family life, sanctity of social institutions and social life as laid down in the Dharmasastra while Kautilya discussed more realistically and as a matter of fact problems like battles, war, conduct of government departments, internal and external dangers to the state and espionage.

However, both Manu and Kautilya recognised the importance of Vedas and Dharma, but they had different views on them. They also differed on their views on other concepts like sovereignty, dandniti, wealth, size of state etc. During that period people found themselves in trouble and fled in all directions. For their protection the lord created a king. The kingship is thus divine in origin. It is also believed that in ancient time people themselves selected Manu as their king for their protection and agreed to pay him the necessary taxes. The modern concept of the state was non-existent in the past and at that time there was no difference between state and government as it exists in present times.

Kautilya's 'Arthashastra' is a great book on Political Science and Economics. The term 'arthashastra' can be translated as "science of political economy". It contains the ancient Indian Political thought. It explains the Hindu concept of Law and Justice. It also contains the Hindu ideas of Kingship and the State. It deals with mode of autocracy, framework of administration, and economies and welfare of the people. Manusmriti refers to the sacred character of the laws in the four castes and four orders to the ancient customs and duties of the king. Kautilya did not condemn the moorings of the ancient dharmasastras, but he

added some new political ideas for the political institutions and also reinterpreted some existing ones. He also mentioned the relative importance of the sacred law and the state law.

Manu and Kautilya have given us comprehensive political and administrative ideas. They both believed in Vedas and goodness of human nature. But they also believed that the common man could be kept under control, and on the path of truth by the fear of punishment. To maintain peace and order in the state both believed in Dandniti. But their approach to the subject is different. Manu believed that it is danda, which rules over all the subjects. But Kautilya's philosophy was that punishment was not to be viewed only in its aspect. It established law and order in society and proper progress in religious and economic aspects. Kautilya's Arthashastra is the most important work on policy and administration. The main objective of Kautilya's life was the attainment of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha.

As early as the fourth century B.C., Kautilya, in his *Arthashastra*, divides disciplines (*vidya*) into four: scripture (the three Vedas, *trayi*), agriculture and commerce (*varta*), politics and public administration (*danda-niti*), and finally "the light of all other disciplines, the methodology of all other practice, and the foundation of all moral virtues" *anviksiki*, the investigative reflective science which examines beliefs acquired through observation and testimony by the means of correct knowledge (*pramanaih arthaparikshanam*). The very recognition of a metascience (*anviksiki*) which would examine what is moral and what is immoral in the Vedas (*dharma dharmau trayyam*), what is efficient and what is inefficient in the sciences of material acquisition, and good and bad policies in the science of government weighing their strength of evidence by arguments and the identification of this metascience with philosophy (examples given by Kautilya include samkaya, yoga, and the lokayata materialistic philosophy) unquestionably proves that even the recognition of the purposefulness of rational inquiry or action was part of a *theoretical* orientation of these ancient Indian thinkers.

The discussion so far we had would provide you with an overall picture of the evolution of the Indian political thought in Ancient India. To recapitulate, in earlier paragraphs the emergence of state and how various texts explained in detail about the role of the King was discussed. Monarchy was no doubt the predominant form of government, but within it the roles of its various constituents have been clearly spelt out. Concept of bureaucracy,

welfare state, individual rights, and public opinion, mentioned in Kautilya's writings give the impression of a very developed scientific thinking prevailing in our early traditions. Values and morality were given more importance over individual likings in the matters of governance. Cutting across time, the dominant ideology of the state was to protect the interest of its people. Religious idealism was given prominence over the promotion of harmony and universalism within the state. In the backdrop of this discussion, we will now move on to the development of the medieval Indian political thought.

1.1.4 MEDIEVAL INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

Medieval Political Thought consists of both Hindu and Muslim political thought. Many Hindu and Muslim traditions and norms influenced in the evolution of Medieval political thought. The following sections throw light on those traditions.

1.1.5 HINDU POLITICAL THOUGHT

When we look at the medieval political tradition and philosophy essentially based on Hinduism, as Donald Mackenzie Brown in his *The White Umbrella* considers the 'Nitisastra' or 'Sukraniti' is an important creation of medieval political theory in India. He also states that this Sukraniti is the product of a late medieval writer who used the name of Sukra to lend authority to his own treatise. It was considered to be an important treatise on public policy. Brown and other scholars consider that it was the last work that sums up the Hindu Political thought borrowing heavily from Mahabharata, Manu and even Kamandaka and also indirectly from Kautilya. Thus, it stands in the historic Hindu political tradition, despite its creation in a period when much of India had fallen under foreign rule. One would come across detailed discussions on Government and Law in Sukraniti.

1.1.5.1 ON STATE, GOVERNMENT AND THE SOVEREIGN

For Sukra, the kingdom is an organism of seven limbs, the Sovereign, the Minister, the Friend, the treasurer, the State, the Fort and the Army. Of these seven limbs, the sovereign remains to be the head, his minister is the eye, his friends are the ears, treasurer is the mouth and the Army is the mind, the fort is the arms and the state is the legs.

While dealing with the government and the functions of the king, sukraniti highlights that there are two primary functions of a King. They are the protection of subjects and constant

punishment of offenders and the King who is guided by Nitishastra can deliver these two functions effectively. It is through the fear of punishment meted out by the king, each and every man gets into the habit of following his own Dharma or duty. The person who practices his own duty and sticks to it can become powerful and influential in this world. Without such an adherence in life there can be no happiness and practicing and performing one's own duty is the paramount penance. The King should make his subjects acquire the habits of performing their duties and he himself should practice his own religion, or his influence will be on the wane. Discipline is prerequisite for a king to acquire mastery over his senses. His mastery over senses leads him to acquire mastery over Shastras.

The miserable king is one who is disrespected by people, deserted by both the virtuous and rich. The king who is inimical to the intelligent and who is pleased with cheats does not understand his own faults, thus creates his own destruction. The king who turns out to be a mere punisher, robs the wealth of the people, oppresses the subjects on hearing his own faults, only causes disorganization and disturbance in the society.

1.1.5.2 ON CASTE OR VARNA

As mentioned by Brown, one can also find discussion on the caste or varna system in Sukraniti. Sukra maintains that one is called as a brahmin because of his virtue. Such a person is habitually a worshipper of the gods with knowledge, practices and prayers and he is peaceful, restrained and kind. The one who protects men and who is valorous, powerful and the punisher of the wicked is Kshatriya. The ones who are experts in sales and purchases, live by commerce or who cultivate lands are called vaishyas. The men of lower order who are servants and followers of the twice-born and who drive the plough, draw the wood and grass are called Sudras. Those who are unkind and troublesome to others, and who are very excitable, envious and foolish are Mlechhas.

1.1.5.3 ON LAWS

As observed by Brown, the Sukraniti insists that the King should always promulgate the laws of following kind:

1. Laws pertaining to the behaviour of people towards slaves, servants, wife, children and Disciples. Anyone found not obeying the royal command should be punished

harsh.

2. Laws pertaining to Dishonesty and Corruption in the weights and measures, currency, and all essential food items of daily usage.
3. Laws that discouraging protection to the thieves, offensive and wicked people and any other wrongdoers.
4. Laws relating to the usage of religious places, public places and the rights of the blind or deformed.
5. Laws encouraging the learning of virtuous character.

As Brown mentions, Sukra further insists that certain activities like gambling, drinking hunting, use of arms sale and purchase of animals immovable property, gold, jewels, medical practice etc should be done only with the permission of the King. Further, the doings like serious cursing, acceptance of pledges, promulgation of new social rules, defamation of castes, receipt of unowned and lost goods, disclosure of state secrets and discussions about the King's demerits should never be done or encouraged in a state.

Sukra in his Nitisastra insisted that the king should respect the opinion of his subjects and the king along with his ministers should listen to the petitions and appeals of the people. Each night he should hear from the secret spies and informers the opinions, sentiments and demonstrations of the subjects and officers, the departments of administration, enemies' soldiers. It also insisted that there should be only one leader in a state, not many. It also maintains that the king should never try to leave any situation without a leader. Sukra discouraged partition of Kingdoms as it causes no good rather it exposes the kingdom to the enemies and a king should not leave his own position but conquer his enemies only through Niti.

While Sukra's Nitisastra remains to be the last major work and as we have seen it draws heavily upon the ancient traditional literature. The Muslim conquest of India brought a temporary halt to the political thought based on ancient Hindu traditions and literature till it found its expression in the militant nationalism during the 19th century. Hence it is important to understand the political thought based on Islam that flourished in the intervening time and marked a distinct phase in the tradition of Indian Political Thought.

1.1.6 ISLAMIC OR MUSLIM POLITICAL THOUGHT

The phase of Muslim or Islamic political thought is essentially based on the teachings of Prophet Muhammad and the universality of the law of the Koran. The Shariat based on the Koran is considered as the ultimate authority and the state existed to serve the Shariat. Governance was influenced by the political ideas of Islam. This belief in single text is something new and unique as several religious traditions and texts contributed to the growth of political traditions in ancient India.

Fatwa-i-Jahandari written by Al Barani and *Ain-i-Akbari* of Abul-Fazl are the two important texts that provide us with an understanding about the dominant trends of political thought and the details of governance during this period.

1.1.6.1 BARANI'S FATWA-I-JAHANDARI

Barani's enormous experience about the working of the Delhi Sultanate and the existing social order often got translated in his political ideas. Barani's text denotes, the King was considered to be the representative of God on the Earth and he is the source of all powers and functions of the State. Any means that the King adopts to discharge his duties and responsibilities are justified so long as they aim at the service of the religion. Barani also suggests how a king ought to discharge his functions. For example, he writes that the king should be guided by wise men and welfare of the religion and the state are the hall marks of an ideal state. He reiterates that kingship is based on two pillars called administration and conquest. Hence King should devote himself totally in the governance of the state, at brings him closer to the God. Also it becomes the duty of the sultan or king to think carefully the likelihood of the success or failure of a policy decision and also its implications on his own position, religion, state and the army.

Further Barani suggests the execution of law and delivery of justice should become the main concerns of the Sultan. As per the increasing complexities of the society, in addition to the accepted principles of the Islamic Zawabit or state law (the foundation of which is non-religious) should become an important source of law in the administration of the state. However, because of their non-religious nature, those state laws cannot contradict to the orders of Shariat and its main objective. At the same time, Barani mentions that the recognition of individual rights is the basis of the State. He also suggests on maintaining

hierarchy in administration elaborates on the composition classification, nature and relation of bureaucracy with the sultan and the people of the state.

1.1.6.2 ABUL FAZL'S AIN-I-AKBARI

On the other hand, Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* provides an important text on the administration of the state and prevailing political ideas during the Mughal rule in India. Abul Fazl was a great scholar and one of the most important thinkers who contributed in the formulation of many political and administrative ideas of Akbar in sixteenth century. Like Barani Fazl too believed in the divine nature of the Sultan, he advocated for strong centralized monarchical government and for the better governance, he suggested the division of work or distribution of work among various departments. He suggested that the genuine concern of a true sultan should be the welfare of the people and not the power and sovereign is should become a father to his subjects and rule them for their welfare. He also suggests to the kind that the intermediaries are not required to interpret religious and holy law and the king himself should interpret the holy law. The essence of Fazl's political ideology is that the king should be guided by the principle of common good in performing his divine and royal duties. Making a huge shift from the earlier political thinking he even suggests 'in doing so, the sovereign may go even beyond the holy law'. The reflection of the same could be seen in the reforms introduced by Akbar especially in the abolition of Jizya and the ban on the slaughter of cows.

This way, three important texts, The Sukraniti by Sukra, Fatwa-i-Jahandari written by Al Barani and Ain-i-Akbari of Abul-Fazl remain to be the main sources for understanding about the both of the Hindu and the Muslim in medieval times. These texts provided a great detail about the nature of the kingship, the administrative system, treatment meted by the people, supremacy of the law and also the religious influence on the state and sovereignty.

1.1.7 LET US SUM UP

In this introductory lesson you have broadly studied about the evolution of the Indian political thought till the medieval period. The texts produced by the scholars like Manu and Koutilya not only guided the kings and rulers in statecraft but also remained to be the main source of understanding the socio-political thought

emerged during ancient period. Such texts helped us today in understanding about the emergence of the state, role of the king and the laws governing the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. In a similar manner the texts produced by Shukra, Al Barani and Abul Fazl provide a lot of understanding on the socio-political thought, role of the Sovereign, Government and law during the medieval time. In both the times, the main concern of the State remained to be the protection of the interests of its people and the rulers were bound by the values, morals and public opinion. The religious idealism and universalism that were sought in the ancient India reappear in the ideas and thought of the social reformers and the thinkers of the modern India.

1.1.8 EXERCISE

1. Discuss the main political Ideas that emerged in Ancient India.
2. Write a brief note on how Manu Dharma Shashtra molded ancient political thought
3. Brief the main political and administrative ideas appeared in Ardhashastra.
4. Provide a detail of the prevailing political ideas of the Medieval India.
5. Elaborate on the supremacy of the Sovereign as you have seen in both the Ancient and Medieval Indian Thought.
6. Discuss about the five major sources for understanding the political ideas in the ancient and medieval India as mentioned in the chapter.
7. Write a brief note on the main suggestions of Sukraniti to a King with regard to the promulgation of Laws

1.2 EVOLUTION OF MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT : COLONIAL MODERNITY, RENAISSANCE AND ENLIGHTENMENT

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

1.2.0 Objectives

1.2.1 Introduction

1.2.2 Renaissance and Enlightenment

1.2.2.1 Renaissance and Modernity

1.2.3 Socio-economic and Cultural Conditions of the Period

1.2.4 Torchbearers of the Renaissance and Reform Movement

1.2.4.1 Raja Ram Mohan Roy

1.2.4.2 Vivian Derozio and Young Bengali Movement

1.2.4.3 Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar

1.2.4.4 Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya

1.2.4.5 Swami Vivekananda

1.2.4.6 Dayanand Saraswati

1.2.4.7 Jyotirao Govindrao Phule

1.2.4.8 Mahadev Govind Ranade

1.2.4.9 Pandita Ramabai

1.2.4.10 Sarojini Naidu

1.2.4.11 Annie Besant

1.2.4.12 Reform Movements among the Muslims and Syed Ahmed Khan

1.2.4.13 Reform Movements among the Parsis and the Sikhs

1.2.5 Indian Renaissance: A Critical Review

1.2.6 Let us Sum Up

1.2.7 Exercise

1.2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Comprehend importance of renaissance and enlightenment in advancing progressive and reformist thought among Indians;
- Understand socio-economic conditions of the 18th and 19th centuries from which reformist movements and modern Indian political ideologies originated;
- know torchbearers of the renaissance and movement in 19th and 20th centuries across various socio-religious contexts;
- .critically review the renaissance movement and its impact.

1.2.1 INTRODUCTION

The collapse of the Mughal political system in the eighteenth century, a resurgence of Hindu political power of Maratha confederacy gave promise of being the sovereign power all over India. However, no significant intellectual revival accompanied this Hindu political revival. It was after the decline of Maratha power, when British established their foreign control, once again a flow began in the cultural life of India—the movement that is often called as ‘Indian Renaissance’. Many thinkers have come out with fresh ideas as they have been exposed to Western culture and ideology. Hence, we find a synthesis of east and west in the political thought of modern India.

1.2.2 RENAISSANCE AND ENLIGHTENMENT

What distinguishes the intellectual, cultural and social regeneration during the early phase of colonialism in India, generally described as “renaissance”, from the movements of reform in the pre-colonial period were the linkages the former had with modernity. The attempt to reform prevalent socio-religious practices is quite common in all civilisations; it is a part of the reformers’ efforts to refine and refurbish the inner resources of their civilisations. It is through such processes of renewal that all civilisations try to overcome internal stagnation and meet external challenges.

The social and religious reforms witnessed in 19th century India were neither a continuation of past efforts nor their reinvocations to face contemporary challenges. While the pre-colonial movements were trapped in feudal ethics, the 19th century regeneration occurred in the context of an emerging middle class which mainly developed its social vision, political beliefs and cultural ethos from the history of Western societies, received through the medium of the ideological apparatuses of the colonial state.

The European Renaissance was characterised by the discovery and triumph of humanism and the re-emergence of man to the centre of history with sensitivity to his creative ability, reflected in his achievements in the past. The Renaissance paintings that celebrated the human body are a reflection of the rebirth of man. The emergence of man to the centre stage also meant emancipation from social bonds, particularly religious bonds, which provided the inspiration for the Reformation and the necessary intellectual freedom for Enlightenment. A new world of scientific knowledge and social thought were opened before him. Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment formed an interconnected triad from which modernity drew its strength, character and vision.

1.2.2.1 RENAISSANCE AND MODERNITY

Modernity in India had a different trajectory. Its origin was not in indigenous intellectual and cultural churning but in the influences disseminated by the colonial state and its agencies. The consumers and propagators of this modernity were the newly emerging middle class linked with the colonial administration and thus exposed to Western culture. They were drawn towards a new cultural situation through their association with the colonial rulers as trading intermediaries and subordinates in the administration.

Such a situation, first developed in the Presidency towns of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras and in other parts of the country later on, led to the emergence of a new breed of Indians who idealised the West, adopted a Western-modern way of life and subjected tradition to critical inquiry. The relationship between the traditional and the “colonial-modern” was not dialogical but mainly one of domination. Restricted by prevailing caste and religious practices and attracted by the “colonial-modern” life, this new breed of Indians experienced the tension between what was possible in the new world and what was practised in the traditional.

The changes in the social and cultural life they sought to materialise emerged out of this tension. The participation in the colonial order demanded a refashioning of the social world of the colonised, at the same time there was considerable social pressure to maintain traditional social practices. The social and religious reform witnessed in 19th century India, which was an attempt to reconcile the cultural world of the middle class with the demands of the new way of life, emerged out of this dynamic. As a result, unlike in Europe, reformation took precedence over renaissance in India.

In this sense, Renaissance in India was essentially the meeting of minds of both Indian and European thinkers, in nutshell; it marked a constructive interaction and a creative synthesis of the best of both worlds East and West. Politically, the period of ten decades between the Battle of Plassey (1757) and the Sepoy Mutiny (1857) was the era of expansion of the British Empire in India and of its subsequent consolidation. It was also the time of Indian social progressive reform and of the eradication of feudal and obscurantist forces and religious orthodoxy in Indian life. In spite of the vileness of British motives, there was a growing cooperation between the ruler and the ruled, ushering in the making of modern India. The cultural and intellectual heritage of modern India derives largely from this phase of questioning and search.

This Renaissance is often associated with modern education established by the British colonial rule in India. During this colonial administration some kind of propagation took place for a common language that could be used for commercial and political purposes across the country. However, by this time many progressive Hindus too were demanding for English Education as it provides all resources of Western Civilization, including the opposition movements to the British rule. Initially the Muslims did not take part in the movement with a fear that it was a scheme to Christianize the population and destroy the

foundations of Muslim religious life. As a result, the Hindu community was in the forefront of the new programme, not only in the matter of public employment but in relation to the intellectual revival created directly or indirectly by the Western contacts.

We can witness many reforms during the renaissance period: one such act is the famous 1832 Macaulay's minutes. Seeking to organise Indian society in a typical western mould, Macaulay argued for an introduction of English education and British jurisprudence for their role in radically altering the feudal basis of Indian society. What was implicit in his views was the assumption that the liberal values of the British variety would definitely contribute to the required social transformation in India. So the arrival of the British in India was a boon in disguise. Not only did colonialism introduce Indians to western liberalism, it also exposed them to the socially and politically progressive ideas of Bentham, Mill, Carlyle and Coleridge, which drew attention to a qualitatively different mode of thinking on issues of contemporary relevance. The second equally important influence was the ideas of German philosophers like Schelling, Fichte, Kant and Herder. These ideas gained ground as the intellectual challenge against the British rule acquired momentum. In fact, there are clear traces of German ideas in Bankim's writings. Unlike Ram Mohan Roy whose historical mission was to combat the social evils in the form of inhuman customs, including the sati, Bankim sought to champion the goal of freedom by drawing upon the German philosophy and the Hindu past. Conceptually, the notions of *volk*, community and nation seemed to have inspired the early nationalists, including Bankim, presumably because they contributed to homogeneity despite differences in the context of foreign rule. The third significant influence in the early phase of Indian nationalism was the French revolution and its message of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Ram Mohan Roy was swayed by the ideas that inspired the French revolution. In his writings and deeds, Roy launched a vigorous attack on the archaic social mores dividing India along caste and religious cleavages. For him, the priority was to create a society free from decadent feudal values that simply stood in the way of attaining the goal of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. The final source is of course the traditional Indian thought that was interpreted in the context of colonial rule.

Hence, the ideas of the West influenced many scholars during the renaissance phase and contributed significantly to the intellectual revival. This revival was brought about in two ways: firstly, the works of scholars like Sir William Jones who translated in Code of Manu,

James Prinsep, who unravelled the ancient alphabets and Max Muller who edited the complete text of Rig-Veda. This kind of works by many other European and Indian scholars not only rediscovered but also made available to all educated Indians the great works of Sanskrit literature, formerly known to a few Brahmin pundits. Secondly, the western institutions and ideas that were introduced through English education and administration provided a challenge to many aspects of Indian society. To understand and appreciate the direction and contributions of the renaissance and enlightenment period it would be appropriate here to quickly grasp the prevailing socio-economic and cultural conditions of the time.

1.2.3 SOCIO- ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CONDITION OF THE PERIOD

Indian Society in the eighteenth century was a picture of many contrasts and contradictions. Economically agriculture was the main occupation of the people. Foreign trade was flourishing under the Mughals. In spite of such a favourable balance of trade, India's economic condition could not improve because of constant warfare. Within the country, there were revolts of the Sikhs, Jats, and Marathas and from outside, foreign invasions, like that of Nadir shah (1739 A.D.) and Ahmad Shah Abdali (1761), were common. European countries like France, England, Portugal and Spain showing their interest in trading with India caused further political and economic instability in the country and ultimately they destroyed its economy. Socially, there was no unity of pattern in the social and cultural life of the people. Whether they were Hindus or Muslims, there was division among them on the basis of region, tribe, language and caste. Caste rules were to be observed in matters of marriage, diet, inter-dining as well as in choosing a profession. Anyone found disobeying rules was most likely to be thrown out of the community.

The condition of women was the nastiest. The birth of a girl child was considered to be unfortunate. Girls were married off in their childhood. Polygamy was permitted. Women had no right to property or divorce. Perpetual widowhood was the injunction of the society, especially amongst the upper castes. The presence of widows was considered inauspicious. As child marriages were common in such occasions sometimes even the infant girls became widows and were condemned to perpetual widowhood. Inter-caste marriages were not allowed. Even the prevailing social system did not permit a person from a lower caste to

eat with a person of a higher caste. The condition of Muslim women was much the same. They faced immense hardship due to the practice of purdah, polygamy, lack of education and rights to property.

In the field of science that India, which was so advanced, had by now neglected her mathematics and sciences. They remained ignorant of the advances made in the field of science by the West. Education was steeped in tradition. The students were taught reading and writing along with arithmetic. Girls seldom went to school. Education was patronized by local rulers, members of the aristocracy and benevolent contributors. The only positive aspect was the friendly relations. Friendly relations existed between the people of the two religions. Religious tolerance was practised. Many Hindus had faith in Muslim saints while many Muslims showed an equal respect for Hindu gods and saints. In fact, the upper class Hindus and Muslims had many more things in common with each other than with the lower classes of their own community.

Thus, the re-examination of the existing socio, political and legal traditions and bringing much needed changes in the social and cultural practices became the main concerns for the pioneers (who essentially imbibed new ideas of liberalism, rationalism, democracy, equality and freedom) of the reform movement. Calcutta being the old centre of British rule, the schools, colleges and newspapers have come up first in Calcutta. The citizenry of Calcutta utilizing the opportunities provided by English education played a leading role not only in the new educational movement but also in the Indian renaissance movement.

1.2.4 TORCHBEARERS OF THE RENAISSANCE AND REFORM MOVEMENT

Many thinkers and cultural figures who are well-versed with Indian traditions and also exposed to Western values are the one who were active in renaissance movement and contributed to the modern Indian political thought. Significant among such pioneering people was Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833), who is recognized by many as the father of modern political thought in India. Ram Mohan Roy being the torchbearer was followed by Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Michael Madhusudan Datta, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, Rabindranath Tagore, Sharatchandra Chattopadhyaya, Nazrul Islam and many others from all walks of Indian life, culture, religion, literature and science. At the same time it is not

possible to discuss renaissance that took place in all walks of life under the current subject matter of political thought. As the social and religious reform activities of Individuals, missions and the literature produced by them played a significant role in awakening the Indian Society, building patriotism and nationalistic feelings among the Indians across the geographical divisions and distinct religious communities it would be more appropriate to deal with such endeavours in the subsequent section beginning with the father of Modern Indian Political Thought.

1.2.4.1 RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY (1774-1833)

Raja Ram Mohan Roy struck the most distinguishing note of Hindu Renaissance, the note of Universalism which is heard again and again in the teachings of the Hindu prophets of the new age. It is a is the note we hear in Sri Rama Krishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Ranade, Gandhi, Tagore, Aurobindo and S. Radhakrishnan. It is the fulfilment and realization of the universalism of the Upanishads. The Brahmo Samaj Movement was essentially a non-sectarian movement wedded to the basic principles of Universalism. Under the influence of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Brahmo Samaj touched several aspects of Indian life namely, law, matrimony, social customs, religion and education.

In religious field, Roy emphasized the latent values in all great religions; in the political sphere he stressed freedom from outworn and perverted restrictions. In his political agenda, he announced his intention to restore to India her ancient traditions of the Dharma by removing the senseless accretions that had defiled it in later years. Thus in leading the successful fight against Sati and other customs, he often referred to Manu, Vyasa and Narada to prove his authority.

Roy was one of the earliest Indians to realise that India's greatest need was a synthesis of eastern and western cultures and his greatest contribution to the modern system of education was the introduction of western education, the study of English language and western sciences, in the country. He felt that the spread of English education must inevitably result in the raising of moral, social and political life of his backward and degenerate countrymen. In other words, he did so because he earnestly desired to bring India into the full current of modern thought and civilization.

1.2.4.2 VIVIAN DEROZIO (1809-1831) AND YOUNG BENGAL MOVEMENT

Born in an Anglo- Indian family of Portuguese descent in Kolkata in 1809, within a span of life of 22 years and 8 months Vivian Derozio left a phenomenal legacy as a rare Anglo-Indian prodigy, a thinker, a fiery journalist, a spirited patriot, one of the harbingers of Bengal Renaissance and a pioneer of Indian Modernity. He wrote several patriotic poems while declaring India as “My Native Land”. Indeed, he was the first person to exhort the words “freedom from British rule”. He and his firebrand student-disciples of “Young Bengal” fought against Sati, idolatry, bigotry and for widow re-marriage, the spread of education and ideas of liberty and human rights.

Derozio made a profound impact on learning and the shaping of modern history in India. He started Young Bengal Movement in Hindu College and lit a torch of knowledge which was carried forward by some of his pupils at Hindu College. He taught his students to prize rationality and shun superstition during his brief teaching tenure (about six years) at his college. But by then he had ignited the spark which would light up the path of Bengal Renaissance and was instrumental in effecting the transition from tradition to relative ‘modernity’. Derozio’s emphasis on critical and free thinking, rational radicalism and his young Bengal movement features eloquently and significantly in the whole paradigm of Bengal Renaissance.

1.2.4.3 ISWAR CHANDRA VIDYASAGAR (1820-1891)

While Ram Mohan Roy stirred up the Renaissance movement in India through social reforms, combining European bourgeois humanist thoughts, ideals and concepts with the essence of religion, the tenor of Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar’s thinking was absolutely secular. Vidyasagar, despite of being born as a Brahmin and a versatile Sanskrit scholar, not only called the Sankhya and Vedanta philosophy as false, emphasized on the study of Western philosophies, which according to him, evolved rationally as a result of interaction with the progress of science. He defined a very bold break to give a new orientation to the currents of Renaissance. It was Vidyasagar who freed the humanist movement, as far as it was possible to do it, in the then social condition, from religious outlook and influence. His conduct, his entire life and works affirm this truth unequivocally. Vidyasagar’s greatest contribution lies in the improvement of the condition of widows. Despite opposition,

Vidyasagar openly advocated widow remarriage. Soon a powerful movement in favour of widow remarriage was started. At last, after prolonged struggle the Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856. Through his efforts, twenty-five widow remarriages took place. He also spoke vehemently against child marriage and polygamy.

Vidyasagar contributed enormously to the growth of the Bengali language and contributed to the evolution of the modern prose style in Bengali. He wrote a Bengali primer, 'Varna Parichay', which is used even today. Through his writings, Vidyasagar made the people aware of the social problems and thus helped the growth of nationalism in India.

1.2.4.4 BANKIMCHANDRA CHATTOPADHYAYA (1838-1894)

Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya was not only the literary beacon of Bengal in the 19th century but the inspiring soul of the revolutionary struggle for the liberation of India from the clutches of cultural, literal and political colonialism in British India. The lyrical song- '*Bandemataram*' (1882) (Hail to The Mother), originally written in 1874, later included in his novel – *Anandamath* became the national anthem of Indian National Congress. Many of our patriotic revolutionaries went to the gallows singing this '*mantra*' (hymn) during the independence movement. The Mother, to Bankim, is not an ordinary religious deity, but a new entity, the mother country India, in which people, irrespective of race, religion and caste, live and move. Bankim simply epitomized the sacred and eternal religion of patriotism and nationalism in one single poem.

Bankim is not only the Father of *Bandemataram*; he is also the spiritual father of Indian nationalism. Since the beginning in the 10th century AD, Bengali literature has been secular, non-communal and liberal. Bankim maintained that great tradition. He wrote in "*Rajsingha*" (1882): "No-one is good as only because he is a Hindu; No-one is bad as only because he is a Muslim" Of course, experts notice slight sectarian deviation in Bankim's '*Anandamath*' (1882) from secular ideals. This deviation is rather minor and insignificant when compared with his enormous positive contribution to the Indian Renaissance. Muslims of the day accepted Bankim's positive contribution to the nation and joined the '*Bandemataram*' chorus without any inhibition. As a slogan, it was raised from common Hindu-Muslim platforms during the movement against the Partition of Bengal in 1905 and the Khilafat movement in the early 1920's. The alleged sectarianism in '*Anandamath*' slipped into oblivion.

1.2.4.5 SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (1863-1902)

Vivekananda proclaimed the essential oneness of all religions. He condemned the caste-system, religious rituals, ceremonies and superstitions. He believed that Monism, the Brahman of the *Advaita Vedanta* philosophy, could be the future religion of thinking humanity. He had a deep understanding of Hindu philosophy and travelled far and wide to spread its message. Vivekananda took the spiritual message of Indian Renaissance to the West. He attended the World Parliament of Religions, the first of its kind in recorded history, to be held anywhere in the world. Representatives of fifty nations participated in the Parliament. Swami Vivekananda's speeches in the Parliament of Religions electrified the audience. Universalism and secularism were enshrined in the immortal words of Swami Vivekananda and the ancient civilization of India appeared on the world stage with the new glare of Renaissance.

At home Vivekananda was a social reformer rather than a religious leader. He propagated Ramakrishna's message of peace and brotherhood and emphasized the need for religious tolerance which would lead to the establishment of peace and harmony in the country.

In 1896, Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission to propagate social welfare. It laid emphasis not on personal salvation but on social good and social service. The Ramakrishna Mission stood for religious and social reform based on the ancient culture of India. Emphasis was put on the essential spirit of Hinduism and not on rituals. Rendering social service was the primary aim of the Ramakrishna Mission. It believed that serving a human being was the same as worshipping God. The Mission opened a chain of schools, hospitals, orphanages and libraries throughout the country. It provided relief during famines, earthquakes and epidemics. A math or monastery was established in Belur near Calcutta. The Belur Math took care of the religious developments of the people.

1.2.4.6 DAYANAND SARASWATI (1824-83)

Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj in Rajkot, was born into a Brahmin family in Kathiawar, Gujarat, in 1824. At the early age of 14, he rebelled against the practice of idol worship. He ran away from home at the age of twenty. For the next fifteen years, he wandered all over India meditating and studying the ancient Hindu scriptures. Dayanand Saraswati believed that the Vedas contained the knowledge imparted to men.

by God, and hence its study alone could solve all social problems. So he propagated the motto “Back to the Vedas.” Asserting that the Vedas made no mention of untouchability, child marriage and the subjugation of women, Swami Dayanand attacked these practices vehemently.

In 1863 Swami Dayanand started preaching his doctrine of one God. He questioned the meaningless rituals, decried polytheism and image worship and denounced the caste system. He wanted to purify Hinduism and attacked the evils that had crept into Hindu society. Dayanand began the suddhi movement which enabled the Hindus who had accepted Islam or Christianity to return to Hinduism, their original faith. Dayanand published his religious commentaries in Hindi so as to make the common people understand his preachings. The Satyarth Prakash was his most important work. Dayanand worked actively for the regeneration of India. In 1875, he founded the Arya Samaj in Bombay. The Arya Samaj made significant contributions to the fields of education and social and religious reforms. The Arya Samaj influenced mostly the people of northern India, specially Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Punjab. Although it was not a political organisation, the Arya Samaj played a positive role in creating a nationalist pride in Indian tradition and culture.

1.2.4.7 JYOTIRAO GOVINDRAO PHULE (1827-90)

Jyotirao Govindrao Phule prominent role in bringing about, reforms in Maharashtra. His main aim was to seek social justice for the people belonging to the so-called untouchable and backward classes. By establishing Satyasodhak Samaj he began working towards improving the condition of women, the poor and the untouchables. He was opposed to the domination of the Brahmins and started the practice of conducting marriages without Brahmin priests. People from all castes and religions were allowed to join the association. Jyotirao Govindrao Phule did his best to bring in positive changes in the spheres of education, agriculture, caste system, social position of women, etc. in the 19th century.

1.2.4.8 MAHADEV GOVIND RANADE(1842-1901)

In 1867, the Prarthana Samaj was started in Maharashtra with the aim of reforming Hinduism and preaching the worship of one God. Mahadev Govind Ranade and R.G. Bhandarkar were the two great leaders of the Samaj. The Prarthana Samaj did in Maharashtra what the Brahmo Samaj did in Bengal. It attacked the caste system and the predominance of

the Brahmins, campaigned against child marriage and the purdah system, preached widow remarriage and emphasised female education. In order to reform Hinduism, Ranade started the Widow Remarriage Association and the Deccan Education Society. In 1887, Ranade founded the National Social Conference with the aim of introducing social reforms throughout the country. Ranade was also one of the founders of the Indian National Congress.

1.2.4.9 PANDITA RAMABAI (1858-1922)

The British Government did not take substantial steps to educate women. Still, by the end of the 19th century, there were several women who had become aware of the need for social reform. Pandita Rama Bai had been educated in United States and in England. She wrote about the unequal treatment meted out to the women of India. Pandita Ramabai is the only female personality whose ideas and practices on ameliorating the conditions of women in India place her in league with other socially awakened thinkers of the country. For instance, like Jyotirao Phule, for whom the cause of Dalits became his mission for life, Ramabai remained engrossed with the cause of the women's emancipation throughout her life. She founded the Arya Mahila Sabha in Pune and opened the Sarda Sadan for helping destitute widows.

1.2.4.10 SAROJINI NAIDU (1879-1949)

Sarojini Naidu who is also called as Nightingale of India was a renowned poet, great orators of her time and social worker. She was a singer of songs and a fighter for freedom. She was a rare blend of a poet and patriot. She inspired the masses with the spirit of nationalism through her patriotic poems. She stood for voting rights for women, and took an active interest in the political situation in the country. She toured the world extensively advocating for Indian Independence. She also helped to set up the All India Women's Conference.

1.2.4.11 ANNIE BESANT

Annie Besant, an Irish woman who came to India in 1893, helped the Theosophist movement to gain strength. She propagated Vedic philosophy and urged Indians to take pride in their culture. The Theosophists stood for the revival of the ancient Indian religion

and universal brotherhood. The uniqueness of the movement lay in the fact that it was spearheaded by foreigners who glorified Indian religious and philosophical traditions.

1.2.4.12 REFORM MOVEMENTS AMONG THE MUSLIMS AND SYED AHMAD KHAN (1817-1899)

Movements for socio-religious reforms among the Muslims emerged late. Most Muslims feared that Western education would endanger their religion as it was un-Islamic in character. During the first half of the 19th century only a handful of Muslims had accepted English education. The Muhammedan Literary Society, established by **Nawab Abdul Latif** in 1863, was one of the earliest institutions that attempted to spread modern education. Abdul Latif also tried to remove social abuses and promote Hindu-Muslim unity.

The most important socio-religious movement among the Muslims came to be known as the Aligarh Movement. It was organised by Syed Ahmad Khan a man described as the most outstanding figure among the Muslims. Syed Ahmad Khan was born in 1817 into a Muslim noble family and had joined the service of the Company as a judicial officer. He realised that the Muslims had to adapt themselves to British rule. Hence, advised Muslims to embrace Western education and take up government service.

In 1862, he founded the Scientific Society to translate English books on science and other subjects into Urdu. He also started an English-Urdu journal through which he spread the ideas of social reform. Through his initiative was established the Mohammedan Oriental College which later developed into the Aligarh Muslim University. It helped to develop a modern outlook among its students. This intellectual movement is called the Aligarh Movement.

As a social reformer, Syed Ahmad Khan campaigned against the purdah system, polygamy and the Muslim system of divorce. He emphasised the need for removing irrational social customs while retaining the essence of Islam and encouraging a rational interpretation of the Koran. Syed Ahmad Khan believed that the interest of the Muslims would be best served through cooperation with the British Government. It was only through the guidance of the British that India could mature into a full-fledged nation. So he opposed the participation of the Muslims in the activities of the Indian National Congress.

1.2.4.13 REFORM MOVEMENTS AMONG THE PARSIS AND THE SIKHS

The Parsi Religious Reform Association was started in 1851. It campaigned against orthodoxy in religion. Religious and social movements among the Sikhs were undertaken by various gurus who tried to bring about positive changes in the Sikh religion. Baba Dayal Das propagated the nirankar (formless) idea of God. By the end of the 19th century a new reform movement called the Akali Movement was launched to reform the corrupt management of Gurdwaras.

1.2.5 INDIAN RENAISSANCE: A CRITICAL REVIEW

Many historians and social thinkers of India while recognizing the importance of renaissance in igniting rational and enlightened thinking, however, they also view that the mixing of tradition and modernity in it has its own negative consequences. According to KN Panikkar, the cultural creativity and intellectual efflorescence that were the hallmarks of the European Renaissance were conspicuous by their absence in the Indian situation. The period of renaissance was not particularly known for creativity, which received an impetus only when renaissance and reformation merged with nationalism and tried to usher in an alternative modernity. The Indian intelligentsia had to undergo a long period of incubation before they could try to redefine the renaissance by exploring their cultural and intellectual roots. Such an enquiry, however, got enmeshed in religion, leading to sectarian consciousness, which in turn undermined some of the core values of renaissance such as religious universalism. What reformers such as Ram Mohan Roy, Devendranath Tagore, Keshab Chandra Sen and Narayana Guru did to propagate monotheism and the unity of the godhead was indeed significant, but in a multi-religious society, the invocation of Vedanta as the source of inspiration adversely affected the principle of universalism which all of them upheld. This contradiction, which remained unresolved, had serious repercussions for the state of secularism in post-Independence India.

For Panikkar, what is celebrated in India as the renaissance was actually an attempt to reorder existing social and cultural practices in light of the lived reality in the life of the middle class and the demands of the changing social and cultural world. The practices to which the middle classes were traditionally subjected were obscurantist, inhuman and irrational. The quest for an alternative to these practices, in which the intelligentsia were

involved, did not lead to a reinvention or reinterpretation of the past but only to an invocation of tradition to gain legitimacy for creating new cultural and ideological conditions. The debates on the abolition of sati or child marriage are examples. The social or cultural break brought about by such an attitude towards the past was rather superficial as the critique of tradition did not interrogate its ideological foundations.

It was not based on traditional or Western resources, and as a consequence, an element of ambiguity characterised the attitude towards tradition, on the one hand, and colonial modernity, on the other. Imitation rather than ingenuity, therefore, became the dominant feature of the modernity that the renaissance sought to usher in. The very term renaissance to describe what happened during the colonial era is, therefore, a misnomer, not because it was far removed from the European phenomenon but because most of its ideas were either borrowed from the West or uncritically invoked from sectarian religious sources. The attitude towards tradition was textual rather than experiential. Almost all reformers referred to the Vedas, the Upanishads or the Quran; at the same time, none of them invoked the syncretic tradition of the Bhakti or Sufi movements.

The rebirth of man which the Renaissance connoted hardly happened in India. That raises the question whether Indian society really experienced a renaissance and whether it was later enriched by enlightenment. What Indian society witnessed was reform, both social and religious, which, caught between tradition and colonial modernity, could not fulfil its historic mission. The intelligentsia involved in this effort, ranging from Ram Mohan Roy to Narayana Guru, valiantly struggled to realise their vision of a humane society but found themselves defeated by forces over which they had no control. Their tragedy was that they either trusted the benevolence of colonialism, as Ram Mohan did, or overlooked it as in the case of Narayana Guru. Their inability to confront the cultural ideological domination of colonialism made them increasingly irrelevant.

As a consequence, when political struggles gained ground, movements for social reform were marginalised. By the 20th century, Brahmo Samaj and Prarthana Samaj increasingly lost their appeal, Arya Samaj ceased to be a social force, Satya Shodak Samaj could not sustain its radicalism, and the Sree Narayana Movement had given up its concern for reform. The social space thus vacated by these movements have been colonised by

conservative and obscurantist forces, giving way for the return of the socio-religious practices that the reformation had tried to eliminate.

1.2.6 LET US SUM UP

As it has been discussed in the earlier section, in the Modern political thought that began during the Renaissance and Enlightenment period, one would come across two notable tendencies in the articulation of various thinkers and reformers mentioned in the lesson. While the first tendency is the reaffirmation of the ancient Dharma Principles, the second tendency is emphasis on reform and universal ideals. Some scholars attribute this unique combination of respect for ancient political tradition and sensitivity to the needs for reform a product of the union of English and Hindu culture. To put it in the words of Sen, “The mobile power of European mind struck against the immobile Indian mind. The universal aspect of knowledge, the distribution irrespective of castes and classes, the acceptance of an active and inquiring mind—all these were the revolutionary doctrines which British rule brought forth in seeking to cement the connection between India and the West.”

The cumulative effect of the forces of the Indian Renaissance, thus, is to establish in the political field a synthesis of the religious and cultural tradition and the Western spirit of enquiry. Although the reform movement owed much to the European ideas, the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and Dharmashastras provided a basis for the Universalism and the spirit of enquiry underlying the political thought of Modern India. While human values being the same either in West or in East, it may further be said that the European contribution acted as a catalyst in enabling the dormant forces of ancient Indian culture to reassert themselves after centuries of decay.

However, the exposure to Western and traditional values, however, did not lead to a critical attempt to marry traditional values and beliefs with modernity. Within the renaissance, therefore, two streams emerged: one gave greater importance to tradition and the other to modernity. Eventually, both moved in opposite directions: those who invoked tradition moved towards revivalism, whereas those who advocated modernity tended to discard tradition. The dichotomy thus developed adversely affected the possibility of retrieving the creative potential in tradition as well as charting out the path of an alternative modernity, distinct from the colonial and the traditional.

1.2.7 EXERCISE

1. Discuss about the two notable tendencies in the articulation of various thinkers and reformers that were discussed in the Chapter.
2. Discuss about the social and economic conditions that triggered the renaissance and reform
3. Briefly mention the thought contributed by Women Reformers
4. Briefly mention about the thought of Muslim Reformers
5. Provide a brief note of the reform thought emerged among Sikhs and Parsis.
6. Critically analyse the impact of Indian Renaissance movement.

1.3 EARLY MODERNISERS: RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY AND VIVEKANANDA

- Rajesh Kumar

STRUCTURE

1.3.0 Objectives

1.3.1 Introduction

1.3.2 Raja Ram Mohan Roy

1.3.3 Swami Vivekananda

1.3.4 Let us sum up

1.3.5 Exercise

1.3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Comprehend the contributions of Raja Ram Mohan Roy to the modernist thinking and his contribution to social reform, particularly modern education and eradication of social evils such as sati;
- Understand Swami Vivekanand's philosophy and his contribution to reformist movement and introducing to the world India's rich heritage;

1.3.1 INTRODUCTION

The urgent need for social and religious reform that began to manifest itself from the early decades of the 19th century arose in response to the contact with Western culture and

education. The weakness and decay of Indian society was evident to educated Indians who started to work systematically for their removal. They were no longer willing to accept the traditions, beliefs and practices of Hindu society simply because they had been observed for centuries. The impact of Western ideas gave birth to new awakening. The change that took place in the Indian social scenario is popularly known as the Renaissance which you have broadly studied in the previous lesson. In this lesson you will learn more extensively on two important early modernisers of renaissance period, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Vivekananda.

1.3.2 RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born in a Bengali Hindu family in Radhanagore, Hooghly, Bengal (now West Bengal), in 22 May 1772, into the Rarhi Brahmin caste of Sandilya Gotra (family name Bandyopadhyay). His family backdrop displayed religious diversity; his father Ramkanto Roy was a Vaishnavite, while his mother Tarinidevi was from a Shaivite family. He was the first person amongst the educated Indians to sail to England in 1830. At the time Roy was an ambassador of the Mughal emperor Akbar II, who conferred on him the title of Raja to convince the British government for welfare of India and to ensure that the Lord Bentick's regulation banning the practice of Sati was not overturned. Roy also visited France. Roy died in Britain at Stapleton, Bristol, on 27 September 1833.

In words of Chakrabarty and Pandey, Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a social thinker par excellence. His role in doing away with *sati* among orthodox Brahmins was historical. By founding Brahmo Samaj, Roy sought to articulate his belief in the Islamic notion of 'one god'. In his conceptualisation, social reform should precede political reform, for the former laid the foundation for liberty in the political sense. Given his priority, Roy did not appear to have paid adequate attention to his political ideas. Although he despised colonialism, he appeared to have endorsed the British rule, presumably because of its historical role in combating the prevalent feudal forces. Not only was the British rule superior, at least, culturally than the erstwhile feudal rulers, it would also contribute to a different India by injecting the values it represented.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy's admiration for the British rule was based on his faith in its role in radically altering traditional mental makeup of the Hindus. The continued British rule, he

further added, would eventually lead to the establishment of democratic institutions as in Great Britain. Like any other liberal, Roy also felt that the uncritical acceptance of British liberal values was probably the best possible means of creating democratic institutions in India. In other words, he appreciated the British rule as a boon in disguise because it would eventually transplant democratic governance in India.

Chakrabarty and Pandey further add that the other area for which the role of Ram Mohan was decisive was the articulation of the demand for the freedom of press. Along with his colleague, Dwarkanath Tagore, he submitted a petition to the Privy Council for the freedom of press which he justified as essential for democratic functioning of the government. Not only would the freedom of press provide a device for ventilation of grievances, it would also enable the government to adopt steps for their redressal before they caused damage to the administration.

Roy's viewed the context in the liberal mould, this was a remarkable step in that context for two reasons: (a) the demand for freedom of press was a significant development in the growing, though limited, democratisation among the indigenous elites in India, and (b) the idea of press freedom, if sanctioned, would act as a safety valve for the colonial ruler because of the exposition of grievances in the public domain. Ram Mohan Roy had played a progressive role in a particular historical context. While conceptualising his historical role, Roy appeared to have privileged his experience of British colonialism over its immediate feudal past. By undermining the obvious devastating impact of foreign rule on Indian society, politics and economy, he also clearly supported one system of administration over the other rather consciously, simply because of his uncritical faith in British Enlightenment in significantly transforming the prevalent Indian mindsets. Ram Mohan Roy discharged his responsibility in tune with the historical requirement of his role in the particular context of India's growth as a distinct socio-political unit. Thus, Ram Mohan not only forwarded the rational explanation and cause as the basis of truth but being a revise of relative religion, also contributed to the development of the thought of religious universalism and a universal outlook based on the element of Godhead and monotheism. Ram Mohan explained dissimilar religions in conditions of national embodiments of one universal theism.

Ram Mohan Roy brought out many tracts and pamphlets in Bengali condemning Sati. The Bengali reformers refuted all the arguments forwarded by orthodox in favour of Sati, viz.,

a) failure to perform Sati would mean rebirth as an animal, b) its observance meant enjoyment with husband for eternity, c) it expiated the sins of her husband's maternal and paternal ancestors up to three generations. The reformers dismissed these arguments as metaphysical and not provable since one really did not know with certainty anything that legislation necessarily seek to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number on this earth. The women's happiness when alive was more significant than any promise of happiness hereafter or in the after that life. The reformers also condemned several other inhuman practices such as the sale of daughters to prospective husbands and polygamy. They also sought to restore to women the rights of inheritance-bestowed on her by the ancient law givers like Vajnavalkya, Narad and Vyas.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy not only championed for the cause of women's empowerment, he also advocated for political liberal principles in all walks of life. In the religious field Roy stood for tolerance, a non-communal approach to all problems and secularism. He valued the freedom of the individual to follow the dictates of his conscience and even to defy the commands of the beastly class. Politically, Roy was a supporter of the impersonal authority of law and opposed all kinds of arbitrary and despotic power. He was convinced that the existence of constitutional government is the best guarantee of human freedom. He insisted on the use of constitutional means as when required to safeguard the rights. He preferred the gradual improvements of the condition of this country because, to him, such improvements were more lasting and profound.

As firm believer of individual's political and civil rights, Roy believed in the sanctity of right to property. Similarly, he believed that a strong middle class had an important role to play in socio-political dynamics. He was for the emancipation of poor peasants who were exposed to the exploitation of zamindars. He wanted the government to reduce its demands of landlords. He wanted to preserve the ryotwari system and rural basis of Indian civilization and also establish modern scientific industry. He however differed from the other western liberal thinkers in one important respect, viz. role of state and sphere of state activities. In his scheme of things, the state is expected to bring about social reform, in protecting the rights of the tenants against the landlords etc.

1.3.3 SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Swami vivekananda was born in Calcutta in 1863. Sooner after having come in contact with Ramkrishna, Vivekanda's life was changed. It was in 1883 he became world famous at Chicago. "*jiva is shiva*". "Awake, arise & stop not till the goal is reached." He founded Ramkrishna mission in 1897. Narendranath had varied interests & wide range of scholarship in philosophy, history, social sciences, art and other subjects. He evinced much interest in spiritual text.

In words of Nikhilnanda, Vivekananda is regarded as the patriot saint of modern India and an inspirer of her dormant national consciousness. To the Hindus he preached the ideal of a strength-giving and man-making religion. Service to man as the visible manifestation of the Godhead was the special form of worship he advocated for the Indians, devoted as they were to the rituals and myths of their ancient faith. His four classics: *Jnana-Yoga*, *Bhakti-Yoga*, *Karma-Yoga*, and *Raja-Yoga*, all of which are outstanding treatises on Hindu philosophy. In addition, he delivered innumerable lectures, wrote inspired letters in his own hand to his many friends and disciples, composed numerous poems, and acted as spiritual guide to the many seekers who came to him for instruction.

Vivekand's initial beliefs were shaped by Brahmo concepts, which include belief in a formless God and deprecation of the worship of idols. Not satisfied with his knowledge of Philosophy, he wondered if God and religion could be made a part of one's growing experiences and deeply internalized. Narendra went about asking prominent residents of contemporary Calcutta whether they had come "face to face with God. but could not get answers which satisfied him.

In words of Anil Chawla, Swami Dayanand's primary focus was reform of Hindu society and political message, though important, was secondary. Swami Vivekananda wanted Indians to develop pride in their culture. To that extent one can say that Swami Vivekananda's message was more political than reformist. For him service of mankind was more pious than any rituals. He rejected caste system. Swami Vivekananda, like Swami Dayanand, faced severe opposition from the then prevalent Hindu orthodoxy all his life. He decided to go to USA and talk of Hinduism when crossing the sea was declared to be a taboo by Hindu orthodoxy. In 1893, he delivered his famous speech at the Parliament

of Religions held at Chicago. For three years he preached in USA and England. Recognition of Swami Vivekananda by West was not just an acceptance of him as a person.

Chawla adds that Swami Vivekananda helped Hinduism rise out of the clutches of orthodoxy. The new educated class that was emerging across the country found a new identity that did not break them from their roots and yet was modern in outlook. Swami Dayanand's message had got confined to the newly formed community of Arya Samaj, which became one more sect of Hinduism. Swami Vivekananda's appeal was universal. He inspired a new generation of nationalists across the country in places as far as Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Bengal. He always said, three things are necessary to make every man great, and every nation a great: Conviction of the powers being great; Absence of jealousy and suspicion; Helping all who all are trying to be and do good. He favoured the idea that always first learn to be servant, and then you will fit to be master. Avoid jealousy, and you will do great works that they are yet to be done. You must have an iron will if you would cross the ocean. You must be strong enough to pierce the mountains. He was a firm believer of the idea that they alone live longer who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive.

Vivekananda was one person who tried to amalgamate the material well being with spiritual well being. He strongly believed about religion that to be good and to do good is the whole of religion. Vivekananda was of the view that religion is generally taught all over the world, is said to be based upon faith and belief, and, in most cases, consists only of different sets of theories, and that is the reason why we find all religions quarrelling with one another. These theories, again, are based upon belief. One man says there is a great Being sitting above the clouds and governing the whole universe, and he asks me to believe that solely on the authority of his assertion. In the same way, I may have my own ideas, which I am asking others to believe, and if they ask a reason, I cannot give them any. This is why religion and metaphysical philosophy have a bad name nowadays. Every educated man seems to say, "Oh, these religions are only bundles of theories without any standard to judge them by, each man preaching his own pet ideas." Nevertheless, there is a basis of universal belief in religion, governing all the different theories and all the varying ideas of different sects in different countries. Going to their basis we find that they also are based upon universal experiences.

For Swamy Tejasananda, Sri Ramakrishna was the embodiment of the spirit of India's culture and religion. He opened the eyes of the Indians to the beauty, grandeur, and strength of Hinduism at a time when their faith in it had greatly slackened. His life stood as a bulwark against those alien forces which attempted to undermine the spirit of Indian civilization. For Vivekananda, Religion is the backbone of Indian national life. From the hoary past India has passed through numberless vicissitudes. That she has survived them is due to the fact that the nation has remained true to its spiritual instinct. At every time of spiritual crisis in Indian national life there has been born a saint or a prophet who has saved the nation from the impending danger. Sri Krishna, Buddha, Shankara, Nanak, Chaitanya each fulfilled a great demand of the age in which he was born.

For Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna represented not only Hinduism but all faiths. In words of Swami Nikhilanand, The spirit of democracy and equality in Islam appealed to Naren's mind and he wanted to create a new India with Vedantic brain and Moslem body. Further, the idea began to dawn in his mind that the material conditions of the masses could not be improved without the knowledge of science and technology as developed in the West. He was already dreaming of building a bridge to join the East and the West. But the true leadership of India would have to spring from the soil of the country. Again and again he recalled that Sri Ramakrishna had been a genuine product of the Indian soil, and he realized that India would regain her unity and solidarity through the understanding of the Master's spiritual experiences.

These are the immortal words of Vivekananda: An aimless life is a miserable life and on the quality of your aim depends on the quality of your life. Go forward, March forward, Look forward; do not look back. Look at the ocean and not at the wave. Swamiji's favorite quote in the Gita: "Kshudram Hrudaya Dourbhalyam." There is nothing meaner than the timidity of the heart. It is only due to fear that you commit mistakes. It is only due to fear that you get death. Every negative occurrences in the society is only due to fear. Therefore be fearless. Live for the sake of the Ideal and die for the sake of the Ideal. Don't live looking at yourselves from the eyes of others. The dogs may bark on looking at the sky. Currently what India needs is neither Sattava nor tamas. What India currently needs is rajas. In India People may look 'sattvic' externally but are 'tamasic' within. Do

not have friends who are petty minded as they crave for name and fame. If you serve the society selflessly, the liberation will adorn you automatically.

In the words of Vivekananda, “religion is not Hinduism. The essence of my religion is Strength. If you are not physically and mentally strong, how can you experience the Truth? You will always have someone to criticize you in this world, however good your work may be. This world resembles the tail of a dog and can never be reformed. You are not a sinner. He is a sinner who calls you a sinner. You are all the sons of Immortality. There are no such words called sin and fear in my dictionary. Arise, Awake and stop not till the goal is reached. For how many births do you want to remain in this sleep of ignorance? After you started your journey towards God, how much ever nearest or dearest tendencies may call you back, do not look behind but March forward. Oh! My Mind get back to your source.”

To Viveknanda, if the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: “Help and not Fight,” “Assimilation and not Destruction,” “Harmony and Peace and not Dissension.”

1.3.4 LET US SUM UP

What runs through the early renaissance response—whether Ram Mohan or Vivekananda—was the concern for massive reform in the Hindu society that had lost its vitality. Given the fractured nature of the Hindu society, it would be difficult if not impossible, they argued, for the nation to strike roots, let alone prosper. Drawn on his liberal values of the British variety, Ram Mohan and Vivekanand welcomed the Western ideas as a significant step towards radically transforming the Hindu society by injecting the basic ideas of Enlightenment. Vivekananda’s intellectualism reached its heights when he carried to world stage and played his part in introducing great heritage of India to world community.

1.3.5 EXERCISE

1. Discuss what makes Raja Rammohan Roy to stand first among the Modernizers.
2. Elaborate on Swami Vivekananda's philosophy.

1.4 MODERATE AND EXTREMIST DEBATE: GOPAL KRISHAN GOKHALE AND BAL GANGADHAR TILAK

- Rajesh Kumar

STRUCTURE

1.4.0 Objectives

1.4.1 Introduction

1.4.2 The Moderates

1.4.3 The Moderate: Gopal Krishan Gokhale

1.4.4 The Extremists

1.4.5 The Extremist: Bala Gandhar Tilak

1.4.5.1 Tilak's Concept of Swaraj

1.4.5.2 Tilak's Extremist Programme of Action

1.4.5.3 National Education, Boycott, Swadeshi and Passive Resistance

1.4.6 Let us Sum up

1.4.7 Exercise

1.4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand Moderates understanding about British colonialism, their inclination towards liberalism and self-rule with a case study of Gopal Krishna Gokhale;

- Comprehend the departure of Extremists from Moderates and how revolutionary are some of the Extremist viewpoints and their struggle against what they consider the British imperialism;
- Grasp the Extremist ideology through the pronouncements of Thilak and his concepts of Swaraj, direct action and passive resistance; and
- Get a critical perspective about moderate and extremist debate.

1.4.1 INTRODUCTION

In contemporary historiography, the Moderate phase begins with the formation of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885 and continued till the 1907 Surat Congress when the Extremists appeared on the political scene. The basic differences between these two groups lay in their perception of anti-British struggle and its articulation in concrete programmes. While the Moderates opposed the British in a strictly constitutional way, the Extremists favoured a strategy of direct action to harm the British economic and political interests in India. By dwelling on what caused the dissension among those who sincerely believed in the well-being of the country, the aim of this lesson is also to focus on the major personalities who sought to articulate as coherently as possible the respective ideological points of view.

1.4.2 THE MODERATES

While Moderates and Extremists constitute contrasting viewpoints, their contribution to the freedom struggle in its early phase is nonetheless significant. Moderates like Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and M.G. Ranade were uncritical admirers of western political values. They held the concept of equality before law, of freedom of speech and press and the principle of representative government as inherently superior to their traditional Hindu polity which they defined as ‘Asiatic despotism’. So emphatic was their faith in the British rule that they hailed its introduction in India as a providential mission capable of eradicating the misrule of the past. Given the reluctance of the Crown to introduce representative institutions in India, Dadabhai Naoroji lamented that the British government in India was ‘more Raj and less British’ (quoted in Nanda 1998: 48–49). What he meant was that though the British rule

fulfilled the basic functions of Hindu kingship in preserving law and order in India, its reluctance to introduce the principle of representative government was most disappointing. So, despite their appreciation of British liberalism, their admiration hardly influenced the Raj in changing the basic nature of its rule in India.

The Moderate philosophy was most eloquently articulated by Surendranath Banerji (1848–1925) in his 1895 presidential address to the Congress. In appreciation of the British rule, Banerji thus argued that: “we appeal to England gradually to change character of her rule in India, to liberalise it, to adapt it to the newly developed environments of the country and the people, so that in the fullness of time, India may find itself in the great confederacy of free state, English in their origin, English in their character, English in their institutions, rejoicing in their permanent and indissoluble union with England”

The Moderates were swayed by British liberalism and were persuaded to believe that in the long run, the crown would fulfil its providential mission. Banerji appears to have echoed the idea of Dadabhai Naoroji (1825–1917) who in his 1893 Poona address underlined the importance of “loyalty to the British” in protecting India’s future. As he stated, ‘until we are able to satisfy the British people that what we ask is reasonable and that we ask it in earnest, we cannot hope to get what we ask for, for the British are a justice-loving people ... [and] at their hands, we shall get everything that is calculated to make us British citizens’. Despite his ‘loyalist’ attitude, Naoroji was perhaps the first Congressman who argued strongly for a political role for the Congress which was, so far, identified as a non-political platform. While conceptualising the role of the Congress in British-ruled India, Naoroji had no hesitation in announcing that the Congress as a political body [was] to represent to our rulers our political aspirations”.

There are four points that need to be highlighted here. First, as evident, the Moderates identified specific roles for the Congress that sought to mobilise people in accordance with what was construed as the most appropriate goal in that context. The guiding principle was to avoid friction with the ruler.. Second, the philosophy stemmed from an uncritical faith of the early nationalists in the providential mission of the British and, hence, the British conquest of India was not ‘a calamity’ to be lamented but ‘an opportunity’ to be seized to ‘our advantage’. Third, the Moderates believed that the continuity of the British rule was sine qua non of India’s progress as a civilised nation. In other words, the introduction of

the British rule was a boon in disguise simply because Hindus and Muslims in India, argued Ranade, 'lacked the virtues represented by the love of order and regulated authority'. Finally, Ranade defended a strong British state in India to ensure equality of wealth and opportunity for all. By justifying state intervention in India's socio-economic life, he differed substantially from the basic tenets of liberalism that clearly restricts the role of the state to well-defined domains. Here, the Moderates performed a historical role by underlining the relative superiority of a state, drawn on the philosophy of Enlightenment, in comparison with the decadent feudal rule of the past. To them, the imperial state that gradually unfolded with its devastating impact on India's economy, society and polity, was a distant object and, hence, the idea never gained ground in their perception and its articulation.

1.4.3 THE MODERATE: GOPAL KRISHAN GOKHALE

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was born on May 09, 1866 in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, and a state on the western coast of India that was then section of the Bombay Presidency. Although they were Chitpavan Brahmins, Gokhale's family was relatively poor. Even so, they ensured that Gokhale received an English education, which would lay Gokhale in a location to obtain employment as a clerk or minor official in the British Raj. Being one of the first generations of Indians to receive a university education, Gokhale graduated from Elphinstone College in 1884. Gokhale's education tremendously influenced the course of his future career. In addition to learning English, he was exposed to western political thought and became a great admirer of theorists such as John Stuart Mill and Edmund Burke.

Like most of the liberal Indian thinkers of his time, Gokhale appreciated and welcomed the British rule in India. He had trust in the English conscience. He supported the British rule for two reasons. Firstly like all the moderates, Gokhale was convinced that it was because of British Rule that the process of modernization of the Indian society had set in. Secondly, the British upheld the concept of equality before the law. They introduced the principle of representative government and guaranteed freedom of speech and press. Gokhale was convinced that if British Rule continued for sometimes, India would be modernized completely. He also believed that in keeping with their traditions, the British would fulfill their pledges and bestow on India-self government once Indians qualified for the same.

However, Gokhale's faith in the British sense of justice does not imply that he was their blind admirer. He bitterly criticized the policies of the British government on a number of issues. He condemned the British for keeping the Indians out of high position despite their professions of equal treatment to all. He also opposed the partitioned of Bengal. He no doubt remains to be one among the founding social and political leaders of the Indian Independence Movement against the British Empire in India. Gokhale was a senior leader of the Indian National Congress and founder of the Servants of India Civilization. By the Civilization as well as the Congress and other legislative bodies he served in, Gokhale promoted not only primarily independence from the British Empire but also social reform.

To achieve his goals, Gokhale followed two overarching principles: non-violence and reform within existing government organizations. Thus essentially, Gokhale becomes a moderate and liberal political thinker. As a moderate, he preferred constitutional methods for attaining the goal of self government. He argued that the chief merits of constitutional method were that it involved a minimum of disturbances in the existing arrangement and would help in winning the support of the freedom loving people of England. Gokhale's constitutional method includes passive resistance, nonpayment of taxes etc. avoiding violence, rebellion and abetting of foreign invasion. As a liberal, his political ideas were largely influenced by the liberal thinker like Bentham, Mill and Ranade. At the same time, his liberalism was slightly different from the classical liberalism that existed in the 18th and 19th century. As a liberal Gokhale stood for individual liberty and certain basic rights which the people should enjoy. He felt that individual liberty could be usefully allowed only when individual behave with a sense of self-restraint. To him the right of free expression and freedom of the press were essential to realize the ideal of individual liberty. He therefore, opposed the Official Secret Bill in 1904. Gokhale also supported the right to private property and freedom of contract. In order to maintain individual liberty and essential civil rights, he proposed the establishment of the representative institution in the country. Gokhale did not demand universal franchise. For e.g. for the village Panchayat election he wanted that only such person should be enfranchised who paid a minimum land revenue. Gokhale also suggested the principle of special representation for the religious minority. Recognizing the communal differences between the Hindus and Muslims, he pleaded for separate representation of the Muslims.

Gokhale's ideas regarding the role of state remarkably differed from that of classical liberalism. Classical liberalism stands for a laissez-faire state. But, Gokhale wanted state intervention to regulate the economic and social life of the country. So far as his political tenets were concerned he believed that political progress of India must be based on law and order, ii) his political goal was that of the colonial self-government, iii) to him the constitutional agitation was the only means to attain the desired end. He was a liberal thinker but differed from the classical liberal thinkers in certain respects, particularly with their ideas regarding the role of the state and their insistence on laissez-faire policies. In contrast with the classical liberal thinkers, Gokhale advocated a positive role for the state in developing and modernising society.

In words of D.G. Karve, Gokhale was an ardent social reformer. His attitude towards social reform was essentially humanitarian and liberal. When it comes to social reforms Gokhale followed Ranade to a great extent. Like Ranade he believed that the social and political reform must go hand in hand and he favoured legislation in order to bring about certain social changes. He began his advocacy for social reforms as early as 1890, wherein he sought several reforms in the areas of marriage, female education.

Patwardhan says, Gokhale also believed that social reforms must go along with political reforms and advocated certain reforms viz. (i) not more than a year's income should be expended on the marriage ceremonies of son or daughter; (ii) that the boys should not be married before the ages 16, 18 or 20 and the girls before the ages of 10, 12 and 14; (iii) Polygamy should be prohibited; (iv) no one should marry after the age of 60; (v) that efforts should be made to promote female education.

Patwardhan adds, Gokhale suggested free and compulsory elementary education and the elementary education meant something more than a mere capacity to read and write. It meant the greater moral and economic efficiency of the individual-and hence he strove hard to insist on compulsory free education. He also suggested prohibition of liquor and other measures of public health so as to remove hindrances and hardships from the path of the development of individual personality. It could be easily noticed from the reforms suggested by Gokhale that his programme of social reforms reflects his liberal faith. Liberalism attaches greater importance to individual dignity. This dignity cannot, however, be restored unless the person is educated and enlightened. It is for this purpose that the

liberal ideology advocates the all-round development of the individual personality. Gokhale as a convinced liberal attached utmost importance to this aspect of human life viz., the development of personality. Caste barriers, racialism, communal disharmony, ignorance, religious fanaticism, subjugation of women, were all hindrances in the path of the development of individual personality and hence had to be removed immediately. Thus, Gokhale's social reformism was also the child of his liberal outlook.

Religion as a particular sect or faith did not count much in Gokhale's thinking although he insisted on the spiritualisation of politics. This morality was again based on secular considerations and did not refer to any religious dogma. He also believed in the primacy of means. He insisted on the spiritualization of politics and wanted to use it as a means for serving the people. He laid more emphasis on building up of character and asserted that a nation must deserve liberty before it puts forward the demand for the same. He laid emphasis on the need of raising the moral and social standards of the people to fully involve them in the national movement. As such he proved to be a precursor of Mahatma Gandhi in this respect.

Gokhale was not a mass leader unlike Tilak and Gandhi. On the contrary, he was of the opinion that the enlightened, educated people, few in number should guide the society and lead the masses in a proper way. Hence he exerted more to enlighten the educated classes on major socio-economic issues rather than to organize masses for political action. He believed in persuasion rather than confrontation. In short, in the field of politics Gokhale laid the foundations of constitutionalism. In the field of economics he encouraged the process of capitalist development and in the field of social reforms he tried hard to enhance the dignity of the individual irrespective of his caste, race, religion, language and class. He was thus a modernizer of Indian society in every sense of the term.

1.4.4 THE EXTREMISTS

In contrast with the Moderates who pursued a policy of reconciliation and compromise with imperialism, the Extremists demanded time-bound programmes and policies harming the British interests in India. This new school of thought represented an alternative voice challenging the Moderates' compromising policies of conciliation with imperialism. Disillusioned with the Moderates, the Extremists believed in self-reliance and sought to

achieve swaraj through direct action. So, there were two levels at which the Extremist critique had operated. At one level, they questioned the Moderate method of mendicancy that, for obvious reasons, appeared hollow when the imperial logic of the state prevailed over other considerations. In other words, the failure of Moderates in obtaining concessions for the Indians indicated the changing nature of the colonial state that had shown its true colour as soon as its political control in India was complete. So, it was a level at which the Extremists articulated their opposition both to the Moderates and the British government. At another level, the Extremists also felt the need of being economically self-reliant to fight the British state that gained in strength by exploiting India's economic resources. Swadeshi was not merely an economic design but also a political slogan on which India was sought to be made strong by being self-reliant. This was an area where serious intellectual contributions were made by such exponents of Extremism as B.G. Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo, and so on. Unlike the Moderates who insisted on constitutional means to reform the British state, not only did the Extremists dismiss this plea as most unfortunate, they also ruled out the possibility of negotiations with the ruler for verbal concession.

As evident, by the early part of the twentieth century and especially in the context of the 1905 Bengal partition agitation, the Moderates lost credibility since their anti-imperial strategies failed to gain what they aspired for. Moreover, their faith in the British liberalism did not work to their advantage and it dawned on the later nationalist, particularly the Extremists, that the colonial power in India drew more on exploitation and less on the basic tenets of liberalism. So, the rise and consolidation of Extremism as a political ideal in contrast with the Moderate philosophy is a clear break with the past, since the principles that inspired the late nineteenth century nationalists appear to have completely lost their significance.

1.4.5 THE EXTREMIST: BAL GANGADHAR TILAK

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was born in a middle class family of moderate means in the Ratnagiri district of Konkan on the west coast of India on 23rd July, 1856. The family was noted for its piety, learning and adherence to ancient traditions and rituals. His father, Gangadhar Pant was a teacher by profession and a Sanskrit scholar. Young Tilak was thus brought up in an atmosphere of orthodoxy and traditions. This instilled in him a love for Sanskrit and respect for ancient Indian religion and culture. His father was transferred to Pune when he

was ten years of age. This provided him with an opportunity to get higher education.

After completing his graduation in 1876, he studied law. But instead of joining the government service or practising law, he decided to serve the country. Believing that the best way to serve the country was to educate the people, he and his friend Gopal Ganesh Agarkar decided to devote their lives to the cause of education. They started the New English School at Pune in 1876 and started their career as school teachers. However, Tilak started feeling that educating young children was not enough and that the elderly people also needed to be exposed to the socio-political reality. Hence, in 1881 he started two weeklies, 'Maratha' in English and 'Kesari' in Marathi. Both the Kesari and the Maratha evoked an enthusiastic response and within a short time five thousand copies of the Kesari were getting printed. In almost all the major towns of Maharashtra, a single copy of the Kesari was read by many people. In 1885 Tilak along with Agarkar set up the Deccan Education Society in order to start a college which was later named after the then Governor of Bombay as the Ferguson College. However, after 10 years, due to the ideological differences with Agarkar, Tilak left Deccan Education Society and devoted his energy to political work. He made the Kesari a powerful weapon to fight the British.

During this period he played an active role on the political front. He became one among the founding members of Indian National Congress and often actively participated in deliberations. He even moved an amendment to the resolution on the reconstruction of the Legislative Council in the 1889 Bombay session of Indian National Congress. He moved an amendment to the resolution on the reconstitution of the Legislative Council. The amendment was seconded by Gopal Krishna Gokhale. In 1892, Lord A.O. Hume, who had actively supported the establishment of the Indian National Congress, sent a secret circular to its members, exhorting them to carry on their active work among the people in order to strengthen the Congress. The circular evoked mixed reactions among the leaders of the party. Tilak strongly supported the circular by Hume and from the various editorials Tilak wrote in the Kesari, it becomes evident that he was getting more and more convinced that the political movement could gather momentum only if the Congress members were to work actively among the people and organize them together.

Tilak not only put forth the idea on the need for working among the people but started acting towards implementing it. The first programme he undertook was to organize the

Ganapati festival on a social basis. He knew that the people liked festivals and participated in them enthusiastically. It was his earnest desire to give a constructive orientation to the Ganapati festival and create a social platform for educating the people. People in Maharashtra enthusiastically responded. He also organized lectures by eminent persons on varied subjects and thus created a platform for educating and enlightening the people. Chhatrapati Shivaji is to this day one of the greatest national heroes for the people of Maharashtra; he is a perennial fountain of inspiration. Tilak decided to organize the Shivaji festival in Maharashtra with a strong belief that if we cherish the memories of our national heroes we can promote in ourselves a nationalist attitude. For promoting the sense of nationality, it is necessary to have national heroes whom people can worship as idols. His capacity for mobilizing public opinion and defying powerful opponents soon earned him popularity. He was thus emerging as a leader of the people not only in Maharashtra. Up to 1898, his field of activity was confined to Maharashtra. After 1900, however, he realized the need for spreading the political activity to every nook and corner of India and directed his efforts towards doing so.

It is important to mention here that during the early decades of freedom struggle the leadership of Indian National Congress was dominated by moderates like Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerji, Pheroz Shah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and M.G. Ranade were uncritical admirers of western political values advocated liberalism. Tilak, who in his earlier days was influenced by liberal thinkers like Ranade and his disciple Gokhale, later began to feel that liberalism would not find roots in the Indian soil. He thought that an effort to transplant Western philosophy would not succeed either. He believed that every society had its own source of strength and India's strength lay in her cultural values. The Indian society was like a tree in the soil which derived sustenance from her cultural values. He wanted the modern political ideal of nationalism to be grafted on this tree, instead of transplanting an alien ideology on Indian soil. Tilak had thus given up his early adherence to liberalism and taken to the path of militant nationalism. He did not approve the moderate stand of the Indian National Congress because he felt that it would not help achieve political rights. He decided to give a radical orientation to the Indian National Congress by creating a greater awareness among the people through their participation in political activities. He wanted a militant struggle against the British government which was responsible for economic exploitation and impoverishment of the Indians. Tilak pointed out that due to foreign

domination people had lost their sense of self-respect which had led to moral degeneration in the society. He was agonized at the slavish mentality that had come to stay with the Indians; he decided to make a determined bid to put a stop to this rot and generate a new enthusiasm among the masses. He realized that sacrifices were necessary in order to kindle the flame of patriotism. Convinced that not words but deeds alone could bring about a change in the attitude of the people, he organized cadres of active and devoted young men, willing to make sacrifices. Though he himself worked within the framework of law, he wanted the young men to pave the way for revolutionary action.

The change in his ideological shift from liberalism to radical nationalism was reflected in his various actions. In addition to the Ganapati and Shivaji Festivals, he organized a successful campaign for the boycott of foreign cloths, no tax campaigns against the imposition of taxes on cotton etc. He had clearly articulated his mission of expanding the Congress base by incorporating the peasants, a constituency that was simply beyond the Moderates purview. It was in this period that he took the decision on the priorities in his public life and began to strive for his country's Independence. This decision was the result of his belief that the ills of our society could be overcome once independence was achieved. Therefore achievement of *swarajya* became his first priority.

Tilak also asserted that a nation striving for freedom had the moral right to use all means and methods in its struggle. He knew the significance of the contributions made by Swami Vivekananda in India's freedom struggle by trying to mould world opinion. He also appreciated Gokhale's fervent advocacy of the Indian cause and his concerted efforts at convincing the British of the need for giving political rights to the Indians. He was also aware of the importance of the spade work done by Shyamji Krishna Varma in building up a revolutionary cadre. He strongly supported all these efforts carried out in different corners because all aimed at the single ideal of winning freedom. His ideological stance was to accept the sutra which called for adoption of all kinds of means for the realization of the goal of *swarajya*.

In 1916, Tilak started the Indian Home Rule League with barrister Baptista as its president. The two organisations started by Mrs Besant and Lokamanya Tilak clearly demarcated their programmes and spheres of action before starting to work in cooperation with each other. In May 1915, Tilak gave a speech at Belgaum in which he said, "Swarajya is the

natural right of the people and in order to win swarajya, the formation of the Home Rule League (Swarajya Sangh) is absolutely essential.” He toured different parts of Maharashtra to impress on the people that “swarajya is our birthright and we must have it”. Tilak was no great orator and his speeches were devoid of flowery language. His words were direct and simple; but his sincerity touched the hearts of the people. The sacrifices made by him and his dedication to the ideal of swarajya made people accept his moral authority. Thus it is important to understand the concept of Swarajya or swaraj as expounded by Tilak.

1.4.5.1 TILAK’S CONCEPT OF SWARAJA OR SWARAJ

Chakrabarty and Pandey say, Tilak insisted on immediate *swaraj* or self-rule. His concept of *swaraj* was not complete independence but a government constituted by the Indian themselves that ‘rules according to the wishes of the people or their representatives.’ Similar to the British executive that ‘decides on policies, impose and remove taxes and determine the allocation of public expenditure’, Indians should have the right ‘to run their own government, to make laws, to appoint the administrators as well as to spend the tax revenue.’ This is one dimension of his thought.

According to Chakrabarty and Pandey, Tilak gave the idea of *prajadroha* or the right of the people to resist an authority that loses legitimacy. In Tilak’s conceptualisation, if the government fails to fulfil their obligation to the ruled and becomes tyrannical, it lacks the legitimacy to rule. Tilak was a nationalist par excellence. Tilak’s argument in favour of cow protection drew upon the sacredness of cow in Hindu belief, completely disregarding the importance of beef in Muslim diet. Furthermore, the organisation of national festivals in honour of Shivaji, the Hindu hero of the Maharathas, and also redefining of an essentially Hindu religious festival—the Ganapati *utsav*—in nationalist terms, set the ideological tenor of Tilak’s political philosophy where Muslims seemed to be peripheral, if not entirely bypassed. Chakrabarty and Pandey add that under the cover of religious festivals, Tilak sought to create a nationalist platform for an effective mobilisation against the British that would not allow, for obvious reasons, a political campaign adversely affecting the imperial interests. Tilak emerged as a master planner in refining these in the pre-Gandhian phase of Moderates and Extremists.

Famous Historian Bipin Chandra says, Tilak not only did he articulate the voice of protest

in a unique vocabulary; he also expanded the constituency of the nationalist politics by proclaiming the supposed spiritual superiority of the ancient Hindu civilisation to its western counterpart. In other words, Tilak played a historical role in the construction of a new language of politics by being critical of ‘the denationalised and westernised’ Moderate leaders who blindly clung to typical western liberal values disregarding their indigenous counterparts while articulating their opposition to the British rule. To Bipin Chandra, Tilak was not merely a nationalist leader with tremendous political acumen, he himself represented a new wave of nationalist movement that created an automatic space for it by (a) providing the most powerful and persuasive critique of Moderate philosophy, and (b) articulating his nationalist ideology in a language that was meaningful to those it was addressed. This is how Tilak is transcendental and his ideas of *swadeshi*, boycott and strike had a significant sway on Gandhi who refined and well-tuned some of the typical Extremist methods in a completely changed socio-economic and political context when the nationalist struggle had its tentacles not only in the district towns but also in the villages that unfortunately attainment of the perfection remained peripheral in the pre-Gandhian days of freedom struggle.

1.4.5.2 TILAK’S EXTREMIST PROGRAMME OF ACTION

The task of the extremist leaders was fourfold—educating the people, creating in them self-respect and pride in their own ancient heritage, uniting them and lastly preparing them for the struggle to regain their lost freedom or *Swaraj*. The programme of action advocated by the extremists included: (a) National Education, (b) Boycott, (c) *Swadeshi* and (d) Passive Resistance. Tilak contributed immensely to the development of each of these programmes.

1.4.5.3 NATIONAL EDUCATION, BOYCOTT, SWADESHI AND PASSIVE RESISTANCE

Chandra says, nationalists like Tilak wanted education to infuse among the people a sense of respect and affinity for their own religion, culture and heritage. Hence, they drew a different scheme of education which they called ‘National education’. The objective of this scheme was to remove despondency and scepticism from and to inculcate self-respect in the minds of the people. This was to be achieved by presenting to them a picture of the greatness of their past. Bipin Chandra says, under the scheme of National Education, the schools and colleges were to be exclusively managed and run by Indians. Secular education alone was not sufficient because it developed a one-sided personality. Religion has a

salutary influence on human personality. It builds morality and courage. But at the same time, secular and practical education was not to be neglected. This was necessary for preparing the youth for their responsibilities in the present day world. The new syllabus was also to include technical and industrial education. Thus, under the scheme of National Education, the modern scientific and technological knowledge of the west was to be combined with the knowledge of all that was best and worth retaining in our own heritage.

Bipin Chandra adds that a very important basis for Tilak's extremist action programme was to pressurise the alien rulers with a 'boycott' of foreign goods. He greatly contributed to the development of the theory of boycott and to popularise it. Economic exploitation was one of the primary motives of British imperialism. Their reckless policies were responsible for the total destruction of the Indian industries, crafts, trade and commerce. Indian economy was forced to face unequal competition with the foreign goods which were allowed a free flow into the country. The tools of this self-help were 'boycott' and 'Swadeshi'. Boycott meant a firm determination on the part of the Indians not to use foreign goods.

The swadeshi movement exhorted the people to use indigenous products even if they were crude and costly. It also urged the educated Indians to enter the field of production, instead of pressing for bureaucratic jobs. The swadeshi movement also included in it a plan to train Indians in the art of industry and commerce. Obviously, the success of the swadeshi movement depended upon the success of boycott. The more the people resolved to boycott foreign goods, the more would be the demand for swadeshi goods.

The last but not the least weapon of the nationalists was Passive Resistance. In a sense, it was an extension of boycott. Boycott implied a determination not use foreign products and not to assist alien bureaucracy in carrying out the administration of the country. Chandra says Passive Resistance urged the people to go one step further. It insisted upon non-payment of taxes and revenues to the alien authorities. It also included a programme to train people for self-rule. This training was to be provided to the people by organising our own administrative units parallel to those instituted by the British. The villages, talukas and districts were to have parallel institutions like courts, police etc. Thus, Passive Resistance was a revolutionary programme. It amounted to a silent revolt against British imperialism.

1.4.6 MODERATE-EXTREMIST DEBATE

Bidyut Chakrabarty identifies six major differences between moderates and extremists. First, the distinction between the Moderates and Extremists is based on serious differences among themselves in their respective approaches to the British Empire. Based on their perception, the Moderates hailed the British rule as most beneficial in contrast with what India had confronted before the arrival of the British. Until the 1905 Bengal partition, the Moderate philosophy was based on loyalty to the Empire that had shown signs of cracks in the aftermath of atrocities meted out to those opposing Curzon's canonical design of causing a fissure among Indians by highlighting their religious schism. For an Extremist like Bipin Chandra Pal, it was most surprising because "how can loyalty exist in the face of injustice and misgovernment which we confront everyday". Opposed to the Moderate stance, the Extremists always considered the British rule as a curse that could never render justice to the governed in India. Not only did they challenge the British government for its evil design against the Indians, they also criticised the Moderates for having misled the nationalist aspirations in a way that was clearly defeating. Instead, the new nationalist outlook, articulated by the Extremists, drew largely on an uncompromising anti-imperial stance that also fed the revolutionary terrorist movement in the late nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century.

Second, the difference between the Moderates and Extremists was based on their respective approaches to the outcome of the nationalist intervention. While the Moderates stood for the attainment of self-government through gradual reforms, the Extremists insisted on complete swaraj. In other words, the model of self-government, as evident in the dominion of Canada and Australia, appeared to be an ideal form of government for India. The Extremist arguments were qualitatively different. By demanding complete swaraj, Tilak, the most prominent of the Extremists, exhorted that 'swaraj is my birthright'.

Third, the Extremists were not hesitant in championing violence, if necessary, to advance the cause of the nation while the Moderates favoured constitutional and peaceful methods as most appropriate to avoid direct friction with the ruler. In contrast with these means, the Extremists resorted to boycott and swadeshi that never evoked support from the Moderates. While defending boycott, Tilak argued that 'it is possible to make administration deplorably difficult and to create conditions impossible for the British bureaucracy by fighting for our

rights with determination and tenacity and by boycott and strike'. Urging those associated with the British bureaucracy, Tilak further argued that with the withdrawal of Indians from the administration, 'the entire machinery will collapse'. Simultaneously, with the boycott of government offices, the Extremists also propagated for the boycott of foreign goods and promotion of swadeshi or home-spun. This strategy, first adopted in the context of the 1905 Bengal partition agitation, was further extended to the nationalist campaign as a whole, presumably because of its effectiveness in creating and sustaining the nationalist zeal. The economic boycott, as it was characterised in contemporary parlance, caused consternation among the British industrialists more than the other types of boycott.

Fourth, the Moderates appeared to be happy under the British, presumably because of their belief that Indians were not capable of self-rule. This was what prompted them to support the British rule uncritically. The views of the Extremists were, for obvious reasons, diametrically opposite. While articulating his opposition to this idea, Tilak argued that "we recognise no teacher in the art of self-government except self-government itself. It values freedom for its own sake and desires autonomy, immediate and unconditional regardless of any considerations of fitness or unfitness of the people for it". Here too, the Moderate-Extremist distinction is based on serious ideological differences; while the former supported a loyalist discourse, the latter simply rejected the stance in its articulation of anti-imperialism.

Fifth, in the Extremist conceptualisation of struggle against imperialism, the ideal of self-sacrifice, including the supreme sacrifice figured prominently, while in the Moderate scheme of political struggle, this idea appeared to have received no attention. This probably indicates two different faces of Extremism: on the one hand, there was the public appearance where the strategies of boycott, swadeshi and strike were pursued to articulate the nationalist protest; the sudden violent attack was, on the other hand, also encouraged to terrorise the British administration that was really rattled following the incessant violent interventions by those who preferred underground militant operation.

Finally, while the Moderates drew upon the British variety of liberalism, the Extremists were inspired by the writings of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and the teachings of Vivekananda. In view of their faith in constitutional means of opposition to the British rule, Moderates preferred the path of conciliation than confrontation, whereas the Extremists espousing the demand for swaraj plunged into direct action against the government by

resorting to boycott and strike. Unlike the Moderates who drew upon the ideas of Gladstone, Disraeli and Burke to refine their political strategy, the Extremists found Bankim's *Anandamath*, a historical novel that narrated the story of the rise of the Hindu sannyasis vis-à-vis the vanquished Muslim rulers and Vivekananda's interpretation of Vedanta philosophy. By overlooking the non-Hindu tradition completely and accepting the Hindu tradition as Indian tradition, they however, nurtured a narrow view of history which is misleading given the cross-fertilisation of multiple traditions in Indian civilisation.

1.4.7 EXERCISE

1. Briefly state moderate understanding about British Colonialism.
2. Discuss the underlying philosophical foundations of Gokhale's Thought.
3. How Extremists are different from moderates.
4. Elaborate on the concept of Swaraj as given by B.G Tilak.
5. Elaborate on Tilak's Extremist Programme of Action.
6. Bring out the main differences in the philosophy and methods as expounded by Gokhale and Tilak.
7. Critically analyse the moderate-extremist debate.

2.1 CIVIC NATIONALISM: GANDHI, NEHRU AND AZAD

- S. S. Narang

STRUCTURE

2.1.0 Objectives

2.1.1 Introduction

2.1.2 Meaning of Civic Nationalism

2.1.3 Gandhi's Contribution to Civil Nationalism

2.1.3.1 Gandhi and Satyagraha

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2.1.3.4 Gandhi and Non-Violence

2.1.3.5 Truth: The Basic Principle of Non-Violence

2.1.3.6 Gandhi on State

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2.1.4 Nehru and Civil Nationalism

2.1.4.1 Nehru on Nationalism

2.1.4.2 Nehru on Secularism

2.1.4.3 Nehru on Hindu-Muslim Problem

2.1.4.4 Nehru and Democracy

2.1.4.5 Nehru's Internationalism

2.1.5 Contribution of Maulana Azad to Civic Nationalism

2.1.5.1 Azad on Nationalism

2.1.5.2 Azad on Hindu-Muslim Unity

2.1.5.3 Azad on Non-Violence

2.1.5.4 Azad's views on Democracy

2.1.5.5 Azad on Partition of India

2.1.6 Let Us Sum Up

2.1.7 Exercise

2.1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the meaning of civic nationalism and how it is different from ethnic or religious nationalism;
- Comprehend Gandhi's contribution to civic nationalism with his concepts of satyagraha, sarvodaya, swadeshi, non-violence, truth, state and swaraj;
- Recognize how Nehru contributed to India's civic nationalism with his liberal and secular notions, how his views on nationalism, secularism, Hindu-Muslim unity, democracy and internationalism influenced to advance the concept of civic nationalism in post-independence India;
- Understand Maulana Azad's views about civic nationalism, his concepts non-violence, democracy, his views on nationalism, Hindu-Muslim unity and on partition of India.

2.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, India has been a nation-in-the-making. This was both an objective and subjective process. On the one hand, several political, economic, social and cultural forces were interacting to make India into a unity. On the other hand the

Indian people were becoming conscious of this unity and the commonness of their interests, particularly the struggle for overthrow of the British rule. Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad along with other national leaders made tremendous contributions in creating and sustaining the consciousness of Indian nationhood.

The concept of civic nationalism is their unique contribution. It was pitted against cultural nationalism of both Hindu and Muslim national leaders. Civic nationalists led by Gandhi not only waged successful anti-colonial struggle for freedom, but also attempted to build a secular, democratic India where liberty, equality, fraternity and justice were secured for its people. Commitment to civil liberties and democracy was a basic constituent of nation-making in India. Hence, civic nationalism was both a theoretical concept and a practical weapon to make India a strong and united nation.

2.1.2 MEANING OF CIVIC NATIONALISM

Civic nationhood is meant to describe a political identity built around shared citizenship in a liberal-democratic state. A ‘civic nation’, in this sense, need not be unified by commonalities of language or culture (where “culture” refers to the traditions and customs of a particular group). It simply requires a disposition on the part of citizens to uphold their political institutions, and to accept the liberal principles on which they are based. Membership is open to anyone who shares these values. In a civic nation, the protection or promotion of one national culture over others is not a goal of the state.

Although the concept of a ‘civic’, as distinct from a ‘cultural’, nationalism goes very far back in the literature, those employing the distinction today tend to be philosophers who wish to defend a liberal ideal of citizenship. Jürgen Habermas argues that new immigrants to a liberal state should not be required to assimilate to the culture of the majority nation, but instead must simply “assent to the principles of the constitution within the scope of interpretation determined at a particular time”.

Brian Barry has also defended a version of civic nationalism: he suggests that liberal governments should maintain a fair set of rules within which individuals have equal opportunity to make free choices (perhaps based on their cultural preferences). All that a civic state can legitimately require of its citizens is that they take account of their fellow citizens’ interests and are willing to sacrifice for the common good, not that they adopt the

cultural practices of the majority nation. Civic nationalists agree that it is not the role of the state to privilege or endorse one national culture over others.

Hence, civic nationalism is the form of nationalism in which the state derives political legitimacy from the active participation of its citizenry, from the degree to which it represents the 'will of the people'. It is often seen as originating with Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Civic nationalism lies within the traditions of rationalism and liberalism, but as a form of nationalism it is contrasted with ethnic nationalism. Membership of the civic nation is considered voluntary. Civic-national ideals influenced the development of representative democracy in countries such as the United States, France.

The identification of Western nations with civic identities cannot be understood apart from the very successful theoretical efforts of Hans Kohn, Karl Deutsch, Ernest Gellner, and Eric Hobsbawm against any notion that Western nations were rooted in primordial ethnic identities. None of these writers denied that people in the premodern era had a sense of communal kin affinities within their respective tribes or localities. Their focus was on the modern nation states of Europe, and their argument was that these nation states, and the corresponding ideology of nationalism, were "artificial historical constructs", "invented traditions", designed by political elites interested in forging powerful territorial states among previously scattered and loosely related rural communities lacking a sense of national-ethnic identity. The claim that European nations contain a strong ethnic core was not factual but an ideological weapon employed by state-elites seeking to create states with mass appeal, a national infrastructure, official languages, centralized taxation, national currency and laws, through the modern era, culminating in the nineteenth century. The exhortations of nationalists in the 19th and 20th centuries about the kin-ethnic roots of their nations were mere rhetorical ploys to induce in the masses support for elite efforts at extending their power nationally over an otherwise disparate, never ethnically conscious, population consisting of multiple dialects, ancestries and local loyalties.

Civic nationalism came out of western-north European countries where a solid middle class had developed; the members of this class were inclined to a conception of the state as a voluntary association of individual wills. This was a progressive class in wanting a form of citizenship based on laws originating out of the free reasoning of individuals; this class did not like states that impose an ethnocultural identity on its members. Ethnic

nationalism, by contrast, come out of cultures lacking a middle class, driven by regressive classes suspicious of free willing individuals, and preferring states that impose on their people an irrational sense of communal collective identity inspired by emotions rather than by factual historical realities.

2.1.3 GANDHI'S CONTRIBUTION TO CIVIC NATIONALISM

Mahatma Gandhi's greatness lay in defining the character and contours of the nation that was being forged, mobilizing common people, peasants, workers and the middle classes. He was successful in bringing millions of women out of their homes to participate in the political movements and Satyagraha campaigns wherein nation was defined as the nation people. It was also proclaimed that politics was the domain of all Indians. Through Satyagraha, Sarvodaya, trusteeship, morality in politics, non-violence and many other means, Gandhi not only built Indian nation, but also the feeling of oneness that is nationalism.

Gandhi was a multifaceted personality. He was an intensely political person who observed the highest standards of morality in politics. He was great a political strategist who led a prolonged non-violent mass movement for the overthrow of colonial domination and the capture of state power. He was an orthodox religious person, who stood for the social liberation of women and the ending of caste discrimination, oppression and, ultimately the caste system itself. He pleaded in general for the application of reason to all aspects of social life. Above all, he was a person who had the vision of a world in which all conflicts would be settled without the use of violence. He exhibited total commitment towards civil liberties and democratic functioning and gained grasp over the relationship between leaders and masses in a mass movement.

Gandhi's uncompromising opposition to and fight against communalism *is* well-known. Moreover, he opposed communalism in all its variants: Hindu, Muslim or Sikh. He wrote in January 1942 that he held it to be utterly wrong thus to divide man from man by reason of religion. He also refuted the basic communal assumption that the political economic interests of Hindus and Muslims were different as they follow different religions.

What conflict of interest can then be between Hindus and Muslims in the matter of revenue, sanitation, police, justice, or the use of public conveniences? The differences can only be in religious usage and observances with which a secular State has no concern. He added

that we must get out of the question of religious majorities and minorities. Why is a Parsi's interest different from Hindu's or Muslim's, so far as the state is concerned? Also, refuting the two-nation theory, he observed in 1940 that a Bengali Muslim speaks the same tongue that a Bengali Hindu does, eats the same food, has the same amusements as his Hindu neighbour. They dress alike. The same phenomenon is observable more or less in the South among the poor who constitute the masses of India. One reason why he was critical of colonial electoral bodies such as municipal committees and legislatures was because in them Hindu and Muslim interests were falsely regarded as separate and even antagonistic.

Gandhiji was totally committed to civil liberties. He wrote that Indian must first make good the right of free speech and free association before they can make any further progress towards their goal. They must defend these elementary rights with their lives.' He then went on to explain what these rights meant: 'Liberty of speech means that it is unassailed even when the speech hurts; liberty of the Press can be said to be truly respected only when the Press can comment in the severest terms upon any event or matters. Freedom of association is truly respected when assemblies of people can discuss even revolutionary projects. The fight for swaraj, the khilafat, the Punjab wrongs means fight for this threefold freedom before all else. Further he wrote that Civil liberty consistent with the observance of non-violence is the first step towards swaraj. It is the breath of political and social life. It is the foundation of freedom. There is no room for dilution or compromise. It is the water of life. He has never heard of water being diluted.

Communalism was, Gandhiji asserted, not only anti-national but also anti-Hinduism in the case of Hindu communalism and anti-Islam in the case of Muslim communalism. For example, referring to Mohammad Ali Jinnah and those who think like him, he said, are rendering no service to Islam; they are misinterpreting the message inherent in the very word Islam. He said that Muslims will not serve Islam if they annihilate the Hindus; rather they would thereby destroy Islam. And if the Hindus believe that they would be able to annihilate Islam, it means they would be annihilating Hindu Dharma. As is well-known, during 1946 and 1947, Gandhiji stood like a rock in opposition to the prevailing communal mentality, popular communal pressure and the barbarous communal killings, and waged an incessant campaign against communalism and for Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity. His work in hate-torn Noakhali, Bihar, Calcutta and Delhi is a legend.

Gandhiji had a holistic, modern understanding of secularism. In India, as elsewhere secularism has come to be defined in four terms and Gandhi accepted all of them and framed his own one which was truly national. First definition was that religion should not intrude into politics; there should be separation of religion from politics, economy, education and large areas of social life and culture; and religion should be treated as a private or personal affair of the individual. To talk of any other, so-called Indian definition of secularism, which would condemn this, would be to deny secularism. At the same time, secularism does not mean removing religion from life itself or antagonism to religion. Nor does a secular state mean a state where religion is discouraged. In a multi-religious society, secularism also means that the state should be neutral towards all faiths or, as many religious persons would put it, the state should show equal regard for all faiths, including atheism. Secularism further means that the state must treat all citizens equal and must not discriminate in favor of or against citizens on grounds of their religion. Secularism has another feature specific to India. In India secularism arose as the ideology of uniting all the Indian people vis-a-vis colonialism and as a part of the process of nation-making. Simultaneously, communalism has developed as the most divisive social and political force. Consequently, secularism also came to mean a clear-cut opposition to communalism.

It is well known that the social vision of the Indian national movement encompassed a secular society and a secular state. The movement also defined secularism in the same comprehensive manner as discussed in the previous paragraph. It was as a result of this vision and the resultant commitment to it that independent India succeeded in framing a secular constitution and laying the foundations of a secular state and society despite the Partition and the Partition riots.

All would agree that the individual, the Congress and nation must show equal respect for all religions. But Gandhi did not differentiate between this formulation and observing neutrality towards all religions. Gandhiji's regard for the followers of all religions included equal respect for atheists. Gandhiji's change of the proposition 'God is Truth' to 'Truth is God' enabled him 'to give an equal place to atheists in his Congress of all religions. Atheists, provided they accepted Truth as the Supreme End, had an equal place in his programme.

Gandhi also declared that in freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion, that all citizens would be equal before the law, irrespective of creed or

sex, that no disability would be attached to any citizen on grounds of religion, caste, creed or sex 'in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling.

2.1.3.1 GANDHI AND SATYAGRAHA

The concept of Satyagraha was Gandhi's own. He coined it when the Transvaal Government introduced in 1906 an anti-Indian legislation in the local legislature: the Asiatic Registration Bill, seeking to prevent Indians, who had left Transvaal during the Boer War, from returning and to prevent any future Indian immigration; forcing all Indians (around thirty thousand in number) living in the Transvaal to go for fingerprinting and receive from the Government registration certificates. They were supposed to carry these certificates with them whenever and wherever they went. Otherwise, they would be fined, imprisoned or deported. The Bill, as expected, was strongly opposed as the Indians feared that if it was passed, it might one day be used to drive them out from the Transvaal as well as from the whole of South Africa. Under Gandhiji's leadership, the Indians living in the Transvaal opposed the Bill. It was against this background that Gandhi coined the term 'Satyagraha'.

Satyagraha is more than the passive resistance as it goes beyond it. It is the method of securing rights by personal suffering; it is opposed to resistance by arms. As a fundamental concept of Gandhian political theory, it means a conscious assertion of truth and fight against the vested interests. Elaborating the concept, Gandhi states that when he refused to do a thing that is repugnant to his conscience, he used the soul force. For instance, the government of the day passed a law which one does not like. If by using violence he forces the government to repeal the law, he is employing body force. If he does not obey the law and accepts the penalty for violating it, he uses soul-force. It involves sacrifice of self.

The practical application of non-violence in life is Satyagraha or soul force. It is not merely abstaining from violence, but doing good. If one hits one's adversary, that is, violence but to be truly non-violent, one must love him and pray for him even when he hits. Love forgets and forgives evil, wrongdoing, injustice or exploitation. It does not avoid the issue but fearlessly faces the wrongdoer and resists his wrong with the force of love and suffering.

Thus Satyagraha is the non-violent resistance to evil with all the moral and spiritual force. Trust and suffering are its main features. Satyagrahi never considers his opponent an enemy

and always appeals to his reason and conscience to mend his behaviour.

Gandhi believed that soul was superior to body. Hence, he advised the people to oppose any law that went against their moral code of conduct. Voice of the inner conscience was supreme. The dictates of the government were to be strongly resisted if they prevented the people from discharging their duties. Gandhi was not opposed to Satyagraha in a democratic set-up. He did not have full confidence in a parliamentary democracy nor could he accept, the superiority of the majority represented in parliament. Like J.S. Mill, he believed that one single individual might be absolutely right in resisting the anti-people laws of the state. He said that even in a democracy, he would singlehandedly fight against the evils because non-cooperation with evil would be a sacred duty.

The ethics of Satyagraha, thus, does not go well with that of democracy, which rests on number only. In democracy, people are influenced by passion, prejudices and petty consideration. But a Satyagrahi is free from all these. Satyagrahi refutes anything that is opposed to the soul. While fighting for justice and the truth, he prepares himself for any kind of sufferings and sacrifices.

Satyagraha is an inherent birthright of a person, a sacred right, a sacred duty. If the government tramples the rights and freedoms of the people, denies them their due share in the process of the government, deprives them of their independence, protects social exploitation, promotes economic inequality, encourages indiscipline and rests on force, it should be challenged, disobeyed, resisted and overthrown. And anyone who opposes such type of government and tries to secure his rights must be prepared to invite all kinds of atrocities from the government. He may be fined, tortured, imprisoned, persecuted, and also eliminated.

2.1.3.2 GANDHI AND SARVODAYA

Based on the concept of the unity of existence, Sarvodaya (The good for all or the emancipation of all) implies constant fight against cruelty to human beings. It has its roots in the famous Yajur Veda which states that the entire universe is blessed by the Supreme God. It is the Vedantic concept of the spiritual unity of existence and the Gita-Buddhistic concept of the good for all living beings. Sarvodaya includes the values of freedom, equality, justice and fraternity and opposes the state machinery.

State is not created by God. It is an instrument of coercion and exploitation, and based on force and organized violence. It projects and promotes the interests of those who have manipulative skills and capacity to influence and control the government machinery. Sarvodaya seeks to replace the politics of power by the politics of cooperation. People should have freedom and equal opportunity for their spiritual growth. It also means good life for all in every sphere of life – social, economic, political and cultural. It symbolized the greatest good for all the people. It seeks to provide social justice, economic equality and political rights to the people. It is rooted in love, faith, kindness, help and goodwill.

At the political level, it has two significant implications. One it rejects the theory of class struggle and two, it safeguards the interests of the minority. As stated earlier, it seeks to maximize the good of the entire community. Discouraging and denouncing the lust for power and wealth, it emphasizes disinterested service. Dedication, service and the realization of common good are its main features. Sarvodaya has faith in social equality which rests on truth and non-violence. Opposing majoritarianism and giving importance to consensus, Gandhi stood for the village commonwealth and criticized Western democracies these propagated the violence.

2.1.3.3 GANDHI AND HIS CONCEPT OF SWADESHI

Gandhi's Swadeshi was the most powerful weapon in the struggle to drive out the British from India. By using the Swadeshi goods and boycotting foreign goods, he wanted to challenge the English trade and commerce. He knew that the Great Britain was a merchant nation and the British and the East India Company came to India for trade purposes. In case the trade was not profitable, they would never stay here. Therefore, he advised the people to boycott the foreign goods. Who not only boycotted the foreign goods, but also burnt them at different places. By purchasing the goods manufactured in India, they encouraged Indian industries and gave them a new lease of life. The Indian workers also got jobs and Indian money stopped flowing out of the country, which greatly improved the Indian economy.

Gandhi encouraged the use of "Charkha" and "Khadi" to improve the lot of the poor in India and inspired the people to use "Khadi". With Charkha and Khadi he wanted to bring a great change in the village economy and finally in the Indian economy. He stood for

decentralization of production and wanted every village to produce and use all its necessities so that it could become self-sufficient. In addition, it should produce something more to fulfil the requirements of the cities. Heavy industry would necessarily be centralized and nationalized. He did not favour industrial economy as it did not recognize the dignity of man. Rather it made him a slave, a soulless machine. For instance, the West had yet to discover anything as hygienic as the Indian tooth-stick. This was truly Swadeshi giving a tremendous satisfaction to the people. He favoured cottage industries as it gave employment and removed poverty in the countryside. He launched the Swadeshi Movement because political freedom was meaningless without economic freedom.

2.1.3.4 GANDHI'S CONCEPT OF NON-VIOLENCE

Ahimsa, otherwise known as non-violence, means no torture to any one's life. No one should do anything undesirable against any one. One should love all the living and non-living beings. This can be possible only when one is pure and divine. This can be done either by withdrawing from the world or by fighting the evil by doing good deeds in the world. Ahimsa is not merely being harmless to others but is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer. He believed that only love or non-violence would conquer evil wherever it was found — in people or in laws, in society or in government. He who practises non-violence should not even hurt those who are unjust. He must love them. But he would oppose the tyranny whether of parents or others, but never hurt the tyrant.

About his practice of non-violence, Gandhi often used to say, "Truth was inborn in me, non-violence came to me with great effort." His greatest contribution to politics in particular and life in general was his teaching and practice of non-violence. On 14 August 1920, he wrote in *Young India* that nonviolence was a perfect state. It was the real goal towards which all mankind moved naturally, though unconsciously.

Non-violence as a concept did not originate from Gandhi. But certainly he was the first to apply it on a mass scale and in the arena of politics. Bismark unified Germany through the policy of blood and iron, but Gandhi adopted non-violence as a means to get independence for the country. Emphasizing it, he once said that his interest in India's freedom would cease if she adopted violent means, because the outcome would be not freedom but slavery in disguise. For him, non-violence was not a mere philosophical principle. It was

the rule and breath of his life. It was a matter not of the intellect but of the heart.

Recognizing the importance of liberty and love, Gandhi said that non-violence must have universal application, transcending time and space. Applied in both war and peace, it had lasting value. The more one practised it, the more he became perfect and disciplined. One attained divinity to the extent he practised it. By doing so, he could attain deliverance in his life. Whatever was needful and could be gained by political power could be more quickly and more certainly gained by nonviolent means.

2.1.3.5 TRUTH: THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF NON-VIOLENCE

It was Gandhi's highest "Dharma" and non-violence the highest duty. He never wanted violence to be applied to achieve a goal. In 1909 Madanlal Dhingra shot down an English officer and was hanged to death. Without expressing his anger or surprise over the incident, Gandhi remarked, "Dhingra was a patriot, but his love was blind. He gave his body in a wrong way; its result can only be mischievous". Praising non-violence, Gandhi said that India's ills could not be removed by the violence as India's civilization required the use of a different and higher weapon of self-preservation. In his message to the Indian National Congress in 1909 he said violence in any shape or form was to be given up. Neither Swaraj could be won nor any benefit the country would get by violence and terrorism. Anger was to be conquered by non-anger and evil by good.

To Gandhi, Ahimsa was the greatest love, the largest charity. Love never claims, it always gives and suffers, never resents, never revenges itself. In the practice of non-violence, truth is the foundation and love the weapon. Writing on self-suffering, Mahatma Gandhi said: "A nation that is capable of limitless sacrifices is capable of rising to limitless heights. The greater the sacrifice, the quicker the progress". Those who used force overlooked the fundamental distinction between the animal and the human worlds. Adoption of violent resistance posed a threat to human life and degraded it to the level of animal existence.

2.1.3.6 GANDHI ON STATE

Restricting the activities of the state to minimum Gandhi firmly believed in self-directed activity. Emphasizing voluntary cooperation at the village level, he realized that undue state action killed or suppressed one's initiative as it gave rise to nepotism and bribery. Like

other philosophical anarchists, he believed that the compulsive nature of the State robbed individual action of its morality. Men were not machines, and when they were forced to act as automations, there could be no question of morality. Like Thoreau, he considered the state to be a soulless machine. He said that stateless democracy was the most ideal society. On 2 July 1931, he wrote in *Young India*: in such a state of enlightened anarchy, everyone was left to himself. Everyone was his own ruler. There was least interference in his activities from outside. He ruled himself in such a manner that he was never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state, therefore, there was no political power because there was no state.

Gandhi wanted that the State should enjoy minimum power and its role be minimum and limited. Voluntary associations should enjoy more power than the state. State should not be coercive. It should be people-oriented and welfare-oriented. It should be least arbitrary and least authoritative and coercive. As an instrument of exploitation, the state let loose an organized violence against the poor, weak, docile, meek and mild. Supporting the rich, it oppressed the poor, restricted their scope and always rest on force and fraud, coercion and intimidation. In a non-violent society, the state governs the least and applies minimum force. He believed that in the ideal state of Ram Raj or the kingdom of God upon earth, moral authority of the people reigned supreme and the state would collapse and perish in time. But, at the same time, he did not want its immediate abolition.

2.1.3.7 GANDHI AND SWARAJ

In the field of politics or political freedom, it could be obtained only through intense suffering and continuous struggle. It was by no means a gift to be conferred on the people, but something to be achieved through hard work and sincere efforts. And it required a moral courage, physical endurance and a strong conviction. Accepting the Tilak's slogan "Swaraj is our birth right", Gandhi believed that the people were entitled to freedom because they had fought for it and had to pass through a number of ordeals. People should be free because of their immense sufferings they had suffered for freedom. He emphasized that his Swaraj stood for the downtrodden and starving millions; he felt that if the state failed to ensure a good life for its citizens, it must be resisted peacefully.

Swaraj was not the replacement of the white bureaucracy by the brown. It was the total

recasting of life in India. There should be unity in diversity and communal harmony. The society should be free from regional imbalances and rural-urban dichotomy. Freedom, personal and civic, was the foundation of Swaraj. It could be moral freedom (emancipation from the slavery of passions), national freedom (emancipation from the bondage of alien rulers and exploiters) and spiritual freedom as realization of truth. Dedicating every moment of his existence to the cause of the Swaraj, the birth right of Indians, he said that they should not be deprived of it. Swaraj for him meant freedom for the lowliest of our countrymen. He was not interested in freeing India merely from the British yoke, but from any slavery whatsoever.

Swaraj meant self-rule or Ram Raj, or the Kingdom of God on earth. He had a strong desire for Ram Raj. As God did not reside in heaven, he had to be realized on earth. One need not think of the world beyond. If he could do his duty with all sincerity, God would take care of him. This necessarily included political independence.

Unity among different sects would help in achieving Swaraj. Hence he emphasized upon Hindu-Muslim unity. And for this, the Hindus must come forward as their responsibility was greater than that of Muslims, the latter being in minority. It was argued by some that Indian Swaraj would be the rule of the majority community, the Hindus. They were certainly mistaken. If it was to be true, Gandhi said that he would not call it Swaraj and fight it with all the strength at his command. To him Hind Swaraj was the rule of all, the rule of justice. Whether under that rule, the minorities were the Hindus or Musalmans, they had to get justice. No community in India should develop an apprehension that Swaraj would be monopolized by a community. Swaraj would be real only when there would be no occasion for safeguarding such rights. Therefore, necessity of separate electorate for different communities did not arise. He said that poor man's Swaraj was soon coming and let them not be found unrepresented when it actually came.

Swaraj, to Gandhi, was freedom that one enjoyed in every sphere. It was complete independence from alien rule and complete economic and moral freedom. While political Swaraj necessarily meant the removal of the control of the British army in every shape and form, economic Swaraj meant freedom from the British capitalist, as also their Indian counterpart. By political independence, Gandhi did not mean a mere imitation of the Europeans or Americans. They had systems suited to their own genius. Indians must

choose that which would be most suitable for them. He described it Ram Raj, which meant sovereignty of the people based on moral authority. Indian economic independence meant to him the economic uplift of every individual by his or her conscious effort. People must lead a good life and maintain a decent standard of living.

Therefore, he urged the people to go to villages, identify themselves with the villagers, with untouchables and give a meaning to the Hindu-Muslim unity. They should do menial jobs like scavenging. After getting Swaraj, they could not go to sleep, unconscious, unmindful of various problems confronting them. Swaraj was not absence of rule. The people should strive hard to make it success. It recognized no race or religious distinctions. Nor was it to be the monopoly of lettered person or rich men. It was to be for all including the farmer, the maimed, the blind and the starving toiling millions. A stout-hearted, honest, sane, illiterate man might be the first servant of the nation. Swaraj did not lie in the cities but in the villages. If India was to attain true freedom, the people should live in villages, but not in town; in huts, not in palaces to accommodate crores of people. An ideal village would be self-sufficient in nature, free from social evils like untouchability and caste and race exploitation.

Gandhi felt that riches were always a hindrance to real growth. To solve this, he evolved a trusteeship system which would transform the present capitalist order of society into an egalitarian one. It did not recognize any right of private ownership of property unless it was permitted by society for its own welfare. The rich must act as trustees of the people. Capital and labor would coexist: capital as trustee of the society. In his socialism, the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee were all at the same level. This would ensure perfect unity in the plurality of designs.

Strongly criticizing gross economic inequality existing in the contemporary society, Gandhi said that the basis of socialism was economic equality. There could be no Ram Raj in such a society if inequalities existed and the people did not have enough to eat. Gandhi wanted India to become a network of self-governing and self-sustaining village republics. Each village or group of villages would have to own industries and each village would have its own autonomous existence.

Gandhi's views on economy could be summed up: "Decentralization of production and regional self-sufficiency: avoidance of the extremes of wealth and poverty. Acceptance of

wealth as a trust for the betterment of the whole humanity; raising of the moral standards of life by reducing the material standard of luxurious living; renunciation of all vindictive punishments and reprisals; and reducing the use of physical force to its minimum in the task of maintaining law and order”.

He was a Mahatma, a champion of love and peace: gave a new dimension to Indian politics by spiritualizing it. The whole world appreciated his policy of religious basis of politics. He was a great exponent of Truth.

2.1.4 NEHRU AND CIVIC NATIONALISM

Nehru is the single most person who was credit to provide direction to the country and government towards civic nationalism. Being a first Prime Minister of India, he is the one who always attempted to uphold the constitution on all the sensitive matters. His scientific temper, secular outlook, liberal ideology significantly influenced his understanding about civic nationalism.

2.1.4.1 NEHRU ON NATIONALISM

Though a great nationalist leader, Nehru did not develop any theory of nationalism as such. Nevertheless, he defined the meaning and content of Indian nationalism. In his *Unity of India*, there is indication that he believed in the objectivity of the fundamental unity of India nurtured on cultural foundations, “which were not religious in the narrow sense of the term.” He defined nationalism as essentially a collective memory of past achievements, traditions and experiences. Briefly speaking, Nehru’s theory and practice of nationalism had three foundations. First, he was against the racial arrogance of the British rulers. The second source of his nationalism was economic in nature. He blamed the British for the rampant poverty and ruthless exploitation of the country. The third foundation of his nationalism was political and administrative. The foreign rulers had the monopoly of decision making. They cleverly followed the policy of ‘divide and rule’ and tried to disrupt the unity of the country. To Nehru, nationalism is, indeed, a noble phase of self-realization. In his view, nationalism has also solid social, political and economic foundations as well as material advantages to offer. Nehru had been a firm believer in the concept of self-determination.

Other ingredients of his philosophy of nationalism were socialism, secularism, Hindu-Muslim

unity, democracy and internationalism. On the question of socialism, it is to be understood that while a student in London (1905-12), he became attracted to the ideas of Fabian socialism of Shaw and the Webbs, but in a vague and humanitarian way. But during 1926-27 he was again in Europe and there he imbibed more radical ideas of social and economic emancipation. Back in India, he presided over the annual conference of the Indian Trade Union Congress in 1929, and from the presidential platform of the Lahore Congress he categorically emphasized his commitment to socialism.

By now Nehru was fully dedicated to the ethical, sentimental and emotional aspects of socialism as a philosophy of compassion for the suppressed classes and nationalities. But till 1932 his socialism remained rather vague and ambiguous. Between the years 1933 to 1936, however, Nehru bent more and more in the direction of Marxian Socialism. In 'Wither India' (published in 1933) he recognised the conflict between the old nationalist ideology and the new economic ideology" making its appearance on the Indian scene, and pleaded for combining the national struggle with the struggle for economic emancipation. It was, however, in his Presidential Address to the Lucknow Congress on April 12, 1936 that Nehru's socialism acquired a distinct Marxian colour. But since 1936, Nehru gradually drifted away from Marxism and went back to his old socialistic ideals which were nearer to a diluted form of Fabianism. In fact socialism for Nehru was largely a matter of economic strategy rather than an economic doctrine.

Nehru's socialism revolved around planning and the public sector. But planning to him was neither a dogma nor a doctrine. Though he felt the need of a controlled economy, he did not believe in an autonomous sphere of economics beyond the realm of politics. Anyway, by the end of 1938 a National Planning Committee headed by Nehru was set up. But the development model that he put forth envisaged the simultaneous participation of both the private and public sector. Primacy, of course, was given to the public sector as it was considered to be the chief agency of development and modernization.

In the post-Independence period, the Indian National Congress accepted the ideal of a "socialistic pattern of society" at the Avadi (Andhra Pradesh) session in January 1955. The socialistic pattern connotes social ownership or control of the principal means of production, acceleration of national production and the equitable distribution of the wealth of the nation. In a Lok Sabha speech, he pointed out that "equality, removal of disparities

and the possibility of everyone to live a good life constitute a socialist pattern of society.” In Nehru’s scheme, the public sector in the field of heavy and basic industries was to be the dominant phase of the economic advance of the country. But for the advance of production, private sector was also to be encouraged. In a way, he now subscribed to the ideas of a welfare state rather than a socialist state. Besides, cooperative farming had been recognized since the Nagpur Congress of 1958 to be one of the dominant techniques for the realization of a welfare society. Nehru was committed to the theory and practice of mixed economy. All the same, Nehru took the lead in putting socialism as a concrete social and economic objective before the Congress and the country.

2.1.4.2 NEHRU ON SECULARISM

An agnostic, Nehru had been a secularist in his approach since the beginning. In his secular outlook he was greatly influenced by the family environment and the personality of his father, who himself was an agnostic. In his own words, “Of religion I had very hazy notion; for me it seemed to be a woman’s affair.” The Anand Bhawan, the ancestral home of Nehru, was free from religious atmosphere. Here, there were three cultural strands — Hindu, Muslim and Christian. This influence of mixed culture turned Nehru broad-minded and ultimately a secularist. According to Chester Bowles, the US Ambassador, “One of Nehru’s greatest achievements is the creation of a secular state. By proclaiming Indian democracy neutral in matters of religion, he laid down the foundations of a secular state and saved the country from falling prey to religious fanaticism and chauvinism.” In the words of Ashok Mehta, “A distinctive contribution to Indian political life was Nehru’s insistence on secularism.” As a secularist in the Western sense, Nehru believed in keeping the state neutral in religious matters.

2.1.4.3 NEHRU ON HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEM

Nehru’s thoughts on Hindu-Muslim problem evolved along with his evolution as the national leader of India’s independence movement. Firstly he thought that it would be patently wrong to assert that the Hindu Muslim problem in India was created by the British government. But at the same time, he drew attention to the continuous British efforts to keep that problem alive. As a social realist, Nehru was not satisfied with the generally prevalent religious explanation of Hindu-Muslim tensions. As a Marxist, he offered an

economic analysis of this phenomenon. But being unaware of Hindu- Muslim hostility at the grassroots level, he could not go beyond a simplistic class analysis of the whole issue.

2.1.4.4 NEHRU AND DEMOCRACY

Nehru firmly believed in the theory and practice of Parliamentary democracy. He detested authoritarianism and dictatorship of any variety. He was always repelled by the crudities and vulgarities associated with fascism Naziism and totalitarianism. He was a passionate and genuine defender of freedom — civil, political and economic. He deplored the absence of a strong opposition in Indian polity, which is essential for the success of Parliamentary democracy. Regarding press freedom, another pillar of democracy, Nehru's famous remark was: "I would rather have a completely free press, with all the dangers involved in the wrong use of that freedom, than a suppressed or regulated press."

2.1.4.5 NEHRU'S INTERNATIONALISM

A great patriot, Nehru was no narrow nationalist. Intensely proud of his country, he felt it a great honour to be called a "citizen of the world". To him, the whole of humanity was one and the whole world was the stage on which he wanted India to play her part. Nehru was one of the leading spokesmen of Asian and African aspirations for absolute political and economic freedom.

It was Nehru who broadened the outlook of the Indian National Congress and made it take keen interest in international affairs. He made Congress realise that the Indian struggle for freedom was a part of global struggle, and it could be made to succeed if it is geared in the international context. He visited Spain and China (1936-37) to express India's sympathy with the freedom fighters in pre-independence period.

After independence, the credit for India's key role in arranging ceasefire in Korea, in the ending of hostilities in Indo-China, in advocating the ending of Anglo-French military action in Suez, and for sending Indian peace-keeping troops to Gaza Strip and Congo goes to Nehru. He was fully aware of the growing sentiments for interdependence among nations. He stated: "The world be become internationalised, production is international, markets are international and transport is international. Only men's ideas continue to be governed by a dogma which has no real meaning today. No nation is really independent."

He was a firm believer in the ideals of the United Nations. He was opposed to the bipolarisation of world politics and persistently refused to join any power bloc, and instead adopted the policy of Non-alignment. But he sponsored a dynamic concept of Non-alignment and not a passive one of neutrality. In 1949, he declared: "Where freedom is threatened, where justice is menaced and where aggression takes place, we cannot and shall not be neutral." Nehru was the architect of the Indian foreign policy. The foundations of his foreign policy were: non-alignment with power blocs, active pursuit of peace and freedom, opposition to imperialism and racialism, interest in developing close relationship with Asian countries, and a deep concern with the plight of the people of Africa.

Further, Nehru was the exponent of the Panch Sheel or the five cardinal tenets of international amity and accord: (1) Maintaining respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) Non-aggression; (3) Non-interference in each other's internal affairs; (4) Peaceful coexistence and; (5) Equality and mutual benefit.

Nehru always believed that political revolution must be accompanied by economic revolution. He visualized a synthesis of political and economic democracy. Although the synthesis of political freedom and economic justice was not his original thesis, he was certainly a leading exponent of this idea in India. It was more due to his efforts than that of any other leader that socialism became a vital issue of Indian politics.

Debating about the kind of nation Nehru had built, Bipan Chandra, an acknowledged Historian writes that during most of the Nehru era, despite a multitude of problems and difficulties, which often appeared to overwhelm, there was no feeling of frustration. There was 'the mood of hope' and expectation in the country, a certain faith in its future, a confidence in its future destiny. There was a feeling that new forces were emerging which will change the face of the country. As Nehru himself put it in a message to the Chief Ministers in June 1955 that there is the breath of the dawn, the feeling of the beginning of a new era in the long and chequered history of India and he the rightly added that he felt so and in this matter at least that he thought that he represented innumerable others in our country. Though dissatisfied with and largely critical of Nehru and his policies, most on the Left too shared this feeling, though with an angle different from Nehru's but very much because of what Nehru was doing. Those who have lived through that era, now often feel that they were lucky to have lived through those years.

2.1.5 CONTRIBUTION OF MAULANA AZAD TO THE CIVIC NATIONALISMS

In his political life Azad travelled on three paths at different times: the path of exclusive patriotism and pan Islamism (1906-20); the path of reconciling Muslim patriotism and Indian nationalism (1920-23); and the path of thoroughgoing secularist-democratic nationalism (1923-58).

In the beginning, Azad was inclined towards Extremist politics during the Swadeshi movement, and he followed Aurobindo Ghosh, Shyam Sunder Chakravarty and Ajit Singh in this phase of his political career.

But, soon after his release from Ranchi jail, he met Gandhi on 18 January 1920. This meeting became a watershed in his life, as it marked his involvement with a movement based on the philosophy of non-violence. When the Noncooperation Movement was launched, he threw himself whole-heartedly in it and gave the Khilafat question his full support. Khilafat, to him, meant representation, and the authority of the Khilafa was a kind of representative authority. Azad brought Jamait-ul Ulema-i-Hind, of which he was the President, into active participation in this Movement. Azad declared: “Liberty is the natural right of man given by God and no power on earth can deny this. Political liberation, therefore, was not only a political duty but a religious act.” Within three years he had the distinction of becoming the youngest president of the Congress in 1923 at the age of thirty four. Incidentally, he set another record — that of the longest term, as he was the President of the Indian National Congress from 1940 to 46.

2.1.5.1 AZAD ON NATIONALISM

Azad was one with Gandhi on the question of relating politics with religion and he did not favour separation between the two. He said: “There will be nothing left with us, if one separates politics from religion.” “Religious to the core though he was, he would not countenance nationalism based on religion, especially in the Indian context of multiplicity, as it would be a force for division rather than unity in the wider sense.” On another occasion he said: “It is a fraud on the people to suggest that religion can unite areas which are economically, culturally and linguistically different.” He was, therefore, opposed to sectarian nationalism preached by the Muslim League. He challenged the concept of Islamic nationality

in the Indian context, as propounded by Sir Syed and the Aligarh School.

2.1.5.2 AZAD ON HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Azad was one of the greatest champions of unity between the Hindus and the Muslims. In fact, it is not Jinnah of the Congress membership period but Azad who should be regarded as the real “ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity.” He was a consistent champion of communal peace and amity. He wanted his own co-religionists to follow a policy of give and take and not to be rigid.

While addressing the Congress in 1923, Azad spoke: “If Swaraj is delayed, it will be a loss for India but if Hindu-Muslim unity is lost, it will be a loss for the whole of mankind.” He further added: “If an angel descends from the heaven today, and proclaims from the Qutub Minar that India can attain Swaraj within 24 hours provided I relinquish my demand for Hindu-Muslim unity, I shall retort to it. Not my friend, I shall give up Swaraj but not Hindu-Muslim unity.” Again in 1940, he proclaimed: “I am a Muslim and proud of the fact; Islam’s splendid tradition of 1300 years are my inheritance. I am part of the indivisible unity that is Indian nationality. Everything bears the stamp of our joint endeavour. Our language was different but we grew to use a common language (Hindustani); our manners and customs were different, dissimilar but they produced a new synthesis. No politicking or artificial scheming to separate and divide can break this unity.” As a student of History, he pointed out that the ancestors of the Hindus and Musalmans were common and they have been living together for nearly a thousand years.

2.1.5.3 AZAD ON NON-VIOLENCE

Regarding the techniques of revolution, Azad was guided not guided by Islam, but by Gandhi. Though Islam did sanction the meeting of violence with violence but taking in view the political situation of the day, Azad declared that he was committed to non-violence as the only course available. Nonviolence, for Azad, was not a creed but a policy. He believed that “means should be appropriate and effective not necessarily non-violent.”

2.1.5.4 AZAD’S VIEWS ON DEMOCRACY

As regards his views on the political system, he did not take inspiration from Islam alone but also from the West. He said: “Ours is essentially a democratic age and the spirit of

equality, fraternity and liberty is sweeping over all the peoples of the world.” In his broad spirit of synthesis Azad could even reconcile the seemingly opposed concepts of aristocracy and democracy. He argued that aristocracy of merit and talent may not supplant democracy but may enrich it with the richness and grace of a cultivated minority. Aristocracy may serve democracy by supplying the cultural deficiencies of a broad-based power structure. Democracy is not opposed to aristocracy if the latter serves “as an adjunct to democracy and seeks to fulfil its purposes.” According to Azad, “Aristocracy develops a width of vision and a far reaching imagination and thus enriches democracy.”

2.1.5.5 AZAD ON PARTITION OF INDIA

Azad was a staunch opponent of the idea of partition or Pakistan. According to him, “The scheme of partition is harmful not only for India as a whole, but also for Muslims in particular, and in fact it creates more problems than it solves.” As President of the Congress, Azad had warned against partition. He had pinpointed and forewarned that partition would be a bitter pill which would keep the two countries at loggerheads and the condition of the minorities would be miserable. The subsequent largescale massacre on the subcontinent on the eve of partition vindicated Azad’s statement that the scheme of partition creates more problems than it solves. What is more, the creation of Pakistan has given it (Hindu-Muslim enmity) a constitutional form and made it more difficult for solution. However, even after the partition, Azad wistfully thought that the two countries would be united once again. He said: “The division is only on the map of the country and not in the hearts of the people, and I am sure it is going to be a short-lived partition.

Unlike other Indians, who have laid the blame for partition entirely on the Muslim League and British machinations, Maulana was candid and courageous enough to place some of the blame on the Congress leaders, particularly Nehru, his closest colleague. Azad in his ‘Prelude to Partition’, a chapter added to *‘India Wins Freedom’* in 1988, blamed Nehru for partition of the country. He writes: “I have to say with deepest of regrets that a large part of the responsibility for the development rests with Nehru. His unfortunate statement (of 10 July 1946) that “the Congress would be free to modify the Cabinet Mission Plan” reopened the whole question of political and communal settlement to which both the parties were agreed. Mr. Jinnah took full advantage of his mistake and withdrew from the League’s early acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan. It was on the basis of distribution of power

among the Centre, the provinces and the groups that the League had accepted the Plan. Congress was neither wise nor right in raising doubts. It should have accepted the Plan unequivocally, as it stood for the unity of India. Vacillation would give Jinnah opportunity to divide India, who was already under pressure to wriggle out. But Raj Mohan Gandhi, in his *'India Wins Errors'* takes Azad to task for not having stood up against the partition resolution, for the only person who dissented was J.B. Kriplani and not Azad at the Congress Working Committee meeting on 8 March 1947.

Azad was right in pointing out at partial culpability of Congress leaders, but where he was wrong asserting that the last chance in averting the creation of Pakistan was lost in 1946. As a matter of fact, it was lost eight years earlier at the time of the formation of the Congress Ministry. About this event Azad writes: "Nehru committed an almost equal blunder in 1937. This was a most unfortunate development. If the League's offer of cooperation had been accepted, the Muslim League would for all practical purposes merged with the Congress. But Jawahar Lai Nehru's action (in refusing the offer) gave the Muslim-League a new lease of life. Jinnah took full advantage of the situation and started an offensive which ultimately led to Pakistan." No doubt, "it was one of the most disturbing features in the political history of India; it gave strength to the belief held by some adventurous Muslim leaders that the Muslims should have a separate homeland."

2.1.6 LET US SUM UP

According to Pardha Chatterjee, Afro-Asian nationalism was based on difference and, therefore, it is wrong to conclude that the nationalist discourse that galvanised the masses into action was entirely derivative and heteronymous. It is true that the nonwestern leaders involved in the struggle for liberation were deeply influenced by European nationalist ideas. They were also aware of the limitations of these ideas in the particular socio-economic contexts of Africa and Asia due to their alien origin. So while mobilising the imagined communities for an essentially political cause, they spoke in a 'native' vocabulary. Although they drew upon the ideas of European nationalism, they indigenised them substantially by discovering or inventing indigenous equivalents and investing them with additional meanings and nuances. This is probably the reason as to why Gandhi and his colleagues in the anti-British campaign in India preferred swadeshi to nationalism. Gandhi avoided the language of nationalism primarily because he was convinced that the Congress flirtation with nationalist

ideas in the first quarter of the twentieth century frightened away not only the Muslims and other minorities but also some of the Hindu lower castes. This seems to be the most pragmatic idea one could possibly conceive of in a country like India that was not united in terms of religion, race, culture and common historical memories of oppression and struggle. Here is located the reason why Gandhi and his Congress colleagues preferred the relaxed and chaotic plurality of the traditional Indian life to the order and homogeneity of the European nation-state because they realized that the open, plural and relative heterogeneous traditional Indian civilisation would best suit Indians. In view of the well-entrenched multilayered identities of those identified as Indians, the drive to revitalise the civilisation of India was morally more acceptable and politically more effective.

2.1.7 EXERCISE

1. In the light of the statement “Civic Nationalism was both a theoretical concept and a practical weapon to make India a strong and united nation” discuss Gandhi’s unique contributions.
2. What is Civic Nationalism? What are Nehru’s contributions to Civic Nationalism?
3. Discuss the contributions of Maulana Azad to Civic Nationalism.

2.2 CULTURAL NATIONALISM: V D SAVARKAR AND M S GOLWALKAR

- S. S. Narang

STRUCTURE

2.2.0 Objectives

2.2.1 Introduction

2.2.2 Defining Cultural Nationalism

2.2.3 Veer Savarkar and Cultural Nationalism

2.2.4 Savarkar's Interpretation of Indian History

2.2.5 Savarkar on Hindu-Muslim Unity

2.2.6 Golwalkar's Views on Cultural Nationalism

2.2.7 Views of Golwalkar on Hindutva

2.2.7.1 Golwalkar on Internal Threats

2.2.7.2 Golwalkar Views on Christians

2.2.8 Golwalkar's Resentment against Communism

2.2.9 Let Us Sum Up

2.2.10 Exercise

2.2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the meaning of cultural nationalism and how primordial identities are important in defining cultural nationalism;
- Comprehend Veer Savarkar's views about cultural nationalism, his interpretation of Indian history, and Hindu-Muslim unity;
- Know Golwalkar's views on cultural nationalism and Hindutva, his resentment against Pakistan and Christianity and his animosity towards communism.

2.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Cultural nationalism as propagated by Savarkar and Golwalkar is based on religion, language, culture, history, race and territory with religion being in the commanding position. This ideology has come to be equated with Hindutva. The national leadership of the Indian National Congress which spearheaded the Freedom Movement did not include cultural nationalism in their ideological structure. Their understanding was that the constituents of cultural nationalism split the national movement which was known for immense diversity. Their deep commitment to democracy and secularism did not permit cultural nationalism to take a centre stage during the independence struggle. But the ideological leadership of Savarkar and Golwalkar kept cultural nationalism abreast of the national movement and endeavoured to equate it with Indian nationalism of the Indian National Congress. Savarkar and Golwalkar, the chief exponents and proponents of the ideological cultural nationalism not only wrote about the ideology, but also mobilized Indian masses around it.

2.2.2 DEFINING CULTURAL NATIONALISM

Cultural nationalism generally refers to ideas and practices that relate to the intended revival of a purported national community's culture. If political nationalism is focused on the achievement of political autonomy, cultural nationalism is focused on the cultivation of a nation. Here the vision of the nation is not a political organisation, but a moral community. As such, cultural nationalism sets out to provide a vision of the nation's identity, history and destiny. The key agents of cultural nationalism are intellectuals and artists, who seek to convey their vision of the nation to the wider community. The need to articulate and express this vision tends to be felt most acutely during times of social, cultural and political upheaval resulting from an encounter with modernity. Cultural nationalism often occurs in the early

phase of a national movement, sometimes before an explicitly political nationalism has appeared. But it can also recur in long-established national state.

Anthony Smith significantly contributed to the notion of Cultural Nationalism. For Smith, all nationalism has a cultural dimension; hence his insistence that it is an ideological movement rather than merely a political movement. Across his long career, Smith has sought to demonstrate the trans-generational ‘stickiness’ of the culture of nations. According to Smith, this pattern of myths, symbols, memories and values often extends backwards into the pre-modern era, as well as structuring a nation’s particular path toward modernisation. However, while Smith stresses the capacity for cultural patterns to endure in the face of social change, he also acknowledges they can undergo rapid change. Here Smith attempts to carve out a middle ground between those who view nationalism as an expression of an innate collective spirit stretching back into ‘time immemorial’, and those who view it as a wholly modern ideology conjured up by enterprising elites and imposed upon the masses. For Smith, national cultures take shape through a process of reinterpretation and rediscovery rather than mere invention. Smith has lately focused more explicitly on cultural nationalism.

Cultural nationalism encompasses the feelings of cultural pride that people have in a society. This society is typically, but not limited to, an ethnically diverse makeup of people who have common cultural beliefs and a common language but not a common race or ancestry. These societies thus have a shared culture even when they do not share the historically common characteristics of a national group. These characteristics mainly being race, religion and ethnicity, the way groups have typically been separated throughout history. Hence, the ideas and feelings of cultural nationalism are built upon shared cultural ideals and norms among a society. These shared ideals and norms may include political ideologies, recognition of holidays, a specific and unique cuisine, etc. The other main idea of cultural nationalism is the shared language of the groups of people. While societies that are ethnically and religiously homogeneous usually also share a common language, culturally nationalistic societies typically have a common language and different races of people who also speak a native language from a previous society or country along with that common language.

2.2.3 VEER SAVARKAR AND CULTURAL NATIONALISM

Who is Hindu, written by Savarkar while he was in prison, is the real charter of Hindu nationalism, the ideology which has come precisely to be equated with the word 'Hindutva'. It is in this work that Savarkar argues that Muslims were the real enemies, not the British. It rests on the assumption that Hindus are weak compared to Muslims. The Muslims are a closely-knit community that has no nationalist sympathies. According to him, the adventurous valour of the Aryans and sublime height to which their thought rose laid the foundation of a great civilization. By the time they had cut themselves aloof from their neighboring people especially the Persians, they had spread out to the farthest of the seven rivers, Sapta Sindhus and had developed a sense of nationality. Out of their gratitude to the network of rivers that ran through the land, they naturally took to themselves the name of Sapta Sindhus which was applied to the whole of Vedic India in the oldest records of the world, the *Rigveda* itself. These seven rivers were a visible symbol of common nationality and culture.

Down to this day, a Sindhu - a Hindu - wherever he may happen to be, will gratefully remember these rivers that purify his soul. We actually find that the Vedic name of our nation Sapta Sindhu had been mentioned as Hapta Hindu by the ancient Persian people. Thus in the very dawn of history, we find ourselves belonging to the nation of the Sindhus or Hindus and this fact was well known to our learned men even in the Puranic period. The activities of the fearless Sindhus or Hindus could no longer be kept confined to the Panchnad or the Punjab. They spread out to reclaim the vast, waste and very thinly populated lands. Forests were felled, agriculture flourished, cities rose, kingdoms thrived. The touch of the human hand changed the whole face of the wild nature. But while these great deeds were being done, the Aryans had developed a policy that was loosely centralized. As time passed on, the distances of their new colonies increased, and different peoples of other highly developed types began to incorporate into their culture. The new attachments grew more and more powerful. Some called themselves Kurus, others kashis or Videhas or Magadhas while the old generic name of the Sindhus or Hindus was first overshadowed and then almost forgotten. National and cultural unity did not vanish, but it assumed other names and other forms, the politically most important of them being the institution of a Chakravartin. At last the great mission which the Sindhus had undertaken of founding a nation and a country, reached its geographical limit when Prince of Ayodhya conquered

Ceylon and actually brought the whole land from the Himalayas to the Seas under one sovereign hold. The day when the prince returned unchallenged to Ayodhya, the great flag of sovereignty was unfurled over that imperial throne of brave Ramachandra. Allegiance to him was sworn, not only by the Princes of Aryan blood but also by Hanuman, Sugriva, Bibhishana from the south. That day was the real birthday of the Hindu people. It was truly our national day; for Aryans and Anaryans knitting themselves into a people. A nation was born. It politically crowned the efforts of all the generations that preceded it and it handed down a new and common mission, banner and cause which all the generations after it had fought and died to defend.

But as it often happens in history, this undisturbed enjoyment of peace and plenty lulled our Sindhusthan in a sense of false security and bred a habit of living in the land of dreams. At last she was rudely awakened on the day when Mohammad of Gazni crossed the Indus and invaded her. That day the conflict of life and death began. Nothing can weld people into a nation and nations into a state as the pressure of a common enemy. Hatred separates as well unites. The fight began with Mohammad and ended with Abdalli. For years the contest continued. During this period nations and civilizations fell before the sword of Islam. But here for the first time the sword succeeded in striking but not in killing. It grew blunter each time it struck, each time it cut deep. Vitality of the victim proved stronger than the vitality of the victor. The contrast was not only grim but it was unequal. India had to struggle against not one race or one nation. It was nearly all Asia, quickly to be followed by nearly all Europe. The Arabs had entered Sindh. They soon failed to defend their own independence in their homeland. The moral victory was won when Akbar came to the throne and Darashikoh was born. The frantic efforts of Aurangzeb to retrieve their fortunes lost both in the moral field as well as battlefield.

Till the reign of Aurangzeb, the Hindus lost the battle. But after his death, they won the war. No Afghan dared to penetrate to Delhi, while the triumphant Hindu banner that our Marathas had carried to Attack was taken up by our Sikhs and carried across the Indus to the banks of the Kabul.

Savarkar further writes that in this prolonged furious conflict, our people became intensely conscious of ourselves as Hindus and were welded into a nation to an extent unknown in our history. It must not be forgotten that we have all along referred to the progress of the

Hindu movement as a whole and not to that of any particular creed or religious section there of Hindutva and not Hinduism only, which gained strengths. Sanatanists, Satnamis, Sikhs, Aryas, Anaryas, Marathas and Madrasis, Brahmins, Panchamas all suffered as Hindus and triumphed as Hindus. The enemies hated us as Hindus and the whole family of peoples and races, of sects and creeds that flourished from Attock to Cuttack suddenly became a single being.

The majority of the Indian Muslims loves India as their Fatherland, as the patriotic and noble-minded amongst them has always been doing. The story of their forcible conversions is very recent. So they remember that they inherit Hindu blood in their veins. But we cannot recognize these Muslims as Hindus. It is clear that though their original Hindu blood is still pure, yet they cannot be called Hindus, because Hindus are bound together by the love they have for the fatherland and by the common blood that runs through their veins.

Hindus are one because they are a nation, a race and own a common Sanskriti (Civilization). Mohammedans or Christians who had been forcibly converted to a non-Hindu religion but who have inherited along with Hindu, a common Fatherland and a common culture, language, law, customs, folklore and history, cannot be recognized as Hindus. It is not to them a Holyland as it is for Hindus. Their Holyland is far off in Arabia or Palestine. Their mythology and Godmen, ideas and heroes are not from this soil. Consequently their names and their outlook seem to be of a foreign origin. Their love is divided. That is but natural. Muslims or Christians possess all the essential qualifications of Hindutva but they do not look upon India as their Holyland.

Savarkar believed that the Muslims could grow to their height and satisfaction in the temple of Hindutva. They should come to the Ganges to quench their thirst. The blood in their veins is that of the Hindus. They were cruelly snatched away from their Indian heritage at the point of the sword. They should come back to their brothers and sisters who would welcome them. In Hinduism there is tremendous freedom of worship. Even atheists can propagate their viewpoint. There is lot of freedom of social organization in the Hindu society. Muslims by race, blood, culture and nationality possess almost all the features of Hindutva. They should recognize the Fatherland (*pitri-bhu*) which is the Holyland (*Punyabhū*); and they would be most welcome to the Hindu fold.

2.2.4 VEER SAVARKAR'S INTERPRETATION OF INDIAN HISTORY

In his book *Six Glorious Epochs of Indian History* (published in 1971), Savarkar said that Indian History contained six glorious epochs. They were:

- First, the Maurya Empire set up by Chandragupta with the assistance of his great teacher Chanakya. Without any strong background, he founded with his own efforts his empire mightier even than that of Alexander himself.
- Second, the triumph and victories of King Pushyamitra who destroyed the Greek power in India.
- Third, Vikramaditya who annihilated the might of the Sakas.
- Fourth, Yashodharma of Malwa who defeated the Huns at Mandasore in 528 A.D. and captured the powerful and cruel Hun leader Mihiragula.
- Fifth, the foundation of the Maratha power as a powerful counter-blast to the might of the Islamic forces in India. Maratha leaders believed in the aggression against the enemy. Mere defence was not their policy, and
- Sixth, successful removal of the British from India and getting freedom for the country.

While making a brilliant exposition of Indian history, Savarkar glorified with much passion and zeal the Vedic Hinduism. At the same time, he strongly opposed virtues like pacifism, generosity, forgiveness, etc. as these were against the achievement of goal through violence. He extolled the virtues of Shivaji who established the independent empire and reconverted Palkar and Nimbakar who were forcefully converted into Islam; criticized the Hindus for tolerating “foreign rulers” who invaded India, plundered its property, killed its innocent people and enslaved those who survived their anger. Devoid of virtues like sympathy, goodwill, sacrifice, cordiality, compromise, understanding, etc. they were cruel, selfish and arrogant. Savarkar highly praised the Maratha power for challenging the Muslim regime and accepting “Swadharma and Swaraj” as its two fundamental ideals which they cherished.

Calling the Sepoy Mutiny (1857) as the First War of Independence and praising those who participated in it, he argued that the fear of “greased cartridges” and the annexation of Oudh might have been its minor and immediate causes. But it was in fact, the result of suppression. Quoting others, he said that the term “Sepoy Mutiny” did not mean that only Sepoys participated in it. It was by no means a military mutiny. Several factors like military grievances, national hatred and religious fanaticism were responsible for it. The Meerut Sepoys found in a moment a leader, a flag and a cause and the Mutiny was transformed into a revolutionary war. When they reached Delhi, they had all “unconsciously seized one of the great critical moments of history and converted a military mutiny into a national and religious war”. Assuming a new dimension in 1857, the Mutiny became the rebellion of a whole people.

Opposing the concept of absolute non-violence, Savarkar strongly believed that violence has no place if the world is good, peaceful and where saints and angels rein the supreme. But when there are thousands of wicked people and where there are countless contradictions and maladies, violence can be used as a means to achieve an ideal. Unless there is a kingdom of God where good souls live, unless and until a new era of perfect peace and love comes in, it would be a sin if violence is given up as a means to achieve the goal. But once there exists a kingdom where virtues play a dominant role, it would be a great sin to apply violence to achieve a cause, however noble it may be. Savarkar, therefore, admired those who adopted violence to bring justice, establish the truth, promote equality, guarantee liberty and achieve fraternity. He wrote that he had full faith that justice must win in the end. Because every Hiranyakashipa has the Narasimha, because every Dushashana has his Bheema, because every evil-doer has his avenger, there is still some hope that injustice cannot last for long.

India as a nation has its cultural and organic solidarity. Strongly subscribing to the theory of Hindu resurrection, he powerfully argued that Hinduism is certainly superior to other religions, and firmly believed that Hinduism should undergo both moral and social regeneration. It should be concerned with different aspects like “life after death”, “salvation”, “rebirth”, “existence of heaven and hell”, “existence of God”, etc. But so far as the materialistic aspect is concerned, the Hindus are a nation bound by a common culture, a common history, a common language, a common country and religion. They can develop

only if they consolidate their interests. Fellowship and community feeling should replace their pervasive isolationism.

A Hindu is he who regards this land of Bharatvarsha, as his Fatherland as well as his Holy land. It is the cradle of his religion. There are three criteria which make someone a Hindu. First, he should have an intense love and attachment for his country which extends from the Sindhu river to the Brahmaputra and from the Himalayas to the Cape Comorin. Second is the racial or blood bond or the **Jati**. A Hindu is one who inherits the blood of the race “whose first and visible source could be traced to the Vedic Sapatasindhu”. It is evident from history that the Hindus have developed racial features over the centuries and these are different from those of Germans, Chinese or Ethiopians.

It is only the Hindus and to some extent the Jews who belong to a racial unit. No other religion can claim this status. A Hindu marrying a Muslim may lose his caste but not his Hindutva. He may be an orthodox or heterodox. He may believe any theoretical or philosophical or social system which is Indian and founded by a Hindu. He may lose his sect but not his Hinduness because it is determined by blood which gets transmitted from generation to generation. Therefore, one who loves his Fatherland and inherits the blood of the race that has evolved, possesses two of the most essential requisites of Hindutva.

A Hindu is known by his culture, the third criterion. He feels proud of it. It is a set of values which regulate, determine or control his behaviour: a feeling, an attitude, an impression born out of common language, common history, common geography, common achievements and failures, common expectations common religion, common art and architecture, common rituals and festivals. Those who give up Hinduism and accept Christianity or Islam can never be called as Hindus, because they no more subscribe to the culture of Hindus. The converted Christians and Muslims eat beef, criticize Hindu gods and deities and do not take ‘Prasad’ offered to them.

Hindutva is more comprehensive than Hinduism. While the later has religious significance and covers rituals, etc., the former includes the social, moral, political and economic aspects. It transcends Hinduism. It is not merely a concept of organic socio-political unity. It is something more than that. It is an embodiment of essential elements of nationalism. It is a socio-political body knit together by three bonds of territorial belongingness, blood or

birth and culture. It is a programme for action. All those forces that create discord and division are to be controlled, so that there can be unity and understanding among them. All the barriers that divide the Hindus must be demolished. Inter-caste marriages will go a long way in this regard. It will remove caste barriers. Jains, Sikhs, Buddhists, Arya Samajists and Brahm Samajists are to be treated as Hindus.

Savarkar argued that Hindutva and nationalism are not antithetic. They go together. Rationalistic and scientific Hindutva is not a narrow creed and it stands for nationalism, humanism and universalism.

2.2.5 SAVARKAR ON HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

On the issue of Hindu-Muslim Unity, Savarkar stated that the human world has been divided, according to the Muslim theology and theoretical politics, into two groups: the Muslim land and the enemy land. While the former is inhabited entirely by the Muslims or is ruled by the Muslims, the latter is just the opposite. A faithful Muslim becomes intolerant of the latter and only mission or his only goal is to conquer all the enemy lands and their rulers. Muslims want to convert the entire enemy land into the Muslim land. A Muslim feels happier if he converts the Hindus into Muslims.

A faithful Muslim's love for the Muslims is unique as it transcends all barriers, geographical, territorial, historical, etc. Territorial patriotism is something unknown to them. He may be staying in India among his friends and relatives, but thinking about Mecca and Medina. Needless to say, he treats India and every non-Muslim Indian as his enemies.

An Indian Muslim, to Savarkar, hardly loves India. He rarely shares with its sorrows and sufferings with his non-Muslim brethren. He feels shy of identifying himself with a country where he is born and brought up. It is because the country's majority of the population is the Hindus and it is not ruled by Muslims. He is not loyal to India, nor has any commitment towards it. He always looks up to Mecca and Medina and develops an extra-territorial loyalty. He is moved more by events in Palestine than that concern India as a nation. He is worried more about the well-being of the Arabs than the well-being of their Hindu neighbours and countrymen in India. He conspires with any one any number of times to bring India under the Muslim rule.

A Muslim theologian has maximum hatred for the Hindus. To him, Christians and Jews are after all “Kitabis”, having holy books partially in common. But Hindus are totally ‘Kafirs’, and as a consequence their land Hindustan is “Enemy Land” as long as it is not ruled by Muslims or all Hindus do not embrace Islam. This is, to Savarkar, the religious mentality of all Indian Muslims.

Consequently, political and cultural mentality of the Muslims is essentially anti-Hindu and is bound to be so as long as they continue to be the Muslims and “faithfuls”. They are always conscious of the fact that they entered India as conquerors and subjected the Hindus to their rule. But they have forgotten that they were defeated by the Hindus in a hundred battlefields in India. In the long run, the Hindus freed India from the Muslim yoke and re-established Hindu Padshahi. Muslims know that they are a powerful minority and their population has been growing every day.

Muslims want that Urdu should be the national language even though crores of them living in India and elsewhere do not speak it or understand it. It can claim no more merit than Hindi which is the mother tongue of more than twenty crore people and easily understood by more than ten crore people. While the Arabian language itself on which Urdu is based deemed foreign by Kemal and the Turks in the land of the Khaliphas itself, the Muslims expect some twenty-five crore Hindus to learn it and adopt it as their national language.

The Muslims insist on the adoption of the Urdu script as the national script, without bothering about the oldest script “Nagri”. Kemal discarded the Arabian script itself as it was not suitable to the present day needs. The Nagri is more scientific, more amenable to printing. Yet the Urdu script must be, to them, the national script and the Urdu the national language. The only reason for this is that they consider Urdu as their cultural asset. Therefore, it is not their concern to make room for the culture of Hindus and other religions.

The Muslims do not tolerate the song “Vande Mataram”. It is reduced and shortened because of lack of unity amongst the Hindus. But the Muslims are not satisfied even with reduced portion. Even if the whole song is dropped, they would treat the very words “Vande Mataram” quite insulting to them.

Savarkar is of the view that the self-centered politicians of India have deprived Hindus of their dues. He was never against the Muslims, but he was certainly opposed to the policy

of appeasement towards them. This was solely responsible for the partition of India. He strongly criticized Nehru and Gandhi for their role in this regard and also opposed Golwalkar, the then Head of the Rastriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, for his role during the massacre of Hindus. He kept quiet while Hindus were mercilessly butchered, silently watched the perpetration of the worst crimes and did not do anything to prevent such ghastly events. Neither he nor the RSS supported Veer Savarkar and the Hindu Mahasabha who were opposed to the partition of the country.

2.2.6 GOLWALKAR'S VIEWS ON CULTURAL NATIONALISM

Golwalkar lamented on the anti-British nationalism of pre-independence India. In his books titled *We or our Nationhood Defined* and *Bunch of Thoughts*, he criticized the vigorous anti-British character of the Indian freedom movement. In Golwalkar's own words: Anti-Britishism was equated with patriotism and nationalism. This reactionary view has had disastrous effects upon the entire course of the freedom struggle, its leaders and the common people. Golwalkar writes that to keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the Semitic Races – the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here. Germany has also shown that it is very difficult for different races and cultures, to be assimilated into one united whole. It is good lesson for us in Hindustan to learn and profit by. Ever since that evil day, when Moslems first landed in Hindustan, right up to the present moment, the Hindu nation has been fighting to defeat Muslims. The Race spirit has been awakening.

According to Christopher Jaffrelot, an English scholar on Hinduism, despite the use of the term “race”, Golwalkar's main purpose was not racial unity but cultural unity. However, Jaffrelot also makes references to Golwalkar's racism. According to Jaffrelot, Golwalkar viewed a national language like Sanskrit to be an expression of the race spirit; Golwalkar's racism is a form of socio-cultural domination rather than being based on notions of racial purity. The “racial factor” was, to Golwalkar, the most important ingredient for a nation, and in this respect, Golwalkar claimed inspiration from Hitler's ideology. Golwalkar applied this nationalist ethnic reasoning to Indian Muslims. He felt that they were destabilizing Hindu society. The minorities were meant to be “assimilated” through the removal of their signs of identity. It was stated that the Hindu symbols are “national,” those of the religious minorities are communal or foreign. The Indian nation of Golwalkar and other RSS leaders

is a “hierarchy dominated by the Hindus”.

Golwalkar strongly opposed the concept of a secular Indian state. He stated that the non-Hindu people must adopt Hindu culture and language, learn and respect Hindu religion, entertain no idea but of those of glorification of the Hindu race and culture. In a word they must cease to be foreigners, or may stay in the country, wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation. They should claim nothing, no privileges, and no preferential treatment not even citizens’ rights. Golwalkar believed that the Aryan ancestors of the Hindus were indigenous to India in contrast to India’s Muslims, who invaded India and still looked to Mecca as the centre of their faith.

In “*Bunch of thoughts*”, Golwalkar opines that Muslims and Christians in India are unpatriotic, but Golwalkar’s hatred is not confined to Indian Muslims or Christians. Golwalkar condemns even Chinese because they eat rats, pigs, dogs, serpents, cockroaches, and everything. Such men cannot be expected to have human qualities. Golwalkar showers praise on the Nazi campaign against Jews and Gypsies which took place in the 1930s in Germany explaining that this was a good lesson for us in Hindustan to learn and profit by, there are only two courses open to these foreign elements, Golwalkar explains, either to merge themselves in the national race and adopt its culture or to live at its mercy so long as the national race may allow them to do so and quite the country at the sweet will of the national race. Further he wrote that in this land Hindus have been the owners, Parsis and Jews are guests, and Muslims and Christians the dacoits.

2.2.7 VIEWS OF GOLWALKAR ON HINDUTVA

Golwalkar tells religious minorities to pledge allegiance to Hindu symbols of identity, which are synonymous with Indian Identity. It is equated with Hindu culture, and religious minorities should to keep community concerns in the private sphere. Golwalkar actually labelled members of these minorities, as well as foreigners namely ‘those who do not subscribe to the social laws dictated by the Hindu Religion and Culture’ as mlecchas (barbarians), in ancient India a mleccha was someone at the fringe of the caste system dominated by the values of the Brahmin. Golwalkar pays no attention to the territorial dimension of nationalism. He repeatedly condemns Indian National Congress for the amazing theory that the nation is composed of all those who, for one reason or the other happen to live in the country’.

Race is by far the important ingredient of a nation'. In this context Golwalkar claims inspiration from Hitler's ideology. He applies this nationalist ethnic reasoning to India's Muslim minority, which he believed posed a threat not only because it enjoyed the backing of Islamic states but also because it was a 'foreign body' lodged in Hindu society. Golwalkar considers India's Christians and Communists as anti-national elements too.

2.2.7.1 GOLWALKAR ON INTERNAL THREATS

The Muslims: It has been the tragic lesson of the history of many countries in the world that the hostile elements within the country pose a far greater menace to national security than aggressors from outside. Unfortunately, this first lesson of national security has been one thing which has been consistently ignored in our country ever since the British left this land. Wishful thinking born out of lack of courage to face realities, mouthing of high-sounding slogans by the persons at the helm of affairs to cover up the tragedies overtaking us one after another, and opportunistic alliances of parties and groups with the hostile elements to further their narrow self-interests, have all combined to make the threat of internal subversion to our national freedom and security very acute and real.

First, of all, he takes the case of Muslims even to this day, there are so many who say, that 'Now there is no Muslim problem at all. All those riotous elements that supported Pakistan have gone away once and for all. The remaining Muslims are devoted to our country. After all, they have no other place to go and they are bound to remain loyal.

Pakistan-A Continuing Aggression: Their aggressive strategy has always been twofold. One is direct aggression. In the pre-independence days, Jinnah called it 'Direct Action.' The first blow got them Pakistan. Our leaders who were a party to the creation of Pakistan may try to whitewash the tragedy by saying that it was a brotherly division of the country and so on. But the naked fact remains that an aggressive Muslim State has been carved out of our own motherland. Golwalkar states, from the day the so-called Pakistan came into being; leaders in Sangh have been declaring that it is a clear case of continued Muslim aggression. The Muslim desire, growing ever since they stepped on this land some twelve hundred years ago, to convert and enslave the entire country, could not bear fruit, in spite of their political domination for several centuries, because of the conquering spirit of the nation rose in the form of great and valiant men from time to time who sounded the death-

knell of their kingdoms here. But even though their kingdoms lay shattered, their desire for domination did not break up. In the coming of the British, they found an opportunity to fulfil their desire. They played their cards shrewdly, sometimes creating terror and havoc, and ultimately succeeded in browbeating our leadership into panicky surrender to their sinful demand of Partition.

Pursuing Jinnah's Dream: The second front of their aggression is increasing their numbers in strategic areas of our country. After Kashmir, Assam is their next target. They have been systematically flooding Assam, Tripura and the rest of Bengal since long. It is not because, as some would like us to believe, East Pakistan is in the grip of famine that people are migrating into Assam and West Bengal. The Pakistani Muslims have been infiltrating into Assam for the past fifteen years. Does it mean then that famine has been stalking East Pakistan all these fifteen years. They are entering Assam surreptitiously and the local Muslims are sheltering them. As a result, the percentage of Muslims there which was only 11 percent in 1950, has now more than doubled. What else is this but a conspiracy to make Assam a Muslim majority province so that it would automatically fall into the lap of Pakistan in course of time.

The Time-Bomb: Golwalkar argues that Sardar Patel was aware that Western U.P. had continued to be as powerful a Muslim pocket as before. He did not want that it should be linked to West Pakistan by a continuous Muslim belt. Hence he had taken due precautions to see that the Muslims driven out of East Punjab after Partition did not resettle anywhere near West Punjab so as to form a contiguous Muslim chain from West Pakistan to U.P. But, on account of pressure from Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Muslims were allowed to resettle first in Gurgaon District and then over four lakh Muslims were resettled in other regions. There are sure signs that an explosive situation similar to that of 1946-47 is fast brewing and there is no knowing when it will blow up. Right from Delhi to Rampur and Lucknow, the Muslims are busy hatching a dangerous plot, piling up arms and mobilizing their men and probably biding their time to strike from within when Pakistan decides upon an armed conflict with our country. And when they do strike, it is very likely that even Delhi may be rocked to its foundations unless Indians wake up in time to nip the mischief in the bud. Not those Indian leaders do not know it. The secret intelligence reports reach them all right. But it seems they have in view only elections. Elections mean vote catching, which means

appeasing certain sections of people having a solid bloc of votes. And the Muslims are one such solid bloc. Therein lies the root of all this appeasement and consequent disastrous effects.

Forgetting Nothing, Learning Nothing: Golwalkar further stated that Muslim League has again raised its ugly head in the South. The creation of Pakistan woke up the Hindus in the North, at least for the time being, to the danger of Muslim League. So the League leaders shifted their headquarters to the South. Now they have come out with the statement that they have been carrying on their activities all these years in secret. The mass agitation in Kerala which brought down the Communist Government, gave them a golden opportunity to come out in the open. The elections that followed proved to be a windfall for them. The Congress, learning nothing from its past experience of placating the Muslim League which had landed our country in the calamity of Partition, once again stretched its arms to embrace that treacherous party during elections. And in order to justify their blatantly anti-national move, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave the Muslim League a clean chit of patriotism saying that it was not the old Muslim League, but a new patriotic party devoted to their community and religion! It was a marvellous definition of patriotism. But to his misfortune, on the very next day, the All-India President of the Muslim League came out with the statement that theirs was the same old party with not a shadow of change. Now in Kerala, they openly propagate for an independent 'Mopland'.

Everywhere the Muslims were being abetted in their separatist and subversive activities by our own Government, our leaders and political parties. Take the case of Calcutta riots which occurred in the wake of the holocaust of Hindus in Khulna, Narayanganj and Dacca areas of East Pakistan in 1963. Our men in power tried to paint it as a reaction to the East Bengal riots. But what are the facts? These were the Muslims in Calcutta who first started the attack on a peaceful procession of students. It was again they who set fire to the grand exhibition pandal erected in connection with the Swami Vivekananda centenary celebrations and destroyed the precious exhibits. Can anyone in his senses believe that the Hindus of Calcutta could have destroyed a pandal containing Swami Vivekananda's exhibits? It was only after the Muslims began perpetrating such vandalism that the Hindus rose to defend themselves. Thus the Calcutta riots were, beyond a shadow of doubt, only an extension of and not a reaction to the riots in East Bengal.

But Indian Government, as usual, Golwalkar observes following in the footsteps of their erstwhile British masters, came down upon the Hindus with a heavy hand and shot them indiscriminately. One of the Central Ministers even declared, 'Every Muslim life is sacred to us,' whereas every life ought to be a sacred trust with any Government worth the name. He even boasted that more Hindus were killed in police firing than Muslims. By this statement he had only betrayed the real mind of the Government in the matter. That, is the way things are going on in our own country, said Golwalkar.

Countless 'Miniature Pakistans': In fact, all over the country wherever there is a masjid or a Muslim mohalla, the Muslims feel that it is their own independent territory. If there is a procession of Hindus with music and singing, they get enraged saying that their religious susceptibilities are wounded. If their religious feelings have become so sensitive as to be irritated by sweet music, then why don't they shift their masjids to forests and pray there in silence? Why should they insist on planting a stone on the roadside, whitewash it, call it a prayer spot and then raise a hue and cry that their prayers are disturbed if music is played?

The so called religious susceptibility of the Muslims here regarding music has nothing to do with religion or prayer but is solely motivated with a view to picking up quarrel with the Hindus and establishing their own little independent cells.

The Great 'Nationalist Muslims: Golwalkar contioned his countrymen to wake up, look around and understand the true significance of the words and actions of even the very eminent Muslims. Their own statements have exposed the greatest of the so-called 'nationalist Muslims' in their true colours today.

Maulana Mohammad Ali, the right hand man of Mahatma Gandhi in the early days of the freedom struggle, had announced in public, not once but repeatedly, that the worst sinner among the Muslims was, in his eyes, far superior to even Mahatma Gandhi.

Golwalkar says that he had once an opportunity to talk to a great scholar of the Sufi sect in our country. He said that the only way to meet the challenge of the godless philosophy of Communism was to mobilize and bring together all men having faith in God to whatever sect or religion they might belong. Golwalkar asked him, 'What is that common plank on which all can come together?' Without a moment's hesitation he replied, 'Islam'! That is

how the minds of even their so-called scholars and philosophers work.

The greatest ‘nationalist Muslim’ of our times, Maulana Azad too in his last days gave out his mind in the book ***India Wins Freedom*** in unmistakable terms. Firstly the whole of the book, from start to finish, is an egocentric narration which depicts all other leaders including Gandhiji, Nehru etc., as simpleminded and Patel as a communalist. Secondly, he has not a single word of condemnation for the heinous massacres and atrocities committed by Muslims on Hindus in various places like Calcutta, Noakhali, etc. More than all, the entire burden of his opposition to the creation of Pakistan was that it would be against the interests of Muslims. In effect, Azad says, the Muslims were fools in following Jinnah, as thereby they got only a fraction of the land, whereas if they had followed his advice, they would have had a decisive say in the affairs of the entire country in addition to all the benefits of Pakistan. Sri Mehar Chand Mahajan, Ex-Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, has come out with the same comments about that book. For instance, he says, ‘The Maulana was shrewder than Mr Jinnah. Left to him, India would become virtually a Muslim-dominated country.’

2.2.7.2 GOLWALKAR’S VIEWS ON CHRISTIANS

So far as Christians are concerned, to casual observer, they appear not only quite harmless, but also very embodiment of compassion and love for humanity. Their speeches abound in words like ‘service’ and ‘human salvation’ as though they are specially deputed by the Almighty to uplift humanity. They run schools and colleges, hospitals and orphanages. The people of our country, simple and innocent as they are, are taken in by these things. But what is the real and ulterior motive of Christians in spending crores of rupees in all these activities?

Are Christian gentlemen residing in our land today^ out to demolish not only the religious and social fabric of our life but also to establish political domination in various pockets and if possible all over the land? Such has been, in fact, their role wherever they have stepped—all under the alluring garb of bringing peace and brotherhood to mankind under the angelic wings of Jesus Christ. Jesus had called upon his followers to give their all to the poor, the ignorant and the downtrodden. But what have his followers done in practice? Wherever they have gone, they have proved to be not ‘blood-givers’ but ‘bloodsuckers! What is the

fate of all those lands colonized by these so-called disciples of Christ? Wherever they have stepped, they have drenched those lands with the blood and tears of the natives and liquidated those races. Do we not know the heart-rending stories of how they annihilated the natives in America, Australia and Africa? Why go so far? Are we not aware of the atrocious history of Christian missionaries in our own country, of how they carried sword and fire in Goa and elsewhere?

After the British quit this land and we became free to shape our future national set-up, the discussion of various theories and 'isms' has become a live issue for us. No doubt we have opted for the Western type of democratic set-up. But have we been able to reap its beneficial fruits after all these years of experimentation? Instead of symbolizing the collective will of the people, it has given rise to all sorts of unhealthy rivalries and forces of selfishness and divisions.

2.2.8 GOLWALKAR'S RESENTMENT AGAINST COMMUNISM

A serious failure of democracy in our country is the growing menace of Communism which is a sworn enemy of democratic procedure. In a bid not to be left behind the Communists in their economic appeal to the masses, our leaders are only making Communism more respectable by themselves taking up the Communist jargon and the Communist programmes. If the leaders imagine that they will be able to take away the wind out of the Communist sail by such tactics, they are sadly mistaken.

They also feel that economic development is the only defence against Communism. It is the constant dinning into the ears of the masses of the promise of higher standards of life, thus raising their expectations at a time when they cannot possibly be satisfied. That is aggravating the sense of frustration and paving the way for popular discontent and chaos. Nowhere do we find the appeal to higher sentiments like patriotism, character and knowledge; nor is there any stress on cultural, intellectual and moral development.

Under the garb of Socialism, what is it that is actually taking place? We find that all the measures being undertaken here are only an improved version of what has happened in China. The only difference is that these developments were brought about by brutal violence in China whereas here the same things are being done through polished propaganda. This will be quite clear to us if we compare the governmental measures of both countries. When

the present Communist Government in China first came to power, they did not want any challenge to their absolute power. So they liquidated the old nobles, chiefs and industrialists and nationalized all industries. They liquidated the landholders and ultimately the smaller zamindars and farmers.

Here also, landlords were liquidated. Now the 17th Amendment has come by which even the smaller farmer, having even half an acre of land, is considered an estate-holder and the Government is empowered to take away his property practically without any compensation. Co-operative farming, collective farming, nationalization of banks and industries and such socialistic doctrines are going to be implemented. All this is, in a way, following the Chinese line step by step. Let us try to see the close parallel and read the writing on the wall. And before we are reduced to mere slaves and tools, beware!

Further, Socialism is not a product of this soil. It is not in our blood and tradition. It has absolutely nothing to do with the traditions and ideals of thousands of years of our national life. It is a thought alien to crores of our people here. As such it does not have the power to thrill our hearts, and inspire us to a life of dedication and character. Thus we see that it does not possess even the primary qualification to serve as an ideal for our national life.

Thus, after throwing the British out, we find ourselves in a confused state of affairs trying to catch foreign theories and 'isms'. This is highly humiliating to a country which has given rise to an all-comprehensive philosophy, capable of furnishing the true and abiding basis for reconstruction of national life on political, economic, social and all other planes. It would be sheer bankruptcy of our intellect and originality, if we believe that human intelligence has reached its maximum heights with the present theories and 'isms' of the west. Let us therefore evolve our own way of life based on the eternal truths discovered by our ancient seers and tested on the touchstone of reason, experience and history.

2.2.9 LET US SUM UP

Indian political thought involves three related issues of 'nation', 'nationalism' and 'national identity'. For obvious reasons, these three ideas constitute the foundation, as it were, of any nationalist discourse. Based on specific experiences, the thinkers engaged in this project seek to articulate a voice which is neither absolutely derivative nor entirely delinked with the context. In other words, the ideas are constructed, nurtured and developed within

a social, political and economic milieu that can never be wished away in conceptualising social and political thoughts. What is most determining in the entire process is the organic link with a particular reality that always leaves an imprint on the construction of ideas. Hence, one must capture the complex interrelationship between the ideas and reality in the context of exogenous but formidable influences of colonialism. Implicit in this process is the dialectics of social and political changes shaping ‘the mind’ of an age that is simultaneously a point of departure and convergence with its immediate past. Presumably because the ideas that constitute ‘the core’ of new thinking are an outcome of a process in which both the present and past seem to be important, they are creatively articulated underlining both the influences.

2.2.10 EXERCISE

1. How do you understand cultural nationalism?
2. Discuss the theory of Hindutva as propounded by veer Savarkar.
3. Analyse Golwalkar’s views on cultural nationalism and Hindutwa.

2.3 NATION AND NATIONALISM : SYED AHMED KHAN, MOHAMMAD IQBAL AND MOHAMMED ALI JINNAH

- S. S. Narang

STRUCTURE

2.3.0 Objectives

2.3.1 Introduction

2.3.2 Sir Syed Ahmed Khan

2.3.2.1 Social Reformer

2.3.2.2 British Loyalist

2.3.2.3 Syed as a Nationalist

2.3.2.4 Pioneer of Muslim Separation

2.3.2.5 Sir Syed's Views on Representative Democracy

2.3.2.6 Social and Political Ideas of Sir Syed

2.3.3 Muhammad Iqbal

2.3.3.1 Iqbal's Views on Nationalism and Islamic Humanism

2.3.3.2 A Nationalist-Turned-Communist

2.3.3.3 Ideology of Pakistan

2.3.4 Mohammad Ali Jinnah's Views on Nationalism

2.3.4.1 From A Nationalist to A Communist

2.3.4.2 Differences with Congress Leaders

2.3.4.3 Leadership Question at the Round Table Conference

2.3.4.4 Creation of Pakistan – Jinnah’s Role

2.3.5 Exercise

2.3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the contribution of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in the social reforms of Muslim society in India, his views on representative democracy and his other social & political ideas;
- Know Muhammad Iqbal views on nationalism and Islamic Humanism, his ideology of Pakistan;
- Jinnah’s contribution to the Islamic thought, his differences with the Congress leadership and his role in the creation of Pakistan.

2.3.1 INTRODUCTION

The linguistic, religious and cultural diversity in India, the positions of Muslims as members of a minority community as well as their interpretation of the message of Islam led Muslim intellectuals to grapple with definitions of nationhood, political community and the paths towards national development. Their concerns were heightened by the increasingly dominant view that the political unity of India ultimately hinged on the unity of culture. Whereas sections of the Muslim intelligentsia in India championed the call for national integration on a secular basis, others expressed reservations about the call for integration, arguing instead for the compatibility of sectional and national interests. Some stressed the need for a more ‘Islamic’ legal-political order for Muslims. Yet others called for the broadening of Islamic categories such as *dhimmi* and *umma* to include Hindus and other communities in India so as to facilitate the further integration of Muslims and non-Muslims into a single political entity; thus they were in essence calling for Islamic political categories to be fundamentally reconstructed.

2.3.2 SIR SYED AHMED KHAN

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan rendered a significant service to Muslims. What Raja Ram Mohan Roy did to Hindus, Khan did the same to the Muslims. Well known for his learning and piety, he commanded respect from *ulemas* of his time who accepted him as their leader. Khan was a powerful personality vibrant with a noble desire to uplift his community by making its members literate and educated, dynamic and progressive, forward and ambitious. He was a legendary Muslim leader with modern outlook to issues and problems confronting the Indian Muslim community in particular. He did his best to “purify” Islam by restoring its original purity. He also denounced the un-Islamic practices that had crept into the Muslim community.

It may be noted that though the western education contained numerous flaws and deficiencies, it had, by all means, a positive impact upon the Indians, particularly those who were exposed to it. A new elite class emerged. Committed, it took a vow to liberate India from the British regime. Apart from it, others being exponents of Indian culture and thought, did something to usher in a new era socio-cultural renaissance. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan did the same work for the Muslims.

A strong supporter of modern education, he wanted to give a new image to Koran. It was because of this his friends called him a heretic. He did his best to bring a synthesis between the old system and the new system of education.

2.3.2.1 SOCIAL REFORMER

Syed brought out a monthly journal *Social Reformer* in Urdu in which he propagated the importance of social reform. Founder of Mohammedan Educational Conference, he made the people aware of social reforms, modern education and general economic and intellectual progress. It was painful for him to see the plight of the Muslims as they were poor, backward, illiterate and ignorant. They also suffered from arrogance and false pride. Hence, they lagged behind and could not prosper.

2.3.2.2 BRITISH LOYALIST

Khan was a great loyalist of the British Government. He believed that Muslims’ loyalty to the Government would bring them rewards, benefits and benedictions. He wanted to win

the heart of the Government by extending it the community's support and cooperation. And for this he was prepared to face the consequences. He, therefore, congratulated the Government for introducing the Self-Government Bill in 1883 for imparting training to the Indians in the field of Self-Government. This reflected Government's greatness and magnanimity. But at the same time he objected to the introduction of the elective element in Indian politics. For this extreme loyalty to the Government, he was known as "a loyalist of the loyalists".

Khan stressed the necessity of modern education and he had a rational approach towards the Koran and for this some of the Islamic religious leaders called him a heretic. He pleaded for social reform and an educational curriculum synthesizing the old and the new learning. Thus the Aligarh movement launched by Syed Ahmad was a deliberate counterpoise to the stand of the Muslim revivalists like Haji Shariat Ullah¹, Dudu Miyan and the Ahil-i-Hadis movement. Syed Ahmad wanted to give pride of place both to secular modern education and to Islamic theology. He had been, earlier, influenced by the Wahhabis like Ahmad Shahid, Ismail and others. He defended Wahhabism from the charge of sedition and conspiracy against the British government.

II. The Causes of the Indian Revolt of 1857: Non-participation of Indians in Decision Making

In 1858, Syed Ahmed Khan wrote *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*. Originally written in Urdu, it was translated by Colvin and Graham in English in 1873. According to Syed Ahmad the primary cause of the revolt was the non-admission of Indians into the processes of legislation. Participation by people in the councils is essential. In India due to the non-admission of Indians in the legislative bodies, there was no avenue open to them through which they could register their protests and express their opinions. There was thus a great misunderstanding of the real intentions of the government. There came a time when all men 'looked upon the English government as slow poison, a rope of sand, a treacherous flame of fire.' The colossal misunderstanding would have been avoided if there would have been an Indian in the Legislative Council. Hence in his *book* he deplored the absence of an effective communication and information feedback between the rulers and the subjects. He lamented that although the British government had been in the country for nearly a century, no attempts had been made to solicit the affections and good feelings of the

people. He regretted that the people had no means of expressing to the rulers their grievances. Syed Ahmad had made a plea for people's participation in councils and lamented that the people in India had no means to register their protest against an unwanted measure. They had no channel whereby they could give public expression to their wishes. The government, hence, had to take the initiative in winning the affections and friendship of the subjects. He wrote:

“Most men agree, I believe, that it is conducive to the welfare and prosperity of government—indeed it is essential to its stability—that the people should have a voice in its councils. It is from the voice of the people that government can learn whether its projects are likely to be well received. This security can never be acquired unless the people are allowed a share in the consultation of government. The men who have ruled India can never forget that they were here in the position of foreigners. The security of government is based on its knowledge of the governed as well as its careful observance of their rights and privileges.

There were some other subsidiary causes of the Indian revolt, according to Syed Ahmad, which were rooted in the primary factor of legislative non-participation by Indians. These other factors can be thus classified:

- The passing of laws and measures which went against the cherished traditions and conventions of people. Some of these laws and measures were definitely objectionable.
- The government was ignorant of the desires and aspirations of the people.
- The neglect by the rulers of the basic elements which were requisite for the good government of India.
- The bad management of the army leading to the spread of disaffection amongst them.

From the revolt of 1857, Syed Ahmad drew some lessons for political philosophy. He inculcated the necessity of friendship and sympathetic intercourse between the rulers and the ruled. Taking a botanical analogy he said that the government is the root and the people are the growth of that root.

Syed Ahmad Khan did not believe in popular Government. He, like John Stuart Mill, had a genuine fear of the 'tyranny of the majority'. Being a member of the minority community he felt that the advance of popular government would result in stifling and even suppressing the interests of the Moslems. Khan's opposition to democracy was not based on aristocratic grounds and it will not be accurate to interpret him as a spokesman of the interest of the agrarian aristocracy. His basic theme was the dread of the numerically overwhelming, large Hindu community.

Being sensitive to the trends and tenor of his times Sir Syed wanted a fresh orientation of Islamic thought. He stressed the necessity of modern education. On 24 May, 1875, he founded a school in Aligarh, which soon developed into the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College, now called the Aligarh Muslim University. His aim was to popularize the scientific and rationalistic philosophy of the West for the purpose of the enlightenment of the mind. But his immediate and pragmatic consideration was that the Muslim community should take to English education for obtaining necessary training for getting good jobs under the government. He wanted an educational curriculum synthesizing the old and the new learning. He wanted to give place of pride both to secular modern education and to Islamic theory.

2.3.2.3 SIR SYED AS A NATIONALIST

In the beginning, Sir Syed was inspired by patriotic sentiments. He said in a speech (27 January, 1883) that India is the motherland for both of us (that is, the Hindus and Muslims) who breathe the same air, drink the water of holy rivers of Ganges and Jamuna and consume the products of the same earth which God has given to the country and live and die together. In his opinion, India was like a newly wedded bride whose two beautiful and luminous eyes are the Hindus and the Musalmans; if the two exist in mutual concord the bride would remain forever splendid while if they make up their mind to see in different directions, the bride is bound to become squinted and even partially blind. Another speech by him is still more revealing of his nationalistic sentiment. In his reply to an address presented to him by Arya Samaj, he observed: "The word 'Quam' refers to the inhabitants of the country. The word 'Hindu' does not denote any religion. Every Indian can call himself a Hindu, for he who lives in India is a Hindu.

In this nationalistic phase of his career, Sir Syed supported the Ilbert Bill, which sought to

eliminate the discrimination against the authority of Indian judges. Again, in 1884, during his trip to Punjab, he exhorted the people of both communities to forge a united front, so as to evolve a composite nationhood. Thus, he remained a champion of Indian nationalism and stood for territorial nationalism up to 1887.

2.3.2.4 PIONEER OF MUSLIM SEPARATION

However, after 1887 we see a marked change in Sir Syed's attitude. He became suspicious of the national movement led by the Indian National Congress. He advised Muslims to keep aloof from the Congress. Quoting Sir Syed, M.N. Roy writes that those of the Hindus, who inaugurated the agitation for representative government and social reforms, were intellectual bourgeoisie, whereas the Aligarh alumni belong to the landed aristocracy with social and political tendencies predominantly feudal, socially diverse hence, could not get united in a national movement. Because of his anti-Congress attitude, Sir Syed opposed tooth and nail the Congress's proposal to hold simultaneous examinations for recruiting the best talent in the country. In addition, he took lead in the establishment of two associations meant as a counterpoise to the Indian National Congress: the United Indian Patriotic Association (1888) and the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental Defence Organization (1893).

2.3.2.5 SIR SYED'S VIEWS ON REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

According to Sir Syed, Islam was opposed to personal rule or monarchy. He was one of the first Indians to plead for a responsive and representative government. But he opposed the system of representation by election or popular government. In fact, Sir Syed was worried of the numerically overwhelming large Hindu community. He felt that the advance of popular government would result in stifling and even suppressing the interests of the Muslims who are in a minority. He argued that the system of representation by election was most unsuited to India because India did not constitute a homogeneous nation. It is unsuited to India because in India caste distinctions still flourish, there is no fusion of races and religious distinctions are still violent and education in the modern sense has not made an equal or proportionate progress among all sections of the people.

By 1893 Sir Syed began to emphasize that India was inhabited by different nationalities, professing different faiths, speaking different languages and having different historical

traditions. Hence, the Muslims could be considered as part and parcel of the same nation. In short, Muslims constitute a separate nation. Now his argument was “How can the Muslims and Hindus sit at the same throne and remain equal in power. It is necessary that one of them should conquer the other and thrust it down. To hope that both will remain equal is to desire the impossible and inconceivable” In another speech he remarked that no nation could be made of a mere geographical expression such as India was, for the Hindus and the Muslims were so different with regard to their aims and aspirations that they could not be blended into a single nation. Thus, an analysis of his speeches after the 1880 does indicate that a nationalist Syed was replaced by a sectarian communalist. Sir Syed Ahmed was no longer the upholder of territorial nationalism.

In the light of these perceptions that Sir Syed then entertained, it is not surprising that he preferred the British rule to that of the Congress, a body dominated by the Hindu community. The question arises as to how Sir Syed changed from an ardent nationalist to a staunch communalist? There are several factors responsible for this change in his outlook.

As a matter of fact, the British rulers were horrified to see the remarkable unity between the two major communities during the revolt of 1857. Hence, they adopted the policy of divide and rule. Through the good offices of Theodore Beck, the first principal of the Aligarh College, efforts were made to wean Sir Syed, the rising Muslim star, away from growing nationalism in the country. Beck had great influence on Sir Syed, and he succeeded in convincing him that Anglo-Muslim alliance alone would ameliorate the Muslim community.

The founders of the Congress displayed shortsightedness in not reading the mind of Sir Syed. No attempts were made for reconciliation with him. Sir Syed had hoped to be the third president of the Congress, but it went to another Muslim leader, Badruddin Tyabji. Thus, getting disillusioned with the Congress, Syed hastened to fall in the communalist camp, just as Mr. Jinnah did a few years later.

Sir Syed always aimed at raising the Muslim intelligentsia to a higher and better status. With this goal in mind, he always looked to the British for support. Since the British started distancing from the Congress after 1887, Syed followed suit.

Although the influence of Mr. Beck on Syed was undeniable, it was not the sole factor in his conversion. Syed was unhappy about British callousness towards Muslims after the

Mutiny, and he was sincerely striving for a rapprochement. He believed that Muslim interests lay in siding with the foreign rulers rather than with the Congress. He felt that any support to the Congress would have meant antagonizing the British and thereby acting as a setback to the Muslims' uplift.

2.3.2.6 SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IDEAS OF SIR SYED

Since the beginning Sir Syed emphasized the necessity of interaction between the rulers and the ruled and for this purpose he suggested the inclusion of chosen Indian representatives in the Legislative Council, which was done by the Indian Council Act of 1861. He himself was the member of the Council for five years (1878-82). Further, he suggested the formation of a suitable organization that could keep in touch with the British Parliamentarians regarding the needs and aspirations of the Indian people. It resulted in the establishment of the British-Indian Association in 1866. Again, Sir Syed vehemently supported the Ilbert Bill (1883) which provided for the elimination of racial discrimination in judicial administration. He also joined Surendra Nath Bannerjee for securing equal facilities and opportunities for Indians to enter the Indian Civil Service.

Sir Syed's greatest achievement, however, was that he liberalized and modernized Islam in India. He was the greatest protagonist of modernism in Islam in India. He made the first concerted efforts to reconcile Islam with rationality and Western science.

Sir Syed held liberal views on social questions. He was keen to eradicate social evils which had crept into the Muslim society. For instance, he was opposed to ritualism, polygamy and easy divorce. However, he was against sweeping changes in religious and cultural matters. To quote Moin Shakir, "Despite his rationalism in politics and radicalism in religious matters, Sir Syed was not progressive in his views on social matters. He supported the system of purdah and considered the education of men more important than that of women. Moreover, his efforts were confined to the promotion of the upper and middle classes."

Summarising the political views of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Moin Shakir observes: "His political programme was isolationism, separatism and withdrawal. In the opinion of A.G. Noorani, "Sir Syed's three pronged approach — loyalism, separatism and modernism — paved the way which eventually led to partition of India. Sir Syed was equally responsible

for Islamic integration as well as Islamic separatism in Indian body politic. He was the first Muslim leader who spoke of the Muslims being a separate race. He was the first to declare that both Hindus and Muslims are two different nations with separate and often conflicting economic, political and cultural interests. A renowned historian, B.R. Nanda accuses Sir Syed of “sowing seeds of Muslim separatism: He was the forerunner of separatism in India. A well known authority, Pendrel Moon, observes that “Sir Syed laid down the premises which led naturally to the idea of Pakistan. To conclude, vision of two-nations was implicit in Sir Syed’s thinking.

2.3.3 MUHAMMAD IQBAL

Iqbal was an Islamic revivalist. In his *Six Lectures* he wrote that the ultimate spiritual basis of all life, as conceived by Islam, is eternal and reveals itself in variety and change. But life is not for change, pure and simple. It has within it, elements of conservatism also. Man in his forward movement cannot help looking back to his past. The spirit of man in its forward movement is restricted by forces which seem to be working in the opposite direction. Life moves with the weight of its own past on its back. No people can afford to reject their past entirely; for it is their past that has made their personal identity.

2.3.3.1 IQBAL’S VIEWS ON NATIONALISM AND ISLAMIC HUMANISM

Iqbal was a progressive revivalist. He did recognize the immense significance of the forces of social stability and conservatism. But he wanted the liberal school of Muslim jurisprudence to interpret the fundamental legal principles in the light of the experiences of the jurists and in view of the changed situation of the day so that Muslims could remain abreast of the movement of society.

Iqbal accepts a religious solution of the problems of the modern world. He was repelled by materialism, atheism and plutocracy of Western civilization. He condemned Machiavelli as a “messenger of Satan” because he separated ethics from politics. He pleads for the assertion of the Islamic concept of Fair which imparts strength and provides the capacity for the conquest of evils and passions. Thus, religion is a source of progress to him. What is needed is faith in the abiding continuity of historical heritage and a culture founded upon religious principles. These ideals of social and political resurrection have to be rooted in the acceptance of a spiritual world.

Iqbal had a theocratic conception of political power and advocated the Islamic religious orientation. He was opposed to the modern secularist approach which considers religion to be a private affair of the individual. To quote Iqbal, “The proposition that religion is a private affair of an individual has no sanction in Quran. In Islam, God and universe, spirit and matter, church and state are organic with each other.” To him, religion is to shape all phases of life. He believed that religion is of utmost importance in the life of the individual as well as states. His religious ideal is organically related to the social order which it has created. He believed in the total governance of all aspects and phases of life by the law of the *Shariat*. In his opinion, the various aspects of man’s life social, religious, political and economic cannot be compartmentalized. Thus, politics can be separated from religion at its own peril. The Quran therefore considers it necessary to unite religion and state, ethics and politics in a single revelation. Unlike Christianity, there is no duality of a spiritual world and a temporal world in Islam.

Iqbal believed in the conception of a human commonwealth based on the acceptance of the sovereignty of God. In place of nationalism which separates, he advocated the concept of Islamic humanism. Since nationalism was a political concept, it was not in consonance with the true spirit of Islam.

The state, according to Islam, is only an effort to realize the spiritual in a human organization. Thus, Iqbal sponsored theocracy in the sense of raising the spiritual principle as the basis of political governance. But he never subscribed to the cult of the ruler as the vicegerent of God. His theocracy is a neutralization of force and domination.

The modern orientation to politics expressing itself in the concept of sovereignty of the people and the supremacy of the General Will failed to satisfy him. The notion of democracy, for him, does not take into account the dissimilarities in the inherent capacities and endowments of the individuals. The heads are counted and not weighed. In a theocratic state, then sovereignty of God is to prevail, according to Iqbal. But he failed to identify the medium of expression of such a divine sovereignty in political and economic matters.

Prior to his visit to Europe (1905-08), Iqbal was an ardent nationalist and used to write patriotic poems. His poem “Hindustan Hamara” eulogized the greatness of India. He regarded India as the best in the whole world. In another poem, “Naya Shivala” he expressed

that “every particle of the country’s dust was as holy as an idol.” (Khake watan Ka Mujhko Har Zarra Devta Hai.). In place of strangeness, separatism and alienation, he pleaded for a genuine unity among the inhabitants of the country. But later on, he became a champion of Islamic aspirations towards Muslim fraternity and declared himself to be a Pan-Islamist. When he wrote ‘Tarana Millat’ he forgot all about ‘Tarana-i-Hind. In place of the territorial and racist concept of nationalism, he became the heraldry of an Islamic renaissance. In his ‘Tarana Millat’ he wrote: ‘China, Arabia and India are ours. We are Muslims and the whole world is ours. From the principles of Tauhid (unity of God) he drew the implication of a world unity. He explained that his real purpose is to look for a better social order and to present a universally acceptable ideal of life and action before the world. When he realized that the conception of nationalism based on the differences of race and country was beginning to overshadow the world of Islam and that the Muslims were in danger of giving up the universality of their ideal in favor of a narrow patriotism and false nationalism, he felt it duty to recall them back to their true role in the drama of human evolution. Like modern day fundamentalists, Iqbal gave the slogan, “Back to early Islam.” He emphasized the concept of the Millat as the crystallization of Muslim fraternity. The Millat was the social and political manifestation of the concept of Tauhid which implies equality, freedom and fraternity. Kaba was to represent this solidarity as a geographical centre. But Iqbal categorically stated that Pan- Islamism never dreamed of a unification of all Muslims into one political centre. Because of this supreme belief in the significance of Pan-Islamic fraternity, Iqbal ridiculed the League of Nations as a “Lean structure of European diplomacy” and as one doomed to die.

Iqbal was an opponent of nationalism on two grounds: First, he felt that the slogan of all-India nationalism would mean the political ascendancy of the Hindus. Secondly, Iqbal felt that the concept of nationalism would loosen the bonds of Islamic fraternity because of separate patriotic feelings, as it goes against the idea of Muslim brotherhood. Nationalism, therefore, is dangerous to the interest of humanity. Further, according to him nationalism, with its exclusive sovereign nation state as its political expression, is the greatest single factor militating against peace, freedom and justice in the world. Nonetheless, he accepted Pan-Islamism as a humanitarian ideal recognizing no racial or nationalistic barrier or geographical frontiers. He said that only one unity is dependable, and that unity is the brotherhood of man which is above race, nationality or language.

2.3.3.2 A NATIONALIST-TURNED-COMMUNALIST

In his famous poem ‘Shikwah Aur Jawabe Shikwah’ he clearly stated: “Nation is created and sustained by religion. If religion expired there will be no nation.” He condemned patriotism as a “subtle form of idolatry”. As such, he started describing nationalism incompatible with the spirit of Muslim brotherhood. He feared that the sentiment of nationalism might result in loosening the bonds of Islamic fraternity and induce each Muslim country to develop the feeling of separate nationalism. In addition, he also felt that the slogan of all-India nationalism would mean the political ascendancy of the Hindus.

Hence he declared that “the Muslims from the bank of Nile to the soil of Kashghar must unite to defend the Haram, the place around the Kaba and a symbol of the unity of Islam.” He had the vision of such a state which would be called Islamistan. Iqbal was now inspired by the view of a new Mecca, a world-wide, theocratic, utopian state.”

2.3.3.3 IDEOLOGY OF PAKISTAN

According to Iqbal, the year 1799 (defeat of Tipu Sultan) marked the downfall of Islamic decay. However, in the nineteenth century there occurred a revival of Islam. With the activities of Syed Ahmed Barelvi and Syed Jamaluddin Afghani, there began the phase of Islamic awakening. But it was John Bright, a British radical statesman, who probably was the first person to have suggested the idea of division of the subcontinent in 1877. In 1913, Mohd. Ali, while discussing the Hindu-Muslim problem, also suggested that North India may be assigned to the Muslims and the rest to the Hindus. But Dr. Iqbal was probably the first important Muslim political leader to put forth the idea of a separate homeland for the Muslims on the basis of two nation theory, from the official platform of the Muslim League.

Iqbal felt that the destiny of the Muslims lay in the formation of a state for themselves. He regarded the Muslims as an all-India minority and even called them a “nation.” He was opposed to the unitary Indian nation on the plea that it would mean the domination by the majority. He felt that there was no future for the Muslims in a united India. As a staunch Muslim, he was apprehensive that the Hindu dominated polity may impede the cultural and religious development of the Muslim Community. Accordingly, he supported the Communal Award.

In the early 1930s, Iqbal became an advocate of the “consolidated North Western Indian

Muslim State.” This proposal had been put forward before the Nehru Committee as well. Later on, as President of the Muslim League session at Allahabad on 29 December, 1930 Iqbal said: “To base a constitution on the conception of a homogeneous India or to apply to India the principles dictated by British democratic sentiment is unwittingly to prepare her for a civil war.” In his opinion, the only way to peaceful India was a distribution of the country on the lines of racial, religious and linguistic affinities. According to him, India is a land of many nations. In fact, “India is Asia in miniature,” and there could be no peace in the country until the constituent elements got the opportunity of developing without breaking with the past. Hence, he proposed the formation of a consolidated Muslim state, He said: “I would like to see Punjab, North Western Frontier Province, Sind, Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. The North Western Indian Muslims would thus possess the full opportunities of development within the body politic of India.” Thus, he supported the demand for “a Muslim India within India” Later on, in a letter to Jinnah in 1937, he wrote: “To my mind the new constitution with its idea of a single federation is completely hopeless.” The enforcement of the Shariat of Islam is impossible in the country without a free Muslim state. He, therefore, suggested that in order that Muslim India could solve her problems it would be necessary to redistribute the country and to provide one or more Muslim states with absolute majority. At the Lucknow session of 1937 he asked: why not the North-Western India and Bengal be considered as nations entitled to self-determination as other nations are?” Thus, Iqbal is rightly considered to be the spiritual father of the Pakistan ideology. The ideology of Pakistan was conceived in its basic form in the speech of Iqbal at the Allahabad session of the Muslim League in 1930.

Iqbal believed that Islam is perfect and eternal as a guide for social and political life. He was however aware of the fact that the medieval spirit of Islam had rendered it useless to modern man. But he did not have sufficient courage to break with traditional Islam completely and to accept the spirit of modern science and socialism. With the result “his thought is replete with paradoxes and oscillates between modernity and antiquarianism. He failed to assimilate liberal forces and could not free himself from the mooring of tradition. His inconsistencies and contradictions make it difficult to regard him as a systematic thinker or a consistent philosopher. The story of Iqbal’s thought represents the tragedy of a great genius.

2.3.4 MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAH'S VIEWS ON NATIONALISM

Returning to India Jinnah resumed the leadership of the Muslim League with all seriousness. It was under his leadership that the Muslim League fought the elections of 1937. But to Jinnah's surprise, the League received nominal support from the Muslim masses, securing only 25 percent of Muslim seats. The disastrous performance of the Muslim League had a "traumatic effect on Jinnah". To illustrate its electoral debacle, it won 3 seats in Sind, only one in Punjab and none in North-West Frontier Province. In Bengal, however, it won a third of the Muslim Seats. In the opinion of B.R. Nanda, "it was this electoral disaster which seems to have driven Jinnah to use the dynamite of religious emotion for blasting his way to political influence and power." Again, the failure to reach an accommodation with the Indian National Congress in the formation of coalition governments further compelled him to reconsider his strategy. Besides, he was greatly alarmed by the Congress policy of Muslim mass contact formulated after the 1937 elections. Furthermore, "the difficulties he had faced since 1937 in rallying support in the Muslim majority provinces and in challenging their parliamentarianism had forced Jinnah to cast his demands in communal terms". This is how his Muslim nationalism eclipsed his Indian nationalism.

Jinnah's entire strategy now was aimed at getting the Muslim League accepted as the sole representative of the Muslims of India. In 1939, he put forward the claim of the Muslim League for a fifty-fifty share of political power between Muslim India and non-Muslim India. In 1940, Jinnah formulated his two-nation theory, pointing out that it was impossible to establish in India that bond of homogeneity which is the foundation of Western democracy. Hence, a federal constitution of Dominion type would not suit India. Thus, by 1940 he had become a fervent advocate of the two-nation theory, though he was not its author. But Jinnah did give an ideological and religious tinge to the two-nation theory.

In 1944, in course of Gandhi-Jinnah talks, he fanatically stuck to the concept that the Muslims are a nation. In one of his letters to Gandhi, in September 1944 he wrote: "We maintain and hold that Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definition or test as a nation. We are a nation of a hundred million and what is more, we are a nation with our own distinct culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclatures, sense of value and proportion, aptitudes and ambitions. In short, we have our distinctive outlook on life and of life. By all canons of international law we are a

nation. By this time, Jinnah had become absolutely uncompromising, and he insisted that Pakistan was the sole solution to Hindu-Muslim differences. In 1944 he again said: “There is only one practical realistic way of resolving Hindu-Muslim differences and this is to divide India into two sovereign parts.

2.3.4.1 FROM A NATIONALIST TO A COMMUNALIST

In his early phase of political career, Jinnah was an ardent nationalist in the non-denominational sense of the term. In fact, he was the most secular of all Muslim leaders until 1936, and cherished the principle of nationalism, democracy, secularism and the unity of the country in this phase. To be exact, right up to mid-thirties he proudly proclaimed that he was “Indian first and a Muslim second”. But how an ardent nationalist became a hard-headed communalist is a pestering question. The following reasons may be attributed to this change in Jinnah’s outlook’:

2.3.4.2 DIFFERENCE WITH CONGRESS LEADERS

With Gandhi’s emergence on the political scene Jinnah felt that his importance would gradually diminish in the Indian National Congress. He felt that he was cheated of destiny, for Gandhi was where he would have been. Whereas Jinnah was pompous and believed in faultlessly tailored suits and high collars, Gandhi was an embodiment of simplicity. Again, Jinnah was a believer in practical and constitutional politics, whereas Gandhi believed in agitational politics and adopted the technique of Satyagraha, non-cooperation and civil disobedience. As such, the two could not pull on well together. Jinnah also did not like another great contemporary and a rival — Jawaharlal Nehru. To Jinnah, Nehru like Gandhi had overshadowed him in freedom movement. It was unbearable to him. Same Nehru almost hated and could not stand Jinnah on account of his arrogance, pomposity and lack of decency.

When Jinnah found that he had lost the leadership of the Congress he began to seek another platform where his leadership was unassailable. He found the League a proper forum for domination to satisfy his lust for acquiring and asserting supremacy. Jinnah was a domineering man, whose reversion to Indian politics in 1934- 35 prepared him to the needs and the characteristics of his people, a community looking for a great saviour who had proposed to unify the community and bring early glory of Islam.

2.3.4.3 LEADERSHIP QUESTION AT THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES

His vanity was hurt when he was not chosen to represent the Muslim community at the Second and Third Round Table Conferences as he was not considered a true representative of the Muslim community. Hence, he now began to cover himself in a communal coat.

Jinnah got undue importance in the last decade of the freedom struggle. His ego was given a great boost when Gandhi went to him for talks in 1944 and addressed him as "Quaid-i-Azam". The British bureaucracy also did the same by standing behind him on all issues and by conniving at his obstinacy. All this made him uncompromising.

But it is to be noted that as late as 1936 Jinnah took a liberal communalist position. At Lahore (March 1936) he said: "My role and only object has been the welfare of my country. I assure you that India's interest is and will be sacred to me and nothing will make me budge an inch from that position." But Jinnah was greatly alarmed by the Congress policy of Muslim mass contact formulated after the 1937 elections. Further, the failure to an accommodation with the Congress forced him to reconsider his strategy.

It is interesting to note that Jinnah's political career spanned all the phases of communalism: communal nationalism, liberal communalism and extreme communalism. "Once the basic digits of communal ideology are accepted, the ideology takes over a person bit by bit, independent of the subjective desire of the person." This is how a person who started as an ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity and strongly stood for national unity ended by demanding partition of the country. The logic of communalism, thus, asserted itself and transformed Jinnah into, first from a nationalist into a communal nationalist and, then into a liberal communalist. But it is worth noting that until the elections of 1937 Jinnah stuck to his semi-nationalist, liberal communalist politics. But after the elections he became an extreme communalist. However, he tried (though unsuccessfully) to revert to a liberal phase in independent Pakistan as his speech on 11 August 1947 shows. But, it was too late for him to back-out from his ill-conceived notion of two nations.

2.3.4.4 CREATION OF PAKISTAN — JINNAH'S ROLE

Jinnah is commonly considered the creator of Pakistan. In some quarters, it is believed that had there been no Jinnah there would have been no Pakistan. Some writers even

believe that Pakistan was Jinnah's off-spring. To Frank Moraes, "Pak was one man's achievement. If Jinnah had not taken upon himself to lead a crusade for an Islamic "Land of the Pure," it is problematical whether Pakistan would have been established." In the opinion of Sharful Mujahid, "Jinnah's presence was necessary at least as far as the calendar date of Pakistan's emergence was concerned." Endorsing his views, Ishaq Hussain Qureshi in 'Struggle for Pakistan' says, "Though without Jinnah Pakistan would have come but it would have been delayed by decades." According to S.R. Mehrotra, "Jinnah became both the architect and the symbol of the alliance between Muslim separatism and the Muslim will to rule the Muslim majority provinces."¹⁰ Most of the writers concur that but for his unflinching stand against all offers of concession within a united India there would have been no Pakistan.

But it appears from the above statements that undue credit has been given to Jinnah for the creation of Pakistan, for, as Hemshaw maintains: "The character of the leader and the circumstances of his time are equally crucial in the shaping of events at any given point of time." The destinies of nations are molded by the inner-most urges and their determination to achieve the purpose. But if they fail to provide a leader of necessary ability and stamina they may be frustrated. In view of Moin Shakir, "the formation of Pakistan cannot be regarded as just the result of the ambitions and intrigues of selfish leaders like Jinnah. Such a view could leave out of account the larger impersonal forces without the aid of which the results of such magnitude would be impossible." According to Akbar Ahmed, "Pakistan has been the fulfilment of the collective wish of the Muslims of the subcontinent for their own homeland.

It is worth mentioning in this context that much before Jinnah there were three others who created the necessary atmosphere for fostering separatism. Sir Syed started the Aligarh Movement, the rallying point for Islamic revivalists and Aligarh professors prepared the two- nation theory and submitted it to Jinnah. Iqbal provided theoretical justification for a separate homeland. To Rahmat Ali goes the credit for coining the word PAKISTAN, and above all there was an organized political platform the Muslim League. Nevertheless, it has to be admitted that the Muslim League minus Jinnah could not have amounted to a great deal. In fact, Muslim League became both the agent and the index of Muslim resurgence during 1937-47 because of Jinnah. The irresistible demand for Pakistan and

the solidarity of the Indian Muslims behind that demand were creations of the “decade of destiny” (1937-47) alone and supremely the creation of one man-Jinnah. But it is worth noting that it was not until the elections of 1945-46 that Jinnah could effectively stake his claim that the vast majority of the Muslims supported his demand for Pakistan.

2.3.5 EXERCISE

1. Discuss the political and social ideas of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan with special reference to the Nationalist Movement.
2. Make a fair assessment of Muhammad Iqbal’s views on Nationalism and Islamic Humanism.
3. In his early phase of political career, Jinnah was an ardent nationalist; discuss how Jinnah got converted from a Nationalist to a communalist.

2.4 ALTERNATIVE DISCOURSE ON NATION: JYOTIBA PHULE, E V RAMASWAMY NAICKER AND RABINDRANATH TAGORE

- S. S. Narang & V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

2.4.0 Objectives

2.4.1 Introduction

2.4.2 Jyotirao Govindrao Phule

2.4.2.1 Phule's Ideas on Social Justice and Equality

2.4.2.2 Phule's Fight against Oppression

2.4.2.3 Phule's Political Ideas

2.4.3 Ramaswamy Naicker and Nation

2.4.3.1 Naicker in Indian National Congress

2.4.3.2 Vaikom Satyagraha (1924-25)

2.4.3.3 The Self-Respect Movement

2.4.3.4 Anti-Hindi Movement

2.4.3.5 Demand for Dravidnad

2.4.4 Rabindranath Tagore

2.4.4.1 Tagore's Critique of Nationalism

2.4.4.2 Tagore and Indian Nationalism

2.4.5 Exercise

2.4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the alternative discourses on nation and how they are questioning the mainstream ideas on nation and nationalism
- Know Jyotirao Phule's ideas on social justice and equality, his fight against oppression and his main political ideas;
- Comprehend Tagore's views on nationalism, his concept of freedom, and his opinions on Indian nationalism.

2.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The 'alternative discourse', as a collective term refers to the set of discourse that had emerged in opposition to what it understands to be mainstream, essentially the western constructs in social sciences. What is being defined as alternative is often considered to be relevant to its surroundings, creative, non-imitative and original, non-essentialist, counter-Eurocentric, autonomous from the state, and autonomous from other national or transnational groupings. In the current lesson, you will study about such alternative discourse on nation as provided by Jyothiba Phule, E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker and Rabindranath Tagore.

2.4.2 JYOTIRAO GOVINDRAO PHULE

A prominent social reformer, a renowned activist, a great thinker and above all a noble 'Soul', Jyotirao Govindrao Phule did his best to bring in positive changes in the spheres of education, agriculture, caste system, social position of women, etc. in the 19th century. He is admired and remembered for his selfless service to educate women and low caste people. Respectfully addressed as "Mahatma", he led a movement against the existing caste structure, revolted against the domination of the Brahmins, and fought for the rights of the peasants and others belonging to low castes. He was the first Hindu to set up an orphanage for the unfortunate children.

2.4.2.1 PHULE'S IDEAS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

Phule strongly felt that all the problems of *dalits* could be solved if right and proper education was provided to them and education was the key to their survival, success and enlightenment. He had also a strong conviction that women should have voice in the society, power to influence the decision-making process and revolt against injustice, deprivation and exploitation. His stress on women education impelled him to establish in 1848 the first girls' school in India. His wife, who was educated by him, played a key role in this regard.

His efforts in making the *dalits* and women educated and conscious of their rights were strongly condemned and denounced by orthodox Brahmins. Furious at his activities, they accused him of vitiating the norms and regulations of the society. Many considered him to be an agent acting on behalf of the Christian missionaries. Firm, outrageous and fearless, Jyotirao remained committed to his goal. Interestingly, he was strongly supported by some Brahmin friends. But for them, his 'Movement' might not have been successful. Criticizing and condemning the attitudes of orthodox Brahmins and others belonging to upper castes, he called them 'hypocrites' and campaigned against them for their authoritarianism and urged upon the peasants and 'proletariat' to defy the restrictions imposed upon them.

In 1851, Jyotirao established another girls' school. He also set up a number of schools for girls and an indigenous school for the lower castes, especially the *Mahars* and *Mangs*. Moved by the plight of the poor widows and their children, he established an orphanage in 1854 to provide shelter to them. In fact, it provided shelter to many young widows belonging to upper castes.

Jyotiba felt that a new society or social system could be created to ensure liberty, equality, freedom, rights, fraternity, etc. and this could be possible only when blind beliefs and superstitions were given up. The old social system which encouraged and protected old, obsolete blind beliefs and superstitions, should be replaced by a new one having strong faith in those phenomena which were rational. He condemned things like belief in astrology, fate, rituals, sacredness, Godmen, etc. as these were absurd and irrational. To him, religious books and sacred texts were never created by God. It would be better if those were

analysed scientifically but not accepted blindly. These should not be followed without any proper analysis. He criticized the priests as they were solely responsible for all kinds of social evils and social disorder.

To him, God never wrote the Texts (religious scripts). If at all He wrote, why did He write in Sanskrit, a language which was understood only by few people in India? He further asked: if there was only one God, who created this entire world which is diverse? It was one's ignorance and prejudice that made him to believe that Scriptures and Texts were divine-oriented. All religions were man-made and all Texts written by men and the intention behind such writing was to perpetuate the blind beliefs and keep the 'Shudras' and other backward people under their (authors') control. Every Text, every Scripture, every Religion has a value system. But it is purely temporary in nature. It loses its relevance, validity and importance in due course of time. It is not universal. Religion, an instrument for exploitation, a paradise for Brahmins, could be interpreted in any way by them. And their interpretation was final. It was certainly ridiculous. It was not religion, but removal of economic exploitation that mattered.

2.4.2.2 PHULE'S FIGHT AGAINST OPRESSION

Jyotirao strongly believed that Brahmins were solely responsible for all kinds of social oppression and suppression in the society. The laws were made in such a manner that it helped them to 'enslave' the 'Shudras'. Disgusted with the existing laws and regulations, he formed the Satya Shodhak Samaj (Society of Seekers of Truth) on 24 September 1874 to set the 'Shudras' free from the domination of the Brahmins. He became its first President and Treasurer. Any one could be a member of it. As a result, some Jews also were its members. In 1878, its strength was 316. In 1868, Jyotirao decided to construct a common tank outside his house for common man's bath. He also wished to dine with all regardless of their caste.

After the formation of the Samaj, his wife Savitribai became the head of the women's section which included ninety female members. She also taught tirelessly the girls. Deenabandhu Publication, the mouthpiece of the Samaj, played an important role in its Movement. After the demise of Jyotiba in 1890, his sincere and devoted followers spread the message of the Movement in the remotest parts of Maharashtra. Shahu Maharaj, the

ruler of Kolhapur Princely State, gave a lot of financial assistance to the Samaj. As a non-Brahmin party, it dedicated itself to the cause of *dalits*, women, etc. and made tremendous efforts to remove superstitions.

A dedicated and devoted 'Soul', Phule spent his whole life to uplift *dalits*. He laid the foundation of a new society where there would be no more exploitation, humiliation and torture against any one, particularly the *dalits* and the women. He ignited the spark, lit the fire that started engulfing the whole society. It enkindled a passion for a new social order that would protect equality, liberty and rights of every *dalit*. His relentless revolt against arrogance, and meanness of the Brahmins made him a 'Mahatma'. A significant figure in the social reform movement, he developed an impeccable sense of social justice. He was not critical of British rule in India as it gave India a new notion of social justice. A pioneer of anti-caste movement, he was the first *dalit* to start a chain of girls schools at Pune in 1850s. Founder of a fondling home to take care of unwanted children, he set up a shelter home for neglected widows and an orphanage for the poor women. Opposed to child marriage and 'Sati' system, he favoured widow remarriage. Because of his contributions to the upliftment of the *dalits*, poor, women, destitute, orphans, widows, etc. he became a legend and pioneer of social transformation and *dalit* liberation in his lifetime.

Opposing idolatry, denouncing the *Chaturvanya* system (caste system), propounding rational thinking and rejecting the need of a Brahmin priestly class as educated and religious leaders, Jyotirao did not regard the Vedas as sacrosanct. Phule called Shivaji a 'destroyer' of Muslims who were a degenerative force like the Brahmins. The True inhabitants of India were the Astiks but not the Brahmins. The latter were outsiders to Hindustan. He did not like the castists of Tamil Nadu using Rama as a symbol of oppression of Aryan conquest.

Some of India's first modern feminists were closely associated with Phule. They were: his wife Savitribai Phule; Pandita Ramabai, a Brahmin lady who created a sensation in the liberal reforms movement; Tarabai Shinde, a non-Brahmin who wrote a book on gender inequality; and Muktibai, a fourteen year old baby girl, who became famous for writing an essay on social oppression of the Mang and Mahar castes. It is because of his popularity, place and position in the society, the Crawford Market in Mumbai and an agricultural institution are named after him. The latter is called Mahatma Phule Krishi

Vidyapeeth set up in Rahuri in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra.

2.4.2.3 PHULE'S POLITICAL IDEAS

Mahatma Jyotiba Phule's political ideas are closely connected with his social ideas. Phule believed British raj is not a curse but a boon. It is better than Peshwa's raj. British established rule of law, equality of laws. The new rulers opened the opportunities in education. He hoped that the new government which believes in equality between man and man would emancipate lower castes from the domination of the Brahmins. He welcomed the British rule as 'Divine Dispensation' for he viewed it as God's instrument to rescue the oppressed from the clutches of Brahman demos. Phule raised the question that what do you mean by independence of the country? Freedom means political freedom? Freedom means upper caste freedom only. After independence will upper caste allowed shudras for equal rights? Though Phule preferred British rule, he was aware of shortcomings of the former and he never hesitated to point them out openly. Thus Phule was committed not to the Britishers but for the justice and equality of downtrodden. Phule's criticism of the British government emanated out of his concern for the welfare and the status of the lower castes.

In short, it may be said that Mahatma Jyotiba Phule questioned the existing social order, brahminical supremacy and contributed heavily for the liberation of women and shudras from the control of religious vested interests. He believed in the equality of men and women. For Phule equality in the society was meaningless without equality of man and woman in the family. He believed in overthrowing the social system in which man has been deliberately made dependent on others, illiterate, ignorant and poor, with a view to exploiting him.

Jyothiba Phule remained inspirational for various others in bringing necessary changes in the social and economic fields of India. Dr. Babasaheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar, first law minister of the Republic of India and the architect of Indian Constitution was inspired by his noble work towards humanity and he followed the philosophy of Phule based upon justice, equality, liberty and fraternity. Jyotiba Phule's philosophy of education, human rights, women empowerment, socio-political and religious ideas remain relevant and still inspire several people in their fight against the man made disparities and the discriminations in Indian Nation.

2.4.3 RAMASWAMY NAICKER AND NATION

E. V. Ramaswami Naicker (1879-1973) who is fondly called as Periyar, by the followers of his philosophy is known for the Self Respect Movement of the *Dravidian Movement*. He is also the founder of the socio-cultural organization, Dravida Kazhagam. Periyar propagated the principles of rationalism, self-respect, women's rights and eradication of caste. He opposed the exploitation and marginalization of the non-Brahmin indigenous Dravidian people of South India and the imposition of, what he considered, Indo-Aryan India. Thus, he proposed the creation of an independent state called ***Dravidanad*** comprising South India.

2.4.3.1 NAICKER IN INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The non-Brahmin members of the Tamil Nadu Branch of the Congress Organization formed the Madras Presidency Association in 1917. It was formed to represent and safeguard the non-Brahmin interests in the national organization and at the same time, to repudiate the claims of the Justice Party to be the sole representative of the non-Brahmin community in the Madras Presidency. However, the immediate aim of the Association at that time was to place before Edwin S. Montague, the Secretary of State for India, a scheme of reforms that would give non-Brahmins full communal representation in the legislature. Naicker, who attended the inaugural meeting of the Association, was in full agreement with its aims, and particularly its efforts to secure representation for non-Brahmins in public bodies. Naicker viewed such efforts for representation of non-Brahmins as inspired by the need for social justice. Brahmin domination in liberal and civil services added a further sharpness to such demand for social justice in the Madras Presidency.

Indian National Congress' plans for the liberation of the country appealed to him. Especially its efforts to raise the condition of the masses and remove untouchability and prohibition impressed him. As the Congress held views similar to his own on social reforms, he felt it could bring about a new social order in the Presidency of Madras and joined the Indian National Congress 1919. Naicker participated wholeheartedly in the non-cooperation movement, in the temperance campaign and in the campaign launched to replace foreign cloth by the progressive use of Khaddar, i.e. home spun cloth. Naicker fully endorsed Gandhiji's calls for boycott not only of legislatures but also of local taluk board elections.

In 1921 he felled all the revenue fetching toddy trees and lost permanent income. In this he showed he would go to the extreme of keeping principle above all other considerations. In the same year he organized picketing before arrack and toddy shops. In 1922 Periyar was elected as the president of the Madras Presidency Congress in its Tirupur session. In the same session, he advocated for reservation in government job and education. Several of his attempts were defeated in the party essentially due to the strong indifference and discrimination by the upper caste. Disillusioned, eventually he left the party in 1925. During his congress days he actively participated in Vaikom Satyagraha and kept questioning the brahminical supremacy tooth and nail. Hence they require a special mention.

2.4.3.2 VAIKOM SATYAGRHA (1924-25)

Vaikom was in the princely state of Travancore. Persons of low social status were not permitted to use the road near the temple in that place. To protest against such inequality in society and to maintain the right of untouchables to use the roads and the temples, the Congress members in Travancore launched a Satyagraha with Gandhiji's permission. But the Travancore State swiftly arrested them. Before their arrest, they appealed to EVR, then the President of TNCC to take over the leadership of the Satyagraha. EVR arrived in Travancore and made provocative speeches against the Gods and Brahmins. The Vaikom Satyagraha revealed the positions EVR and conservative sections in the society, held on the question of untouchability. EVR launched his agitation on principle but he could not foresee the reaction of the conservatives. He could not recognize that the age-old practice of untouchability could not be eradicated by one satyagraha or violent speeches against Gods. It had to be fought at every level over a long period without communal colour.

At Congress funded Gurukulam at Shermadevi, in Tirunelveli District, non-Brahmin boys were forced to eat apart from the Brahmins. This issue agitated the minds of the Congressmen but they were not able to intervene in the Gurukulam affairs. At the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee meet in Trichinapally, a compromise resolution was agreed by which the committee recommended that all organisations partaking in the national movement should shun all gradations of merit based on birth. Ramaswamy Naicker himself agreed with the resolution. He said that if the country was not yet prepared to accept this state of affairs, it was the duty of the non-Brahmins to create public opinion which was receptive to their rights.

Failure to settle the issue of the Gurukulam, widened the rift between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins in the Congress. Even efforts made by Naicker and another individual with the mandate from the TNCC to dispense with the communal restrictions failed to produce results. Naicker whose criticisms so far were directed against the social evils and Brahmin domination in the bureaucracy, now directed charges against the Congress organization itself.

Naicker was of the view that the Brahmin question should be settled even while the British supremacy lasted in the country. Otherwise non-Brahmins would have to suffer under “the tyranny of Brahmanocracy”, he said. While this question opened a rift between the Congress and Naicker in the Tamil Nadu Congress, two other issues completed it. They were the question of communal representation and the controversy with Gandhiji on Varnashram Dharma. On communal representation, Naicker held the view that in a society marked by caste hierarchy, representation of Brahmins only in bureaucracy and other liberal professions would mean only consolidation of caste hierarchy in society. A majority of non-Brahmins were denied access to economic and political benefits. He said that non-Brahmins would remain low in social hierarchy. To lift them he suggested communal representation for them. Brahmins were in the national organization only to further their own political interests rather than to strive for the independence of the country. He contended that Brahmin leaders on account of their vested interests were opposed to any measure that sought to improve the political fortunes of a majority of the non-Brahmin community. Naicker held very strong views against four-fold division of caste hierarchy in the Indian society. He joined the Congress for its lofty ideals and goals, one of which was the abolition of untouchability. His fight against it at Vaikom was by itself a vigorous agitation. Moreover, the Justice Party’s formation was itself a revolt against Brahmins and Varnashrama dharma. Unfortunately, Mahatma Gandhi expressed his firm belief in Varnashrama dharma on at Cuddalore. He appealed to the non-Brahmins that in their anger ‘against Brahmins, non-Brahmins should not wreck ‘the system of Varnashrama dharma, which is the main basis of Hinduism. However, he stoutly rejected the notion of higher and low status attached to the system of Varnashrama dharma and suggested that neither the ban on intermarriage nor that on inter dining was desirable.

However to many non-Brahmins in the Tamil region, Varnashrama dharma could mean the

superiority of Brahmins over the rest of the population. Naicker was very condemning of Varnashrama dharma. He considered that it included the relegation of all the non-Brahmin castes Hindus to the position of Shudras in the Tamil region. He felt that if each caste were to follow their own Dharma, non-Brahmins would be forced to serve the Brahmins. Should we think of ourselves as Shudras or we accept ourselves as sons of prostitutes, he lamented.

Naicker even met Gandhi in September 1927 with a view to modify Gandhi's stand on varnashrama dharma. He expressed his deep concern over Gandhi's statements and pointed out that this only strengthened the orthodox Hindu position on the question of untouchability and child marriage, the two evils against which Gandhi himself was fighting.

2.4.3.3 THE SELF- RESPECT MOVEMENT

The propagation of the philosophy of self respect became a full time activity for Periyar since 1925. Towards this he started a Tamil weekly *Kudi Arasu* (People's Government) started in 1925 and an English journal **Revolt** essentially to reach the English reading people. Eventually these two became the mouthpieces of the Self-Respect Movement specially directed at certain non-Brahmin groups.

The Self-Respect Movement had its target the Brahminical traditions, on a number of occasions, the Manusmriti was burnt. Certain characters in the puranas were changed. For instance, Ravana in the Valmiki's *Ramayana* was held up as the hero and be an ideal of good Dravidian conduct. Rama was seen as a wicked and unjust Aryan. Attack of this kind on Hindu scriptures and its symbols, however, were, criticized even by non-Brahmin leaders apart from Brahmins. But their criticisms did not have any impact on the Self-Respect Movement's tone. The propaganda of the Self-Respect Movement continued and even grew sharper. Songs about self-respect leaders were printed and distributed and pamphlets were issued to explain the movement's aims.

The most important of the early activities of the Self-Respect Movement was the convening of the first Provincial Self-Respect Conference at Chingleput on February 17, 1929. The conference proceedings reflected its strong egalitarian bias and its determination to boycott Brahmin priests, its desire to attract young people and women and above all its commitment to what it considered to be Dravidian civilization. The new programme envisaged the formation of different wings. It was confirmed belief of the movement that *Kudi Arasu*,

which not only propagated the ideology of the movement, but also carried on practical activities. It went on strengthening the true freedom for India would be achieved only with the destruction of Indian National Congress, Hinduism and Brahminism. This extreme step pushed Naicker to support even the statutory Simon Commission which was boycotted by the Congress. He went to the extent of criticizing the Civil Disobedience campaign of Mahatma Gandhi as well.

The movement which is dedicated to the goal of giving non-Brahmins a sense of pride based on their Dravidianist past denied the superiority of the Brahmins and their implicit faith in the present system. The movement sought to drastically change the present social system and establish a living bond of union among all the people irrespective of caste or creed, including the untouchables. One of the essential points was a denial of the of Hinduism by which the non Brahmins were made victims of the Brahmins. Since the Brahmin was seen as a leader of the social and religious life of Tamil Nadu, he became the prime target of ‘Self-Respect’ attacks.

The Movement concentrated entirely on the Tamil Districts. It covered primarily the groups low in the social hierarchy like Vanniya, Kula, Kshatriyas and the untouchables. Naicker’s efforts were also directed at women and young people. Because of the directness of contact and simplicity of message, the illiterate and semi-educated in the rural areas turned to the movement. This was a new development in Tamil Nadu politics. The Justice Party, which claimed to be the sole representative of the non-Brahmins, did not bother to cover these groups. In fact the leadership of the Justice Party was drawn from the landowning groups and attempted to cover the middle classes and landowning classes.

A Special bond was developed within the body of Self-Respect League Samadharma (Communist) Party of South India. Both aimed at achieving political independence for the country through constitutional methods, amelioration of the condition of the industrial and the agricultural labourers and working with redoubled vigour for the original aims of the Self-Respect Movement. These aims of the Movement were termed as the Erode Programme.

2.4.3.4 ANTI-HINDI MOVEMENT

In the Legislative Council elections, the Congress won a sufficient number of the seats to

form a government and C. Rajagopalachari became premier of the Madras Presidency. In accordance with the Congress policy, he announced to the Press that Hindi would be introduced as a compulsory course of study in the school curriculum for the first three years. The decision to introduce Hindi in the Madras Presidency ignored the linguistic differences between the North and the South and overlooked the strong currents of regionalism which were themselves an out of the cultural revivalism that had taken place half a century ago. But the political awakening that was brought about was created in their mother tongue, i.e. Tamil.

There were two main reasons for the Tamil scholars' opposition to Hindi. First, the introduction of Hindi meant to them the revival of Sanskrit — a language which they traditionally opposed. Secondly, the mother tongue was not a compulsory subject in the curriculum in those days and many passed out of the schools without knowledge of the Dravidian tongue. Therefore, they argued that the introduction of Hindi in the schools without making the mother tongue also a compulsory subject was a deliberate attempt to relegate the Dravidian languages to the background.

These genuine fears were ignored and Hindi was introduced in April 1938 in the schools. Agitations and demonstrations were launched against Hindi. Meanwhile the leaders of the Self-Respect Movement organised a march from Trichinapally to Madras in order to strengthen public opinion in favour of the anti-Hindi movement. The most important feature of the anti-Hindi movement was the participation of a large number of women in the agitation. Naicker asked the women participants to fight against "Hindi Imperialism". He appealed to the women to protect the mother tongue 'from the onslaught of an Aryan and alien language'. After his speeches, a large number of women came to participate in the anti-Hindi movement and many of them were arrested and sentenced to imprisonment for picketing schools.

2.4.3.5 DEMAND FOR DRAVIDNAD

Naicker's opposition to the Congress did not rest with the anti- Hindi alone. It was extended to raise demand for a separate Tamil Nadu called Dravidianad. To some extent this demand was the culmination of a separate identity kept up over for about 50 years. The writings of the western writers, besides contributing to Tamil revivalism also fostered

a sense of new identity of Dravidianism. But Naicker gave a political dimension to a hazy identity, by passing a resolution at the Executive Committee of The Justice Party in 1940. He expressed his views that the concept of a Tamil nation was nothing new but had been popularised since the inception of the Justice Party. The concept had manifested itself as a political credo only in 1937 when the political Brahmins under the aegis of the Congress threatened his goal. The nationalist press like the Swadesamitran criticized his demand as “mischievous” and “dangerous”. Despite that he carried on his propaganda. He supported the demand of the Muslim League for partition. He also supported nation Jinnah’s two nation theory, advocating reasons for establishing a separate Muslim nation. He conceded and upheld the Muslim demand as the only solution for them to live harmoniously in a nation dominated by themselves and not by Aryan Brahmins. The League’s role in the politics of the nation, Naicker said, was not to disrupt national unity; it was to defend the right and privileges of the Muslims and all the other minorities in the country.

To sum up, Naicker represented the new emerging forces in Tamil Society. He was a stout follower of Gandhian methods of struggle against the colonial power. But on the question of communal representation and varanashrama dharma, he differed from the Congress and Gandhiji and even left the Congress. The Self-Respect Movement was a new development and was a revolt against the artificial division of society into varnas. The Movement attracted the masses that were hitherto untouched and claimed to fight against social evils like untouchability. The more enduring aspect of the Movement was the elevation of Tamil language and Tamil culture. Some of the caste rigidities were removed and representation of non-Brahmin communities in services for which Naicker fought consistently was secured.

The Movement had also negative features. It uncritically assimilated the racial theories propounded by foreign scholars. It saw inequality in society in terms of Brahmin contrivance and dominance. This communal outlook led him to call the Congress and the national movement as Brahmin dominated. He even went to the extreme extent of siding with the Muslim League and raising the demand for Dravidianad. But he maintained throughout that he was not against Brahmins but was against Varnashrama dharma, and Brahmins’ claim to superiority.

2.4.4 RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize. Much of his writings deal with the problems of national belonging. His negotiation with the politics of his time was particularly complex. Tagore participated in Indian Nationalist movement in his own non-sentimental and visionary way, however, it was a fluctuated one, largely because of his ideological differences with the leaders of the Indian national Movement of the day. While Tagore was without a doubt, patriotic, his notion of freedom was not simply political, just a release from the British.

2.4.4.1 TAGORE'S CRITIQUE OF NATIONALISM

Before directly going into Tagore's views on nationalism and Indian Nationalism, it is important to take a note of how Tagore viewed the relation between the East and the West. Like all the leading intellectuals of his time, Tagore also was obliged to address the question of the relation between India and the West. Like his compatriots he began by believing in an essential dichotomy between the two cultures and, for a certain period of time, he talked of a spiritual East and the materialistic West. But there was an evolution in his understanding when he discovered for himself spirituality in Western civilization too. He located this spirituality in the West's dynamism and experimentation and its continuous pursuit of truth. Equally, he observed and critiqued the West's arrogant display of power but believed that it clashed with her 'inner ideal'. This criticism led to his controversial lectures on *Nationalism* in 1916 where he argued that the West's tremendous success in science and technology had led to dehumanization and an increasing greed for power.

Without dwelling so much into the debates on nationalism we will touch upon the concept briefly. Here it may be remembered, even though, cultural nationalism has prevailed since the beginning of society, nationalism as a political expression, "people sharing a common geographical boundary and some unifying cultural political signifier is relatively new. Despite the fact that such nationalism has received world wide acceptance as the only legitimate form of political organization, Tagore did not express an iota of positivity towards such nationalism as it was a constructed modelled with certain utilitarian objectives. Scholars like Ernest Gellner, attribute the emergence of "nationalism" to the rise of industrial-capitalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The epochal shift of human society from pre-

industrial to industrial economies, he argues, set up the conditions required for the creation of larger social units and economies that would be culturally 'homogenous' and cooperative as workforce, thus paving the way for the formation of the more complex and intricate social organization of the nation-state. Effectively, the expansion of the workforce and the market made the earlier pre-industrial, tribal societies and their structures both inadequate and obsolete. Having and expressing similar kind of view point Tagore makes his severe critique of nationalism.

Thus for Tagore, Nationalism was essentially a western construct, and it is not a spontaneous self-expression of man as social being, where human relationships are *naturally* regulated, so that men can develop ideals of life in co-operation with one another, but rather a political and commercial union of a group of people, in which they congregate to maximize their profit, progress and power; it is the organized self-interest of a people, where it is least human and least spiritual. Tagore deemed nationalism a recurrent threat to humanity, because with its propensity for the material and the rational, it trampled over the human spirit and human emotion; it upset man's moral balance, obscuring his human side under the shadow of soul-less organization.

Tagore also found the fetish of nationalism a source of war, hatred and mutual suspicion between nations. Tagore argued that British colonialism found its justification in the ideology of nationalism, as the colonizer came to India and other rich pastures of the world to plunder and so further the prosperity of their own nation. They were never sincere in developing colonized countries/nations, as to convert their hunting grounds into cultivated fields would have been contrary to their national interest. Like predators, they thrived by victimizing and violating other nations, and never felt deterred in their heinous actions by the principles of love, sympathy or universal fellowship. The logic is simple but cruel, and is sustained by a privileging norm, that in order to have rich and powerful nations, some nations ought to be left poor and pregnable, because this civilization is the civilization of power, therefore it is exclusive, it is naturally unwilling to open its sources of power to those whom it has selected for its purposes for exploitation. By its very nature as an organization, Tagore argued, nationalism could ill afford any altruism in this regard.

This way, Tagore called into question both the constructed aspect of nationalism, which stifled the innate and instinctive qualities of the human individual, and its overemphasis on

the commercial and political aspects, at the expense of man's moral and spiritual qualities. Both of these limitations reduced nationalism to an incomplete, monolithic and unipolar ideology—essentially inadequate for human beings given to an inherent multiplicity and seeming contraries, that needed to be unified and synthesized, through a process of soulful negotiation and striking of an axial line between opposites, to create the whole and wholesome person.

2.4.4.2 TAGORE AND INDIAN NATIONALISM

The Nation, Tagore considered with all its paraphernalia of power and prosperity, its flags and pious hymns, its blasphemous prayers in the churches, and the literary mock thunders of its patriotic bragging, cannot hide the fact that the Nation is the greatest evil for the Nation. Hence, he fiercely opposed to India joining the bandwagon of nationalism. In his understanding, such a thing would compromise India's history and identity as a culture and bring it under the shadow of the West. He warned that as Indians, 'we must make up their minds that we cannot borrow other people's history and that if we stifle our own we are committing suicide. When you borrow things that do not belong to your life, they only serve to crush your life. I believe that it does India no good to compete with Western civilization in its own field. India is no beggar of the West'.

Even though, Tagore was apolitical in nature, when the *Swadeshi* movement started at his doorstep in 1905 as a response to the British policy of partitioning Bengal, he was drawn towards the movement and started giving lectures and writing patriotic songs with great fervor. However, when he noticed the movement turning violent against innocent civilians especially the Muslims, who were in favour of partition, Tagore found it difficult to accept the violence and all kinds of loss happening around; he withdrew from the swadeshi movement. Tagore's withdrawal was seen as a betrayal by many of the nationalists, but nothing could alter his decision. Tagore's experiences of violence, hijack of the movement by Bengali Bhadrolaks (elites) and their vested interests found expression in his novels *The Home and the World* and *Four Chapters*.

It would be appropriate to mention that Tagore was a precursor of Gandhi in many ways and it was Tagore who gave Gandhi the title 'Mahatma' to Gandhi and in return Gandhi treated Tagore as 'Gurudev'. Despite of such mutual respect for each other, Tagore

stubbornly refused to support the national movement against the British rule led by Gandhi. However, it cannot be understood as Tagore's love for British rule. Rather, he lamented the impersonal rule of England in India where there was no accommodative communication and social, sympathetic relation between the rulers and the ruled. With all its faults, the Mughal Empire in India cultivated social relationships between the rulers and the subjects. But the British, partly out of fear and partly perhaps actuated by a sense of racial snobbery, maintained a great distance between themselves and the Indian people. The sensitive soul of Raindranath reacted against this unhealthy situation and he expressed deep hostility to the impersonal rule of England (here it may be recollected that Tagore was knighted by the ruling British government in 1915, but within a few years he resigned the honour as a protest against the British policies in India). Hence he stood for India's right to political freedom. He acutely pointed out that lack of political freedom degrades the moral fibre of the people. Thus, Tagore was a champion of India's right of self determination.

At the same time he also opined that political freedom and attainment of a nationalist identity by driving the British out was not the right solution for India's problems. He held the view that what India needed was not a blind revolution or the miracle of freedom built upon the quicksand of social slavery, but a purposeful education that leads to one's evolution and constructive work coming from one's self. The one similar to that of Europeans experienced during the Renaissance, which broke up the feudal system and the unreasonable controls of the Latin Church.

The history of India had a special message for Tagore. He saw it not so much as a synthesis, as is generally said, but as a 'mixture of ideas' and an 'interpenetration of opposites'. To him it was not the history of Aryans and non-Aryans, not the history of Hindus, nor a history of Hindus and Muslims taken together. He did not see the coming of the British as an accidental intrusion. His essays written during 1898 and 1904 convey an intuitive sense of history. He distanced himself as much from the colonialist historiography as he did from a Hindu nationalist view of the past. Tagore believes that India's social civilization was founded on 'an adjustment of races, to acknowledge real differences between them, and yet to seek some basis of unity'.

Tagore maintained that India's immediate problems were social and cultural but not political. India being a miniature of the world where several religions and races are being

accommodated, it is important to constantly strive to resolve the problems associated with this heterogeneity. As a part of it India must address the caste issue first. As the caste system has become too rigid and influencing the minds of the people even to resort to cold blooded repression, the need of the hour was to bring the people out of the trance of the religion. This only can demolish the immovable walls existing in the current society and help Indian society to regain its past vitality and provide people with true freedom. Otherwise there is no point in attaining political freedom in a country or society where the elites exploit the lower classes and untouchables. At the same he stressed on the necessity of cultivation of strength for the realization of rights, both by the individual and the group. He earnestly wanted that the exploited and destitute humanity of India should cultivate moral force for their regeneration and should refuse to be exploited. He wanted that the tenants should be conscious of their rights. To obtain one's right is long and difficult path of constructive suffering and patient self sacrifice he said.

Thus Tagore insists on racial and religious unity persistently in his writings. He hoped for the equal status of various races and religious groups. The day India achieves it would become a model of unity for the rest of the world. Tagore was of the view that such unity and plurality of consciousness could be achieved only through proper education of the people, eradication of poverty through modernization and cultivation of freedom of thought and imagination. He believed that freedom of mind is needed for the reception of truth and it was education and not the adulation of the Charka which would liberate India from the tyranny of the tyranny of the past and the growing unreasoned misery and orthodoxy. To break the spell of stasis through intellectual or cultural revival and find freedom, India ought to keep itself open to the West and not become insular from the rest of the world through appropriation of provincial nationalism.

2.4.4.3 TAGORE ON FREEDOM AND FREE INDIA

As a theorist of freedom, Tagore pleaded for liberty of thought and action and liberty of conscience. He reacted against all concentration of power. He loved the free autonomy of the human spirit. Freedom is the sole antidote to mechanical conventions, arbitrary and tyrannical laws, priestly prejudices, and narrow social creeds. He revolted, against the pretensions of all organized institutions which smother the power of the human individual. These exist to safeguard and interests of the individual; the individual does not exist for

them.

Tagore, like Vivekananda and Aurobindo, has a spiritual conception of freedom. The essence of freedom is illumination of the soul by a process of self-realization. It lies in the attainment of universality. Hence love is the pathway to freedom. Aloofness creates maladjustment in the world. Sympathetic co-operation, compassion and trustful understanding bring to man the blessings of freedom through the development of his faculties. Only a spirit of sympathy and compassion can release the hidden power of spiritual union. Freedom is attained only through consciousness.

Tagore's vision of a free India—free from the fetters of materialism, nationalism as well as religious and racial orthodoxy—actively seeking a common destiny with the rest of mankind, constantly evolving towards a global society, is most ardently and expressly expressed in the following poem in *Gitanjali*,

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and action—

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

Thus to conclude, Tagore rejected the western construct of nation and nationalism as artificial ones and attempted to offer a more inclusive concept. He wanted all human beings to be treated equally regardless of the country or nation to which they belonged. He also did not want barriers between people even within the same nation—the barriers of caste, race, and religion. It is not uncommon for a person to believe in the equality of all men, and yet to regard his or her own country in an exclusionist sense. However, Tagore's

strong faith in man led him to an inclusive approach and propagate ideal of comprehensive social and cultural growth of India. He was able to shake off all shackles of traditional Hinduism, and arrive at a non-parochial and inclusive concept of India. As Mohammad A. Quayum rightly observes, Tagore's vision might seem idealistic but it is not unattainable. It calls for a humanitarian intervention into present self-seeking and belligerent nationalism, through the introduction of a moral and spiritual dimension in the institution. It also requires us to step out of history to reinvent a new future for ourselves that respects human dignity and sees every individual and nation as equals, in a true democratic spirit. The risks for us not to take up Tagore's trajectory are too high. The current form of nationalism that works rationally within a "lunatic" doctrinal framework is threatening our very survival. Violence is spreading around the world like virus. Our vast killing power is multiplying everyday with the introduction of yet more sophisticated ammunition in our arsenal.

2.4.5 EXERCISE

1. Keeping Jyothba Phule's social and political ideas in mind describe the kind of social transformations he wanted to see in Indian Society.
2. Briefly discuss various initiatives Phule took through Satya Sodhak Samaj.
3. Gove a brief note on Phule's work for Women Empowerment.
4. Depict Naicker's idea of Nation and discuss what made him to propagate for Dravidanad?
5. Discuss various circumstances that led to the initiation of Self Respect Movement by Naicker.
6. Discuss the role played by Naicker as a member of Indian National Congress.
7. What were the main reasons for Naicker leaving the Congress Party?
8. Write a brief note on Naicker's Anti-Hindi Movement.
9. Discuss Rabindranath's critique of Nation and Nationalism.
10. Discuss on Rabindranath's view of Indian Nationalism.

11. Explain why Tagore considered that India's problems were social more than political and how he wanted those problems to be dealt?
12. Do you think the philosophy of Rabindranath practical in today's world?
13. Discuss Tagore's arguments for the synthesis between the West and the East.

3.1 M.K. GANDHI : SATYAGRAHA, NON-VIOLENCE, SARVODAYA, TRUSTEESHIP AND UNTOUCHABILITY

- Nirmal Singh

STRUCTURE

3.1.0 Objectives

3.1.1 Introduction

3.1.2 Life and Education

3.1.3 Philosophical Foundations of Gandhi's Ideas

3.1.3.1 God

3.1.3.2 Religion

3.1.3.3 Human Nature

3.1.3.4 Means and Ends

3.1.4 Political Ideas of Gandhi

3.1.4.1 Satyagraha

3.1.4.2 Forms of Satyagraha

3.1.4.3 Non-Violence

3.1.4.4 State

3.1.4.5 Democracy

3.1.4.6 Sarvodaya

3.1.5 Let us Sum Up

3.1.6 Exercise

3.1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand influence of Gandhi's life and education on the evolution of his political ideas;
- Comprehend how philosophical ideas such as god, religion, human nature, ends and means influenced Gandhi's political ideas;

Acquainted with Gandhi's major political ideas, viz. Satyagraha, Non-violence, State, Democracy, Sarvodaya, Trusteeship, etc.;

3.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Those who want to understand Gandhian thought must always keep certain things in mind. First of all, Gandhi was not a system builder in an academic sense. He was not a political philosopher. For all his sayings were pouring from his deep feelings and sincere realization of the truth. Without going into disputes, it can be agreed that he was not committed to any exclusive school of thought. His speech and pen had generally come from responses from particular situation. Gandhi even at the fag end of his life spoke of himself that he had never ceased to grow and therefore, he had been learning from 'Experiment with Truth'. Thus Gandhi had revised his opinions from time to time though his conceptual framework remained the same. He had not altered from his basics.

Gandhi's political thought stems from different traditions, Eastern and Western. Though he had inherited many traditions he had not agreed in to with any one of them. He had picked up many traditional concepts from his immediate predecessors as well as from ancient texts. Gandhi did never claim to be an original thinker. But when we look into all his sayings we find a conceptual framework, common to a philosopher. Moreover, when we find that his theoretical formulations and practical pursuits are identical, we have every reason to accept him as a philosopher in the Indian sense. But unlike other philosophers

and political scientists of both the East and the West, only he could emerge not only as the man of destiny of the nation but also as the man of the millennium.

3.1.2 LIFE AND EDUCATION

Mahatma Gandhi is one of the great figures of the twentieth century. Even though, Gandhi was not a political thinker, in the true sense of the term, it cannot be denied that the ideas propounded by him exercised profound influence on Indian Nationalist Movement between 1919 and 1947. Further, in a century marked by the excesses of Nazism and Communism, the struggles against Colonialism, and two World Wars, his thought shined like a beacon of hope across the borders. Gandhian philosophy is so comprehensive that it has left no aspect of human life untouched. In his philosophy there are very clear indications of his love for individual and national freedom. Gandhi was a great social reformer. He had a many sided personality with clear vision and definite approach to the problems which faced India of his time. Gandhi was a practical thinker and as such it has rightly been said about him that he was a great karmayogi. Gandhi was one of those philosophers who believed in self sacrifice, Satyagraha or Non-cooperation. He believed that violence brought with it hatred and feelings of revenge where as in non-violence there was no such danger. The foundations for each tenet of his thought and philosophy could be traced in his childhood and the people that greatly inspired Gandhiji, in his early life.

Mahatma was born as Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi on October 2, 1869 in the Porbandar city of Gujarat, to Karamchand Gandhi, the diwan of Porbandar, and his wife, Putlibai. Since his mother was a Hindu of the Pranami Vaishnava order, Gandhi learned the tenets of non-injury to living beings, vegetarianism, fasting, mutual tolerance, etc. at a very tender age. Mohandas was married at the age of 13 years to Kasturba Makhanji and had four sons. He passed the matriculation exam at Samaldas College of Bhavanagar. In the year 1888, Gandhi went to University College of London to study as a barrister. He came back to India after being called to the bar of England and Wales by Inner Temple. In 1893, he accepted a yearlong contract from an Indian firm to a post in Natal, South Africa. There, he faced racial discrimination directed at blacks and Indians. Such incidents provoked him to work towards social activism.

Gandhi's activities and his writings and in South Africa had made him a transnational celebrity.

His first biography, *M. K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa*, by Joseph J. Doke, a Baptist missionary-friend, was published in 1909, with an Introduction by Lord Ampthill, a former Governor of Madras and Acting Viceroy. This biography is still regarded as a classic of its kind. It was during these years he wrote **Hind Swaraj** or **Indian Home Rule** and this work is universally regarded as the key document to understand his philosophy. It becomes clear from this book, that although he was working in South Africa, his mind was really in India. The book, immediately banned from India, advocates that India must cease to be a colony and become instead an independent country; but it must do so, not by using violent methods of any kind, but only with the aid of the newly discovered nonviolent methods of Satyagraha.

The South African interlude played a crucial role in the shaping of many of Gandhi's ideas, among them:

- Satyagraha as a method of settling political and social conflicts;
- the need for a common secular, civic space, if religiously and ethnically divided India is to have internal peace and cohesion;
- the need to have an economic philosophy that gives due importance to work ethic, a simpler life style, individual initiative and concern for the common good, and concern for the worst off of society;
- the importance of the arts to lighten the burden of daily chores and enhance the joys of collective living.

As a young barrister, Gandhi returned to India on the eve of first world war and decided to extend full support to British Government in the hope that they would do justice to India after the war. Gandhi received personal guidance from Gokhale, whom he considers as his guru and mentor, the knowledge and understanding of India and the issues confronting common Indians. By 1920, Gandhi emerged as the leader of the Indian Independence Movement marking the beginning of the Gandhian era of satyagraha or nonviolent politics in India and rest became the history. Finally the inspiring life of Mahatma Gandhi came to an end on January 30, 1948, when he was shot by Nathuram Godse. His ideas and thought blended with practice remain highly relevant and continue to inspire people in

several ways.

3.1.3 PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR GANDHI'S IDEAS

3.1.3.1 God

The fundamental basis of Gandhism is the conception of an omnipresent spiritual reality which can be called God or simple Truth. For Gandhi God is a self-existent and this supreme absolute ever-present spirit of God is the starting point of Gandhian Thought.

Gandhi spoke of truth not only as an ethical category but as a supreme being of the highest quality. It is not only a value or ideal, but is the highest concrete reality. God as truth is the eternally infinite consciousness. The spiritual truth, according to Gandhi, was not to be realized by dialectical skill or abstract thinking but by spiritual experience obtained through pure and disciplined holy life and by practicing non-violence in one's actions. The wickedness of human heart is the greatest hindrance to the realization of God. It is only through faith and purity that the realization of the God is possible. It is more of faith than reason that can help us in its realization.

3.1.3 .2 RELIGION

Gandhi was also a religious man. Religion signified, to him, the belief in the ordered moral governance of the world and this view of religion remains to be one among the strong philosophical foundations for his political ideas. He called himself a Hindu but he was not a narrow sectarian. He remained above the bounds of creeds, cults, rituals, and ceremonies. He accepted the moral essence of Hinduism which according to him was the essence of all the great religions of mankind. True religion, for Gandhi, implied an emphasis on the moral values of man as spirit. As soon as the moral basis was lost one ceased to be religious. Thus, religion provided the dynamic impetus to his actions and life.

Gandhiji believed that man's ultimate goal in life was self-realisation. Self-realisation, according to him, meant seeing God face to face, i.e., realising the absolute Truth or, what one may say, knowing oneself. He believed that it could not be achieved unless man identified himself with the whole of mankind. This necessarily involved participation in politics. Politics is the means, par excellence, to engage with the world. Such an engagement

is expressed in service. Gandhiji was clear in his mind that Truth could not be attained by merely retiring to the Himalayas or being bogged down with rituals but in actively engaging with the world, keeping oneself open to the voice of God and critically reflecting upon oneself and letting others to reflect on you. If Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, all the activities of the humans whether they are social, political or religious have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God and immediate service of humanity becomes necessary part of this attempt. The best way to find God is by serving his Creation. It is only through the means of self-purification that one can attain self-realisation. The service to humanity, fasts, and prayers that Gandhi undertook were all directed towards such an end.

Thus, Gandhi saw a close relationship between religion and politics and sought to spiritualize politics. He condemned politics which was bereft of religion on the ground that it makes man corrupt selfish, unreliable, materialistic and opportunistic. For him the politics separated from was a politics of force and fraud.

3.1.3.3 HUMAN NATURE

Gandhi had a great faith in human nature and believed in the inner goodness of man. The human being has a sense of spiritual self consciousness and morality. Each individual has the possibility of spiritual growth. This individual conceived in moral and spiritual terms is the supreme consideration of Gandhian political thought. He believed that there was something inherently divine in human nature. However, the existing man is so imperfect and far from God. Hence, he should be raised to his higher ideal self. Towards this, he advocated for moral change of human heart and always stressed on the moral and spiritual side rather than on the intellectual and scientific side of man's nature. According to Gandhi, social betterment depends upon individual efforts for self-purification. Thus the revelation of moral powers of the individual is an important point in his political thought and one would find integral connection between the spiritual realization and social service across his thought. Gandhi traces the evil in man to his own evil tendencies than of the society. Hence, he felt that man can be cured of his evil tendencies by prolonged efforts. He considered the religious remaking of human nature prior to social and political transformation. Thus, spiritualization of politics requires the fundamental remaking of Human Nature first. Thus, in order to realize human perfection, Gandhi laid emphasis on non-violence, truth and

other virtues.

3.1.3.4 MEANS AND ENDS

Gandhi saw a very close relationship between the end and means and considered the means as more important than the end itself because the former grows out of the latter. He kept arguing that if we take care of the means the end will take care of itself. He linked the means to a seed and the end to a tree. This belief in means and ends becomes the main reason behind his argument that moral ends can be achieved only through moral means and no peaceful and disciplined society could be build through violence. Gandhi decisively rejected the view that an action could be separated into two parts—means and ends and so long as the end was good any means to achieve the end were justified. Gandhi said that means and ends are inseparable and they constitute an organic whole. He was not willing to diverge from his belief even for the attainment of country's independence when he says 'You might, of course say, that there cannot be non-violent revolution and there has been none know to history. Well, it is my ambition to provide an instance, and it is my dream that my country may win its independence through non-violence. I will not purchase my country's freedom at the cost of non-violence'.

These philosophical foundations remained to be the back bone and guided Gandhi in all the movements, endeavours he initiated and the political views he expounded. To understand his political ideas in a better manner, one must keep these philosophical foundations in mind and study those ideas.

3.1.4 POLITICAL IDEAS OF GANDHI

3.1.4.1 SATYAGRAHA

This idea is being considered the heart and soul of Gandhian philosophy. It inculcates moral pressure for the sake of truth. It is a technique of resisting all that is evil, unjust, impure or untrue love, self-suffering and self-purification and by appealing to the divine spark in the soul of the opponent. According to Vishnoolal Bhagwan, Gandhiji described it as a love or soul force. Satyagraha is vindication of truth by bearing witness to it through self-sufferings, in other words, love. It is contrary to coercion and is the weapon of *Satyagraha* by lifting these from the gross physical plane to the elevated spiritual and

moral plane where they can be adjusted by the union of souls. As *Satyagraha* does not injure the opponent and always appeals either to his reason by gentle argument or to his heart but the sacrifice of self. *Satyagraha* not only blesses who practice it but also against whom it is practiced. In the Gandhian tradition, the theory of *Satyagraha* is based on sufferings and the sufferings serve following three purposes:

- It purifies the person who suffers.
- It intensifies favourable public opinion.
- It makes a direct appeal to the soul of the oppressor.

According to Gandhiji, no country has ever risen without being purified by the fire of suffering. Vishnoolal Bhagwan says Gandhi prefers the term *Satyagraha* to passive resistance as the designation of his instrument for political transformation. He is prepared to suffer physical injury at the hands of opponent so that the spirit of self sacrifice may sway the conscience of the opponent and make him see the truth. A *Satyagrahi* has so much of spiritual power that he may disregard even death at the hands of the opponent. It will change the heart of the opponent and will aspire him to see the truth. A *Satyagrahi* has lot of patience. He fights the enemy with patience and sympathy. He pursues truth by making himself rather than the opponent suffer. Gandhi used the word *Satyagraha* in South Africa to explain the difference between his ideal and that of passive resistance. He started *Satyagraha* movement in February, 1919. To begin with the *Satyagraha* campaign was a mere constitutional opposition to the government. It was a sort of respectful appeal for certain urgent reforms. However, with the passage of time it assumed different forms suiting different occasions.

3.1.4.2 FORMS OF SATYAGRAHA

Vishnoolal Bhagwan mentions seven major forms of *Satyagraha* which includes non-cooperation, civil disobedience, fasting, *hijrat*, peaceful picketing, strike and peace brigade. The forms are explained below:

1. **Non-Cooperation:** Gandhiji started non-cooperation movement to ouster the British in 1922 and ended in 1923. It reflected mass consciousness and revival of Indian manhood. Gandhiji was of the view that the government can continue inflicting

injustice on people because people cooperate with government. If people will not cooperate with the government, it will stand paralysed. Non-cooperation can be exercised through following ways:

- *Hartal*: It implies stopping the business as a mark of protest. Its main object is to strike the imagination of the people and the government. The technique of *hartal* is voluntary and mostly non-violent and it is not routinely used.
- *Social ostracism*: It means social boycott of those people who defy public opinion.
- *Picketing*: Its literal meaning is strike, protest or blockade. It is not used to block the path of any person rather it is resorted to warn and shame the blacklegs.

2. **Civil Disobedience**: In the views of Gandhiji, civil disobedience is the breach of unmoral statutory enactments. He regarded it as a complete effective and bloodless substitute for armed revolt. It signified the resisters' outlawry in civil i.e. in non-violent manner. He was of the view that civil disobedience was to be practised with great caution. All possible steps should be taken to avoid violence during civil disobedience. Gandhiji mentioned following types of civil disobedience as discussed below:

- *Offensive Civil Disobedience*: Offensive is also known as aggressive or assertive civil disobedience. It is symbol of revolt against the state. It means disregard of laws relating to revenue or regulation of personal conduct for the convenience of the state. It is wilful disobedience.
- *Defensive Civil Disobedience*: it is undertaken to uphold one's self-respect and human dignity. It is involuntary and not deliberate. It refers to laws that are not people-friendly and therefore require change. It advocates formation of volunteer corps for peace, holding of public meetings, publication of articles not inciting violence in any form.
- *Individual Civil Disobedience*: it does not require particular atmosphere

like mass civil disobedience. It involves participation of single individual.

- *Mass Civil Disobedience*: it involves masses and it requires particular atmosphere in which people in large number feel the need to join civil disobedience.
3. **Fasting**: It is an extreme form of *Satyagraha* and it is most effective and fiery weapon at the disposal of *Satyagrahi*. Gandhiji suggested some attributes for person who wants to go on fast such as spiritual fitness, purity of mind, discipline, humility and faith. Fasting is not physical act rather it shows spiritual potency. Taking moral positions of uprightness, Gandhiji himself took several fasts in South Africa as well as in India. He considered fasting both as prayers and penance and he was of the opinion that fasting is eyes of the soul. He advised the use of fasting only as a last resort. Fasting improves the wrong-doer without inflicting any physical or mental injury. *Satyagrahi* will not hesitate to die while fast against wrong-doings of government or any authority. However, it was not coercion in Gandhiji's view.
 4. **Hijrat**: Hijrat is voluntary movement of the people from their permanent place of residence. People migrate in protest against oppression by the ruler or the government. To protect their self-respect and dignity people take to exile.
 5. **Peaceful Picketing**: This form of *Satyagraha* was extensively used during the struggle for independence of India. Gandhiji felt that it was a very useful and valid form of *Satyagraha*.
 6. **Strike**: This technique of *Satyagraha* is used by the workers to seek redressal of their grievances. Gandhiji did not find favour with Marxian ideology and hence did not support class war and overthrow of capitalism. Rather he considered both workers and owners of factories as trustees. By strike, workers seek to protest against corruption, injustice and exploitation by owners of capitalist enterprises. Gandhiji advised that strike should not involve any form of violence and demands and objectives of the striking workers should be lucid and reasonable.
 7. **Peace Brigade**: Mahatma Gandhi supported the formation of peace brigade to

work at social level. Members of peace brigade were to apply basic principles and techniques of *Satyagraha* and they were to be seen as substitute for the army and police to be ready for any sacrifice to control communal frenzy and violence by mob. The member of peace brigade, according to Gandhiji, should be local members who can enjoy trust of the citizens. The characteristics recommended for member of peace brigade by Gandhiji were as follows:

- They should be of unimpeachable character.
- They must have faith in compassion and majesty of God.
- They should have equal respect for all religions.
- They should wear distinctive dress.

3.1.4.3 NON-VIOLENCE

The greatest contribution to politics in particular and life in general was his interpretation of Non-violence and its applicability in the modern age of incessant wars and bloodshed. To Gandhiji, “non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle, it is the rule and breath of my life. . . It is a matter not of the intellect but of the heart.” Vishnoo Bhagwan holds the view that his non-violence is rooted in the Indian doctrine of Ahimsa. Literally Ahimsa means non-killing but for Gandhiji, it had much wider meaning. It meant avoiding injury to anything on earth in thought, word or deed. A harsh speech is a form violence. To think bad of others is violence. A non-violent man does not consider anyone as his enemy. He bears no ill-will against anyone. An episode a few days before his assassination bears ample testimony to his interpretation of Non-violence. On January 20, 1948 a bomb was thrown during the evening prayers. It exploded at some distance from him and he ignored it. He pleaded with the police not to molest the youth who had thrown the bomb but to convert him through love and expression. It is said Gandhiji would not have suggested execution of Godse in case he had spared a few moments before his death and asked about penalty for his assailant. Gandhiji included in his definition of violence every act which could cause injury to an individual or the society. Comparing non-violence with violence, he stated, “Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical force. The dignity of men requires

obedience to a higher law-the struggle for the spirit. Non-violence is a perfect state. It is the goal towards which all mankind moves naturally, though unconsciously.

Non-violence is the creed of the brave and not of the timid. It does not mean passivity or pacifism or sitting with one's hand folded in the face of danger or evil or actual attack. It does not mean meek surrender or submission to the evil-doer. It is a soul force or truth force or truth-seeking force. It is in short *Satyagraha* which means resistance to evil with the moral and spiritual force that a person can command. It is the use of moral force of firmness in the vindication of truth. It is "the soul force or the power of God-head within us." It signifies conscious suffering, utter selfishness and universal love. According to Gandhiji non-violence is more positive than electricity and it constitutes a positive procedure for promoting worthwhile social change. Sometimes violence is not wrong. There are conditions in which one is justified in inflicting violence e.g. when one is confronted with a choice between doing so and acting in a cowardly manner. He said it is better to be a soldier than a coward.

Ahimsa is conterminous with Christian principle of love. It is synonymous to God himself. Ahimsa stands for the ultimate deliverance of man from the bondage of the flesh so that he may attain the state in which life is possible without the necessity of a perishable body whose sustenance inevitability involves destruction. He remarked that no-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by ingenuity of man. Destruction is not the law of humans. Man lives freely by his readiness to die if need be at the hands of his brother, never by killing him. Every murder or other injury, no matter for what cause committed or inflicted on another is a crime against humanity. Following are the requisites of non-violence explained by the Gandhiji:

- *Truth*: truth is the basic factor non-violence. Gandhiji would not keep himself confined to 'God is truth'. To him 'Truth is God'. In his words, "for me, truth is the sovereign principle which includes numerous other principles. This truth is not only the relative truth of our conception but the Absolute Truth, the Eternal principle, that is God." Truth quenches untruth, love quenches anger, self-suffering quenches violence. This eternal rule is not the monopoly of saints. It stands for all. A believer in non-violence will not shirk telling truth.

- *Inner Purity*: a true believer in Ahimsa is expected to observe inner purity as well. As non-violence is to be warfare of ascetic, he should prepare himself for it by self-discipline, civility and inner purity. In fact non-violence begins and ends by turning the searchlight inwards.
- *Fasting*: it is an agent of self-purification and in a national struggle, an instrument of national penitence. According to Gandhiji, “A genuine fast cleanses the body, mind and soul. It crucifies the flesh and to the extent sets the soul free. Mortification of the flesh is a condition of spiritual progress. A complete fast is a complete denial of self. It is potential weapon of a non-violent soldier. Gandhiji made use of it frequently to bring the erring country men on the right path. He made white masters to yield to his demands through resorting to fast unto death many a time. He believed that a fast if entered upon with pure selfless motives would cleanse his own heart, mind and might help him to see what more could be done that had not been attempted already.
- *Fearlessness*: fearlessness is another important requisite of votary of Ahimsa. Gandhiji pleaded for the heroic non-violent action of the brave and never stood for the non resistance offered by the weak. He wanted a non-violent soldier to develop in himself moral courage and strength. Fearlessness can be acquired by perfection of personal character and by deep faith in the existence of the God. Ahimsa means absolute fearlessness. It is the strongest and the subtlest force. It is the demonstration of the resolute strength of the heroic soul which declines to injure anybody. Cowardice is to be shunned by non-violent.
- *Non-possession*: Non-violent soldier is to develop an attitude of non-attachment in a detached interest in the material things of life. According to Gandhiji, “So many of the so called comforts of life are not only not indispensable but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind. Non-possession is a principle applicable to thoughts as well as to things. Thoughts which turn us away from the God or do not turn towards him constitute impediments in our way.
- *Perseverance*: Non-violence does not yield fruits so promptly as violence does. Hence an advocate of non-violence and believer in Ahimsa should cultivate a

divine patience and perseverance. He should be apprised of the fact that quick results yielded by violence are neither stable nor lasting. A non-violent person knows no defeat as he has infinite faith in God. A non-violent soldier realizes that repeated attempts and frequent failures are essential before good causes can succeed. Display of patience and perseverance, however, does not mean lethargy of fatalism. Gandhiji's Quit India Movement of 1942 and Do or Die policy bears an ample testimony to the fact that apostle of non-violence did not brook delay when sense of urgency demanded.

3.1.4.4 STATE

Gandhi opposed the present state because it was based on force and centralization of authority, which led to negation of individual freedom. Gandhi felt that the state represents violence in a concentrated and organized form; being a votary of non-violence he did not regard it as the actualization of reason and freedom. To some extent the brutalities committed by the South African Government and the atrocities committed by England in India can be considered as responsible for its hostile attitude towards the state.

Even though, Gandhi denounced the current form of state, he did not contemplate the destruction of the State he wanted to replace it by an ideal state, based on non-violence, in which individual would have maximum independence. While he refrained from painting a picture of that ideal state, he did provide a vague idea about that ideal state through some of his speeches and writings. While the creation of an Ideal state remained to be the ultimate goal, the immediate goal should be the moulding of the state according to the principles of non-violence. It may be said that Gandhi was a type of anarchist who wanted to establish "Ram Rajya" or the Kingdom of God on earth.

For Gandhi, Political Power means the capacity to regulate the national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representative becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state everyone is his own ruler and he rules in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state therefore there is not political power, because there is no state. But the ideal state is never fully realised and the nearest approach to purest anarchy would be a democracy based on non-violence.

3.1.4.5 DEMOCRACY

Being a staunch believer in individual freedom, rights and equality, Gandhi also believed that the attainment of these things would be possible only in a Democracy. He strongly believed that power belongs to the people and for time being it is entrusted to those whom they may choose as their representatives. For him Parliaments have no power or even existence independently of the people. At the same time Gandhi opposed to the procedures and practice of British parliamentary democracy. For him the Western Democracies were dominated by the ruling classes which carried on the exploitation of its interests at the cost of the people. He rather went on to the extent of saying that the people of Europe have no doubt political power, but no swaraj.

Further, he did not believe in the majority principle of democracy. Rather, he suggests that, the way of approaching to a question is not to examine the numerical strength of those behind the opinion but to examine the soundness of the question. He wanted a democracy where even the minority would not be coerced, but persuaded, respected and any minority yielding to majority would be slavery. Thus, Gandhi's major contribution to the concept of Democracy is his attempt to provide a moral bulwark to democracy. He had an ethical approach to democracy. He wanted Democracy to be a bastion of autonomy and progress and he felt that courage and resistance were only safeguards of democracy. He asserted that if Democracy becomes unresponsive to the public needs then it should be resisted through Satyagraha.

3.1.4.6 SARVODAYA

The idea of *Sarvodaya* given by Gandhiji is an apex of Gandhian socialism. Gandhiji believed that socialistic order could not be established in India without consistent and constant attempt for re-orientation by individuals. *Sarvodaya* does not only focus on majority rather it stands for growth and upliftment of each individual. It supports organic unity where all individuals have equal importance and the rise of everyone is dependent on rise of every other. It lays emphasis to individual capacity. It does not merge the entity of individuals in the state rather the state is to ensure provision of all the necessities of life for all members of society without any discrimination on any basis. *Sarvodaya* is an attempt at rediscovery and enshrinement of the soul of India and its fulfilment at the social and

political levels. It envisaged the re-building of the political and social structure on the basis of the reconstructed agrarian traditions and behaviour in India. The importance of *Sarvodaya* lies in emphasising ever-abiding value of self-abnegation. It seeks to substitute the law of mutuality and dominant altruism for party strife, jealousies and cut-throat competitions. It stresses replacement of majority voting by unanimity in the village panchayats thus enshrining the primacy of goodness and character in place of the skill of manipulation and self-assertion. It appeals to our mind and heart in terms of values and goals, embodied in our culture. It emphasises that corruption, and the decadence which infect the organised institutional mechanism can be removed by the reassertion of moral and spiritual values and their introduction in social, economic and political life. It suggests development of people's capacity to man their affairs with minimum governmental control and assistance. It proposed limitation of wants.

3.1.4.7 TRUSTEESHIP

Gandhiji believed in the divinity of man. It is difficult to draw distinction between man and man. It comes from this deep feeling of spirituality of man that Gandhiji derived his ethico-economic theory of trusteeship and inheritance. He was of the opinion that everything belonged to God and therefore it was for his people as a whole and not for a particular individual. When an individual had more than his proportionate portion, he became a trustee of that portion of God's people. Hence he laid stress of theory of complete equality and supported equal distribution of wealth. The rich did not need all their wealth for the satisfaction of their personal needs. Hence, they should utilise the surplus wealth for the benefit of the society at large. They should act as trustees of the surplus wealth. Gandhiji argued that if rich do not voluntarily become trustees of the surplus wealth and work for the social welfare, the poor can offer non-violent non-cooperation which could have prevented the rich from amassing wealth. The landlords and industrialists can amass wealth only if farmers and workers respectively cooperate with them. Non-violent non-cooperation is the suitable weapon in the hands of workers and farmers to prevent amassing of wealth and it will exert pressure on landlords and industrialists to become trustees and guardians of the poor. He claimed that trusteeship is a peaceful way of eliminating class conflict and achieving class collaboration. If the landlords and industrialists would not stop exploitation, then they would have to face violent upsurge and perish. Following are the main features of

trusteeship:

- Trusteeship provides a means of transforming the capitalistic order of society into an egalitarian one. It gives the capitalists a chance of reforming themselves. It is based on the faith that human nature is never beyond redemptions.
- It does not recognise any right of private ownership of property except in as much as permitted by society for its own welfare.
- It does not exclude legislative regulation of ownership property and use of wealth.
- An individual is not to hold or use his wealth for selfish satisfaction or in disregard of the interest of society.
- Not only a decent minimum wage is to be fixed up but also a limit is to be fixed for the maximum income. The difference between the minimum and maximum incomes should be reasonable and equitable and variable from time to time.
- The character of production will be determined by social necessity and not by personal whim or greed.

3.1.5 LET US SUM UP

Even though, Gandhi did not provide a systematic and well worked out political philosophy in the western sense and merely provided empirical suggestions to deal with various social, economic and political issues, yet his contributions to the Indian Political Thought cannot be denied. He attempted to blend politics with ethics and emphasised the value of truth and non-violence for the solution of the national and international problems. He did not agree that religion should be separated from politics. He suggested that politics offers great opportunities to serve others and such service is an essential attribute of religion. While Gandhi believed in his own religion and thought highly of it, he had equal respect for all other religions, considered all of them as true but not without shortcomings. He considered that ends and means are integral to each other. He did not subscribe to the idea that good ends justify appropriate means. He applied this principle to the pursuit of truth as well, which he considered as God himself. Truth as end and nonviolence as means are inseparable.

Gandhiji accepted the need for power in the absence of a fully self-regulated and self

directed order, he never considered political power as an end; it is only a means to serve the people. He saw Democracy closest to his Ideal state. However, he never believed in majoritarianism. He was a staunch believer that trusteeship ensures creativity and initiative, ensures freedom while ensuring equal distribution of goods.

The critics of Gandhi have bitterly condemned Gandhi for his efforts to combine politics with ethics, especially with regard to his concept of non-violence in the existing context. Doubts were expressed about the effectiveness of non-cooperation as a weapon to bring about a change in the heart of the opponent and there is every possibility of such movement being suppressed with an iron hand. There is enough criticism on Gandhi's concept of primacy of means over the ends.

Despite of the criticism of Gandhi's ideas, it cannot be denied that many of his ideas have been practiced, tested and yielded results. They are worthy of emulation and can greatly contribute to save civilization from its complete eclipse. To conclude in the words of Lord Halifax "I suppose there could be few men in all history who by their own personal character and example have been able to deeply influence the thought of their Generation like Gandhi".

3.1.6 EXERCISE

1. Briefly explain the philosophical foundations of Gandhi's Political Ideas.
2. Bring out the philosophy underlying Gandhi's doctrine of Satyagraha.
3. Evaluate Gandhi's theory of Non-Violence.
4. Discuss Gandhi's criticism of state and the depiction of his Ideal State.
5. Write Gandhi's criticism of majoritarianism in Democracy.
6. Discuss the philosophy and main tenets of Sarvodaya.
7. Highlight the significance of the concept of Gandhi's Trusteeship.

3.2 J.L. NEHRU : DEMOCRATIC LIBERALISM, SECULARISM, SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

- Nirmal Singh

STRUCTURE

3.2.0 Objectives

3.2.1 Introduction

3.2.2 Life and Education

3.2.3 Role in Freedom Movement

3.2.4 European Tour of Nehru

3.2.5 Political Ideas of Nehru

3.2.5.1 Socialism

3.2.5.2 Democratic Socialism

3.2.5.3 Equality with Justice

3.2.5.4 Mixed Economy Model

3.2.5.5 Planning and Democratic Socialism

3.2.6 Secularism

3.2.6.1 Nehruvian Definition of Secularism

3.2.6.2 Secularism: Socio-religious Harmony and Equality

3.2.6.3 National Unity and Integrity

3.2.6.4 Protection of Minorities

3.2.6.5 Secularism as Constant Phenomenon

3.2.7 Internationalism

3.2.7.1 Development of International Outlook

3.2.7.2 Internationalism and Industrial Development

3.2.7.3 Nehru's Views about World Government

3.2.7.4 International Peace through Non-alignment and Panchsheel

3.2.7.5 Basis of Internationalism

3.2.8 Let Us Sum Up

3.2.9 Exercise

3.2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- Nehru's role in India's freedom movement;
- Nehru's political ideas with special reference to socialism, democratic socialism, mixed economy and planning;
- Nehru's concept of secularism, unity and integrity and protection of minorities;
- Nehru's views about internationalism, world government, international peace through Panch Sheel.

3.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Jawaharlal Nehru, the great Indian political leader was the first prime minister of independent India. He was an upholder of some of the concrete political values. He believed in socialism, secularism, democracy and in the modern values of positivism. The contribution of Jawaharlal Nehru is rightly acclaimed as the maker of modern India. Having faith in the Indian people, he sought to build a democratic polity and economically modernised nation. He was both a thinker as well as a political practitioner. He was influenced by the developments of the

19th and 20th centuries. Though he belonged to life of comfort and luxury, his politics connected him to the masses.

The main intellectual influence on Nehru was the humanist tradition of the West. His democratic thought constitutes an amalgam of ideas of Locke, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Bentham, J.S. Mill, Karl Marx, etc. Besides humanism and early liberalism, Nehru's emphasis on all-round development of individual in the society turned him into a true democrat. Nehru was also highly influenced by the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. The greatest influence of Gandhi on Nehru's political ideas was that he discarded materialist assumptions of the Marxism and began to see the importance of moral and spiritual aspects of democracy.

Indeed, Nehru has propounded no theory of democracy. He was more of an experimentalist in the science of democracy but wanted to consider all aspects of it in its actual working. To him, democracy is dynamic in nature and as it changes, its scope becomes more wider. Nehru had faith in democracy as a way of life. He was not in favour of giving a specific definition of the word 'democracy' apprehending that narrowing democracy to a definition would mean imposing limitations on its vast scope.

Nehru's faith in man and the absolute faith in the freedom of man made him a staunch democrat. However, he was not a protagonist of unrestricted freedom. In a debate in the Parliament, he once said, "In a democratic society, concept of individual freedom has to be balanced with social freedom and the relation of the individual with the social group. The individual must not infringe on the freedom of other individuals".

Political liberty, equality, progress through peaceful methods, tolerance, organized political parties, proper leadership and discipline in the individual and community are integral to Nehru's concept of democracy. Nehru described democracy as a structure of society in which social and economic equality was gradually attained. The democracy could be achieved only through establishing economic equality in the society.

Though Nehru did not evolve any new concept of political and economic sciences, such as dialectical materialism, but his writings and pronouncements bear the unmistakable impact of a leader trying to synthesize the legacies of different cultural backgrounds and to conglomerate them with cogency. Through his historic approach and his sociological understanding of India's history, he had tried to find out some deeper meaning of Indian

political development and the evolution of society, amidst the chaotic and bewildering cluster of details and political events. Although his ideas lacked theoretical originality, but a solid idealism and realism which pervaded all through provided a distinctive character of his political ideas.

3.2.2 LIFE AND EDUCATION

Jawaharlal Nehru was born on 14 November 1889, to a wealthy Kashmiri Brahmin family in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. His father Motilal Nehru was a renowned advocate and also an influential politician. The atmosphere in the Nehru family was different from that of other prominent families of that society. English was spoken and encouraged in the family. His father, Motilal Nehru had appointed some English and Scottish teachers at home. For higher education, young Nehru was sent to Harrow school and then later to Cambridge University in England. After spending two years at the Inner Temple, London, he qualified as a barrister. During his stay in London, Nehru was attracted by the ideas of liberalism, socialism and nationalism. In 1912, he returned to India and joined the Allahabad High Court as a Barrister but soon he began to feel dissatisfaction with the daily routine of the legal profession. Politics to him meant in those days an aggressive nationalist movement against the foreign rule, but he saw no scope for it in the Indian politics of those days. He joined Congress slowly and gradually his conviction too grew to give his life to the cause of Indian Independence. For two years (1920-21) he devoted most of his time to the villages and there after he became deeply attached to the cause of developing villages.

Mahatma Gandhi, who by this time entered Indian politics, influenced Nehru deeply. Gandhiji named Nehru as his political successor. The coming years of Nehru's life were full of political activities.

3.2.3 ROLE IN FREEDOM MOVEMENT

In 1916, Nehru participated in the Lucknow Session of the Congress. There, after a very long time, member of both the extremist and moderate factions of the Congress party had come. All the members equivocally agreed to the demand for 'swaraj' (self rule). Although the means of the two sections were different, the motive was 'common' - freedom. In 1921 Nehru was imprisoned for participating in the first civil disobedience campaign as general secretary of the United Provinces Congress Committee. The life in the jail helped

him in understanding the philosophy followed by Gandhi and others associated with the movement. He was moved by Gandhi's approach of dealing with caste and 'untouchability'. With the passing of every minute, Nehru was emerging as a popular leader, particularly in Northern India. In 1922, some of the prominent members including his father Motilal Nehru had left the Congress and launched the Swaraj Party. The decision, no doubt upset Jawahar but he rejected the possibility of leaving the Congress party. He was also elected as the president of the Allahabad municipal corporation in 1920.

3.2.4 EUROPEAN TOUR OF NEHRU

In 1926, he along with his wife Kamala and daughter Indira, travelled to the flourished European nations like Germany, France and the Soviet Union. Here, Nehru got an opportunity to meet various Communists, Socialists, and radical leaders from Asia and Africa. Nehru was also impressed with the economic system of the communist Soviet Union and wished to apply the same in his own country. In 1927, he became a member of the League against Imperialism created in Brussels, the capital city of Belgium. During the Guwahati Session in 1928, Mahatma Gandhi announced that the Congress would launch a massive movement if the British authority did not grant dominion status of India within next two years. It was believed that under the pressure of Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose, the deadline was reduced to one year. Jawaharlal Nehru criticized the famous 'Nehru Report' prepared by his father Motilal Nehru in 1928 that favoured the concept of a 'dominion status for India within the British rule'. In 1930 Mahatma Gandhi supported Nehru as the next president of the Congress. The decision was also an attempt to abate the intensity of 'communism' in the Congress. The same year, Nehru was arrested for the violation of the Salt Law. In 1936, Nehru was re-elected as the president of the Indian National Congress. Sources suggest that a heated argument between the classical and young leaders had taken place in the Lucknow Session of the party. The young and 'new-gen' leaders of the party had advocated for an ideology, based on the concepts of Socialism.

3.2.5 POLITICAL IDEAS OF NEHRU

3.2.5.1 SOCIALISM

Jawaharlal Nehru was an avowed supporter of socialism. Even before Indian independence Nehru was the first major Indian leader to reject capitalist development as also bourgeois

civilization perspective. Nehru's orientation towards socialism owed its origin to his contact with peasants between 1920-21. His interest in Marxism and planned economic development was stirred by the Brussels Congress and his four-day visit to Moscow in 1927. In his presidential address to the Lahore Congress in December 1929, Nehru affirmed that he was 'a socialist and republican. In the post-independence scenario, he kept up his campaign for the spread of socialist ideas and popularised the aim of the fundamental transformation of Indian society in a socialist direction. Nehru could not build a socialist society. But he made many innovations while trying to develop socialism in India using Soviet experiences and Gandhian approach. With regard to conditions prevailing in India, socialist transformation for Nehru was a process rather than an event. His ideas of socialism need to be understood in terms of continuity, gradual change and a series of reforms which were termed as 'surgical operations' by Nehru. He held the view that civil liberty and voting democracy were basic to socialism. Socialism would develop, only when the majority wanted it and willed it. The most important aspect of Nehru's strategy- the core of his strategy was the belief that virtually the entire people should be carried behind them by the socialist forces. He wanted to carry all shades of public opinion and overwhelming majority of people with him. Nehru believed that socialist transformation would be slow or gradual process as it would take time to win active or passive consent of people and eliminating vested interests.

In 1930s, Nehru held the belief that coercion should be used to remove ruling classes but later on Gandhiji's influence moulded his thinking, for instance he started believing that socialist society could be developed through non-violent and peaceful methods i.e. using democratic channels. Bipin Chandra says socialism according to Nehru was elimination of social and economic inequality and depression created by capitalism. Socialism would come when class distinctions and class domination would end and there would be large scale social ownership or control over the means of production. Nehru is considered one of the founding fathers of the socialism. He made efforts to establish socialism in India. He wanted India to be free of 'exploitation, degradation and subjection'. He was the main person behind the introduction of socialism in Congress Party as well as in the Indian development planning. D.K. Mohanty believed that he was not follower of orthodox socialism of China or Russia rather he blended liberalism and democracy with socialism.

Why socialism?

He believed that his socialism is not against individualism rather it frees individual of economic and cultural bondage. He thought that socialism was only remedy for all the ills of the economy. He was of the opinion that socialism is more scientific and useful therefore it was more acceptable. He held the view that planning undertaken in socialism could tackle poverty and unemployment in the country. He felt that socialism was more scientific because it is based on past. Socialism for him was an inevitable tool to bring social and economic change. He wanted Congress to become a socialist organisation. After independence, he made it sure to formally make socialism as part of the Constitutional mandate in the form of Directive Principles of State Policy. Development through planning was adopted by India under his primeministership. His ideas on socialism are mix of Gandhism, Marxism and liberalism. However, he had limited faith in the Marxian socialism. He believed in the inevitability of the class struggle and the belief that equality cannot be achieved if means of production remain in a few limited and private hands. Nehru felt that poverty can be removed and minimum standard of living can be ensured to all the people of the country without use of any violence even if it involves change of regime.

3.2.5.2 DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

As it has been discussed in the earlier paragraphs, Jawaharlal Nehru was very much concerned about the socio-economic conditions of the country. Immediately after the attainment of independence, he was convinced of the need for ushering socio-economic changes. Socialism adopted elsewhere could not be used in India in the views of Nehru as India had different socio-economic conditions than other countries. D.K. Mohanty says Nehru was very much influenced by liberal democratic ideas of the 19th century. Therefore he had deep regard for individual and his freedom. He considered political freedom to be prerequisite for solution of socio-economic ills of the country and ensuring human dignity. He saw political freedom as a means to achieve upliftment of masses as an end. According to him, democracy and socialism are complementary to each other. As an ideology, Democratic Socialism advocated and envisioned to customize to the Indian conditions is very much flexible. It was based on pragmatism not dogmatism. He did not subscribe to Marxian socialism and Gandhian concept of trusteeship. His socialism was based on social order. He advocated a Socialist Pattern of Society in which individual freedom and human

dignity can go hand in hand with social and economic justice. The Nehruvian ideology of Democratic Socialism stands for the following important tenets.

3.2.5.3 EQUALITY WITH JUSTICE

Nehru believed that socialism was not just an economic doctrine and it is deeply related to lives of the individuals and whole of society. D.K. Mohanty explains that he equated socialism with philosophy of life because he was convinced that individuals need to bring changes in their behaviours, attitude, instincts, habits and desires along with changes in social and political spheres. These changes would help to tackle exploitation, hunger and joblessness in the country. He envisioned new society in which cooperation, equality and justice would prevail instead of competition and conflict among individuals. He wanted each individual to develop socialist outlook i.e. 'to live and to let others live'.

3.2.5.4 MIXED ECONOMY MODEL

Nehruvian model of development is based on a mixed ideology i.e. socialism and capitalism. Therefore, it is blend of mixed economy. In the mixed economy system of Nehru, the state provides such environment in which both public and private industries can exist and equally flourish. The state keeps under its control important and big industries such as Railways and means of economic distribution like cooperatives and banks. He advocated keeping under state controls the main industries of the economy and leaving rest industries for the private sector. It strives to provide economic growth with social justice i.e. benefits of growth reach everyone on fair basis.

3.2.5.5 PLANNING AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

For ensuring development for everyone and effective utilisation of resources of the country, Nehru adopted planning system. D.K. Mohanty argues that he believed that peaceful method of development through planning was very useful to realise democratic socialism on the country. Instead of class war and violence of Marxian traditions and monopoly and competition of capitalism system, Nehru chose planning as a method to bring about change. Planning is very important process in socialist economy which helps to develop a classless society based on cooperative lines.

3.2.6 SECULARISM

Bipin Chandra says secularism meant to Nehru as giving of full protection to the minorities and removing their fears. He asserted that in a secular state and society it was the duty of the religious majority to accept responsibility for the maintenance of communal peace and to win the goodwill and confidence of the minorities by fair and even generous treatment. He was pained to say that quite often majorities not only forget minorities rather they also act in a very narrow-minded way. Bipin Chandra says Nehru argued that secularism was also in the interest of the minorities and that communalism harmed the interest of those it claimed to defend.

He was of the opinion that communalism harmed not only the country as a whole and the majority but also the minority itself. He felt that secularism is constant attack on all forms of communalism emanating from any religion. He believed that secularism can be only basic for unity of India. However, he sacrificed from a certain economic deterministic and reductionist bias. Resultantly, he underplayed the role of ideology and of ideological political struggle in the promotion of secularism in the minds of the people. Bipin Chandra argues that he believed that planning and economic development and the spread of education, science and technology would automatically weaken communal thinking and it would develop secular consciousness in people. But despite all this his commitment to secularism was total and his opposition to communal resolute.

Nehru is considered a secular person in thought as well as action. If makers of the Indian Constitution provided secularism nation, then Nehru attempted to develop a secular society by implementing processes and rules aimed at establishment of secular country. He laid foundation for a secular India. Nehru was of the opinion that secularism was the basic law of the country. D.K. Mohanty writes that he was convinced that through secularism India could achieve political stability, territorial integrity and national identity. His western education and scientific outlook helped him to have a secular orientation in his political life too which he implemented polity and administration of the country. He fought against social ills and made efforts to replace tradition with technology and superstition with scientific outlook. The concept of secularism was existence since the Vedic times when it was widely prevalent belief that God was one but he was remembered or revered by different names by different communities, religions and in different geographical places. The church in Europe dealt a

blow to secularism but emergence of liberalism and supremacy of state revived secular traditions. In India before Mughal Akbar, King Ashoka is example who strongly believed in secularism and upheld it by organising meetings of leaders of different religions. The British rulers attacked and damaged India's secular fabric by introducing communal electorates and policy of divide and rule. After attaining independence, Nehru made efforts to restore secular structure of the country and elimination of communalism. The Indian Constitution provided for a legal framework for establishment of secular state by giving religious freedoms on equal basis to all religions. However, the word secular was added to the Preamble to the Constitution in 1976 by 42nd Amendment daughter of the Nehru i.e. Indira Gandhi.

3.2.6.1 NEHRUVIAN DEFINITION OF SECULARISM

To Nehru, secularism was a private and individual matter and he wanted to isolate religion from state, politics and education. He fought communalism with the weapon of secularism. 'Nehru strongly opposed the religious practices which were infected with the virus of superstitions, credulity, irrationalism and intolerance. He suggested to not talking about the saints and he felt that we must be concerned about our fellow countrymen and country. He was of the opinion that each individual should develop scientific temperament and outlook and should abjure any type of religious dogmatism.

3.2.6.2 SECULARISM: SOCIO-RELIGIOUS HARMONY AND EQUALITY

Nehru knew that India is country of religious diversity. By including secular provisions, he wanted to ensure that harmony prevails among different communities and groups. It would lead to establishment of stable society. He wanted Uniform Civil Code to be made part of the Directive Principles. To him, secularism was meant to be equal respect for all faiths and religions alongwith equal opportunities. It would ensure political security to all the religious majorities as well as minorities. Democracy will be strengthened in such conditions.

3.2.6.3 NATIONAL UNITY AND INTEGRITY

India is country of diverse religions, faiths, ethnicities, castes, cultures and languages. Nehru was of the opinion that secularism would lead to guaranteeing religious, social and political unity and integrity of the country. Secularism develops rationality and scientific outlook in

the individuals and it frees the minds of the people of any religious fundamentalism or dogmatism. He wanted to fight communalism with secularism along with education, urbanisation and industrialisation.

3.2.6.4 PROTECTION OF MINORITIES

D.K. Mohanty feels that at the time of Nehru, the secularism was equally for majorities and minorities but after Nehru, secularism became minority-oriented concept. He was convinced that majority community Hindu were safe and protected in India. But minorities such Muslims were having apprehension because wounds of partitions were not properly heeled. He effected changes in Hindu code but he did not amend Muslim personal law. He argued that Hindus because of education were prepared to accept change but same was not true for Muslims and Christians. He wanted minorities to be given proper protection.

3.2.6.5 SECULARISM AS CONSTANT PHENOMENON

He believed that secularism is not any temporary process rather it is continuous process. He wanted Indians to make secularism as part of not only national thinking but also individual thinking. According to Nehru, secularism does not mean that there exist no religion rather all the religious values such love, compassion and humanity are well respected by the people of all religions.

3.2.7 INTERNATIONALISM

Nehru was having strong faith in internationalism. He considered internationalism as the bedrock of international peace and welfare of all the countries. He was a realist as far as international relations were concerned. He envisioned development of cooperation and inter-dependence among countries for their economic, scientific and technological progress. According to D.K. Mohanty, he was hopeful of survival of humankind through internationalism.

3.2.7.1 DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

Nehru was the first Congress leader who tried to give the Congress party an international outlook. He did not want the party to become narrow and egocentric in its approach and functioning. He was of the opinion that after achieving independence, country should strive

for internationalism instead of nationalism. His nationalism was opposed to imperialism and colonialism and he believed in equality of nations. His ideas about democratic nationalism were truly reflective of his orientation for internationalism. Nehru tried to see and understand national events from international perspective. He put forward argument that no country can remain isolated from international events.

3.2.7.2 INTERNATIONALISM AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Nehru linked development of the country with international factors. Nehru believed that growth and development of the country is dependent on prevalence of international peace, goodwill and mutual cooperation among countries. For industrialisation, countries have to be inter-dependent. He argued that no nation is truly independent in real sense rather each country is dependent on other countries for various reasons. It can be seen that markets, transport and industrial production is linked and dependent internationally. Everything has gone global except human thinking which is still dogmatic.

3.2.7.3 HIS VIEWS ABOUT WORLD GOVERNMENT

Nehru had a great vision of international peace through internationalism. He envisioned world federation and world government of all countries. In such world system, each country would have free participation to resolve conflict and establish peace. He was quite hopeful of establishment of world government. He wanted each country of the world to take keen interests in world affairs and no country should strive to live aloof from the world. To avoid destruction of world peace in the times of scientific and technological advancement, there must be some sort of federation of countries of the world. He advocated judicious balance of nationalism and internationalism for international peace and unity. He wanted all countries to live peacefully by cooperating with one another. In this way world would progress on equal basis.

3.2.7.4 INTERNATIONAL PEACE THROUGH NON-ALIGNMENT AND PANCHASHEEL

He was at the forefront on NAM which was directed against as joining of blocs by different countries in the backdrop of Cold War between the United States of America (USA) and the erstwhile United Socialist States of Russia (USSR) for supremacy. He was founding member of NAM. He advocated NAM to assert independent status of countries like

India which did not want to be a part of any power bloc. He proposed Panchasheel i.e. five cardinal principles to foster peace and cooperation with neighbouring and other countries. As a Prime Minister of free India, he played very effective role on resolution of various conflicts in different parts of the world such as Congo Crisis that went on for four years (1960-1964), Korean Crisis that also continued for three years i.e. 1950-1953. According to D.K. Mohanti, following were main principles under Panchasheel:

- Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- Mutual non-aggression.
- Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs.
- Equality and mutual advantage.
- Peaceful coexistence and economic cooperation.

3.2.7.5 BASIS OF INTERNATIONALISM

He considered United Nations (UN) as the basis of establishing world peace and ensuring peaceful coexistence of different countries by avoiding war. He made efforts for inclusion of China into the UN (UNO at that time). He wanted the UN to have universal character which was not possible if countries like China were not taken into its fold. That shows his sincere commitment for internationalism and world peace.

3.2.8 LET US SUM UP

Fifteen years after the Guwahati Session, on August 15, 1947, the Congress succeeded to overthrow the influential British Empire. Nehru became the first Prime Minister of independent India. The time had come to implement his ideas and construct a healthy nation. Following Gandhi's assassination in 1948, Jawaharlal Nehru felt very much alone. He was very much concerned about the issues pertaining to the economic sector of the country. In the year 1949, Jawaharlal Nehru made his first visit to the United States, seeking a solution to India's urgent food shortage. In 1951, Jawaharlal Nehru launched the country's 'First Five-Year Plan' emphasizing on the increase in the agricultural output. In 1957, despite of the major victory attained in the elections, the Nehru-led central government faced rising problems and criticism. The election of his daughter Indira as

Congress President in 1959 was viewed by many, as Nepotism. Jawaharlal Nehru was supporter of the anti-imperialist policy. He extended his support for the liberation of small and colonized nations of the world. He was also one of the prominent architects of the Non-Alignment Movement. Following the policies of NAM, India decided stay away from being a part of the global bifurcation. He advocated NAM to assert independent status of countries like India which did not want to be a part of any power bloc. He proposed Panchasheel i.e. five cardinal principles to foster peace and cooperation with neighbouring and other countries.

3.2.9 EXERCISE

1. Discuss the significant role played by Nehru in the Freedom Struggle.
2. Discuss the influence of Socialistic ideas on Nehru.
3. Explain Nehruvian conception of Democratic Socialism with its various tenets.
4. Nehru strongly asserted that secularism is constant attack on all forms of communalism emanating from any religion. Discuss his concept of Secularism.
5. In the light of the statement ‘internationalism as the bedrock of international peace and welfare of all the countries’ discuss various beliefs of Nehru pertaining to Internationalism.

3.3 B.R. AMBEDKAR : CRITIQUE OF HINDUISM, CASTE, UNTOUCHABILITY, RESERVATION AND PLANNING

- Nirmal Singh

STRUCTURE

3.3.0 Objectives

3.3.1 Introduction

3.3.2 Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar: Life and Education

3.3.3 Dalit Movement and Political Activism

3.3.4 Change of Religion to Buddhism

3.3.5 Political Ideas of Amdekar

3.3.5.1 Critique on Hinduism

3.3.5.2 Perceptions on Caste

3.3.5.3 Denouncement of Untouchability

3.3.6 Amdekar on Reservations

3.3.7 Amdekar on Planning

3.3.8 Let Us Sum Up

3.3.9 Exercise

3.3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- How B R Ambedkar's life and education influenced his political ideas;
- Ambedkar's political activism, involvement with dalit politics, his religious views in general and with regard to Buddhism in particular;
- Ambedkar's political ideas, particularly his critique on Hinduism, his perceptions on caste, denouncement of untouchability; and
- Ambedkar's reformist activities with specific reference to reservations and planning.

3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

The political philosophy of Ambedkar may help in renegotiating the crisis of western political theory in particular and leading the struggles of the masses in general. One can see Ambedkar's association with the grand political streams such as liberal, radical or conservative through his writings. At the same time he differentiates himself with these three dominant political traditions. Ambedkar's philosophy is essentially ethical and religious. For him, the social precedes the political. Social morality is central to his political philosophy. He is neither a fierce individualist nor a conservative communitarian. His conceptions of democracy internalises the principles of equality, liberty, and fraternity in their true spirit. Though there are many attempts but one may find difficulty in locating him in dominant political traditions. Often this may lead to misunderstanding of the essence of Ambedkar. Ambedkar's political thought demands a new language to understand the complexity of his thoughts.

3.3.2 BHIMRAO RAMJI AMBEDKAR: LIFE AND EDUCATION

Bhim Rao Ambedkar was born on April 14, 1891 to Bhimabai Sakpal and Ramji in Madhya Pradesh. He was the fourteenth child of his parents. Ambedkar's father was a Subedar in the Indian Army and posted at Mhow cantonment, MP. After the retirement of his father in 1894, the family moved to Satara. Shortly after, his mother passed away. Four years later, his father remarried and the family shifted to Bombay, where he cleared his matriculation in 1908. Being a very bright student later he went on to study at the Columbia University in the City of New York and at the London School of Economics. He also studied economics at Bonn. As a postgraduate student, he had done advanced studies in the field of economics. His works on the Indian rupee as well as on Provincial Finance and

Currency are notable. Further, being a renowned Jurist he could emerge as one of the architects of the Indian Constitution.

Ambedkar championed the aspirations and claims of the so-called Untouchables. His efforts to eradicate the social evils like untouchability and caste restrictions brought him undying recognition. The leader, throughout his life, fought for the rights of the dalits and other socially backward classes. Ambedkar was appointed as the nation's first Law Minister in the Cabinet of Jawaharlal Nehru. He was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna India's highest civilian honour in 1990. Ambedkar was a victim of caste discrimination. His parents hailed from the Hindu Mahar caste, which was viewed as "untouchable" by the upper class. Due to this, Ambedkar had to face severe discriminations from every corner of the society. The discrimination and humiliation haunted Ambedkar even at the Army school, run by British government. Fearing social outcry, the teachers would segregate the students of lower class from that of Brahmins and other upper classes. The untouchable students were often asked by the teacher to sit outside the class.

After shifting to Satara, he was admitted to a local school but the change of school did not change the fate of young Bhimrao. Discrimination followed wherever he went. In 1908, Ambedkar got the opportunity to study at the Elphinstone College. Besides clearing all the exams successfully Ambedkar also obtained a scholarship of twenty five rupees a month from the Gayakwad ruler of Baroda, Sahyaji Rao III. Political Science and Economics were the subjects in which he graduated from the Bombay University in 1912. Ambedkar decided to use the money for higher studies in the USA. After coming back from the US, Ambedkar was appointed as the Defence secretary to the King of Baroda. Even, there also he had to face the humiliation for being an 'Untouchable'. With the help of the former Bombay Governor Lord Sydenham, Ambedkar obtained the job as a professor of political economy at the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics in Bombay. In order to continue his further studies, in 1920 he went to England at his own expenses. There he was awarded honour of D.Sc by the London University. Ambedkar also spent few months at the University of Bonn, Germany, to study economics. On 8 June, 1927, he was awarded a Doctorate by the University of Columbia.

3.3.3 DALIT MOVEMENT AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM

After returning to India, Bhimrao Ambedkar decided to fight against the caste discrimination that almost fragmented the nation. Ambedkar opined that there should be separate electoral system for the Untouchables and lower caste people. He also favoured the concept of providing reservations for Dalits and other religious communities. Ambedkar began to find ways to reach to the people and make them understand the drawbacks of the prevailing social evils. He launched a newspaper called “Mooknayaka” (leader of the silent). It was believed that, one day, after hearing his speech at a rally, Shahu IV, an influential ruler of Kolhapur dined with the leader. The incident also created a huge uproar in the socio-political arena of the country.

In 1936, Ambedkar founded the Independent Labour Party. In the 1937 elections to the Central Legislative Assembly his party won 15 seats. Ambedkar oversaw the transformation of his political party into the All India Scheduled Castes Federation, although it performed poorly in the elections held in 1946 for the Constituent Assembly of India. Ambedkar objected to the decision of Congress and Mahatma Gandhi to call the untouchable community as Harijans. He would say that even the members of untouchable community are same as the other members of the society. Ambedkar was appointed on the Defence Advisory Committee and the Viceroy’s Executive Council as Minister for Labour. His reputation as a scholar and eminent jurist led to his appointment as free India’s first, Law Minister and chairman of the committee responsible for drafting Indian Constitution.

3.3.4 CHANGE OF RELIGION TO BUDDHISM

In 1950, Ambedkar travelled to Sri Lanka to attend a convention of Buddhist scholars and monks. After his return he decided to write a book on Buddhism and soon, converted himself to Buddhism. In his speeches, Ambedkar lambasted the Hindu rituals and caste division. Ambedkar founded the Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha In 1955. His book “The Buddha and His Dhamma” was published posthumously. On October 14, 1956 Ambedkar organized a public ceremony to convert around five lakh of his supporters into Buddhism. Ambedkar travelled to Kathmandu to attend the Fourth World Buddhist Conference. He completed his final manuscript, “The Buddha or Karl Marx” on December 2, 1956.

3.3.5 POLITICAL IDEAS OF AMBEDKAR

3.3.5.1 CRITIQUE ON HINDUISM

It is a very well known truth that Ambedkar had renounced Hinduism and had adopted Buddhism as his mark of protest against the prevalent Caste system in Hindu society, which he believed was the original religion of his ancestors. In fact, he even paved a way for many of the Dalits to adopt Buddhism as well. Ambedkar was against a phenomenon called Brahmanism, which he believed is one of the components of Hinduism and not its essence. He is a staunch critique of the caste system which according to him is nothing but, Brahmanism incarnate. It is one of the components of a large cultural unit that is the Hindu culture. Brahmanism can be easily understood as the desire of those in the Brahmin caste, or those appropriating that status, to assert themselves so as to be at the top of the social hierarchy. Ambedkar was aware of this fact. Ambedkar in his works did not condemn the people born in particular castes (therefore much against what many contemporary ideologues claim), but the tendency within the caste ideology, spearheaded by the status of the Brahmin caste to oppress the lower orders in accordance to the given graded hierarchies. He vehemently critiques Hinduism and calls this religion a myth, a set of rules. The fact that he calls it a myth arises out of the sources which convinced him that the word Hindu never existed in Shastras.

Ambedkar was of the view that Hindu religion was based on caste system, so it could not do any justice to depressed classes such as Dalits. Thus, he went on to articulate that Hinduism has been the cause of perpetuation of injustice towards poor and toiling masses of India who had been denied dignified life for centuries. D. K. Mohanty says Ambedkar argued that the religion which maltreats its followers nothing less than animals and cripples them from all aspects was not at all a religion. He was opposed to Hinduism because it did not support social unity rather it promotes discrimination and societal isolation of some communities considered as untouchables. He believed that *Varna* system is the root cause of the emergence and perpetuation of untouchability in India for centuries together and continuing till now. He criticised the notion of Hindu religion in which virtue is caste-ridden and morality is caste bound. The Hindu religion is a means for the exploitation of *Shudras* by Brahmins. Ambedkar attacked theoretically on Hindu religious books from a rationalist and humanist point of view, as he felt that caste would only be annihilated if Hindus lost

faith in the religious books which sanctify the Varnashrama-dharma and caste system. It is insignificant whether his analysis right or wrong, but what remains significant is his objectiveness he adopted in the criticism of the holy books. He hated Hinduism because it inherently institutionalizes the discrimination by the caste system in most inhuman ways. One cannot be a Hindu until he/she belongs to a certain caste. Ambedkar tried to reform Hinduism in his younger days, but he realized that his efforts are futile as upper caste Hindus feel pride for their caste and not ready to give up their caste and socioeconomic privileges derived from their caste. So he studied various religions and found flaws and vulnerabilities in almost every one of them. He got influenced by Buddhism because it preached non-violence, peace and equality. It was also a simple and logical religion. Ambedkar revived old Buddhism in a new form called 'navayana' or 'neo-Buddhism' which was distinct from other varieties of East Asian Buddhism which was riddled with idol worship and blind faith.

Therefore, he was determined to reform and 'restructure the Hindu social system which was based on faulty Hindu religion' and also further grounded in *Verna* system. He supported the social system in which human beings live a human life based on the liberty, equality and fraternity. He stressed the preferential treatment for socially oppressed and economically exploited masses of the country.

3.3.5.2 PERCEPTIONS ON CASTE

Ambedkar's perception of caste and its critical analysis from the historical and social perspective can be found in his works such as *Caste in India, Annihilation of Caste* and *Who Were Sudra?* For Ambedkar Caste System is part and parcel of the Hindu Society. It has been coming through the ages and it will remain with the Hindu society for ever. Ambedkar, denounced the caste system as totally unscientific as it has no scientific origin. According to Ambedkar, caste system is not merely a division of labour. It is a hierarchy in which one labourer is graded above the other. This division of labour was not spontaneous; it was neither based on natural aptitudes nor on choice. Individual's sentiment had no place in it. It was based on the dogma of predestinations. He felt, in no civilised society, there is unnatural division of labour into water-tight compartment. Social and individual efficiency requires us to develop the capacity of an individual to the point of competency to choose and to make his own career. This principle is violated in the caste

system in so far as it involves an attempt to appoint tasks to individual in advance, selected not on the basis of trained original capacities but on that of the social status of the parents.

He said, unemployment among Hindus is due to the caste system because there is no readjustment of occupations. Caste, thus, does not result in economic efficiency; it cannot and has not improved race. It has completely disorganised and demoralised the Hindus. It prevents common activity and by doing so, it has prevented the Hindus from becoming a united society. But how to abolish caste? Ambedkar said, caste cannot simply be abolished by forced inter-caste marriage and inter-dining. What is needed is notional change. Hindus observe caste not because they are inhuman, but because their religion and religious shastras (scriptures) have taught them so. People being religious minded observe it blindly. Hence he said, make every man and woman free from the thralldom of the shastras, cleanse their minds of the pernicious notions founded in the shastras and he or she will inter-dine and inter-marry, without any body telling him or her to do so. He called upon the people to disobey the unscientific, inhuman and unsocial rules of the shastras. People must also deny the authority of the shastras like Buddha and Nanak.

Vishnoolal Bhagwan says Ambedkar "... was of the opinion that the Hindu society based on caste system led to exploitation and perpetuation of inequality. Due to *Varna Vyavastha*, a class of untouchables has emerged. In this system Brahmins acquired supreme position and indulged in highhandedness and extreme cruelty towards the untouchables. Unfortunately the nasty system was strongly supported by the Brahmins, torch-bearers of the Hindu religion and advocates of Manusmriti. Hence, he felt the end of *Varna Vyavastha*, a stiff opposition of traditional religion and burning of holy books like Manusmriti also could help reforming the untouchables and subsequently the Indian society. He himself burnt Manusmriti in bonfire on September 29, 1927 at Mahad and told people to do so. This prompted even Gandhiji to consider Baba Sahib a challenge to Hindu religion. In fact, Baba Sahib was not opposed to Hindu religion as such. However, he was against misinterpretation of religion which taught a section of Hindus to hold another sizeable section to ridicule. He discovered that equality has always been a casualty in Hindu religion. Hence at the fag end of life, he ultimately embraced Buddhism which stands for equality, humanism, compassion and fellowship. His personal experience from a school student to barrister and in Maharaja's service made him realise that low caste *shudras* were not

treated as human beings. Hence caste system was slur on the fair name of Hindu religion. It must be destroyed. His books exposed the ills of the Hindu society and suggested abolition of caste system. He dwelt at length on evils of caste system.

He believed that caste system caused downfall of the Hindus and Hindu society based on four castes is mere exploitation of the lowest rung. It is harmful as it demoralises untouchables and deny them education. Such society is devoid of liberty, brotherhood and equality. He suggested completely destroying of religious consciousness, strengthening caste and class system and abolishment of the godly base of the *shastra*. He firmly believed that the upliftment and development of Hindu society is not possible without eradicating the caste system. Socialism could not be established and democracy could not be attained successfully in India in the presence of caste system. Even peace and integrity in the country depends on abolition of caste system. He stressed that that there is a need of a social revolution along with social improvement for a fundamental change in social organisation.

He traced the root cause of the caste system in the holy *shastras* as well. Hence he exhorted each man and woman to come out of the grasp of *shastras* and efface from mind their holiness in order to wipe out caste system. He suggested promoting inter-caste marriages as the blood mixture would generate feeling of self relations with others and result in the destructions of separatist feeling of caste system itself. He advocated the abolition of Brahmanism as well if Hindu Religion was to be salvaged. He exhorted the people of his caste to stop performing of these activities which make them untouchables and low. The shielding of inferiority complex will help the untouchables to consider themselves at par with high castes. Such steps were certainly creative and effective for eradicating the caste system. Even Gandhiji despite his differences with Ambedkar agreed on the abolition of caste system.

3.3.5.3 DENOUNCEMENT OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Ambedkar made all out efforts to eliminate untouchability from the country. D. K. Mohanty feels “Ambedkar himself belonging to the group of untouchables, dealt with the problem from both historical and social perspective. He made a detailed analysis of the origin and the practice of untouchability in his book entitled *The Untouchables: Who were they and why they became Untouchables* published in 1948. He repudiated “the racial ethnic or

occupational theory for the origin of untouchability using anthropometric and ethnographic evidence. His conclusion was that untouchables clung to the faith and practice of Buddhism and Brahmanism which had completely moulded the history of India.” Ambedkar’s theory rejected the idea of pollution attached to the untouchables. He argued that there was no racial difference between Hindus and untouchables. Thus he condemned all the misconceptions and the practice of untouchability as baseless. Purification and defilement attached to untouchability can neither be applicable to a group nor can it be hereditary basis. Impurity or defilement is observed in case of birth, death etc. It cannot be imposed over any group or race. Hence, Ambedkar demanded total abolition of untouchability. That can be possible by both social and legal ways. Socially the untouchables themselves should rise to the occasion. They should give up traditional occupations like carrying dead cow out of the village and should give up drinking alcohol. They should be educated. Secondly he fought for the cause of representation of all the untouchables at all levels of government. As a result, by Poona Pact, agreement was made for reservation of seats in general electorate. According to Ambedkar, untouchables must be seen as a minority as a separate people so long as they are treated as a separate people. And so long as they have special needs, those needs must be represented in the government by the untouchables themselves. The government must initiate welfare measures for the untouchables.

The untouchability old age curse of Hinduism is in fact corollary of the nasty caste system. Vishnoolal Bhagwan says Ambedkar said “the root of untouchability lies in caste system.” while sending a message to the first issue of Harijan weekly of Gandhi he remarked, “...The out caste is a by-product of the caste system. There will be outcastes as long as there are castes and nothing can emancipate outcaste except the destruction of the caste system.” Hence he opposed caste system vehemently and took cudgels to fight for the by-product of caste system. Hence the untouchables who had no right to pull water from the well, no right to enter the temple, no right to get education and no right to enjoy socio-political-ritual rights, got a new direction from Ambedkar. He established a Bahiskrit Hitkarini Sabha on July 20, 1924 in Bombay (present Mumbai) for the upliftment of the untouchables. Its aims were as following:

- To establish hostels for the spread of education for the down-trodden.
- To start reading and spiritual centre for the cultural development.

- To open industrial and agricultural school for economic development.
- To start movement for eradicating the untouchability.
- To remove the bad tradition of higher classes.

He headed a movement of 500 untouchables to use the water of Chawtar tank in Mahar village of district Kolaba (Bombay) on March 20, 1927. Addressing the untouchables from Vireshwar Pandal he remarked, “You have to establish your right. If you do not do so then there will be no difference between you and the cattle.” He himself drank water of the tank and subsequently tank was declared a public tank. Again on March 2, 1930 he started famous movement at Nasik i.e. the movement of entering the temple by untouchables. The down-trodden under his leadership eventually succeeded in procuring the facility of entering the temple since October, 1935. Later he participated in the first Round Table Conference in London to represent the point of view of depressed classes. He demanded equal rights, safeguard against differential behaviour, reservation in government services, a separate department for their development and a new code as a substitute of Manusmriti. All this reflects that he was in the true sense messiah of the down-trodden, a social revolutionary who shook the very foundation of rigid caste structure, deeply entrenched in Hindu society.

The steps that Ambedkar took for improvement of lives of untouchables which is a saga of incessant struggle by a social revolutionary to bring his brethrens out of the quagmire of degradation, perpetual humiliation and inhuman subjection to Brahmanical brutalities are as following:

- The presentation of the case of the depressed classes before Simon Commission and in Round Table Conferences.
- MacDonald Award assuring the untouchables separate electorates and Poona Pact undoing the MacDonald Award to save life of Gandhiji and allowing the depressed classes reservation of seats, but undoing separate electorates.
- Coining of a dignified name Harijans for the untouchables by Gandhiji

- Establishment of Scheduled Castes Federation to bring Scheduled Castes in national politics.
- Ambedkar safeguarding the rights of untouchables in the Draft of the Indian Constitution, the legal abolition of untouchability in free India.

Eventually, the sixteen sections incorporated in the Constitution act as stationary light pillars to direct politics of the downtrodden. The abolition of caste system and the eradication of untouchability was apt to usher in era of social justice. Hence, as chairman of Drafting Committee of the Constitution of free India, he accorded special importance to the dreams and aspirations of the ordinary men in relation with social and economic justice. Assurance of opportunities for a rightful place in the national polity through Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles was his aim when he got the honour of heading the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution. But the bitter truth is that despite being highly educated, he himself had to face humiliation at the hands of Hindus. He was convinced that the dalits would never be given fair and just treatment in the Hindu religion.

3.3.6 AMBEDKAR ON RESERVATIONS

Caste based reservation in India started in 2nd Century BC. In Manusmriti, the law book of Brahmins, all the laws were based on caste and no merit was ever considered. It divided people into high and low castes on the basis of their birth and not on the basis of merit. Wealth, political power, spiritual leadership, education, ownership of land, trade and all lucrative aspects were reserved purely to the higher castes. The correct term used for reservation in the Indian Constitution is representation. It is not given to anyone in his individual capacity. It is given to individual as a representative of the underprivileged community. The beneficiaries of reservations are in turn expected to help their communities to come up. Reservation is a democratic principle to provide representation to the castes hitherto remained unrepresented in the governance of the country. The reservation policy has no doubt played an important role in the advancement of SC/ST's. Most of the beneficiaries of the reservation are busy in their daily routine work i.e. office and home. They don't even have time to think about their community as such. Their children are well off, some taking education in best engineering colleges even in payment seats, best management colleges, some working abroad in MNC's.

During the British rule of India in twentieth century, Ambedkar demanded separate electorates for untouchables on the pattern of Muslims. He wanted that untouchables should be elected by the untouchable electorates only. He asked for reservation of seats for untouchable masses according their share or proportion of population. But the British accepted only nomination of untouchables. He argued that untouchables are distinct and individual entity; therefore there should be reservation of seats for them in legislatures. He wanted abolition of the practice of nomination of a few seats for the dalits. He also strongly advocated introduction of adult franchise system. He said that untouchables are not Hindus and they should be called as non-caste Hindus, Protestant Hindus or non-conformist Hindus. He said that untouchables are given just treatment by Hindus so they are separate. He wanted consideration of depressed classes as a separate community for electoral purposes. In August 1932, the British announced Communal Award through Ramsay MacDonald. The Award gave recognition to depressed classes as a minority community so it deserved separate electorate. Following two benefits were given to untouchables through Communal Award by the British:

- A fixed quota of seats to be elected by a separate electorate of untouchables.
- A double vote one to be used through separate electorates and the other to be used in general electorates.

He wanted to secure maximum participation of minorities in the legislatures. But he wanted to ensure that there would not develop absolute majority of either of majorities or minorities. He stressed that the depressed classes formed a distinct and independent entity. Accordingly he demanded/suggested that the Hindus should be given 40 percent representation, 32 per cent to Muslims, 20 per cent to SCs, 4 per cent to Sikhs, 3 per cent to Christians and 1 per cent to Anglo-Indians in the legislatures. He asked for election of untouchables by the untouchables only. During the representation of Wavell Plan, he demanded for untouchables three seats in the Viceroy's Executive Council in accordance with the population of lower castes. He asked for 22 seats of total 140 seats in the Bombay Legislative Council. The invitation to Ambedkar to represent depressed classes in the Round Table Conference in 1930 was recognition by the British of separate and independent identity of untouchables. He suggested that the untouchables should be designated as non-caste Hindus. He submitted memorandum to Cabinet Mission in April 1946 demanding

separate electorates for SCs as also adequate representation in the legislatures, executives and services. Before the attainment of independence, he pleaded for special constitutional safeguards for untouchables from British government. He argued for equal rights for SCs. While framing the Constitution, he ensured inclusion of safeguards for depressed classes.

Bidyut Chakrabarty and Rajendra Kumar Pandey are of the opinion that Ambedkar was a protagonist of the idea of social justice as an inalienable part of the constitutional democratic framework in India. He was of the firm opinion that the provisions for securing only political justice would not suffice to bring about the desired level of socio-economic upliftment of untouchables so as to enable them to enjoy a life of social equality in the country. Thus, he vehemently supported the idea of social justice as the complex and comprehensive set of socio-economic and political preferential and supportive policy measures to uplift the status of depressed classes in the society. Ambedkar was convinced that the operationalisation of the idea of social justice could be carried on by putting in place a set of constitutional provisions in the nature of both protective and promotional measures.

Alongwith distinct and autonomous political representation of the depressed classes in the institutions of Indian polity, Ambedkar also argued for reservation for the depressed sections of society in public employment provided their eligibility for a particular job is complete. Ambedkar presumably envisioned that such a move would serve two utmost purposes instrumental in securing a comprehensive amelioration in the conditions of the disadvantaged groups of people. First, with the increase in their share in public services, a wider majority of people belonging to the depressed classes would gain social recognition and some degree of preponderance power that the public services carry in the feudal mindset of the majority sections of Indians. Second, such an assured employment would probably also contribute to the economic upliftment of the depressed groups as regular and fairly sufficient source of income in a family might add to the amelioration in the hitherto miserable economic conditions of the family. Thus, combined together, the idea of reservation in public services was considered to be a crucial component in the scheme of social justice envisioned by Ambedkar for the depressed sections of Indian society. Ambedkar showed an enormous degree of clarity by conceptualising that the preferential treatment to the disadvantaged sections need not be construed as a reflection of the benevolence of the majority, viewpoint quite probable given the reticence of such people in accepting the rational imperative of

the policy. Moreover, he argued that such a conceptual understanding of the notion of preferential treatment would inspire the depressed classes to fight for these measures if the government showed any leniency in affording them to the people.

3.3.7 AMBEDKAR ON PLANNING

Most people rightly remember Baba Saheb Ambedkar as the principal architect of the Indian Constitution and as an emancipator of the poor and deprived. But he was also an eminent economist. He contributed substantially to the formulation of postwar economic development plan in general and labour, water resources and electric power development plans in particular. In all his earlier writings, such as ‘The problem of the rupee – its origin and its solution’, ‘Administration and finance of the East India Company’, ‘Evolution of provincial finance in British India and Small holdings in India and their remedies’, Ambedkar made a realistic assessment of economic problems faced by the country during the British Rule and had expressed his views very boldly about the administration of public finance, sharing of taxes between the centre and the provinces and decentralization of financial powers to the provinces. He also advocated that as India depends almost wholly upon agriculture, and has surplus landless labour, it was necessary to divert the surplus labour from agriculture to industry. In his thesis which had obtained for him Ph.D. of the Columbia University in 1917 ‘National Dividend of India - A Historic and Analytic Study’ wherein Ambedkar had traced the growth of the financial arrangements from the charter of 1833 granted to the East India Company by the British Parliament and critically examined the nature and growth of the provincial finances. He held the British bureaucracy responsible for the financial ills of the country. His thesis speaks volumes about the courage, and conviction of Ambedkar to criticize the British administration so bluntly, while he was so young and India was still under the British rule. Ambedkar knew clearly the problems in levying of taxes. He pointed out that it is very difficult to have proper taxation policies, as the governments which depend on the peoples’ vote to govern, would be always hesitant to mobilize the needed resources through requisite taxation and at the same time the government cannot take measures to reduce public expenditure by enforcing administrative economies. The following are the important components of the taxation policy advocated by Ambedkar:

- A personal tax should be based on taxable capacity of the individual and not on his

gross income,

- The rates should be progressive, meaning the rich should be taxed more and the poor less,
 - There should be exemptions subject to a limit of income tax for tax payers.
- Ambedkar also argued for a strategy of transferring labour from agriculture to other sectors of the economy.

Ambedkar had argued for an important place for labour and the depressed classes in the planned economic development of the country. He was particularly concerned that planned economic development should not only develop programmes but also translate them in terms which the common man could understand, namely, food, housing, clothing, education, good health and above all the right to work with dignity. He laid the foundation of water resources and power development of the country and a major achievement of Ambedkar was the establishment of two technical organizations, presently known as Central Water Commission and Central Electricity Authority (CEA) that have contributed substantially for the development of irrigation and power in the country.

3.3.8 LET US SUM UP

Ambedkar was of the view point that Hindu religion was based caste system so it has not served any justice to depressed classes such as dalits. He was opposed to Hinduism because it did not support social unity rather it promotes discrimination and societal isolation of some communities considered as untouchables. He believed that *Varna* system is the root cause of the emergence and perpetuation of untouchability in India for centuries together continuing till now. Therefore, he stressed the preferential treatment for socially oppressed and economically exploited masses of the country. To Ambedkar, caste is not only unnatural division of labour, it is also an undemocratic system in which division of labourers are graded one above the other. It prevents common activity and by doing so, it has prevented the Hindus from becoming a united society. People being religious minded observe the caste system blindly in their lives. Ambedkar exhorted the untouchables to not obey the authority of shastras. He felt the end of *Varna Vyavastha*, a stiff opposition of traditional religion and burning of holy books like Manusmriti also could help reforming the untouchables and subsequently the Indian society. He himself made bonfire of Manusmriti. He discovered

that equality has always been a casualty in Hindu religion. His personal experience from a school student to barrister and in Maharaja's service made him realise that low caste *shudras* were not treated as human beings. Ambedkar rejected the idea of pollution attached to the untouchables and declared that there was no racial difference between Hindus and untouchables. He argued that purification and defilement attached to untouchability could neither be applicable to a group nor could it be hereditary basis. He asked for reservation of electoral seats for untouchable masses according to their share or proportion of population. Along with distinct and autonomous political representation of the depressed classes in the institutions of Indian polity, Ambedkar also argued for reservation for the depressed sections of society in public employment provided their eligibility for a particular job is complete. That is why he is rightly called as Messiah of poor and untouchables.

3.3.9 EXERCISE

1. Ambedkar felt, 'Hindu religion is a means for the exploitation of *Shudras* by Brahmins'. Discuss Ambedkar's critique of Hinduism.
2. 'Ambedkar had renounced Hinduism and had adopted Buddhism as his mark of protest against the prevalent Caste system in Hindu society'. In the light of the given statement, critically examine Ambedkar's views on Caste System.
3. Highlight the key arguments of Ambedkar on Reservation Policy.
4. In light of the important components of Taxation policy advocated by Ambedkar, Discuss Ambedkar's views on Taxation.

3.4 VALABH BHAI PATEL: NATIONALISM, NATIONAL INTEGRATION, SECULARISM AND INDIAN ECONOMY

- Nirmal Singh

STRUCTURE

3.4.0 Objectives

3.4.1 Introduction

3.4.2 Patel: Life and Education

3.4.3 Participation in Indian National Movement

3.4.4 Influence of Gandhi on Sardar Patel

3.4.5 Patel's Views on Nationalism

3.4.6 Patel on National Integration

3.4.7 Patel's Perceptions on Secularism

3.4.8 Patel on Indian Economy

3.4.9 Let Us Sum Up

3.4.10 Exercise

3.4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Know the life and education of Sardar Patel and his participation in Indian nationalist

movement;

- Understand his political ideas of nationalism, national integration and secularism;
- Comprehend his economic thoughts in general and his opinions about Indian economy.

3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Sardar Patel dominated the Indian political scene from 1917 to 1950 and dedicated himself to the freedom struggle and reorganised the Indian National Congress. After Independence, he managed sensitive portfolios such as Home and the States. Following the Partition, he restructured the bureaucracy and integrated the princely States. Patel laid the foundation of political democracy by being an important member in the drafting of the Indian Constitution. Thus, he emerged an astute leader and a sagacious statesman acknowledged as the ‘Iron Man’ and a founder of modern India.

As a fiery champion of fundamental rights and liberty, Patel was convinced that these values were essential pre-requisites for the development of the individual and a nation. He always raised his voice on several issues against exploitation and criticised the high-handedness of authority, the exploitative revenue policy of the Government and maladministration in the Princely states.

Patel not only criticised the arbitrary policies of confiscation of movable and immovable properties, but also insisted on guarded regulations on land reforms and nationalisation of key industries. His efforts to reform the Hindu religion and protect the people of other faiths reflected his longing for the right to religion. He encouraged the duly elected authority to bring restrictions through various legislative measures to freedom for all. Thus, his political value system was a fine synthesis of liberalism, conservatism and welfarism.

Patel’s vision of State was in tune with the pattern of his political values. In his concept, the State was founded and held together by a high sense of nationalism and patriotism. Individual liberty was to be in conformity with the provisions of the Constitution, to create a Nation-State, he pressed for the emancipation of backward communities and women and bring about Hindu-Muslim unity through the Gandhian constructive programme and skillfully

utilised the higher castes for social integration and political mobilisation. Thus, he strengthened the plural basis of the nation-state by bringing electoral participation as effective political mobilisation. He saw a nation as ‘democratic in structure, nationalistic in foundation and welfarist in spirit and function’.

3.4.2 PATE: LIFE AND EDUCATION

Vallabhbhai Patel was born on October 31, 1875 in Gujarat to Zaverbhai and Ladbai. His father had served in the army of the Queen of Jhansi while his mother was a very spiritual. Starting his academic career in a Gujarati medium school Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel shifted to an English medium school. In 1897, Vallabhbhai passed his high school examination and started preparing for law examination. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel went to England to study law in 1910. After finishing his law studies in 1913 and came back to India and started his law practice. Vallabhbhai was offered many lucrative posts by the British Government but he rejected all. He was a staunch opponent of the British government and its laws and therefore decided not to work for the British. He later started practicing at Ahmedabad. After a meeting with Mahatma Gandhi, at the Gujarat Club, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel got influenced by Gandhi’s words. Later, Patel became an ardent follower of Gandhiji inspired by his work and philosophy.

Vallabhbhai Patel was one of the great social leaders of India. He played a crucial role during the freedom struggle of India and was instrumental in the integration of over 500 princely states into the Indian Union. Despite the choice of the people, on the request of Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel stepped down from the candidacy of Congress president. The election on that occasion eventually meant for the election of the first Prime Minister of independent India.

3.4.3 PARTICIPATION IN INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

In 1917, Sardar Vallabhbhai was elected as the Secretary of the Gujarat Sabha. The next year, when there was a flood in Kheda, the British insisted on collecting tax from the farmers. Sardar Vallabhbhai led a massive “No Tax campaign” that urged the farmers not to pay their land tax. The peaceful movement forced the British authority to return then

land taken away from the farmers. His efforts to bring together the farmers of his area brought him the title of ‘Sardar’.

In 1928, the farmers of Bardoli faced a similar problem of “tax-hike”. After prolonged summons, when the farmers refused to pay the extra tax, the government in retaliation seized their lands. Vallabhbhai Patel launched agitation for the farmers. The agitation took on for more than six months and after a deal was struck between the government and farmer’s representatives and the lands were returned to farmers.

In 1930, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was imprisoned for participating in the famous Salt Satyagraha called by Mahatma Gandhi. His inspiring speeches during the Salt Movement transformed the lives of numerous people, who later played a major role in making the movement successful. Sardar Patel was freed in 1931 following an agreement signed between Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy of India. The treaty was popularly known as the Gandhi-Irwin pact. The same year, Patel was elected as the president of Indian National Congress Party for its Karachi session. In the Karachi session, the Indian National Congress Party committed itself to the defence of fundamental rights and human rights and a dream of a secular nation. An agreement regarding this was also sanctioned. In 1934, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel led the all-India election campaign for the Indian National Congress. Though he did not contest a seat for himself, Sardar Patel helped his fellow party mates during the election. Sardar Patel was annoyed at Jawaharlal Nehru for the latter’s declarations of the adoption of socialism in 1936.

3.4.4 INFLUENCE OF GANDHIJI ON SARDAR PATEL

Sardar Patel had great influence of Gandhiji. He always supported ideas, policies and actions of Gandhiji. While senior leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru, Chakravarti Rajagopalachari and Maulana Azad criticized Mahatma Gandhi’s concept that the civil disobedience movement would compel the British to leave the nation, Patel extended his support to Gandhi. Despite the unwillingness of the Congress High Command, Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel strongly forced the All India Congress Committee to ratify the civil disobedience movement and launch it without delaying it further. Acting

under the pressure, the All India Congress Committee sanctioned the drive on 7 August 1942. One important episode that could change the political lines of the country had shaped up just a year ahead of attaining independence. During the election for the Congress presidency in 1946, thirteen of the sixteen states proposed Sardar Patel's name for the post. It was a very crucial election, as the elected president of the congress party would be later considered as the first Prime Minister of independent India. Just a few days, before the all important election, Mahatma Gandhi requested Sardar Patel to leave the candidacy and support Jawaharlal Nehru. Sardar Patel, without pondering twice, stepped down.

3.4.5 PATEL'S VIEWS ON NATIONALISM

Popularly known as the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was one of the founding fathers of the Republic of India. A statesman of integrity, he played a quintessential role in helping India garner independence from the British rule. Sardar Patel was a staunch nationalist. He fought for the independence of the country. Patel's involvement in politics grew astronomically. As a fiery champion of fundamental rights and liberty, he was convinced that these values were essential pre-requisites for the development of the individual and a nation. He always raised his voice on several issues against exploitation and criticised the high-handedness of authority, the exploitative revenue policy of the Government and maladministration in the Princely states.

He fought against servitude of Indians to Europeans, organized relief efforts during plague and famine in Kheda and took a leading role in the non-violent Civil Disobedience Movement against the payment of raised tax, levied by the British. His leadership activities earned him the title of 'Sardar'. He travelled village to village, garnering support from peasants and other villagers for a state-wide revolt in Gujarat by refusing the payment of taxes. He laid emphasis on unity and non-violent demeanour despite provocation and also briefed the villagers of the potential hardships that they might have to face in the process. When the revolt was launched, the British government responded by conducting raids at the holdings of the farmers. They even imprisoned thousands of villagers. The revolt had attained a national status and earned empathy from people across the country.

Though once Patel was a follower of Western fashion, he switched to khadi with the influence of Gandhi and nationalist movement. He even organized several bonfires of British goods in Ahmedabad. Apart from these, Patel supported the empowerment of women and worked for abolishing alcoholism, untouchability and caste discrimination from the society. In 1928, the village of Bardoli suffered from famine and steep tax hikes. To curb the problem, Sardar Patel organized a struggle, which called for non-violent unity from the villagers and a demand for complete denial of the taxes to the Government. The fate of the Satyagraha started in Bardoli was similar to that of Kheda as the British government agreed on repealing the tax hike. The victory brought Sardar Patel into limelight and highlighted his role as a typical ‘Sardar’ or ‘leader’. Due to this, more and more people started addressing him as Sardar Patel.

Vallabhbhai Patel took active participation in the Gandhi-led Quit India Movement. He believed that the mass civil disobedience would compel the British to leave the nation like in Singapore and Burma. Under the pressure of Gandhi and Patel, the All India Congress Committee launched the mass civil disobedience in the form of Quit India Movement on August 7, 1942. Patel influenced the large crowd that had assembled to take part in the civil disobedience, which included forced shutdown of the civil services and refusal to pay taxes. It was his powerful speech that electrified nationalists even those people who were sceptical about the rebellion. Vallabhbhai Patel was arrested two days later on August 9 and was released after three years on June 15, 1945. Strikes, protests and revolutionary activities ruled India and Indians during this time with the result turning out in the country’s favour, as British decided to leave India and transfer the power to Indians. He remained the president of the Indian National Congress. Under his presidentship, the Congress passed resolution for fundamental rights at Karachi session in 1931. During his term, Patel committed to protecting the fundamental rights and human freedom and envisioned India as a secular nation.

He strongly opposed and condemned the execution of Bhagat Singh. He was in favour of helping British in Second World War not unconditionally but rather on certain conditions. Patel was opposed to the Indians helping Japan in the World War as Japan was an

imperialistic country in his views. After failure of Cripps Mission, he advocated agitation and violence in the form of inflicting damage to telephone lines and other means of communication. He extensively campaigned in the 1946 elections and exhorted people to vote in the last elections under the foreign yolk. He was in favour of united and strong India. As a Home Minister of India, he worked for the consolidation and integration of the country. He was instrumental in the founding the Indian Administrative Service and the Indian Police Service and is therefore known as the ‘Patron Saint’ of India’s services. After assuming office of the States Department, Sardar defined the policy of the Government of India with regard to the Princely states and persuaded them to accede to the Dominion of India on the subjects of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications. He assured the States that the policy of the government was to create harmony and to work for mutual interest. He pointed out that the Indian states should not forget that the only alternative to co-operation in the general interest was alike. In his concept, the State was founded and held together by a high sense of nationalism and patriotism.

In foreign relations Patel took such a strong stand in favour of sanctions against Pakistan after partition that he earned the displeasure of Gandhi. He took a position opposite to that of Nehru in relation to Tibet and China, adopting an attitude of distrust towards China in general, condemnation of the Chinese invasion of Tibet in particular, and a willingness to provide Indian diplomatic support to Tibet. He favoured strong condemnation of North Korea’s aggression against South Korea in June 1950. Nor did he share the mistrust of Nehru and others on the left in Indian politics of the United States and their reluctance to accept the US aid. Patel also supported strongly the maintenance of India’s membership in the Commonwealth.

3.4.6 PATEL ON NATIONAL INTEGRATION

At the time of independence, Indian territory was divided into three parts. First, there were territories which were under the direct control of the British government. Second were the territories over which the hereditary rulers had suzerainty. The regions, which had been colonized by France and Portugal, formed the last. Patel knew that India, without the integration of these different territories under one fold, could not be considered as a unified

and total country. It was a stupendous task for the ruling party, to persuade the rulers of these states to join. According to British government, the province rulers had the liberty to choose how they wanted to be ruled. They were given two choices. They could join either of India and Pakistan or stay independently. The stance of the British government had made the task much difficult for India. At this point many leaders of the Congress approached the rulers but they failed to convince. At last, they all made a request to Vallabhbhai Patel to think some other options to bring the Princely rulers under Indian control. Sardar Patel eventually dealt with the tough situation and came out successfully. He had secured their accession. Therefore, the state of India we see today was a result of the efforts put in by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Blessed with practical acumen, great wisdom and political foresight, he took up the uphill task of unifying India.

At the time of the withdrawal of the British power in India, one possibility was that the states might become completely free and independent sovereign states without having any control exerted over them by the two newly formed states of India and Pakistan. Such a possibility was very much dangerous since the result would have been that the country would have divided into a number of states which would not have sufficient resources of their own for their liabilities. Such a proposition would have led to the complete Balkanization of the country. The immediate fallout of the freedom of the country was the creation of two distinct nations, namely, India and Pakistan. The native princes were allowed to join either of the two proposed countries according to their choice. A country, invested with such a large number of free states, could not have dreamt of political consolidation in such an environment.

Sardar's Patel task was to create political consciousness in the minds of the people of those states and simultaneously to persuade their princes to merge with the union of India so as to form a strong united India after the departure of the British. Sardar had close contacts with the princes. He explained that by acceding to the Indian Union the future of the country, and simultaneously the future of the princely states, would be brighter; even peace would return to the country. Sardar appealed to the princes for their good-will and for peaceful accession of their States to India. He tried to impress upon the princes that for

the integrity of the country, the princes should co-operate with the Congress to form a United India.

As a Home Minister of independent India, he faced uphill task of integrating hundreds of princely states with India. He opened talks with chiefs of royal states and negotiated terms with them. With sincere and dedicated efforts of Patel, total of 562 princely states agreed to be integrated with independent India leaving the three states of Jammu and Kashmir, Junagadh, and Hyderabad. According to Vishnoolal Bhagwan, “Some of the petty states were merged with provinces; some were brought in the union fold through the instrument of accession, and given new names. Some states like Hyderabad were brought to knees through military action.” Patel used the tactics of invoking patriotism in the Indian rulers and proposed favourable terms for the merger. Junagadh on the other hand had acceded to Pakistan. With more than 80% population as Hindu and its distance from Pakistan, Patel demanded Pakistan to annul accession and forced the Nawab of Junagadh to accede to India. Hyderabad too joined the Indian Union by force, after the Razakars failed to match up to the Indian army. As for Kashmir, it was during the Pakistani invasion of Kashmir in September 1947 that Kashmir’s monarch acceded to India. Patel then oversaw India’s military operations to secure Srinagar and the Baramulla Pass. In the days to follow, Indian forces retrieved much territory from the invaders.

It is worth to mention here that it was a really a Herculean task to convince these princely states as most of them were loyal to the British and they were enjoying life of utmost comfort and luxury. Sardar, thus, realized that in order to counteract any evil design by the Princes, the Congress and the Constituent Assembly, should hold full powers. Sardar did not like to have confrontation with the rulers unless otherwise compelled. The situation, prevailing at the time of independence, was extremely critical due to innumerable problems resulting out of positions which needed a careful handling to bring stability into the administration and the social conditions. In such circumstances, it was not desirable to have any additional problem as the situation would have gone completely out of control.

Having done integration of these states, the next priority of the Patel was democratisation of formerly princely states. Sardar Patel wanted that democratic governments should be

established in the states and the princes should join the Union of India as the federating units. In the process of nation-building, he wanted the citizens of the states to join him. He believed that the will of the people is supreme, and sovereignty rested not with the king but with the people only. The process of integration did not create any bitterness or ill feelings among the princes at that time and credit for it certainly goes to Sardar Patel. Whole of this process was nothing less than a bloodless revolution carried out by Patel. After independence, he opposed the demands for the reorganization of the internal boundaries of the Indian states on linguistic grounds as a potential threat to Indian unity, and favoured the adoption of Hindi as the official language of the country. As home minister he used his powers of arrest to stave off militant Sikh demands in Delhi for a special status for the Sikhs in Punjab.

3.4.7 PATEL'S PERCEPTIONS ON SECULARISM

The secular attribute of Sardar Patel remained a matter of doubt. He was seen as a strong Hindu and anti-Muslim. At some time after independence, he was also portrayed as against Mahatma Gandhi. But in reality, he was always in favour of Hindu-Muslim unity and its consolidation. He also remained chairman of the Sub-committee on Minorities and he favoured removal of differences between majority community Hindus and minority Harijans. He saw caste system of the Hindus as weakness of the Hindu religion. He was in favour of united India and single identity of its people as Indians. He recommended legislative protection to untouchables but only for the period of ten years from the implementation of the Constitution. He wanted to create homogeneous society and for that he contacted each community that was accorded special treatment by the British. For the safety and security of Anglo-Indians, he advocated nomination of at least two members of Anglo-Indian community to legislative houses both at the central and state level. He was of the opinion that separate electorate for the Muslims should be scrapped as it would continue to foster hatred between the Hindus and Muslims. He called India a secular state not a Hindu state. It clearly shows that he was having secular bent of mind not fanatic. At the time of independence of the country, the problems of minorities, though at the first instance seemed of minor nature, came out to be crucial. And, Sardar Patel with his extraordinary calibre

wisdom and capacity, could arrive at an acceptable solution to restore confidence in them; thereby leading them towards the common goal of national solidarity.

Bipin Chandra says it is grossly misunderstood and false propaganda is spread that Patels's secularism was closer to that of Hindu communists. The RSS and the BJP are even staking a claim to Patel as one of their ancestor. However, it is hard truth that Patel was strongly committed to secularism and opposed to communalism. At the Jaipur Session of the Congress on December 1948, he said that the Congress and the government were determined to make India a truly secular state. He termed "Hindu Raj" as nothing but a mad idea. He demanded in 1946-47 from the Britishers' ruthless action against communal rioters. He termed massacre of 1947 as "the blackest chapter in the history of India." Patel was pragmatic secular nationalist while Nehru and Gandhi were concerned about the woes, feelings and psychology of Muslims after the Partition. But Patel's mind was agitated over Hindu communal backlash. Patel's viewpoint was that "some of the pain of the Muslims was self-inflicted as they supported the two-nation theory. At the back of the mind of Patel was giving only physical protection to Muslims."

However, Bipin Chandra says, Patel was not fully secular as he was not completely free from some communal ideological elements. He was having overwhelming emotional support for the Hindus and Sikhs than Muslims whom he confused with communalism because of their association with Muslim League. Although he declared his belief in the secular ideology of the Indian state, he adopted a patronizing attitude towards the Muslims who remained in India after partition, while on the other hand accepting as patriotic Indians the members of the militant Hindu organization, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). He disputed the complicity of this organization in the murder of Mahatma Gandhi and urged an early removal of the ban imposed on it after Gandhi's assassination.

3.4.8 PATEL ON INDIAN ECONOMY

Vishnoo Bhagwan is of the opinion Patel is regarded as supporter of capitalism. He was concerned about rising influence of socialists and left-wing people in the Congress party of his time. He was in favour of capitalists taking up the role of the trustees of the wealth of

the country. He was in favour of helping the poor to rise to higher level. He was equally supportive for landlord and princes. He was opposed to British socialism or Marxian socialism but he favoured Gandhian socialism. He wanted Indian socialism to develop on cooperative lines. He believed that socialism should neither be state-sponsored nor forceful. Following Gandhian line of thinking, he supported small scale industries and as also small machinery which provide gainful employment to people. He was cautious about large scale industry and highly industrialised economy as mass production associated with it might result into many other problems. He believed that it would create greed for political power which in turn would cause heavy build up of armed forces. He was strongly pro-farmer leader who wanted development of rural industries which would be helpful for farmers as it would increase their incomes. He was against strike by the workers as also rise of the workers against their landlords and capitalists. He wanted the workers and labourers to consider landlords and capitalists as their family and exhorted workers to work for the development of the country.

Patel was of the view that development of the country depends on the hard work of the workers and the workers should realise their importance for the country. Though he worked for the poor and workers and raised voice for them but he was not in favour of traditional socialism as advocated by Karl Marx and others. He supported justice and equity and wanted development of the poor but not at the cost of the rich. He did not support nationalisation of the industries of the country. Bipin Chandra says he wanted the abolition of land reforms, he was for inclusion of the Right to Property in the Constitution of India. He not only criticised the arbitrary policies of confiscation of movable and immovable properties, but also insisted on guarded regulations on land reforms and nationalisation of key industries.

Patel stood for the transformation of India into a major industrial power, which he thought could be achieved only by a strong, centralized state. Although not averse to a governmental role in industrial development and agrarian transformation, he did not support assaults against private industrial and commercial enterprises. He was sharply critical of and opposed politically to the communist and socialist parties and their leaders, whose ideas he considered

unrealistic and irrelevant to Indian society and economy. In agriculture he supported the rights of peasant proprietors against both the former landlords and the state. He favoured industrialization because he believed that without it, rural and agriculture development could not be possible. He advocated industrialization as a means of proper use of our resources. This clearly reveals that Sardar Patel was not in favour of nationalised industrial system having pattern of socialist culture. He favoured private players and liberal economic policies. In short the economic model of Sardar Patel would have three pillars: Industrial Growth, Promotion of Private Entity, and Liberal Government Policies. The above phrases depicts that Sardar Patel was having a bold view on domestic Industrialization. He advocated self sufficiency of the nation towards fulfilling the basic needs of the population. He also suggested increasing savings and converting it into investment on assets which contribute towards development of the nation.

3.4.9 LET US SUM UP

As a fiery champion of fundamental rights and liberty, he was convinced that these values were essential pre-requisites for the development of the individual and a nation. He always raised his voice on several issues against exploitation and criticised the high-handedness of authority, the exploitative revenue policy of the Government and maladministration in the Princely states.

Patel vision of State was in tune with the pattern of his political values. In his concept, the State was founded and held together by a high sense of nationalism and patriotism. Individual liberty was to be in conformity with the provisions of the Constitution, to create a Nation-State, he pressed for the emancipation of backward communities and women and bring about Hindu-Muslim unity through the Gandhian constructive programme and skilfully utilised the higher castes for social integration and political mobilisation. Thus, he strengthened the plural basis of the nation-state by bringing electoral participation as effective political mobilisation. He saw a nation as ‘democratic in structure, nationalistic in foundation and welfarist in spirit and function’.

As a nation-builder, Patel was a key leader in the framing of the Constitution, consolidated

the nascent state by integrating the Princely states and reorganising the bureaucracy. As Sikata Panda puts it “Liberal-democratic ideology with due emphasis upon conservatism, pragmatism, welfarism and nationalism seems to characterize the mindset of Vallabhbhai Patel which is perfectly in tune with Integral Humanism.”

Bipin Chandra says that Sardar Patel “has been much misunderstood and misrepresented both by admirers and critics.” Both “have used him to attack ‘Nehruvian Vision’ policies.” Patel was a basically a political fighter and organiser and not an ideologue as Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru were. He emerged as a major leader in his early political career much like Gandhiji because he was able to link local issues with freedom struggle. Almost all movements he organised and political positions he adopted, says Bipin Chandra, were based on hard facts not on populist grievances. He always demanded independent inquiry. As part of the Gandhian strategy, Patel learnt to look for an opportunity to settle with the opponent even at the height of the struggle. Patel played very important role in keeping nationalist trends united despite political and ideological differences with Nehru and Gandhi. He was strongly opposed to the socialists and communists. In this regard, he made efforts to reduce their role in the Congress organisation. However, he never wanted their exclusion from movement and leadership. He had a great hold on the masses. Especially, the people in Gujarat had great regard for him and considered him to be an excellent leader of the country. Sardar also tried his best to look after the welfare of the citizens of the states. Till today, the sections of the people believe that Sardar Patel would have proved to be better Prime Minister than Nehru.

3.4.10 EXERCISE

1. In the light of the statement “Sardar patel was a fiery champion of fundamental rights and liberty for both the individual and the nation”, discuss his concept of nationalism.
2. Analyse Patel’s views on Secularism.
3. Examine Sardar Patel’s economic views.

4.1 COMMUNIST THOUGHT : M N ROY AND EMS NAMBOODIRIPAD

- Rajesh Kumar

STRUCTURE

4.1.0 Objectives

4.1.1 Introduction

4.1.2 M N Roy

4.1.3 MN Roy and Marxism

4.1.4 Humanist Critique of Marxism

4.1.5 Roy and Radical Humanism

4.1.6 EMS Namboodiripad

4.1.7 EMS and his Marxist-Leninist Views

4.1.8 EMS on Caste and Agrarian Issues

4.1.9 Let Us Sum Up

4.1.10 Exercise

4.1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Comprehend the basic propositions of Indian Marxist thought;
- Understand MN Roy's contribution to Marxism in India, his humanist critique of

Marxism and his thoughts on Radical Humanism;

- Know the significance of EMS Namboodiripad in India's Left movement, his Marxist-Leninist views, his understanding about caste and his critique on agrarian issues in India.

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Marxism has played a central role in Indian political thinking since the time of the foundation of an independent, if truncated, Indian 'nation-state' in 1947. And indeed Marxist ideas became highly influential within the nationalist movement from the 1920s. This was not especially related to the role of the communist party or parties, whose electoral strength has been largely confined to one of two regions of the country (although their political and intellectual influence has often been far greater than their numerical size), but to the much wider sway held by Marxist thought amongst other political parties and institutions in post-independence India. Many thinkers significantly contributed to advance Communist thinking in India from the early twentieth century. In this lesson, two thinkers were introduced to provide a glimpse of Communist thought: one is M.N. Roy, the other is E.M.S. Namboodiripad. While M.N. Roy introduced Communist ideology to India, Namboodiripad significantly contributed in the practice of the same among the Indian masses.

4.1.2 M N ROY

Manabendra Nath Roy (1887–1954), born Narendranath Bhattacharya and popularly recognized as M. N. Roy, was an Indian nationalist revolutionary and an internationally recognized radical activist and political theorist. Roy was a founder of the Communist Parties in both Mexico and India and was a delegate to congresses of the Communist International. He began his political life as a militant nationalist, believing in the cult of the bomb and the pistol and the necessity of armed insurrection. The futility of this path made him a socialist and then a communist. He joined the Communist International, but was thrown out of it as he differed with its aim of 'being a movement all over the world'. According to V P Verma, Roy passed through three phases in his career. In his first phase, which lasted up to 1919, he was a national revolutionary, smuggling arms for the terrorists of Bengal. In the second phase, Roy was a Marxist engaged in active Comintern first in Mexico and then in Russia, China and India. In the last and final phase, Roy emerged as a

radical humanist, completing his journey from Nationalism to Communism and from Communism to Radical Humanism. He was in his student life, a revolutionary as well as an intellectual. He had a zest for new ideas and a quest for freedom. This is how he drifted from Marxism towards Radicalism. Marxism and Radicalism constitute the characteristics of his philosophy.

4.1.3 M N ROY AND MARXISM

M.N. Roy, quite often regarded as one of the founders of communist movement in India, was one of those early Marxists who attempted a radical understanding of the issue of social transformation of Indian civilization as separate from the framework of nationalism. In his early stage (extending up to the late 1920s) Roy's understanding suggested that the social emancipation of the Indian masses was possible only by effecting a socialist revolution in the country under the leadership of the working class, since he understood that in India nationalism was a spent force and that the nationalist movement was virtually aimed at ultimate consolidation of the interests of the middle class which spearheaded it. This hostility towards and cynicism relating to the nationalism made Roy an uncompromising critic of the leaders of the Indian National Congress like Gandhi and Nehru. Moreover, Roy's optimism in relation to the prospects of a socialist revolution in India was mainly guided by his understanding that industrialization had proceeded quite rapidly in the country with the result that a strong working class had appeared with the potentiality to unleash a revolution. Subsequent research has proved that this understanding was totally at variance with reality, since the British were not at all interested in any real and effective industrialization of India.

M.N. Roy, as we know, later returned to India following his dissociation with the Communist movement and this second stage, broadly recognized as the era of 'radical humanism', witnessed Roy's reinterpretation of Marxism in a new perspective. Throughout this era, while he maintained his earlier critique of nationalism and thereby sustained to aloofness himself from the Congress Party, his views underwent a change in regard to the earlier understanding of Marxism as presently a political instrument for violent overthrow of the exploiter class. Roy now came round to the location that for a real social revolution in India what was primarily necessary was the assertion of a new type of ethical consciousness with which the people would have to be imbued. The emphasis now shifted in his thought from political confrontation to a type of abstract humanism which, though, was of little

practical use. As a transition took place in his writings from focusing on the masses to that on the individual and from political action to abstract humanism, his perspective of social revolution became blurred and virtually unworkable.

According to Sudipta Kaviraj, Roy stands apart because of his attempt in conceptualising nationalism from the Marxist point of view. Apart from his ideological conviction, the larger colonial context seemed to have obviously cast significant influences on Roy's radicalism that sought to redefine the ideological goal of the national bourgeoisie in India. So, Roy was significantly different from other radicals because of his attempted mix of nationalism with what he drew from Marxism. This also gave a peculiar theoretical twist to Roy's conceptualisation of radicalism underlining the impact of both nationalist and Marxist ideas.

M N Roy was opposed to the ideology of the Indian National Congress (INC). He suggested that the future of Indian liberation movement depended on the participation of the neglected sections of society. While commenting on the new basis of the national struggle, Roy thus exhorted, 'the future of Indian politics (of national liberation) will be determined by the social forces which still remain and will always remain antagonistic to Imperialism even in the new era dominated by the "higher ideals of Swaraj within the Empire"'. He was convinced, as his draft thesis on national and colonial question demonstrates, that 'the mass movements in the colonies are growing independently of the nationalist movements and the masses distrust the political leaders who always lead them astray and prevent them from revolutionary action'.

While pursuing this argument further, Roy also underlined the growing importance of the proletariat in political movements against imperialism. Critical of 'the bourgeois national democrats in the colonies', Roy was in favour of supporting the revolutionary mass action through the medium of a communist party of the proletarians that will bring the real revolutionary forces to action which will not only overthrow the foreign imperialism but lead progressively to the development of Soviet power, thus preventing the rise of native capitalism in place of the vanquished foreign capitalism, to further oppress the people.

4.1.4 HUMANIST CRITIQUE OF MARXISM

Differing with Gandhi, Roy outlined the programme of a revolutionary nationalist party in the following ways:

1. Nationalist independence: complete break from the empire; a democratic republic based on universal suffrage.
2. Abolition of feudalism and landlordism.
3. Nationalisation of land; none but the cultivator will have the right of landholding.
4. Modernisation of agriculture by state aid.
5. Nationalisation of mines and public utilities.
6. Development of modern industries.
7. Protection of workers, minimum wages, eight-hour day, abolition of child labour, insurance and other advanced social legislation.
8. Free and compulsory primary education.
9. Freedom of religion and worship.
10. Rights of minorities.

As the programme suggests, Roy provided a critical alternative to the Congress-led nationalist movement that was more ‘reconciliatory’ and less ‘revolutionary’. These programmes are mere reiteration of what he wrote in his *India in Transition* in 1922 while outlining the meaning of *swaraj*. In the aftermath of the Non- Cooperation Movement, the Congress, as Roy believed, appeared to have lost its revolutionary potentials because of two reasons: (a) the Congress lacked a revolutionary leadership, and (b) it had lost support of the masses. While suggesting the means to strengthen the Congress, Roy recommended that in order to regain its strength, ‘the Congress should go to trade unions and the peasant *Sabhas* (meetings), listen to the grievances discussed there and incorporate them into a truly constructive programme which will draw the wide masses once more within the folds of the Congress party to fight under its command for *Swaraj*’. Critical of Gandhian *swaraj*

as it evolved in the aftermath of the 1919–21 Non-Cooperation Movement, Roy was convinced that this Congress-led movement was bound to fail since it aimed at protecting exploiting classes ignoring ‘the political rights of the workers and peasants’ (‘Appeal to the Nationalists’, reproduced in Ray 2000b: 324). As a Marxist, he also felt the need to join hands with the proletariats elsewhere otherwise these movements would remain just ripples. He, therefore, suggested that ‘the revolutionary nationalists should, therefore, not only join hands with the Indian workers and peasants, but should establish close relations with the advanced proletariat of the world’.

4.1.5 ROY AND RADICAL HUMANISM

In the later years of his life, Roy became an exponent of “New Humanism”. He distinguished this from other humanist philosophy and termed it radical. Though Roy is influenced in his approach by the scientific materialism of Hobbes, Ethics of Spinoza and Secular politics as propounded by Locke, he reconciled all these to propound a rational idea of freedom with the concept of necessity. The central purpose of Roy’s Radical humanism is to co-ordinate the philosophy of nature with social philosophy and ethics in a monistic system. “It is for this reason that Roy claims it as humanist as well as materialist, naturalist as well as emotionalist, creativist as well as determinist”.

Vishnoo Bhagwan and V.P. Verma have summarised M.N. Roy’s views regarding Radical Humanism as following: Roy’s idea revolves around Man. it is the man who creates society, state and other institutions and values for his own welfare. Man has the power to change them for his greater welfare and convenience. His belief lies in “Man as the measure of everything”. As a radical humanist, his philosophical approach is individualistic. The individual should not be subordinated to a nation or to a class. The individual should not lose his identity in the collective ego of such notions. Man’s being and becoming, his emotions, will and ideas determine his life style. Roy says that man has two basic traits, one, reason and the other, the urge for freedom. The reason in man echoes the harmony of the universe. He states that every human behaviour, in the last analysis, is rational, though it may appear as irrational. Man tries to find out the laws of nature in order to realise his freedom. This urge for freedom leads him to a search for knowledge. He considers freedom to be of supreme value. While rationality provides dynamism to a man, will urge for freedom gives him direction. The interaction of reason and freedom leads to the expression of

cooperative spirit as manifested in social relationship. Thus, Roy's radical humanist turned into cooperative individualism. Roy's conception of human nature became the basis of society and state. He attributes their origin to the act of man for promoting his freedom and material satisfaction.

Roy presents a communal pattern of social growth. Groups of human beings settled down in particular localities for the cultivation and the organisation of society. Each group thinks out an area as its collective domain. The ownership is common because land is cultivated by the labour of the entire community. The fruits of collective labour belong to all collectively. This does not last long. With the origin of private property, there arises the necessity of same authority to govern the new relations. This gives birth to the state. Roy defines state as 'The political organisation of society'. The rise of the state is neither the result of social contract, nor was it ever super-imposed on society. The evolution of the state is not only historical, but also natural. It was a spontaneous process promoted almost mechanically, by the common regulation of the necessity of co-operation for the security of all concerned, for the administration of public affairs. Roy is aware of the coercive character of the state. He blames it on more and more concentration of power in a few qualified administrators enjoying full authority to rule. He criticises it and wants to reshape the state on the basis of the principles of pluralism, decentralisation and democracy. For him, the state must exist and discharge its limited functions along with other equally important and autonomous social institutions reduces the functions of the state to the minimum. He pleaded for decentralisation where maximum possible autonomy should be granted to the local units.

Roy was a supporter of not only a democracy where every citizen will be informed and consulted about affairs of the state, but also of radical democracy as well. Such a democracy will neither suffer from the inadequacies of parliamentary democracy, nor will it allow the dangers of dictatorship of any class or elite. The basic feature of the radical democracy is that the people must have the ways and means to exercise sovereign power effectively. Power would be so distributed that maximum power would be vested in local democracy and minimum at the apex. Roy also contemplated an economic reorganisation of the society in which there would be no exploitation of man by man. It would be a planned society which would maximise individual freedom. This is possible when society is established on the basis of cooperation and decentralisation.

As a radical humanist, Roy came to believe that a revolution should be brought about not through class struggle or armed violence, but through education. Roy emphasised the concept of moral man. To him politics cannot be divorced from ethics. Roy traces morality to rationality in man. Reason is the only sanction for morality, without moral men, there can be no moral society. Moral values are those principles which a man should observe for his own welfare and for the proper working of society.

Roy advocated humanist politics which would have led to purification and rationalisation of politics. Today, man is debased to the level of an unthinking beast power politics. To him, politics can be practiced without power. "Party politics has given rise to power politics". To him any party government, at best, be for the people, but it is never of the people and by the people. In a country like India, he laments about the evils of party politics that exist, where ignorant conservative people are exploited in the elections. Thus, he favoured the abolition of the party system which will enable politics to operate without an incentive of power. In the absence of that corrupting agency, morality in political practice would be possible.

Verma highlights Roy's views about social order which rises with the support of enlightening public opinion as well as intelligent section of the people. Roy stands for 'Revolution by Consent'. He concludes the right of the people to resist tyranny and oppression, but he rules out the use of violent methods. Today, the modern state is too powerful to be overthrown. Lastly, according to Roy, "One cannot be a revolutionary without possessing scientific knowledge. The world stands in need of change. Science has given confidence to a growing number of human beings, that they possess the power to remake the world, Thus, education becomes the essence and condition of revolution ' and re-construction, Revolution by consent does not operate through the politics of power, but through the politics of freedom".

A critical evaluation of the philosophy of New Humanism of M.N. Roy reveals certain discrepancies in the entire scheme of things. To begin with, the idea of New Humanism was advanced by Roy in the face of his utter dissatisfaction with the theoretical constructs of the ideology of Marxism over the years. Indeed, most of the characteristics of New Humanism are in the nature of discarding the prevalent conception of the Marxian analysis and evolving a counter argument rooted in reason, morality and freedom of the individual.

To conclude, Roy's learning is indeed impressive. He has written a six thousand page book, *The Philosophical Consequences of Modern Science*. His book, *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution* is a significant contribution to political thought by an Indian writer. While India has embarked upon the path of parliamentary democracy, in its neighbourhood, many countries were swamped by some form of totalitarianism. He was an critical revisionist in the history of socialist thought. He began his academic pursuits as a Marxist, but gradually almost completely restated all the prepositions of Marx. He gave a moral restatement of Marxism. Roy's application of the Marxist concepts amid generalisations to the structure and processes of the Indian economy and society seemed thought provoking and enlightening.

4.1.6 E.M.S. NAMBOODIRIPAD (1909-1998)

E.M. Sankaran Namboodiripad was one of architects of United Kerala, a renowned, brave and committed socialist and Marxian theoretician who took an active part in the communist movement of India. He was born in perinthalmanna Taluk of the present Malappuram district. His early years were associated with V.T. Bhattathiripd's social reform movement and later became one of the office bearers of Yogaskhema Sabha. In 1934 he joined the Congress Socialist Party and was later elected as the general secretary of party in the state. When the communist party was formed in Kerala, he became one of its founder member and later its leader. E.M.S. belonged to the more militant wing of the communist party. He supports the idea that the Maoist nation of a peasant based revolution more relevant to the Indian situation than the worker based ideas of Marx and Lenin. He remained committed to the socialist ideas and his compassion towards the downtrodden working class made him join the ranks of the community for which he had to go in hiding for many years. In 1957, E M S Namboodiripad led the communist to victory in the first popular election in the state. Soon he introduced the revolutionary land reforms ordinance and the education bill, which actually caused the dismissal of his government in 1959. E M S Namboodiripad has been a strong supporter of decentralisation of power and resources and the Kerala literacy movement as well. EMS Namboodiripad was described by the *Frontline* Magazine as a "Thinker, History Maker, the tallest communist leader India has seen, an anti-imperialist and freedom fighter, social reformer, writer, journalist, and theoretician".

4.1.7 EMS AND HIS MARXIST LENINIST VIEWS

As a true Marxist-Leninist, EMS emancipated the rural poor and the wage earner keeping in view the peculiar Indian conditions; land reforms were a great characteristic of EMS communist ideology. He formulated the historic land reforms by way of legislation and by strengthening the kisan movement which addressed itself to the problems concerning small landholders and agricultural labour. EMS was a great communist theoretician who tried to relate the Marxian principles to the Indian realities. In the process, he made his own interpretation to the Indian situation. He stood for the cause of the toiling masses, the rural labourers, and the exploited workers working in different parts of the country. But he, as a centrist of the Marxian ideology, favoured the socioeconomic changes in the peculiar Indian conditions existing then. In agriculture, his method was cooperativisation; in industry, it was first the introduction of industrialisation and thereafter, its socialisation.

As a true Marxist, EMS believed that Marxism was not a static ideology, under different circumstances, its interpretations can be different and for bringing about socio- economic changes, its strategy also differs in different conditions. The conflicting trends among different segments of the communist party in India were because of competing ideological influences from native and alien social structures. Analysing this trend realistically, EMS wrote thus: ‘The conflict here was between an outdated decadent indigenous social system and a foreign social system that was being newly evolved. While on the one side, one section is eager to build a new society, another section is eager to protect its own land and the ancient customs and traditions characteristic of it. It is only through introducing the essence of modern society that come to the country through the foreigners and modernising our society can we protect our country from attack by foreigners. Namboodiripad, like a true Marxist, believed that Marxism was not a static ideology; under different circumstances, its interpretations can be different and for bringing about socioeconomic changes, its strategy also differs in different conditions, That was why, to take an out of the coexistence stance, EMS Namboodiripad believed that after the developments in the former Soviet Union following the 1989 years, there could be no restoration of Soviet Communism, and that communism would have to absorb significant lesson of other ideologies. EMS advocated for a well- coordinated political struggle against the enemies of the people imperialism or foreign monopoly, feudalism and the rapidly growing monopoly capital with the foreign

collaboration. He was in favour of proletarian internationalism of the working classes towards the world socialist movement.

4.1.8 EMS ON CASTE AND AGRARIAN ISSUES

EMS was a special type of thinker - and organic intellectual who combined theory and practice. His intellectual pursuits were closely linked to the organisational and agitational tasks of the radical movement. With his background of activism in the social reform movement among the Namboodiris in the earliest stage of his public career, EMS exhibited an abiding theoretical interest in the caste problem. The creative application of Marxism in understanding the caste problem in Kerala and the dialectical approach towards caste movements that EMS advocated played a major role in the advance of communist movement in Kerala. At a time when many a leading Indian Marxist was struggling to fit Indian history into the classic Marxist mould of primitive communism-slavery- feudalism- capitalism.

EMS in his first major book entitled Kerala: The Motherland of the Malayalis theorised instead of a transition from primitive communism to what he described as 'Jati-Janmi-Naduvazhi Medavitvam' By this he meant a social formation dominated by the upper castes in social relations, the Janmis (Landlords) in production relations and naduvazhi's (local chieftains) in administration that impoverished the vast majority materially and spiritually. His historical analysis of social evolution in Kerala later underwent a number of revisions in the National Question in Kerala (1952) Kerala: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow (1967) and Kerala Society and Politics: A Historical Survey (1984), but the basic concept that he proposed in 1948 has remained, with further enrichment over time. An even more important theoretical contribution of EMS was in understanding the agrarian question in Kerala. His analysis laid the theoretical basis for the transformation of the tenancy movement in Malabar from one that focused on the superior tenants to a radical peasant movement mainly made up of agricultural workers and inferior tenants. The formation of the first communist ministry (1957-1959) under his chief minister ship saw the launching of a number of democratic projects such as land reforms, administrative restructuring, decentralisation, overhaul of the education sector, strengthening of public distribution systems, minimum wages and social security measures. The dismissal of the communist ministry by the central government left many of the projects unfinished but for the path for the development of the state for the next two decades was largely set.

EMS was elected to the central committee of the communist party in 1943 and since then played a major role in shaping the policies of the communist party at the national level. In 1954 he became a Politburo member. As Politburo member of CPI(M) until his death and as general secretary of the party from 1977 to 1991 EMS played a major role in national politics. At the time of his death (1998) he had completed a detailed book, A History of Communist party in India from 1920 to 1998. The collapse of socialism in eastern Europe saw him analysing what went wrong with the socialist project with a rare openness and frankness but without compromising his revolutionary partnership.

4.1.9 LET US SUM UP

The political philosophy of EMS Namboodiripad is indeed a valuable contribution to the growth of social sciences of the contemporary society. EMS Namboodiripad sought, in practical terms, a modernised developed society in India, especially in Kerala. The presence of such tallest thinkers proved the importance of Modern Indian Political Thought and its relevance.

4.1.10 EXERCISES

1. Discuss the ideas and contributions of M.N. Roy as a Marxist.
2. Briefly discuss the reasons behind Roy's transformation from a Marxist to a Radical Humanist.
3. Offer Roy's humanist critique of Marxism.
4. "The central purpose of Roy's Radical humanism is to co-ordinate the philosophy of nature with social philosophy and ethics in a monistic system". In the light of the statement discuss M.N Roy's Radical Humanist philosophy.
5. Discuss the Marxist and Leninist views of EMS Nambudripad.
6. Discuss Nambudripad's views on Caste and Agrarian Issues.

4.2 SOCIALIST THOUGHT: RAM MANOHAR LOHIA AND JP NARAYAN

- Rajesh Kumar

STRUCTURE

4.2.0 Objectives

4.2.1 Introduction

4.2.2 Ram Manohar Lohia

4.2.3 Lohia's Socialist Thought

4.2.4 On English Language and Caste System

4.2.5 Lohia's Political Ideas for Indian Political System

4.2.6 Jaya Prakash Narayan

4.2.7 JP and Formation of Congress Socialist Party (CSP)

4.2.8 JP and the Philosophy of Sarvodaya

4.2.9 JP and the Philosophy of Sampurn Kranti (Total Revolution)

4.2.10 Let Us Sum Up

4.2.11 Exercise

4.2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the origins and influence of socialist thought in India;
- Know the socialist thought of Ram Manohar Lohia, his views on English language and Caste system, and his ideas for Indian political system;
- Comprehend Jaya Prakash Narayan's contribution to socialist thought in India and in the formation of Congress Socialist Party, his philosophy of Sarvodaya and Sampurn Kranti (Total Revolution).

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Socialism in India is a political movement founded early in the 20th century, as a part of the broader Indian independence movement against the colonial British Raj. It grew quickly in popularity as it espoused the causes of India's farmers and labourers against the zamindars, princely class and landed gentry.

Apart from directly securing less unjust conditions of life in some areas, the socialist movement has had a much larger range of indirect effects, both intended and unintended. It legitimised a pro-people, anti-oppression and anti-exploitation culture and to that extent has fundamentally altered the terms of political discourse in India. Different constituents of this movement have acted at different times as foci of various other emancipatory ideas and actions in Indian public life-civil rights, women's emancipation, defence of minorities or other marginalised sections of society, promotion of literacy, popular culture and literature and soon. It contributed more than one generation of activists to various spheres of Indian public life. Hence, it is imperative to study some of the important contributors to the socialist thought in India. This lesson introduces two such thinkers of socialism, Ram Manohar Lohia and Jaya Prakash Narayan.

4.2.2 RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

Ram Manohar Lohia (23 March 1910 – 12 October 1967) was an activist and a Nationalist political leader. He was born in a village Akbarpur in Ambedkar Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh, in India to Hira Lal, a nationalist and Chanda, a teacher. He was born to Marwari Maheshwari family. His mother died when he was very young. Ram was introduced to the Indian Independence Movement at an early age by his father by the several protest

assemblies Hira Lal took his son to. Ram made his first contribution to the freedom thrash about by organizing a small hartal on the death of Lokmanya Tilak. By 1934, many socialist groups were formed in different parts of the country. The birth of the Congress Socialist Party in May 1934 was a landmark in the history of the socialist movement in India. The Congress Socialist Party provided an all India platform to all the socialist groups in India. Ashok Mehta's 'Democratic Socialism, and studies in Asian Socialism', Acharya Narendra Dev's 'Socialism and National Revolution' Jayaprakash Narayan's Towards Struggle, and Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's The Mystery of Sir Stafford Cripps etc., played a significant role in spreading the messages of socialism in India.

4.2.3 LOHIA'S SOCIALIST THOUGHT

In words of Bipin Chandra, by 1934, many socialist groups were formed in different parts of the country. The birth of the Congress Socialist Party in May 1934 was a landmark in the history of the socialist movement in India. The Congress Socialist Party provided an all India platform to all the socialist groups in India. Ashok Mehta's 'Democratic Socialism, and studies in Asian Socialism', Acharya Narendra Dev's 'Socialism and National Revolution' Jayaprakash Narayan's Towards Struggle, and Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's The Mystery of Sir Stafford Cripps etc., played a significant role in spreading the messages of socialism in India. The socialists played an important role in the 1942 Quit India Movement, and in organised trade union movements of the country. Their increasing popularity was neither lilted by the leading members of the Congress nor by the communists and the Royalists. The communists were not part of the nationalist struggle against the British imperialism. They also did not like the popularity of the trade union movements under the leadership of the socialists. They criticised them as fascists and symbol of 'left reformism'. In the Nasik Convention of the CSP, in March 1948, the socialists ultimately took the decision to leave the Congress and to form the Socialist Party of India. In 1952, immediately after the first national election, the Socialist Party and the Krishak Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP) of J.B.Kripalani took a decision to merge into a single organisation. The socialist organisations in India then had two basic objectives: (a) They wanted to develop into an all-India organisation for social and economic reconstruction and (b)

Development of the weaker sections of the social structure and also as an ideological framework for political emancipation of India.

The Congress Socialist Party adopted the principle of democratic socialism in the Patna Convention of the party in 1949 more seriously. While emphasising its ideological purity the party was more careful about its constructive activities among the peasants, poor and the working class. In its famous Allahabad Thesis of 1953 the party proposed to go for an electoral alliance adjustment with the opposition parties. But the Party was not prepared to have any united front or coalition with any political party. In the Gaya session of the Party, the separate identity of the Congress Socialist Party was also emphasised. The Party was reluctant to have any electoral adjustment or coalition with the Congress, Communist or Hindu Fundamentalist Party or Organisations. But this attitude was toned down and diluted during the General Elections of 1957 and thereafter. In 1952, the Congress Socialist Party strongly advocated for the greater synthesis of the Gandhian ideals with socialist thought. Dr. Ramnanohar Lohia as the President of the Party put emphasis on a decentralised economy based on handicrafts, cottage industries and industries based on small machines and maximum use of labour with small capital investment. During the Panchamarhi Socialist Convention in May 1952, this line of thought of Dr. Lohia did not impress several Socialist leaders of the Party. In June 1953, Ashok Mehta's thesis of the "Political compulsion of a backward economy" pleaded for a greater cooperation between the Socialist and the Congress Party. As a counterpoise to Ashok Mehta's thesis, Dr. Lohia offered the "Theory of Equidistance" which is theory advocated equidistance from the Congress and the Communists by the Socialist parties. As a result of these two streams of thought the Congress Socialist Party was divided into two camps. Some of the members even thought of quitting the party to join the Congress.

Lohia advocated socialism in the form of a new civilisation which in the words of Marx could be referred to as "socialist humanism". He gave a new direction and dimension to the socialist movement of India. He said that India's ideology is to be understood in the context of its culture, traditions, and history. For the success of democratic socialist movement in India, it is necessary to put primary emphasis on the removal of caste system

through systemic reform process. Referring to the caste system he said, all those who think that with the removal of poverty through a modern economy, these segregations will automatically disappear, make a big mistake.” He often highlighted the irrelevance of capitalism for the economic reconstruction and development of the Third World countries. Lohia was opposed to doctrinaire approach to social, political, economic and ideological issues. He wanted the state power to be controlled, guided, and framed by people’s power and believed in the ideology of democratic socialism and non-violent methodology as instruments of governance.

Lohia’s scathing attack on the western ideological constructs appears to be aimed at preparing the ground for establishing socialism as the most appropriate theoretical format for steering India on the path of an equitable and all-round socio-economic development. However, it is interesting to note that even his ideology of socialism kept on getting improvised and enriched with newer intellectual inputs coming from Lohia from time to time. Thus, while he accepted socialism as the viable ideology for India and tried to conceptualise it in the light of the Gandhian inputs, he came out with the idea of ‘New Socialism’ in 1959 with the plea that it offers a comprehensive system of socio-economic and political life for the people in India.

While conceptualising the notion of socialism, Lohia began by arguing that, the concept of socialism has too long lagged ‘behind the cohorts of capitalism or of communism’ and has lived ‘on borrowed breath’ leading to hesitancy in the action of socialists and that it must be developed, if it is to have an effective appeal, into a doctrine independent of other political ideologies. He, therefore, sought to free the ideology of socialism from its borrowed breath by infusing the spirit of Gandhism in it. Overwhelmed as he was by the logical and spiritual consistency of Gandhian principles, Lohia asked for dovetailing the philosophy with the Gandhian doctrines of *satyagraha*, theory of ends–means consistency, economic system rooted in the small machine technology and, finally, the idea of political decentralisation. He maintained that the incorporation of Gandhian principles in the socialist philosophy would lend greater practicability of socialism to the Indian situations.

Lohia’s views regarding ‘New Socialism’ can be summarised as the following six fundamental

elements: egalitarian standards in the areas of income and expenditure, growing economic interdependence, world parliament system based on adult franchise, democratic freedoms inclusive of right to private life, Gandhian technique of individual and collective civil disobedience, and dignity and rights of common man. The cumulative impact of the theory of New Socialism, argued Lohia, would be in providing such a complex web of system of life for the people that they would not only be able to live an egalitarian and contented life within the country but would also aspire to become a part of the world government. Thus, the theory of New Socialism seems to be either a reflection of the reiteration of the cherished ideals of Lohia or his growing detachment from the realities of life in the country paving way for utopianism in his political thinking to a large extent.

4.2.4 ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND CASTE SYSTEM

Ram Manohar Lohia favoured Hindi as the official language of India, arguing “The use of English is a hindrance to original thinking, progenitor of inferiority feelings and a gap flanked by the educated and uneducated public. Approach, let us unite to restore Hindi to its original glory.”

Lohia decided to create the mass public realize the importance of economic robustness for the nation’s future. He encouraged public involvement in post-freedom reconstruction. He pressed people to construct canals, wells and roads voluntarily in their neighbourhood. He volunteered himself to build a dam on river Paniyari which is standing till this day and is described “Lohia Sagar Dam.” Lohia said “*satyagraha without constructive job is like a sentence without a verb.*” He felt that public job would bring unity and a sense of awareness in the society. He also was instrumental in having 60 percent of the seats in the legislature reserved for minorities, lower classes, and women.

Lohia himself was well-versed with a number of foreign languages such as German and English. Indeed, it appeared in consonance with Lohia’s indelible passion for indigenous and native aspects of life being given preponderance in comparison to imported or imposed values and institutions drawn from an alien ambience. Hence, Lohia seemed quite pained at finding reluctance on the part of the government to give an impetus to Hindi as the

mother tongue of the people. Lohia vehemently argued for the progressive replacement of English by Hindi as the official language in the country. Moreover, he averred that the ethos of democracy could not be delved deep in the hearts of the people unless Hindi becomes the language of administrative and judicial systems in India. In sum, thus, Lohia's social thoughts reflected his deep sense of critical understanding of the problems of Indian social structure and a bunch of plausible solutions to overcome such problems.

Unlike the Marxist theories which became fashionable in the third world in the 1950s and 1960s, Lohia recognized that caste, more than class, was the vast stumbling block to India's progress. It was Lohia's thesis that India had suffered reverses during her history because people had viewed themselves as members of a caste rather than citizens of a country. Caste, as Lohia put it, was congealed class. Class was mobile caste. As such, the country was deprived of fresh thoughts, because of the narrowness and stultification of thought at the top, which was composed mainly of the upper castes, Brahmins and Baniyas, and tight compartmentalization even there, the former dominant in the intellectual arena and the latter in the business. A proponent of affirmative action, he compared it to turning the earth to foster a better crop, urging the upper castes, as he put it, "to voluntarily serve as the soil for lower castes to flourish and grow", so that the country would profit from a broader spectrum of talent and thoughts.

In Lohia's language, "Caste restricts opportunity. Restricted opportunity constricts skill. Constricted skill further restricts opportunity. Where caste prevails, opportunity and skill are restricted to ever-narrowing circles of the people". In his own party, the Samyukta (United) Socialist Party, Lohia promoted lower caste candidates both by giving electoral tickets and high party positions. However he talked in relation to the caste incessantly, he was not a castist—his aim was to create sure people voted for the Socialist party candidate, no matter what his or her caste. His point was that in order to create the country strong, everyone needed to have a stake in it. To eliminate caste, his aphoristic prescription was, "*Roti and Beti*", that is, people would have to break caste barriers to eat jointly (*Roti*) and be willing to provide their girls in marriage to boys from other castes (*Beti*).

Providing a macro analytical framework to the problem of caste in India, Lohia emphasised

on the inherent tussle between the forces perpetuating caste and the forces bent on introducing class perspective in the society. In such a conflict, while the idea of caste represent the evil forces of conservatism, primordial affinities and inertia, the notion of class becomes the beholder of the virtues of dynamism and social mobilisation in society. Chakrabarty and Pandey add that Lohia, came with the idea of ‘seven revolutions’ or *sapta kranti* to infuse a new sense of dynamism and vigour in the Indian social system. These seven revolutions are to be materialised in the form of: equality between man and women; struggle against political, economic and spiritual inequality based on skin colour; removal of inequality between backward and high castes based on traditions, and special opportunity for the backwards; measures against foreign enslavement in different forms; economic equality by way of planned production and removal of capitalism; measures against unjust encroachments on private life; and non-proliferation of weapons in conjunction with reliance on *satyagraha*. The most significant aspect of the seven revolutions of Lohia appears to be the reflection of his utmost desire to bring about the greatest degree of socioeconomic equality amongst the people. More importantly, the idea of equality to Lohia did not consist of only material equality in terms of equitable distribution of economic resources but also consisted of a higher degree of spiritual equality coming from the innate feeling of the individuals that they are equal like others in society.

4.2.5 LOHIA’S POLITICAL IDEAS FOR INDIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

Lohia expressed himself in favour of guaranteeing basic fundamental freedoms of the people, provided it was ensured that the basic needs of each and every citizen would be fulfilled. In his opinion, the notion of democracy must not be confined to affording the people certain civil and political rights, but be construed in such a way that it leads to provision of such socio-economic conditions where nobody remains without securing the basic minimum needs of life. In so far as the system of government is concerned, Lohia’s creditable contribution seems to be his model of four pillars of state called the ‘Chaukhamba Model’. This model was contextualised within the framework of decentralised democratic polity Lohia recommended for the country. In such a system, he called for the operationalisation

of the concept of ‘permanent civil disobedience’ which would act as a perpetual antidote against any sort of injustice. Thus, considering village, *mandal* (district), province and centre as the four pillars of the decentralised system of government, Lohia unconventionally sought to dovetail the lower levels like village and *mandal* with the police and welfare functions. However, later, reiterating his support for the idea of world government, he argued for the creation of the ‘fifth pillar’ also, which would be in the form of the world government.

Lohia argued for acknowledging and right placing of the ideas of religion and politics in order to develop the infrastructures of the political system. However, the imprudent admixture of the two unavoidably leads to communal fanaticism amongst various communities whose repercussions for the country are fatal. For instance, in one of his lesser known works, *Guilty Men of India’s Partition* (2000), he was categorical in exposing the errors and untruths which were propagated in the name of religion ultimately leading to partition of the country. Outlining the basic causes of partition, he unhesitatingly chided the selected persons whom he squarely held responsible for India’s partition.

To conclude, Manohar Lohia was one of the finest socialist thinkers of India who blended western ideas of socialism and Marxism with Indian needs specially with the Gandhian philosophy and gifted the country and its people the philosophy of New Socialism. Thus, the main contours of the political thought of Lohia cover a wide range of spectrum touching most of the pressing problems of the political processes and institutions in the country even in the 21st century.

4.2.6 JAYA PRAKASH NARAYAN

Jayaprakash Narayan’s life happens to be a life of endless quest for getting suitable ways and means to resolve the socio-economic and political conditions of the toiling masses of the country. Born on 11 October 1902 in a village in Chapra district in Bihar, he appeared to be an unconventional boy even from his early childhood. Having spent several years in U.S. after coming back to India he got attracted towards the revolutionary ideas of Marx and Marxist writers like M.N. Roy, leading him eventually to become one of the most

orthodox Marxists in India. Jaya Prakash Narayan believed that the existing socio-economic problems of India could be solved only within the Marxist–Leninist ideological framework; JP outlined a comprehensive scheme of radical reforms supposedly to bring about a socialist socio-economic order in the country.

4.2.7 JAYA PRAKASH AND THE FORMATION OF THE CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY (CSP)

The Congress socialist party was formed in the Nasik Jail when JP, Lohia, Ashok Mehta, Achyut Patwardhan and Minoo Masani decided to float an organisation. Left wing intellectuals because of their political conviction floated a forum. At the same time, mass politics in the civil disobedience movement got radicalized. Kisan Sabha and All India Trade Union Congress became two powerful class fronts. Combination of social forces with intellectuals created a powerful socialist movement in India. JP, as a Marxist intellectual wrote a book—'Why Socialism', which helped the Left wing people all over India to clarify their doubts regarding the concept of socialism. This book was published on behalf of the congress socialist party. In this work, he developed four important theses: The foundations of socialism; what the congress socialist stands for; Alternatives; Methods and techniques.

4.2.8 JAYA PRAKASH AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF SARVODAYA

Marxist phase of JP's life seemingly continued during the decade of the 1930s, after which he drifted to the philosophy of democratic socialism and finally turning out to be *sarvodayee* in the post-independence times. This ideological transition in the thinking of JP needs to be explained to find out the causes for his disenchantment with an ideology which, at one point of time, seemed to be the only plausible framework of bringing about the socio-economic transformations in the country. The establishment of some sort of military bureaucratic dictatorship under the leadership of Stalin in place of the promised dictatorship of the proletariat distressingly compelled JP to review his indoctrination in the ideology of Marxism at both philosophical as well as practical planes. Quite evidently, the philosophical critique of Marxism by JP was also presumably conditioned by his increasing appreciation

of the Gandhian techniques such as *satyagraha*, non-violence and the conformist perspective on the end–means dialectics.

At one point of time, JP was quite critical of the slowness of the Gandhian methods of peaceful struggle and argued for the use of socialist methods to bring about quick socio-economic transformations of the society. But when empirical evidence from the Soviet Union started showing the true picture of the violent and forced methods of securing people's obedience to the Communist Party and a highly pressurised and forced extraction of labour from the workers to ensure a fast pace of industrialisation of the country in the times of Stalin, JP went into introspection. He ultimately came around the idea of Gandhi that to attain a pious end, the means ought to be equally pious. He wondered 'if good ends could ever be achieved by bad means' and came to the conclusion that under Marxism, the sole focus on the veracity of means did not allow it to become a plausible ideological framework to bring about the desirable transformations in backward societies like India.

4.2.9 JAYA PRAKASH AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF SAMPURN KRANTI 'TOTAL REVOLUTION'

On his return to India in 1929, JP joined the national movement with the intention of practising socialism in India. His imprisonment in the wake of the civil disobedience movement at Nasik jail brought him close to the other likeminded nationalists which later on culminated in the formation of the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) in April 1934. However, his passion for Marxism was so strong that in 1936, J.P. Published a booklet 'Why Socialism' arguing that today more than ever before is possible to say that there is only one type, one theory of socialism – Marxism. The Marxist phase of JP's life seemingly continued during the decade of the 1930's after which he drifted to the philosophy of democratic socialism and finally turning out to be sarvodaya in the post independence times.

Total Revolution (Sampurana Kranti) was the last intellectual intervention of Jayaprakash Narayanan in his unending quest to seek and establish such a socio economic and political order in the country which would turn India into a democratic, federal participatory, equitable and prosperous nation in the world. The concept of total revolution was for the first time

evolved by Vionoba Bhave during the 1960's to articulate his desire to the need of a comprehensive movement in the country which would transform all the aspects of life in order to mould a new man to change human life and create a new world. The idea was picked up by JP to call upon the people in 1975 to work for total revolution in order to stem the rot creeping into all aspects of public life and create a whole new world encompassing the basic elements of socioeconomic and political order that he had been advocating in the name of Sarvodaya.

The context of JP calling for the total revolution was provided by the growing authoritarianism in the functioning of the government machinery headed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi. In fact, his call for sampurna kranti became the rallying cry for the movement against Indira Gandhi's government. J.P.'s concept of total revolution is a holistic one. JP is indebted to Gandhi for developing the doctrine of total revolution. He wrote thus, "Gandhiji's non-violence was not just a plea for law and order, or a cover for the status quo, but a revolutionary philosophy. It is, indeed, a philosophy of total revolution, because it embraces personal and social ethics and values of life as much as economic, political and social institutions and processes".

JP has pointed out that the French revolution started with the mission of realising liberty, equality and fraternity. But it ended in Bonapartism and the humiliations at waterloo. The Russian revolution started with the mission of redeeming the rights of the proletariat and the other suppressed sections of society. But power has not percolated to the Russian people and the cry of the withering away of the state is now relegated only to the field of antiquarian intellectual dialectics. Hence if the basic aim is to transfer decision-making policy execution and judicial arbitration to the people there has to be change in the technique of revolution. JP, hence, advocates 'persuasion and conversion – social revolution through human revolution would necessarily postulate a comprehensive programme of radical social construction for total development and welfare.

Jayaprakash Narayan's doctrine of total revolution is a combination of seven evolutions social economic, political, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual. He was not every rigid regarding the number of these revolutions. He said the seven revolutions could be grouped as per demands of the social structure in a political system. He said, 'for

instance the cultural may include educational and ideological sense, it can embrace all other revolutions. He said economic revolution may be split up into industrial, agricultural, technological revolutions etc. Similarly intellectual revolutions may be split up into two - scientific and philosophical. The concept of total revolution became popular in 1974 in the wake of mass movements in Gujarat and Bihar. He was deeply disturbed by the political process of degeneration in the Indian politics. He was deeply moved by the mutilation of democratic process, political corruption and full of moral standards more public life. In a letter to a friend in August 1976, JP defined the character of the total Revolution. He wrote “Total revolution is a permanent revolution. It will always go on keep on hanging both our personal and social lives. This revolution knows no respite, no halt, and certainly not complete halt. JP’s Total revolution involved the developments of peasants, workers, harijans, tribes and all weaker sections of society. He was always interested in empowering and strengthening India’s democratic system. He was deeply disturbed by the growth of corruption in the Indian political system. He wrote that ‘corruption is eating into the vitals of our political life. It is disturbing development, undermining the administration and making of mockery of all laws and regulations. It is eroding people’s faith and exhausting their proverbial patience.’ The concept of total revolution aimed at reversing the tide of the political and economic system of the country ostensibly due to the concentration of political and economic powers in few hands and restoring the sanctity of institutions and procedures in those sheers of life by decentralising such powers in the hands of the masses. In the sphere of political system, JP noted the inherent fallacies of the prevailing parliamentary system of government as its basic features such as electoral system, party-based political processes and increasing concentration of powers in the hands of the Prime Minister etc, are bound to convert the system into a corrupt, tyrannical and farcical one. Hence, in his conceptualisation of total revolution, JP was firm on reforming the electoral system in such a way that the people can vote in an incorruptible manner and accordance with their free conscience. Moreover in such a system, there would be no place for political parties and the potential concentration of powers in few hands would be effectively curbed.

Like political power, JP was also convinced of the perverse effects of the concentration of economic power in the hands of few in the society. He, therefore, called for total recasting of the economic system of the country as well.

4.2.10 LET US SUM UP

JP visualised an economic order for the country where there would be progressive socialisation of the means of resources by way of establishing cooperative societies and voluntary associations to manage the resources with a view to ensure prosperity for all. JP's call for executing the idea of total Revolution in 1975 was accompanied by some sort of blueprint for the volunteers to carry out the implementation of the scheme of holistic transformation of Indian society. He exhorted the people to rise against the authoritarian and inimical policies and programmes of the government. In its operationalization, however, the idea of total revolution occasionally evoked misplaced perceptions in the minds of its practitioners.

4.2.11 EXERCISES

1. Analyse the statement “Ram Manohar Lohia was one of the finest socialist thinkers of India who blended western ideas of Socialism and Marxism with Indian needs especially with the Gandhian philosophy”.
2. Throw considerable light on the Socialist Thought of Ram Manohar Lohia.
3. Discuss Lohia's on English Language and Caste System
4. Explain Ram Manohar Lohia's Political Ideas for Indian Political System
5. Give a detail of Jaya Prakash Narayan's Philosophy of Sarvodaya.
6. Elaborate on the Philosophy of Sampurn Kranti or Total Revolution as given by Jaya Prakash Narayan.

4.3 FEMINIST THOUGHT : PANDITA RAMABAI AND KAMLADEVI CHATTOPADHYAY

- V. Nagendra Rao & Rajesh Kumar

STRUCTURE

4.3.0 Objectives

4.3.1 Introduction

4.3.2 Pandita Ramabai

4.3.3 Ramabai as a Feminist

4.3.4 Ramabai's Work for the Destitute Children

4.3.5 Ramabai as a Linguist

4.3.6 Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay

4.3.6.1 Early Life

4.3.7 Kamaladevi's Political Activism

4.3.7.1 Endeavour for National Cause

4.3.8 Kamaladevi's Political Activism

4.3.9 Kamaladevi's Social Activism

4.3.9.1 Champion of Women's Rights

4.3.9.2 Rehabilitation Work with Refugees

4.3.9.3 Rejuvenation of Handicrafts

4.3.9.4 Contributions to Art and Theatre

4.3.10 Let Us Sum Up

4.3.11 Exercise

4.3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the women or feminist thought in India and the leading champions of it;
- Know Pandita Ramabai's contribution to feminist thought in India, her skills as linguist and her role in women empowerment and her work with destitute children;
- Comprehend Kamaladevi's political activism, her contribution to national and transnational causes, her social activism, particularly related to Women's Rights.

4.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Pandita Ramabai and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay are two significant women the nation has ever produced. Their commendable understanding about the male hegemony in Indian Society and resultant status of women made them to rededicate to the work of women empowerment not only through education but all possible means. Their ideas and thought on ameliorating the conditions of women and other sections of the society socially as well as legally place them in the league with other socially awakened thinkers of the country. Both in their own way contributed to expose the structural inequalities and marginalization in the society and worked towards amelioration. In this lesson you will be studying about these two women the nation has ever produced for their contributions to the modern Indian political thought.

4.3.2 PANDITA RAMABAI

Pandita Ramabai is the only female personality whose ideas and practices on ameliorating the conditions of women in India place her in league with other socially awakened thinkers of the country. For instance, like Jyotirao Phule, for whom the cause of Dalits became his mission for life, Ramabai remained engrossed with the cause of the women's emancipation throughout her life. The efforts for the amelioration of the conditions of women in India have, no doubt, been made by a number of social reformers. Her birth in the home of a very progressive Brahman Anant Shashtri Dongre in 1858 ensured that Ramabai was saved from the twin curses of lack of education and child marriage. However, the adverse

material conditions of her family resulted in the death of her parents and her sister. Eventually, Ramabai, along with her brother, moved to Calcutta in 1878, which proved to be a turning point in her life. Here, she was not only conferred with the titles of ‘Pandita’ and ‘Saraswati’ in recognition of her intellectual attainments, but was also introduced into the realm of social reforms pioneered by the Brahmo Samaj, with the focus on the emancipation of women. Soon, the death of her brother in 1880 presumably forced her to marry a non-Brahman lawyer Bipin Behari Das Medhavi. Having become mother of a daughter, she lost her husband in less than two years time. Subsequently, she moved to Pune in 1882 to set up the Arya Mahila Samaj to work for the cause of women. Yet, her quest for knowledge led her to visit England where under circumstantial difficulties, she converted to Christianity.³ After staying for about three years in England, she went to the United States of America (USA) in 1886. Her sojourn in the USA helped her concretise her plans for opening a home for high caste Hindu widows in India by raising funds under the aegis of The Ramabai Association of Boston. In the end, she returned to India in 1889 and remained busy with activities aimed at fostering the cause of women till her death in 1922. For her social reform activities, she was conferred with the *Kaiser-e-Hind* gold medal in 1919 by the British government.

4.3.3 RAMABAI AS A FEMINIST

Ramabai’s reading of Dharmashastras made her deeply conscious of the contempt with which women of all castes and men of the lower caste were treated in these texts. Like women, rules did not permit the Shudras to perform the same religious acts as the upper castes. Ramabai rejected this discrimination in her personal life when she decided to accept the marriage proposal from a Bipin Behari, a Shudra, hereby decisively breaking with the tradition. Bipin was excommunicated as it was an inter-caste marriage by civil registration. Just after two years of marriage, Bipin’s death forced widowhood on young Ramabai at the age of twenty four. After her initial experiences of oppressive widowhood, Ramabai refused to be confined to the domestic space and catapulting herself into the public arena.

Returning to Maharashtra, Ramabai experienced her first public encounter with the forces of patriarchy when she set up the Arya Mahila Samaj in 1882 in Poona to mobilise women, and aroused instant hostility. She brought out a book in Marathi, *Stree Dharma Niti* with

an objective of counselling the helpless and ignorant women. The *Kesari* commented: “In reality, it is the task of men to eradicate these and other evil customs in our society. Women cannot therefore interfere in it for many years to come - even if they are ‘panditas’ and have reached the ultimate stage of reform ... Our women will have to be under the control of men for a long time to come.” Undeterred, Ramabai set up a home for high-caste Hindu widows and made an appeal to the Hunter Commission to provide training facilities to women to become teachers and doctors enabling them to serve other women. However, she failed to connect to the women in Maharashtra and felt alienated as she had no community, no social base and no real emotional bonds to fall back upon. This led to her search for solace in religion and God which could simultaneously accommodate her social agenda as well as her personal quest for religious fulfilment. Thus she got converted to Christianity by the Anglican Church. Ramabai’s encounter with the patriarchy of the Anglican Church across the globe was no less harsh. When she was offered a professorship which would involve her teaching to male students, the Bishop of Bombay protested, or “Above all things, pray believe that her influence will be ruined forever in India if she is known to have taught young men.” Ramabai promptly replied: “It surprises me very much to think that neither my father nor my husband objected [to] my mother’s or my teaching young men while some young people are doing so.”

Thus, the major contestation in Ramabai’s educational and missionary activities was that of patriarchy. A Christian convert and renowned social reformer, Pandita Ramabai was a scholar of Hinduism who had profound disagreements with its philosophical premises, particularly with regard to women, and later as a Christian convert who rebelled against Christian dogma. Thus, her life was a narrative of complex contestations-that of a woman against male hegemony both in Hindu society as well as Anglican Church, that of an Indian convert against the British Anglican bishops and nuns, that of an Indian Christian missionary against the oppression of Hindu women.

Such an understanding about the male hegemony and resultant status of women made her to rededicate herself to work towards the women empowerment through education. Due to her tremendous efforts to educate women, the social status of women in India was greatly improved. Even widows were able to be remarried. She introduced vocational training for women, including brick making, weaving, carpentry, masonry, making vegetable

oil, and printing – all done by women. She fought for women to be trained as doctors to prevent the premature death of many hundreds of thousands of women who could not receive medical attention. She pleaded for lady doctors to treat women patients. Her ‘evidence’ published in ‘The Times of India’ influenced Queen Victoria who started a movement to give medical help and train women for medical work from 1885 onwards. The wife of the Viceroy of India, Lady Dufferin started ‘The National Association for Supplying Female Aid to the Women of India’ in 1885 which in due course became known as the ‘Countess of Dufferin movement’.

4.3.4 RAMABAI’S WORK FOR THE DESTITUTE CHILDREN

Further, her compassion for the fellow and suffering humans, made her to start Mukti Mission in the year 1889. By 1905, she was caring for nearly 2000 people in her home including disgraced women, young girls, young orphan boys, the blind and those who were physically and mentally handicapped. She started schools, ran hostels, developed numerous industrial training enters and working units. She taught the girls typesetting and how to run a printing press. She introduced a kindergarten system of education as well as the Braille system for the blind to enable them to learn to read and write. During her lifetime, she took care of thousands of child-widows, poor and orphaned girls, destitute women and famine victims. Not only did she care for them but helped them to find Jesus and to be rehabilitated and trained so that they could to take care of their own financial needs and again be useful citizens in society.

4.3.5 RAMABAI AS A LINGUIST

Pandita Ramabai loved languages and had linguistic mastery in 11 languages. She was one of the first to suggest Hindi as the national language of India, in May 1889, to the Indian National Congress long before the time of India’s independence. She advocated honouring her country above the Head of the Empire.

When her own experience with understanding the English and existing Marathi bible proved it is beyond the comprehension of the common people, she learnt the ancient biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek solely for the purpose of translating the Bible into a simple Marathi version which the people on the street could easily understand and appreciate. She worked 12 years translating the Bible form the original Hebrew and Greek texts into

simple Marathi. Later the women at Mukti Mission printed over 10,000 copies of the Marathi Bible. Ramabai also wrote a Hebrew primer in Marathi. Also she was the first person to translate American textbooks into Marathi.

Overall it can be concluded that the views and actions of Pandita Ramabai laid foundations for the feminist movement in India. Showing the colours of a true revolutionary from her childhood, Ramabai's entire life represented an unending pilgrimage of a visionary for the cause of women's emancipation. However, the circumstantial upheavals of life forced her to tread such paths which would not have been her preferred course, given the contemporary circumstances in which she rose to prominence. She exposed the structural inequalities and functional marginalisation of the high caste Hindu widows, however, this cause was absolutely lost, probably due to her infatuation with Christian missionary activities in the later part of her life. Nonetheless, her sincere effort in making women aware of their socio-political role in contemporary society paid-off in due course.

4.3.6 KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAY

Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay (1903-88) was person of many parts. She was a Gandhian, a champion of woman's rights, a freedom fighter, a social reformer, a trade unionist, a patron of arts and a revolutionary of her times. She is forever remembered for her enormous efforts in organizing women around various causes and for working towards improving the lives and livelihoods of the artisans of the country.

4.3.6.1 EARLY LIFE

Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay was born to Ananthaya Dhareshwar and Girjabai on April 3rd 1903, in an aristocratic family from Mangalore. She lost her father, who had not written a will, when she was but seven years old, and the family wealth and properties all went to a stepbrother with whom there was little contact. At a stroke, Kamaladevi and her mother were left disinherited. It was at the home of her maternal uncle, Kamaladevi received another kind of political education: he was a notable social reformer and visitors to the home included eminent lawyers, political luminaries, and public figures, among them Gopalkrishna Gokhale, Srinivasa Sastri, Pandita Ramabai, and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. Thus she was initiated into politics at an early age.

Kamaladevi's was further inspired by her mother and grandmother who left the deepest impressions on her. Both women were educated, ecumenical in their interests, and enterprising, and it is from them that she inherited many of her traits including her love of books. In 1917, at the age of 14 she got married but continued her education. However within two years she was widowed. Supported by her mother Girijabai who had progressive ideas, the young girl refused to bow her head to widowhood and went on to complete her studies from the Madras University. There she met a well-known poet, play writer and actor and brother of Sarojini Naidu, Harindranath Chattopadhyay and married him. She joined her husband in Britain in 1921 and her interest in social work led her to enrol in a Social Work Diploma Course at Bedford College, London. The course in sociology combined with practical training which allowed Kamaladevi to visit, understand and empathize with the people slums in London. It was during this time Kamaladevi had been inspired by her mother's contacts and the political climate in India to pledge herself to Gandhi's work. Husband and wife returned to India in 1922.

4.3.7 KAMALADEVI'S POLITICAL ACTIVISM

After her return to India, Kamaladevi became actively involved with the All-India Women's Conference (AIWC) and became friends with Margaret Cousins. She became involved in Gandhi's Salt Satyagraha in 1930 and was arrested for entering the Bombay Stock Exchange to sell packets of salt. In the meantime she had divorced Harindranath. Kamaladevi continued to be engaged in politics and social work, particularly in promoting handicrafts, until her death in 1988.

4.3.7.1 ENDEAVOUR FOR NATIONAL CAUSE

Like many educated upper-caste Hindu women of her generation, Kamaladevi too was influenced by the non-violent struggle of Mahatma Gandhi and came into the political life of the nation in the 1920s and 1930s. By 1923, she had fallen under his spell and she enrolled herself in the nationalist struggle as a member of the Congress party. Three years later, she had the unique distinction of becoming the first woman in India to run for political office. Kamaladevi competed for a seat in the Madras Legislative Assembly and lost by a mere votes. Along with the rest of the nation, she was completely captivated by the Salt Satyagraha, but she differed with Gandhi's decision to exclude women among the initial

group of marchers. Though Kamaladevi was charged with violation of the salt laws and sentenced to a prison term, the most dramatic moment that brought her to the nation's attention occurred when, in a scuffle over the Congress flag, she clung to it tenaciously. While Kamaladevi's admiration for Gandhi never wavered, and the ideals to which he aspired became her own, she occasionally felt stifled by the authoritarian strands within his personality and felt restless at the slow pace of change. Thus, she had been slowly drifting towards the socialist wing of the Congress party and became a key figure in the international socialist feminist movement and in 1936 she finally took over leadership of the Congress Socialist Party.

4.3.8 KAMALDEVI'S WORK FOR TRANSNATIONAL CAUSES

Starting from the late 1920s to the 1940s and beyond, Kamaladevi became not only an emissary and spokesperson for political independence but for larger transnational causes, such as the emancipation of coloured people around the world from colonial rule and political and economic equity between nations. She attended the International Alliance of Women in Berlin in 1929, only to become aware of how race and national boundaries might become obstacles to the solidarity of women: it was a 'misnomer' to call it 'international', she says, as the only non-Western representatives were from Egypt and India. At the international session of the League against Imperialism in Frankfurt, Kamaladevi highlighted problems encountered in common by colonised peoples in West Africa, North Africa, Indochina, the American south, and elsewhere. Though this has never been recognised as such, Kamaladevi facilitated India's emergence as the leader of the non-aligned movement and the crafting of the Bandung Declaration of 1956 which was nothing other than a clarion call for a fundamental reordering of the world order.

Kamaladevi was a prolific writer and her 20 odd books furnish unimpeachable evidence of the wide array of her intellectual and political interests, and a global outlook which shunned alike a narrow nationalism and a superficial cosmopolitanism. She travelled to Nanjing and Chongqing and met with resistance leaders during the country's occupation under Japanese rule — from this resulted a small book, *In War-Torn China* (1944). Yet, given her spirit of inquiry, she also took it upon herself to visit Japan and came to the conclusion, in *Japan: Its Weakness and Strength* (1944), that the Japanese, who had sought to be the vanguard of a pan-Asianism, had bloodied their hands with the most

virulent strands of materialism and imperialism. She is also among a handful of people in India in the 1930s-1950s who wrote widely on the US. In *Uncle Sam's Empire* (1944) and *America: The Land of Superlatives* (1946), she reverses the gaze. Reams and reams have been written of the saffron robe-clad monk, known to the world as Swami Vivekananda, visiting Chicago in 1893 and thereby bringing Hinduism to the New World; and yet, we know little of the sari-clad Kamaladevi wandering around the United States, making her way into prisons, union meetings, political conventions, black neighbourhoods, and American homes, and leaving behind the distinct impressions of an Indian feminist with strong nationalist and socialist inclinations of the possibilities and limitations of the experiment with democracy.

4.3.9 KAMALADEVI'S SOCIAL ACTIVISM

While the first half of her life was intensely political, greatly disillusioned by the Partition, Kamaladevi had come to recognize that India was not going to even remotely take the shape that she had envisioned at the dawn of freedom. As a result she eschewed every political office in independent India, focused on directly working for the social causes either she was already involved or newly attached with. One among such causes was her advocacy for Women's Rights.

4.3.9.1 CHAMPION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS

As Sakuntala Narasimhan writes, it was in her childhood itself, while answering a question posed by C. Rajagopalachari, she revealed her determination for changing the society, especially for women. Kamaladevi was fortunate enough to grow under the influence of two strong feminists at home, her mother and grandmother, who believed that gender need not restrict a woman from involvement in fulfilling, socially productive work outside the confines of the home. Mrs. Annie Besant too exercised a great influence on young Kamaladevi and became a guiding star to emulate the ideals and perceptions. Once again, she was highly moved by the works and writings of Pandita Ramabai. While participating in the freedom movement, she also began working for women's rights. Here it is important to mention that, Kamaladevi was definitely not the feminist, if it meant anti-man. She made a clear distinction between the kind of feminism that she saw in the west and what she herself defined as women's betterment. She noted the inappropriateness of battle lines

being drawn across the sex divide with men and women confronting each other as antagonists. Rather, she saw women's problems as an issue that was social in origin and a problem that had to be tackled as such by both men and women in conjunction, because feminism according to her was no more and no less than a question of human rights. Women must demand for recognition as human beings and individuals in their own right, rather than adversarial condemnation of the male. She believed, women should neither fight men nor imitate them but try to instil in themselves a consciousness of their own faculties and functions, and in men, respect for the other sex.

In 1926, Kamaladevi met the Irish-Indian suffragette Margaret Cousins, who founded the All India Women's Conference (AIWC). Her 60 years of association with the AIWC as one of its founder members and as general secretary for three terms, vice-president and president, was another part of her feminist involvement. As one of the oldest organizations of women in the country working for women's advancement, the AIWC played a leading role in many of the political developments of the pre-post Independence decades and she spearheaded these activities as one of its leading activists. She saw the issue of Women's rights an invisible part of the larger political and social and economic struggle. She strongly felt that education could not be separated from women's social betterment and social programmes in turn could not be seen as separate from political advancement, she thus saw the question of women's progress not as a separate issue but as part of the wider national movement from freedom, based on holistic perspective of people's betterment. As she perceived it, feminism was very much an integral part of the Swadeshi movement itself, because one could not talk of freedom in the political sense without addressing at the same time the dimension of social freedom- and that meant fighting against the unjust treatment that social customs were imposing on half the population, on the basis of sex. Her insistence about women's participation in Salt Satyagraha too was aimed at drawing women out into the public arena as rightful participants in national activities. This made her to convince Gandhiji over women's participation in the protest. That was the first time in the history of the nation that such a large surge of ordinary women had participated in a public demonstration and in a way this encouraged scores of women to participate in the freedom movement.

As Sakuntala mentions, her feminist involvement was along two fronts-one was through

legal changes for which she lobbied and the other through social change in terms of attitudes and ideas. She warned Indian women that they were becoming complacent on the basis of legal victories won on the statute books and this might endanger the gains they had made through hard won battles over the years. She worked hard to get the prevention of Child marriage Act passed in 1929. Another area where she fought was for the rights of women workers to maternity leave, now automatically and universally incorporated into statute books. Such efforts towards improving conditions of women's work were based on pragmatism and practical changes, not armchair theorizing or mere academic lip service.

Kamala Devi fought against the discrimination under law. She was also in favour of Uniform Civil Code for personal laws governing women and advocated for it all through her life. She often pointed how discriminating laws were especially relating to the maintenance and adoption under various laws. For example under a Muslim Women's Bill of 1986, women were not entitled to maintenance but are left to the mercy of male relatives or the waqf board, whereas a Hindu Woman is entitled to maintenance. In a similar manner adoption laws too discriminate between women of different faiths. Her efforts were always aimed at erasing such differences and discrimination.

Kamaladevi's first writings on the rights of women in India date to 1929; one of her last books, *Indian Women's Battle for Freedom*, was published in 1982. Over a period of some five decades, Kamaladevi articulated in dozens of writings and speeches a distinct position, one that was mindful of the liabilities faced by Indian women that were both peculiar to them and common to women everywhere. While she became an advocate of positions that are now commonplace to women's movements all over the world, such as equal pay for equal work, she also resisted the idea that the experience of the West was to furnish the template for women's movements in India.

4.3.9.2 REHABILITATION WORK WITH REFUGEES

The lives of common people were of abiding interest to her and in post-independent India, Kamaladevi set up Indian Co-operative Union and self-employment schemes and worked relentlessly with refugees in establishing new homes, health facilities and new professions. The refugees received training in new skills. The city of Faridabad which today has a population of around 1.5 million, but hardly anyone is aware of the fact that

Kamaladevi played the critical role in giving birth to this industrial township, a flagship project that she undertook as the founding leader of the Indian Cooperative Union (ICU) to resettle nearly 50,000 Pathans from the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) in the wake of the post-Partition migrations.

4.3.9.3 REJUVENATION OF HANDICRAFTS

Kamaladevi loved the traditional skills of Indian craftspersons and weavers. She was the woman pioneer to start a revival in Indian textile art. It was this movement, along with her work at the grassroots level and her advocacy, which resulted in the recognition of Indian handlooms and handicrafts. Above all she revived Indian handicrafts, became the country's best-known expert on carpets, puppets, and its thousands of craft traditions.

The Crafts Council, which was founded by Kamaladevi as a non-profit organization served as a platform to lobby for the rights of craftsperson, to restore to them their rightful status and to resuscitate languishing craft. Today, the Crafts Council of India is a powerful apex body, carrying aloft the banner of Kamaladevi and her ideals. Her vision brought handicrafts into the ambit of the national economy. For her the craftsmanship grew from the village community, its joys and burdens, the change of the seasons, the memories filled with song and verse legends, myths and local romances from the core and substance of their daily existence. She was the force behind the intensive surveys carried out by the Handicraft Board of various crafts. She believed in a sound home market for Indian craft, as a result of which the State Governments opened a chain of Government emporia in all major cities.

Kamaladevi's involvement with craft was so deep; she travelled the length and breadth of India, watching every coil of cane put together into a basket, every thread of warp and weft transformed into fabric. She not only nurtured craftspeople but also gave dignity and value to their products. All this and more has brought about a sea-change in the tastes of the modern generation. Today, the handicrafts sector is recognized both for its vibrancy and its market value in India and abroad. The institutions of the All India Handicrafts Board and the All India Handloom Board came into existence as a result of her active advocacy. Her ideas on various projects were widely borrowed and recognizing her contributions she was appointed Chairperson of the All-India Handicrafts Board in 1952.

4.3.9.4 CONTRIBUTIONS TO ART AND THEATRE

For Kamaladevi, life was an integrated whole – the hand, the heart and the mind, and an unflinching commitment went together. As a young girl, she had defied convention to be a theatre artist. The arts were her love and passion, be it music, dance, theatre or the crafts. There was not an occasion when she did not discover a remote tradition or an obscure theatre form, to nurture it, to promote it and to present it. And yet, there was a last mission to be fulfilled, to integrate the rich diverse and living traditions of our cultural heritage with the formal systems of education. It was her firm belief that unless there was equity between the creativity of the hand, the intellectual critical discriminating mind and the pulsating heart, a total human being would not be possible.

Kamaladevi nurtured the greater majority of the country's national institutions charged with the promotion of dance, drama, art, theatre, music, and puppetry. She often emphasized that there was more to theatre than just acting. She understood that there was a whole oeuvre of craft items connected with theatre that was also going out of our cultural scene when theatre got overrun by the arrival of television and movies. From jewellery to musical instruments, there was a host of items which decided to preserve by setting up a theatre crafts museum, the only one of its kind in Southeast Asia. Painstakingly she collected artefacts, sold her property to set up a trust, and housed her collection first in her own house and later at a small place on Deen Dayal Updhyay Marg in Delhi and later Vice-Chairperson of the Sangeet Natak Academy.

To conclude, a force to contend with, Kamaladevi remained active till her end at the age of 86. Today, her larger than life personality lives on in the hearts of people who remember her work. Hers was a life well spent and her fervour devoted to meaningful causes, difficult to emulate. Her life offers many cues about the intersection of politics and aesthetics and in her resolute insistence on autonomy and the integrity of every life we find the threads that enable us to fold the various Kamaladevi into one majestic figure.

4.3.10 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson on you have studied about the two great women the national has produced and who contributed to the alternative trends in modern political thought. Their thought was much ahead of their times and versatile. Coming from similar kind of background and

experiences both the women thinkers have dedicated their lives for the Society. Both the thinkers have contributed to feminist thought in India and remained to be the pioneers of women's Movement. Despite of their dominant concern for women, their work did not confine only to the women. Their holistic understanding of the issues and humanistic sympathies with dedication for social cause made them to venture into the fight for the people who were destitute, refugees, backward and marginalized. Thus they remain to be the women representing alternative trends in modern Indian Political Thought.

4.3.11 EXERCISE

1. Discuss various tenets of Ramabai's thought.
2. Highlight the key arguments of Pandita Ramabai as a Feminist.
3. Briefly discuss Ramabai's contributions for the destitute children.
4. Discuss Ramabai's linguistic contributions.
5. Kamala Devi Chattopadhyay was a person of many parts. Substantiate.
6. Trace the underlying beliefs of Kamaladevi's Political Thought.
7. Discuss on the Social Activism of Kamaladevi.
8. Mention the contributions of Kamaladevi for the revival in Indian textile art.
9. Highlight key arguments of Kamaladevi in her fight for women's rights.
10. In your own understanding how do you see Ramabai to be a great influencer in shaping the thought of Kamaladevi. Discuss the common threads that you come across.

4.4 THOUGHTS ON TRIBES: JAIPAL SINGH, J.L. NEHRU

- V. Nagendra Rao & Rajesh Kumar

STRUCTURE

4.4.0 Objectives

4.4.1 Introduction

4.4.2 Jaipal Singh Munda

4.4.3 Champion of Advasi Rights

4.4.4 Nehru's Tribal Policy

4.4.5 Nehru's Tribal Panchsheel

4.4.5.1 Efforts for the Translation of Tribal Panchsheel

4.4.6 Safeguards under Indian Constitution for Tribal Welfare

4.4.7 Nehru and the Naga Case

4.4.8 Let Us Sum Up

4.4.9 Exercise

4.4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand how the tribal people conceptualized in the nationalist thought;
- Know the significance of Jaipal Singh as a champion of tribal cause and his efforts in the Constituent Assembly to ensure minimum constitutionally guaranteed rights

for tribals;

- Jawaharlal Nehru's contribution to tribal welfare, his tribal panchsheel, his involvement with Naga case, his involvement in ensuring specific constitutional safeguards for tribal welfare.

4.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The task of integrating tribal people into the mainstream of Indian society was extremely complex. It is due to the fact that they lived in different parts of India, speaking different languages with distinct cultures. Tribals were spread over different parts of India and the greatest concentration was in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Karnataka. These states were having larger number of scheduled tribes accounting 83.2% of the total Scheduled Tribe population of the country. The north eastern states like Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and others like Jammu & Kashmir, Bihar and Tamil Nadu account for another 15.3% of the total Scheduled Tribe population. Except the north eastern states, the tribal peoples are minority in their own states, but in the north eastern states, they lived mostly in the hilly areas while the non-tribal peoples were concentrated in the plain area.

During the colonial period, a number of merchants, money-lender, landlords, petty officials etc. coming from the non-tribal community disrupted the life of tribal people by acquiring their land, disrupting their traditional way of life, exploiting them in their own business at a lower cost etc. This suffering of tribal community in the hands of non-tribal community led to a number of uprisings like Santhal uprising, Munda uprising, Uprising for Bodoland and Naga Uprisings

The Independence India laid a great emphasis on the preservation of the rich and distinct culture of the tribal people living in various parts of India. Against this background in this lesson you will be studying about the thought of two prominent personalities who Jaipal Singh Munda and Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru for their thought and contributions towards tribals. While Jaipal Singh, in the process of maintaining the unique culture of *adivasis* aspired to create a common tribal state, what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru thought was that the of accommodating the uniqueness of tribal people into the mainstream of India. He

also proposed to inspire them with confidence and to make them feel at one with India, and to make them realize that they are part of India and have an honoured place in it.

4.4.2 JAIPAL SINGH MUNDA (1903-1970)

Jaipal singh was a multi-faceted personality-a distinguished parliamentarian, a champion sportsman, an educationist, a powerful orator and above all, the leader of the Adivasis. Jaipal alias Pramod Pahan was born at the Takra village of Khunti subdivision of the present day Jharkhand. In childhood, his job was to look after the cattle herd. His destiny had a turn around with his admission to St. Paul's School, Ranchi, in 1910. Then Jaipal moved to England and graduated from St John's College, Oxford with Honours in Economics. Jaipal was selected in Indian Civil Service from which he later resigned. In 1928 Amsterdam Olympics, he captained the Indian hockey team which won the gold medal. In 1934, Jaipal joined teaching at the Prince of Wales College at Achimota, Gold Coast, Ghana. In 1937, he returned to India as the principal incumbent of the Rajkumar College, Raipur. In 1938, he joined the Bikaner princely State as foreign secretary. Jaipal thought that with his varied experience he could be more useful to the country through the Congress. His encounter with Rajendra Prasad at the Sadaaquat Ashram in Patna, however, did not go well. The then Governor of Bihar, Sir Maurice Hallet offered to nominate him to the Bihar Legislative Council but Jaipal declined. In deference to their wishes, Jaipal then decided to go to Ranchi and assess the situation for himself. The return to Ranchi was Jaipal's homecoming. When the news got around that Jaipal had arrived in Ranchi, there was great excitement among the Adivasis. The united Adivasi forum called Adivasi Sabha, formed in 1938 made him the president of the-organisation. As many as 65,000 people gathered to listen to Jaipal's presidential speech on January 20, 1939. They came from all over, walked on foot for days together to have a glimpse of him as they had done in the past for Birsa Munda, the legend. His oratory, simultaneously in English, Hindi, Sadani and Mundari, mesmerised men and women from all walks of life.

Jaipal Singh declared that "the Adivasi movement stands primarily for the moral and material advancement of Chhotanagpur and Santhal Parganas", and set as his goal a separate administrative status for the area. He was instantly the people's 'Marang Gomke' - their Supreme Leader. The history of the region changed henceforth. With Jaipal at the helm, there was no looking back. He worked ceaselessly for a better future for his fellow Adivasis

everywhere, even beyond the frontiers of south Bihar. The Adivasi Sabha was changed into All India Adivasi Mahasabha.

On the national political front, Jaipal had alienated himself from the Congress personally. He played an active role in the anti-Compromise Congress conference at Ramgarh in 1940 in close alliance with Subhas Bose. He went against the Congress stand and supported the British in the World War II and recruited men and women from Chhotanagpur for the British army.

Since 1946, Jaipal was a member of the Constituent Assembly, the Provisional Parliament and was elected four times to the Parliament until his death in 1970. As a close friend of the doyen of anthropology, S.C. Roy and Verrier Elwin and supported by Ambedkar, he led his 'glorious struggle' both inside and outside the legislature to establish the Adivasi identity. With the creation of the Jharkhand Party and the induction of non-Adivasis into it in 1950, he changed the emotive cultural movement in Jharkhand into a regional political movement, free from any communal bias. The Jharkhand Party (JHP) was the first legitimate political party that drew the political agenda and gave the direction to the future of Jharkhand politics. The party became so strong that it played a vital role in the formation of the government in the neighbouring province of Orissa in 1957.

4.4.3 CHAMPION OF ADIVASI RIGHTS IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

As a member of the Constituent Assembly Jaipal came to represent the tribals not just of his native plateau, but also of all of India and played a key role in raising the issue of Adivasi identity. Jaipal advocated for equal participation for his people while creating a vision for the country and taking all important decisions as it is largely going to determine the future of Adivasis. He often argued that the tribal question cannot be dealt in isolation of the plans for the nation-state being shaped in the Constituent Assembly. However, it was not the vision shared by most others in the Assembly.

Being a gifted speaker, his interventions enlivened the Assembly. Hence it would be appropriate to discuss some of his arguments supporting the adivasi case and speeches asserting adivasi identity. During the discussions on the Objectives Resolution he submits to the entire house, in the last 6,000 years history of Indus Valley Civilization, how the new

comers (many of those in today's mainstream) have driven away the adivasis (the original inhabitants) to the jungle fastness. While submitting how the adivasis were exploited, neglected and disgracefully treated by all the others across several junctures he welcomed the opening of the new chapter of independent India where there would be equality of opportunity and where no one would be neglected. Jaipal treated and considered the objectives resolution nothing but a modern restatement of the view point of his own people, as there is no place for discrimination in the name of caste and gender among adivasis. Rather he insisted one must learn democratic ways from Adivasis.

At every stage, he aired his fears of being deceived, of inadequate *Adivasi* representation in decision making in the Assembly as well as outside of it, and of moves and proposals that amounted to nothing more than "political window-dressing. In the discussion on the draft Constitution, Jaipal made a speech that was spirited in all senses of the word. Bowing to pressure by Gandhians, the prohibition of alcohol had been made a Directive Principle. This said the *Adivasi* leader, was an interference 'with the religious rights of the most ancient people in the country'. For drink was part of their festivals, their rituals, indeed their daily life itself. Thus in West Bengal 'it would be impossible for paddy to be transplanted if the Santhal does not get his rice beer. These ill-clad men ... have to work knee-deep in water throughout the day, in drenching rain and in mud. What is it in the rice beer that keeps them alive? I wish the medical authorities in this country would carry out research in their laboratories to find out what it is that the rice beer contains, of which the *Adivasis* need so much and which keeps them against all manner of diseases.' This way while highlighting several such dissimilarities Jaipal urged for the need of taking care of the special requirements of the Tribals.

In Jaipal Singh's vision, the undoing of past wrongs in the present required something other than the welfare work envisaged by some other members of the Assembly. Thus all through his debates Jaipal emphasised on tribal autonomy as a means for ensuring an equitable deal for his people. He demanded for autonomy in decision making and a relationship based on respect and reciprocity for the *Adivasis*. Singh extended his understanding of autonomy not only to relations between *Adivasis* and the nation-state, but also to relations between different tribes.

To conclude it may be said that Jaipal remained to be a champion of tribal rights and

culture all through his life; fought for the cause single handedly amidst of majority opposition in the Constituent Assembly. The criticism often he received in the process and the deaf hearing at times he ended up with did not deter him in articulating the larger cause. While he remained to be an unsung hero across the country, he remains to be the Marang Gomki in the tribal heart. He succeeded in changing the emotive cultural movement in Jharkhand into a regional political movement, free from any communal bias. Finally, Jaipal's dream of creating a tribal state has materialised partially into reality on November 15, 2000, when Jharkhand was carved out of Bihar. His vision for the *Adivasi* State was bigger, that was to comprise the tribal districts of Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, besides those of Bihar and Orissa yet to come true.

4.4.4 JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S TRIBAL POLICY

Nehru was one of those unusual politicians and revolutionaries who comprehended the great issues of their time and had the ability to formulate answers to questions of their own and other people caught up in the history of change. He served the country in his various roles as a freedom fighter, a leader of the people, a nation builder, and an advocate of social justice, freedom and international peace.

4.4.4.1 TRIBAL PHILOSOPHY AS A COMPONENT OF HIS PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Nehru's attitude towards tribals was a part of the wider framework of his philosophy of social justice and national reconstruction. It may be recollected that the concept of social justice was an integral part of the Freedom Struggle and a hallmark of Gandhian philosophy. As a leader of the Indian National Congress, Jawaharlal Nehru was committed to this concept. His faith in equality and social justice was also influenced by his world-view that the neglected and oppressed peoples had a right to equality and freedom.

There are some forty million or more tribal people in India today, inhabiting nucleated village systems all over the country. For tribals, life means living in harmony with one's environment. Nehru was appreciative of the diverse tribal culture and the variety of colour and strength tribals provided to India's culture. He believed that the latent energy of tribals could be harnessed to creative pursuits in a modern world.

To Nehru, the protection of tribals from exploiters and the safeguarding of what was beautiful, free and enchanting in their societies and culture were important tasks. In his thinking, one of the signs of a civilized, democratic society was that the state system must be sensitive to the tribal way of life. Nehru always tried to view opportunities and challenges in terms of what they meant to the tribes, apart from the nation as a whole. He often asserted that the tribes had as much right to their own culture and religion as anyone else in India and effort was necessary to protect the tribal languages and prevent the loss of the oral literatures. The same can be seen in his address to a gathering in Bastar district in Madhya Pradesh in 1955, he declared: ‘You should live in your own way. This is what I want you to decide yourselves. . . . Your old customs and habits are good. We want that they should survive, but at the same time we want that you should be educated and should do your part in the welfare of our country.’

Nehru appreciated and initiated the set up of modern industrial plants as they unleashed forces of economic opportunity, attracting persons of skill as well as wealth to descend upon these new centres. At the same time he did not fail to acknowledge that the setting-up of large-scale industrial units like steel plants in the tribal belts in Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh led to large-scale displacement of tribal populations and forced them to join the band of landless labourers. He could understand the agony of the tribal population created by sudden industrialization and also felt that the tribal were left at the mercy of the new economic system in which their lack of skill and experience made them vulnerable to exploitation. He often insisted that administrators, social and political workers must focus on understanding the problems of the tribals. Assam had a special attraction for Nehru because of its location and history. He visited Assam in December 1945 immediately after the cessation of hostilities in the Second World War.

The best expression of Nehru’s tribal philosophy is recorded in his preface to Verrier Elwin’s treatise *A Philosophy for NEFA*. Nehru wrote: We cannot allow matters to drift in the tribal areas or just not take interest in them. In the world of today that is not possible or desirable. At the same time we should avoid over-administering these areas and, in particular, sending too many outsiders into tribal territory. It is between these two extreme positions that we have to function. Development in various ways there has to be such as communications, medical facilities, education and better agriculture. These avenues of

development should, however, be pursued with the broad framework of the following five fundamental principles:

4.4.5 NEHRU'S TRIBAL PANCHSHEEL

The way India and China pronounced Panchsheel for conducting international relations, Nehru also advanced similar Panchsheel for the tribal communities.

1. People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture.
2. Tribal rights in land and forests should be respected.
3. We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will, no doubt, be needed especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.
4. We should not over-administer these areas or overwhelm them with a multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through, and not in rivalry to, their own social and cultural institutions.
5. We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved.

4.4.5.1 EFFORTS FOR THE TRANSLATION OF TRIBAL PANCHSHEEL

The task of providing an institutional framework to translate this vision was entrusted to the Constituent Assembly. The Constituent Assembly viewed the problems of tribals from two broad perspectives: (1) those related to the tribals in general, and (2) those related to the tribal population concentrated in India's north-east. Special provisions were made in the Constitution to reserve seats for the Scheduled Tribes in the state legislatures and the national Parliament and in making appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union and the State.

The Constituent Assembly, under Nehru's influence, constituted a subcommittee styled the

North-East Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Areas Subcommittee. Gopinath Bardoloi was its chairman. J.J.M. Nichols Roy, a respected hill tribal leader from Shillong and Rup Nath Brahma, a plains' tribal from the Brahmaputra valley, were members. There were two other members on the subcommittee from outside the north-eastern region. The committee found that (1) 'the fact the hill people have not yet been assimilated with the people of the plains of Assam has to be taken into account;' (2) the assimilation process was least advanced in the Naga Hills and the Lushai Hills and 'the policy of seclusion has tended to create a feeling of separateness;' and (3) the various tribes in the foothills under the administrative jurisdiction of one frontier tract or the other were closer to the plains' tribes through family as well as economic bonds. The committee wished to safeguard tribal institutions so that new political organizations could be built on the old foundations. The distinct features of the tribal way of life pertaining to land, forests, *jhuming* and settling disputes were sought to be preserved; changes would emanate 'as far as possible from the tribe itself'.

Keeping in view all these considerations, the Bardoloi Committee recommended that (1) the Khasi and Jaintia Hills (excluding Shillong town), the Garo Hills, the Lushai Hills, the Naga Hills, the North Cachar Hills and the Mikir Hills (excluding certain plains areas) be made autonomous districts with wide-ranging powers vested in the district councils for the administration and development of these areas; (2) the Sadiya and Balipara Frontier Tracts, the Tirap Frontier Tract and the Naga Tribal Area should be non-autonomous areas and responsibility for their all-round administration and development should be vested in the governor of Assam; and (3) the plains' tribals of Assam should be recognized as a minority and be entitled to all the privileges of a minority, including representation in legislatures and in the services and that their land should be protected. The district council was an administrative innovation which found its place under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. It was a democratic framework in which seventy-five per cent of the councillors were directly elected. It was also significantly traditional, as twenty-five per cent of the councillors would be nominated by the government from among ex-tribal chiefs. The debates in the Constituent Assembly and the inclusion of the Sixth Schedule in the Constitution bear testimony to Nehru's great love and affection for the tribes and to his vision of creating institutions to safeguard and promote the interests of the tribals in a fast-changing world. Here it would be appropriate to recollect the constitutional safeguards provided by the

government of India, which were largely influenced by Nehru's philosophy.

4.4.6 SAFEGUARDS UNDER THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION FOR TRIBAL WELFARE

As a leader of Congress and country's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru ensured constitutional provisions for the welfare and advancement of tribal population of the country. Some of them were given below.

1. Article 46 of Indian Constitution states that the state should promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the tribal people and should protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation through special legislatures.
2. Article 244(2) (Sixth Scheduled) provides a self-government to the tribal peoples by making a provisions of the creation of autonomous district council, creation of districts and regional councils. The objective of Sixth Scheduled was to enable tribal peoples to live according to their own ways.
3. Article 275(1) provides special grant-in-aid for promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes.
4. Article 330, 332, 335 allocates a reservation of seats for the Scheduled Tribes in Lok Sabha and in state legislatures as well as in services.

Besides, there are a number of constitutional provisions for the promotion and upliftment of the tribal peoples in India. Wide powers were earmarked for the district councils in the north-east and other tribal organizations functioning at the village level in other parts of India. The right to vote and the creation of economic opportunities were accorded high priority. At the same time it was advocated that the quality of tribal life, tribal culture and tribal freedom were to be maintained and promoted. The five-year plans allocated large sums of money to tribal development schemes throughout India, and the policy of isolation of the British days became a thing of the past. The new emphasis was on intensive development in the tribal areas to enable them to catch up with their neighbours in respect of education, health, agriculture, industry and communications. Nehru wanted India's democratic institutions and the bureaucracy to allow tribesmen to live their lives with the utmost possible happiness and freedom. With all these, the tribal people found a new

place in the political system. Schemes of development in tribal areas made headlines in the media. It became clear that the tribals could no longer be neglected or ignored.

The policy of large-heartedness that Nehru advocated towards the tribes was put to severe test in his lifetime in dealing with the Nagas and the way he dealt with the Nagas, remains to be a case to study and the same guided the succeeding prime ministers in dealing with the tribals and carving the newer states in the north eastern part of India. Hence the Naga case requires a mention here.

4.4.7 NEHRU AND THE NAGA CASE

The Nagas have traditionally lived both in India and in Burma. Administration of the Naga Hills in India at the time of Independence was the responsibility of Assam of which it formed a part. From the days of the legendary Ahom rulers of Assam and the British, this tribe of tough people had received a great deal of autonomy and consideration. Soon after Independence, a demand was made by certain groups of Nagas for an independent country. In the first general elections in February 1952, the electoral process could not take root in Nagaland as the Nagas did not seek election either to the State Assembly or the Lok Sabha and none voted although arrangements were made by the Election Commission to hold elections. Same was the fate of the first elections to the newly-formed district councils. This made Nehru to plan and combine a visit to Burma and Nagaland in March-April 1953. Along with the Burmese Prime Minister, U Nu, Nehru visited the Naga areas in Burma and Assam to gain a firsthand experience of the extent to which the Nagas were alienated from the state system.

When the second half of the 1950s witnessed a fierce armed conflict between the underground Nagas and the security forces, Nehru once again visited Nagaland and made it clear that he was willing to accommodate the Nagas in every possible way, but not at the cost of national integrity. He further made it clear that violence would be met with force and would not interfere with the work of the missionaries provided they behaved and functioned as missionaries.

In the following years Nehru preferred a favourable treatment to the Nagas. Accordingly, Nagaland was carved out of Assam and made into a state on 11 December 1963 even though it then had a population of only 0.3 million. However, the elections held in 1964 for

the state assembly and consequent formation of a government did not usher in either a fully participatory democracy or peace in Nagaland. The forces of insurgency continued to command a following among the proud and independent Nagas even as the forces of democracy had used the tradition of self-government in Naga society to make it participate in elections. The results were mixed.

In such situation Nehru preferred winning the support of local communities than relying on force. He used all positive means of conciliation, than simply relying upon the state processes, to deal with the Nagas. In 1964, with his approval, Jayaprakash Narayan, Michael Scott and B.P. Chaliha went to Nagaland as a peace Mission and signed an agreement with the underground leaders that led to a cessation of hostilities and a psychology of peace. The democratic processes have since taken root in Nagaland. This remains to be a testimony to the Nehru's ability to put himself into the shoes of the tribals understand their needs deal with such needs effectively and maintain his lifelong contact with the oppressed people.

Further, Nehru could understand well that in the traditional tribal way of living, the choices were extremely limited and one can see how he made several efforts to widen the range of choices by education and state intervention through the instrumentality of planning and Community Development programmes under his leadership. The strength and relevance of Nehru's tribal policy can be seen in the constitutional provisions, in the creation of several institutions and the ushering of several policies in the history of independent India. People in tribal areas still remember and refer to Nehru's philosophy of allowing them to develop along the lines of their genius.

Nehru's tribal policy and understanding about the unique needs of the tribals, further guided Indira Gandhi in dealing with the new wind blowing in the north-east India in a sympathetic manner. In a similar manner Nehru's approach inspired others in the world whether in Australia, the United States, China or the Soviet Union, who are engaged in similar tasks of development of tribals located on the periphery of their society.

4.4.8 LET US SUM UP

In the current lesson you have studied about the thought of Jaipal Sing Munda and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru towards the tribal population of India. One would come across two different approaches articulated and followed by these two significant people in the

contemporary tribal history of India. While Jaipal believed autonomy within the state to be the solution for tribal suppression, while maintaining that the tribal people have special needs Nehru believed and attempted was that of accommodating the uniqueness of tribal people into the mainstream of India by creating enough emotional comfort.

4.4.9 EXERCISES

1. Write a brief note on the early life of Jaipal Singh.
2. Briefly discuss about Jaipal's contributions in the creation of Jharkhand.
3. Through a light on the key arguments Jaipal put forward in the Constituent Assembly debates.
4. Discuss the Tribal Philosophy of Nehru along with the Naga Case.
5. Elaborate on the Tribal Panchsheel.
6. Discuss various constitutional safeguards provided to the tribal people in India.

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