

POLITICAL THOUGHT

**BA [Political Science]
Second Semester**

[ENGLISH EDITION]



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Reviewer

Dr Nivedita Giri

Assistant Professor, Jesus & Mary College, University of Delhi

Authors

Dr Biswaranjan Mohanty, Units: (2.3.5, 2.4.1-2.4.5, 3.3.1, 4.2-4.4) © Dr Biswaranjan Mohanty, 2016

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• Website: www.vikaspublishing.com • Email: helpline@vikaspublishing.com

SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

Political Thought

Syllabi	Mapping in Book
Unit - I Plato: Concept of Justice, Education, Communism and Ideal State Aristotle: State, Slavery, Revolution, Classification of Government Machiavelli: Modern Absolutism, Prince, Secularism	Unit 1: Western Classical Political Thinkers (Pages 3-40)
Unit - II Bentham: Jurisprudence, Principles of Morals, Legislation J. S. Mill: On Liberty, Essays on Government, Revision of Utilitarianism Lenin: State, Dictatorship of Party, Contribution to Marxism Neo Marxism, Scientific Socialism	Unit 2: Modern Political Thinkers (Pages 41-84)
Unit - III Ram Mohan: Social Reform, Liberalism Bankimchandra: Nationalism, Equality Vivekananda: Nationalism, Socialism	Unit 3: Indian Social Thought (Pages 85-103)
Unit - IV Gandhi: Satyagraha, State M. N. Roy: New Humanism, Organised Democracy B. R. Ambedkar: Social Justice, Political Ideas Nehru: Model of Development, Freedom Movement	Unit 4: Modern Indian Political Thought (Pages 105-159)

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
UNIT 1 WESTERN CLASSICAL POLITICAL THINKERS	3-40
1.0 Introduction	
1.1 Unit Objectives	
1.2 Plato	
1.2.1 Plato's Political Theory	
1.2.2 Concept of Justice in an Ideal State	
1.2.3 Plato's Communism	
1.2.4 Theory of Education	
1.2.5 Education in <i>The Laws</i>	
1.2.6 Relevance of Plato in Contemporary Discourse	
1.3 Aristotle	
1.3.1 Aristotle's Idea of Political Theory and State	
1.3.2 Ideal State	
1.3.3 Classification of Governments	
1.3.4 Slavery	
1.3.5 Theory of Citizenship	
1.3.6 Revolution	
1.4 Machiavelli	
1.4.1 Modern Absolutism: Machiavelli's Theory of Political Power	
1.4.2 Prince	
1.4.3 Evaluation of Machiavelli's Political Thought	
1.4.4 Secularism	
1.5 Summary	
1.6 Key Terms	
1.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'	
1.8 Questions and Exercises	
1.9 Further Reading	
UNIT 2 MODERN POLITICAL THINKERS	41-84
2.0 Introduction	
2.1 Unit Objectives	
2.2 Bentham	
2.2.1 Utilitarian Principles	
2.2.2 Legislation and Morality	
2.2.3 Political Philosophy	
2.2.4 Views on Jurisprudence and Punishment	
2.2.5 Panopticon	
2.3 J. S. Mill	
2.3.1 On Liberty	
2.3.2 Simple Principle of Liberty	
2.3.3 State and Liberty: Essays on Government	
2.3.4 Equal Rights for Women	
2.3.5 Revision of Utilitarianism	

- 2.4 Vladimir Lenin
 - 2.4.1 State and Dictatorship of Party
 - 2.4.2 Theory of Revolution
 - 2.4.3 Neo Marxism: Revolution in Non-industrial Countries
 - 2.4.4 Lenin's Contribution to Neo-Marxism
 - 2.4.5 Scientific Socialism
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 Key Terms
- 2.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 2.8 Question and Answers
- 2.9 Further Reading

UNIT 3 INDIAN SOCIAL THOUGHT

85-103

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Unit Objectives
- 3.2 Rammohan Roy: Social Reform
 - 3.2.1 Liberalism
 - 3.2.2 Concept of Freedom
 - 3.2.3 Freedom of Press
 - 3.2.4 Separation of Powers
 - 3.2.5 Colonial Rule
 - 3.2.6 Ideal of Internationalism
- 3.3 Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay
 - 3.3.1 Nationalism
 - 3.3.2 Equality
- 3.4 Vivekananda
 - 3.4.1 Nationalism
 - 3.4.2 Socialism
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 Key Terms
- 3.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 3.8 Questions and Exercises
- 3.9 Further Reading

UNIT 4 MODERN INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

105-159

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Unit Objectives
- 4.2 Gandhi: Preacher of Non-violence, Satyagraha
 - 4.2.1 Satyagraha
 - 4.2.2 Gandhi's Concept of the Individual and the State
- 4.3 M. N. Roy: A Revolutionary Nationalist
 - 4.3.1 Roy's Marxist Beliefs
 - 4.3.2 New or Radical Humanism
 - 4.3.3 Concept of Organised Democracy
 - 4.3.4 Roy and Gandhi
 - 4.3.5 Roy's Contribution to Indian Political Thought
- 4.4 B. R. Ambedkar: A Social Revolutionary
 - 4.4.1 A Revolutionary Seeking Social Justice
 - 4.4.2 Organisation of the Socially Oppressed Classes
 - 4.4.3 Ambedkar and the Poona Pact

- 4.4.4 Political Ideas of Ambedkar
- 4.4.5 Ambedkar's Ideas on Social and Economic Democracy
- 4.4.6 Economic Planning
- 4.5 Jawaharlal Nehru
 - 4.5.1 Freedom Movement
 - 4.5.2 Nehruvian Model of Development
 - 4.5.3 Institution Building and Infrastructure Development
 - 4.5.4 Critique of Nehruvian Model
- 4.6 Summary
- 4.7 Key Terms
- 4.8 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 4.9 Questions and Exercises
- 4.10 Further Reading

INTRODUCTION

Every single individual, at one point or another, in his or her life, has thought about the kind of society they would like to live in. Those who become seriously interested in the field have looked towards the theories of political philosophers through the ages to give coherence to their own ideas on society. Thus, it would not be an exaggeration to state that from Aristotle to Marx, the thoughts of great political thinkers on subjects as varied as liberty, justice, state, law and property have provided the foundation for the shaping and the development of human society.

The political environment around the world has been moulded by the thinking and visions of famous thinkers like, Plato, Aristotle and Karl Marx. All their theories were based on philosophies, which covered subjects like, freedom, law, justice, rights, authority and property. These theories have set a base for triggering revolutions and global changes. The majority of political ideologies of the world owe their guidance to these thinkers. Every person, who is studying political science, has to have a clear understanding of the political theories of thinkers like Bentham, J. S. Mill, and Gandhi. For students in India, it is important to understand the ideas and thoughts of early socialists and reformers such as Rammohan Roy and Vivekananda and also the likes of M. N. Roy and B. R Ambedkar. This understanding is critical for analysing any situation in the current scenario of global politics.

The book *Political Thought* has been designed keeping in mind the self-instruction mode (SIM) format and follows a simple pattern, wherein each unit of the book begins with *Introduction* followed by *Unit Objectives* to the topic. The content is then presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, and is interspersed with *Check Your Progress* questions to test the student's understanding of the topic. A list of *Questions and Exercises* is also provided at the end of each unit, and includes short-answer as well as long-answer questions. The *Summary* and *Key Terms* are a useful tools for effectual recapitulation of the text by the students.

NOTES

UNIT 1 WESTERN CLASSICAL POLITICAL THINKERS

NOTES

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Unit Objectives
- 1.2 Plato
 - 1.2.1 Plato's Political Theory
 - 1.2.2 Concept of Justice in an Ideal State
 - 1.2.3 Plato's Communism
 - 1.2.4 Theory of Education
 - 1.2.5 Education in *The Laws*
 - 1.2.6 Relevance of Plato in Contemporary Discourse
- 1.3 Aristotle
 - 1.3.1 Aristotle's Idea of Political Theory and State
 - 1.3.2 Ideal State
 - 1.3.3 Classification of Governments
 - 1.3.4 Slavery
 - 1.3.5 Theory of Citizenship
 - 1.3.6 Revolution
- 1.4 Machiavelli
 - 1.4.1 Modern Absolutism: Machiavelli's Theory of Political Power
 - 1.4.2 Prince
 - 1.4.3 Evaluation of Machiavelli's Political Thought
 - 1.4.4 Secularism
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 Key Terms
- 1.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 1.8 Questions and Exercises
- 1.9 Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Western political thought concentrates principally on the history of the West and different issues confronting it. Political thought is of great importance. It consists of political institutions and social practices. It is the reflection of how best to adjust in our collective life. A political philosopher aims at suggesting how to underline the basic principles regarding the justification of a particular form of state. Political philosophy can also be comprehended by analysing it through the angles of metaphysics, epistemology and axiology. This would reveal the ultimate side of reality, the knowledge or methodical side and the value aspects of politics. Political thought grew in the world with the Greeks. A thousand years before the birth of Christ the Greeks were developing city states in and around the Mediterranean region. Consequently, Greek thinkers paid a great lead of attention to the creation of an ideal state, its rulers and the institutional structures necessary for running it. In the 4th century BC three great thinkers gave birth to systematic political speculation and

created the basis of modern political science: Socrates, his disciple Plato and Plato's disciple Aristotle.

NOTES

A study of Western political thought involves a comprehensive investigation of the works of various philosophers and political thinkers from the time of Plato till the contemporary thinkers. Students of history and political science will be able to understand its insights into the nature of political organization, citizenship, justice, sources of state power and other related ideas. As an academic discipline, the origin of Western political philosophy may be traced back to ancient Greek society when different forms of political organization, such as monarchy, tyranny, aristocracy, oligarchy and democracy were being experimented with. Plato's Republic is one of the first important classical works of political philosophy. This was followed by Aristotle's politics and Nichomachean ethics.

1.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Describe Plato's theory of ideal state
- Interpret Plato's concept of justice
- Assess Plato's view on communism
- Evaluate Plato's argument for education
- Discuss Aristotle's view on state and classification of government
- Explain Aristotle's view on revolution
- Interpret Aristotle's theory of slavery
- Describe the political theory as explained by Machiavelli
- Discuss the concepts of state and secularism as stated in the *Prince* and *Republican Discourses*

1.2 PLATO

Plato was an influential ancient Greek philosopher born in 427 BC in Athens, Greece. He was a student of Socrates, another Greek philosopher, so were his two older brothers. In due course of time, Socrates forced them to adopt the notions and ideas and beliefs he critically laid down in the areas of 'know thyself.' Not to add, Socrates was not in good terms with the Thirty Tyrants, who were in the regime, while he was growing. Contrarily, this group was the supporter (pro-Spartan) of the oligarchy installed in Athens, and one of its two leading members was a follower of Socrates. This group severely reduced the number of rights of Athenian citizens. Just, a particularly chosen 500 could participate in legal functions, nearly 3,000 people had the right to carry weapons or receive a jury trial. Hundreds of Athenians were killed by orders to drink hemlock and thousands were exiled. Plato, hence, alienated them by his method and approach of critical interrogation and he was brought to trial for

having committed capital crimes of religious impiety and corruption of youth. He was eventually sentenced to death. His friends came to his aid and offered to pay a fine versus the death penalty.

Socrates' influence on Plato

Socrates had influenced Plato immensely. A great deal of Plato's earlier works appeared to be borrowings or adaptations from Socrates himself. However, it is questionable as to how much of the content, discussions, argument of any given dialogue is actually Socrates' point of view and how much of it is Plato's. Socrates himself did not seem to write down any of his teachings. Surely enough, he dictated the writings and teachings to the great people around, and those who followed as great followers. Needless to add, in due course of time, he got a large number of followers to understand his teachings and discussions on a variety of issues that directly suit them and that of the contemporary society.

His writings were not merely confined to the political system and administration, but also those which posed challenges to people at the time. His ideas particularly dealt with debates concerning the best possible form of government featuring adherents of monarchy, democracy, and all other issues. The focus of all these important writings was the fight between convention and nature and the role of heredity and the environment on human intelligence and personality. The debate continued unabated even after the death of Plato and his disciples and followers made their presence felt to carry out the legacy further.

The Academy

After the death of Socrates, Plato founded a school in Athens in a grove sacred to the demigod Academus. It was called the Academy (the term academics has its roots in this word). Plato, rather than following a political path and tradition, tried to move on the path of education and educating people. He thought it more significant to educate others. The Academy was considered a great learning centre of higher education during this period. The subjects consisted of astronomy, physical science, philosophy, mathematics.

Plato's *Republic* contains a treatise on education. Plato delivered a series of lectures on various subjects, not available nowadays or published. He was a man of great letter who fought throughout his life for the betterment and change of the society. He is considered by many to be the greatest philosopher till date. He is known as the father of idealism in philosophy. He died at the age of eighty.

1.2.1 Plato's Political Theory

Plato's political theory was based upon Socrates' teaching. It was intended to change the existing conditions, not to merely create an exercise in abstract thinking. Unlike his teacher, however, Plato was not content simply to wander the streets of Athens discoursing upon his philosophy. His Academy functioned not only to teach philosophy to young men but to reform Greek politics. Teachers were sent out to train political leaders in the philosophical truths learned at the Academy. The results, however, were rarely what Plato would have desired, for the same irrational politics prevailed

NOTES

NOTES

no matter what the philosopher taught. This was a cause of great dismay to Plato and the source of much of his hostility towards the political domain.

Plato went on some legendary teaching expeditions, all of which turned out to be disastrous. The story of these trips is worth recounting because it will help us understand Plato's basic hostility toward politics. In 387 BC, when Plato was in his early forties, he visited Sicily. There he met Dion, the brother-in-law of Dionysius I, the tyrant of Syracuse. Dion was impressed by Plato's philosophy and, according to legend, persuaded Plato to teach Dionysius I. Unfortunately, Dionysius was not enchanted by what Plato had to say and reportedly sold him into slavery. Plato escaped with the aid of friends and returned to Athens.

Upon his return he founded the Academy, where he remained for twenty years, glad to be rid of politics. But when Dionysius I died, Dion summoned Plato back to Syracuse in order to teach young Dionysius II what he had failed to do with his father. Initially Dionysius II was quite enthusiastic and spoke of reforming Syracuse's politics in light of Plato's teachings. But soon he became weary of philosophy and became distrustful of Plato's relationship with Dion. Dion was banished and Plato was put under virtual house arrest. Eventually, he managed to secure his release and once again returned to Athens.

Several years later, he returned at the request of Dionysius II with the hope of reconciling the young tyrant with Dion. The reconciliation failed, and the trip turned out as disastrously as the first two. To make matters worse, events went in a direction designed to utterly disgust Plato with politics and to ensure his final withdrawal from public activity. Dionysius II became increasingly tyrannical, and Dion eventually overthrew him. Then Dion was assassinated by one of Plato's own students who, in turn, established himself as a tyrant. Later, he too was assassinated. What had begun many years earlier in philosophical enthusiasm ended in cabals and intrigues and, for Plato, it was utter despair.

Here was the paradox and agony of Plato's life. His attempt to teach philosophy to tyrants indicates his unflagging belief that politics could be rationalized by truth, yet the attempt failed utterly. Plato barely avoided the fate of Socrates. No matter how loudly and insistently the truth was proclaimed, the same irrational element in politics prevailed.

Even though over the years, the reality of politics slowly chipped away at Plato's bedrock belief in the power of philosophy to transform the human condition, the belief was never destroyed. It was modified in Plato's more mature works, such as his last great political treatise, *The Laws*, but it was never destroyed. Plato never lost hope that at some propitious time philosophy might enter people's lives and transform them. He, at least, could prepare the way philosophically. His most famous dialogue, *The Republic*, was just a preparation.

1.2.2 Concept of Justice in an Ideal State

In Plato's *Republic* you will see that it is by all accounts a great work of political philosophy. It is simply a notable work of human intelligence. One cannot be untouched about it. The kind of insights it has is unparalleled. *The Republic* is a phenomenal

work by Plato. It talks vividly about justice and human perception. It is definitely a desirable virtue for the citizens and the state alike. Because it deals with an ideal, *The Republic* has often been described as a utopian work of political philosophy. But Plato's utopianism cannot be equated with modern utopian thinking. *The Republic* is not an early form of science fiction or an ancient version of contemporary futurist writing. Rather, it is a work that attempts to establish an ideal standard or a normative measuring rod to judge the existing political practices. As such, *The Republic* is about the ideal state of perfect justice.

Plato's later works discuss the best possible states of less than perfect justice. The ancients were realists who understood that the ideal cannot as a general rule be attained in the 'real world'. But they also understood that without an ideal standard, they could say nothing about the real. How can we say that an existing political system or political practice is unjust if we do not know the ideal of justice? It would be as if we were to attempt to measure something without a ruler.

There is a hint in the very opening page of *The Republic*. These hints are contained in a dialogue that begins at the house of a respected man named Cephalus whom Socrates and others visit. In the course of the conversation, a question arises as to what is right conduct or justice. Cephalus answers that justice is simply telling the truth and paying back one's debts. But Socrates argues that the definition is not inclusive enough and, therefore, does not always apply. Socrates further points out that if 'a friend who had lent us a weapon were to go mad and then ask for it back, surely ... we ought not to return it'.

Plato begins his discussion of justice in the state by arguing that the state is natural because no one is self-sufficient. Human beings need each other. The question that arises is what makes a society self-sufficient? Plato argues that it entails maintaining an appropriate division of labour. Every state, he argues, will require artisans first of all. Plato includes in this group all those who produce goods and perform socially necessary services such as craftsmen, farmers, traders, and the like. Theirs is an economic function. Secondly, every state will require a class of warriors whom Plato calls the guardians. Theirs, of course, is a military function. Finally, every state will require rulers whose function is involved in making decisions, formulating policy, and so on. Plato proposes that this third class of rulers be drawn from the guardians. Thus, the guardians really should form two classes according to Plato: those who are selected to rule and those who are charged merely with the execution of the rulers' decisions. Plato calls the latter element of the guardian class as the auxiliaries to distinguish it from the higher guardians who will be trained specifically to rule.

Plato's discussion of justice in the state is not that disputed. We might argue that Plato's threefold division of labour is too simple, that a truly self-sufficient state would require a much more complex and extensive division of labour. It must be remembered, however, that the polis was a small and a relatively self-contained community. It did not require the complex division of labour characteristic of modern industrial societies. What is important in any case is the underlying principle involved in Plato's scheme, not its technical viability.

NOTES

NOTES

In addition to this, Plato's *Republic* deals with some very practical issues. Assuming we can make philosophers rulers, how can we assure that they will continue to rule? The danger is not only that those unfit to rule may attempt a coup d'état; the philosophers themselves may come to promote their self-interest rather than the public interest. They may become so trained by desire that the just state will not continue to exist. This, at least, is Plato's fear. Plato proposes to resolve this problem in a variety of ways almost all of which involve the rulers. To begin with, he proposes an elaborate system of ruler selection. We need not discuss that system in any detail here except to note that any child, regardless of sex or class position, may become a ruler if he or she indicates a capacity to learn philosophical truths. The selection process, in other words, is not to be based upon artificial class or sex biases. Plato is not advocating a hereditary male-dominated ruling class. Such a proposal would utterly contradict the whole premise of *The Republic* that knowledge is the only criterion for rulership. Clearly, Plato argues that the class into which one is born or one's sex is not irrelevant consideration.

Selecting the best candidates for rulership is important. However, it is not sufficient. In addition, says Plato, the objects of desire must be removed from the society of rulers. To this end, he proposes that the society must be based upon communist principles. The auxiliaries and rulers will not be allowed to own property, nor will they have families of their own. They would be carefully regulated to ensure a pool of future rulers; rather the decision to choose the future rulers should take place outside of the family structure. Children will be held in common, and they will not know who their real fathers and mothers are. They will come to identify the state as their family. In this way, Plato believes that the familial objects of desire can be removed from the ruling class, and the children who will later be selected for training as rulers will come to identify their interests with those of the larger community.

Theory of Division of Labour

Plato's division of labour is based on class. It means more specifically functional specialization. A distinct division has to be in the perspective, if the society has to grow in the right direction. The overlapping of each other really creates problem for one and all. Clearly, a division of labour is essential to the state. Each class must obviously possess virtue, that is, the necessary skills to perform its tasks. The meaning of virtue to this points is still ethically neutral, and any Greek of the time would have understood and accepted Plato's meaning.

What, then, are the specific virtues required for each class? The upper level guardians, the rulers, must possess the virtue of wisdom. They must have the requisite knowledge to know how to appropriately order the state as a whole. The lower-level guardians, or auxiliaries, must obviously embody the virtue of courage; otherwise they would make poor warriors indeed. The artisans must have the virtue of temperance, i.e., the ability to restrain their passions. They must understand that theirs is an economic function and not allow cravings for wealth or status to lead them to take over those functions, such as rulership, that they are not equipped to handle.

The virtue of temperance is the virtue of self-restraint, and self-restraint in this context means keeping one's place in the division of labour. Clearly, then, each class in society must be temperate. The auxiliaries, no less than the artisans, must restrain any desire to perform a function for which they are not equipped. The point, however, is that the artisans need only to be temperate, while the auxiliaries must be both courageous and temperate. The rulers must be wise in addition to possessing these other virtues.

The division of labour, in short, is a division of virtues, and those who have a superior role in the division of labour are, in Plato's ideal society, those who have a superior degree of virtue. The rulers possess complete virtue because they have wisdom or knowledge, which you will recall is identical to virtue in Socratic philosophy. Other classes have incomplete virtue because their knowledge is limited and, in the case of the artisans, almost non-existent.

Now the bigger question remains, what then is a rationally acceptable or just state from Plato's point of view? He has just mentioned it. It is one ruled by philosophers, and that means a state in which the appropriate division of classes, and therefore, of virtues, is maintained. Thus, justice is the virtue of virtues, it is the virtue of maintaining proper relationship among wisdom, courage and temperance. Injustice is rule by non-philosophers, which means the appropriate orders of classes and virtues has broken down. In political terms, this breakdown is identical to class war in which those not equipped to rule struggle among each other to acquire power. This developments took place during Plato's lifetime. The poor wanted to overthrow the rule of the rich; the rich wanted to suppress the poor. Neither was in the least concerned about justice; they wanted simply to promote their own class interests. They were practising Sophists as far as Plato was concerned.

Given this analysis, the supposed advantages of philosophic rulership are clear, but what precisely makes such rulership the defining characteristics of the just state? Plato's answer brings us back to our starting point. Justice is a virtue, and in the Socratic system, virtue is identical to knowledge. Hence, a 'just' state must by definition be one ruled by philosophers, by those with knowledge. The kind of political knowledge they must possess is knowledge of how to maintain the division of labour, which is the necessary condition for philosophical rulership and thus, for appropriate ordering of virtues within the state. In its most general sense, then, political justice is simply the virtue of harmony within the state and the absence of conflict. It is a condition in which each performs his or her task well for the benefit of the whole. This conception of justice matches perfectly with its traditional usage. The Greeks had always considered justice as the principle of order and harmony, whether they used it in reference to a person, a state, or the universe (the pre-Socratics frequently described the cosmos, which means order, as just). Even our contemporary usage of justice as equal to fairness still retains this idea of order and harmony.

But herein lay, in Plato's own words, the central paradox of *The Republic*. Philosophers must rule, yet it is precisely philosophers who have no desire to rule. Unlike Thrasymachus and his kind, they are lovers of knowledge, not of power. Yet rule they must, say Plato, unless either philosophers become kings in their countries

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or those who are now called kings and rulers come to be sufficiently inspired with a genuine desire for wisdom; unless, that is to say, political power and philosophy meet together, there can be no rest from troubles.

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1.2.3 Plato's Communism

Plato's communism opened the practicality regarding human nature and the ruling governance virtues. Virtue and principle should be affected while running the government. No doubt, it sounds bizarre, but this is true, in all accounts. Precisely on that assumption, it is essential that communism should have a better place and not be allowed to mix with the common understanding with the common citizens. Running the administration requires great skill and wisdom. General copulating might not produce the desired generation to rule the country, hence communism.

Nevertheless, Plato claims, the just state is one ruled by philosophers. It clearly cannot exist unless desire is eliminated in the ruling stratum. It must be remembered, however, that Plato's communism applies only to the ruling elite, not to the vast majority of the population. The artisans will be allowed to own private property and to have families. Moreover, there is no relationship between Plato's communism and its contemporary meaning. Plato was not an ancient Karl Marx. Plato proposes an ascetic communism, the purpose of which is to remove objects of desire, not to distribute them more equitably.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What was Plato's idea behind building the Academy?
2. What was Plato's idea behind his political theory?
3. What does Plato mean by justice in the state?

1.2.4 Theory of Education

It is Plato's educational system, however, that is most important in maintaining the rule of philosophers. It is through education, Plato claims, that the future rulers will come to recognize that the desire for power and pleasure is not the basis of political or individual happiness and fulfilment. Since Plato's educational philosophy illuminates the whole of his political theory, we must analyse it in some depth.

Plato expresses his thoughts and ideas regarding education in two of his dialogues in the name of Socrates, his teacher, namely *The Republic* and *The Laws*. In *The Republic*, Plato, with the idea of a perfect state in mind, offers two accounts of education. His first educational theory is expressed with the formation of guards, the role of whose is to defend the city, in mind and has two arts which were valued highly by the Greeks, namely music, including poetry, and gymnastics, at its root. And his second educational account is regarding the education of the philosopher king.

Plato argues that education should begin at a young age with the learning of basic skills such as reading, writing, recitation, and so on. His proposed programme of studies is not markedly different from what actually existed. Plato does advocate one major reform— censorship of poetry, and particularly that of the great epic poet Homer. His reason is that people took from the poets what they thought to be sound ethical knowledge when, in fact, says Plato, the poets are not different from the Sophists. They teach people opinions of what is true, not genuine knowledge. Besides, he complains, they present unacceptable models of human behaviour. Both heroes and gods frequently act unjustly, if not downright basically, in the epic poems. It would be inappropriate, Plato argues, for potential rulers to be influenced by such models at a young and impressionable age. How, he asks are they to become just rulers if their literature exposes them to acts of injustice?

In addition, Plato points out that poetry appeals to the emotions. Unless it is carefully censored it will lead the young guardians astray. Instead of learning to control their lives rationally, they will become subject to their passions. Plato is a classicist; he believes that art should reflect order and harmony so that the same order and harmony will begin to be reflected in the lives of those exposed to it. He is opposed to romanticism, to art that simply appeals to feeling and emotion and that he believes, thereby, disorders the soul. For this reason, Plato concludes that we must not only compel our poets to make their poetry and express image of noble character, we must also supervise craftsmen of every kind and forbid them to leave the stamp of baseness, meanness and unseemliness, on painting and sculpture, or building, or any other work of their hands. Anyone who cannot obey shall not practise his art in the commonwealth.

First Account of Education

Socrates proposes in the first account that the aim of education should be to control the guards and curb their tendency to rule and convert them into what he calls ‘noble puppies’, who can fight fiercely with the enemies, and behave gently with those who are familiar to them. He suggests that the character of guards must be shaped with education in two arts which the Greeks valued very highly, namely music and gymnastics. Education in music for the enrichment of their soul, and learning in gymnastics for the development of their bodies. The kind of education that Socrates has in mind for the guards, i.e. the military class of his ideal state is indeed moral in nature. And, therefore, the emphasis of the education here is not on the development of logical and critical faculty but on the shaping their mind to follow and accept.

According to Socrates, the nature of those who are chosen for the education for being guardians must be ‘philosophic, spirited, swift, and strong’. He suggests that the guardians must be able to distinguish between familiar and foreign by the use of ‘knowledge and ignorance’. Which means that they approve of only what is familiar to them, and consider everything new as their enemy.

Education of the guards in music (which also includes speeches and poetry) begins at the very young age, for it is in these years that people are most susceptible to being influenced. The tragic and epic poetry must be heavily censored, for it

NOTES

NOTES

contains themes such as revenge, which Socrates considers unworthy. Such poetry can be fatal for the moral development of the military class of the state. The tales that are told at the very young age must also be censored, for young children can absorb everything that they are exposed to: 'A young thing can't judge what is hidden sense and what is not; but what he takes into his opinions at that age has a tendency to become hard to eradicate and unchangeable'. Through the narration carefully composed, fit for the education of young children, mothers and nurses will be able to shape and nourish the souls of these children.

The tales should be composed and carefully constructed to impart virtue and knowledge of certain theology. Socrates does not offer examples of what kinds of tales should be appropriate for children, but attacks poets like Homer and Hesiod and deems the tales of these poets as inappropriate and bad lies. Gods must always be just in the tales, or the children will think it proper to do injustice. They should not be told tales which include fighting amongst the gods or people between themselves. This will teach them the importance of unity.

Socrates considers those tales as good which are capable of fostering courage, moderation, and justice. Education of the children should be such that they should grow up fearing slavery and not death. What is interesting is that though Socrates mentions courage, moderation and justice as important values that the children should learn, he does not mention wisdom. Absence of wisdom in education of the military class whose sole responsibility is to defend the state suggests that Plato does not want their rational and critical faculty to develop, after all they are supposed to be like 'noble puppies', fierce and yet be able to follow what they are ordered and not question it.

Another important education that is important for those who are to become the defenders of the state is the education of gymnastics. Instead of recommending a complicated gymnastic routine, Socrates recommends moderate eating and drinking, along with a simple routine of physical exercise, which according to him will ensure a healthy and fit body. Socrates emphasises that proper education in gymnastic will not only prevent illness but will also reduce the use of medicine in the city, which according to him should not be used for keeping those alive who are useless.

The moral education that Socrates prescribes for the military class, the defender of the state, is supposed to develop their ability to distinguish between good and bad, without ever being exposed to what is bad.

There is no doubt that music is the most significant in the education of the defender guards, but for their moral development it is important to maintain equilibrium between music and gymnastics, for a completely gymnastics education can potentially transform the guards into savages, and a complete musical education will make them soft, that is why it is important to balance the education of the two arts.

Second Account of Education

After expounding the details of his ideal state, Socrates acknowledges that the ruler of his state should be philosopher kings. He also admits that the account of education that he gave earlier in the dialogue regarding the education of the military guard was

not adequate for the philosopher-kings. The quick and fiery natures of music are not stable for developing courage during the situation of war, and the brave nature that can be trusted during the war are not reliable intellectually and critically, and therefore, it is important that the philosopher-kings should receive a special kind of education which will refine and develop their philosophical nature. But this does not mean that the philosopher kings should not receive education in gymnastics: 'It must also be given gymnastics in many studies to see whether it will be able to bear the greatest studies, or whether it will turn out to be a coward.' Thus, it appears that the education, as illustrated in the first account, serves to be a test for the philosophising nature of the students, and once identified as a suitable candidates, the education of the philosopher-kings will develop and strengthen their philosophizing natures. Unlike the education of the guards, the education of the philosopher-kings would teach the students the true love of learning and will make them philosophers instead to transforming them into 'noble puppies'.

NOTES

The aim of philosopher kings' education is not the attainment of four virtues, but the knowledge of good, which is considered as the ultimate virtue by Socrates. The importance of this knowledge can be understood by the fact that without it, the attainment of the other four virtues is impossible. The idea of good is the supreme of all. Socrates distinguishes between having opinions about good, and having its knowledge. The former is not sufficient and therefore, the latter is needed: 'When it comes to good things, no one is satisfied with what is opined to be so but each seeks the things that are.' This puts the education of the philosopher kings in sharp contrast with the education of the guards, who were trained and educated to have correct opinions. Unlike the first account of education, this education is more philosophical in the sense that it aims directly for true knowledge.

Socrates uses his famous sun analogy to explain something that is similar to good. As sun makes it possible for our eyes to see things, the good makes it possible for the intellect of the person to know. Thus, it is good that makes the knowledge possible. It is the idea of good that 'provides the truth to the thing known and gives the power to the one who knows'. The idea of good is not only responsible for the human faculty of reason, but also for one's very 'existence and being'.

Socrates uses his famous cave analogy to explain how education can be used to possess the knowledge of good. Socrates evokes an image of a cave in which some prisoners are chained in such a way that they can only see the wall they are facing and nothing else. Behind the prisoner there is a puppeteer who casts the shadows of figurines on the wall. The prisoners can only see the shadows and for them these shadows are the only reality, but what they perceive is not the complete reality, only a small segment of it. It is clear that this new education is meant to free the prisoners and make them aware of the reality beyond their perceived reality of the cave. In order to show why philosophical education is not readily accepted and the way in which such education is enlightening, Socrates develops his analogy further.

What happens when one of the prisoners is able to escape the cave and go outside? At first, the foreign sights will hurt his eyes, and he would resist the thought

NOTES

that what he used to consider reality was only a fragment of it. His eyes, which are accustomed to the darkness of the cave, will be blinded by the light of the sun. He would, of course, want to go back to his familiar environment. But if somehow someone is able to take him 'away from there by force along the rough, steep, upward way, and didn't let him go before he had dragged him out into the light of the sun', his eyes would eventually adjust to his new surroundings, and slowly he would begin to perceive the new reality. Once he is fully aware of the new reality, he would never want to go back to the darkness of the cave. But, somehow if he tries to go back to the cave only to help the other prisoners, they will call him disillusioned, for they are still limited to the perceived reality of the cave. Through this powerful allegory Socrates explains that the good is beyond the reality of perception, but once its knowledge is acquired, it becomes the 'cause of all that is right and fair in everything', and therefore, the ruler of the ideal state must possess its knowledge and understanding.

For the philosopher kings, Socrates envisions an education that would teach them to utilize their capacity of knowledge, for it is always within a man's soul: 'Education is not what the professions of certain men assert it to be. They presumably assert that they put into the soul knowledge that isn't in it, as though they were putting sight into blind eyes...but the present argument, on the other hand...indicates that this power is in the soul of each and that the instrument with which each learns—just as an eye is not able to turn toward the light from the dark without the whole body—must be turned around from that which is *coming into being* together with the whole soul until it is able to endure looking at that which *is* and the brightest part of that which *is*.'

Socrates asserts that the ruler of his ideal state cannot be the prisoners of the cave. They cannot also be the philosophers who choose to never again go back to the cave once enlightened. The rulers must be those who escape the cave and receive the education of the good and then return to the cave to help the other prisoners.

Here Socrates acknowledges the limitations of his first account of education, for they are only helpful in teaching habits through examples. He includes the study of numbers, geometry, and cubes in his second account of education. The study of mathematics is both practically useful and intellectually stimulating. He also includes the study of complex concepts and the study of dialectic. The former would help the students to know and understand what is permanent, and the latter, through the use of questioning and answering, would help them to understand one's self and the depth of one's own knowledge, which would help them in identifying the good in both the world and oneself.

Like the education of the guards, the education of the philosopher kings also begins in the childhood. But unlike the former the latter is not compulsory, but is voluntary play: 'Don't use force in training the children in the studies, but rather play. In that way you can better discern what each is naturally directed towards.'

Education of gymnastic will be ceased at the age twenty. At the age of thirty, those students will be tested in dialectics, who will excel in their studies, and duties. The idea of the test will be to determine 'who is able to release himself from the

eyes and the rest of sense and go to what which *is* in itself and accompanies truth.’ Socrates realizes the danger of allowing the young students a free reign with dialectics, and cautions that it might tempt the students to rebel against the laws of the state and indulge in a baser pursuits. But if the art of dialectic is used by the educated older men, they will ‘discuss and consider the truth rather than the one who plays and contradicts for the sake of the game’. At the age of thirty-five, those who have excelled in the art study of dialectics, will hold offices in the cave, and the same process will continue. And finally when they have reached the age of fifty, those who have performed best in everything will know the good and will govern the city. ‘And, lifting up the brilliant beams of their souls, they must be compelled to look toward that which provides light for everything. Once they see the good itself, they must be compelled, each in his turn, to use it as a pattern for ordering city, private men, and themselves for the rest of their lives. For the most part, each one spends his time in philosophy, but when his turn comes, he drudges in politics and rules for the city’s sake, not as though he were doing a thing that is fine, but one that is necessary. And thus, always educating other like men and leaving them behind in their place as guardians of the city, they go off to the Isles of the Blessed and dwell’

NOTES

1.2.5 Education in *The Laws*

The Laws is perhaps the last dialogue written by Plato. In this dialogue the ideal state is called the city of Magnetes or Magnesia. In Magnesia the written laws are most important, unlike the ideal city of the *The Republic* where the words of the philosopher-king is the best representation of the law, because of the educational value of content. Respect towards the law should be there not because of the fear but because of the realization of the role of the citizen in social development. Plato, in this dialogue considers God as the transcendental foundation of every law: God is the ‘norm of the norms, the measure of the measures’. What was the idea of good in *The Republic* is God’s mind in *The Laws*. Plato asserts that like a good fountain always gives out good water, the God always does what is fair. He is the one who maintains the pedagogical relationship with men, and therefore, is ‘universal pedagogue’.

In *The Laws*, Plato is not concerned with who will be fit to rule and govern the state after receiving education, but is concerned with the number of people that education will transform as patriots. And for this very reason the argument of the dialogue is for the public character of the education, which is only possible when it is imparted in the public building designed especially for that purposes. There should not be any discrimination in education based on the gender of the student, and the process of education must begin quite early in the life of the student. Plato argued for education in dancing, wrestling, riding and archery for both boys and girls. Children should play games which can help them channel their energy and resources towards the activities which they might engage with in their future adult lives. Plato considered the games of the children as something very important: ‘No one in the state has rally grasped that children’s games affect legislation so crucially as to determine whether the laws that are passed will survive or not.’ He considered change as something immensely dangerous, even in games of the children, without one exception, evil.

NOTES

Because education is an important factor in the formation of citizens, there should be someone to supervise it. Plato suggests an education minister, who should not be more than fifty years old and should be well qualified. This minister should be elected through secret voting, but the thus elected candidate cannot be the member of Nocturnal Council, which is above the various levels of servers the responsibility of which is to carry out administration of the state. The primary responsibilities of the council are:

- To promote and develop the philosophical studies so that the citizens develop a proper understanding of laws of the state.
- To develop and improve the laws of the state through the exchange with the philosophers of the other cities.
- To ensure the awareness of the philosophical and legal principles among the citizen of the state.
- Many scholars and commentators think that in spite of being surprising in some of its aspects, the educational theories presented in *The Laws* are not very different from the educational account of *The Republic*, which to an extent is true.

1.2.6 Relevance of Plato in the Contemporary Discourse

Plato's thought and understanding, you will realize, still has real relevance. In the modern nation-state too, there is a need for class division and functional specialization, so that society can function properly. And yes, Plato's division of labour is based on each class, i.e., each class must have a certain end. Clearly a division of labour is essential to the state, and just as obviously each class must possess virtue, i.e., the necessary skills to perform its tasks. The meaning of virtue is to this point still ethically neutral, and any Greek of the time would have understood and accepted Plato's meaning. What, then, are the specific virtues required for each class? The upper level guardians, the rulers, must possess the virtue of wisdom. They must have the requisite knowledge to know how to appropriately order the state as a whole. The lower-level guardians, or auxiliaries, must obviously embody the virtue of courage; otherwise they would make poor warriors indeed. The artisans must have the virtue of temperance, i.e., the ability to restrain their passions. They must understand that theirs is an economic function and not allow the craving for wealth or status to lead them to take over those functions, such as rulership, that they are not equipped to handle. It is high time, that the present state of governance still follows the Platonic version of class division.

Criticisms of Plato's *Republic*

Plato's theory in *The Republic* does have flaws, which are discussed as follows:

- The main discrepancy in *The Republic* has to do with Plato's proposals for maintaining the distribution of labour within the state. The solution is to ensure the sustained rule of the wise. Ideally, other classes within the state will accept this arrangement to the extent that they appreciate its rationale.

- There is the requirement of developing philosophical virtues themselves and understanding the logical need of philosophical governance. It appears that even Plato doubts the regime's ability to appreciate the chemistry of philosophy.
- Exclusion of the myth of the metals from *The Republic* would have been better.
- There appears to exist, inconsistencies between philosophers and non-philosophers since, it exposes a fundamental inaptness between justice in the state and justice in the personality.
- Plato moves too far when he says that knowledge indicates moral truths, which the citizens need to include in their political institutions and lives.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

4. What does Plato's first account of education state?
5. What are the main elements of education for a state guard?
6. What is the aim of education for a philosopher king?
7. What example does Plato's Socrates uses to explain the utility of education for possessing the knowledge of good?
8. What does *The Laws* emphasise on?

1.3 ARISTOTLE

Aristotle's works are divided into logic, physical works, psychological works, philosophical works and works on natural history. The Peripatetic school of philosophy groups Aristotle's writings on 'logic' under the title '*Organon*', which means instrument because they considered logic to be the chief instrument for scientific investigation. However, Aristotle considered 'logic' to be the same as verbal reasoning. He believed that to gain knowledge of an object, people ask certain questions, and he classified words into substance, quantity, quality, relation, place, time, situation, condition, action and passion, arranged in the order in which the questions are asked. Obviously, 'substance' is considered most important, including individual objects and the species to which these objects belong.

In his works on philosophy, Aristotle first traces the history of philosophy. He believed that philosophy grew as a result of wonder and curiosity which were not fully satisfied by religious myths. At first there were only philosophers of nature such as Thales and Anaximenes who were succeeded by Pythagoreans with mathematical abstractions. Pure thought was partly a contribution of Eleatic philosophers such as Parmenides and Anaxagoras. However, the complete level of pure thought was reached in the works of Socrates. Socrates was able to express general concepts in the form of definitions. Aristotle was of the opinion that metaphysics dealt with the early principles of scientific knowledge and the final conditions of all existence. It was concerned with existence in its basic state. In contrast, mathematics dealt with existence in the form of lines and angles.

NOTES

In his works on psychology, Aristotle defined the soul as the expression or realization of a natural body. He accepted the existence of a relationship between psychological states and physiological processes. He regarded the soul or mind as the truth of the body and not as the outcome of its physiological conditions.

The activities of the soul are manifested in specific faculties or parts corresponding with the stages of biological development: nutritional faculties (characteristic of plants); movement-related faculties (characteristic of animals) and faculties of reason (characteristic of humans).

Aristotle viewed ethics as an attempt to find out the highest good or the final purpose or end. Most ends of life merely help us to achieve other ends, there is always some final goal or pursuit that we aspire for or desire. Such an end is usually happiness, which must be based on human nature, and must originate from personal experience. Thus, happiness must be something practical and human, and should exist in the work and life which is unique to humans. It lies in the active life of a rational human being or in a perfect realization and outworking of the true soul and self, throughout a lifetime.

According to Aristotle, the moral ideal in political administration is merely a different aspect of what is applicable to individual happiness.

Humans are social beings, and the ability to speak rationally results in social union. The state develops from the family through the village community, which is just a branch of the family. Although originally formed to satisfy natural wants, the state exists for moral ends and also to promote higher life. The state is a genuine moral organization that advances the development of humans.

1.3.1 Aristotle's Idea of Political Theory and State

Political science is the body of knowledge that practitioners will use in pursuing their tasks. The most important role played by the politician is that of lawgiver, the one who frames the appropriate constitution comprising laws, customs and a system of moral education for the citizens. It is the responsibility of the politician to take measures to maintain the constitution and introduce reforms whenever the need arises and to prevent situations that may undermine the power of the political system. This is the field of legislative science, which according to Aristotle is more important than politics.

According to Aristotle, a politician is similar to a craftsman. Just like a craftsman produces an object making use of the four causes discussed earlier, namely formal, material, efficient and final causes, a politician also works with the four causes. The state comprises several individual citizens, who form the material cause out of which the city-state is created. The constitution forms the formal cause. The city-state cannot exist without an efficient cause, that is, the ruler. In the absence of the ruler, the community, irrespective of its type will be in disorder. The constitution acts as this ruling element.

All communities are established with the aim of achieving some good. This is where the final cause comes in. The community with the most authority and the one that contains the other communities has the most authority of all, and it aims at the highest good. This explains the existence of politics for good life or happiness.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

9. How has Aristotle defined the soul?
10. What are the sub-sections of knowledge according to Aristotle?

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1.3.2 Ideal State

When Aristotle talks about the state as a community of sorts in *Politics*, he refers to the Greek city-state. The state, like any other community, exists for an end that is for the highest good of man. To find out the nature of the state and to differentiate it from the communities, Aristotle analyses the origin of the state and studies each of its components. He says there are two dimensions which are instrumental in bringing the community together — first, the bond between a man and a woman, which emerges from the reproductive instinct; and second, that of master and slave, which emerges from self-preservation and mutual benefit. ‘Out of these two relationships...the first thing to arise is the family... The family is the association established by nature for the supply of men’s everyday wants.’ The family, hence, is the sapling that grows to become a state.

In the second stage, several families come together and that association aims to do more than just meeting daily needs. This association or unification of families, which probably has a common descent, allows creation of the first big community, i.e., the village.

In the third stage, the several villages come together to form a big community which is self-sufficient. ‘When several villages are united in a single complete community, large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficing, the state comes into existence, originating in the bare needs of life, and continuing in existence for the sake of a good life. And, therefore, if the earlier forms of society are natural, so is the state, for it is the end of them, and the nature of a thing is its end. For what each thing is when fully developed, we call its nature, whether we are speaking of a man, a horse, or a family.’

The only factor that differentiates a state from a family is the fact that in a state all are happy as it is self-sufficing. Whereas, a family can barely be self-sufficing. The state, hence, differs from the family and village in kind, and not merely quantitatively.

Aristotle considered state as a natural society. According to him, it is the natural instinct of man to form societies such as family, village and state. A man’s ultimate aim is to have a good life. Man is a social animal. His civilized behaviour and natural human progress differentiates him from other animals. He prefers to be with other human beings which make them interdependent.

It can be said that Aristotle believed in the evolutionary or historical theory of the origin of state. That is to say that Aristotle compared state to an individual. As an individual has limbs, the state is a body and individuals are its organs. Although he

regarded state to be a natural need of human uplift, he wanted restricted interference of the state in the life of individuals.

1.3.3 Classification of Governments

NOTES

In Books IV to VI of *Politics*, Aristotle has dealt with one of the most contentious of political questions. Who should rule the masses? Aristotle has, at this point, actually looked at the different forms of government existent in Greece to seek answer to this question. As we have seen above, he primarily classified the governments into monarchy, tyranny, aristocracy, oligarchy and polity or democracy. The first criterion he uses to distinguish between these regimes is by the number of people ruling: one man, a few men and many. '[T]hose regimes which look to the common advantage are correct regimes according to what is unqualifiedly just, while those which look only to the advantage of the rulers are errant, and are all deviations from the correct regimes; for they involve mastery, but the city is a partnership of free persons' (1279a16).

In Book III Chapter 7, Aristotle describes these six types of regimes. Depending upon the number of people involved in governing and the focus of their interests, Aristotle distinguished six kinds of social structure in three pairs:

- A state with only one ruler is either a **monarchy** or a tyranny
- A state with several rulers is either an **aristocracy** or an **oligarchy**
- A state in which all rule is either a **polity** or a **democracy**

The correct regimes are monarchy (rule by one man for the common good), aristocracy (rule by a few for the common good), and polity (rule by the many for the common good); the flawed or deviant regimes are tyranny (rule by one man in his own interest), oligarchy (rule by the few in their own interest), and democracy (rule by the many in their own interest). Aristotle ranks monarchy as the best and tyranny as the most perverted form of government. So, according to him from the best to the worst may be put down as: monarchy—aristocracy—polity—democracy—oligarchy—tyranny (1289a38). Aristotle considers democracy, which is generally accepted as the best form of government, as one of the flawed regimes. Aristotle accepts monarchy as the best form of government as a monarch works for the greater good of the citizens. Aristotle further clarifies, that the real distinction between oligarchy and democracy is in fact the distinction between whether the wealthy or the poor rule (1279b39), not whether the many or the few rule. Since every city-state has a few wealthy noblemen as well as poor people, Aristotle was well aware of the conflicts between these two groups that even lead to civil wars.

According to Aristotle, democrats and oligarchs advance equal claims to rule. He maintains that justice should dictate who should have the power to rule and that equal people should have equal things. Aristotle upheld that both groups—the oligarchs and democrats—offer judgments about this, but neither of them gets it right, because 'the judgment concerns themselves and most people are bad judges concerning their own things' (1280a14). While the democrats think that the fact that all citizens are free entitles everyone to rule, oligarchs assert that their wealth should entitle

them to form the government. According to Aristotle, democracy is the rule of the majority; and since the majority is poor, the rule of the poor and hence, poor rule. Since ruling in accordance with one's wishes is the trademark of tyranny, it is the most despotic of all. The monarch, who has the country's welfare in his mind, will make the best ruler for a state.

According to Aristotle, 'For tyranny is a kind of monarchy which has in view the interest of the monarch only; oligarchy has in view the interest of the wealthy; democracy, of the needy: none of them the common good of all. Tyranny, as I was saying, is monarchy exercising the rule of a master over the political society; oligarchy is when men of property have the government in their hands; democracy, the opposite, when the indigent, and not the men of property, are the rulers.' He rests his case with recommending polity. 'Simply speaking, polity is a mixture of oligarchy and democracy' (1293a32). We need to remember that polity is one of the correct regimes and keeps the interests of the political community in mind. In order to create a successful polity, a combination of oligarchy and democracy needs to be made. While in democracy the rich are paid to serve on a jury, in an oligarchy, the poor are paid to serve and the rich fined for not serving the state free of cost.

'Kyklos' is the term used by Greek philosophers for the political cycles of government. This concept was first elaborated in Plato's *Republic* and has been endorsed by Aristotle as well. Aristotle believes the cycle begins with monarchy and ends in anarchy, but that it does not start anew.

1.3.4 Slavery

Aristotle considered slavery to be natural to human beings. In fact, he considered it be an integral part of the household, which he justified as natural and hence, moral. This conclusion of his can be justified from the fact that during his time slavery was rampant and part of the domestic economy. The basis of his theory is the fact that natural inequality exists among humans and superior humans behave differently towards the weaker or the inferior. Thus, functions or activities of humans should be based on this natural segregation. That is to say, the superior functions in the society, i.e., ruling the state, should be carried out by the superior intellects and works of labour should be carried out by the weaker intellects, who, in most cases, have stronger physique.

Justification for Slavery

As mentioned earlier, Aristotle believed slavery to be a part of the household, hence an institution in itself. A household consist of husbands, wife, children, freeman and slaves. Slaves were considered a living possession of a household and a tool that undertook actions at the command of the master. While in reality, a tool is lifeless, a slave has life and is worth many tools.

He was critical of his criticses who considered slavery as unjust. He argued that not having slaves would be contrary to nature and its laws. Humans with low intellect were destined to act on commands while men endowed with high intellect are fit to command and direct. Thus, the former is by nature a slave and the latter a

NOTES

NOTES

master. Physically there are different; the former can only do menial duties and the latter can take up military duties and hold public services. While one has the mental strength and ability to take decisions and foresee the future, the other lacks mental ability to take decisions. Hence, the slave is to the master what the body is to the mind.

Just by virtue of the rule of the mind over the body, a man is destined to become a master and the other a slave. Consequently, a slave should be used as any other property. Aristotle says that a slave is not only a slave but his master's property.

Aristotle further justifies that it is necessary for the society to have slaves as it essential to boost the morale and intellect of the superior humans. Also, the facilities required to develop the institutions for the development of the superior humans can be done at leisure, which is not possible without having slaves. Aristotle further says that a slave shares his master's life and hence, his intellect.

However, he makes some distinctions between natural slavery and slavery made compulsory by law. In case a man is made a slave, subjected to law, he becomes a prisoner. He goes on to say that the offspring of a slave might not become a natural slave. In case his intellect is superior, he may become a freeman. He adds that all humans should be given the opportunity to emancipate. He, however, does not allow enslavement of a Greek by a Greek, and tell the master to not ill-treat their slaves.

1.3.5 Theory of Citizenship

Aristotle gives his general theory of citizenship in part III of *Politics*. He distinguishes citizens from other inhabitants, such as resident aliens, slaves, even children, seniors and ordinary workers. According to him a citizen is a person possessing the right to participate in 'deliberative or judicial office'. Citizens were those who had the right to be part of juries, the assembly, the council and other bodies as was the case in Athens, where the citizens were directly involved in governance. However, full citizenship was not given to women, slaves and foreigners. The city-state, according to Aristotle, comprised several such citizens. He considered the constitution as a tool for organizing the various offices of the city-state. The governing body is defined by the constitution (comprising either the people in a democratic set-up or a chosen handful in an oligarchy).

The benefit that is common to all in forming a city-state is the attainment of noble life. Aristotle also states that an individual can rule over another in many ways depending on his own nature and the nature of the subject. The master-slave relationship represents despotic rule wherein the slaves cannot function without a natural master to instruct or direct them. It is a form of rule which exists primarily for the master and is only incidental for the slaves who are born without the skill of self-governance.

The second form of rule, paternal or marital, asserts that the male possesses more leadership qualities than the female. Similarly, children lack the ability to rationalize and cannot do without the supervision of adults. Aristotle firmly believed that paternal or marital rule was necessary for the sake of the women and children,

a thought that was criticized by many modern thinkers. However, Aristotle was somewhat right in believing that the rule that benefitted both the ruler and the subject were just whereas the rule that was advantageous only to the ruler was unjust and inappropriate for the community consisting of free individuals. Going by this logic, the case of a single ruler is just if it is a kingship and unjust if it is a tyranny. Similarly, in case of a few rulers, aristocracy is just whereas oligarchy is certainly unjust. In case of several rulers, polity is correct while democracy was considered deviant by Aristotle.

According to Aristotle, the city-state is not a business enterprise concerned with wealth maximization. It is not an association promoting equality and liberty either. The city-state, in fact, attempts to achieve good life. Therefore, aristocracy, he felt, was the best option wherein political rights could be assigned to those who could make good use of it in the interest of the community. His ideal constitution comprised fully virtuous citizens.

Aristotle divides knowledge into practical, theoretical and productive knowledge. While theoretical knowledge is aimed at action, productive knowledge addresses daily needs. Practical knowledge deals with knowledge of how to live and how to act. It is possible to lead a good life by making use of practical knowledge. Both ethics and politics are considered practical sciences and are concerned with human beings as moral agents. While ethics deals with how human beings act as individuals, politics deals with how human beings act in communities. However, Aristotle felt that both ethics and politics influence each other. According to him, abstract knowledge of ethics and politics is useless because practical knowledge is useful only if we act on it. Both should be practiced to attain goodness or to become good.

In his works Aristotle mentions that it is not for a young man to study politics because he lacks experience. Also, he rightly states that youngsters act according to emotions instead of reason. Without reason it is impossible to act on practical knowledge, therefore, young students are not equipped to study politics. Very few possessed the practical experiences of life and the mental discipline to gain from a study of politics, which is why a very low percentage of the population in Athens was given the benefits of citizenship or political participation.

Political and moral knowledge cannot possess the same level of precision or certainty as mathematics. For example, there cannot really be a fixed and accurate definition of 'justice'. On the contrary, many things in geometry or mathematics such as a point or an angle can be defined precisely. These definitions will not change either. This is probably why Aristotle refrains from listing set rules to be followed for making ethical and political decisions. Instead, he expects readers of his works to become people who know what is the correct thing to do or the right manner to act in a situation when faced with it.

Ethics and politics are interlinked because of the ultimate purpose they serve. Human beings also have a purpose which they need to fulfil. This ultimate aim, Aristotle feels, is 'happiness'. However, happiness cannot be achieved without leading a life of virtue. A person who chooses to do a particular thing because he feels it is

NOTES

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the right thing to do will lead a flourishing life. An individual can be happy and also possess a high degree of moral values only if he is placed in a political community that is well-constructed. A well-constructed political community will encourage and promote the right actions and ban the wrong ones and educate people about what is right and what is wrong. This is where the link between ethics and politics becomes clear.

Aristotle saw the political community as a partnership of citizens who pursue a common good. It is the responsibility of the city-state to help its citizens attain good. Each individual will try to achieve his individual goal or purpose, that of happiness. In this way, all the individuals put together will achieve happiness or goodness.

Aristotle brings us face to face with the truth that we as individuals need to figure out how best to lead our lives together in a group. To figure this out, human beings, unlike animals, use the ability to reason and talk. Using this ability, they create laws that help practice justice and facilitate survival. People, in groups, all pursuing virtuous lives, together form a city. In the absence of this city and justice, human beings would be as good as animals. The most important element of a city is not the pursuit of security or wealth and riches but the pursuit of virtue and happiness.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

11. How did Aristotle divide the social structure?
12. Who is a citizen according to Aristotle?
13. Who were excluded from full citizenship?

1.3.6 Revolution

Aristotle discussed at great length on revolution in part V of his book *Politics*. His ideas were shaped after reading around 158 constitutions. Before giving a scientific analysis of the implications of revolution, Aristotle gave a broad meaning of the term revolution, which meant two things to him. First, revolution is any kind of change, major or minor, that is brought about in the constitution. That is to say, when a change is noticed in the structure of the ruling body — monarchy or oligarchy. Second, it implies a change in the ruling power, which may or may not bring a change in the government or constitution. He also stated that a revolution can be both direct and indirect, which can affect a particular institution.

Causes of Revolution

Aristotle classifies the reasons of revolution in two categories — one is the general causes and the other, revolution in a particular type of state.

Let us first talk about the general causes.

All human being want to be treated equally. Whenever there is a variation in this treatment, say favourable or unfavourable, revolutions will take place. In states where inequality is high, the chances of revolution are higher. On the other hand,

states where the level of equality is higher, there is stability. Hence, lesser inequality would mean less chances of revolution.

He further explains that failure of the political order to distribute property fairly is likely to lead to tension and finally revolution. Aristotle says that less virtuous humans motivated by the urge to hold property are the most likely force behind any upheaval.

To Aristotle, the general causes of revolution can be tackled by

- Inculcating the habit of abiding law by citizens
- Treating various sections of the society with consideration
- Educating the citizens that the spirit of constitution is the highest
- Awarding political offices on a temporary basis
- Ensuring equal distribution of political power among citizens
- Rewarding citizens as often as possible
- Restricting foreigners from holding public offices

Coming to particular causes, Aristotle explains inequalities which are prevalent in various forms of government. In an oligarchy or monarchy, democracy is a less permanent feature as power is held by a restricted few. The sole reason for revolution in such cases are jealousy of those who possess wealth and honour. But there are other factors such as oppression of the oligarchy, dissent among the members of the oligarchy, attraction of power, failure of the middle class to maintain balance, racial antagonism, and fear of the law or of its abuse, personal rivalries and so on. Under monarchy, injustice and arrogance are the causes of insurrection or fear, or contempt for incompetence, coupled with ambition. In aristocracy, the thought of revolution germinates from the feeling of being left out in the run for power, personal ambition, and greater inequality in wealth. In a democracy, revolution is caused due to the demagogic attacks on wealth as they finally lead to establishment of oligarchy and tyranny.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

14. What did the term revolution mean to Aristotle?
15. How can the general causes of revolution be tackled, according to Aristotle?

1.4 MACHIAVELLI

Niccolò Machiavelli was a philosopher, author and Italian politician who is considered as the founder of modern political science. As a Renaissance man, he was a diplomat, a political philosopher, a musician, a poet and a playwright, but the most important role he played was that of a civil servant of the Florentine Republic. He is well known for his short political discourse the *Prince*. This is a work of realistic political

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theory. Nevertheless, both the *Prince* and the *Republican Discourses* that dealt with more serious issues, were not published until after Machiavelli's died.

It was Machiavelli's firm belief that the basis of contemporary politics was selfish political seizure and violence and not good Christian ethics. Though the Papacy was successful in maintaining some law and order, the Holy Roman Empire continued to disintegrate and international relations continued to become chaotic.

Machiavelli's period was the transition stage between the middle and the modern ages. Spirituality, salvation and god dominated the dogmatic Christian theology and social morality were free thoughts not considered at all. Machiavelli specifically believed in the historical method, because he preferred practical rather than speculative politics. As a realist in politics, he did not care much for the philosophy of politics. His writings expound a theory of the government and actual working of its machinery rather than the state and the abstract principles of constitution.

1.4.1 Modern Absolutism: Machiavelli's Theory of Political Power

From Greek philosophy to Renaissance all philosophers and thinkers dealt with the end of the state. They thought that the political power of the state would be used as a means to achieve further end. All political thinkers from Plato, Aristotle to the Middle age (till 16th century) had concerned themselves with the central question of the end of the state and had considered state-power as a means to a higher end conceived in moral terms. But Machiavelli adopted a quite different line. To him the power of the state is the end of the state. i.e., every state must aim at maximizing its power. The failure of the state to do so will throw it into great turmoil. Consequently, he confined his attention to the means best suited to the acquisition, retention and expansion of power of the state.

State is the highest form of human association. It is indispensable for the promotion of human welfare. State is to be worshipped even by sacrificing the individual for the interest of the state. A ruler must remember that whatever brings success is due to power. For acquiring political power he can use any type of means. Political statesman plays important role in organizing state, and providing it with safety and security. Hence, the major theme of *Prince* is the process of acquiring power.

Modern power politics cannot be thought of without any reference to Machiavelli and his book the *Prince*.

The *Prince* and its central theme

The *Discourses* and *The Art of War* were Machiavelli's famous books. It contains analysis of body politics. The *Prince* is a handbook on the art of government and state craft. Hence, it is said that the *Prince* is not an academic work on political-science but a book on the art of governance. It is in the form of advice and addressed to any ruler.

Machiavelli's Justification for a Powerful State

Machiavelli acquired practical experience of politics of his time. He was born in Florence, Italy, in 1469 in a well-to-do family, when Prince Medici was at the height of his power. At the age of 25, he entered the government service as a clerk chancery. Within a very short period he was appointed as an ambassador, after that he became secretary of the king. His administrative and political experience determined his views about politics.

Machiavelli lived in Renaissance Italy and was greatly influenced by the new spirit. The intellectual awakening injected rational scientific approach in every sphere of human life as renaissance replaced the faith by reason. Italy was the hotbed of Renaissance, the most modern and urbanized country of Europe. But in Italy the wealth, intellect and artistic achievements were accompanied by moral degradation and political chaos. The worst aspect of the period during which Machiavelli lived was rampant corruption and selfishness among Italian rulers and church officials. Machiavelli represents the culture, which was undergoing a period of deep political crisis.

Italy consisted of a very large number of small but independent states. Some of these states like Florence and Venice were republics, while others were ruled by despots. Internally, these states were the home of fierce political rivalries and personal ambition and externally they were involved in a constant struggle with one another. This political division of Italy and the struggle between the states made the country weak and a prey for the ambitions of the powerful neighbouring states of France, Prussia and Spain. France invaded Italy and defeated the Medici rulers. Machiavelli was witness to this tragedy. It was this traumatic experience that made Machiavelli conclude that unless Italy was united under a strong central government, the country would always remain under the threat of conquest and annexation by neighbouring countries.

Machiavelli was a true patriot who thought of the plight of Italy and looked for remedies. He did not recommend a republican form of government for Italy, as it presupposes virtuous, honest and patriotic citizens, whereas the sixteenth century Italians were corrupt and selfish. He suggested a strong and powerful ruler for Italy.

He was not interested in idealistic conception of the state. His chief interest was concentrated in the unity of body politic and power. He adopted an empirical method. He studied records of the medieval age from 4th century to 15th century. This age was characterized by the feudal state. In this order, the king divided his dominions into many parts. Each part was granted to a noble or tenant chief. There were no common laws and central authority. In short, the feudal system was a confusion. Of this confusion, the church emerged as the superior authority. This resulted in continuous conflict between the spiritual and temporal authorities. The Pope claimed superiority over the prince.

The state (civil authority) was merely the police department of the church. Thus, a true national life could not grow in such a system. Machiavelli analysed the entire Italian society and concluded that feudalism and the church not only destroyed

NOTES

NOTES

the identity and importance of the state, but the state was considered a subordinate of the church.

But Machiavelli completely divorced religion from politics. He broke the medieval tradition that the political authority is under the control of the church. He made the state totally independent of the church by saying that the state has its own rules of conduct to follow, that it is the highest, supreme and autonomous body. He said the state is superior to all associations in the human society. He rejected the feudal system and propounded all powerful central authority, who is supreme over all institutions.

The central theme of Machiavelli's political ideas is power. He highlighted power as an essential ingredient of politics. According to him, moral code of individual prescribed by the church cannot provide guidelines to the ruler. According to Machiavelli, a ruler must remember that whatever brings success is due to power. For acquiring political power he can use any means. He said politics is a constant struggle for power. All politics is power politics.

For Machiavelli, absolute state was the end and for this, means was power. He said the sole aim of the 'prince' was to make the country strong and united, establish peace and order and expel the foreign invader. To achieve this end any means would be satisfactory.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

16. What did Machiavelli think about contemporary politics?
17. What was the status of the state according to Machiavelli?
18. What does the *Prince* state?

1.4.2 *Prince*

Machiavelli's *Prince* is in the form of advice given to a ruler on statecraft. Some significant aspects of the advice to the ruler are as follows:

- Doctrine of *raison d'état*
- End justifies the means
- State is sovereign, autonomous and non-religious
- A prince must combine the qualities of a lion and a fox
- Use a double standard of morality
- Favour despotic rule
- Maintain strong army
- Human nature is low and ungrateful, so a prince must consider this nature of man
- He should win the popularity of his people must not touch the property of the people

- A prince must have council of wise men and not of flatterers
- Separate politics from religion
- Remain free from emotions

Elaborating on the doctrine of *raison d'état* (reason of state), Machiavelli says it implies actions and policies promoting safety and security of the state. Because the state must preserve itself before it promotes the welfare of its people. For preserving and safeguarding itself, all means adopted by the state are justified by Machiavelli. According to him, in politics, one is guided by the harsh realities of political life, which is a struggle for power and survival. The actions of the state must be judged only on the basis of *raison d'état*, i.e., independent, self-sufficient, well-ordered and well maintain state. Machiavelli advised the prince in preserving and safeguarding this type of state through means well justified by the state.

A prince, hence, should give priority to power. Morality and ethics have different spheres. It cannot be mingled with the reason of the state. To a prince, power of state is of supreme importance. Self-sufficiency of the state means the state will have its own army, a strong and unified government, unity and integrity among the people and solid economic foundation.

End justifies means: It is a very famous statement of Machiavelli which he justified for the 'reason of state'. He assumed that the state is the highest form of human association. The state is to be worshipped like a deity even by sacrificing the individual. A ruler must remember that whatever brings success and power is virtuous, even cunningness and shrewdness is justified. Politics is the most precarious game. It can never be played in a decent and orderly manner. The state has some primary objectives and responsibilities like protection of life, maintenance of law and order and looking after wellbeing of its members. Hence, the state must have adequate means at its disposal.

State is sovereign, autonomous and non-religious: Machiavelli said the state is superior to all associations in the human society. It is a sovereign and autonomous body; moral and religious considerations cannot bind the prince. A prince is above the prelims of morality. He can use religion to realize his ends. Religion cannot influence politics and the church cannot control the state. In fact, sovereign state enjoys absolute power over all individuals and institutions.

A state is necessary for all institutions. It stands on a wholly different footing and, therefore, must be judged by different standards. State power is the end and religion is its organ and instrument. The state came into being to satisfy material interests of the people. Machiavelli divorced politics from theology and government from religion. He did not view the state as having a moral end and purpose, but gave importance to man's worldly life. He said politics is an independent activity with its own principles and laws.

A prince must combine the qualities of a lion and a fox: Machiavelli advised the prince to imitate the qualities of the fox and the lion. Imitating the fox (cunningness, foresight) will enable him to visualize his goal and means to achieve it. Imitating the lion will give him necessary strength and force to achieve that goal. A fox might

NOTES

NOTES

have shrewdness and foresight, but he is powerless without necessary force of a lion. Similarly, a lion without shrewdness and prudence of a fox would be reckless. Hence, a ruler who wants to be very successful must combine in himself the qualities of both fox and lion. He must possess the fearless attitude of a lion and cunningness of a fox. Physical force is necessary when there is anarchy and indiscipline. But law and morality is essential to check selfishness of people and to generate civic virtues.

Use double standard of politics: Here Machiavelli says that there should be different political standards for the ruler and the ruled. According to him, morality is not necessary for the ruler. He is creator of law and morality, hence, the prince is above both.

A ruler has primary duty of preserving the state. For this purpose he may use instruments of lie, conspiracy, killings and massacre. Because absolute morality is neither possible nor desirable in politics. He insisted that morality is essential for people. Only moral citizens willingly obey laws of the state and sacrifice their lives for their nation. It cultivates civic sense and patriotic spirit. Thus, Machiavelli prescribes double standard of morality.

Favoured despotic ruler: Machiavelli did not recommend the republican form of government, because republican form requires virtuous, honest and patriotic citizens. He also advised the prince to convert his monarchy into a republic. He warns the prince against corruption and misuse of power for evil purposes.

According to Machiavelli, the government is founded upon the weakness and insufficient capacity of the citizen. If in a society men are corrupt and selfish and the law is powerless, then normal administration is not possible. A superior power is essential for bringing the society into order. The government with absolute power stop the excessive desires and control the behaviour of the people.

Maintain strong army: Machiavelli recommended constant military preparedness for the preservation of the state. The prince should organize a strong army to meet any internal and external threat to his power. Strong and regular army is a must for a state for its own defence. The state should build its own independent and regular army with faithful men at service. Such an army should consist of its own citizens and be prepared not only to defend its national borders but also to expand. The citizens must be trained for army service and all able bodied persons should have compulsory military training.

Human nature is low and ungrateful, so the prince must consider this nature of man: According to Machiavelli, rational analysis of politics must begin with an account of human nature. He viewed the activities of man with special interest and explained human nature. He viewed men to be a compound of weakness, ungrateful, fearful, lusting for power and essentially bad.

Prominent traits of human nature are (i) there is no limit to human desires. He is selfish and aggressive. Hence, there is strife and competition. (ii) The masses are interested in security. They realize that only laws of the state can ensure security hence they co-operate with the state and obey the laws. Hence, a ruler who wants to be successful must ensure security of life and protection of people. (iii) People must be restrained by force because force breeds fear. Only force and repression

can keep control and check on the evil tendencies in man. Hence, the method of government should be force and not persuasion. (iv) By nature every human being is ambitious and remains unsatisfied. No human being is content with his position. He is always after domination. Enmities and wars are the outcome of this desire. Thus, human nature is selfish, power hungry, quarrelsome and guided by materialistic considerations. Only fear of punishment is a powerful bond and it never fails.

Should be popular and try to win the heart of his people: A prince should try to win popularity, goodwill and affection of his people. He should keep his subjects materially contented by not imposing tax on them. The prince should not interfere in age old customs and traditions of his people because by nature people are conservative. He should not crave for wealth and women of his own subjects. He should keep a watchful eye on his dissidents.

A prince must have council of wise men and not of flatterers: Powerful government and internal unity were essential for any state. A prince must choose wise men in his council and should give them full liberty to speak the truth to him. He must ask them about everything and hear their opinion and afterwards deliberate by himself in his own way.

Separate politics from religion: Before Machiavelli, medieval political philosophers believed that religion was the basis of the state. But Machiavelli emancipated the state completely from the control of the church. He denied medieval philosophy of religion. He repudiates the theory of Aquinas that man needs the guidance of the divine law. Machiavelli said that only end which man can place before himself is the pursuit of his well-being in his material values in life. He did not view the prince as having a moral end and purpose but gave importance to man's worldly life. He believed that politics is an independent activity with its own principles and laws. Moral and religions considerations cannot bind the prince, state is above and outside the religion.

Machiavelli does not ignore religion and morality. He gave only an instrumental value to religion and said it should be used as an organ of the state. He advised the ruler that religion play important role in the life of a community. According to him, religion is necessary for unity and integrity of the people within the state. Common religion creates a sense of unity among people. Religious rites and beliefs establish social harmony. It also cultivate civic sense and patriotic spirit.

Lack of respect for religion among the citizen is a sign of downfall for the state. He said religion cannot influence politics and the church cannot control the state. In fact, the sovereign state enjoys absolute power over all individuals and institutions. As such the church is subordinate to the state. Thus, Machiavelli separated religion from politics and paved way for emergence of the secular state.

He was not against the religion and morality. He only propose two different standards of morality and placed the sate above morality and religion. According to Machiavelli, the state is the highest form of social organisation and the most necessary of all institutions. It stands on a wholly different footing and must, therefore, be judged by different standards. He said politics is an independent activity with its own principles and laws. State is non-religious and secular. It has its own rules of conduct

NOTES

to follow. Machiavelli sanctioned the use of immoral means by the ruler whenever it was necessary to do so to save the state. Thus, separation of politics from ethics is the essence of Machiavellian.

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Prince must be free from emotions: A prince should exploit emotions of his people for the purpose of the state. He should be cool, calculating and opportunist. His suggestion is that a prince must know how to act as a beast.

Ordered state: In the *Prince*, Machiavelli advocated absolutism and an effective government. This advocacy of absolutism was due to the fact that he had witnessed anarchy, lawlessness, corruption and misrule that prevailed in Italy of his times. He had witnessed how King Charles VIII of France had captured Florence without being offered resistance. Therefore, Machiavelli advocated a well-organised, ordered and militarily strong state. Without a strong state, a country had no hope of survival in international politics. He believed that an ordered state was the only security against forces of external aggression and internal chaos.

1.4.3 Evaluation of Machiavelli's Political Thought

- **Laid the foundation of modern political thought**

Machiavelli is regarded as the founder of modern political thought. He is the first exponent of power-politics. He is the first to put forward the theory of nation states. He was the first thinker who separated religion from politics and justified secular state. He is responsible for the growth of modern nationalism. He was the first advocate of autonomy for the state. He put forward the concept of supreme, sovereign state and justified all powerful central authority. State is an end i.e. survival of the state is the central theme. Gave a great insight for art of government and modern diplomacy.

Machiavelli contributed to new political thoughts and brought a new awakening in the political field. He is called the child of renaissance or child of his time. Hence, modern power politics cannot be thought of without any reference to Machiavelli and his book the *Prince*

- **Guide for the rulers**

Machiavelli's advice was followed by Cromwell and Napoleon. Machiavelli's emphasis on absolute power and authoritarian rule is the source of fascist movement. The *Prince* was a textbook for authoritarian rulers. It is like a guide for the rulers for ruling the state or statecraft.

- **Most revolutionary aspect of the prince**

From Greek philosophy to renaissance all philosophers and thinkers dealt with the 'end' of the state. They thought that political power of the state would be used as 'means' to achieve further 'end'. But Machiavelli adopted a quite different line; to him power of the state is the 'end' of the state. i.e., every state must aim at maximizing its power. The failure of the state in this enterprise will throw it into great turmoil.

Criticism

Machiavelli suggested power politics is the means and authoritarian state as the end. This thought of Machiavelli leads to absolutism and narrow nationalism. Power politics cannot be end, it will lead to autocracy and war.

He ignored individualism, i.e., individual liberty, equality and justice. He sacrificed individual at the altar of the state. Also, he held one sided views of human nature. In Machiavelli's view, men are universally bad. This is a biased view of human nature. He ignores the fact that much of civilization is based on the social and co-operative instincts of men.

He believed materialism is the product of renaissance and politics, and power and wealth are its central concepts. Morality and idealism became less important. According to Machiavelli, politics and power are instruments for strengthening and unifying a state. Hence, he separated politics from religion. According to Machiavellian, though the sole aim of a prince is unification and welfare of the state, he explained the practical aspects of politics. He keenly observed the affairs of the state and interstate rivalries. From his observation he deduced that the powerful government and internal unity were the essential of any state. Hence, he recommended constant military preparedness for the preservation of the state. Thus, Machiavelli's writings were free from the abstract ideals and based on facts.

According to him, the sole aim of a prince is to be an expert in managing and organizing a war, because it is the only way of increasing power. Power is the only reason of the state. Thus, Machiavelli justified utility of war.

Machiavelli on Ethics, Religion and Politics

Till the 15th century the state was working under the dominance of church and religion. There were conflict between the state and the church for power, where the church was more aggressive. Before Machiavelli, Aristotle separated politics from philosophy and gave separate status to political science as a subject.

But Machiavelli completely divorced religion from politics and tried to subordinate religion to the state. He repudiated the theory of Aquinas that man needs the guidance of the divine law. Machiavelli said that only end which man can place before himself is the pursuit of his wellbeing in his life i.e. material values. State came into being to satisfy material needs.

He differentiated between public and private morality. While Plato and Aristotle believed in moral nature and ethical ends of the state, Machiavelli completely disregarded this view of the state. According to him there is vital difference between the ruler and the citizens. He insisted that morality is essential to people. Only morally awakened citizens willingly obey laws of the state and sacrifice their lives for their nation. But morality is not necessary for the ruler. He is the creator of law and morality hence, he is above both. A ruler has primary duty of preserving the state. He may use instruments of lie, conspiracy and killings for the state.

He said absolute morality is neither possible nor desirable in politics. For example, a corrupt state cannot be reformed without heavy dose of violence.

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NOTES

Machiavelli does not ignore religion and morality. He wants to use the religion and church as an instrument for creating national customs and habits for creating national thought which will help the state in preserving peace and order and maintaining the stability of society. Prince must preserve the purity of all religious observances and treat them with proper reverence. Common religion creates a sense of unity among people.

Machiavelli proposed two different standards of morality and placed the state above morality. Thus, Machiavelli divorced politics from theology and government from politics. He gave the state a non-religious character. He did not view the state as having a moral end and purpose but gave importance to man's worldly life. He believed that politics is an independent activity with its own principles and law.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

19. What does Machiavelli's doctrine of *raison d'état* (reason of state) state?
20. List some of the qualities a prince must possess, according to Machiavelli.

1.4.4 Secularism

Machiavelli borrowed the idea of secularism from the philosophy of Marsiglio. He put emphasis on the secular character of the state and did not take cognizance of the principle of 'divine law', a theory that was prevalent during the medieval period. He not only alienated the spiritual and the sequential, but also made the spiritual secondary to the chronological authority. This was in contrast to the medieval way of philosophy in which spirit was treated as better to the temporal power.

Machiavelli was the first thinker to justify the study of the state as a secular institution. According to him state is a secular political institution; a power system. A strong state should have a uniform population and should own public spirit. He puts emphasis on element of national unity and national homogeneity and the concentration of power at the centre i.e. absolutism.

Machiavelli talks of secular state in the *Discourses*. He talks of equality as an essential ingredient for a steady self-governing system.

He comprehends that a simple lawful arrangement is not enough. A practical legal establishment needs a matching social constitution. It is a system of social institutions that hold up the legal structure of the state. And of all these institutions, says Machiavelli, none is extra imperative than that of religious belief. Such a view appears at first astonishing given Machiavelli's religious belief and the logic that he considered irreligious. Machiavelli's keen interest in religious belief is strictly political biased. It is not based on theology.

As a political practical person, Machiavelli was the first to point out the political significance of religion. In the words of Machiavelli, religion provides a heavenly sanction to the laws without which the people would have no cause to follow. He disapproved the functions of the Church for political reasons but not for religious

motive. But Machiavelli's political assessment of the church went beyond a disapproval of its participation in secular affairs. Machiavelli was at best ambivalent about Christianity. To the degree that Machiavelli did have a spiritual preference; it was for the pagan religion of ancient times.

In the backdrop of secularism, the state has a standard inclination to make bigger or produce in power. Machiavelli said that this inclination is present both in the Republican as well as monarchical state. Under the monarchy the prince resorts to strategy of development because of his insatiable desire for power. On the other hand under the republican system, it has to follow strategy of development per force of consideration of its continuation in the competitive world. He realized that the ancient Roman republic as the most excellent instance of a healthy state. To him the gaining of an empire is as normal to a state as growth to a human body. He emotionally involved great significance to the interaction of money-oriented attention and even subordinated the church to the state. He realized that church was subject to commanding organization.

He requested the Prince to give due respect the spirit of religion which has been confined to his subjects. He considered religion as an expedient gadget to work out authority in excess of the people. It grows among the citizens the character of humbleness, obedience, respect of law etc. He repeatedly requested the ruler to make use of this authoritative tool to restrain the anti- social activities of the populace. He realized that it is the best alternative to make sure men's evil and chaotic propensity. He treats religion is necessary for the physical condition and affluence of the state.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

21. From where did Machiavelli get the idea of secular state?
22. What is a secular state according to Machiavelli?

1.5 SUMMARY

- A study of Western political thought involves a comprehensive investigation of the works of various philosophers and political thinkers from the time of Plato till the contemporary thinkers.
- A great deal of Plato's earlier works appeared to be borrowings or adaptations from Socrates.
- Plato's Republic contains a treatise on education.
- Plato's political theory was based upon Socrates' teaching. It was intended to change the existing conditions, not to merely create an exercise in abstract thinking.
- The Republic is a phenomenal work by Plato, which talks vividly about justice and human perception.

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- Plato begins his discussion of justice in the state by arguing that the state is natural because no one is self-sufficient. Human beings need each other.
- Plato proposes that the society must be based upon communist principles. The auxiliaries and rulers will not be allowed to own property, nor will they have families of their own.
- Plato's division of labour is based on class. It means more specifically functional specialization.
- The aim of philosopher kings' education is not the attainment of four virtues, but the knowledge of good, which is considered as the ultimate virtue by Socrates.
- The Laws is perhaps the last dialogue written by Plato. In this dialogue the ideal state is called the city of Magnetes or Magnesia.
- In The Laws, Plato is not concerned with who will be fit to rule and govern the state after receiving education, but is concerned with the number of people that education will transform as patriots.
- Aristotle's works are divided into logic, physical works, psychological works, philosophical works and works on natural history.
- Aristotle viewed ethics as an attempt to find out the highest good or the final purpose or end.
- Aristotle considered state as a natural society. According to him, it is the natural instinct of man to form societies such as family, village and state.
- In Books IV to VI of Politics, Aristotle has dealt with one of the most contentious of political questions. Who should rule the masses?
- Aristotle considered slavery to be natural to human beings. In fact, he considered it be an integral part of the household, which he justified as natural and hence, moral.
- According to Aristotle a citizen is a person possessing the right to participate in 'deliberative or judicial office'.
- It was Machiavelli's firm belief that the basis of contemporary politics was selfish political seizure and violence and not good Christian ethics.
- The central theme of Machiavelli's political ideas is power. He highlighted power as an essential ingredient of politics.
- Machiavelli's Prince is in the form of advice given to a ruler on statecraft.
- Machiavelli proposed two different standards of morality and placed the state above morality.
- As a political practical person, Machiavelli was the first to point out the political significance of religion. In the words of Machiavelli, religion provides a heavenly sanction to the laws without which the people would have no cause to follow.

1.6 KEY TERMS

- **Division of labour:** Although it means work in the society being distributed among various section of people, according to Plato it is a division of virtues, and those who have a superior role in the division of labour are those who have a superior degree of virtue.
- **Self-restraint:** Self-restraint as stated by Plato is in the context of keeping one's place in the division of labour.
- **Kyklos:** It is the term used by Greek philosophers for the political cycles of government.

NOTES

1.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Plato believed rather than following the political path and tradition he should take on the path of education and educating people.
2. Plato's political theory was based upon Socrates' teaching. It was intended to change the existing conditions, not to merely create an exercise in abstract thinking.
3. Plato's theory of justice in the state argues that the state is natural because no one is self-sufficient. Hence, he elaborates his argument with the theory of division of labour.
4. Plato proposes in the first account that the aim of education should be to control the guards and curb their tendency to rule and convert them into what he calls 'noble puppies', who can fight fiercely with the enemies, and behave gently with those who are familiar to them.
5. Music and gymnastics are the two main elements of education for state guards.
6. The aim of philosopher kings' education is not the attainment of four virtues but the knowledge of good, which is considered as the ultimate virtue by Socrates.
7. Plato's Socrates uses his famous cave analogy to explain how education can be used to possess the knowledge of good.
8. *The Law* is concerned with the number of people that education will transform as patriots. And for this very reason the argument of the dialogue is for the public character of the education, which is only possible when it is imparted in the public building designed especially for that purposes.
9. In his works on psychology, Aristotle defined the soul as the expression or realization of a natural body. He regarded the soul or mind as the truth of the body and not as the outcome of its physiological conditions.
10. Aristotle divides knowledge into practical, theoretical and productive knowledge.

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11. Depending upon the number of people involved in governing and the focus of their interests, Aristotle distinguished six kinds of social structure in three pairs:
 - A state with only one ruler is either a monarchy or a tyranny
 - A state with several rulers is either an aristocracy or an oligarchy
 - A state in which all rule is either a polity or a democracy
12. According to Aristotle, a citizen is a person possessing the right to participate in 'deliberative or judicial office'.
13. Full citizenship was not given to women, slaves and foreigners.
14. According to Aristotle, revolution had a broad definition, which had two implications for him. First, revolution is any kind of change, major or minor, that is brought about in the constitution. That is to say, when a change is noticed in the structure of the ruling body — monarchy or oligarchy. Second, it implies a change in the ruling power, which may or may not bring a change in the government or constitution.
15. To Aristotle, the general causes of revolution can be tackled by
 - Inculcating the habit of abiding law by citizens
 - Treating various sections of the society with consideration
 - Educating the citizens that the spirit of constitution is the highest
 - Awarding political offices on a temporary basis
 - Ensuring equal distribution of political power among citizens
 - Rewarding citizens as often as possible
 - Restricting foreigners from holding public offices
16. It was Machiavelli's firm belief that the basis of contemporary politics was selfish political seizure and violence and not good Christian ethics.
17. State is the highest form of human association. It is indispensable for the promotion of human welfare. State is to be worshipped even by sacrificing the individual for the interest of the state.
18. The *Prince* is a handbook on the art of government and state craft. It is in the form of advice and addressed to any ruler.
19. Elaborating on the doctrine of *raison d'état* (reason of state), Machiavelli says it implies actions and policies promoting safety and security of the state. Because the state must preserve itself before it promotes the welfare of its people. For preserving and safeguarding itself, all means adopted by the state are justified.
20. Some of the qualities a prince must possess are:
 - Combine the qualities of a lion and a fox
 - Use a double standard of morality
 - Maintain strong army
 - Separate politics from religion
 - Remain free from emotions

21. Machiavelli borrowed the idea of secularism from the philosophy of Marsiglio.
22. According to Machiavelli, a secular state should keep religion separate from administration and not follow the principle of 'divine law'.

1.8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Short-Answer Questions

1. Why did Plato try to teach the philosophical ideas of Socrates to the rulers?
2. What argument does Plato give on division of labour?
3. What was the position of women in Aristotle's city-state?
4. Write a note on citizenship as discussed by Aristotle.
5. Write about the particular situations/causes where revolutions are likely to take place, according to Aristotle.
6. What was Machiavelli's view on the state?
7. What justification did Machiavelli give for the existence of a powerful state?

Long-Answer Questions

2. Do you think *The Republic* is a dialogue? Give your arguments.
3. What do you understand by Plato's concept of communism?
4. What was Aristotle's view about citizenship?
5. What were the causes of revolution according to Aristotle?
6. Discuss Aristotle's view on slavery.
7. Examine Machiavelli's views on the following:
 - (i) Politics and morality
 - (ii) State and religion
 - (iii) End justifies the means
8. 'Machiavelli laid the foundation of power politics'. Comment.
9. Explain Machiavelli's advice to the prince for powerful state.
10. 'Machiavelli laid the foundation of modern political thought'. Discuss.

1.9 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 MODERN POLITICAL THINKERS

NOTES

Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Unit Objectives
- 2.2 Bentham
 - 2.2.1 Utilitarian Principles
 - 2.2.2 Legislation and Morality
 - 2.2.3 Political Philosophy
 - 2.2.4 Views on Jurisprudence and Punishment
 - 2.2.5 Panopticon
- 2.3 J. S. Mill
 - 2.3.1 On Liberty
 - 2.3.2 Simple Principle of Liberty
 - 2.3.3 State and Liberty: Essays on Government
 - 2.3.4 Equal Rights for Women
 - 2.3.5 Revision of Utilitarianism
- 2.4 Vladimir Lenin
 - 2.4.1 State and Dictatorship of Party
 - 2.4.2 Theory of Revolution
 - 2.4.3 Neo Marxism: Revolution in Non-industrial Countries
 - 2.4.4 Lenin's Contribution to Neo-Marxism
 - 2.4.5 Scientific Socialism
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 Key Terms
- 2.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 2.8 Question and Answers
- 2.9 Further Reading

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Jeremy Bentham was an English philosopher and a social reformer. He is primarily known for his moral philosophy, especially his principle of utilitarianism, which evaluates actions based upon their consequences. Influenced by many enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke and David Hume, Bentham developed an ethical theory grounded in a largely empiricist account of human nature. Happiness for him was a matter of experiencing pleasure and lack of pain. The unit also deals with the concept of the Panopticon, the model of a prison which was structured by Bentham for the British government.

This unit also covers the ideas propounded by John Stuart Mill, a British philosopher, political economist and civil servant. Mill has actively contributed to social theory, political economy and political theory. He is considered the most influential English philosopher of the nineteenth century. Mill was a proponent of liberty and woman's rights. He, like Bentham before him, advocated utilitarianism,

and wished to offer a solution to issues related to probabilistic or inductive reasoning, such as the tendency of people to support information that conforms to their beliefs (also called confirmation bias). Therefore, he was of the opinion that falsification is a key component in science.

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The final section of this unit will discuss Lenin. For over 150 years the world has been challenged by a system of thought known as Marxism. Marxism has questioned the basis of class society in general and capitalist society in particular, and it was the foundation of a new kind of state, namely, a socialist state. A socialist state is a structured and organized economy where all means of production are controlled by the government. It is a state formed on the basis of centralized economic planning for the welfare of the masses. Two of the most outstanding proponents of this system of thought were Karl Marx of Germany and V. I. Lenin of Russia. Marx, the proponent of Marxism, discovered the law of class contradiction and declared that, without a revolution of the proletariat, there cannot be an end of exploitation of the working people. Lenin gave an organizational shape to this doctrine by setting up a revolutionary party that captured power in Czarist Russia and transformed it into a socialist state.

2.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Define the utilitarian principle and its implication towards legislation
- List the basic tenets of Bentham's ideas of political philosophy
- State Bentham's views on justice and legislation
- Assess the conception of the state in line with utilitarian principles and the theory of pain and pleasure
- Describe J. S. Mill's views on the rights for women
- Explain Mill's idea of individual liberty
- Describe Mill's view on representative government
- Discuss Lenin's contribution to Marxism
- Interpret Lenin's view about the party

2.2 BENTHAM

Jeremy Bentham, widely known as the founder of utilitarianism, also played the multiple roles of a philosopher, a jurist, a social reformer and an activist. A leading theorist in Anglo-American philosophy of law, Bentham is seen as a political radical whose ideas paved the way for the development of welfarism. He is popularly associated with the concept of utilitarianism, and the panopticon. His position entailed arguments in favour of individual and economic freedom, usury, the separation of church and state, freedom of expression, equal rights for women, the right to divorce,

and the decriminalizing of homosexual acts. He also fought for the abolition of slavery and the death penalty and for the elimination of physical punishment, including that of children. Even though he was on the side of extension of individual legal rights, he was against the idea of natural law and natural rights, referring to them as ‘nonsense upon stilts.’ He can be seen as one of the most influential utilitarian and his ideas were brought to the fore through his works and that of his students. Here we have his secretary and collaborator on the utilitarian school of philosophy, James Mill; James Mill’s son J. S. Mill; John Austin, legal philosopher; and several political leaders, including Robert Owe, a founder of modern socialism. He is considered the godfather of University College London (UCL).

Bentham is often seen in relation with the foundation of the University of London specifically University College of London (UCL), even though when UCL opened in 1826, he was 78 years old and played no active part in its foundation. The probable explanation is that UCL may not have been possible without his inspiration. Among Bentham strong beliefs was that education should be more widely available, specifically to those who were not wealthy or who did not belong to the established church – two requirements that had to be fulfilled by both the students by Oxford and Cambridge. UCL, being the first English university to open its doors to all irrespective of race, creed or political belief, can be seen, thus, to be largely in consonance with Bentham’s vision. He is credited with overseeing the appointment of one of his pupils, John Austin, as the first professor of Jurisprudence in 1829.

Born on 15 February 1748, in London in a prosperous middle class family, Bentham’s mother died when he was ten. His father was very strict and demanding and arranged a thorough education for Bentham. Such an upbringing rendered Bentham’s childhood monotonous and gloomy. Even as a child, Bentham could be seen as deriving his primary source of enjoyment from reading books with no inclination to play, reflecting his serious outlook.

An incident from his childhood suggests that he was nothing short of a child prodigy: Once, as a toddler, he was found sitting at his father’s desk perusing a multi-volume book on history of England. He began studying Latin at the age of three. Bentham had close relations with Samuel Bentham, his one surviving sibling. He had training as a lawyer and, was called to the bar in 1769 despite the fact that he never even practiced. When the American colonies published their Declaration of Independence in July 1776, the British government instead of issuing an official response covertly commissioned London lawyer and pamphleteer John Lind to publish a rebuttal. His 130-page tract was sent for distribution in the colonies and included an essay titled ‘Short Review of the Declaration’, penned by Bentham, a friend of Lind’s, which condemned and satirized America’s political philosophy.

Bentham began learning Latin at the age of three and proceeded to Queens College, Oxford, at the young age of twelve. It is on being stationed there, that he began developing his critical stance towards ancient or traditional ideas and institutions. He espoused the view that the entire system of law needs an overhauling. He had a keen interest in science, particularly in Chemistry and Botany. He was inspired and influenced by the French Philosopher *Claude Adrien Helvetius* and

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Cesare Bonesana, Marquis of Beccaria. He also drew inspiration from *Feneton's Telemaque*. From Helvetius, he took the lesson which proclaimed legislation as the most significant of all worldly pursuits. It is from the early 1770s, that we may trace the study of legislations becoming an important concern with Bentham. Though, he refrained from practicing law, he nonetheless concentrated on charting out what the lord should be, rather than delving in what it was. The period from the early 1770s to the mid-1780s can be seen as marking an important phase of development of Bentham's ideas. During this time, he concentrated on trying to comprehend the rational basis of law, in England as well as in other countries. During the mid-1770s, at the age of 28, he wrote a lengthy piece criticizing William Blackstone's - *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. A portion of this piece appeared in 1776 as *A Fragment on Government*. This work had a profound influence on the Earl of Shelbourne, a Whig aristocrat, who henceforth became his close friend. During his close association with Earl of Shelbourne, *Bentham* got attracted to lady Shelbourne's niece *Caroline Fox*. This was his second love, the first being *Marry Dunkley*. However, neither of the relationships led anywhere, and he remained a bachelor.

Bentham began to give his time and commitment to practical areas like public administration, economic, social policy, in addition to working on developing a theory on law and legislation. He laid down details for the construction of a prison or factory or work house which is referred to as the Panopticon or the inspection house. The panopticon was viewed as the pivotal hinge of utilitarianism, for it would aid in scientifically meting out philosophic calculus by measuring pain justly. Though he welcomed the French Revolution and sent forth his reform proposals, none were accepted. Yet, he was made an honorary citizen of France in 1792 for his *Draught of a New Plan for the Organisation of the Judicial Establishment of France* (1790). The early 1800s were witness to an increase in his popularity and reputation, which began to garner attention even in far off places like Russia and countries in Latin America. In 1809, a close relationship between *Bentham* and *James Mill* (1773–1836) started taking root, with Mill being convinced of the urgent need for reforms. It is under Mill's influence, that Bentham can be seen as having become more radical. In 1817, he published *Plan of Parliamentary Reform* in the form of catechism, and 1819 saw the completion of the draft proposals of the *Radical Reform Bill*. An attack on the establishment church can be witnessed in the Church of England in 1818. The codification of law occupied a high priority for Bentham from the 1780s to the 1830s. He continued with his lifelong devotion to legal reform, looking upon it as a game. Other developments ascribed to Bentham include inventing devices like primitive telephones, suggesting reforms for the London police, the London sewage and drainage systems, devising a central heating system, running a law school from his home, labouring on a scheme for lowering the national debt, securing low interest loans for the poor, planning a national public education system, a national health service, and a national census.

Even though leading an ascetic life himself, given that saints were idlers, he is to be seen as having regarded ascetism with contempt. He looked down upon spiritualism and claimed that spiritualism glorified unhappiness and distrusted pleasure. Spiritualism is, then, to be seen as being in opposition to Bentham's unwavering

belief in happiness as the goal of all individuals. He helped in providing funds to the University of London. He also composed humorous songs and was fond of rituals. It is with progression in age that he is seen to have become light-hearted and causal. He began, and financed, the *Westminster Review* in 1824 with the aim of furthering his utilitarian principles.

The list of books penned by him include, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789), *Anarchical Fallacies* (1791), *Discourse on Civils and Penal Legislation* (1802), *The Limits of Jurisprudence* (1802), *Indirect Legislation* (1802), *A Theory of punishments and Rewards* (1811), *A treatise on Judicial Evidence* (1813), *Papers Upon Codification and Public Instruction* (1817), *The Book of Fallacies* (1824). He also wrote *Rational of Evidence* (1827), which was edited by J. S. Mill. He also had several correspondences with the Indian thinker Ram Mohan Roy, who was his friend. Ram Mohan supported Bentham's negation of the natural right theory and the distinction between law and morals. He was also appreciative of the principle of utilitarianism. Bentham lived till the age of 84 and died on 6 June, 1832. Bentham left manuscripts which account for some 5,000,000 words. Since 1968, University College London has been working on an edition of his collected works. The Project is now attempting to bring about a digitization of the Bentham papers and outsource their transcription. So far, 25 volumes have come up; and there may be many more waiting in the wings to come out before the project is completed. While most of his work was never published in his lifetime; much of that which was published was readied for publication by others. Several of his works first came in French translation, prepared for the press by Etienne Dumont, while some made their first appearance in English in the 1820s drawing from back-translation from Dumont's 1802 collection of Bentham's writing on civil and penal legislation. The works which were published in Bentham's lifetime include:

- (i) 'Short Review of the Declaration' (1776) was an attack on America's Declaration of Independence
- (ii) 'A Fragment on Government' (1776) which served as a scathing critique of some introductory passages relating to political theory in William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. The book, published anonymously, got a good acceptance, and was ascribed to some of the greatest minds of the time. Bentham disagreed with several of the ideas propounded by Blackstone, such as his defense of judge-made law and legal fictions, his theological formulation of the doctrine of mixed government, his appeal to a social contract and his use of the vocabulary of natural law. Bentham's 'Fragment' was only a small part of a 'Commentary on the Commentaries', which remained unpublished until the twentieth century.
- (iii) *Introduction to Principles of Morals and Legislation* (printed for publication 1780, published 1789).
- (iv) *Defence of Usury* (1787). Jeremy Bentham wrote a series of thirteen 'Letters' addressed to Adam Smith, published in 1787 as *Defence of Usury*. Bentham's main argument against the restriction was premised

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on the view that ‘projectors’ generate positive externalities. Gilbert K. Chesterton identified Bentham’s essay on usury as marking the very advent of the ‘modern world.’ Bentham’s arguments had a far reaching influence.

Many eminent writers tried to put an end to the restriction, and a repeal was strived for in stages and fully achieved in England in 1854. There is little evidence corroborating Smith’s reaction. He did not revise the offending passages in *The Wealth of Nations*, but Smith made little or no substantial revisions after the third edition of 1784.

(v) *Panopticon* (1787, 1791)

(vi) *Emancipate your Colonies* (1793)

(vii) *Traité de Législation Civile et Penale* (1802, edited by Étienne Dumont. 3 vols)

(viii) *Punishments and Rewards* (1811)

(ix) *A Table of the Springs of Action* (1815)

(x) *Parliamentary Reform Catechism* (1817)

(xi) *Church-of-Englandism* (printed 1817, published 1818) (xii) *Elements of the Art of Packing* (1821)

(xii) *The Influence of Natural Religion upon the Temporal Happiness of Mankind* (1822, written with George Grote and published under the pseudonym Philip Beauchamp)

(xiii) *Not Paul But Jesus* (1823, published under the pseudonym Gamaliel Smith) (xv) *Book of Fallacies* (1824)

(xiv) *A Treatise on Judicial Evidence* (1825)

John Bowring, a British politician who had been Bentham’s trusted friend, was appointed his literary executor and given the task of bringing forth a collected edition of his works. This appeared in 11 volumes in 1838–1843. Instead of basing his edition on Bentham’s own manuscripts, Bowring based his edition on previously published editions (including those of Dumont), and he did not bring out any reprint of Bentham’s works on religion. Even though Bowring’s work includes significant writings, such as the one on international relations as Bentham’s *A Plan for the Universal and Perpetual Peace*, written 1786–89, which forms part IV of the *Principle of International Law*, it has received criticism.

In 1952–54, Werner Stark published a three-volume set, *Jeremy Bentham’s Economic Writings*, in which he tried collating all of Bentham’s writings on economic matters, including both published and unpublished material. Not trusting Bowring’s edition, he undertook great labour in reviewing thousands of Bentham’s original manuscripts and notes; a task rendered much more difficult because of the way in which they had been left by Bentham and organized by Bowring.

2.2.1 Utilitarian Principles

The school of thought called Utilitarianism dominated English political thinking from the middle of the 18th century to the middle of the 19th century. Some of the early

utilitarians were Francis Hutcheson, Hume, Helvetius, Priestly, William Paley and Beccaria. However, it was Bentham who established the theory of Utilitarianism and rendered it popular on the basis of his endless proposals for reform. As Russell has rightly pointed out, Bentham's significant contribution is to be located not so much in the doctrine but to various practical problems. It was through his friendship with James Mill, the father of John Stuart Mill, that Bentham got acquainted with the two greatest economists of his time — Malthus and David Ricardo - and was able to learn classical economics from them. This group of thinkers referred to themselves as philosophic radicals and aimed to bring about a revolutionary transformation of England into a modern, liberal, democratic, constitutional, secular state based on market economics. Utilitarianism was used interchangeably with philosophic radicalism, individualism, laissez faire, and administrative nihilism.

The seminal assumptions of utilitarianism postulated that human beings, naturally so, sought happiness, that pleasure alone was good, and that the only right action was that which produced the greatest happiness of the greatest number. In espousing such assumptions, the utilitarian thinkers can be seen reiterating the ideas of the Greek thinker - Epicures. Bentham lent a scientific colour to this pleasure – pain theory and brought it in application in the context of the policies of the state, welfare measures, and the administrative, penal and legislative reforms. He brought to the fore a psychological perspective on human nature. He conceived human beings as seekers of pleasure. In his analytical inquiry, he used the benchmark of utility. His book, *Introduction to the principles of Moral and Legislation*, provides an explanation of his theory of utility. The central principle undergirding his theory states that the state is useful only so long as it caters to the 'Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number'. The 'Greatest Happiness Theory', in turn, is based on a psychological and hedonistic theory of pleasure and pain.

Bentham's ambition in life was to create a 'Pannomion' - a complete utilitarian code of law. Bentham not only brought to the fore many legal and social reforms, but also elaborated on an underlying moral principle on which they should be based. The argument being put forward here stated that the right act or policy was one which would lead to 'the greatest good for the greatest number of people, also known as 'the greatest happiness principle' or the 'principle of utility'.

Bentham also brought to the fore a procedure which would aid in gauging the moral status of any action, which he referred to as the Hedonistic or felicific calculus. Utilitarianism was revised and expanded by Bentham's student John Stuart Mill, and it is due to Mill's that, 'Benthamism' became a primary component which was deployed in the liberal conception of state policy objectives.

Bentham proposed a classification of 12 pains and 14 pleasures and 'felicific calculus' by which we might test the 'happiness factor' of any action. Nonetheless, it should not be forgotten that Bentham's 'hedonistic' theory unlike Mill's, is often said to be devoid of the principle of fairness, which is entrenched in a conception of Justice. In 'Bentham and the Common Law Tradition', Gerald J. Postema states: 'No moral concept suffers more at Bentham's hand than the concept of justice. There is no sustained, mature analysis of the notion . . .'

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2.2.2 Legislation and Morality

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Bentham's *Principles of Legislation* highlights the principle of utility and explains the way this view of morality feeds into legislative practices. His principle of utility hails 'good' as that which aids the production of the greatest amount of pleasure and the minimum amount of pain, while 'evil' is conceived as that which produces the most pain without the pleasure. This concept of pleasure and pain is defined by Bentham as being of both a physical as well as spiritual nature. Bentham delineates this principle as it manifests itself within the legislation of a society. He lays bare a set of criteria for gauging the extent of pain or pleasure that a certain decision will create.

Deploying these measurements, Bentham takes a review of the concept of punishment and tries to fathom when it should be used, and whether a punishment will end up creating more pleasure or more pain for a society. He tells legislators to determine whether punishment can lead to an even more evil offense. Instead of bringing down evil acts, Bentham is arguing that certain unnecessary laws and punishments could ultimately lead to new and more dangerous vices than those being punished to begin with. These statements are followed by propositions explaining how antiquity, religion, reproach of innovation, metaphor, fiction, fancy, antipathy and sympathy, and imaginary law are not a sufficient justification for the creation of legislature. Rather, Bentham is calling upon legislators to measure the pleasures and pains associated with any legislation and to bring forth laws in order to enable the greatest good for the greatest number. He argues that the conception whereby the individual pursues his or her own happiness cannot be necessarily declared 'right', since often these individual pursuits can lead to greater pain and less pleasure for the society as a whole. Hence, the legislation of a society is integral to maintaining a society with optimum pleasure and the minimum degree of pain for the greatest amount of people.

Pleasure and pain theory, which is quite abstruse, is brought to the fore by Bentham in a simple and accessible manner. He points out that human beings are creatures of feeling and sensibility, while reason is only a feeling or passion. All experiences are either to be seen as pleasurable or painful. That action is deemed good which increases pleasure and decreases pain, whereas, that action is deemed bad which decreases pleasure and increases pain. The benchmark for judging the goodness or badness of every individual's actions is the pleasure-pain theory. Bentham advocated that 'nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters - pain and pleasure. It is incumbent on them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. So, we have on one hand, the standard of right and wrong, and on the other, the chain of causes and effects. Achievement of pleasure and avoidance of pain are, however, not to be seen as the sole motivating forces of human behaviour; they also set the standards of values in life'. According to him, what applies to the individual's morals, applies with equal force statecraft. He further pointed out that the action of the state is to be adjudged well, if it increases pleasure and decreases pain. All actions must then be judged by significant yardstick. Sabine in his book *History of Political Theory* points out that

this principle was held by the utilitarians to be the only rational factor, guiding both private morals and public policy. The seminal function of jurisprudence is sensorial, while criticism of the legal system is carried out keeping in mind its improvement. For such criticism to function, a standard of value is required, and that can be gathered only from the principle of utility. He pointed out that it is the greatest happiness of the greatest number on the basis of which we may ascertain the issue of right and wrong. All actions of the state should be geared towards providing the greatest good of the greatest number. Hence, utilitarianism is to be seen as implying both individualism and democracy.

In Bentham's framework, pleasure and pain can be quantitatively and arithmetically calculated and measured, and a comparison can be drawn between the two qualities. In order to gauge pleasure and pain, he advocated the doctrine of felicific calculus. The sum of the interests of the several members composing it is the interest of the community. The calculation here would entail that the happiness of each person is to count for one and none is to account for more than one. He delineated a list of some factors which would be used to measure pleasure and pain:

- Intensity
- Duration
- Certainty or uncertainty
- Nearness or remoteness
- Purity
- Extent
- Fecundity

While the first four factors are clear, the fifth factor *purity* means that pleasure is one which is not likely to be followed by pain. The sixth factor *extent* refers to the number of persons who might be affected by this particular pleasure or pain. The seventh factor *fecundity* refers to productivity. Bentham's formula of calculation entails that we should make an addition of the values of all the pleasures on one side, and those of all the pains on the other. The balance or surplus of any of the sides will be an indication if it is to be deemed good or bad. Based on his felicific calculus, he has tried to render ethics and politics as exact sciences like physics and mathematics. In the words of Wayper, "The doctrine of utility is a doctrine of quantitatively conceived hedonism - it can recognize no distinction between pleasures except a quantitative one. He contended that human beings by nature were marked by hedonism. Each of their actions drew from a desire to seek pleasure and avoid pain. Every human action could be traced to embody a cause and a motive. He saw hedonism not only as a principle of motivation, but also as a principle of action. He listed 14 simple pleasures and 12 simple pains, which were then classified into self-regarding and other regarding groups. Only two, benevolence and malevolence, were put under other-regarding action. Under self-regarding motives, he listed physical desire, pecuniary interest, love of power and self-preservation. Self-preservation would include fear of pain, love of life, and love of ease. He described four sanctions which would serve as sources of pain or pleasure, such as physical sanction, political and legal sanction, moral or popular sanction and religious sanction. He postulated

NOTES

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that an adult individual is to be hailed as the best judge of his own happiness, and to be seen worthy of pursuing it without harming the happiness of others. He traced an essential connection between the happiness of an individual and that of the community, and offered the principle of utility as a standard which would aid in framing laws to obtain overall happiness and welfare of the community. 'I' was constantly emphasized by him, that a person's actions and policies had to be judged against his intention geared towards furthering the happiness of the community. The end and the goal of legislation were to follow the rule: 'each is to count for one and no one for more than one'. His defense of the principles of utility led him to plead a case for democracy, manhood, and, later on, universal suffrage, including female enfranchisement. As Bentham postulated, suffrage and democracy were to be seen as integral for the realization of the greatest happiness principle.

His views regarding monetary economics are to be seen as being at great variance from those of David Ricardo; however, they both exhibited certain affinities with Thornton. He focused on monetary expansion as a means of helping to create full employment. Bentham also underlined the relevance of forced saving, propensity to consume, the saving-investment relationship, and other matters that underlie the content of modern income and employment analysis. His monetary view can be seen as having a close affinity with the fundamental concepts deployed in his model of utilitarian decision-making. His work is to be seen as occupying the centre stage of modern welfare economics.

Bentham stated that pleasures and pains can be graded according to their value or 'dimension' such as intensity, duration, certainty of a pleasure or a pain. He was occupied with thinking out the maxima and minima of pleasures and pains; and this engagement triggered the trajectory which would see a future employment of the maximization principle in the economics of the consumer, the firm, and the search for an optimum in welfare economics.

2.2.3 Political Philosophy

More popular of Bentham's works are *Fragments on Government* and *Introduction to the Principles of Moral and Legislation*, in which he has laid out his political philosophies which can be discussed under following heads.

Utilitarian Principle

Though, the principle of utility has been discussed in detail, we can retrace here a brief outline since it is one of the most significant political ideas propounded by Bentham. As said earlier, he was not the originator of this idea. He borrowed it from Priestley and Hutcheson. However, Bentham reworked the idea, and owing to his attributing to it great significance, this idea became an integral part of his philosophical system and also a watch-word of the political movement of the later 18th and early 19th century. The keynote of this principle postulates that the state is useful only so long as it caters to the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number'. The 'greatest happiness' theory in turn is based on a psychological and hedonistic theory of 'pleasure and pain'. Bentham highlighted that, action is good which increases pleasure and decreases pain. The yardstick of judging the goodness or badness of every individual's

action is the pleasure-pain theory. According to him, what applies to the individual morals, applies with equal force to statecraft. The seminal idea which needs to be grasped here is that pleasure and pain can be quantitatively and arithmetically calculated and measured.

Views on Political Society

With respect to the origin of the political society, Bentham blatantly rejected the contract theory as absurd. He rejected the view which saw children as being bound by the oral or written words of their forefathers. He brought to the fore a harsh criticism of the theory of natural rights. According to him, the state is founded on the selfish interest of the individuals. People obey the demands of the state as it furthers their selfish interest, their life, and property. In his view, the political society has existed and will continue to exist because it is believed to promote the happiness of the individual who compose it. Hence, succinctly put, the origin of the state is in the interest, welfare, and happiness of individuals which comprise it. It is the principle of utility which is to be credited with binding individuals together. The utilitarian concept conceives the state as a group of persons organized for the promotion and maintenance of the greatest happiness of the greatest number of individuals comprising it. Bentham's view of the state entails that 'any corporate body, such as state all society is evidently fictitious. Whatever is done in its name is done by someone, and it's good, as he said, is the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it.'

Views on State, Law and Liberty

According to Bentham, the modern state is to be viewed as an ideal, and an aspiration which examines the technique of state building and the method that would promote modernization. He regarded diversity and fragility within political order as inevitable. He saw the state as a legal entity with individualism as its ethical basis. He saw modernization as entailing two things: on the one hand, it required a broad based and diversified legal system which would take stock of desires of individuals and on the other hand, it comprised of institutions that would extend support to the legal system, aiding in namely the Bureaucratization of public service and legislation as a continual process, accommodating both change and diversity. He kept secure the individualist notion of moral autonomy with due priority given to individual interest. According to Hume, 'Bentham's theory brought together in a particular way the two great themes of modern political thought: individualism and the modern sovereign state.'

Bentham came up with ideas and devises geared to guarantee governmental protection of individual interest, ensuring that public happiness should be seen as the object of public policy. Government is to be seen as a trust with legislation as the primary function and uniformity, clarity, order and consistency were to be seen as crucial for both law and order. He was equally conscious of the need for institutional safeguards which would see to it that the government pursued public interest. He championed universal adult franchise and recommended it to all those who could read the list of voters. Further, he conceived of the state as comprising a number of persons who are supposed to be in the habit of paying obedience to a person, or an assemblage of persons, of a known and certain description. Such a group of persons

NOTES

NOTES

taken together is to be seen comprising a political society. In his *Constitutional Code*, Bentham reserved for the people the power to select and dismiss their leader, and to ensure that the interest of the rulers were closely linked with those of the people. For furthering this, he recommended the abolition of monarchy and the House of Lords, checks on legislative authority, unicameralism, secret ballot annual elections, equal electoral districts, annual parliaments and election of the prime minister by the parliament. He saw representative government as providing a solution to the problem. He considered constitutional representative democracy as an overall political arrangement which was seen secured by measures like widespread suffrage, an elected assembly, frequent elections, freedom of the press, and of associations providing a guarantee against misrule. He regarded constitutional democracy as being of great significance to all nations and all governments who were in possession of liberal opinions.

Bentham postulated that the state was the only source of law. The main purpose of the state is to frame laws which attend to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. According to him, law is to be seen as comprising the command of the sovereign, and binding on the subjects. But the individuals obey the law of the state only because it furthers their interest. In the words of Wayper, 'because law is a command, it must be the command of a supreme authority.' Indeed it is only in the case where such an authority is regularly obeyed, that Bentham is prepared to admit the existence of civil society. His state, thus, is to be seen as a sovereign state. It is the sign of a sovereign state that nothing it does can be illegal. Law is the sole source of all rights of the individuals. There is no such thing as natural rights, and all rights are civil rights. The individuals can never plead natural law against the state. According to Bentham, natural rights are not to be ascribed any significance. The basis of the political obligation comprises partly habitual obedience of the laws of the state by the individuals and partly the calculated self-interest of the individuals. Even though Bentham strongly believed that rights cannot be maintained against the state, yet he justified opposition to the state if that opposition will end up producing less pain than continued obedience. According to him, liberty is not to be perceived as an end in itself. Happiness is the only final criterion and liberty must bow to that criterion. The end of the state is maximum happiness and not maximum liberty. This concept of a state can only be a democracy and that too a representative democracy. In such a state all men should have equal rights. However, the concept of equality of rights is not premised on any abstract notion of natural law, but rather rests on the concrete idea that every individual seeks to pursue his interest to the best of his mind. All individuals are invested with equal rights including right of property in the eyes of law, despite the fact that by nature they may not be equal. Protection of property is one of the ways to ensure a furtherance of one's happiness. However, Bentham also believed that law should strive for facilitating an equal distribution of property and removal of gross inequalities. In opposition to natural rights and natural law, Bentham recognized legal laws and rights that were enacted and enforced by a duly constituted political authority or the state. He defined law as comprising the command of the sovereign, and postulated that the power of sovereign be seen as indivisible, unlimited, inalienable, and permanent.

Bentham defined liberty as signifying an absence of restraints and coercion. Crucial to his concept of liberty was the idea of security, which brought together his idea of civil and political liberty. For him, the principle of utility provided the objective moral standard, which was seen as being considerably at variance from other theories that supplied purely subjective criteria.

Even though Bentham downplayed the sanctity of natural rights formulations, he acknowledged the importance of right as being essential for the security of the individual. He rejected not just the idea of natural and inviolable right to property, but also the idea of absolute right to property since the government had the right to interfere with property to usher in security. He backed the need for adequate compensation in case of a violation of the individual's right to property. Property, for Bentham, was neither natural, nor absolute, and nor inviolable.

2.2.4 Views on Jurisprudence and Punishment

One of the most significant aspects of Bentham's political philosophy is located in the sphere of jurisprudence and reforms in criminal law and prison. There was no limitation imposed on the legislative power of the state, not even in the customs and conventions. While the state may take help from customs and established institutions, there were no checks on the legislative competence of the state. Bentham brought to the fore his popular distinction between 'descriptive' and 'sensorial' jurisprudence; namely what the law ought to be or whether a particular law was bad or good, to establish the validity of moral propositions about legal rights. Bentham's greatest achievement comprises his attempt to apply the principle of greatest happiness of the greatest number to all the branches of law - civil and criminal, procedural law as well as to the organization of the judicial system. For furthering this end, he suggested several reforms in civil and criminal laws and procedures. He was entirely for simplification of English law and international law. As a jurist and legal reformer, he brought to the fore liberal reforms in antiquated British law and procedure. The whole of the 19th Century legislation of England can be seen as resulting from his laborious endeavours. Bentham suggested diverse ways and means by which justice could be administered cheaply and expeditiously. He postulated that justice delayed is justice denied. He suggested that acts of the parliament should be framed in simple and easily accessible language to ensure that the lawyers do not cheat the public at large. The highly technical, rigid, obscure, capricious and dilatory legal procedures existing during his time were nothing short of a conspiracy on the part of the legal profession to misguide the public. Bentham suggested that there should be single-judge courts, since the multi-judge courts led to a shirking of responsibility. He also furthered the suggestion that judges and other officers of the court should be paid regular salaries instead of ad hoc fees. Further, he also attacked the jury system.

In the context of punishment, he maintained that penalty is an evil but a necessary one. It is an evil since it engenders pain, but it can be justified if it is seen as either preventing a greater future evil or repairing an evil already committed. Bentham strongly believed that punishment should be in consonance with the crime committed, and that under no circumstance should it exceed the damage done. He was not for death penalty, except in very rare cases. He was also in favour of doing

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away with other savage penalties from the British legal system, and suggested diverse reforms in the treatment being doled out to the prisoners. Here, the state was required to tailor the punishment with regard to the offence in such a manner which would restrain the offender from committing a crime, or at least from repeating it. To aid in the furtherance of these reforms, Bentham has given a detailed account of various punishments to be given in particular circumstances.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. To what is Bentham most popularly associated with?
2. Which university was inspired by Bentham's ideas?
3. Name some of the early utilitarians.
4. What does the principle of utility involve?

2.2.5 Panopticon

The starting point of Bentham's political theory was his strong belief that there was need for extensive reforms in British society and particularly in English law and judicial procedure. He critiqued the existing laws and the machinery, as well as the methods of executing them and proposed detail scheme of his own. Most of the law reforms since Bentham's day can be traced to his influence. Sir Henry Maine once said 'I do not know a single law reform affected since Bentham's day which cannot be traced to his influence'. As earlier stated, Bentham postulated a theory of punishment. In this context, he envisaged the construction of a prison which came to be known as the Panopticon. This model prison was designed by him for the British Government in the 1790s. While he envisaged that the British Government would buy a piece of land to construct the prison, to his disappointment the project could not be concretized.

Bentham conceived of the Panopticon to be the hallmark of utilitarianism. His concept of the felicific calculus was to be deployed in this institution. However, it would be significant to keep in mind that the Panopticon envisioned by Bentham was more than a mere prison. It was to serve as a model for any disciplinary institution. Besides being a jail house, it could as easily be a school, hospital, factory, military barracks, etc. According to Michel Foucault, the Panopticon represents a pivotal moment in the history of repression — the transition from the inflicting of penalties to the imposition of surveillance. In his book *Power/Knowledge*, Foucault has extensively dealt with the details which went in the building of prisons: 'the prison was a perimeter building in the form of a ring. At the centre of this, there is a tower pierced by large windows opening on to the inner face of the ring. The outer building is divided into cells, each of which traverses the whole thickness of the building. These cells have two windows, one opening on to the inside, facing the windows of the central tower, the other, the outer one, allowing day light to pass through the whole cell. All that is then needed is to put an overseer in the lower end place and in each of the cells a lunatic, a patient, a convict, a worker or a school boy. The back lighting enables one to pick out from the central tower the little captive silhouettes in

the ring of cells. In short, the principle of the dungeon is reversed; day light and the overseer's gaze capture the inmate more effectively. The prisoners, who have no contact with each other, feel as if they are under the constant watch of the guards. There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints, but just a gaze. An inspecting gaze which each individual will end up interiorizing to the point that he becomes his own overseer; each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself.' Bentham suggested an incorporation of 'Big Brother' supervision, coupled with fourteen hours a day, long hours on the tread wheel accompanied by Martial music, while completely rejecting solitary confinement as abhorrent and irrelevant. In his utilitarian mission to prevent crime, he advocated punishments like castration for rape. Subsequently he applied the principle of the Panopticon to poultry, devising the first battery farm.

Among his diverse proposals for legal and social reform was a design for a prison building he called the Panopticon. Although it was never built, the idea had an important influence upon several subsequent generations of thinkers. Twentieth-century French philosopher Michel Foucault argued that the Panopticon was paradigmatic of a whole range of 19th century 'disciplinary' institutions. It is said that the Mexican prison 'Lecumberri' was designed on the basis of this idea.

Having written a dissertation on punishment, in which he developed and systematized Baccaria's ideas, Benjamin was convinced that pain could be scientifically administered by experts. He devoted most of his time in dividing the scheme, and making meticulous plans which went so far as the governor's urinal. He hoped to be appointed the first governor of the Panopticon and was confident that it would give him £37,000. Like his brother, he had an unwavering belief in contraptions of all kinds. In 1791, Bentham send his plans to the English Prime Minister Pitt, but the panopticon, as earlier stated, never really materialized, forcing him to admit defeat 20 years later. A jail was built, but not on the design recommended by him. He was awarded compensation for his sincerity and effort.

The Benthamite idea of the panopticon has been severely criticized by Michel Foucault. Foucault saw the panopticon as the quintessential disciplinary apparatus of the bourgeois state, epitomizing a repressive nationality.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

5. When was the model prison designed by Bentham?
6. Who has severely criticized the Benthamite idea of the panopticon?
7. What, according to Michel Foucault, was the panoptican paradigmatic of?

2.3 J. S. MILL

John Stuart Mill, a great essayist, economist, reformer and one of the greatest political thinkers of modern times, was born in London on 20th May, 1806. His father, James Mill, was also a political philosopher and contemporary of Jeremy Bentham. J. S.

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Mill was a British philosopher and civil servant. An influential contributor to social theory, political theory, and political economy, his conception of liberty justified the freedom of the individual in opposition to unlimited state control. He was a proponent of utilitarianism, an ethical theory developed by Jeremy Bentham, although his conception of it was very different from Bentham's. Mill became a strong advocate of women's rights and for social reforms such as labour unions and farm cooperatives. In *Considerations on Representative Government*, J.S. Mill called for various reforms of Parliament and voting, especially proportional representation, the Single Transferable Vote, and the extension of suffrage. He was godfather to Bertrand Russell. He died in 1873 at the age of 67.

By the end of his life, he was the acknowledged philosopher-leader of English liberalism and in Lord Morley's words, one of the greatest teachers of his age. In his thinking, he was greatly influenced by the dialogues and dialectics of Plato and the cross questioning of Socrates. He had imbibed Bentham's principle from his father and from Bentham himself, and he found the principle of utility the key stone of his beliefs. He outlined in his own words 'I now had a creed, a doctrine, a philosophy, a religion, the inculcation and diffusion of which would be made the principal outward purpose of my life.'

2.3.1 On Liberty

Mill's 'Essay on Liberty' is one of the finest discourses on the definition of freedom in general and freedom of thought and expression in particular. He is an ardent champion of liberty. According to Mill, free discussion alone can nourish fruitful ideas. He points out that not even the whole of mankind can coerce even a single person into accepting the majority view point. He says truth will certainly come out of free discussion. There cannot be any self-realization or self-development of individuals without liberty. Mill passionately advocates the right of the individual to freedom. In its negative sense, it meant that society had no right to coerce an unwilling individual, except for self-defense.

In Mill's words 'it is being left to one self: all restraints qua restraints is an evil'. In its positive sense, it meant the greatest amount of freedom for the pursuit of the individual's creative impulses and energies for self-development. If there was clash between the opinion of the individual and that of the community, it was the individual who was the ultimate judge, unless the community could be convinced without resorting to threat and coercion.

Mill's ideas on liberty had a direct relationship with his theories of utility or happiness. Mill regarded liberty as a necessary means for the development of individuality, which was to become the ultimate source of happiness. There was only one road for him to take and that was the road of higher utility. Mill has done a distinction between higher and lower utility, which may better be understood respectively as conducting to the good of society and the good of individuals. He is keen to promote the good of the society as well as individuals. But the ultimate basis on which he erects his grand edifice if liberty is his consideration of social good, conceding of course, that individual has also not been lost sight of Happiness, for Mill, was the ability of the individual to discover his innate powers and develop these

while exercising his human abilities of autonomous thought and action. Happiness means liberty and individuality. He regarded liberty as a fundamental prerequisite for leading a good, worthy and dignified life. J. Gray says 'The contention of the *Essay 'On Liberty'* is that happiness so conceived is best achieved in a free society governed by the principle of liberty.

Mill insists on liberty of thought and expression as well as liberty of conduct. He defends liberty of thought and expression on two important grounds. In the first place, he argued that it is useful to society. He asserts that rational knowledge is the basis of social welfare, and the only way of confirming an extending two knowledge is to submit all ideas, old and new, to the test of free discussion and debate. In the second place, he advocates liberty of thought and expression on the ground of human dignity. On the liberty of conduct, he takes another line of argument. He draws a distinction between two types of actions of man 'self-regarding actions' and 'other-regarding actions'. He advocates complete freedom of conduct for the individual in all matters not affecting the community, i.e., in the case of 'self-regarding actions'. However, in the case of 'other-regarding actions', i.e., in matters that do effect the community Mill concedes the right of the community to coerce the individual if his conduct is prejudicial to its welfare. In this way, Mill defends complete freedom of conduct for the individual unless it harms the community. But the state could also interfere in the self-regarding action if it was thought to be very injurious to individual himself. Mill says in his 'Essay on Liberty', 'the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others'.

Mill defended the right of individuality, which meant the right of choice. He explained that as far as self-regarding actions were concerned, coercion would be detrimental to self-development. First, the evils of coercion far outweighed the good achieved. Second, individuals were so diverse in the needs and capacities for happiness that coercion would be futile. Since, the person was the best judge of his own interest, he had the information and the incentives to achieve them. Third, since diversity was in itself good. Other things being equal, it should be encouraged. Last, freedom was the most important requirement in the life of a rational person. Mill contended that positive liberty, i.e., autonomy and self-mastery, were inherently desirable and it was possible if individuals were allowed to develop their own talents and invent their own life styles, i.e., a great deal of negative liberty. Hence, he made a strong case for negative liberty, and the liberal state and liberal society were essential prerequisites.

Mill had no doubt of the utility of absolute liberty of thought and expression. He does not recognize any limitation of any kind what so ever on the right of free discussion of individuals. According to him, no society in which these liberties are not on the whole respected, is free, whatever may be its form of government. Mill is not merely concerned with the advocacy of thought and discussion but he is also concerned with the development of individuality of men and women in the community. The freedom of thought and discussion is not the only theme of his liberty. He wants to promote the development of individual man and woman because he is convinced that all wise and noble things come and must come from individuals. In his opinion,

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there can be no self-development without liberty. It is this connection between liberty and self-development that interests him most, and even though he goes on to argue that liberty is also necessary for the happiness of society.

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Mill justified restricted interference not because he is a great democrat but because of his in-bred distrust of authority, and especially of democratically controlled authority. Mill's contention was that individual in democracy was swamped in general. Democracy prevented him from developing individuality. From the arguments of Mill and his definitions of liberty, it becomes very clear that he is a reluctant democrat and all the more a prophet of empty liberty. Defining liberty at one place, Mill points out 'liberty consists in what one desires. Mill has gone far towards admitting the extreme idealist contention that one can be forced to be free.

Mill regarded liberty of conscience, liberty to express and publish one's opinion, liberty to live as one pleased and freedom of association as essential for a meaningful life and for the pursuit of one's own good. His defense of freedom of thought and expression was one of the most powerful and eloquent expositions in the western intellectual tradition. In the words of Mill 'if all mankind minus one were of one opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind'.

The early liberals defended liberty for the sake of efficient government whereas for Mill, liberty was good in itself, for it helped in the development of a humane, civilized moral person. It was beneficial both to society that permits them and to the individual that enjoy that. Mill accepted the observation of Tocquville that the modern industrial societies were becoming more egalitarian and socially conformist, thereby threatening individuality and creativity. He was fearful, 'Lest the inevitable growth of social equality and of the government of public opinion, should impose on mankind an oppressive yoke of uniformity in opinion and practice'.

According to Mill, the singular threat to individual liberty was from the tyranny of the majority in its quest for extreme egalitarianism and social conformity. This made him realize the inadequacy of early liberalism. He pointed out that in the area of thought and discussion; the active and inquiring mind had become morally timid, for it concealed the true opinion when discussed in public. He further says 'Our merely social intolerance kills no one, roots out no public, but induces men to disguise them.

According to Mill individuality meant the power or capacity for critical inquiry and responsible thought. It meant self-development and the expression of free will. He stressed on absolute liberty of conscience, belief and expression for they were crucial to human progress. Mill offered two arguments for liberty of expression in the liberty of truth: (i) the dissenting opinion could be true and its suppression would rob humankind of useful knowledge; (ii) even if the opinion was false it would strengthen the correct view by challenging it.

Mill applied the principle of liberty to mature individuals and excluded children, invalids, the mentally handicapped and barbarian societies. Liberty could be withheld where individuals were not educated. He considered liberty as belonging to higher and advanced civilizations, and prescribed despotism or paternalism with severe

restrictions in case of lower ones. He also cautioned against sacrifice or infringement of liberty for the sake of making a state strong.

It is generally believed Mill's *Essay on Liberty* was essentially written with the purpose of defending the idea of negative liberty. It is true that Mill advanced a notion of positive liberty but, he valued choice and individuality as ends in themselves, and not because they promoted general happiness. He did not propose a single overarching principle or values, which normally accompanied theories of positive liberty. The theme on liberty was not the absence of restraints but the denial of individual autonomy by the coercion exercised by moral majority and/or an intrusive public opinion. It is criticized that Mill's linkage between individuality and liberty made him conclude that only a minority was in a position to enjoy freedom. The majority of the people remained enslaved in customs, and hence unfree. However, in spite of his elitism, he remained an uncompromising liberal for he ruled out paternalism, the idea that law and society could intervene in order to do good to the individual. He explicitly ruled out interference in self-regarding actions. Mill stated that the right of liberty could be sacrificed only for some 'other right', a point that has been reiterated by Rawls. However, he failed to analyse and establish a relationship between freedom and responsibility. It is also argued that Mill failed to specify the proper limits of legislation, and was unclear when it came to actual cases. For instance, he supported compulsory education, regulations of business and industry in the interest of public welfare and good, but regarded prohibition as an intrusion on liberty. Barker has criticized Mill as the 'prophet of an empty liberty and an abstract individual'. This observation flowed from the interpretation that the absolutist statements on liberty like the rights of one individual against the rest was not substantiated when one accessed Mill's writings in their totality.

There is no definite line of demarcation between the self-regarding and other-regarding actions. At various items and various stages the disputes may arise as to what is a self-regarding and what is other-regarding action. Mill takes a little account of the more mysterious springs of human thought, intuition, illumination and revelation. Though Mill's exposition of liberty is one of the best in the history of political thought, he was unable to reconcile the claims of individual freedom with the claims of order and social peace satisfactorily.

For Mill, the sole end for which humankind is allowed, individually or collectively, to interfere with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will make him happier, because, in the opinion of others, to do so would be wise, or even right. The only part of the conduct of anyone, for which they are amenable to the society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns them, their independence is absolute. Over himself, and over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.

Controversially by today's standards, in *On Liberty*, Mill also argued that in 'backward' societies a despotic government is tolerable as long as the despot has

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the best interests of the people at heart because of the barriers to spontaneous progress. Mill's principles in *On Liberty* seem to be clear. However, there are certain complications. For example, Mill's definition of 'harm' includes both acts of omission as well as acts of commission. Thus, for Mill, not saving a drowning child or not paying taxes are harmful acts of omission that need to be regulated. On the other hand, it does not count as harming someone if— without force or fraud—the affected individual consents to assume the risk. Therefore, it is acceptable according to Mill's standards to offer unsafe employment to others provided that this is done without fraud and deceit. While reading Mill's arguments in 'On Liberty' it is important to keep in mind that Mill was a product of his time and also that his arguments are based on the principle of utility and not on appeals to natural rights.

Mill's 'On Liberty' also delineates an impassioned defence of free speech. For Mill, free speech is a necessary condition for intellectual and social progress. According to Mill, 'We can never be sure that a silenced opinion does not contain some element of the truth'. He also suggests that the airing of false or uninformed opinions is productive for two reasons. Firstly, he states that an open and frank exchange of ideas will result in people abandoning incorrect beliefs. Secondly, Mill argues that debate forces people to examine and affirm their own opinions and thus prevents these beliefs from declining into mere dogma. In Mill's view, it is simply not good enough if one believes in something that happens to be true; one must also know why the belief in question is true.

Mill believed that people should have the right to have a say in the government's decisions. For Mill then *social liberty* meant limiting the power of rulers so that they may not be able to use power based on whims and thereby bring harm to society. Mill wrote that social liberty is, 'the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual'. Mill believed that to bring about this social liberty one needed the recognition of certain immunities, called political liberties or rights and also by establishing a system which had 'constitutional checks'.

The limiting of a government's power is not enough for Mill. Mill believed that a society can and does execute its own mandates, and if it issues wrong mandates instead of right, or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to meddle, it results in a social tyranny more fearsome than many kinds of political oppression.

Mill co-wrote 'On Liberty' with Harriet Taylor; the work was published a year after Harriet's death and is dedicated to her. 'On Liberty' begins with Mill's assertion that democratic nations like the United States would replace absolute monarchies of the past. However, Mill goes on to examine a new problem that would arise with people being control of their governments. Deeply influenced by the works of Alexis de Tocqueville, especially his *Democracy in America*, Mill fears that will of the people in democracies would result in the 'will of the majority'. Mill believed that a tyranny of the majority is a huge threat to individual liberty and self-development if the majority started acting to oppress minority viewpoints and lifestyles. To overcome this threat, Mill proposed what philosophers today call 'harm principle'. Mill's harm principle stated that, 'the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is

to prevent harm to others.’ This principle of Mill negates the tyranny of the majority and thus would block democratic majorities from interfering with the liberty of any adult unless that person threatened harm to others.

In ‘On Liberty’ Mill identified various types of liberties. They are enumerated below:

- Liberty of conscience
- Liberty of thought and feeling
- Absolute freedom of opinion
- Liberty of expressing and publishing opinions (freedom of speech and press)
- Freedom to unite, for any purpose (freedom of assembly)
- Liberty of making the plan of our life to suit our own character, of doing what we like, even if this appeared to be foolish, perverse, or wrong

Mill stressed that a society that does not have such liberties is not really free. According to Mill, ‘The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it.’ Mill argued that truth is found through the ‘collision of adverse opinions’. He further wrote, ‘He who knows only his side of the case, knows little of that.’ When people listen only to one viewpoint, he explained, ‘errors harden into prejudices, and truth itself ceases to have the effect of truth, by being exaggerated into falsehood’. At the same time, Mill believed that there needed to be limits on individual liberty so as to prevent harm to others. To explain his point Mill provided the example of an ‘excited mob’ outside the house of a grain dealer who are shouting that the grain dealer is starving the poor. Mill believed that in such situations the police are justified in arresting those who might incite violence among the crowd.

Mill was also against the censoring of newspaper articles by the government. In Mill’s view, ‘an atmosphere of freedom’ was essential to make sure that all citizens of a nation had the opportunity to develop their own individuality. Condemning the conformist nature of British society, Mill supported original thinkers and non-conformists who experimented with different lifestyles, thus preventing human life from becoming a ‘stagnant pool’. Mill declared that the purpose of government was only to provide the necessary conditions so that people could achieve the higher objective of self-development. He cites the example of the prohibition of gambling and also the harassment of Mormons to prove that the government is wrong in stamping out certain lifestyles and behaviour. On the other hand in *On Liberty* Mill also argued for not permitting people from getting married if they could not afford to have children. He declared, ‘To have a child without a fair prospect of being able not only to provide food for their body, but also to nurture their mind is a moral crime both against the unfortunate offspring and against the society.’ From the moment it was published *On Liberty* was criticized from all quarters. Some said that the work promoted anarchy and godlessness, other’s critiqued Mill’s notion of ‘harm’ and questioned his assumption that people actually wanted to pursue self-development. Mill himself stated that ‘On Liberty’ was ‘likely to survive longer than anything else

NOTES

that I have written'. Mill's prophecy proved to be accurate in 'On Liberty' which remains one of his most popular works.

Criticism

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C. L. Wayper in his book *Political Thought* elaborates that Bentham must have gyrated in his grave far faster than ever at the thought that his favourite follower could ever contemplate such a non-utilitarian position. Another writer Davidson commenting on Mill's freedom of action writes that his freedom of action or conduct is admirable and his working out of the theme is skilfully done. But there are certain points that lead to criticism. Firstly, Mill identifies individual energy with 'geniuses or originality'. But he forgets that this energy may be mere eccentricity. Secondly, Mill does not sufficiently recognize that whereas man's desires and impulses are indispensable to the development of his nature, they are not sure guide to the proper outlet for his activity.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

8. Fill in the blanks with appropriate words.

- (i) Mill's ideas on _____ had a direct relationship with his theories of utility or happiness.
- (ii) Mill insists on liberty of thought and expression as well as liberty of _____.

9. State whether the following statements are true or false.

- (i) Mill had doubt about the utility of absolute liberty of thought and expression.
- (ii) The early liberals defended liberty for the sake of an efficient government.

2.3.2 Simple Principle of Liberty

Except the principle of religious belief, there is a lack of a general principle of liberty. Due to this lack, many serious mistakes have occurred as people's preferences are often wrong about the correctness or incorrectness of coercion. Mill's purpose of conducting a discussion on liberty is to provide this missing principle on liberty. That 'one very simple principle', has the whole purpose of governing all kinds of dealings of the society with the individual. The way of dealings of the society can be in the way of compulsion or control. Control can be in the means of physical force which is in the form of legal penalties or the moral coercion of public opinion. The principle's only aim is self-protection. Human beings can be warranted individually or collectively if any one interferes with the liberty of action of others. The purpose of this principle can be put as 'is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant'.

Therefore, the principle is a necessary condition, to use coercion against any individual when that person's action is seen as harmful to other individuals. His action should be controlled by legal law or moral public opinion. So in other words,

an individual's liberty is protected from other individuals who are a threat to the individual and can do harm to him. In simple words, an individual ought to be free from all forms of restraints if his action is not harmful to others. Therefore, according to Mill, an individual's independence is an absolute right.

Further, Mill explains that this principle is applicable to those human beings, who are capable of 'spontaneous progress', which means, self-development guided by their own judgement and inclinations. So any individual who is not capable of self-development should not be granted liberty, even if his conduct is not harmful to others. Therefore other individual's judgement and inclination is needed for the incapable individual to ultimately help him/her to develop his/her capacities. This ultimately will help him to be protected from self-harm as well as from the harmful actions of others. Therefore, children, young person's below the age which the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood, those individuals who are in a state to be taken care of by others including insane and mentally retarded persons, and barbarians in the backward states of the society are excluded from the principle of liberty. Thus, compulsion either in the form of direct or indirect is admissible for the adults of a civilized states of the society as a means to protect their own good and for the security of others.

Mill explains despotism as a legitimate mode of government provided with the means of people's improvement while dealing with barbarians. Further, Mill argues that people can obey an Akbar or a Charlemagne till they have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. But when people become capable of being guided by their improvement and self-progress by conviction and opinion then compulsion for non-cooperation is not admissible as a means to their own good. Then compulsion is justifiable only for the security of others.

2.3.3 State and Liberty: Essays on Government

While in his essays 'On Liberty', Mills main concern was his passion for freedom of thought and expression, in his *Representative Government*, he is mainly concerned with institutional reforms in the government so as to make it more representative and more responsible. He regarded representative democracy necessary for progress as it permitted citizens to use and develop their faculties fully. It promoted virtue, intelligence and excellence. Interaction between individuals in a democracy ensured the possibility of the emergence of the wisest and recognition of the best leaders. It encouraged free discussion, which was necessary for the emergence of the truth. He judged representative democracy on the basis of how far it, 'promotes the good management of the affairs of the society by means of the existing faculties, moral intellectual and active, of its various members and by improving those faculties'. Unlike Bentham, Mill has assigned some positive reaction of the state. He wants the state to have a positive role in the sphere of education, factory law, economic life, etc. In order to perform its duties well and exercise its power within limits every state must have a constitution. Of course, in those countries, which have no written constitution, the convention or customs prescribe the limits of the powers of the government. However, Mill argues there will always be a single repository of ultimate power, whether by constitutional prescription or by unwritten custom.

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According to Andrew Hacker, Mill tried to reconcile the principle of political equality with individual freedom. He accepted that all citizens regardless of their status were equal and that only popular sovereignty could give legitimacy to the government. Democracy was good because it made people happier and better. Mill identified several conditions for representative government. First, such a government could only function with citizens who were of an active self-acting character. They must be willing to accept it. The passive citizens in backward civilizations would hardly be able to run a representative democracy. Second, they must be willing and able to do what is necessary to keep it standing. Third, the citizens must be able and willing to do what it requires of them to enable it to fulfil its purpose.

Mill advocated liberal democracy which specified and limited the powers of legally elected majorities by cataloguing and protecting individual's right against the majority. He pleaded for balancing the numerical majority in a democracy by adjusting franchise. He advocated universal adult franchise in 1859. However, he wrote in 1861 that 'I regard it as wholly inadmissible that any person should participate in the suffrage without being able to read, write, and I will add, perform the operations of arithmetic'. Mill also prescribed some conditions in regard to voting rights. He advocated for registration tests for checking performances, universal education for all children and plurality of votes to the better educated in order to balance the lack of voting rights to the uneducated. He also recommended the disqualification of three other categories of dependence: first, those who were unable to pay local taxes, second, those who were dependent on public welfare would be excluded for five years from the last day of receipt, third, those who were legal bankrupts and moral deviants like habitual drunkards. However, he prescribed equal voting rights for all irrespective of their sex or colour. He further advocated equal voting rights, universal suffrage, democracy and liberty. They had to be conferred only on those who had the character of self-control, and the ability and interest in using them for the public good. Mill also advocated for open ballot for voting. He considered voting a public trust, which should be performed under the eye and the criticism of the public. He believed that citizens developed intellectual qualities of reason and judgment only through political participation. People had to be free to be able to participate in the government of their country, the management of their workplace and to act as bulwarks against the autocracy of modern-day bureaucracy. This feeling of belonging to a community could only come about if all were granted the right to vote. He was worried about the consequences of the absolute utility that universal adult franchise entailed, namely, the trampling of wise and educated minorities by the mass of people. He prescribed compulsory elementary education for that would make individual citizens wise, competent and independent judges. Mill always emphasized that representative democracy was only possible in a state that was small and homogenous.

According to Mill, through the rights of citizenship, an individual becomes a social person. The best form of government is the representative government. Despotism, however benevolent, can never be a good government as its subjects suffer in their intellectual, moral and political capacities. There is no such

thing as a good despotism. The idea of representative government must safeguard the aggregate interest of the society as a whole. The representative government must be supported by any active and critical body of citizens. The government should not be the representative of a minority but the entire aggregate of the community. The representative body should represent all classes. According to Mill, the first element of the good government was the virtue and intelligence of the human beings composing the community. On the same analogy, the foremost duty of the state is to foster these elements in the members of the community. He argues that the sovereign power of the state should reside in the organ of the government, which is representative of the people. He was in favour of representative government but it did not mean that representative government could be uniformly applied to all people. This government should be adopted by people who are sufficiently advanced and trained in self-government.

The study of Mill's ideas on representative government reveals that he was a democrat alright but with some reservations. He is regarded as a reluctant or distrustful democrat. He accepted democracy with a pinch of salt.

2.3.4 Equal Rights for Women

J. S. Mill applied the principles of liberalism to issues of political and sexual equality for women. He was as much interested in social reforms as in political speculations. His sense of justice was stirred early in his life by the social discrimination meted out to women. In the mid-Victorian period, the condition of the women in the British society was appalling. Mill argued that women's submissive nature was the result of centuries of subjugation and lack of opportunities. This inequality he regarded as highly unjust. He regarded birth as no basis of excluding women from the rights that they deserve. According to Mill, no person is deliberately created by nature for a particular profession. If women, however, differ from men on the grounds of sex, this distinction should not be made a basis of distinction everywhere. He was eager to emancipate women and was the first to plead their cause in the parliament. He believed that if women were given equal opportunities to men, the result would be beneficial for women, since freedom alone gives happiness and is valuable to the community in general. He believed that the society would benefit from the contributions made by the mental capacities and characteristics of women. Higher education for women would increase opportunities for them and will help open their talents, and would extend to them the franchise and eligibility to public office.

For Mill, improving the position of women in society by providing them with suffrage, education and employment opportunities was a stepping stone to progress and civility. Mill considered the improvement in the position of women as an issue which concerned the whole of society. In this regard, his work *The Subjection of Women* made a strong claim for women's right to vote and women's right to equal opportunities in education and employment. The two themes that is prevalent throughout the writings of Mill is liberty and self-determination. Mill believed that freedom was the most spacious and crucial issue for a human's well-being. In this context, Mill asserted that women were the subjugated sex who were not given

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access to their own potential and were subjected to their unquestioned prejudices and biases in society. Mill's main concern was equality as a legal right between the sexes. He referred to women as both the subject and the enslaved class for he believed that their position was worse than that of slaves. According to Mill, unlike slaves, women were in a 'chronic state of bribery and intimidation combined.' He pointed out that the capacity of women was spent in seeking happiness not in their own lives, but exclusively in winning the favour and affection of the other sex, which they gained at the cost of their independence. A woman was not free within her marriage, nor was she free to remain unmarried. He explained how unmarried women in the 19th century were deprived of avenues for living a good and independent life. He deplored the lack of freedom of choice for women and contended that equality should be the ordering principle of societal and personal relationships. He pointed out that opposition to sexual equality was not based on any reason. Mill asserted that to dismiss equality of the sexes as a mere theoretical opposition did not lend credibility to the argument that women were weaker and hence subordinate. He agreed that the majority of the opinions favoured inequality but this he contended went against reason.

According to Mill, the way men dominate women was entirely inappropriate and altogether based on force. Women also accepted it voluntarily without any complaint and became consenting parties to their subordination. Men, on their part, expected not only obedience but also affection from women. This was ensured through education, training and the socialization process. Women from childhood were taught to be submissive, yielding and accommodating, rather than being independent with self-will and self-control. They were taught to live for others, their husband and children. Selfless devotion was considered to be the best feminine trait, the glory of womanhood. In the case of a pre-contractual social arrangement, birth determines one's position and privileges, while the modern society was characterized by the principle of equality. Individuals enjoyed greater freedom of choice to pursue their own life and improve their faculties. However, women continued to be denied of this opportunity, for they were not free to do what they chose to. It seemed paradoxical that the modern world accepted the general social practice of women's equality, but not gender equality. Mill emphatically said that denying women an equal position only demeaned a man.

Like Mary Wollstonecraft, he believed that women could earn their liberation with the support of men. Both Mill and Wollstonecraft presented a reasonable critique of male domination within marriage. However, Mill extended it by pleading for a relationship based on mutual friendship and respect. He subscribed to the view that by and large human nature and character were decided by the circumstances in which individuals were found, and unless and until women were granted freedom, they could not express themselves. The process itself could take longer, but that could not be the basis for denying women the freedom and opportunities for their complete development. He believed that women were as bright and gifted as men, and once granted the same 'eagerness for fame', women would achieve the same success. A judgment regarding the capacities and talent in women could be made only after generations of women benefited from equal opportunities through education

and employment. He rejected the idea that it was natural for a woman to be a mother and wife, and felt that it was the women who should be able to decide whether to marry and manage a house or to pursue a career. He lamented that it was society, however, that decided marriage to be the ultimate aim of women. He articulated and defended the right of women to be considered as a free rational being capable of choosing the life they would like for themselves, rather than being dictated by what the society thought they should be or do. He was of the opinion that women, even if granted freedom and opportunities, would not fail to perform their traditional functions. When he was a member of the British Parliament, he supported a married women's property bill.

According to Mill, the position of the wife under the common law of Britain was worse than that of slaves in the laws of many countries; by the Roman law, for example, a slave might have his peculiar status, which, to a certain extent, the law guaranteed him his exclusive use. He further pointed out that marriage did not give women the dignity and equal status that she ought to get. Once married, she was totally under the control of her husband. She was denied by the law the right to her children and property. Hence, they must have the rights to property, inheritance and custody. He pleaded for the equality of both sexes before the law, for that was crucial to ensuring a just arrangement. This he felt would be beneficial for all. He was of the opinion that a marriage contract based on the equality of married persons before the law was not only a sufficient but also a necessary condition for full and just equality between the sexes. For Mill, equality was a genuine moral sentiment that ought to govern all relationships including the marital one. He also acknowledged the family as the real school of learning the virtues of freedom and liberation, yet it was there that sentiments of injustice, inequality and despotism were taught. He desired a transformation of the family to suit the temperament and spirit of the modern age, namely the spirit of equality and justice, and in the process to bring about a moral regeneration of humankind. The relationship between a man and a woman should be based on mutual respect and mutual love, and giving due regard to one another's rights. This would make women self-reliant and self-sufficient. Mill said, unless the equal and just worth of human beings was recognized, they could not enjoy equal rights and could not realize their full potential as well. A life of rational freedom devoted to the release of their full creative potential was as much a requirement for a man as for a woman. In spite of his insistence on the need to restructure family relationships based on equity and fairness, he continued to pursue the family as one where a man earns for the family and a woman takes care of domestic affairs. He was convinced that if suitable domestic help was made possible, then a woman, and in particular the talented and exceptional ones, could take up a profession or a vocation.

Like Wollstonecraft and Fuller, he argued that 'the dignity of a woman was guaranteed if she had the power of earning her own living'. A married woman would have full right in her property and earning. She would have the right to enter a profession or take up a career. According to him, women were fully capable of becoming business partners, philosophers, politicians and scientists.

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Mill said both the law and the custom prohibited women from seeking any means of livelihood, other than being a mother and a wife. Besides equal opportunity for women in education and property, he also pleaded for political rights to vote and to participate in the government as administrators and rulers. In his book, *The Representative Government*, he commented that the difference of sex could not be the basis of political rights. He desired that the subjection of women be ended not only by the law, but also by education, opinion, habits and finally a change in the family life itself. In his book, *Principles*, he observed the need to open industrial occupations for both sexes.

After 'On Liberty' was published in 1859 Mill turned his attention towards reforms in the political sphere. It could be stated that many of his political opinions were contradictory in nature. Although Mill was a strong supporter of giving voting rights to all, especially women, he advocated a contentious voting system. Rather than universal adult franchise, Mill wanted a voting system where people with an education had more voting power than those who did not. Moreover, Mill was not a supporter of the public schooling system believing that such a system would enforce social conformity. At the same time he supported government subsidies to parents who could not afford schooling for their children. Mill was also an opponent of slavery, something that Britain had abolished in 1833, and was sympathetic to the American North in the American Civil War. When the American Civil War was raging, Mill wrote that if the American South won then this 'would be a victory of the powers of evil, which would give courage to the enemies to progress'.

Mill contested and won a seat in the British Parliament in 1865 on a Liberal Party ticket. He used his Parliamentary position as a platform to give voice to his opinions on social and political reform, especially on issues relating to women. As a parliamentarian Mill helped found the first women's suffrage society in Britain in 1867. Many of Mill's speeches in parliament on issues were many years ahead of his time. He had become a parliamentarian on the condition that he would vote according to his conscience, unfortunately, he was defeated for re-election in 1868 after serving only one term.

The same year that Mill left the British parliament, he published perhaps his most famous work — *The Subjection of Women*. The pamphlet in detail delineates Mill's argument for equality for men and women in society. In it Mill stressed that both women and men should have the same rights to develop their individuality. This entailed both men and women having equal rights to their own property, earn a college education, choose any occupation, and participate fully in politics. Mill's position on the rights of women Mill was sharply different from his father. Mill Sr. believed that women should not have a right to vote since their husbands represented them when they voted. J. S. Mill, on the other hand, stated that a wife's interests are often different from those of her husband, and thus she should have an equal right to vote.

The Subjection of Women and many other works that preceded it galvanized society and played a huge part in breaking patriarchal mind sets and forcing the male dominated society to finally give in to the demand of women's suffrage. This finally occurred in 1918, long after Mill had died.

2.3.5 Revision of Utilitarianism

Mill's essay 'On Liberty' (1859) gave a new dimension to utilitarianism and is one of the classical defences of freedom in the English language. Mill is a transitional thinker who essayed his ideas at a time when the English political society was in a state of flux, of transition from laissez faire to collectivist legislation. Beginning with a negative view of liberty, he comes closer to a positive one when he recommends 'state regulation in the overall interests of society. He starts with a definition of liberty as 'being left to oneself'. 'All restraint qua restraint is an evil'. He assumed the existence of two different spheres of human action: those which concern himself (self- regarding) and those which concern others (other- regarding). He claims complete freedom of conduct for the individual in all matters not affecting the community. The only part of the conduct of anyone, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. Community has a right to coerce the individual if his conduct is prejudicial to its welfare. Critics have said that Mill divides the indivisible. Every action of the individual has in its very nature some social consequences. Mill as 'the prophet of an empty liberty and an abstract individual. He had no clear philosophy rights, through which alone the conception of liberty attains a concrete meaning; he had no clear idea of that social whole in whose realization the false anti-thesis of state and individual disappears.

Mill was painfully aware of the anomaly of a 'tyranny of the majority' tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling in modern democracies. He had a peculiar horror of the mob mind, of the tyranny of the crowd. To offset this he made an eloquent plea for freedom of thought, discussion and toleration of opinion. He was a champion of individual or personal liberty. His primary purpose was to protect the individual even his eccentricities and oddities against the attacks of society. He contends that social and 'political progress depends largely on the originality and energy of the individual and his free choice. Of course, he recognized the utility of some modest form of state regulation in the interest of the common good and came closer to socialistic ideas.

Mill declares that pleasures be at variance not only in quantity but also in quality. He drew a distinction between superior and inferior pleasures. Mill did not talk about with Bentham that pleasure was the only grounds and purpose for individual's events. He held that individual happiness did not give him utmost happiness; on the other hand it was the group happiness, which gave highest gladness and joy to the individual. Thus, he thought that happiness comes from outer surface and not from surrounded by. This was in absolute dissimilarity to Bentham's view that enjoyment comes from inside. Mill greatly tapering down the bay between self-interest and general contentment. He held that the utilitarian standard is not the manager own maximum gladness, but the maximum amount of pleasure altogether.

Bentham was careful that individual happiness as the only decisive factor for all human actions. Mill initiated the idea of good life as more than a life dedicated to happiness. He positioned the ethical ends above the human being contentment and

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thus attempted to endorse righteous life. He also distorted the state into an ethical end.

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Mill also differed from Bentham in justifying private property. The justification of private property came from the English utilitarians. Its great exponent Jeremy Bentham maintained that right to property was a major condition of achieving the greatest happiness. He advocated equal distribution of property in order to strike a balance between security and equality. Mill defended private property as essential for the welfare of the people. He wrote: 'The institution of property when limited to its essential elements, consists in the recognition, in each person, of a right to the exclusive disposal of what he or she have produced by their own exertions, or received either by gift or by fair agreement, without force or fraud; from those who produced it. The foundation of the whole is the right of producers to what they themselves have produced.'

Mill in his work on utilitarianism modified the views of Bentham for the betterment of the society. He recommended numerous rudiments which ran opposite to the hedonist doctrine of Bentham. It was the austerity of Bentham's morals and synchronized utilitarianism with common sense. Mill made utilitarianism extra human and less consistent.

Mill's ideas of liberty also are at variance from Bentham's concept of liberty. Whereas Bentham did not connect any significance to the liberty because it did not in any method add to the maximum happiness of the maximum number of people. He was fond of more in giving importance to safety than freedom. Mill, on the other hand measured liberty is necessary for the accomplishment of the standard of utility and declared that minority rights could be secluded only when all take pleasure in liberty.

Both Mill and Bentham differed in justifying public and private interests. Bentham tried to set up identity between public and personal interests through the concept of super-added pleasures and pains. Mill considered these as outer authorization and therefore wanted to find this association on the basis of some interior sanctions and emotions of conscience. He therefore said that that the happiness and soreness concepts when restricted to oneself alone were outer, but when these related to 'others' these were interior and as such has bearing on sense of right and wrong.

From different diverse perspectives Mill obtained a dissimilar stand. Thus, he situated for public voting as against secret voting developed by Bentham. He preferred extraordinary treatment of women, while Bentham did not think something of the kind. Mill was more anxious with the abolition of imperfection in the obtainable legal system. Mill was more troubled with the social and economic harms facing the society. Both justified democracy but for dissimilar reasons. While Bentham recommended and suggested it because of character of man, Mill justified because of the situation of man. Bentham talked about unicameral legislature while Mill went for bicameral system. Mill was a great winner of the individual liberty and stood for limiting government meddling in the life of the individual.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

10. According to Mill, what was the reason for women's submissive nature?
11. What were the two grounds on which Mill defended liberty of thought and expression?
12. According to Mill, what is the best form of government?

NOTES**2.4 VLADIMIR LENIN**

Vladimir Lenin was the architect of the first communist state in the world, i.e., the Soviet Union. Along with Marx, he also became a philosopher and a guide for communists and revolutionaries all over the world. According to the author and scholar Professor C. C. Maxey, 'Lenin, now the beatified saint of Bolshevism was not only a revolutionary leader of great sagacity and practical ability, but was also a writer and thinker of exceptional penetration and power.' Long before the Russian Revolution, Lenin had a positive and coherent political philosophy, and this philosophy after he became head of the Russian state, governed all his public decisions and acts. It became and has remained to a very large degree of the political road map of Russian communism. Lenin updated and adapted Marx's philosophy to unique Russian conditions. Let us now discuss Lenin's contribution to Marxist thought at length.

Lenin's Theory of Imperialism

Lenin wrote about his 'theory of imperialism' in the essay 'Imperialism, the Highest State of Capitalism'. Lenin regards imperialism as the highest form of capitalism. He argues that as capitalism develops, industries unite and become bigger and then begin collaborating and acting like cartels to create what is known as monopoly capitalism. In the financial world a similar process takes place. When banks combine and become the master of capital, they assist industrialists with the capital, thus encouraging the transformation of monopoly capitalism into finance capitalism. Monopoly and finance capitalism have a great tendency of expanding very rapidly and aggressively. The primary export of finance capitalism is money or capital, and the consequences of its enforcement are the exploitation of colonial people, whom it oppresses and subjects to the law of the capitalist society, thus increasing misery amongst the people and destroying their liberty and freedom. As Lenin stated, 'If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism we should have to say that imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism.'

According to Lenin, 'Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the domination of monopoly and finance capital has taken shape, in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance in which the division of the world by international trusts has begun, and in which the portion of all the territory of the earth by the great capitalist countries has been completed.'

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Lenin identified five distinct features of imperialism, which can be stated as follows:

- The concentration of production and capital develops to such a high stage that it creates monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life.
- The merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on the basis of this finance capital, of a financial oligarchy.
- The export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance.
- The formation of international monopolist capitalist combines which share the world among themselves.
- The territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed.

Lenin claimed that imperialism in spite of being the highest stage of capitalism also contains various contradictions within itself, which shall destroy capitalism and bring in socialism. The first contradiction is that of the antagonism between the labour and capital. The labour is exploited by the capital, thus feelings of revolution would be ignited in exploited workers. If it will be materialized, the spirit of socialism will start. He also identified another feature of imperialism- the decay of capitalism. Lenin asserted that imperialism is not only the period of monopoly capitalism, but it is also the period of decaying capitalism- the decay resulting from its monopolistic character. As he stated, ‘the tendency to stagnation and decay, which is the feature of monopoly, continues, and in certain branches of industry, in certain countries, for certain periods of time, it becomes prominent’.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

13. What is the highest form of capitalism, according to Lenin?
14. According to Lenin, what are the features of capitalism?

2.4.1 State and Dictatorship of Party

The greatest contribution of Lenin to socialism is his theory of the party. While Marx laid too much emphasis on the development of class consciousness among the workers, Lenin laid emphasis on the party organization. According to him, ‘The proletariat has no other weapon in the struggle for power except organization.’

Constantly pushed out of depths of complete poverty, the proletariat can and will inevitably become the unconquerable. The party is needed not only before the revolution to arouse the revolutionary spirit in the proletariat but also after the revolution to annihilate the capitalist state so that the dictatorship of proletariat can be established.

According to Lenin, workers do not become socialists automatically. They become trade unionists. Socialism has to be brought to them from outside and this is done by the party which is in reality the ‘vanguard of the proletariat’. It must be able to lead the proletariat to elevate them to the level where they can understand their class interests and purpose with great vigour and determination. The party must act

as the General Staff of the Proletariat. Lenin wrote thus, 'The Communist Party is a part of the working class, the most advanced most class conscious and hence the communist party has no other interests other than the interests of the working class as a whole. The Communist Party is differentiated from the working class in its totality. The Communist Party is the organizational and political lever which the most advanced sections of the working class use to direct the entire mass of the proletariat and the semi-proletariat along the right road.'

Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Lenin described the proletariat dictatorship as the stage which would come during the transitional period of the state, i.e. when the state would transform into socialism from capitalism. Lenin accepted Marx's doctrine of proletariat dictatorship in full but he succeeded in converting it to the dictatorships of the communist of socialist ideological party. With the destruction of capitalism, class struggle comes to an end. Hence, a classless society ought to exist. But before a classless society is established, an interim period follows. During this period Marx envisages a 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. In this period the state machinery is monopolized by proletariats who establish a mere dictatorship for a temporary period. The state as an instrument of coercion continues. But it becomes an instrument in the hands of the proletariat for crushing the bourgeois elements in society. At this stage, the system of payment to the labourers according to work continues. The principle followed is 'from each according to his capacity and to each according to his work'. This is the early stage of communism. It is a transitional stage which ultimately results in perfect socialism.

Withering away of the State

When all remnants of bourgeois society are crushed, there is no need for the state. 'The state withers away'. The stateless and classless society comes to prevail. This is the final stage of communism. Under perfect communism, the state as a machinery of coercion is no longer necessary. It is a free society of voluntary associations. There are no policemen and no military people. This is the climax of the scientific socialism of Marx and this is the ultimate stage of communism.

According to Marx, the state is used as a tool in the hands of the bourgeois for exploitation. It is commanded by the rich class in order to exploit the poor. If men are good and perfect equality prevails, there is no necessity of the state. The state is necessary in the transitional stage in order to achieve the goal of perfect socialism: It becomes an institution for promoting the cause of the proletariat. In a perfect communist society, the principle is 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.' Communism aims at classless society and perfect economic equality. It also abolishes exploitation. If communism stands for these objectives and when these objectives are realized, there is no necessity of the State at all. Thus, Marx's idea of withering away of the State. However, idealistic it may be has its own sense of justification.

2.4.2 Theory of Revolution

Communism is a revolutionary creed. It believes in violence and force to solve the complicated social problems. In the words of Marx, 'Force is the midwife of the

NOTES

modern State.’ Hence, Marx advocated revolution as the only way to get rid of mankind from inhumanity and exploitation caused by capitalism. He gave a clarion call to ‘the workers of the world to unite and revolt as they have nothing to lose but their chains.’

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Tactics of Revolution

According to Sabine, ‘No principle of Marxian strategy was better settled than the rule that it’s impossible to make a revolution by force of conspiracy before the time is ripe, that is, before the contradictions in a society have produced a revolutionary situation.’ It was this principle which distinguished Marx’s scientific socialism from Utopianism or mere adventurism. This view led to the emergence of two views in Russia, one held by the Mensheviks and the other by the Bolsheviks, regarding the tactics of socialist revolution and the slow growth of the proletariat into a majority. The other group was led by Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin. According to Trotsky, it is easier for the proletariat to take over the ruling class in an economically backward country than in a country where capitalism has reached the advanced stage.

Lenin thought in terms of tactics. According to him, insurrection is an art which can be taught. His tactics came to have certain maxims such as:

- (i) Never play at uprising but once it is begun remember firmly that you have to go to the very end
- (ii) One must strive to take the enemy by surprise to take advantage of a moment when his troops are scattered’.

Lenin was opposed to a large diffused party and he wanted the party to consist of professional revolutionaries and must be organized as secretly as possible. According to Lenin, a revolution becomes possible only when the lower classes do not want the old way and the upper classes cannot continue with the old way.

2.4.3 Neo Marxism: Non-industrial Countries

For Lenin, with the concept of the vanguard party and of imperialist capitalism, the theory of communism as a logical structure was complete, yet it lacked what proved to be its main driving force as a political system. This was the ‘concept of socialism in one country’ developed by Joseph Stalin, which was his sole venture into theory. In a sense this was a normal capstone to Leninism—at least to the concept of Leninism developed in this way. For Lenin’s achievement as it has been described here, was to produce a version of Marxism applicable to an industrially underdeveloped society with an agrarian peasant economy. Socialism in one country, therefore, completed the divergence between Lenin’s Marxism and the Marxism of Western Europe, which had been conceived by Marx and Marxists as a theory to transform a highly industrial economy from a capitalist to a socialist society.

Lenin held this opinion, but this was not the obstacle, from the standpoint of Marxism, for completing socialism in Russia. Marxists had supposed that socialism required an economy with a high level of production and hence, an industrial society, which Russia was not. Stalin did not meet this argument but argued instead that socialism could be built in a country of great extent with large natural resources. In

effect, he neglected the economic argument normal to Marxism and substituted a political argument. Stalin assumed that, given adequate resources, an adequate labour force, and a government with unlimited power, a socialist economy could be constructed as a political policy. This of course is what socialism in one country became, and in theory it is quite different from the supposed dependence of politics on the economy which had been a principle of Marxism. On the other hand, Stalin's assumption fitted rather easily with some elements of Leninism.

2.4.4 Lenin's Contribution to Neo-Marxism

Unlike Marx, Lenin was a practical revolutionary, who applied the Marxist theory to Russia. He was the leader of Bolshevik Party in Russia and was the man behind the Russian Revolution. When he came to power in Russia after the Proletarian Revolution, several problems confronted him. One of them was the task of making neo-Marxism up-to-date. Some of the predictions of Karl Marx went wrong and people began to question the very basis of Karl Marx's theory.

According to Stalin, 'Leninism is Marxism in the epoch of imperialism and the proletarian revolution.' Lenin's ideas on communism are embodied in his book titled the *State and Revolution*, and essays such as 'Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism' and 'What is to be Done'.

Lenin said that the neo-Marxist theory about the destruction of capitalism has not gone wrong in reality. The destruction has been further delayed due to the rise of imperialism, which was not visualized by Marx. Imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism. Under this system. The proletariat and the capitalist of industrial countries jointly exploit colonial people. This will ultimately lead to war among imperial states, resulting in the inevitable destruction of capitalism.

Hence, Marx could not foresee the rise of imperialism. With some modifications, Lenin wanted to justify neo-Marxism. According to him, World War-I was such an imperialistic war and it was indirectly responsible for the growth of the communistic ideology.

On the basis of neo- Marxist analysis of exploitation of the poor, Lenin developed his theory of imperialism. The rich countries used to grow raw materials from the poor countries at a cheaper rate and export both capital and industrial products. While exporting goods and commodities, they try to exploit the poor countries. This form of exploitation will end only under communism.

Contrary to the Marxian prediction, revolution took place in an agricultural country like Russia and not in an industrial country like England. Lenin wanted to justify it. He said that it has been possible to do so through the Communist Party. The Communist Party is the vanguard of the proletariat. It directed revolution keeping in view the interests of the proletariat. It created class-consciousness among the proletariat by providing a revolutionary ideology. Thus it is the Communist Party which makes the proletariat truly revolutionary. This is the role of the Party in the Proletariat Revolution. It was to consist of the professional revolutionaries. Hence, Lenin's major contribution to communism is the addition of the concept of 'professional revolutionary' organized under the banner of the Communist Party.

NOTES

NOTES

Lenin also believed in, the ultimate goal of classless and stateless society. It was the climax point of socialism. He also treated the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transitional period between the destruction of capitalism and the establishment of scientific socialism. But the period was not to be a short one. Dictatorship of the proletariat was to continue indefinitely till time is ripe for the establishment of perfect economic and social justice. Thus, Lenin departed from the original Marxian conception of the term and placed emphasis on the role of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

15. According to Lenin, what tool did workers have to fight capitalism?
16. What is the role of the state in Lenin's view?
17. Fill in the blanks:
 - (i) Lenin believed that the ultimate goal of _____ and _____ society.
 - (ii) Lenin was a _____ revolutionary, who applied the Marxist theory to Russia.

2.4.5 Scientific Socialism

Karl Marx (1818-1883) is said to be the father of communism or scientific socialism. The phrase 'scientific socialism' was used by him in order to distinguish his idea from that of the Utopian Socialism. C. E. M. Joad rightly said, 'Karl Marx, is in a very real sense, the father of socialism.'

Communism is known as scientific socialism. It is an eloquent protest against the system of capitalism. Communism as a systematic and consistent political doctrine is as old as Karl Marx. In the pre-Marxian period, there were traces of communistic thought in the writings of Plato, Thomas More, St. Simon, Robert Owen and Charles Fourier. But Marx had dismissed their ideas as 'utopian socialism' and claimed to have established the first scientific doctrine of

socialism. Hence our study of communism should begin with Marx. We shall, however, give an introductory note on pre-Marxian socialist thought or otherwise known as socialism. While discussing socialism, the pre-Marxian socialist thought has been well explained. Saint Simon, Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, Proudhon, Louis Blanc, and John Gray are the leading socialist thinkers in the pre-Marxian period. They are known as the 'utopian socialists'. They

are criticized on the ground that they were more theoretical in their approach. Karl Marx made socialism scientific and pragmatic or practical. Socialism before Marx was merely a protest and aspiration but Marx made it practical and militant. Marx, therefore, is considered to be the greatest socialist of the world. His scientific socialism is otherwise known as Marxism.

The theory of Marxism has been influenced by three major ideas, namely the German idealism, the English economic doctrine and the French revolutionary and socialist thought. Marx derived the idea of dialectic from Hegel, the famous idealist

thinker of Germany. The idea that 'labour is the most important factor of production' and the labour is always paid less, has been derived from the British economists of the 18th and 19th centuries. That society can be changed through revolution and force is required to bring about the desired changes is the product of the French revolutionary and socialistic thought.

The theory of Marxism is a curious mixture of above three philosophies. It is true that Marx collected stones from various places but he used them to build a house which was very much according to his own design. Lenin made few changes over Marxism. The present philosophy of communism is the result of what is known as 'Marxism-Leninism'. The philosophy of communism is a revised version of Marxism, largely the work of Lenin and therefore, often called Marxism-Leninism.'

Dynamics of Social Change

Communism believes in the dynamics of social change. It is a progressive philosophy. It opposes various forces including religion which hinders the human progress. Marx was convinced that religion retards the progress. Hence he said that 'religion is the opium of the people.' 'Marx is a great humanitarian and a philanthropist. He has advocated rapid progress for the poor and downtrodden in the society.'

Lenin's significant Contribution to Scientific Socialism of Marx

Lenin (1870-1924) who was the main architect of the Russian Revolution of 1917, was also a great thinker. He was an ardent Marxist, but in some respects he departed from some tenets of Marxism. It is said that he made some changes in Marxism to make it 'up-to-date.'

Marx had predicted that revolutions would first come to industrially advanced countries of Europe and their coming would be guided by the dialectical movement of productive forces. The economic situation of these European countries improved due to colonization. The bourgeoisie of these countries prospered by exploiting the poor mass of their colonies. There also took place some improvement in the economic status of the workers of these European countries. As a result, the expected aggravation of the contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat of the industrialized countries of Europe did not take place in the late 19th century and the early 20th century. Against this background Lenin and his Bolshevik comrades tried to launch a revolution in Russia, a backward feudal country, with a predominantly agriculture-based economy. They could not have thought of this had they strictly stuck to the Marxian analysis of revolution. They would have to wait a long time before the situation in Russia was 'ripe' for revolution. Lenin, in his effort to cut-short the process, formulated his theory of revolution which was simultaneously a departure from and extension of Marxism. Lenin said that imperialism was the highest stage of capitalism.

Colonization, no doubt, proved helpful to the European capitalists by providing them with cheap raw materials and markets, but it would also prove to be its graveyard. Capitalism, being expansionist in nature, would indulge in suicidal activities. The intense desire of the bourgeoisie to have monopoly in finance and business would lead to the emergence of 'monopoly-finance-capitalism.' But in the process

NOTES

NOTES

the contradictions of capitalism would be intensified. First, the scramble for markets and raw materials would engage the capitalists in war against one another. Secondly, the exploited people of colonies would revolt against the colonial powers. Thirdly, the proletariat, the exploited class, would launch revolution against the bourgeoisie. As these contradictions sharpen and explode, the doom of capitalism will be certain. Thus, according to Lenin imperialism is the last stage of capitalism after which it will perish.

Marx had hinted at the utility of the party in revolution. But he had not discussed it in detail. In Lenin's theory, the party occupies an important place. He distinguishes between 'revolutionary consciousness' and 'trade-union consciousness.' According to him, the workers, in general,

have the latter. But that alone would not help them in going for a revolution against their class enemy, the bourgeoisie. What they require for this purpose is the former, that is, revolutionary consciousness or class consciousness. They cannot have this on their own. It is the communist party which can help them in attaining class consciousness. Lenin seemed to assign this important function to the middle class intellectuals of the party. 'We said that there could not yet be social-democratic consciousness among the workers (in the Russian strikes in the 1890's). This consciousness could only be brought to them from without. According to Lenin, the party should comprise a group of 'professional revolutionaries', skilled in militantly organising the workers for revolution. There ensued a serious debate between Lenin and Kautsky on the question of the objective of revolution.

There ensued a serious debate between Lenin and Kautsky on the question of the objective of revolution. Kautsky argued that the Marxist revolution should aim only at transferring political power from one class to other - from the bourgeoisie to the proletariat while retaining the state executive agencies of the military and the bureaucracy. Lenin sharply differed from his point of view. He argued that these organs of the state were oppression of the proletariat and, therefore, the purpose of revolution would be defeated if these organs were retained after a successful proletarian revolution. For him, the socialist revolution, aiming at passage from a narrow, restricted democracy to full democracy, should entail the destruction of the bourgeois state.

Lenin elaborated Marx's concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat. According to Lenin, it is a transitional phase, paving the way for the withering away of the state. One of its functions is to annihilate the remnants of capitalism and complete the process of the destruction of the old society. Lenin says the dictatorship of the proletariat is a persistent struggle — bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic educational and administrative against the forces and traditions of the old society.

Lenin was stronger in action than in theory. He was a great revolutionary and proved to be one of the best strategists in designing revolutionary programmes and operations. He was not a pure Marxist, though he ardently swore by Marxism. He sought to reinterpret Marxism to make it look still relevant despite some developments which were not in conformity with the predictions of Marx. He was certainly not a

democrat even though he claimed that the proletarian state was ‘the most complete democracy.’ It is perhaps too strong to describe Lenin as a ‘bastard Marxist. He occupies a unique place in history as a Marxist thinker and revolutionary.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

18. Fill in the blanks:

- (i) Communism is known as _____.
- (ii) In Lenin's theory, the _____ occupies an important place.
- (iii) Lenin says the _____ is a persistent struggle.

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2.5 SUMMARY

- *Jeremy Bentham*, widely known as the founder of utilitarianism, can be seen as having played the multiple roles of a philosopher, a jurist, a social reformer and an activist.
- He is most popularly associated with the concept of utilitarianism, and the panopticon.
- He can be seen as one of the most influential utilitarians, and his ideas were brought to the fore through his works and that of his students. Here we have his secretary and collaborator on the utilitarian school of philosophy, James Mill; James Mill's son J. S. Mill; John Austin, legal philosopher; and several political leaders, including Robert Owen, a founder of modern socialism.
- Bentham is often seen in relation with the foundation of the University of London specifically University College of London (UCL)
- The period from the early 1770s to the mid-1780s can be seen as marking an important phase of development of Bentham's ideas. During this time, he concentrated on trying to comprehend the rational basis of law, in England as well as in and other countries.
- Even though leading an ascetic life himself, given that saints were idlers, he is to be seen as having regarded asceticism with contempt. He looked down upon spiritualism and claimed that spiritualism glorified unhappiness and distrusted pleasure.
- Utilitarianism, conceived as a school of thought dominated English political thinking from the middle of the 18th century to the middle of the 19th century. Francis Hutcheson, Hume, Helvetius, Priestly, William Paley and Beccaria were some of the early utilitarians. However, it was Bentham who is credited with systematically working to establish the theory and render it popular on the basis of his endless proposals for reform.
- James Mill was his closest friend. It is through Mill that Bentham met two of the greatest economists of the time - Malthus and David Ricardo- and learnt classical economics from them.

NOTES

- Bentham lent a scientific colour to the pleasure – pain theory, and brought it in application in the context of the policies of the state, welfare measures, and the administrative, penal and legislative reforms.
- Bentham's *Principles of Legislation* highlights the principle of utility and explains the way this view of morality feeds into legislative practices. His principle of utility hails 'good' as that which aids the production of the greatest amount of pleasure and the minimum amount of pain, while 'evil' is conceived as that which produces the most pain without the pleasure.
- In Bentham's framework, pleasure and pain can be quantitatively and arithmetically calculated and measured, and a comparison can be drawn between the two qualities. In order to gauge pleasure and pain, he advocated the doctrine of felicific calculus.
- According to Bentham, the modern state is to be viewed as an ideal, and an aspiration which examines the technique of state building and the method that would promote modernization.
- He came up with ideas and devices geared to guarantee governmental protection of individual interest, ensuring that public happiness should be seen as the object of public policy.
- One of the most significant aspects of Bentham's political philosophy is located in the sphere of jurisprudence and reforms in criminal law and prison.
- John Stuart Mill, a great essayist, economist, reformer and one of the greatest political thinkers of modern times
- Mill's 'Essay on Liberty' is one of the finest discourses on the definition of freedom in general and freedom of thought and expression in particular.
- In Mill's words 'it is being left to one self: all restraints qua restraints is an evil'. In its positive sense, it meant the greatest amount of freedom for the pursuit of the individual's creative impulses and energies for self- development.
- Mill's ideas on liberty had a direct relationship with his theories of utility or happiness.
- Mill insists on liberty of thought and expression as well as liberty of conduct.
- Mill defended the right of individuality, which meant the right of choice.
- The early liberals defended liberty for the sake of efficient government whereas for Mill, liberty was good in itself, for it helped in the development of a humane, civilized moral person.
- Mill explains despotism as a legitimate mode of government provided with the means of people's improvement while dealing with barbarians.
- According to Andrew Hacker, Mill tried to reconcile the principle of political equality with individual freedom.
- Mill was painfully aware of the anomaly of a 'tyranny of the majority' tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling in modern democracies.
- The justification of private property came from the English utilitarians.

- Mill in his work on utilitarianism modified the views of Bentham for the betterment of the society. He recommended numerous rudiments which ran oppose to the hedonist doctrine of Bentham.
- Vladimir Lenin was the architect of the first communist state in the world, i.e., the Soviet Union.
- Lenin wrote about his ‘theory of imperialism’ in the essay ‘Imperialism, the Highest State of Capitalism’.
- Lenin asserted that imperialism is not only the period of monopoly capitalism, but it is also the period of decaying capitalism- the decay resulting from its monopolistic character.
- According to Lenin, workers do not become socialists automatically. They become trade unionists.
- When all remnants of bourgeois society are crushed, there is no need for the state.
- With some modifications, Lenin wanted to justify neo-Marxism. According to him, World War-I was such an imperialistic war and it was indirectly responsible for the growth of the communistic ideology.
- Lenin also believed in, the ultimate goal of classless and stateless society.
- Communism is known as scientific socialism. It is an eloquent protest against the system of capitalism.

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2.6 KEY TERMS

- **Utilitarianism:** It is an ethical theory which states that the right course of action is the one that maximizes the overall ‘good’ consequences of the action; it thus promotes that the moral worth of an action is determined by its resulting outcome.
- **Principle of utility:** This regards ‘good’ as that which produces the greatest amount of pleasure and the minimum amount of pain, and ‘evil’ as that which produces the most pain without the pleasure.
- **Pleasure and pain theory:** Bentham pointed out that human beings are creatures of feeling and sensibility; since reason is only a handmaid of feeling or passion, all experiences are either pleasurable or painful and that action is good which increases pleasure and decreases pain, whereas, that action is bad which decreases pleasure and increases pain.
- **Individual liberty:** It defines the state of being free to enjoy various social, political or economic rights, free from any government control or restraints in the exercise of those rights.
- **Good governance:** It defines a form of governance where public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in a way to guarantee the realization of human rights.

NOTES

- **Subjugation:** It defines the state of gaining control over somebody or something.
- **Representative government:** The government in which the citizens delegate the authority to elected representatives.
- **Negative liberty:** Freedom from interference by other people. It is set in contrast to positive liberty, which is defined as an individual's freedom from inhibitions of the social structure within the society such as classism, sexism or racism.

2.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Bentham is most popularly associated with utilitarianism and the panopticon.
2. The University College of London (UCL) was inspired by Benthamite ideas.
3. Among some of the early utilitarians were Francis Hutcheson, Helvetius, and Priestley.
4. Bentham's principle of utility hails 'good' as that which aids the production of the greatest amount of pleasure and the minimum amount of pain, while 'evil' is conceived as that which produces the most pain without the pleasure.
5. The model prison was designed by Bentham in the 1790s.
6. Michel Foucault had severely criticized the Benthamite idea of the panopticon.
7. The panopticon, as Foucault tells us, was paradigmatic of a whole range of 'disciplinary' institutions
8. (i) Liberty (ii) Conduct
9. (i) False (ii) True
10. Mill argued that women's submissive nature was the result of centuries of subjugation and lack of opportunities.
11. Mill defended the liberty of thought and expression on two important grounds. In the first place, he argued that it is useful to the society.
12. According to Mill, the best form of government is the representative government.
13. Lenin regards imperialism to be the highest form of capitalism.
14. Lenin identified five distinct features of imperialism, which are as follows:
 - The concentration of production and capital develops to such a high stage that it creates monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life.
 - The merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on the basis of this finance capital, of a financial oligarchy.
 - The export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance.

- The formation of international monopolist capitalist combines which share the world among themselves.
 - The territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed.
15. According to Lenin, the proletariat has no other weapon in the struggle for power except organization.
 16. According to Lenin, who agreed to Marx's view, the state had no role in a classless society. Lenin and Marx saw the state as a tool in the hands of the bourgeois for exploitation.
 17. (i) Classless, stateless (ii) Practical
 18. (i) Scientific socialism (ii) Party (iii) Dictatorship of proletariat

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2.8 QUESTION AND ANSWERS

Short-Answer Questions

1. What is Jeremy Bentham best known for?
2. Write a short note on Bentham.
3. During which period did utilitarianism dominate English political thinking?
4. List some of Bentham's better known works?
5. Why is Jeremy Bentham considered the godfather of University College of London?
6. What was Bentham's view on liberty?
7. What was the panopticon?
8. Write a short note on Bentham's pleasure and pain theory.
9. Why does Mill consider the representative form of government as the best form of government?
10. What are the various liberties that Mill identifies in the essay liberty?
11. What does the study on Mill's ideas on representative government reveal?
12. What is Lenin's opinion about the state?
13. What did Lenin mean by a classless society?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Pleasure and pain is the fundamental tenets of utilitarianism. Discuss.
2. Explain in your own words Bentham's contribution to political philosophy.
3. Critically evaluate Bentham's idea of the Panopticon.
4. Bentham was a great liberal thinker. Justify.

NOTES

5. The starting point of Bentham's political theory was his strong belief that there was need for extensive reforms in British society and particularly in English law and judicial procedure. Discuss.
6. Discuss Mill's contributions towards the emancipation of women.
7. Hume believed that human beings are unable to ground normative arguments in positive arguments. Discuss.
8. Pleasure and pain are the fundamental tenets of utilitarianism. Discuss.
9. According to Mill, 'the position of the wife under the common law of Britain was worse than that of slaves in the laws of many countries'. Discuss the condition of women during Mill's time in light of his statement.
10. Discuss Bentham's theory of punishment.
11. Describe the Mill's concept of the right of individuality.
12. Discuss the Mill's concept of individual liberty.
13. Review Mill's political philosophy.
14. Explain the type of democracy advocated by Mill.
15. What do you understand by scientific socialism?
16. Explain Lenin's view on dictatorship of the proletariat.
17. What is the role of the state in a classless society, according to Lenin?

2.9 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3 INDIAN SOCIAL THOUGHT

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Unit Objectives
- 3.2 Rammohan Roy: Social Reform
 - 3.2.1 Liberalism
 - 3.2.2 Concept of Freedom
 - 3.2.3 Freedom of Press
 - 3.2.4 Separation of Powers
 - 3.2.5 Colonial Rule
 - 3.2.6 Ideal of Internationalism
- 3.3 Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay
 - 3.3.1 Nationalism
 - 3.3.2 Equality
- 3.4 Vivekananda
 - 3.4.1 Nationalism
 - 3.4.2 Socialism
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 Key Terms
- 3.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 3.8 Questions and Exercises
- 3.9 Further Reading

NOTES

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Social and reformist thinkers have played a significant role in making India a more progressive and forward-looking country. These reformers have fought against several social evils such as sati, widow remarriage, child marriage, and casteism. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the most famous reformist of his times. He was also known as the 'maker of Modern India' and he founded the Brahmo Samaj, one of the first Indian socio-religious reform movements. He played a major role in abolishing the Sati system. He was a great scholar and an independent thinker.

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay was another literary figure of India who worked relentlessly to educate the people of India on nationalism and equality. He can be seen as a link between the period and ideologies of Rammohan Roy and the later social reformists. His thoughts on equality of women in the society was influenced by the thoughts of the Western philosophical thinkers.

Swami Vivekananda was one of the most influential spiritual leaders of Vedanta philosophy. He was the chief disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and was the founder of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission. Swami Vivekananda was the living embodiment of sacrifice and dedicated his life to the country and yearned for the progress of the poor, the helpless and the downtrodden. This unit will bring to you the political thoughts of some of the early Indian thinkers.

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3.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the social reforms undertaken by Rammohan Roy
- Explain the Roy's view on liberalism
- Describe nationalism as explained by Bankim Chandra
- Interpret *Samya* and Bankim Chandra's views on equality
- Describe the socialistic and nationalist views of Vivekananda

3.2 RAMMOHAN ROY: SOCIAL REFORM

One of the most prominent leaders of the Indian Renaissance is Raja Rammohan Roy. He is also known as the father of modern India. He was born in 1774 in Radhanagar, in the state of undivided Bengal, to rich, orthodox, brahmin family of zamindars (landowners). When he was hardly 15, he wrote a pamphlet in Bengali in which he denounced idol-worship which, he asserted, was not recognized in the Vedas. Young Rammohan Roy had to pay very heavily for it. He was turned out from his orthodox family and he had to live in exile. However, he made the best of the opportunity offered to him by providence. He travelled far and wide and, thus, was able to gather a lot of experience and learning. He had deep thirst for knowledge and had learnt many languages like Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit. He was well versed in Hindu and Muslim religious scriptures and laws. As an employee of the East India Company in 1797, he was exposed to the Western culture and traditions and during that period learned English, Greek and Latin. He also learnt Hebrew (the original language of Bible) so that he could study the Bible and other works of Christianity. He had deep knowledge of tantra, Jainism and Buddhism.

In 1805, Rammohan Roy joined the service of the English East India Company in Bengal, and continued to work there up to 1814. After his retirement, he settled in Calcutta and devoted himself entirely to the service of the people. In 1814, he started the Atmiya Sabha. In 1828, he founded the Brahmo Samaj. He went to England in 1831 on a special mission to plead the cause of the Mughal emperor of Delhi. While he was still busy in that work, he died at Bristol on 27 September 1833. He was given the title of Raja by the Mughal emperor.

The 18th and early 19th century was termed the dark age of India as the Indian society was crippled with many social evils and inequalities. Some of the practices that plagued the India society during that time were polygamy, child marriage, female infanticide, sati and the caste system. The people were superstitious and backward.

Roy started a campaign against all these social evils by setting up modern religious groups, by publishing books and newspapers, by initiating debates and discussions and by establishing modern schools and colleges.

The first book he wrote on Islam and its influence was *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*. It was published in 1803 and clearly portrays the influence of Islam and Matalzah's philosophy on him. The great Persian Sufi poets and mystics, Maulevi Jalal-ud-din Rumi and Hafiz also had deep impressions on him.

The concepts of one God and absence of idol worship were the main attributes of Islam that influenced him deeply.

His deep knowledge of Christianity and the Bible and his admiration for the Christ and his teachings are all reflected in the various books he wrote. His book, *The Precepts of Jesus*, reflects his deep respect for Jesus Christ and his teachings. His knowledge of Sanskrit enabled him to translate the main ideas of the many old Hindu scriptures like the Upanishads and Shankaracharya's works into Bengali. *Gayatrir Artha* and *Atmanantratma Vivek* are two of his famous works. The main reason for all this research and writings was to influence the Indian society with the concept of belief in one supreme self and god. He deeply desired that all religious and social superstitions should be eradicated from the Indian cultural and social psyche. His book *Manazarat-ul-Adiyan* showed the common message of all religions, in order to bring about religious harmony in India. He tried to allay the fears that Hindus had about the goals and aims of the Christian missionaries.

Roy fought for the freedom of the press. He himself founded and edited a Bengali journal called the *Samvad Kaumudi* which was among the earliest Indian-edited newspapers. He carried on a vigorous agitation against the Press Regulations of 1823. He submitted a memorial to the supreme court in which he dwelt on the benefits of a 'free press. His agitation for the freedom of the press must have paved the way for the final emancipation of the press in 1885.

3.2.1 Liberalism

Roy was a man of reason and great rationality. He had deep faith in the universal message of all religions but also did not hesitate to reject ideas or concepts that were unreasonable and irrational.

During his stay in England from 1831 to 1833, Roy joined the protest for reform in the administrative system of British-India. He was the first Indian to be consulted on Indian affairs by the British Parliament. While giving his evidence before a Select Committee of House of Commons, he suggested reforms in practically all branches of Indian administration.

Roy along with many other modern thinkers of that time like, Dwarkanath Tagore (father of Devendranath Tagore), Prasanna Kumar Tagore, Kalisankar Ghosal, Brindaban Mitra, Brajmohan Majumdar, Nandkishore Bose, Siva Prasad Mitra and Ram Chandra Vidya Vagish, set up the Atmiya Sabha in 1814 in Calcutta. However his ideas of one God and influence of Islam and Christianity and his rejection of caste system shocked many traditional and conservative Hindus and thus the Atmya Sabha could not sustain itself beyond a point and by 1819 it ceased to exist.

NOTES

NOTES

In the year 1829 he started the Brahmo Samaj with the philosophy of devotion to one Supreme Being, the Brahman. He believed in the one immortal soul from which spring the whole of the Universe and its numerous beings and non-beings to unite with it after death. The Brahmo Samaj had some specific guidelines:

- No idol or image worship.
- People from all castes and creeds were allowed to be part of the Samaj.
- No religious rituals were practiced. Meditation and prayer were held. The Upanishads were read.

Rammohan Roy was almost single-handedly responsible for the abolition of the practice of sati. He proved how Sati was a ploy to keep the widow of the deceased from inheriting a share the husband's property and had no religious significance. It was also a way to get rid of the widow who would now be a burden on the relatives with the husband dead. He often went to spots where Sati was being practiced and tried to stop the heinous ritual of burning a woman alive. A petition to stop it from being banned was made by the orthodox Hindus before the Governor-General Lord William Bentinck but Roy filed a counter petition and finally got it banned. The British Government legally prohibited the practice of Sati with effect from 1829.

Roy campaigned for the right to inheritance of women, for the remarriage of widows especially widows who were products of child marriages. However he himself could not explain why he wore a sacred thread when he was against caste system, or why he had three wives when he opposed polygamy. Despite this he remains one of the foremost torch bearers of India's social and religious revival till today.

The Raja has been rightly called 'the herald of a new age'. According to Monier-Williams, the Raja was 'perhaps the first earnest minded investigator of the science of comparative religions that the world has produced'. According to Seal, 'the Raja was the harbinger of the idea of universal humanism, the humanist, pure and simple, watching from his conning tower the procession of universal humanity in universal history'. According to Colet, 'Rammohan stands in history as the living-bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future. He was the arch which spanned the gulf between ancient caste and modern humanity, between superstition and science, between despotism and democracy, between immobile custom and conservative progress, between a bewildering polytheism and a pure, if vague, theism'.

According to Nandlal Chatterjee, Rammohan Roy 'was the human link between the unfading past and the dawning future, between vested conservatism and radical reform, between superstitious isolationism and progressive synthesis, in short, between reaction and progress'.

According to Rabindranath Tagore, Roy 'inaugurated the modern age in India'. He has also been described as the Father of Indian Renaissance and the Prophet of Indian Nationalism. Behind all of his ideas of social and religious reforms, there lay the thought of bringing about the political regeneration of his countrymen. To quote

him, 'I regret to say the system adhered to by the Hindus is not well-calculated to promote their political interest. The distinction of castes, introducing division and sub-divisions among them, has entirely deprived them of political feeling, multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise. It is, I think, necessary that some change should take place in their religion at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort'.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What was Rammohan Roy's first public writing about?
2. What was the name of the Bengali journal Roy edited?
3. The British gave Rammohan Roy the title of Raja. (True/False)
4. Roy was the first Indian to be consulted on Indian affairs by the British Parliament. (True/False)

3.2.2 Concept of Freedom

Rammohan Roy was a passionate believer in the ideal of freedom. His devotion to freedom of thoughts and expression had a lyrical quality about it. The Indian political tradition, despite its despotic aspects, had never interfered with the expression of heretical ideas in the realms of religion and philosophy. Roy emphasized this aspect of our cultural heritage and claimed that the concept of freedom of thought and worship was native to Indian soil. His love for the ideal of liberty was further reinforced by his study of Western political thought and political movements. As a liberal thinker himself, Roy wanted to see the victory of the ideals of liberalism in every country. The concept of freedom could not be limited by narrow national boundaries. For Roy the dimensions of liberty were universal and international. For historical reasons, freedom and constitutional government first arose in Europe, but Roy was confident that the Eastern world would sooner or later realize these ideals too.

Notion of Civil Liberty and Rule of Law

Citizens of a modern democratic state enjoy certain civil rights which are guaranteed by the rule of law or a written constitution. Rammohan Roy was of the view that civil rights cannot be claimed as the natural rights of men. They can exist only in a constitutional system of government where the laws of the state deliberately protect them. Roy argued that the Indians were placed under the protection of the whole British nation and that the British parliament was the supreme law-making authority for them and, consequently, the Indians were entitled to enjoy the same civil and religious rights which were given to Britons in Great Britain. The civil rights which the British subjects in India ought to enjoy are: right to life and liberty, right to property, freedom of thought and expression, and freedom of faith and religious worship. In his tract entitled *Final Appeal to the Christian Public*, Roy pointed out that the Rajput and Muslim political rulers did not allow civil liberties to their subjects.

NOTES

The protection of civil rights depended on certain constitutional and political reforms. Roy demanded for this purpose a written legal code, separation of legislative, judicial and executive functions, independent and efficient judiciary, introduction of the Habeas Corpus Act and the jury system, and the legal accountability of administrations. Roy wanted that the legal code should be self-sufficient and should preclude further references to any other books of authority, either Indian or European. He strongly criticized the fusion of administrative and judicial powers in the collector. He argued that the proceedings in the law courts should be made public so that the local Indian languages and English may replace Persian as the official language of the courts and administration. Revitalization of the Panchayat system and the inclusion of Indians as jurors and judges could be the devices to correct the abuses of the judicial system. Rammohan Roy firmly wanted to establish the legal accountability of every action of an official. To prevent corruption, he advised payment of higher salaries to Indian judges. Despite his adherence to the general principle of equality before law, he did not mind the creation of special courts for the trial of persons of high rank. Roy also emphasized the importance of the right to private property and considered it is inviolable.

Like Locke, Rammohan believed that the government should follow a policy of toleration and must not interfere with the religious beliefs and rites of the subjects. He demanded that the British rulers should pay due respect to Indian religions and must not imitate policies of other conquerors of the past who ridiculed and persecuted the religion of the defeated races. He quoted the historical examples of the Greek, Roman and Muslim conquerors who had persecuted their Jewish and Christian subjects for their religious beliefs. He hoped that the English would not display religious intolerance in their treatment of Hindus and Muslims in India. Criticizing the attitude of the Christian missionaries, Roy declared:

To introduce a religion by means of abuse and insult, or by affording the hope of worldly gain, is inconsistent with reasons and justice. If by the force of argument they can prove the truth of their own religion and the falsity of that of Hindus many would of course embrace their doctrines, and in case they fail to prove this, they should not undergo such useless trouble, nor tease Hindus any longer by their attempt at conversion.

3.2.3 Freedom of Press

Rammohan Roy attached great importance to freedom of the press. He carried on a campaign against the Bengal Government's Regulation of 1823 aimed at restricting the freedom of Indian periodical press. He claimed that the Indian subjects had enjoyed freedom of the press since the beginning of the British rule. Roy criticized the arguments of the British officials in favour of the Bengal Regulation and made a spirited defence of the need for a free press in India in his petition to the King-in-Council. The British view was that a free press could be permitted only within a representative constitutional framework and India did not qualify for this privilege as it was a colony. Rammohan argued that a free press was even more essential in India because the Indian government was not representative. A free press could prove an effective channel of communication between the people and the authorities.

It can enable the rulers to redress the grievances of their subjects before they accumulate and bring about a revolutionary overthrow of the colonial regime. A free press would diffuse knowledge, improve the minds of the people and make them more loyal towards the British regime as this loyalty would be based on a critical understanding of the benefits of the British rule.

3.2.4 Separation of Powers

Like Montesquieu, Raja Rammohan Roy was a firm believer in the theory of separation of powers. While Montesquieu regarded it as a necessary precondition of constitutional liberty, Roy considered it as a cardinal principle of good government. In the case of district administration, Roy strongly against the fusion of executive and judicial functions in the person of the collector.

Before the renewal of the Charter in 1833, there was, broadly speaking, two schools of opinion regarding the creation of legislative authority for India. One school represented by John Sullivan and others held that India must have a legislative council on the Indian Territory to legislate for the country. The other school of opinion wanted to preserve the status quo and wanted the British parliament to exercise legislative authority for India. Raja Rammohan Roy too opposed the plan of vesting legislative authority in the hands of legislative council in India because such a council was bound to be dominated by the executive wing of the Indian government. While he demanded that the British parliament should legislate for India, he was opposed to the transfer of executive power from the East India Company to the Crown as this would violate the principle of separation of powers and might lead to despotic government.

The constitutional arrangement for India, according to Rammohan Roy, ought to have been based on the principle of separation of powers, checks and balances and limited government. While the British Parliament in England should be the law-making authority for India, the executive power should continue with the administrators of the East India Company stationed on Indian Territory. Moreover, there should be a complete delinking of the judicial function from the executive function and with both of these functions the educated and qualified Indians should be associated in larger number. The Indians ought to entrust with the highest judicial and administrative responsibilities. To a modern reader, Rammohan Roy's faith in the doctrine of separation of powers as the basis of institutional rearrangement for the British colonial system seems to be highly misplaced.

3.2.5 Colonial Rule

Speaking about the attitudes of various sections of the Indian population towards British colonial rule, Rammohan Roy said that the responses varied from extreme hostility through total apathy to sincere administration. The hostile elements generally belonged to the aristocratic class. He was much more impressed by the constitutional evolution of England where absolute monarchy had gradually been transformed into a constitutional form of government. He thought that the existing colonial rule of the British in India could also be transformed into constitutional rule by introducing the

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principle of separation of powers and through increasing association of the members of the Indian intelligentsia with administrative and judicial functions. Roy had made a deep and penetrating study of the British political system. He was deeply influenced by Blackstone's commentaries on the laws of England. Blackstone's interpretation of the English constitution was rigidly and narrowly legalistic which failed to take note of the emergence of the cabinet system. Following the analysis of Blackstone, Roy also thought that the essential merit of the British system was its reliance on the separation of powers. Consequently, he insisted on the implementation of the same principle in the reorganization of the Indian government. However, his advocacy of a legal code for India showed that on this question his views were more in harmony with those of Bentham than with those of Blackstone.

Roy did not want that law-making authority should be vested in any institution controlled by the East India Company such as the Governor-General or his council. This function ought to be entrusted to the sovereign in the realm as the study of Bentham's works must have convinced him in this regard. He recommended three methods for ensuring good legislation for India. The first and the most important condition was the establishment of a free press in the country. Through a free press, the public can express its opinion; the laws enacted by them could correspond to the opinion of the people and serve general interest. A free press allows the people to ventilate their grievances and prevent a revolution by enabling the British rulers to make laws in conformity with public opinion. The second method recommended by Rammohan Roy for securing good legislation for India was the appointment of injury by the British parliament whenever it decided to frame any new law about India. The third method proposed by Rammohan Roy to facilitate the task of suitable legislation for India was to ascertain the views of the aristocratic, wealthy and educated classes on any new piece of proposed legislation before it was finally enacted. However, some critics point out that this proposal seems to suggest his bias towards aristocracy and his 'contempt of the masses'. They say that for him, public opinion meant the opinion of the *zamindars*, merchants and the bureaucratic functionaries only.

3.2.6 Ideal of Internationalism

Rammohan Roy's love of liberty had no parochial or chauvinistic quality about it because it embraced the entire humanity irrespective of ethnic and national frontiers. In the spiritual sphere, he was the prophet of universal religion and preached the ideal of brotherhood of men. In the political sphere, he hoped for the victory of the liberal doctrines throughout the world. Roy did not recognize any basic contradiction or antagonism between nationalism and internationalism. He realized this truth at a time when the creed of nationalism was breeding so much intolerance and bitterness in Europe. He believed that Indian nationalism would gain strength from the achievement of national freedom by all European nationalities. The free nations of the world would then discover a bond of union in their common adherence to the principles of liberty and a liberal form of government.

Thus, Roy was one of the earliest exponents of the noble ideal of internationalism and cosmopolitan fraternity. In one of his hymns to the almighty, Roy prayed: 'May God render religion destructive of differences and dislike between man and man, and conducive to the peace and union of mankind.' In the British connection with India, he visualized an instrument by which the nations of Asia could be elevated to the status of Europeans in material and cultural attainments. Without this process of levelling up of the economically and culturally backward peoples of the orient, the great objective of universal brotherhood would remain a mere utopia.

The British Empire in India had given an opportunity to two great nations of the West and the East to come together and develop a synthesis of their divergent cultural traditions and make a successful experiment in international cooperation. As a worshipper at the shrine of universal fraternity, Rammohan suggested various means by which existing imperialist relationship between India and England based on force could be transformed into a voluntary union of nations based on mutually shared rights and benefits. He thought that the complete existence of a free press and deference to public opinion and finally appointment of the Indians to high offices according to merit would remove the isolation of the British regime and pave the way for a permanent association between the two great peoples could be a worthy example in international friendship to be emulated by other nations.

However, Rammohan Roy was not dogmatic in his approach and did not like making political prophecies. During the last years of his life, he even suggested that India might become an independent nation within the next few decades. He hoped that this separation, when it came about, should be without violence and free India with the help of the free nations of Europe should participate in the task of spreading the message of liberalism and liberty to other nations of the East. Roy thought that the ideal of liberty was indivisible and could not be confined to just one part of the world.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

5. Fill in the blanks

- (i) Rammohan Roy was of the view that _____ cannot be claimed as the natural rights of men.
- (ii) Like Locke, Rammohan believed that the government should follow a policy of _____ and must not interfere with the religious beliefs.
- (iii) Roy strongly protested the fusion of _____ and _____ functions in the person of the collector.
- (iv) Roy was one of the earliest exponents of the noble ideal of _____ and _____ fraternity.

3.3 BANKIM CHANDRA CHATTOPADHYAY

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Bankim Chandra was born on 26 June 1838 and died on 8 April, 1894. He had composed the national song *Vande Mataram*. His song is a source of inspiration to the leaders who were involved during the time of India's independence movement. He graduated from the University of Calcutta and was selected the deputy magistrate and deputy collector in the Government of British India. He is was a prominent literary figure of Bengal renaissance.

He was the chief exponent to make the European form of novel writing flourish on the Indian soil. Educated in Calcutta, he was one of the first graduates of pre-independent India and remained a civil servant throughout his career. He also instituted Bengali, his native language, which is mainly spoken in the eastern part of India, as a medium for prose form for artistic practice. He was a multi-lingual person with keen interest in culture of his province and customs, traditions and conventions that were the stumbling blocks in the path of development of the society. His works preserve the grandeur of culture and voice out its delicacy, beauty and emotions in a wider and universal sense. His famous literary creations include novels such as *Lalita O Manas* (1858), *Rajmohan's Wife* (1864), *Durgesnandini* (1865), *Kapalkundala* (1866), *Mrinalini* (1869), *Brisabraksa* (1873), *Indira* (1873), *Yugalanguriya* (1874), *Radharani and Chandrasekhar* (1875), *Rajani* (1877), *Krisnakanter Uil* (1878), *Rajsimha* (Rajasingha) (1881), *Anandmath* (1882), *Debi Chaudhrani* (1884), *Sitaram* (1886), and *Bangadarsan* (1872, a newspaper). His song in the patriotic novel *Anandmath*, called 'Bande Mataram' became the national song of India from the pre-independence generations. It means 'Hail the Mother!'

He was equally well versed in Sanskrit. He purposed to invoke a cultural renaissance through his novels and poetry, and his literary productions truly seal this ability. His novels are written in Bengali and English and they focused on social problems, cultural fineries, nationalistic sentiments, and uplift of the then Indian society which was sincerely required in the pre-independence era. He wrote about Bengali heritage in an attempt to unite the educated people and involve them in a cultural revolution, and make it universal. His work helped to awaken the people, both politically and culturally. His writings helped to develop rational thinking and scientific temper among the Indians.

Interestingly, most of his novels are named after women. They also reflect patriotic emotions, conflicts of the society, human relationships, and an overall restoration of values. He raised a literary crusade and his example was followed by many brilliant authors. He was a marvellous story teller and his tales were romantic ones. His entire repertoire was translated into all the major languages of India.

Through his writings, Bankim Chandra focused on political issues of the period. In his book *Anandamath* was set in the backdrop of *sannyasi* rebellion of the 18th century.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

5. Fill in the Blanks

- (i) Bankim Chandra was a prominent literary figure of ____ ____.
- (ii) Bankim Chandra's work helped to awaken people, both ____ and ____.

6. Name the national song written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay.

7. Name some of the novels written by Bankim Chandra.

NOTES**3.3.1 Nationalism**

By the time Bankim Chandra began writing, Bengal was experiencing a new awakening. People had a new thought, although it may not be called the nationalistic feeling. It was the desire to improve the condition of the self as well as the country. The feeling of patriotism was becoming stronger.

Nirad C. Choudhuri, well known for his critical appraisal wrote, 'Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay ... besides being a genius in imaginative literature was certainly the most powerful intellect produced by India in 19th century.' Similarly, Sri Aurobindo also praised Bankim Chandra. He remarks unhesitatingly, 'Bankim never clamoured for place or power, but did his work in silence for love of his work even as nature does, and just because he had no aim but to give out the best that was in him, was able to create a language, a literature, and a nation.' Thus, Aurobindo credits Bankim Chandra not only as a key literary figure, but also a force to reckon with in building the nation. The praise of one of the leading nationalist in pre-independent India who later turned ascetic is equally demanding attention.

He provides the truth and revelation of his behaviour to the study of prevailing temperament of politics. It constituted the hallmark of his nationalism. Bankim Chandra pointed out the spirit of truth in saying that we do not know how to go for honey and gather it. There is no reflection in going for it. There is no positive symbol of work to go with it. It can only be droning like a humming girl.

He advised his countrymen to wake up and rise. Without a constructive resolution, they could not get any positive outcome from the alien government of India. The country had to be regenerated towards effective politics. The need of the hour was a new brand of politics. He put emphasis on new sense of identity, strength and unity despite different primordial diversities.

Bankim Chandra recognized the need of the hour was to inspire his countrymen with the idea of nationalism. It had to be done in combination with the spirit of religion. He talked about the conceptual God and tangible humanity. He pointed out the essence of dharma of man. Dharma reflects the attainment of full humanity. It should be through the development of harmony and peace.

Bankim Chandra saw the country as the mother, and this feeling of his emerged in all his leading novels, the most important of which was *Anandamath*. His political vision was in the direction of Hindu revival. Although he ties women to tradition, he

creates enough space for them which go beyond subjugation. It can thus, be said that women drew their strength from the tradition; and in representing nationalism he evokes people to draw their strength from the very spirit of India.

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The slogan *bande mataram* from his book *Anandamath* became an inspiring slogan of Indian nationalism. It constituted the core value of his political philosophy. He talked about the love for country. His patriotism comprised the maximum religion. He put emphasis on religious spirit of patriotism. He coined the word 'mother land' to inspire people.

3.3.2 Equality

Samya refers to equality. It is an essay written by Bankim Chandra after studying Jean-Jacques Rousseau and J. S. Mill. The essay presents Bankim Chandra as a radical critique of the Indian society and the position of women here. In the essay he argues that while no two individual are born equal, social inequality is a tool used to create artificial inequality to assert worldly power. He did not argue on favour of equality of income for all but talked of 'each according to his ability and to each according to his needs. He talked of changing the pattern of inheritance among women and to endow them with more rights and education. Inspired by Rousseau, he favoured a social contract that would hold rulers accountable to the people.

Bankim appreciated J. Mill's plea for gender equality and did not feel the need to add to what was mentioned in *The Subjection of Women*. In fact, he felt that Indian women faced 'one hundredth degree more of subjugation than what European women faced'. Many consider Bankim Chandra paid a tribute to Mill by agreeing with him and not making any changes.

Bankim Chandra talked about two aspects of equality, one is real equality and the other is artificial equality. He showed how artificial equality can result in decay of civilization. To him the world is full of inequality. There is inequality in everything. Although man has created differences between communities, races and people, the core value of real differences are created by the rules of nature. Then there are artificial differences. Artificial dissimilarities are not shaped by system of nature. The social hierarchy and man-made differences are artificial in nature. These principles can be applied from different diverse perspectives. He talked about different civilizations. Taking the example of Rome, he showed there are differences between the patricians and plebeians. But these differences are dim and can be eliminated through the course of convergence and osmosis.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

9. Fill in the blanks

- (i) Bankim Chandra pointed out the essence of _____ man to awaken the feeling of nationalism.
- (ii) The slogan _____ from his book *Anandamath* became an inspiring slogan of Indian nationalism.

10. What is the significance of *Samya*?

11. Who influenced Bankim Chandra to write *Samya*?

3.4 VIVEKANANDA

Vivekananda was born in 1863 and was named Vireshwara by his mother, which was later changed to Narendra Nath. In his short life span of 39 years, he contributed not only to the Indian society but also to the world at large with his philosophy on spirituality and religion. His philosophy impinges and influences the political ideas of contemporary India as well. He tried to regenerate India through his philosophy of truth, love and tolerance which has influenced and constituted the Indian political thought over the years.

As a preacher of universal religion, Vivekananda is well known both in the East and the West. He was a great advocate of the Vedanta. He was a humanist, a patriot, a philosopher, a religious preacher who awakened the people of Hinduism from its age-old slumber and infused into it a new life and new blood. Vivekananda successfully infused new hope in man, both in India and abroad, with his message of love, tolerance, service and sacrifice to mankind

His message was meant for a complete rejuvenation of India's national life in all its phases.

3.4.1 Nationalism

Vivekananda was a true nationalist in heart and spirit. He had immense love for his country. His nationalism was spiritual in nature. Like Aurobindo and Bipin Chandra Pal, Vivekananda advocated for a religious basis of nationalism. He called India as 'punya bhumi' (holy land). To him, India is the ancient land where wisdom made its home before it went into any other country. To him, India was the land of immortality of souls and birth place of spiritual leaders. It is here the highest ideals of religion and philosophy reached their climax. It is the birth place of highest ideals, philosophy of spirituality and ethics, of simplicity, of gentleness and of love. It has withstood the shocks of the centuries, hundreds of invasions and hundreds of ups and downs. Yet it stands firmer and stronger. It developed when many European civilizations did not exist. From time immemorial, India has been the land of many precious ideas and the world owes immense debt to India.

Vivekananda was a patriot-monk and did not take part in active politics. He had never made any political speeches attacking the British rule in India. Similarly, he never raised the banner of political revolt to secure India's independence. During Vivekananda's time, Indian politics was largely the concern of the English educated middle class who wanted to share in the administration and get better personal treatment rather than a movement which aimed at the complete independence of the country. Vivekananda was not satisfied with the working of the Indian National Congress. He was rather interested in the moral and religious regeneration of his countrymen. Hence, even if he was not an advocate of Swaraj, he was deeply devoted to the cause of the liberation of the poor and the downtrodden.

Vivekananda played a significant role in preparing the ground for the politics of independence. He gave a new political ideology through his reinterpretation of the Vedanta and the Hindu religion and his concern for the masses and their problems.

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The success of his spiritual mission to the West had acted as tonic to the people of India and helped to restore their self-respect and revived their confidence in India's national destiny. Vivekananda's writings and speeches have contributed a good deal to the strengthening of the moral foundations of Bengal nationalism in theory and practice. At a time when the Indian intelligentsia was busy imitating the Westerners, he boldly proclaimed that the West had to learn much from India. Thus, Vivekananda helped a lot in the consolidation of nationalism in India. His thinking has a tremendous influence on the subsequent political leaders of India. The ideas of Vivekananda, which were politically revolutionary for the India of his times, had a tremendous influence on subsequent political thinking and action in India and embraced within its sphere the mass-dynamism of Gandhi and the socialistic ideas of Nehru.

Vivekananda was of the view that the past historical heritage and greatness were necessary for nationalism. His idea of nationalism, and glorification of the nation gave courage, strength and fearlessness, to the countrymen. India was the 'land where all souls on this earth must come to account for *karma* where wisdom made its home before it went into any country'. Though he took pride in the country's inheritance from the past, he was not an obscurantist or chauvinist.

Vivekananda advocated that every nation has a life centre. All the nations are proud of their political or economic or military strength. He observed that in India the life-centre or the backbone is religion and religion alone. Here religious life forms the centre, the keynote of the whole music of national life; the Indian mind is first religious and then anything else. The Indian vitality is concentrated in religion. It cannot be changed or destroyed. Hence, Vivekananda advocated that the people of India should not give up their spirituality. He admitted that religion in India had forgotten its original purity and it did not recognize the kinship of religions. Hence he tried to reform it. He wanted a reform of religion and integration of this reformed religion with the whole of life. Vivekananda put emphasis on universal love. He did not approve the, love for one's own kith and kin or one's caste or sect or individual', religion. He declared, 'unfurl the banner of love. Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached'.

Vivekananda did not only praise the greatness of the past; he also dreamt of a bright wonderful and glorious future India. He discussed the present decadence, of India and stated that the people are to blame themselves for that. That people were ignoring the past and it is the major cause of India's, decadence. In the words of a scholar, 'As the leading exponent of the spiritual renaissance of India, Vivekananda moulded the past and the present traditional and modern thought to mould modern India's future. In fact, of all the mentors of the Indian renaissance, he was the most vehement advocate of the spirituality of India which constituted her, national growth and vitality. He felt that each nation has a mission and a message of her own. Pursuit of spiritualism formed India's mission and way of life. As a supporter of this idea, he revised the eternal teachings of the Vedas and the Upanishads to strengthen, nation's growth and faith in its individual. To Vivekananda the, main causes of this degeneration were the narrowing of the view and action of the people, perversion of religion tyranny over the masses and the neglect of women.

3.4.2 Socialism

Vivekananda was a radical social reformer. He favoured the idea of the revivalism of Indian traditions, his main intention was to save the masses from ignorance, poverty and evil practices and to reform and revive the Indian society on the basis of its own ideals and values. He was of the view that the social reforms were not possible without spiritual reforms. All reformers in India made serious mistake of holding religion, accountable for all the horrors of the priest craft and degeneration. One must go to the bottom or the very root of the matter. All healthy social changes are the manifestations of spiritual forces working within.

The social ideas of Vivekananda are reflected in his views on caste system, emancipation of women and education. Vivekananda believed that the ancient Indian system of social stratification based upon *varna* is a correct system. He called it as 'social communism'. He criticized the doctrines of superiority of Brahmins as preached by Manu. Rather he put emphasis on the concept of spiritual equality in the Varna system. However, he was not against giving the highest place to the learned and the scholars called *brahmins*. He was a great opponent of ritualism and priestly tyranny. Vivekananda criticized the caste segregation. He was of the view that the degeneration of the ancient idea into a rigid caste system is the cause of the degeneration of the nation. To him the caste system is opposed to the principle of the *vedanta*. As he said, 'There is no caste in religion.' He further observed that caste is simply a crystallized social institutions, which after doing its service can only be removed by giving back to the people their last social individuality.

Vivekananda was not a socialist like the contemporary Fabian socialist or the Guild socialists of England. He gave a new interpretation to the concept of socialism. He spent his life in organising missionaries who would fight as soldiers for the abolition of poverty. Vivekananda called his own brand of socialism as the vedantic socialism. He demands the sacrifice of individual freedom to social supremacy. He applied this definition to the Indian condition. He said, 'if you want to find God, serve man'. He further said, 'It is only by doing good to others that one attains to one's own good and it is by leading others to *bhakti* and *mukti* that one attains. He had deep love for the poor and said, 'Remember that the nation lives in the cottage.' He wanted to give life to the aspirations and suffering of the masses through his preaching and writings. According to him, it was necessary to improve the lot of the poor by bringing education and religion to them.

Vivekananda was aware of the defects of the caste system. The caste system did not provide any ideal condition for a socialist society. Vivekananda strongly denied the thesis of religious sanction for the caste system. He did not believe 'in the hereditary system of the caste. The caste system was opposed the religion of the Vedanta. He observed that religion had a connection with the soul and had no business to interfere in social matters.

However, he was opposed to the privilege a few got in the society. He stood for an equal chance for all the people. Swami Vivekananda was for the amelioration of social evils which stood in the way of the people attaining true freedom. His call to his countrymen was that India was to be raised, the poor were to be fed, education

NOTES

NOTES

was to be spread and the evil of priest craft was to be removed. He demanded more bread and more opportunity for everybody. The masses should not reel under abject misery and frustration. He strongly indicted the Indian National Congress for lacking positive and constructive efforts for the alleviation of the suffering of masses.

Vivekananda attempted to mix socialism and individualism into a system where the socialistic ends would be achieved with the full play of individual freedom. Defining socialism and individualism he observed that the doctrine which demands the sacrifice of individual freedom to social supremacy is called socialism, while that which advocates the cause of the individual is individualism. He is a social realist and reformer who champion the concept of equal opportunity for all members of society. He was a socialist in the sense that he did not believe in social exploitation and inequality. He was opposed to the exploitation of the poor. He showed his resentment against the upper classes in India and wanted to put to an end to all privileges enjoyed by them. Vivekananda appealed to the upper classes to give up their privileges and to merge themselves with the lower and working classes. The new, India according to him, as to arise from the farmer's plough, from the huts, from the forests and from the peasants and the working classes.

The Marxists have described religion as the opium of the people and a means for upholding the status quo, but Vivekananda's concept of religion was a different one: He wanted to advise the people and make them not only discontented with their poverty and backwardness but also stimulate in them both the desire and the will to help themselves. He wanted to bring in material betterment first and then religion. Hence, his religion is known as practical vedanta and his socialism is called as the vedantic socialism. No orthodox socialist was a greater votary of the masses than Vivekananda. Only his method of rousing them and ushering in a new social order was different from that of the other socialists. Vivekananda cannot be listed in the gallery of orthodox socialists, his concept of socialism rests on the climate of change he wanted to bring about in Indian life, conduct and character and the rousing of spirituality among his people Vedanta. Thus, Vivekananda thought of poor nationals of India and aimed at alleviating their miseries by subordinating the bliss of the Absolute. In the words of scholar, 'Patriotism means love of the country and the country means its masses. Only Vivekananda arrived at this road through religion.

Vivekananda was opposed to the inequalities based on the caste system, he found it essential for the Indian society. No society can exist without some sort of social stratification. According to Vivekananda the main objective of the caste-system is 'to evolve every individual of the society to the level of Brahmin, the, supreme and best human being. He did not believe in the hereditary, natural to the caste system.

Vivekananda strongly condemned the evil practice of untouchability. In his writings he discussed the personal experiences of the disabilities suffered by the untouchable castes. He also suggested possible reforms to eradicate it. Thus, he was a great social reformer.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

12. Fill in the blanks

- (i) Vivekananda was a great advocate of _____.
- (ii) Vivekananda was of the view that the historical ___ and ___ were necessary for nationalism.
- (iii) Vivekananda was a social ___ and ___.

13. State whether the statements are true or false

- (i) Vivekananda advocated for a religious basis of nationalism.
- (ii) Through his religious preaching, Vivekananda raised his voice against the British.
- (iii) Vivekananda ignored the defects of the caste system.

NOTES**3.5 SUMMARY**

- In 1814, Rammohan Roy started the Atmiya Sabha. In 1828, he founded the Brahmo Samaj.
- Roy started a campaign against all these social evils by setting up modern religious groups, by publishing books and newspapers, by initiating debates and discussions and by establishing modern schools and colleges.
- Roy fought for the freedom of the press. He himself founded and edited a Bengali journal called the *Samvad Kaumudi* which was among the earliest Indian-edited newspapers.
- Rammohan Roy was almost single-handedly responsible for the abolition of the practice of sati.
- Rammohan Roy was a passionate believer in the ideal of freedom.
- For Roy the dimensions of liberty were universal and international.
- Rammohan Roy was of the view that civil rights cannot be claimed as the natural rights of men.
- Rammohan believed that the government should follow a policy of toleration and must not interfere with the religious beliefs and rites of the subjects.
- Raja Rammohan Roy was a firm believer in the theory of separation of powers.
- Roy did not want that law-making authority should be vested in any institution controlled by the East India Company such as the Governor-General or his council.
- Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay was the composer of the national song *Vande Mataram*.
- He was the chief exponent to make the European form of novel writing flourish on the Indian soil.

NOTES

- Chattopadhyay's work helped to awaken the people, both politically and culturally. His writings helped to develop rational thinking and scientific temper among the Indians.
- Bankim Chandra put emphasis on new sense of identity, strength and unity despite different primordial diversities.
- Bankim Chandra saw the country as the mother, and this feeling of his emerged in all his leading novels, the most important of which was *Anandamath*.
- Bankim appreciated J. Mill's plea for gender equality and did not feel the need to add to what was mentioned in *The Subjection of Women*.
- Vivekananda was a humanist, a patriot, a philosopher, a religious preacher who awakened the people of Hinduism from its age-old slumber and infused into it a new life and new blood.
- Vivekananda advocated for a religious basis of nationalism. He called India as 'punya bhumi' (holy land).
- Vivekananda was a patriot-monk and did not take part in active politics.
- Vivekananda was not a socialist like the contemporary Fabian socialist or the Guild socialists of England. He gave a new interpretation to the concept of socialism. He spent his life in organising missionaries who would fight as soldiers for the abolition of poverty.

3.6 KEY TERMS

- **Brahmo Samaj:** A school of thought started Raja Rammohan Roy which denounced idolatry.
- **Sati:** A practice by Hindu women to self-immolate in the pyre of her husband.

3.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Raja Rammohan Roy's first public was a pamphlet in Bengali in which he denounced idol-worship. He was 15 then.
2. *Samvad Kaumudi*
3. False
4. True
5. (i) Civil rights (ii) Toleration (iii) Executive, judicial (iv) Internationalism, cosmopolitan
6. Bengal renaissance (ii) Politically, culturally
7. The song *Vande Mataram* was written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay.
8. Some of the famous novels by Chattopadhyay were *Lalita O Manas* (1858), *Rajmohan's Wife* (1864), *Durgesnandini* (1865), *Kapalkundala* (1866), *Mrinalini* (1869), *Brisabraksa* (1873), *Indira* (1873), *Yugalanguriya* (1874),

Radharani and Chandrasekhar (1875), *Rajani* (1877), *Krisnakanter Uil* (1878), *Rajsimha (Rajasingha)* (1881), *Anandmath* (1882), *Debi Chaudhrani* (1884), and *Sitaram* (1886).

9. (i) Dharma (ii) *Bande mataram*
10. *Samya* is a long essay written by Bankim Chandra on equality.
11. Bankim Chandra was influenced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and J. S. Mill to write *Samya*.
12. (i) Vedanta (ii) Heritage, greatness (iii) Realist, reformer
13. (i) True (ii) False (iii) False

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3.8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. How did Rammohan Roy emerge as a social reformer?
2. What was Roy's view on separation of power?
3. Write a short note on freedom of press as advocated by Rammohan Roy.
4. Why is Bankim Chandra seen as a link between the past and the future?
5. What did Bankim Chandra say about women equality?
6. Why is Vivekananda called a social reformer?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss Rammohan Roy as a social reformer.
2. Explain Roy's concept of liberalism.
3. What did Roy mean by social liberty?
4. Discuss Bankim Chandra's thoughts on nationalism.
5. Discuss Bankim Chandra's view on women equality as expressed in *Samya*.
6. How did Vivekananda fight caste system in India?
7. Explain Vivekanand's view on nationalism.

3.9 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4 MODERN INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

NOTES

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Unit Objectives
- 4.2 Gandhi: Preacher of Non-violence, Satyagraha
 - 4.2.1 Satyagraha
 - 4.2.2 Gandhi's Concept of the Individual and the State
- 4.3 M. N. Roy: A Revolutionary Nationalist
 - 4.3.1 Roy's Marxist Beliefs
 - 4.3.2 New or Radical Humanism
 - 4.3.3 Concept of Organised Democracy
 - 4.3.4 Roy and Gandhi
 - 4.3.5 Roy's Contribution to Indian Political Thought
- 4.4 B. R. Ambedkar: A Social Revolutionary
 - 4.4.1 A Revolutionary Seeking Social Justice
 - 4.4.2 Organisation of the Socially Oppressed Classes
 - 4.4.3 Ambedkar and the Poona Pact
 - 4.4.4 Political Ideas of Ambedkar
 - 4.4.5 Ambedkar's Ideas on Social and Economic Democracy
 - 4.4.6 Economic Planning
- 4.5 Jawaharlal Nehru
 - 4.5.1 Freedom Movement
 - 4.5.2 Nehruvian Model of Development
 - 4.5.3 Institution Building and Infrastructure Development
 - 4.5.4 Critique of Nehruvian Model
- 4.6 Summary
- 4.7 Key Terms
- 4.8 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 4.9 Questions and Exercises
- 4.10 Further Reading

4.0 INTRODUCTION

India's encounter with the British Empire produced two kinds of intellectual responses: social and political. Throughout the 19th century social movements were initiated by thinkers like Rammohan Roy, Vivekananda, Dayananda and Phule in different parts of the country. In the twentieth century freedom movement grew mainly under the organizational leadership of the Indian leadership. Political thinking actually developed through the writings, speeches and other activities of individual leaders of different hues and reflected their different stresses within the overall goal of national independence also incorporating international ideas.

NOTES

4.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Understand the philosophy of M. K. Gandhi
- Assess the Nehruvian model of development
- Examine critiques of the Nehruvian Model of state-led development
- Discuss M. N. Roy's philosophy of New or Radical Humanism
- Identify some criticisms of Radical Humanism
- Assess Roy's concept of organised democracy
- Evaluate the ideas of Ambedkar

4.2 GANDHI: PREACHER OF NON-VIOLENCE, SATYAGRAHA

With the Indian leadership split between the moderate and extremist factions, another leader emerged who came to dominate the freedom struggle with his principle of non-violent opposition to British rule. This was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a person with mass appeal who enjoyed the support of both the moderates and the extremists. Gandhi, or Mahatma Gandhi, as he came to be known, turned the national movement into a mass movement of the people. He had returned to India from South Africa in early 1915. Gandhi had been a moderate to begin with and had supported the British government during the war. However, a number of events, like the conduct of the British government in Champaran and Kheda, passing of the Rowlatt Act, and the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, turned him from a loyalist to rebel. He considered Gokhale to be his political mentor and, therefore, often turned to him for advice. He went around the country for a year, travelling in third class in trains, and getting acquainted with the people and their problems at the grassroots level.

Gradually, he led several local struggles such as the one at Champaran in Bihar and the dispute at Ahmedabad textile mills. These local struggles were also a landmark in the history of Indian freedom struggle as they were the first Satyagraha protests initiated by Gandhi based on the principle of *ahimsa* or non-violence against the British. His leadership earned him widespread respect and loyal support of the people, and he rapidly rose to the helm of nationalist politics as a charismatic leader of the nationalist movement.

Rabindranath Tagore, India's most well-known poet and author, gave him the title of Mahatma, or 'Great Soul'. Though many leaders fought for the cause of Indian independence, Mahatma Gandhi's role stands out among them. His arrival galvanized the nationalist movement and made it a mass movement.

4.2.1 Satyagraha

Gandhi used the word satyagraha in 1906 to express the nature of the non-violent action undertaken by Indians in South Africa against the racist government there.

During his involvement in the Indian National Movement, Gandhi adopted it as a technique of love-force or soul-force that was non-violent in nature, which aimed constantly at the search and pursuit of truth. For Gandhi, Satyagraha was the vindication of truth, not by the infliction of suffering on the opponent but on one's own self. Satyagraha emphasised always the purity of means as well as the purity of ends. It is a moral weapon in the hands of a morally strong person to fight injustice, tyranny or evil and can be applied in any sphere. According to Gandhi, 'It is a force that may be used by individuals as well as communities. It may be used as well in political as in domestic affairs. Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and invincibility.' Before practicing satyagraha in public life, a *satyagrahi* must practice it in domestic or personal life. Like charity, satyagraha must begin from home.

An individual in search of truth, whether in domestic or public life, has a heavy burden of ethical code over his shoulders. His aim is self-realisation through social service and sacrifice. For a *satyagrahi*, satyagraha is a weapon to be used for public good and never for personal gains. It is not to be resorted to defend immoral acts and wrongly earned gains. There is no place for ill-will and hatred in satyagraha. A *satyagrahi* does not think of his enemy in terms of victor and vanquished.

It must be remembered that satyagraha is not the same as passive resistance. It is true that both are peaceful techniques of meeting aggression and bringing about social and political changes. However, there are differences between the two. Passive resistance as practiced is a political weapon of expediency but satyagraha is a moral weapon based on the superiority of soul force over brute force. Passive resistance is the weapon of the weak but satyagraha can be practiced only by a mentally strong person. The passive resister aims at embarrassing his opponent into submission, but a *satyagrahi* aims at winning the opponent from error by love and patient suffering. There is hardly any place for love for the enemy in the case of passive resistance. In satyagraha, there is no room for ill-will.

Mahadev Desai, a close associate of Gandhi, during the freedom struggle observed, 'satyagraha is dynamic, passive resistance is static. Passive resistance acts negatively and suffers reluctantly. *Satyagrahi* acts positively and suffers with cheerfulness because from love he makes the suffering fruitful. Passive resistance is not by its very nature universal in its application. It cannot be directed against one's nearest relations as satyagraha can be. Passive resistance offered in a spirit of weakness and despair weakens the resister psychologically and morally. Satyagraha emphasises on internal strength and actually develops the same. Satyagraha can offer more effective and determined opposition to injustice and tyranny than passive resistance.'

Forms and Techniques of Satyagraha

The techniques of satyagraha may take the form of non-cooperation and civil disobedience or fasting and strike (stop-work). As regards to non-cooperation, Gandhi pointed out that oppression and exploitation can be checked by non-cooperation of the people. If people refused to co-operate with the government, the latter cannot function. Gandhi said, 'Even the most despised government cannot stand except

NOTES

NOTES

with the consent of the governed, whose consent is often forcibly procured by the despot. Immediately the subject ceases to fear the despotic force, his power is gone.' Non-cooperation may manifest itself in the form of *hartals*, or picketing. Hartals involved the stopping of work as a measure of protest and its objective is to strike the imagination of the people and the government. For hartals to be effective, they have to be voluntary without the use of violence.

According to Gandhi, 'Object of peaceful picketing is not to block the path of a person wanting to do a particular thing but to rely on the force of public opprobrium and to war and even shame the blacklegs. Picketing should avoid coercion, intimidation, discourtesy, burning or burying of effigies and hunger strike.'

Another form of satyagraha recommended by Gandhi is civil disobedience. This is regarded by Gandhi as a 'complete, effective and bloodless substitute of armed revolt'. Civil disobedience implies 'the register's outlawry in a civil, i.e., non-violent manner'. In espousing his concept of civil disobedience, Gandhi put the greatest emphasis on the word 'civil'. He stated, 'Disobedience has to be civil, must be sincere, respectful, restrained, never defiant, must be based on some well-understood principle, must not be capricious and must have no ill will or hatred behind it.' Further, 'Its use must be guarded by all conceivable restrictions. Even possible provision should be made against outbreak of violence or general lawlessness. The area as well as scope should also be limited to the barest necessity of the case'. The leaders, and not the satyagrahis, are to decide which laws were to be violated.

Another form of satyagraha suggested by Gandhi is fasting. This, he considered as an extremely potent weapon. Thus, Gandhi recommended the greatest caution in resorting to fasting. For Gandhi, fasting was not meant for all occasions but only on rare occasions. It could be undertaken for self-purification or for the purpose of resisting injustice and converting the evil-doer. According to Gandhi, fasting was only to be undertaken by those who had spiritual fitness; it requires purity of mind, discipline, humility and faith. Gandhi viewed fasting as a means to rouse the conscience. He stated, 'Those who bring about radical changes in human conditions and surroundings cannot do it except by raising ferment in society. There are only two methods of doing this—through violence or non-violence. Non-violent pressure exerted through self-suffering and by fasting touches and strengthens the moral fibre of those against whom it is directed.

The last method of satyagraha was stop-work (strikes). However, Gandhi's view of strikes was different than what was advocated by the Socialists and Communists. According to Gandhi, strike is a voluntary, purificatory suffering undertaken to convert the wrong doers. Gandhi did not believe in the theory of class war.

Gandhi recommended satyagraha even in the case of foreign invasion. He explained, 'A non-violent man or society does not anticipate or provide for attacks from without. On the contrary, such a person or society firmly believes that nobody is going to disturb them. If the worst happens, there are two ways open to non-violence. To yield possession, but non-co-operate with the aggressor. Thus, supposing that a modern edition of Nero descended upon India, the representatives of the state

will let him in, but tell him that he will get no assistance from the people. They will prefer death to submission. The second way would be non-violent resistance by people who have been trained in the non-violent way. They would offer themselves unarmed as fodder for the aggressor's cannons. The underlying belief in either case is that even a Nero is not devoid of a heart. The unexpected spectacle of endless rows upon rows of men and women simply dying rather than surrender to the will of an aggressor must ultimately melt him and his soldiery.'

When China was attacked by Japan during the 1930s, Gandhi said, 'If the Chinese had non-violence of my conception, there would be no use left for the latest machinery of destruction which Japan possesses. The Chinese would say to Japan, "Bring all your machinery. We present half of our population to you, but the remaining two hundred millions won't bend their knees to you.'" If the Chinese did that, Japan would become China's slave.

According to theologian E. Stanley Jones, 'Satyagraha is the greatest contribution of Gandhi to the modern world.' The question then arises, whether the ideas of Gandhi are relevant for us even today when we see ourselves surrounded in our day-to-day life by so-called satyagrahas, *dharnas*, fasts unto death and *gheraoes*.

Gandhi put emphasis on the means as well as the ends. What is happening in India today falls short of the Gandhian standard of morality and ethics. However, if the Gandhian spirit is truly imbibed by the new generation, many of the problems in India can be solved without recourse to violence. Gandhi's technique can be employed successfully to fight the evils of corruption, black-marketing or injustices in economic, industrial or social life. Without bloodshed, Gandhism can bring a total revolution in India.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.
 - (i) During his involvement in the Indian National Movement, Gandhi adopted _____ as a technique of love-force or soul-force that was non-violent in nature, which aimed constantly at the search and pursuit of truth.
 - (ii) Gandhi put emphasis on _____ as well as the _____.
2. What are the techniques of Gandhi's satyagraha?

4.2.2 Gandhi's Concept of the Individual and the State

The relationship between the individual and the state is one of the most fundamental questions of political thought. In fact, the difference in the relationship between the two often helps differentiate between various schools of political thought. For example, in the fascist state the individual must pledge unswerving allegiance to the state; the state is the highest and most important authority. In a liberal democratic state, the function of a state is to serve the interests of the individual. In a socialist state,

NOTES

although individual rights are important, the larger common good of society overrides the interest of an individual. Gandhi's concept of individual and the state must also be seen within the context of the conflict between individual interest and common good of society.

The individual

Gandhi believed the individual was the soul of the social system. According to him, the individual and the society are also interdependent — the individual is the root and the society is the fruit. Gandhi rejected the unrestricted individualism that ignored social obligations as well as the view that the individual was a cog in the social machine. Gandhi stated, 'I value individual freedom but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to the present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member.'

Gandhi felt that society must provide the maximum opportunities to the individual for his development which consisted in selfless service to society and willing fulfilment of social obligation. If the society failed in discharging its duty, resistance was justified.

Individuals acquire the right of resistance when the laws are: (i) not the people's own making; (ii) repugnant to public or private morals; (iii) not promoting social good; (iv) oppressive in nature and cause, all round harassment, hardship, humiliation, oppression and tyranny.

The manner of resistance by the individual must be of a specific character that is in conformity with the Gandhian general principle of purity of means. Resistances must assume the form of: (i) non-cooperation and (ii) civil disobedience, or satyagraha. Those who resist the state in the name of morality, justice, dictate of conscience or freedom and self-government should adopt non-violent techniques or the techniques of satyagraha and must be prepared for suffering the consequences of such resistance. Gandhi wrote, 'Government of the people is possible only so long as they consent either consciously or unconsciously to be governed. There is no government that can control him without his sanction. Voluntary obedience to the laws of the state and the society should be there so far as they are not repugnant, to public or private morals. Willing obedience to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and society of which he is a member.'

The state

Gandhi was a philosophical anarchist for whom the state was an 'unacceptable' institution. He once stated, 'The state represents violence in a concentrated and organised form. The individual has a soul, but as the state is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence.'

Thus, like Marx and anarchist philosophers, Gandhi thought that the 'state was an instrument of exploitation based on violence and sustained by violence'. According to Gandhi, by the use of violence, the state suppressed the individuality of man. Rights of the individual are not created by the state. They are created by individuals who, by due performance of their duties, qualify themselves for the enjoyment of their duties. According to Gandhi, rights have their source in due performance of duties. If one performs his duties to the society, rights will automatically follow. Rights and duties are related as cause and effect, the latter being the cause and the former being the effect. Gandhi's ideal condition of human existence is a condition of statelessness. However, as a practical idealist, he realised that due to the imperfections of the individuals, the state is often felt as a necessity although a necessary evil.

Gandhi was not only critical of the state but also of all governments extraneous to individuals. He understood *swaraj* in the sense of self-government of the self by the superior self, or control of the individual behaviour, passion, greed and selfishness, by the dictate of conscience. Thus, he observed, 'real home-rule is self-rule or self-control'. As a practical idealist, he felt that since individuals are incapable of perfect self-control and their conduct does not become completely self-regulated, there is need for some form of external control for man. Thus, the formation of a government that is separate from the interests of individuals was justified. But this government must be democratic in nature, i.e., democratic both in form and content.

To Gandhi, such a government must be (i) free from foreign control; (ii) promote the welfare of all members of the society; (iii) based on the equality of all members of the society irrespective of the religion, race, caste, sect or place of birth; (iv) secular in nature; (v) free from domination by any section of the community; (vi) based on the principle of democratic decentralization; (vii) based on the principle of village self-government; (viii) based on mutual toleration.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

3. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.

- (i) Gandhi believed that the _____ was the soul of the social system.
- (ii) Gandhi thought that the state was an instrument of _____ based on violence and sustained by violence.
- (iii) Gandhi's ideal condition of human existence was a condition of _____.

Gandhian Socialism

Gandhi was a critic of capitalism. He condemned the 19th century doctrine of *laissez faire*. To him, accumulation of capital was an evil and immoral act. Today, unfortunately, the word 'socialism' has become a controversial one. Socialism is often compared with a hat which has lost its shape because everybody wears it. However, if socialism is defined as a political and economic theory according to

NOTES

which the means of production, distribution and exchange should be owned and controlled by the people, where everyone should be given an equal opportunity to develop his talents and the wealth of the community should be fairly distributed, then Gandhi may be called a socialist.

Gandhi visualised a social structure in which every attempt needed to be made to ensure a rise of all. Let us now examine the basic tenets of Gandhian socialism:

(i) Equitable distribution of wealth: Gandhi believed in the concept of economic equality and advocated, 'a wise regulation of riches and absolute social justice.' He once wrote, 'Socialism is a beautiful word and, so far as I am aware, in socialism, all the members of the society are equal, none low, none high. In the individual body, the head is not high, because it is the top of the body, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as parts of the individual body are equal, so are the members of the society. This is socialism.'

This statement clearly reveals the concept of equality as embodied in Gandhian socialism. On another occasion he wrote, 'I am working for winning swaraj for those toiling and unemployed millions, who do not have even a square meal a day and have to live only on a piece of a stale *roti* and a pinch of salt.'

At the same time, Gandhi was a practical man. He realised that complete equality was a chimera. Hence, he pleaded for equitable distribution. As he stated, 'My ideal is equal distribution, but so far as I can see, it is not to be realised. I, therefore, work for equitable distribution of wealth.'

(ii) Theory of trusteeship: Gandhi was not altogether in favour of abolishing private property. He believed in the principle of trusteeship under which the rich class could possess all their wealth in trust for the good of the people. This theory of trusteeship was a cardinal point of the economic policy which Gandhi had advocated for independent India. Gandhi strongly believed in the conception of *aparigraha* (non-possession) and contended that 'a thing not originally stolen must nevertheless be classified as stolen property if we possess without need for it'. When in 1929 Gandhi advocated his theory of trusteeship, he expected a good response from the elites in India. However, the response was extremely poor. Therefore, he revised his view and accepted the idea of 'statutory trusteeship'. In the beginning he assumed that trusteeship would be inherited by the son, but later on, in 1938 he declared that a trustee has no heir but the public.

(iii) Bread labour: Gandhi's idea of bread labour is based on the principle of dignity and sanctity of labour. According to Gandhi, the real wealth of the nation consists of labour. The idea that man should earn his bread by the sweat of his labour greatly influenced him. The theory of bread labour postulates that every healthy individual must labour enough for his good and his intellectual faculties must not be exercised in order to amass a fortune, but only in the service of mankind. According to Gandhi, 'If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. There will then be no rich and no poor, none high, none low, no touchable and no untouchable.'

Gandhi rightly realised that labour has its unique place in any civilised nation. Although he did not blindly support the Ricardian or Marxian theory of labour, yet he adhered to the moral idea of the sanctification of labour. He not only preached it but also practiced it during his days in South Africa. Gandhi stated, 'Everyone should deem it a dishonour to eat a single meal without honest labour.'

(iv) Decentralised order: Gandhi advocated decentralisation both in the political and economic sphere. For him, centralisation is a form of regimentation and authoritarianism and it 'makes the world so complex that the common man fails to understand the forces that are working in his life and society'. Gandhi wanted to evolve a decentralised structure of power and economy based on the effective reconstruction of self-reliant and self-sufficient village communities. Hence, Gandhi advocated for powerful village panchayats and the promotion of small-scale and cottage industries.

As J. B. Karipalani writes, 'Decentralisation in industry and devolution of power in politics are the only means by which humanity can hope to establish a social order based upon equality and justice and free from economic and political exploitation.'

(v) Democratic non-violent socialism: Gandhi was a socialist at heart. However, his socialism was not a blind imitation of the West. Gandhi once wrote, 'I have claimed that I was a socialist long before those I know in India avowed their creed. My socialism was natural to me and not adopted from book. It came out of any unshakeable belief in non-violence. No man could be actively non-violent and not rise against social injustice, no matter where it occurred, unfortunately. Western socialist have, so far as I know, believed in the necessity of violence for enforcing socialistic doctrines.'

Gandhi was not prepared to sacrifice the individual at the altar of the state and was opposed to dictatorship of any kind, either capitalist or proletarian. What makes Gandhian socialism practically different from socialism is its faith in *ahimsa*. That is why Gandhism is often called 'Marxism minus the violence.' Gandhi was convinced that social justice could never be achieved by the means of force. He wanted to bring social revolution through non-violent ways. He wanted to convert human nature by persuasion, not by coercion. He wrote, 'Some have called me the greatest revolutionary of my time. It may be false, but I believe myself to be a revolutionary-a non-violent revolutionary.'

(vi) Moral and spiritual socialism: Gandhian socialism is not only non-violent, but also moral and spiritual. Gandhi believed in the purification of means and ends. He was convinced that noble ends cannot be achieved by evil means and contended that 'our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means'. 'This socialism', he wrote, 'is as pure as crystal. It requires crystal-like means to achieve it.' Gandhi fundamentally believed that love is better than hate, peace is better than war, cooperation is better than conflict and persuasion is better than coercion. While Marx put emphasis on matter, Gandhi put emphasis on the spirit or life. To Marx religion was 'the opium of the people' but to Gandhi, 'the existence of world in a broad sense depends on religion.'

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(vii) Indigenous socialism: Gandhi developed his socialism against the background of Indian life. It is wrong to charge Gandhi of having diluted the meaning of socialism; Gandhi's humanism inevitably leads him to be a socialist. Gandhi was a socialist because he wanted to put an end to exploitation, injustice and inequality in society where the poorest of the poor should feel that it is his country and in which people would be guided by devotion to social ends and social service instead of private gains and selfishness.

The Gandhian socialist edifice was built, as far as possible, through indigenous materials. Being influenced by the exalted life of abnegation of Buddha and the doctrine of sacrifice embedded in Hindu philosophy, Gandhi put emphasis on non-accumulation, non-stealing and non-possession. Believing in the conception of *aparigraha*, meaning non-possession, Gandhi contended that 'a thing not originally stolen must nevertheless be classified as stolen property, if we possess it without need for it'. Thus, Gandhian socialism is essentially Indian in character and was not a blind imitation of Western or orthodox Marxism.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

4. What are the basic tenets of Gandhian socialism?
5. How is Gandhian socialism different from that of the Marxists?

4.3 M. N. ROY: A REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALIST

Manabendra Nath Roy, born on 6th February 1886, was one of the radicals in India's struggle for independence. He actively participated in the armed struggles against British colonialism that took place in India in the early part of the 20th century. He was also one of the founders of the Communist Party in India as well as Mexico and also actively engaged in the revolutionary struggle in China during that time. In the early part of his life, Roy was a great champion of the philosophy of Marxism. But later on, Roy lost faith in Marxism and expounded his theory of Radical Humanism or New Humanism.

As a radical revolutionary, Roy also spent a great deal of his life in prison. The forced confinement in jail gave him more time to observe, reflect and theorise. Roy used his prison years to write a systematic study of 'the philosophical consequences of modern science', which would be in a way a re-examination and re-formulation of Marxism to which he had been committed since 1919. The reflections grew over a period of five years into nine thick volumes. The Prison Manuscripts were never published in totality; however, selected portions were published as separate books in the 1930s and the 1940.

4.3.1 Roy's Marxist Beliefs

Roy is regarded as one of the first Indian Marxists. A nationalist, Roy came into contact with Michael Borodin, a member of the Communist International, who

indoctrinated him to Marxism. According to Roy, 'I left the land of my rebirth (Mexico) as an intellectually free man, though with a new faith. I no longer believed in political freedom without the content of economic liberation and social justice.' Roy tried to link nationalism with Marxism. It was Marxist philosophy's anti-imperialistic dimension which attracted him. However, later in life, he discarded Marxism and emerged as one of the leading proponents of radical humanism.

Roy was deeply impressed by the philosophy of Karl Marx, even during his humanist phase. He considered Marx as a merciless critic of social injustice in the traditions of the great Jewish prophets. For Roy, Marxism was more than a mere political and economic approach or a technique of revolution. As he stated, 'As a philosophy, Marxism is the outcome of development of thought from the dawn of history. Therefore, it is the heritage of humanity; it is the ideological equipment belonging to everybody for a better world.'

According to Roy, materialist philosophy was corroborated by the latest scientific knowledge. Like Marx, Roy regarded the capitalist system as unjust, rotten and outdated. He was of the opinion that industry should be controlled by the people themselves. Like Marx, he worked on the fundamental principle that there should be no exploitation of the poor by the rich. Roy supported the idea of Marx that any action to be successful must be in consonance with a clear thought and plan. But any plan or actions, to be effective should also be based on the existing structure of things. Roy also believed that knowledge has its roots in the physical universe. According to Roy, 'To seek the knowledge of the phenomena of nature in a hypothetical supernatural sense, is logically absurd and philosophically inadmissible.' Roy regarded sensation, actions and perceptions as the source of knowledge.



Fig. 4.1 M.N. Roy

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mn_roy2.jpg

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Roy's Criticism of Marxism

In the latter half of his life, Roy became a critic of Marxism and came to the conclusion that communism provided no solution to worldly problems. In his book, *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution*, he observed, 'The abolition of private property, state ownership of the means of production and planned economy, do not by themselves end exploitation of labour nor lead to an equal distribution of wealth.'

The following are the main criticism of Marxism as put forth by Roy:

- (i) Roy argued that the idea of materialism by Marx was dogmatic and unscientific. He interpreted the term materialism in a different way. According to Roy, 'Our approach to the problems of political theory and practice is claimed to be free from any dogmatic pre-supposition. Otherwise, we could not pretend to be advocates of scientific thought. Those who regard Marxism as a closed system of thought cannot also pretend to subscribe to the iconoclastic principles of radicalism which knows no dogma and respects no authority.'
- (ii) Roy criticized the Marxist interpretation of history. According to him, the Marxist interpretation of history provided an insignificant role to mental activity in the social process. He felt that Marxism confined history to materialistic objectivism. He claimed that intelligence of human beings and their cumulative actions are very powerful social force. Thus, Roy emphasized non-materialistic aspects of history.
- (iii) He was also critical of Marxist concept of economic determinism. As he observed, 'economic determinism cannot be the social philosophy which is required to lead civilized mankind out of the present crisis'. He was of the view that the new social order should combine planning with freedom and should be led by the ideal of collective welfare and progress. Roy further stated that 'the materialist conception of history fails when it dismisses ideal system (ideologies) as mere superstructures of economic relations, and tries to relate them directly with the material condition of life.'
- (iv) According to Roy, the principal defect of Marxism was its denial of individual freedom. In Roy's opinion, there was complete regimentation in Marxism with no place for individual freedom of thought. To quote him, 'History is made by the operation of the productive forces; there is little man can do about it, he must recognize necessity and then he is free. Once you realize that you cannot be free, that you are bound hand and foot to some mysterious forces of production, then you are free.' To Roy, Marx did not pay adequate attention to the worth and significance of the individual.
- (v) Roy was also critical of the Marxist theory of dialectical materialism. According to Roy, 'The dialectic process does not leave any room for the greatest revolutionaries, armed with the philosophy of Marxism, to change the world. The irreconcilable contradiction between dialectic materialism and the programme of a revolutionary reconstruction of society is the basic fallacy of Marxism.' Roy also had doubts about the theory of class-struggle.

- (vi) Roy was also highly critical of Marx's rejection of the liberal concept of individualism. Marx was against individualism due to the influence of Hegel's theory of moral positivism. Roy argued that moral positivism resulted in the minimization of the role of the individual. In this context Roy observed, 'The Marxist conception of freedom means slavery for the individual and a society composed of voluntary slaves can never be free.' He was of the view that by rejecting the liberal and utilitarian concept of individual, Marx betrayed his earlier humanism.
- (vii) Roy also felt that the ethical foundations of Marxism were weak because of their relativistic and dogmatic character. According to Roy, the subordination of the individual to the dominance of the forces of production was a neutralization of his autonomy and creativity. Morality was not the product of materialistic forces. In opposition to Marxist ethics, Roy presented his humanist ethics which exalted the sovereignty of the individual and believed in liberty and justice. To Roy, there was something constant and permanent in ethical values.
- (viii) Roy also opposed the Marxist concept of violent revolution. He was for a non-violent cultural revolution in order to bring socio-economic and political changes in society.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

6. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.
- Roy was attracted to Marxist philosophy of _____.
 - Like Marx, Roy regarded the _____ system as unjust, rotten and outdated.
 - According to Roy, the abolition of private property, state ownership of the means of production and planned economy, did not end the _____ of labour.
 - According to Roy, the principal defect of Marxism was its denial of _____.
 - Roy was also critical of the Marxist theory of dialectical _____.
 - In opposition to Marxist ethics, Roy presented his _____ ethics which exalted the sovereignty of the individual and believed in liberty and justice.

4.3.2 New or Radical Humanism

In the latter half of his life, Roy became an exponent of 'new humanism'. New humanism was the name given by Roy to the 'new philosophy of revolution'. The philosophy was summarized by Roy in the 'Twenty-Two Theses' and elaborated in his *New Humanism — A Manifesto*. He also expounded his thoughts and ideas on

the philosophy of new humanism or radical humanism in *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution*, *New Humanism* and *The Problems of Freedom*.

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After the end of World War II, Roy started re-examining communist and democratic doctrines and theories. He was of the opinion that the Bolshevik revolution had established a regime of tyranny and slavery in the Soviet Union. According to Roy, in the communist system the individual had been reduced to the position of a helpless pawn in the hands of blind economic force. Roy also saw the defects of parliamentary democracy in Europe. Therefore, he thought of organised democracy and cooperative economy as the solution to the crisis of the post Second World War period. Radical humanism provided the philosophical foundation to both organised democracy and cooperative economy.

The concept of radical humanism is the greatest contribution of Roy to modern Indian political thought. He termed his humanism as rational, radical and new with a view to distinguishing it from the humanist versions of other thinkers. The term 'humanism' can be traced to the writings of Protagoras, Erasmus, More, Herder, and Jacques Maritain. Roy himself admitted that humanism 'is an old and venerable tradition in the history of human thought'. However, Roy argued that his new humanism was different from the German or French School of humanism of the 19th century. The 19th century humanists attached great importance to man and freedom; however, Roy believed that they those humanists suffered from a fallacy of subordinating man to some super-human and super-natural agencies. On the other hand, for Roy, man was the centre of that humanism which banished every type of supernatural agency from the human world. Indian humanist thinkers like Raja Rammohan Roy, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Gandhi and Nehru also attached the greatest importance to man and individual liberty. Roy explained his 'radical humanism' as a 'philosophy of freedom based on modern scientific knowledge'.

Roy was of the view that new humanism or radical humanism was the perfect answer to the crisis faced by humanity. For Roy, in the post Hitler-Mussolini-Stalin world, the major problem facing humanity was how to guarantee individual freedom against encroachments of totalitarianism of the great Leviathan. Thus, Roy advocated that only humanism would revive faith in man concerning his various potentialities. According to Roy, 'Democracy can be established only by reassertion of the humanist tradition. Man is the true measure of his world. Being inherently rational, he can always learn from experience. He develops his intellectual faculties and moral values in his efforts to secure a better life for himself.'

Roy argued that man is a part of physical nature on account of his biological descent and there is nothing extra-natural in man. Man is the product of biological evolution and everything in man which deals with biological evolution is thus, traceable. Soul or *atma* which is beyond body and mind cannot be traced. Thus, to a radical humanist like Roy, there is no soul or *atma*. Radical humanists believe that man himself must be law-governed like physical nature and he is an integral part of the physical universe which is a moral order governed by laws inherent in it. Roy named these laws as natural laws which were derived from experience. To him, the rational nature of man discovers these laws by establishing casual relations in nature.

Freedom is the fundamental value of radical humanism. Between the individual and society, the radical humanists gave importance to the individual. According to Roy, the individual was an end in itself and society was simply a means to an end. He subordinated everything to individual freedom. In this context he observed, 'The function of life is to live. The basic incentive or organic becoming is the struggle for survival. It goes on throughout the long process of biological evolution, until in man it becomes the conscious urge for freedom — the supreme human value. The beginning of man's endless struggle for freedom lies in the animal struggle for survival. The urge for freedom is the only eternal thing in the human world. This urge enables man to acquire knowledge; he conquers his environment by knowing.' Thus, in Roy's philosophy, freedom is the supreme value from which all human values are derived.

For Roy, the greater the rationalism of the individuals composing a society, the larger would be the measure of liberty enjoyed by them. The aim of radical humanists was thus, to organise society in a rational manner. The individual will not be fully free unless and until the society is organised on a rational basis. In his view, the state and the society have been established to preserve and protect individual liberty. But unfortunately, some mechanism and devices are trying to dominate over man and are suppressing his freedom. Religion or morality is also destroying individual freedom imposing on human mind the chains of superstitions and supernatural beliefs. Roy in this context observed, 'radical had taken over the tradition of modern civilization, the tradition of the revolt of man against the tyranny of god and his agents on this earth'. Roy viewed marriage, family and class as the hindrances to human development and freedom. He also viewed society and class as the greatest obstacles to individual freedom. He felt that society should be understood as means to an end and not end in itself.

Materialism is another fundamental principle of Roy's philosophy. Roy regarded matter as real and independent. On the basis of matter, Roy explained the origin of life and mind. Biological evolution takes place from physical universe. He was of the opinion that all living bodies were formed out of certain chemical matters and their combination resulted in the creation of other matter. For him mind was a characteristic of matter at a higher stage of development. He argued that there was a constant interpenetration and interdependence between man and matter. He thus tried to establish a close relationship between an individual's mind and matter.

The new humanism of Roy was also cosmopolitan in its outlook. It replaced the spirit of nationalism by the spirit of world brotherhood. Like Tagore, Gandhi and Aurobindo, Roy too believed that a confraternity of morally and spiritually liberated individuals was the fundamental requirement for the realisation of a better and healthier society. New humanism aimed at a commonwealth and fraternity of free men. Thus, Roy was a strong advocate for a world federation. As he observed, 'New humanism is cosmopolitan. A cosmopolitan commonwealth of spiritually free men will not be limited by the boundaries of national states—capitalist, fascist, socialist, communist, or of any other kind—which will gradually disappear under the impact of the twentieth century renaissance of man.' Roy made a distinction between cosmopolitanism and internationalism. He openly advocated for a spiritual community.

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He believed that a true world government could only be built upon the neutralisation of nation states.

Roy's view on Philosophy

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In his book *Science and Philosophy*, Roy defines philosophy as 'the theory of life'. For him, the function of philosophy 'is to solve the riddle of the universe'. Philosophy is born out of the efforts of man to explain nature and to understand his own relationship with it. Roy considers philosophy to be the contemplation, study and knowledge of nature. Its function is 'to know things as they are, and to find the common origin of the diverse phenomena of nature, in nature itself'. Philosophy begins when 'spiritual needs' of human beings are no longer satisfied by primitive natural religion, which imagines and worships a variety of gods as personification of the diverse phenomena of nature. The grown-up human is no longer satisfied with the nursery-tales, with which 'he was impressed in his spiritual childhood'. Intellectual growth emboldens him to seek the causes of all natural phenomena in nature itself and to 'find in nature a unity behind its diversity.'

Criticisms of New or Radical Humanism

Roy's philosophy of radical humanism has been criticised on the following grounds:

- Roy failed to give logical and adequate reasons as to how matter was capable of producing life. Thus, although he rejected the Marxist theory of dialectical materialism, he did not give any satisfactory alternative concept of materialism.
- Roy's theory is based on the presumption that man is essentially a rational being. Everything is to be decided by reason. However, Roy failed to explain clearly the meaning of the term 'reason'. Further, he did not take into account the irrational aspect of human nature.
- Roy condemned religion as a hindrance to the development of individual freedom. This was criticised by many theologians who believe that religion has played a very significant role in the cultural and intellectual development of mankind.

In spite of the shortcomings of Roy's philosophy of radical humanism, his interest in individual liberty is significant. Nobody can deny Roy's contention that the main objective of social organisation is a free individual in a free society. As a scholar of political theory rightly observed, 'By defining freedom in what he (Roy) calls a biological way, he has certainly made it more concrete but not more possible. His views on materialism are the most significant. His conception of a secular rational ethics and emphasis on morals is a positive contribution to materialist thought. His insight into communist theory and practice and his observations there upon are of great historical importance.'

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

7. How and why was Roy's humanism different from others?
8. What was the idea behind Roy's radical humanism?
9. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.
 - (i) For Roy, man was the centre of that humanism which banished every type of _____ from the human world.
 - (ii) According to Roy, _____ can be established only by reassertion of the humanist tradition.
 - (iii) Although Roy rejected the Marxist theory of _____, he did not give any satisfactory alternative concept of materialism.
 - (iv) Roy's theory is based on the presumption that man is essentially a _____.

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4.3.3 Concept of Organised Democracy

Roy was a critic of democratic institutions. Like Jayaprakash Narayan, he was against the concept of the Western model of parliamentary democracy. Roy argued that in a parliamentary democracy, political power was concentrated in the hands of a few people. Such a system has destroyed individual freedom. Thus, Roy was opposed to the centralization of power and openly advocated decentralisation of power and authority. His concept of organised democracy revolves round the central theme of individual freedom and welfare. His democracy was both political and economic. It was radical, organised, party-less and participatory. However, before discussing Roy's views on democracy, it is essential to know his criticism of the Western democracy.

According to Roy, there was no individual freedom in the Western model of democracy. For him, Western democratic states accepted the ideal of individual freedom only in theory. In actual practice, the individual was suppressed under collective control in the name of collective welfare. Roy claimed that in the Western form of democracy, people lose their sovereign power to the representatives once the election is over and remain powerless till the next election comes. He observed, 'parliamentary democracy by its bureaucratic method of political administration and by its support to private monopolies in finance, industry and land, had sapped the very source of democratic initiative among the people'. In order to correct this defect of parliamentary democracy, Roy advocated for radical or organised democracy. This organised democracy would be based on decentralisation of power and organisation of powerful and autonomous local people's committees. In this system, there would be no democratic centralism and democracy would be organised from below instead of being imposed from above.

Roy strongly opposed the role of political parties in a democracy. According to Roy, emergence of political parties in the working of democracy has brought in its wake all the evils of party politics. He wrote, 'With the rise of the party system, the

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idea of popular sovereignty became a constitutional fiction. Political parties encourage hollowness and insincerity, which leads to spoils in the system and the debasing of moral standards. According to Roy, the system of party-politics leads to division, bribery and corruption. The main aim of political parties is to capture political power by all means. They do not hesitate to capture power through unscrupulous and corrupt means. Thus, in the struggle for power, political parties inevitably ignore the principles of morality and public interests and welfare. Roy held the view that in the name of welfare state and public well-being, the party in power restricts freedom of the people. He, therefore, suggested the system of organised democracy for securing real freedom of individual.

Roy's concept of organised democracy was based on ideas of decentralisation and party-less democracy. In his scheme of organised democracy, there was no place for any political parties. The people themselves enjoyed political power. Roy's conception of organised democracy was a 'direct democracy with small cooperative commonwealth'. Roy put forward certain condition for the success of organised democracy. According to Roy, the most important condition for the success of organised democracy was that the people would have to have a high cultural standard. Since in most countries most people have not attained a high moral and intellectual standard, Roy argued that in the initial stages, there would be both elective and selective democracy. Rousseau's theory of direct democracy was in a sense, accepted by Roy because the latter's ideal was to ensure direct participation of the entire adult population through people's committees.

Roy drafted a model constitution for free India based on the basis of his concept of organised democracy. The first part of the constitution contains the rights and fundamental principles. As per Roy's constitution, the supreme sovereignty is vested in the people who have absolute right to change or modify any political unit. The people would exercise their sovereign power through people's committees in villages, towns and cities. Roy stated, 'Political ends can be achieved without capturing power. Politics can be practiced without a party organisation. There will be a people's committee in each village, city or town, elected annually on the basis of adult suffrage.'

Roy was of the opinion that these people's committees would be the centre of organised democracy which would bridge the gap between the state and society. These would simultaneously be the units of state and central social institutions of the local people. With the participation of more and more people in the affairs of the state, the danger of the state becoming powerful at the expense of individual liberty would be reduced. According to Roy, these local committees would nominate candidates seeking election to the provincial council and to the federal assembly. Again in Roy's view, these people's committees would have power to initiate legislation and to demand a referendum on any legislative or executive measure.

According to Roy, each province shall have a provisional people's council consisting of the governor and deputies of the people. The governor shall be elected directly by the people of the province for a term of five years. The deputies of the people will also be elected directly by the people of the province for a period of four years. According to Roy, it will legislate on all matters except those reserved for the

federal assembly. Roy also suggested the constitution of a federal union for free India which would include both the British India and the Indian provinces. He was of the view that all provinces in India would be formed on the basis of linguistic and cultural homogeneity. Roy also argued for the creation of a Federal Assembly which would consist of elected representatives of the Federal Union.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

10. What was the basic idea behind organized democracy?
11. In Roy's draft constitution, who had the power?

4.3.4 Roy and Gandhi

Early on in his life, Roy paid glowing tributes to Gandhi. However, in later years, he became a critic of Gandhi. In his work, *One year of Non-Cooperation*, published in 1923, Roy praised Gandhi and compared him with St. Thomas Aquinas and Savonarola. Talking about the non-corporation movement, Roy praised Gandhi's use of mass action for political purpose, the consolidation of Indian National Congress, the liberation of the national forces from governmental repression by the slogan of non-violence and the adoption of the techniques of non-cooperation, non-payment of taxes and civil disobedience. Roy was of the view that through the non-cooperation movement the agrarian movement, the proletarian movement and the nationalist movement were moving towards national independence. Roy's radical humanist philosophy, in some ways, brought Roy close to Gandhi. Both Gandhian socialism and Roy's radical humanism accepted the individual as the central point of all social thought and action. Both stood for the decentralisation of political and economic power. Both suggested party-less democracy for purifying politics. In spite of these similarities, there were some fundamental differences between Roy and Gandhi.

Roy was a materialist and rationalist while Gandhi was a moralist and relied more on his inner voice. In later years, Roy called Gandhism as a 'mass of platitudes and self-contradiction'. Roy regarded Gandhian philosophy as status quo in its nature. He also criticized Gandhi's concept of non-violence. Roy argued that the concept of non-violence had induced people to remain in a state of inactivity. He regarded the Gandhian concept of non-violence as a mask for holding social exploitation and a 'subtle intellectual device to cover up the capitalist exploitation of the country'. In his book, *India's Problem and its Solution*, he criticized Gandhi's ideology and showed his dissatisfaction with the constructive programme the Congress adopted at Bardoli in February 1922. In its place Roy pleaded for the creation of a revolutionary mass party which would organise mass strikes and resistance movements.

Roy also criticised Gandhian economics as being reactionary. He stated, 'Gandhism was not a revolution but a weak and watery reformism.' Similarly, he called the Indian National Congress the 'spinner's association'. In this context Roy wrote, 'The social basis of Gandhism is cultural backwardness, its intellectual mainstay superstition. The Gandhian utopia is a static society, a state of absolute social

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stagnation.’ While Gandhi advocated for small and cottage industries, Roy was for modern industrial progress. Further Roy stated that Gandhism did not have any plan for organizing the proletariat against the landlord and capitalists. Roy described the Quit India Movement as the ‘mischief of whipping up forces which undermined the Indian home front.’

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

12. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.

- (i) Roy was of the view that through the _____ movement the agrarian movement, the proletarian movement and the nationalist movement were moving towards national independence.
- (ii) Later on, Roy started regarding Gandhian philosophy as _____ in its nature.
- (iii) Roy also criticised Gandhian economics as being _____.
- (iv) While Gandhi advocated for small and cottage industries, Roy was for modern _____.

4.3.5 Roy’s Contribution to Indian Political Thought

Roy is one of the most learned of modern Indian writers on politics and philosophy. His book, *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution* is a major contribution to the history of political thought in India. A critical study of his ideas shows that Roy was an ethical revisionist. Unlike the medieval Indian saints and the contemporary social reformers and political leaders, Roy developed the humanist philosophy with flesh, blood and brain. Democracy became the base of this philosophy and rationalism its centre. As an Indian scholar rightly observed, ‘Roy remains unparalleled to the realm of human affairs as an exponent at a time particularly the East and some countries of the West were passing through feverish turmoil for self-determination and emancipation.’

Before analysing the achievements of Roy’s work, it is significant to look at the shortcomings of his philosophy. Roy’s radical humanism is not an original theory. Dr V. P. Verma compares Roy with Edward B. Brownstone, a German revisionist, who supplemented the Marxian theory with Kantian ethics. Similarly, Roy also tried to supplement materialism with humanist ethics. Roy also failed to provide any original sociological interpretation of Indian culture. He strongly criticized the medievalism, primitivism and spiritualism of Indian culture. One of the critics described him as a ‘rootless critic of everything Indian and Hindu’. Roy rejected the concept of morality in politics. As he stated, ‘politics cannot be spiritual and moral politics is often the refuge for cheats and humbugs’. Roy remained mostly in the background as his political philosophy had no mass appeal. His political philosophy was largely ideal and utopian rather than being practical and real.

Among all of Roy’s ideas, radical humanism has had the most lasting effects on the succeeding political philosophy. A few years after Roy’s death, Jayaprakash

Narayan's call of *Sampoorna Kraanti* (total revolution) was influenced by the concept of the party-less democracy espoused by Roy. Moreover, the philosophy of radical humanism has had a tremendous influence on the democratic socialist movement in India. John Gunther in his book, *Inside Asia*, described Roy as 'a figure in three revolutions — Russian, Chinese and Indian'. Regarding Roy, a renowned Indian scholar observed 'Roy started his political career as a revolutionary and ended as a liberal humanist. He made a vain attempt to bring heaven on earth. However, he soon realized that if heaven cannot be achieved, the earth can at least be repaired. He died as a disillusioned man but possibly not a wholly disappointed man.'

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

13. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.
- A critical study of Roy's ideas shows that he was an _____ revisionist.
 - Many critics of Roy stated that his political philosophy was largely _____ and _____ rather than being practical and real.
 - Among all of Roy's ideas, _____ has had the most lasting effects on the succeeding political philosophy.
 - Roy failed to provide any original _____ interpretation of Indian culture.

4.4 B. R. AMBEDKAR: A SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARY

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, popularly known as Babasaheb Ambedkar, was born on 14 April 1891 at a place called Mhow near Indore in Madhya Pradesh into a Mahar family, which was considered an untouchable caste. He was the 14th and last child of Ramji Maloji Sakpal and Bhim Bai. Ambedkar's ancestors had for long been in employment of the British East India Company and his father served in the Indian army at the Mhow cantonment.

When he was five years old, Ambedkar was enrolled at a school in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra. There, Ambedkar noticed that he and his family were treated differently from the others. At school, the teacher did not touch his notebooks due to the fear of being 'polluted', the barbers who claimed social superiority over to his caste, refused to cut his hair and the bullock cart man refused to carry him. At the Elphinstone High School in Bombay, he had to sit in the corner of the room on a rough mat away from the desks of the other pupils. At break time, he was not allowed to drink water using the cups of his fellow school children. These despicable discriminatory practices he faced as a child were permanently etched into his mind. Ambedkar then realised at a young age that this was the plight of anyone who was born into a socially backward caste. Despite these humiliations and other adverse circumstances, Ambedkar passed his matriculation in 1907 and later joined the

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Elphinstone College for further education. After completing his intermediate course, Ambedkar received a scholarship from the Maharaja of Baroda, Sayaji Rao, and attained a Bachelor in Arts degree in 1912. His wife, who Ambedkar had married when she was just nine years old, gave birth to his first son Yashwant in the same year.

In 1913, the Maharaja of Baroda awarded Ambedkar a Baroda State Scholarship of £11.50 (Sterling) per month for three years. This scheme was designed to provide opportunities for postgraduate education at Columbia University in the United States. Ambedkar thus, became the first Mahar untouchable to study in a foreign university. In lieu of his scholarship, Ambedkar would have to serve the state of Baroda for ten years. He passed his Masters in June 1915 majoring in Economics, with Sociology as his other subject of study and presented a thesis titled *Ancient Indian Commerce*. In May 1916, he read a paper on *The Castes in India, their Mechanism, Genesis and Development* at the Anthropology seminar sponsored by Dr Goldonweisir. In June 1916, he submitted his thesis for Ph.D. degree on the topic *National Dividend for India: A Historic and Analytical Study*. This was later published in the form of a book entitled *The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India*. From Columbia University, he went to London School of Economics as a graduate student. But his scholarship was terminated and he had to come back to India.

The Maharaja of Baroda honoured Dr Ambedkar by appointing him as political secretary in the Baroda Civil Service. Ambedkar, who now held a doctorate, was being trained for a job of top level. Despite all the honours that he received, Ambedkar again had to face discrimination after coming back to India. Nobody at his office was willing to hand over files and papers to him — the servant just threw them onto his desk. Ambedkar was not even given water to drink, all because he belonged to a lower caste. For Ambedkar, this was a highly painful and humiliating experience because he had been abroad for a long period and was absolutely free of the label of being a social outcast. Ambedkar resigned from his post after working for only eleven days and left Baroda for Bombay.

He joined the Sydenham College in Bombay in 1918. In this college, although he was recognised as a brilliant teacher and scholar by his students, here too his social treatment was the same. Dr Ambedkar started a fortnightly newspaper, the *Mook Nayak* (leader of the dumb) on January 31, 1920, with the help of Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur who was a sympathizer of the cause for uplift of the depressed classes. The Maharaja also convened a number of meetings and conferences of the untouchables. These meetings and conferences were addressed by Bhimrao. After accumulating sufficient funds, Ambedkar went back to London in September 1920 to complete his studies. He became a barrister and was awarded a doctorate in science. He presented his thesis, *Provincial Decentralization of Imperial Finance in British India* in June 1921, and received a masters' degree in economics from London. After passing his bar examination in April 1923, Ambedkar once again returned to India to join the bar.

Along with his practice, Ambedkar founded the *Bahiskrit Hitkarini Sabha* (Outcastes Welfare Associations) in July 1924 with the aim to uplift the downtrodden, both socially and politically, and bring them to the mainstream of the Indian society. In 1927, he led the Mahar March and burnt copies of the *Manusmriti* publicly at the Chowder Tank at Colaba, near Bombay, in order to show his protest against the caste system and give the untouchables the right to draw water from the public tank.

Coming back to India from London, Ambedkar had realised that nothing had changed for him. His qualifications meant nothing as far as the evil practice of untouchability was concerned; it was still an obstacle to his career. In spite of all this, Ambedkar had received the best of education and was thus, well equipped to be a leader of the Dalit community. He was an expert on law and could give convincing evidence before British Commissions as an eloquent and gifted speaker. Ambedkar dedicated the rest of his life to this task. Ambedkar is today considered a crusader for the rights of the downtrodden, and a man of letters, a literary genius, an eminent educationist, a political philosopher, an able parliamentarian and a great thinker.



Fig. 4.2 B. R. Ambedkar in 1935

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ambedkar_speech_at_Yeola.gif

Another important facet of Ambedkar's life that needs to be mentioned was his conversion to Buddhism later on in life. Ambedkar had studied Buddhism all his life; Buddhism's rejection of the Hindu caste system appealed to him and other leaders of the oppressed castes. In the 1950s, Ambedkar turned his attention fully to Buddhism and travelled to Sri Lanka to attend a convention of Buddhist scholars and monks. In 1955, he founded the Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha, or the Buddhist Society of India. In 1956, he organised a formal public ceremony for himself and his supporters in Nagpur. Accepting the Three Refuges and Five Precepts from a Buddhist monk in the traditional manner, Ambedkar completed his own conversion, along with his wife. He then proceeded to convert some 500,000 of his supporters who were gathered around him.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

14. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.

- (i) Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was born into a _____ family, which was considered an untouchable caste.
- (ii) Ambedkar started a fortnightly newspaper, the _____ on January 31, 1920 with the help of Shahu Maharaj.
- (c) Ambedkar founded the _____ in July 1924 with the aim to uplift the downtrodden, both socially and politically, and bring them to the mainstream of the Indian society.

4.4.1 A Revolutionary Seeking Social Justice

Experiences of personal humiliation and inhuman treatment meted to him were so bitter that Ambedkar could not but revolt against the social taboos created by the upper caste Hindus against the untouchables. His experience, however, did not embitter Ambedkar against Hindus at the individual level. But he worked actively against Hinduism, more specifically Brahmanism, because it stood in the way of establishment of an egalitarian society. The aim of human society, he thought, must be to enable every person to lead a rich, all round life, involving as much as the cultivation of the mind as also the satisfaction of basic physical wants.

Ambedkar was deeply influenced by Buddha, Kabir and Jyotiba Phule. Buddha and Kabir shaped his philosophical conviction of human equality. Jyotiba Phule, a social reformer, taught him to fight against higher caste supremacy and elevation of the masses through education and economic uplift. According to Ambedkar, 'Education is something, which ought to be brought within the reach of every one.' He felt that one of the ways in which the so called 'lower' classes could overcome upper caste bias and discrimination and succeed in life was through education. According to him, 'The object of primary education is to see that every child that enters the portals of a primary school does leave it only at a stage when it becomes literate and continues to be literate throughout the rest of his life'. Ambedkar's thoughts were all geared towards establishing a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity. He was determined to fight the existing caste system. He gave precedence to social change over political independence. His mission was to oppose the orthodox social arrangements and fight for the political rights of the untouchables. Both society and politics became his areas of operation.

Ambedkar analysed Hindu society thoroughly before starting his struggle against untouchability and the caste system. He tried to analyse the origin of the caste system and untouchability before starting his fight against these evils. Ambedkar realised that the lower castes were oppressed on account of two reasons: firstly, they had potentially internalised hierarchy, and secondly, the characteristics of caste-based inequality. Therefore, Ambedkar appealed to the people of the lower castes to reform their way of life. He urged them to stop the carrying of dead cattle out of the village. He advised them to give up eating carrion, alcoholic drinks and begging.

He urged them to educate themselves and dress well. Ambedkar tried to endow the lower castes with a glorious history of sons of the soil to help them acquire an alternative, not caste-based identity, to regain their self-respect and overcome their divisions.

Ambedkar was fully determined to abolish the caste system. He was of the view that caste system was not merely a division of labour but a division of labourers. It was a system of gradation which divided labourers in different grades, one above the other. This division of labour was based neither on natural aptitude nor on the choice of the person concerned. It was, therefore, harmful because it was an abuse of a man's natural power and his ability to work with full potential.

According to Ambedkar, the feelings of self-respect and human dignity were of paramount importance in a democratic country. He supported the noble cause of equality of status. He was of the view that in order to ensure the dignity of the individual and unity of the nation, every Indian should get equal opportunity. He was not only a great scholar but also an intellectual and thinker who sacrificed his entire life for the betterment of the downtrodden. He fought for the dignity and uplift of the destitute and suppressed class of society.

He never supported communalism and always worked for the benefits of society at large. His life was dedicated to the services of humanity and he fought against injustice, inequality, tyranny and exploitation. Dr Ambedkar's principle was to fight the social system, not against any individual. He was of the opinion that an individual or his point of view cannot be held responsible for the sufferings of his fellow sufferers; for him the responsibility lay at the hands of social customs which supported a social system of inequalities.

Idea of Social Justice

Ambedkar was the protagonist of a new social order which was to be based on the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. His views on social problems like caste, untouchability and women constitute the foundations of his socio-political ideas. His own experiences in life and his intellectual faculty made him sceptical about Hindu religion and its social order. His pragmatism and idealism prompted him to work for a new social order based on social justice so that the future of Indian democracy would be strong and stable.

Ambedkar was a leader and spokesman of the ignored humanity. He brought before the world the pathetic conditions of the untouchables and made sincere efforts to bring them in the mainstream of society. Ambedkar's progressive ideology was the basis of his social and political life. Though he was born in the Mahar community, he never confined himself to his community only but represented all those people who were socially and economically backward. He has been rightly described as a crusader for the rights of the downtrodden, and a man of letters, a literary genius, an eminent educationist, a political philosopher, an able parliamentarian and a great thinker. Ambedkar left no stone unturned in his endeavour of attaining self-respect for the untouchables as well as depressed classes of society. He carried on an endless struggle against the social, political and economic exploitations of these classes.

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He realised that only a society based on fraternity would make democracy successful. He believed that democracy is not merely a form of governments; it is primarily a mode of associated living of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude or respect of reverence for fellow human being. In democracy, there should be freedom to choose one's profession. To talk of democracy and not to allow this freedom is to perpetuate slavery. Though equality in absolute sense is not possible but equal treatment of men is quite possible. Since the caste system and untouchability negate such ideas, he demanded that caste and untouchability in any form should be abolished.

Fighting Caste System

According to Ambedkar, the Hindu scheme of social structure based on the four Varna's or *chaturvarna* breeds inequality and has been the parent of the caste system and untouchability. In Hinduism, everything is caste-oriented and caste-based. Caste determines one's status in society. According to the Hindu belief, the four castes came into existence from different parts of the Brahma. The highest caste is the *brahmins* of whom the books of the Hindus tell that they were created from the head of Brahma. They study and teach the Vedas. In Hindu society, they were considered best of humankind. The next caste is the *kshatriyas* who were created from the shoulder and hands of Brahma. Kshatriyas protect the creatures created by God. The *vaishyas* were created from the thighs of the Brahma. They were expected to meet the material needs of the community. The *sudras* were created from the Brahma's feet and they are supposed to serve all other groups. It is believed that the *dharma* for each individual is determined by his origin, and the nature of work of every person is originally determined by his caste.

The practice of the caste system, which refuses to recognize all human beings as equal, is very strong in India. The social system is based on a gradation of caste forming an ascending scale of reverence and a descending scale of contempt, a system which gives no scope for the growth of the sentiment of equality and fraternity, so essential for a democratic form of government. The caste system is not just a division of labour, but a hierarchical division of labourers which is not based on natural aptitudes or spontaneity but on the caste of parents.

Ambedkar denounced the caste system as a totally unscientific method. He believed that in a civilized society labour has not been divided into watertight compartments so it is quite unnatural to divide it in such a way. This unnatural division of labour involves an attempt to appoint tasks to an individual on the basis of the social status of his parents and not on the basis of his original capacity.

To remedy this situation, Ambedkar believed that caste system cannot simply be abolished by forced inter-caste marriages and inter-dining. What is needed is notional change. Hindus observe caste system not because they are inhuman but because their religion and religious scriptures have taught them to do so. People being religious minded, observe it blindly. He urges upon the people to free themselves from the thralldom of the *shastras* and cleanse their minds of the pernicious notions founded in the *shastras*. People must deny the authority of the shastras like Buddha and Nanak.

Untouchability

Untouchability means pollution by the touch of certain persons belonging to a particular caste or family. It leads to defilement, pollution and contamination. It is believed that the practice of untouchability is peculiar to Hindu society.

Untouchability originated in India around AD 400 and it arose out of the struggle for supremacy between Buddhism and Brahmanism. Untouchability is a term used by Ambedkar himself for the lowest castes on Hindu scale of pollution. During the pre-independence era the term 'depressed classes' was used to denote the untouchables. This was replaced by Scheduled Castes in 1935, when these castes were placed on a Schedule as qualifying for special rights. Gandhi adopted the term Harijan from the medieval poet-saint Narsinh Mehta to refer to the 'untouchables' during his campaign against untouchability in the year 1933-34 and since then it is in general usage except among Ambedkar's followers. Opposing Gandhi's use of the term, Ambedkar addressed the 'untouchables' as Dalits.

The origin of untouchability is still a mystery. However, it is generally believed that it was a perverted outcome of the caste system. Ambedkar, who himself belonged to the group of the untouchables, analysed this evil from both its historical and social perspectives. He thoroughly studied the origin and practice of untouchability in his book *The Untouchables* which was published in 1948. Ambedkar denounced the concept of pollution labelled with the untouchables in this book. He declared the practise of untouchability was baseless and against humanity. He opined that the custom of purification and defilement related to untouchability was neither applicable to a group nor individual on hereditary basis. Ambedkar asserted that a person cannot be impure simply because he belonged to a lower caste. On the basis of the above-mentioned points, Ambedkar demanded the complete abolition of untouchability. He categorically stated that abolition of untouchability is badly needed both at the social and legal levels. He advised the untouchables that they should take initiative in this regard by giving up their traditional occupation of carrying the dead cow out of the villages, and abstaining themselves from drinking. They should also take education seriously to abolish the practice of untouchability on social level.

To get rid of the inhuman practice of untouchability on the legal level, he fought for the cause of representation of all untouchables at all levels of government. Due to Ambedkar's efforts the Poona Pact Agreement was made for the reservation of seats for the socially backward classes. According to Ambedkar, the untouchables must be seen as a minority as long as they are treated as a separate people. And so long as they have special needs, must be represented in the government by the untouchables themselves. The government must initiate welfare measures for the untouchables.

Women

Dr Ambedkar was not only the champion of the cause of the untouchables and depressed classes but also of women. He was influenced by Buddha's view about women. Buddha described women as one of the seven treasures and a human being with supreme value. Ambedkar blamed Manu for giving women a degraded position

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in Hindu society. He said, 'According to Manu, women have no right to study the Vedas'. This view in the context of a woman was both an insult and an injury to the women of India. It deprived women of the right to acquire knowledge. It also debarred woman from participating in religious activities by the Brahmins. He said, 'Manu also deprived women from their social freedom. As a result women in modern times also suffer from oppression and humiliation in society. Hence, he fought for giving justice to women.

Ambedkar was convinced that for social justice and progress of the nation, it was essential that the conditions of women should be improved to a great extent. A family can be saved from debacle by placing a woman in authority over their affairs. He stood for the economic equality of women and vehemently pleaded for the spread of women education. He was completely opposed to child marriage and actively campaigned against it throughout. Another important facet of his campaign for the rights of women was the controversial Hindu Code Bill that he introduced as the first law minister of independent India. The idea behind the bill was to expand gender equality to the spheres of inheritance, marriage and the economy. The Hindu code Bill draft introduced by Ambedkar made the following radical proposals:

- For the first time, the widow and daughter were awarded the same share of property as the son
- For the first time, women were allowed to divorce a cruel or negligent husband
- For the first time, the husband was prohibited from taking a second wife
- For the first time, a man and woman of different castes could be married under Hindu law;
- For the first time, a Hindu couple could adopt a child of a different caste

Thus, the Hindu Code Bill empowered women to equally inherit the parental property. The bill also included the abolition of the doctrine of rights by birth, provision for inter-caste marriage and divorce. Unfortunately, these radical changes introduced were greeted with a storm of protest, mostly from upper caste groups. One such group was the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). In a single year, 1949, the RSS organized as many as 79 meetings in Delhi where effigies of Nehru and Ambedkar were burnt, and where the new Bill was denounced as an attack on Hindu culture and tradition. Another prominent leader to oppose the bill was Dr. Rajendra Prasad who became the first president of India. As a result of the storm of protest, Ambedkar's draft of the Bill was stalled in parliament. It eventually could not be adopted because of the conspiracy by some higher caste Hindu leaders in the Congress and outside. In protest, Ambedkar resigned from Nehru's cabinet on September 27, 1951. He, thereafter, became a bitter critic of Nehru, saying that Nehru did not have the 'earnestness and determination' required to back the Bill through to the end.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

15. State whether the following sentences are true or false:
- Ambedkar was of the view that the caste system was an Indian form of division of labour.
 - Ambedkar was deeply influenced by Buddha, Kabir and Jyotiba Phule.
 - Ambedkar was of the opinion that an individual or his point of view should be held responsible for the sufferings of his fellow sufferers.
 - According to Ambedkar, the division of labour in the caste system was based on natural aptitude or on the choice of the person concerned.
 - Ambedkar's principle was to fight against the social system, not against any individual.
16. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.
- According to Ambedkar, the Hindu scheme of social structure based on the four _____ breeds inequality and has been the parent of the caste system and untouchability.
 - Ambedkar opined that the custom of purification and defilement related to _____ was neither applicable to a group nor individual on hereditary basis.
 - The _____ piloted by Ambedkar empowered women to equally inherit the parental property.
 - Ambedkar blamed _____ for giving women a degraded position in Hindu society.
 - The radical changes introduced in the Hindu Code Bill were greeted with a storm of protest, mostly from upper caste groups. One such group was the _____.

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4.4.2 Organisation of the Socially Oppressed Classes

Ambedkar understood that to agitate against the social wrongs of Indian society he needed to organize the depressed classes. He thus, sought to mobilise the so called 'untouchables' under one organization. In 1924, he established an organisation called the *Bahiskrit Hitkarini Sabha*. The motives of the organization were to 'educate, agitate and organize.' He started his struggle against the oppression of the depressed classes by visiting different places in Maharashtra and began to promote education among the 'lower' castes and advocated agitation to reclaim rights. Later, he expanded his struggle by visiting various places all across India. To achieve the objectives of Bahiskrit Hitkarini Sabha, a hostel was inaugurated for the untouchable educated students in January 1925. Ambedkar felt that it was only through education that one would be able to create social and revolutionary consciousness among the 'lower' castes.

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On the question of political representation for the socially oppressed classes, Ambedkar's Bahiskrit Hitkarini Sabha rejected the idea of the principle of nomination and was in favour of the principle of election. Regarding the system of election, Ambedkar argued that the organization did not want a communal electorate. The Sabha felt that it would be adequate if the socially oppressed classes were provided with reserved seats in the general constituencies. Ambedkar also demanded protection through guarantees. Some of these guarantees were:

- Education of the socially oppressed classes would be considered the first charge on the revenue of the province and that a reasonable and just proportion of the total grant for education would be marked specifically for the 'lower' castes.
- The socially oppressed classes would have unrestricted recruitment in the military or the police without any limitation as to cost.
- For thirty years, the socially oppressed classes would be priority in recruitment in the matter of recruitments to all posts, gazetted as well as non-gazetted in all civil services.
- The socially oppressed classes would have the right to appoint a special inspector of police from among their own community for every district.
- The socially oppressed classes would have the right to effective representation on local bodies recognised by the provincial government.
- The socially oppressed classes would have the right to appeal to the central government if the above stated guarantees were violated by provincial governments. Moreover, the central government would have the power to force provincial governments to obey the law in the matter.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

17. The motives of the Bahiskrit Hitkarini Sabha, formed in _____, were to 'educate, agitate and organize.'
18. State whether the following statement is true or false.
 - (i) The Bahiskrit Hitkarini Sabha was not in favour of the principle of nomination; rather, it insisted on the principle of election for the Depressed Classes.
 - (ii) The idea of giving separate electorates to the lower classes had been given by Ambedkar, which the British accepted.
 - (iii) After the events of the Poona pact, Ambedkar became an ardent admirer of Gandhi.

4.4.3 Ambedkar and the Poona Pact

In 1932, Gandhi went on a fast to oppose the provision of separate electorates for the members of the untouchables. This was the starting point of Gandhi's own campaign against untouchability. The idea of giving separate electorates to the lower

classes had been given by Ambedkar, which the British accepted. Gandhi opposed the idea because he felt that it would lead to the disintegration of Hindu society. Thus, while both Ambedkar and Gandhi were against the treatment that was meted out to members of the so called lower castes, they were at opposite ends on this issue. After the British allowed separate electorates, Gandhi went on a fast unto death while he was in jail. Eventually, Ambedkar had to back down from his position and agreed to a compromise with Gandhi. The Poona Pact refers to the compromise agreement between Ambedkar and Gandhi signed on 24 September 1932. According to the agreement:

- (a) There would be seats reserved for the Depressed Classes out of general electorate seats in the provincial legislatures.
- (b) In the Central Legislature, 18 per cent of the seats allotted to the general electorate for British India would be reserved for the Depressed Classes.

After the agreement between the two leaders was made, Gandhi agreed to end his fast. After the events of the Poona Pact, Ambedkar became severely disillusioned by Gandhi. He felt that Gandhi had blackmailed him and the 'depressed classes' by going on a fast unto death to get his way.

4.4.4 Political Ideas of Ambedkar

Ambedkar was a social revolutionary and true liberal who worked for a new political order and envisioned a 'people's India' as well as a 'united India'. Indian polity since long had been undergoing a process of modernisation. Many great men contributed to modernise the polity, but only a microscopic view like that of Ambedkar played a multi-dimensional role in the modernisation process of the entire country. He was one among the few who realised that modernisation of the polity remains a vague concept without social change. Accordingly, he started his political career as a social revolutionary. He always held the view that Hinduism was responsible for the disorganisation and demoralisation of Indian society.

A democratic system of government and transferring the actual powers in people's hands were the major concerns of Ambedkar, and he struggled throughout his life to achieve them. He was clear on this point that unless a citizen has power in his own hands, there could be no democracy in a true sense of the term.

For Ambedkar, democracy rested on the following four premises:

- The individual is an end in itself.
- The individual has got certain inalienable rights, which the Constitution must guarantee to him.
- The individual shall not be compelled to sacrifice any of his constitutional rights to avail of any privilege.
- The state shall not give authority to private persons to govern others.

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The gist of Ambedkar's entire political ideology is contained in his two statements:

- (i) The rights of an individual or a group are protected not by the law but by the social and moral conscience of society.
- (ii) A democratic form of society is the prerequisite of a democratic form of government. Social conscience is the most important criterion to safeguard all types of rights—fundamental or non-fundamental. The prevalent views that once rights are enacted in a law, they are safeguarded and do not carry much meaning. The formal framework of democracy does not have any value. Democracy is basically a form of society, a mode of associated living. The social relationships are the bases of democracy.

Ambedkar was a constitutional expert and so his expertise in this field enriched the concepts of political democracy in the Indian Constitution to a great extent. He is considered the main architect of the Indian constitution as he was appointed the Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee. The text of the Indian Constitution prepared by Ambedkar provided constitutional guarantees and protections for a wide range of civil liberties for individual citizens, including freedom of religion, the abolition of untouchability and the outlawing of all forms of discrimination. Ambedkar argued for extensive economic and social rights for women, and also won the Assembly's support for introducing a system of reservations of jobs in the civil services, schools and colleges for members of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, a system akin to affirmative action.

To Ambedkar, political democracy could not survive unless there lay at the base of it social democracy. Social democracy was a way of life which recognised liberty, equality and fraternity as the basic principles of life. These principles were not to be treated as the separate items but in unison. They formed a union of trinity in the sense that if they were separated from one another the very purpose of democracy would be defeated. In the absence of social democracy, power to the people would remain a wild goose chase.

Ambedkar was well aware of the fact that simply by adopting a democratic system of government in its constitution, a country could not be called a democratic nation. He opined that equality in each society, equality before law and administration, constitutional morality, liberal attitude of the majority towards the minority and developing public conscience are some of the conditions which are highly essential for the success of democracy in India. The most important condition for a successful democracy, in Ambedkar's opinion, was equality in society as it was the foundation stone of the magnificent castle of democracy where the ideas of liberty and fraternity develop. He remarked that equality played a pivotal role in developing human personality and if the right of equality is denied, all exercises would prove futile.

Ambedkar was the first among the galaxy of social reformers in India who made a legal and political approach to the social problems in India. He made a positive attempt to elevate the social position of the untouchables. From 1930 onwards, he devoted himself for the educational development of the untouchables. Among a number of social reformers, he was the first to fight for the political and legal rights

of the untouchables because according to him, a revolution was merely transference of political power from one party to another party. A real social change would occur if the revolution was accompanied by a redistribution of powers among the forces operating within a society. He prepared a declaration of fundamental rights safeguarding cultural, religious and economic rights of the depressed classes and submitted it to the minorities sub-committee. He was emphatic in his demand for abolishing untouchability and establishing equal citizenship.

Ambedkar believed that an egalitarian social order demands equality not only between men and men but also between men and women. As the law minister of India, Ambedkar introduced the Hindu Code Bill on February 5, 1951. The Hindu Code Bill introduced only four new things in their existing law. They included, abolition of the doctrine of the rights by birth, right over property to women, share to daughters from the parental property and provision of divorce. Also it insisted upon the consent of the wife to the adoption of a son by the husband. A daughter was permitted to be adopted. Thus, he was a feminist of the first order in India. The main objective behind Ambedkar's movements for social change had been primarily to establish an egalitarian social order which built real foundation of a modern Indian polity.

Ambedkar's another mission was to make the Indian polity free from economic exploitation because he strongly believed that a casteless and 'classless' society should be the main foundation of Indian polity. In 1937, he established the Independent Labour Party. This party was committed to education, industrialization and social equality. The party became the second biggest opposition party in Bombay. Of the total 15 reserved seats 11 seats went to Independent Labour Party. Ambedkar's main plank as a member of the Labour Party was to abolish 'landlordism' and 'capitalism'. In 1937, after being elected to Bombay Legislature Assembly, he took up the economic problem of the peasants, agricultural labourers and workers coming from all sections of the society. It may be mentioned here that in the first popular provincial assembly, Ambedkar was the first legislator of India to introduce a bill for abolition of serfdom of agricultural tenants. He also dealt with the problems of landless labourers, small holding collective farming, land revenue, currency system, universalisation of education and abolishing of landlordism.

As a labour member in the executive council for two viceroys in India, he made significant contribution in the field of labour legislation and welfare in the country. Ambedkar was also instrumental in bringing about several legislative measures to protect the rights of labourers and workers. He laid emphasis on equal treatment of labourers, whether industrial or agricultural.

What Ambedkar aimed at was to bring structural change in the economic life of the people so that there would be no scope for exploitation. Ambedkar was a great visionary. His pragmatic approach to achieve his goal made him different from others. He believed that a country may be independent but its people may not. Only a privileged class of people may monopolise the entire gamut of power within a state. A polity having oppressors and oppressed was not acceptable to him. As a part of his mission to make India modern and civilised, free from disharmony and disunity, he also undertook other problems of the polity.

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Keeping in view the unity and integrity of the nation, Ambedkar also dealt with the problems of language. He had suggested for 'one language, many states' formula. He was against the creation of linguistic provinces. The patriotic mind of Ambedkar never thought of any threat to India's unity in the name of language. He strongly warned that just like one religion can unite the people, two languages are sure to divide people. In the draft Constitution, he made Hindi as the national language and with the Ashoka Chakra as the national symbol of India. He wanted India to be a nation of peace and universal brotherhood.

Ambedkar was both a visionary and revolutionary. He was a liberal with a strong sense of nationalism. His unfathomable contribution for individual freedom, social justice, equality, unity, and integrity of the nation will be long remembered by the people of India.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

19. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.

- (i) For Ambedkar, political democracy could not survive unless there lay at the base of it _____.
- (ii) Ambedkar was against the creation of _____ provinces.
- (iii) Ambedkar is considered the main architect of the Indian constitution as he was appointed the _____ of the Constitution Drafting Committee.
- (iv) In 1937, Ambedkar organized the _____. This party was committed to education, industrialization and social equality.

4.4.5 Ambedkar's Ideas on Social and Economic Democracy

Ambedkar looked upon democracy as a tool of effectuating social change in a peaceful manner. To him, democracy did not just mean rule by the majority or government by the people's representatives. He took it as a formalistic and limited concept of democracy. To him, it was a means of realizing radical changes in the economic and social domains of society. Ambedkar's notion of democracy is far broader than merely a governmental plan. He insisted on the need for effectuating an all-round democracy taking care of the needs and aspirations of the people of all castes and categories. A governmental scheme cannot exist in vacuum; it functions within the society as its very important part. Its usefulness is based on its relationship with other elements of society. In a democracy, elections, parties and parliaments are the formal institutions. These cannot be fully effective in an atmosphere that is undemocratic in nature and character.

Political democracy connotes the law of 'one man one vote' which again means 'political equality'. However, if injustice and oppression exist in the society, the true spirit of political democracy cannot prosper. Therefore, democratic government must be an extension of the democratic society. For instance, in the Indian context, as long as caste barriers and caste-based prejudices prevail, real democracy cannot

function for the benefit of the masses. In this context, democracy connotes a spirit of equality and fraternity and not just a political arrangement. Ambedkar firmly believed that success of democracy in India can be ensured only by setting up a really democratic society.

4.4.6 Economic Planning

Ambedkar's view of economic development goes back to 1918 when he participated in an academic debate on the problem of small size holdings in India and ways to solve it. He contributed to this lively debate through a thought-provoking paper on small holdings in India and their remedies. Although the main focus of the paper centres on the problem of small size holdings and its remedy, in its theoretical formulation and implied solution, the analysis was placed in a much wider framework of economic development. It began with the discussion on small size holdings, got extended over to the economic analysis of backwardness of the agricultural sector as a whole and ended with its solution in the development of the industrial sector. In this sense it laid down a theoretical and policy framework for general economic development.

The main issue was how to unite small and scattered holdings and, once consolidated, how to maintain them at that size. The underlying assumption obviously was that small and scattered land holdings were too small and inefficient to provide the minimum income to farm households.

The compulsory or voluntary restriction was to be decided on the principle of economic holding. This holding was to be fixed with adherence to the acreage of land owned because it was believed that the large land holdings were somehow economic holdings too. The lower limit to the economic holding or unit was to be fixed in such a way that it would be a parcel of land necessary to keep fully engaged. This in sum was the solution put forward by the academic economists to overcome the problem of small and scattered holdings.

Concept of small economic holdings

Ambedkar differed with the other economists in a number of ways as he approached the issue of small holdings from a different perspective. The solutions put forward by these economists were more in the nature of administrative and legal measures and hence treated the consolidation of holdings as a practical problem. According to Ambedkar, the issue of the enlargement of farm size was essentially a theoretical one and hence, it needed a discussion of the economic principle or theoretical question of enlargement, which can be said to govern the farm size. He differed from others on two important grounds, which are as follows:

- The definition of economic holdings
- The underlying solutions of their enlargement

Those involved in the discussion viewed an economic holding from the standpoint of consumption rather than of production. According to Ambedkar, consumption was not the correct standard by which to judge the economic character or efficiency of a holding. It would be perverse accounting to condemn a farm as

NOTES

NOTES

not paying and hence uneconomic because its total output does not support the family of the farmer through the return for each of his investments. There could be no true economic relationship between the family of the entrepreneur and the total out-turn of his farm or industry. True economic relation could subsist only between the total out-turn and the investment. If the total outturn is paid for all the investment no producer would ever contemplate closing his farm any time because the total outturn did not support his family. It followed, then, that the relation between outturn and investment was a true economic relation. Thus, one could only speak of the farm as an economic unit paying in the sense of production and not in the sense of consumption.

Ambedkar went on to analyse the economic principle of production underlying this holding. Production from agriculture was not governed by land as factor alone but was the result of the combination of land, capital and labour. The combination of necessary factors according to him was governed by a law of proportion, which meant that a certain volume of one factor to give maximum efficiency to both, as an excess or deficit in the volume of one in comparison with others, would tell on the total output by curtailing the efficiency of all. According to Ambedkar, the evil of small size land holding was not fundamental but derived from the parent evil of maladjustment in the social economy.

4.5 JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) a man with vision and dynamism was one of the few Indians who could come out of the lap of luxury provided by his father Motilal Nehru and dedicate his life for political activism for the nation. It is through his role in the political activities that he contributed to the modern Indian political thought. He was also a historian who recorded the British rule in India and the overview of the Indian nationalist movement. Prior to India's independence, he spoke and wrote on various problems facing India and the world at great length. Some of his famous books include *The Discovery of India* and *Glimpses of World History*. *The Discovery of India* provides a broad view of Indian history, philosophy and culture, as viewed from the eyes of an Indian fighting for the independence of his country while *Glimpses of World History* provides a panoramic sweep of the history of humankind.

Nehru was influenced by Marxist thinking and had a good grasp on Marxist literature, which gave a new orientation to his thinking. He had acquired clarity in understanding the Indian society and felt that socialism suited Indian traditions because he saw the Indian society to be in the same state of pre-socialist Soviet Russia. As the first Prime Minister of independent India, he continued to speak on problems facing free India and the nuclear world. He articulated his ideas and his views on political thought in general and on nationalism and social revolution in particular.

4.5.1 Freedom Movement

Jawaharlal Nehru was born in an aristocratic family of Allahabad on 14 November 1889. His father, Motilal Nehru, was a famous lawyer and was one of the wealthiest

people in Allahabad. Nehru described his early childhood as a 'sheltered and uneventful one.' He was educated by a series of British governesses and tutors until he was sixteen. He also had Indian tutors who taught him Hindi and Sanskrit. Nehru went on to attend Harrow in England before earning an honours degree in natural science from the Trinity College in Cambridge University. Nehru returned to India in 1912 and joined the Allahabad High Court as a barrister. He soon lost interest in his legal career as neither the practice of law, nor the company of lawyers stimulated his interests. Rather, Nehru became attracted towards the national movement for home rule, joining Annie Besant's India Home Rule League. He made his first appearance at a Congress platform as a delegate to the Bankipore session in 1912. He campaigned on behalf of the Congress against the indentured labour system forced upon Indian workers in Fiji as well as the discrimination faced by Indians in South Africa. In 1920, he joined the Non-cooperation Movement started by Gandhi, suffering imprisonment for the first time in 1921. He would be imprisoned by the British colonial authorities another eight times for his activities during the freedom struggle. In 1942, he also joined Gandhi's 'Quit India Movement' and as imprisoned until 1945. It was during this period of imprisonment that Nehru wrote *The Discovery of India*, a book that was to have a lasting impact on the shaping of India's nationhood. On 15th August 1947, India won her freedom and Jawaharlal Nehru became independent India's first Prime Minister, serving the nation in this capacity until his death on 27 May 1964.

Nehru drew much of his inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi, whom he first met in 1916. It was under Gandhi's mentorship that Nehru rose to prominence in the Congress and became one of the most important leaders in the freedom struggle.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

20. State whether the following sentences are true or false.
- According to Gandhian scholars, Nehru imposed a model of industrial development that centralised power in the cities and thus devastated the countryside.
 - Ambedkar criticized Nehru on the grounds of his failure to transfer surplus lands to Dalit families.
21. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.
- The Nehruvian model relied on the development of heavy industries which created _____ difficulties on the one hand and failed to absorb rapidly growing labour, on the other.
 - Charan Singh, in his extensive writings on agriculture and agriculture policy in India, condemned government spending decisions as being inequitable, inefficient and _____.
 - The Nehruvian model succeeded in making a break from the colonial past and created the conditions for India to enter the _____ process.

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4.5.2 Nehruvian Model of Development

Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to modernize India as fast as possible and to catch up with the West in terms of economic development. For Nehru, industrialization was the key to India's quick transformation. He often said, 'industrialize or perish'. He believed that industrialization of the Western type would serve as a solution for all the socio-economic ills of India. He wanted India to emerge as a strong, self-reliant and modern nation state, equal to any nation of the West. In his over enthusiasm to modernize India, Nehru sometimes rejected the Gandhian model of development and adopted the Western model, as he felt that the former was regressive and the latter scientific and modern. To achieve his goals of development and making India a 'modernized nation,' Nehru relied on his ideas of a 'mixed economy,' 'centralized planning,' and 'institution building and infrastructure development.' His development strategy was one of state-led development and centralized planning which is often referred to as the 'Nehruvian model'. The major objectives of Nehruvian model were as follows:

- High rate of saving so as to boost investment to a higher level
- Preference towards heavy industry so as to develop the industrial base of the economy
- Opting a protectionist path so as to safeguard infant domestic industries
- Encouraging import substitution so as to achieve self-reliance
- Aiming to enlarge opportunities for the less privileged sections of the society

Mixed Economy

A mixed economy may be defined as 'an economic system in which both the private enterprise and a degree of state monopoly (usually in public services, defense, infrastructure, and basic industries) coexist'. All modern economies are mixed where the means of production are shared between the private and public sectors. Mixed economy is a term used to describe an economic system, where some important production is undertaken by the state, directly or through its nationalized industries, and some is left for private enterprise. It is also defined as an economy containing the characteristics of both capitalism and socialism, that is, a combination of private and public ownership of the means of production, with some measure of control by the central government. It is a type of economy in which private and public sectors co-exist and try to retain the advantages of capitalism and socialism while trying to eliminate the evils of both the systems.

The term-mixed economy arose in the context of political debate in the United Kingdom in the post-War period, although the set of policies later associated with the term had been advocated from at least the 1930s. Supporters of the mixed economy, including R. H. Tawney, Anthony Crossland and Andrew Shonfield were mostly associated with the British Labour Party, although similar views were expressed by Conservatives, including Harold Macmillan.

In broad terms, a mixed economy usually is an economic system where both the public and the private sector direct the economy. Mixed economies reflect the

characteristics of both market driven liberal economies and state controlled socialist economies. Nehru favoured the mixed economy approach towards development, but he did not regard the mixed economy as a 'half-way house' between the capitalistic or liberal and the communistic or socialist forms of economic organization. For Nehru, the mixed economy was an amalgamation of the two economic systems and since it was free from both their dogmatic approaches, the mixed economy represented a higher form of economic organization. Nehru also took the position that the continuous exceptional growth of science and technology that resulted in phenomenal changes in human activity and the modes of production could only be absorbed by the mixed economy, which alone possessed the flexibility and resilience to do so.

Types of economic systems

Any economic system must address four fundamental questions. One can differentiate among the various economic systems based on how they answer these questions. The four fundamental questions are as follows:

- What goods and services should be produced?
- How should the goods and services be produced?
- Should producers use more human labour or more capital (machines) for producing things?
- How should the goods and services be distributed among people?

A capitalist or market driven economy answers these questions by the forces of demand and supply. In a capitalist economy only those consumer goods that are in demand and can be sold for profit in the domestic or foreign markets are produced. For example, if televisions and cars are in demand, they will be produced. Moreover, if labour is cheaper than capital, more labour-intensive methods of production will be used and vice-versa. In a capitalist economy, the goods produced are distributed among people on the basis of their purchasing power, which is the ability to buy goods and services, and not on the basis of what people need. Poor people in a country like India require housing, but since the poor do not have the purchasing power, their needs will not be counted by the market. Thus, housing for the poor will not be produced and supplied by market forces.

A socialist economy answers these questions in a radically different manner. In a socialist economy, the goods and services produced is decided by the government based on what people need. The assumption of socialist economies is that the government knows what people need. For example, the rich may desire luxury items, but the government will use the resources not to produce luxury items for the rich, but rather use resources to produce goods which are needed by the poor. Similarly, the distribution of goods in a socialist country is also based on what people need and not on what they can afford to purchase. Ideally, a socialist nation would provide free education, health care and other civic amenities to all its citizens.

In a mixed economy, the question of what goods and services need to produce and distributed is answered by both the market and the government. In a mixed economy, ideally speaking, the market will provide whatever goods and services it

NOTES

can produce well, and the government will provide essential goods and services which the market fails to do.

Salient features of mixed economy

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The capitalist economy did not appeal to Jawaharlal Nehru. For Nehru, the 'acquisitive society' was not suited for the present age and sought its replacement by 'a classless society, based on co-operative effort, with opportunities for all'. Nehru observed that 'the strongest urge in the world today is that of social justice and equality' and came to the conclusion that any social structure that was based on the possession of land and capital by a few with 'the others living on the verge of existence' stood 'self-condemned' and had to be changed.

Although Nehru took the view that the capitalist system had outlived its relevance, he did not approve of a system where the state controlled the entire means of production because of two reasons, one of which was institutional and the other was historical. The institutional reason was that he felt the introduction of complete control over the means of production was not possible without introducing 'authoritarianism' and 'totalitarianism,' both of which he despised as a staunch democrat. Nehru sought a system which could 'realize economic growth and social justice without the sacrifice of freedom and the democratic rights of the common citizen'. He also felt that with every little growth that took place in the economy, the system would increasingly gravitate towards 'monopolies and aggregations of economic power'. He wanted to change the course of history but in a manner that did not break sharply with the country's geographical, historical, religious, economic and social background. Thus he favoured a mixed economy characterized by the following features:

- (i) A balance between the market economy and the planning mechanism
- (ii) A clear demarcation of the boundaries of public sector and private sector so that the crucial and strategic sectors are invariably in the public sector
- (iii) While profit motive influences decision-making in the private sector, the economic viability criteria for investment decisions in the public sector is based on social cost-benefit analysis
- (iv) The ownership of means of production as between the public sector, private sector, joint sector and the cooperative sector is so decided that there is a balance between personal and social incentives and sectional and general interests
- (v) There is occupational freedom and freedom of consumers' choice
- (vi) The government intervenes to prevent undue concentration of economic power, and monopolistic and restrictive trade practices
- (vii) The government endeavours to take care of the consumption levels and objectives of the weaker sections of the society through the public distribution system (PDS), poverty alleviation programmes, etc.

- (viii) Social objectives of equity, employment, balanced regional development, family welfare are emphasised
- (ix) The dogmatic rigidities of socialism are avoided and a pragmatic approach to decision-making for promoting economic growth is usually adopted
- (x) The mixed economy is not merely an economic concept, it is an economy where the rights of the individual are respected and protected subject only to the requirements of public law and order and morality

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Evolution of mixed economy in India

The evolution of the mixed economy in India can be traced to the national freedom movement, especially in the 1930s with the socialist tilt of the Congress. At the 1931 Karachi session of the Indian National Congress, a socialist pattern of development was set as the goal for independent India. Moreover, the 1955 Avadi Resolution of the Indian National Congress made a socialistic pattern of development as the goal of the party. The resolution mandated that 'the state will necessarily play a vital part in starting and operating big projects through overall controls of resources, trends and essential balances in the economy ... with strategic controls over the private sector to prevent the evils' of anarchic industrial development'. A year later, the Indian Parliament adopted 'socialistic pattern of development' as official its policy, a policy that included the regulation of industries and land reforms. Subsequently, the industry policy resolutions of 1977 and 1980 were focused on mixed economy model.

Industrial Policy Resolution, 1956: The resolution recognized need and the importance of both public sector and private sector enterprises. Among other things, the resolution emphasized that fair and non-discriminatory treatment would be given to private sector industries and their development would be encouraged by developing transport facilities and by providing financial assistance. The resolution considered that the private sector by itself could not bring about rapid industrialization of the country. It, therefore, provided vital and expanding scope for public sector industries. At the same time, the private sector was assured of an important place in the industrial structure of the country. The resolution also acknowledged the important role of village, cottage and small scale industries. At the same time, the resolution accorded a prominent role to the public sector. The apprehensions of the private sector that the public sector would develop at their cost did not turn out to be correct and the private sector found ample scope for its expansion. The resolution classified industries into three categories:

- **Schedule A:** Those industries which were to be the sole responsibility of the state. This list included 17 industries- arms and ammunition, atomic energy, iron and steel, heavy machinery required for mining, heavy electrical industries, coal, mineral oils, mining, iron ore and other important minerals like copper, lead and zinc, etc., aircraft, air transport, railways, ship-building, telephone, telegraph and wireless equipment, and generation and distribution of electricity.

NOTES

- **Schedule B:** The Schedule B industries were those industries where the state could establish new units or where existing units might be progressively nationalised. There were about a dozen industries in this list. In these industries, the private sector was guaranteed plenty of opportunities to develop and expand. It included the following industries- Other mining industries, aluminum and other non-ferrous metals not included in Schedule A, machine tools, ferro alloys and steel tools, chemicals, antibiotics and other essential drugs, synthetic rubber, pulp, road and sea transport.
- **Schedule C:** Those industries which were not included in the Schedule A or B lists were part of Schedule C. These industries were open for the private sector, subject to the social and economic policy of the government.

Industrial Policy Resolution, 1977: The Industrial Policy Resolution of 1977 was focused on the development of small scale sector, cottage and household industries. It further provided for using provisions of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act against the expansion of larger industrial houses. The public sector was to be used for providing strategic goods of basic nature and also for maintaining supplies of essential goods. In areas where foreign collaboration was not required because of the availability of indigenous technical know-how, such collaboration agreements were not to be renewed.

Industrial Policy Resolution, 1980: The policy accorded priority to the optimum utilization of installed capacity, balanced regional development, agro-based industries, export-oriented industries and promoting 'economic federalism' by the equitable spreading of investment over small but growing industrial units in urban as well as rural areas.

Working of the mixed economy

The concept of the mixed economy adopted by India implied the rejection of the idea of immediate nationalisation of the private sector. It further implied a regulated private sector and a fast expanding public sector, especially in basic and heavy industries such as steel, engineering, fertilizer, power and transport. The private sector has been dominant in agriculture and allied activities in retail and most of the wholesale trade, cottage, rural and small scale industries, most of the consumer goods industries like textiles, jute, cement, sugar, radio receivers and others. A number of capital goods industries such as engineering, chemicals, electronics, etc., are also in the private sector. Most of the professional services are in the private sector. Thus, it can be said that the Nehruvian model of the mixed economy left substantial scope for the private sector in India. However, the working of the mixed economy in India has passed through various stages; broadly speaking we can classify them in three distinct phases. They are as follows:

Initial phase: The initial period in the 1950s and 1960s involved mostly the government acting as an entrepreneur and establishing new enterprises but not nationalizing existing ones, except some that had been owned by the British.

Nationalization phase: A wave of nationalisation swept through industry after industry, starting with banks in 1969. In 1969 the monopoly control act was also passed, which limited the size of private firms in many sectors. Subsequently, the coal industry, copper extraction, insurance, and cotton textile mills were either nationalised or placed under strict regulatory controls. The nationalisation of the private sector and the establishment of new state-owned firms continued sporadically until Indira Gandhi's death in 1984. In the later stages, some of the newer state-owned firms were granted special privileges and were allowed to form joint ventures with foreign corporations, with the auto producer Maruti Udyog Limited's (MUL) deal with Suzuki in 1983 being a sign of the times.

Disinvestment phase: This phase starts with the introduction of economic reforms in 1991 due to the balance of payment crisis. In this phase India adopted a new economic policy that laid down a heavy emphasis on the market with the substantial involvement of private sector. In this phase, many of the state owned enterprises have been privatized. In the past two decade, the government has increasingly pushed for disinvestment of public sector enterprises. However, this phase cannot be assumed as a departure from the mixed economy model and a move towards the market driven economy. Although it cannot be denied that the private sector now plays the more prominent role in the Indian economy, however, the public sector continues to play an important role in Indian economy. It is interesting to note that the cumulative investment in central government enterprises which was ₹29 crore in 5 enterprises in 1951 had reached to ₹579920 crore in 249 enterprises as of 31 March 2010.

Centralized planning

The centralized planning model of the Soviet Union attracted Nehru's attention and in the post-Independence period, it became an integral part of the Nehruvian model of development. Nehru set up the Planning Commission with a Government of India resolution in March 1950. The Planning Commission was setup in pursuance of the declared objectives of the government, which was to promote a swift rise in the standard of living of the people by the efficient utilization of the resources of the country, increasing production and offering opportunities to all for employment in the service of the community. Nehru was the first chairman of the Planning Commission, a post that has been held by all subsequent prime ministers. The charge of the Planning Commission was to assess all the resources of the country, increasing deficient resources, formulating plans for the most effective and balanced utilization of resources and determining priorities.

Nehru launched the first five-year plan in 1951. Two subsequent five year plans were devised till 1965, when there was a break as a result of the 1965 India Pakistan War. Two successive years of drought, devaluation of the currency, a general rise in prices and an erosion of resources disrupted the planning process and after three annual plans between 1966 and 1969, the fourth five-year plan was started in 1969. During the years 1990-91 and 1991-92, political instability at the centre resulted in those years being treated as annual plans. The eighth five-year

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plan was launched in 1992 after the World Bank enforced structural adjustment policies on India after the balance of payment crises of 1991. For the first eight plans, the growth of the public sector with immense investments in basic and heavy industry was given prominence, but since the start of the ninth five-year plan in 1997, the emphasis on the public sector has become less pronounced and the current thinking on planning in the country is that it should increasingly be of an indicative nature.

An important feature of the five-year plans was the Nehru-Mahalanobis model which represented the Nehruvian view of state-led development. The model was formulated by P. C. Mahalanobis under the guidance of Nehru. The 'Nehru-Mahalanobis model' became the basis of the second five-year plan and continued to be a guiding principle of all subsequent plans with small alterations until 1977 when the Janata Party came into power and conceived the Gandhian model. The emphasis of the model was on the rapid development of heavy industry with the objective of creating an indigenous industrial base so as to make India even more self-reliant into arms father capital-goods sector. The justification of the heavy goods strategies was stated in the framework of the second year-year plan as being 'in long run, the rate of industrialization and the growth of the national economy would depend upon the increasing production of coal, electricity, iron and steel, heavy machinery, heavy chemicals and heavy industries generally, which would increase the capacity for capital formation. One important aim is to make India independent as quickly as possible of foreign imports of producer goods so that the accumulation of capital would not be hampered by difficulties in securing supplies of essential producer goods from other countries. The heavy industry must, therefore, be expanded with all possible speed.' The Nehru-Mahalanobis model's justifications for greater emphasis on heavy industry were given as follows:

- (i) The British colonial government intentionally denied the development of heavy industry in India and kept the country, primarily an agrarian economy, as an appendage of the British colonial system.
- (ii) The Indian industrial structure was mainly dependent on the consumer goods industries. Therefore, it was necessary to broaden this base by developing heavy industries and infrastructure. The argument was made that a diversified industrial structure could absorb a huge population of labour and raise labour productivity. Such a situation would reduce the nation's dependence on agriculture as a provider of employment.
- (iii) Since the productivity of labour was higher in manufacturing than in agriculture, a push towards industrialisation promised to bring about a swift increase in national and per capita income.
- (iv) The rapid development of the industrial sector was not only critical for the development of agriculture, but also for the growth of all other sectors of the Indian economy.

Although admitting that foreign aid assisted in the development of capital goods and the infrastructure sector, the Nehru-Mahalanobis model stressed that the major burden of development would have to be borne by domestic savings. Since foreign aid would largely come in the form of loans, the model emphasised the growth of exports so as to pay for the bulk of imports by the increase in exports. The model was also conscious of the fact that enormous investments in heavy industry, although very important, would not increase employment significantly, since such investments were capital-intensive. Therefore, in order to generate employment and support the production of consumer goods, investment had to be made in small scale industries. The emphasis of enormous investment in heavy industry did not mean that the model did not give due importance to the role of agriculture for developing the Indian economy. Nehru recognised how critical agriculture was to the Indian economy stating, 'We shall find that this industrial progress cannot be achieved without agricultural advance and progress... Everyone knows that unless we are self-sufficient in agriculture we cannot have the wherewithal to advance in industries. If we have to import food, then we are doomed so far as progress is concerned. We cannot import both food and machinery.'

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4.5.3 Institution Building and Infrastructure Development

One other significant aspect of the Nehruvian model of development was Nehru's continuous efforts to build new institutions for the creation of human resources for the nation. Under Nehru's guidance, many institutions of higher education were established including the All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) and the National Institute of Technology (NIT). Nehru envisioned the development of nuclear energy and established the Atomic Energy Commission of India (AEC). He also recognised the need of hydro-electricity and played an instrumental role in facilitating some of the largest hydro-power plants and dams. Similarly, Nehru's visionary attitude paved the way for the establishment of steel plants in Bokaro, Bhilai, Rourkela, and Durgapur. The Nehruvian vision is further reflected in the unprecedented increase in the educational opportunities in science and technology in universities and institutes. The national expenditure on scientific research and development kept growing rapidly with each plan. For example, it increased from ₹10 million in 1949 to ₹4.5 billion in 1977. Over roughly the same period the stock of India's scientific and technical manpower increased more than 12 times from 190,000 to over 2.32 million, a spectacular increase by any standard.

It was Jawaharlal Nehru's brilliant anticipation of the move towards a 'knowledge society' in world capitalism and his huge emphasis in this area from the first plan itself has enabled the post-economic reform India to reap the benefits of the global opportunities in the information and the knowledge sector.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

22. What is mixed economy?
23. State whether the following sentences are true or false.
 - (a) To achieve his goals of development and making India a modernized nation, Nehru relied on his ideas of a mixed economy, centralized planning, and foreign investment.
 - (b) The 1955 Avadi Resolution of the Indian National Congress made a socialistic pattern of development the goal of the Congress party.
 - (c) The emphasis of the 'Nehru-Mahalanobis Model' was on the rapid development of the service industry so as to increase employment.
24. Fill in the blanks using appropriate words.
 - (i) Nehru sought a system which could realise economic growth and _____ without the sacrifice of freedom and the democratic rights of the common citizen.
 - (ii) One justification of the Nehru-Mahalanobis Model was that the Indian industrial structure was mainly dependent on the consumer goods industries and thus, it was necessary to broaden this base by developing _____ and infrastructure.
 - (iii) One of the charges of the Planning Commission was to assess all the _____ of the country.

4.5.4 Critique of Nehruvian Model

The Nehruvian model of development was severely criticised ever since its inception. The model has been criticized by the communists, liberals, Gandhians and downtrodden scholars in theoretical terms. At the same time, the Nehruvian model have also been blamed for non-achievements, delivery failures and having a conservative outlook and thus, promoting license, permits and the quota raj. In this section of the unit we will study some of the critiques of the Nehruvian model. The critiques have been divided under two broad headings- theoretical critiques and other general critiques.

Theoretical Critiques

Gandhian perspectives: Mahatma Gandhi fought for a free and independent India from British rule based on the idea of a confederation of self-sufficient village republics. On the other hand, according to Gandhian scholars, Nehru imposed a model of industrial development that centralised power in the cities and thus devastated the countryside. Gandhians also argue that industrialisation has fuelled both environmental degradation and social conflict in India, outcomes that could have been avoided if India had followed a decentralized or 'Gandhian' approach to economic development.

Communist perspectives: Although the Nehruvian model of development drew much of its influence from the experiences of the Soviet Union, however, Nehru's

vision of independent development and the mixed economy model was severely criticised by Marxist intellectuals. The orthodox Left, drawing its position from the 1928 VI Congress of the Communist International, argued that no independent development was possible in not only the colonial situation but even after the colonial society had won its political independence. They held the position that colonial economies and even post-colonial 'peripheral' economies necessarily developed in a manner that led to a deepening of their dependence towards the imperialist capitalist West, making it impossible for them to break out of this dependent status unless these societies broke out of the capitalist path altogether and went over to socialism. This view was argued forcefully by Baul Baran in the 1950s, when a major spurt of decolonisation was taking place and was taken up by some of the dependency theorists in Latin America like Andre Gunder Frank, as well as by recent Marxist and neo-Marxist scholars like Samir Amin and Hamza Alavi. Given these assumptions, Communists believed that India during Nehru's leadership could not have developed independently as India had not become socialist. In fact, the Communists immediately after Independence, declared that this independence was not 'real' and Nehru was 'a running dog of imperialism'. However, later, they recognized their mistake and after a politburo session held in mid 1950s, accepted that India's independence was real.

Liberal perspectives: Supporters of the liberal perspective see a communist bias in the Nehruvian model of development. They argue that excessive state control on the economy benefitted the bureaucracy resulting in the emergence of 'license, quota and permit raj' with mind-boggling levels of red-tape. Consequently, the economic growth of the nation was hampered and for decades India was characterized as having a 'Hindu rate of growth' or 'Nehru rate of growth'. Scholars of the liberal perspective have also attacked the stated objectives of the Nehruvian model of development. For instance, the Nehruvian model could not address widespread poverty with the total number of people living below the poverty line being not less than 50 per cent of the total population until the economic reforms initiated in India in 1991. The supporters of economic liberalization also argue that if we had opted for a free market economy instead of the Nehruvian model, India would have long since have become the biggest of the Asian Tigers.

Down-trodden perspective: One of the key objectives of the Nehruvian model of development was to achieve growth with social justice and promote a self-generating path of development with a pledge to the common man that poverty, unemployment, disease and ignorance would be removed, allowing people to realise their potential with the extension of social and economic opportunities. However, many leaders and scholars hailing from the down-trodden sections of the society questioned the ability of the Nehruvian model to do so. For instance, Ambedkar criticized Nehru on the grounds of his failure to transfer surplus lands to Dalit families. In Ambedkar's view, the failure to redistribute landed wealth in India would put 'our democracy at peril'.

The Indian freedom fighter and socialist leader Ram Manohar Lohia and his followers saw Nehru as the symbol of an upper-caste, upper-class, English-speaking intelligentsia that held sway over India since independence. Lohia and his followers

NOTES

NOTES

contend that this elite has influenced both political and economic power to its advantage, to the detriment of the lower castes and the non-English speaking majority, both of whom the 'Lohiaites' seek to represent. On the other hand, the Indian peasantry blamed the Nehruvian model having 'high levels of urban biases'. A leader of farmer's Charan Singh, in his extensive writings on agriculture and agriculture policy in India, condemned government spending decisions as being inequitable, inefficient and unsustainable. In a country where more than 75 per cent of the population was living in rural areas and agriculture's share in the GDP was more than 50 per cent, it made little sense to waste capital on inefficient urban and industrial projects.

Other general critiques

The Nehruvian model of development was also subjected to harsh criticism by other scholars for the following reasons:

- This model relied on the development of heavy industries which required huge capital investments and depended on the imports of capital goods. This resulted in a relative neglect of small industries and industries producing consumer goods. Thus, the heavy industry model created balance of payment difficulties on the one hand and failed to absorb rapidly growing labour, on the other. As a result unemployment was not reduced adequately.
- Under the Nehruvian model of state-led development, agriculture did progress, however, with a relatively small allocation for agriculture, the progress cannot be considered adequate. At the time India was suffering from food scarcity and thus, addressing the issue of agriculture was of most importance. The development of agriculture required much greater investments in irrigation, electricity, fertilizers, pesticides, etc.
- The expansion of the public sector led to the emergence of a high cost economy with much less emphasis on efficiency. Both the undertakings of the central government and various state governments like the state electricity boards, roads transport undertakings and irrigation works, etc., incurred losses year after year and the state exchequer was required to pay these losses out of the general tax revenues of the government.
- The failure of exports to rise proportionately with the increase in imports – necessitated by the expansion of the capital goods sector – resulted in the persistence of the trade deficit which increased in magnitude with every successive plan.
- State-led centralised industrialisation fuelled both environmental degradation and social conflicts.
- The Nehruvian model failed in ensuring a national minimum level of living for people. Despite three decades of planning, nearly half of the population lived below the poverty line in 1978.
- Unemployment and under-employment remained at high levels and increased with every successive plan.
- Rural-urban disparities increased and price rise could not be checked.

Assessment of the Model

We have looked at the Nehruvian model of development and its criticism in detail. Let us now concentrate on a brief assessment of the model. Initially, one may criticise the model on a variety of grounds and may even conclude that the model was inefficient. However, it must be understood that the Nehruvian model succeeded in making a break from the colonial past and created the conditions for India to enter the economic modernization process. The Nehruvian model created a diversified industrial capacity, scientific and technical educational infrastructure, helped create a significant middle class, made progress in agriculture and perhaps most importantly, started the process of land reforms. All of these developments laid the foundation for subsequent developments. In fact, India's developmental breakthrough in subsequent years, especially beginning from the economic reforms started in 1991, was not despite the Nehruvian model, but was made possible because of it.

NOTES

4.6 SUMMARY

- Gandhi used the word Satyagraha in 1906 to express the nature of the non-violence action undertaken by Indians in South Africa against the racist government there.
- For Gandhi, satyagraha was the vindication of truth, not by the infliction of suffering on the opponent but on one's own self. Satyagraha emphasised always the purity of means as well as the purity of ends. It is a moral weapon in the hands of a morally strong person to fight injustice, tyranny or evil and can be applied in any sphere.
- The techniques of satyagraha may take the form of non-cooperation and civil disobedience or fasting and strike.
- Gandhi believed in the concept of the individual being the soul of the social system. According to Gandhi, the individual is the centre of the social system, however, the individual and the society are also interdependent, the individual is the root and the society is the fruit.
- Gandhi was a philosophical anarchist for whom the state was an unacceptable institution.
- Like Marx and anarchists, Gandhi thought that the State was an instrument of exploitation based on violence and sustained by violence.
- Gandhi was a critic of capitalism. He condemned the 19th century doctrine of laissez-faire. To him, the accumulation of capital was an evil and immoral act.
- The basic tenets of Gandhian socialism include equitable distribution of wealth, theory of trusteeship, bread labour, decentralised order, democratic non-violent socialism, moral, spiritual and indigenous socialism.
- Manabendra Nath Roy was also one of the founders of the Communist Parties in India as well as Mexico and also actively engaged in the revolutionary struggle in China during that time.

NOTES

- Like Marx, Roy regarded the capitalist system as unjust, rotten and outdated. He was of the opinion that industry should be controlled by the people themselves. Like Marx, he worked on the fundamental principle that there should be no exploitation of the poor by the rich.
- In the latter half of his life, Roy became a critic of Marxism and came to the conclusion that communism provided no solution to worldly problems.
- In his book, *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution*, Roy observed, 'The abolition of private property, state ownership of the means of production and planned economy, do not by themselves end exploitation of labour nor lead to an equal distribution of wealth.'
- In the latter half of his life, M.N. Roy became an exponent of 'New Humanism'. New Humanism was the name given by Roy to the 'new philosophy of revolution'. The philosophy was summarized by Roy in the 'Twenty-Two Theses' and elaborated in his *New Humanism - A Manifesto*.
- Roy's radical humanist philosophy, in some ways, brought Roy close to Gandhi. Both Gandhian socialism and Roy's Radical humanism accepted the individual as the central point of all social thought and action. Both stood for the decentralization of political and economic power. Both also suggested party-less democracy for purifying politics.
- Roy was of the view that New Humanism or Radical Humanism was the perfect answer to the crisis faced by humanity. For Roy, in the post Hitler-Mussolini-Stalin world, the major problem facing humanity was how to guarantee individual freedom against the encroachments of the totalitarianism of the great Leviathan.
- Materialism is another fundamental principle of Roy's philosophy. Roy regarded matter as real and independent. On the basis of matter, Roy explained the origin of life and mind.
- Roy was a critic of democratic institutions. Like Jayaprakash Narayan, he was against the concept of the western model of parliamentary democracy. Roy argued that in a parliamentary democracy, political power was concentrated in the hands of a few people.
- Roy's conception of organised democracy was a 'direct democracy with small cooperative commonwealth.'
- Roy's radical humanist philosophy, in some ways, brought Roy close to Gandhi. Both Gandhian socialism and Roy's Radical humanism accepted the individual as the central point of all social thought and action. Both stood for the decentralisation of political and economic power. Both also suggested party-less democracy for purifying politics.
- In spite of these similarities, there were some fundamental differences between Roy and Gandhi.
- Roy is one of the most learned of modern Indian writers on politics and philosophy. His book, *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution* is a major contribution to the history of political thought in India.

- Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, born to a Mahar family in Madhya Pradesh in 1891, experienced personal humiliation and inhuman treatment and social taboo.
- His experience however did not embitter Ambedkar against Hindus at the individual level. But he worked actively against Hinduism, more specifically Brahmanism, because it stood in the way of establishment of an egalitarian society.
- Ambedkar realised that the lower castes were oppressed on account of two reasons: firstly, they had potentially internalised hierarchy, and secondly, the characteristics of caste-based inequality. Therefore, Ambedkar appealed to the people of the lower castes to reform their way of life.
- Ambedkar was the protagonist of a new social order which was to be based on the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. His views on social problems like caste, untouchability and women constitute the foundations of his socio-political idea.
- Ambedkar believed that democracy is not merely a form of governments; it is primarily a mode of associated living of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude or respect of reverence for fellow human being.
- For Ambedkar, in a democracy, there should be freedom to choose one's profession. To talk of democracy and not to allow this freedom is to perpetuate slavery.
- Ambedkar was convinced that for social justice and progress of the nation, it was essential that the conditions of women should be improved to a great extent.
- Ambedkar realized the inevitability of organizing the Depressed Classes to agitate against the social wrongs which they have been experiencing since long.
- Ambedkar sought to mobilise the Untouchables under one fold and for which he established an organisation called Bahiskrita Hitakarini Sabha in 1924. The motives of the Sabha were to 'Educate, Agitate and Organize.'
- Nehru can be seen as a product of the Indian freedom struggle. Like many other leaders of the Indian Nationalist Struggle, the appalling oppression and exploitation by the British, the overwhelming poverty in India and the deep sense of nationalism that was gripping the Indian people, convinced him to join the nationalist movement.
- Nehru drew much of his inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi, whom he first met in 1916. It was under Gandhi's mentorship that Nehru rose to prominence in the Congress and became one of the most important leaders in the freedom struggle. However, Nehru's model of state-led development was largely influenced by industrialized Europe.
- Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to modernize India as fast as possible and to catch up with the West in terms of economic development. For Nehru,

NOTES

NOTES

industrialization was the key to India's quick transformation. In this regard, he put forward the economic slogan 'Industrialize or perish.'

- To achieve his goals of development and making India a 'modernized nation,' Nehru relied on his ideas of a 'mixed economy,' 'centralized planning,' and 'institution building and infrastructure development.'
- The Nehruvian model of development was severely criticised ever since its inception. The model has been criticized by communists, liberals, Gandhians and downtrodden scholars in theoretical terms.
- The Nehruvian model has also been blamed for non-achievements, delivery failures and having a conservative outlook and thus promoting license, permits and the quota raj.
- The Nehruvian model succeeded in making a break from the colonial past and created the conditions for India to enter the economic modernization process.

4.7 KEY TERMS

- **Ahimsa:** Ahimsa is a term which means to do no harm.
- **Untouchable:** A person who occupies the lowest rung under the Hindu social structure and considered impure or polluted was referred to as untouchable.
- **Depressed class:** A group of people who are oppressed and devoid of basic comforts and facilities of life were known as the depressed class.
- **Radical humanism:** It was a political philosophy propounded by M. N. Roy, which accepted man as the centre of that humanism which banishes every type of supernatural agency from the human world.
- **Organized democracy:** The concept of party-less participatory democracy which believes in decentralisation of power is regarded as organized democracy.
- **Liberal humanist:** A person who believes in a system of thought that rejects religious beliefs and centers on humans and their values, capacities, and worth is called a liberal humanist.
- **Mixed economy:** It is a term used to describe an economic system, where some important production is undertaken by the State, directly or through its nationalized industries, and some is left for private enterprise.

4.8 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. (i) Satyagraha (ii) Means, ends
2. The techniques of satyagraha may take the form of non-cooperation and civil disobedience or fasting and strike (stop-work). He recommended various methods to perform satyagraha, these are civil disobedience, fasting and finally stop-work (strikes).

3. (i) Individual (ii) Exploitation (iii) Statelessness
4. The basic tenets of Gandhian socialism are the following:
 - Equitable distribution of wealth
 - Theory of trusteeship
 - Bread labour
 - Decentralised order
 - Democratic non-violent socialism
 - Moral and spiritual socialism
 - Indigenous socialism
5. What makes Gandhian socialism practically different from Marxist socialism is its faith in ahimsa. That is why Gandhism is often called 'Marxism minus the violence.'
6. (i) Anti-imperialism (ii) Capitalist (iii) Exploitation (iv) Individual freedom (v) Materialism (vi) Humanist
7. M. N. Roy's humanism was rational, yet radical and new with a view to distinguishing it from the humanist versions of other thinkers.
8. The aim of radical humanists was to organise society in a rational manner. According to Roy, the individual will not be fully free unless and until the society is organised on a rational basis. In his view, the state and the society have been established to preserve and protect individual liberty.
9. (i) Supernatural agency (ii) Democracy (iii) Dialectical materialism (iv) Rational being
10. Roy's concept of organised democracy was based on ideas of decentralisation and party-less democracy. In his scheme of organised democracy, there was no place for any political parties. The people themselves enjoyed political power. Roy's conception of organised democracy was a 'direct democracy with small cooperative commonwealth.'
11. Roy drafted a model constitution for free India based on the basis of his concept of organised democracy. The first part of the constitution contains the rights and fundamental principles. As per Roy's constitution, the supreme sovereignty is vested in the people who have absolute right to change or modify any political unit.
12. (i) Non-cooperation (ii) Status quo (iii) Reactionary (iv) Industrial progress
13. (i) Ethical (ii) Utopian, ideal (iii) Radical humanism (iv) Sociological
14. (i) Mahar (ii) Mook Nayak (iii) Bahiskrit Hitkarini Sabha
15. (i) False (ii) True (iii) False (iv) False (v) True
16. (i) Varna's (ii) Untouchability (iii) Hindu Code Bill (iv) Manu (v) Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
17. 1924
18. (i) True (ii) True (iii) False

NOTES

NOTES

19. (i) Social democracy (ii) Linguistic (iii) Chairman (iv) Independent Labour Party
20. (i) True (ii) True
21. (i) Balance of payment (ii) Unsustainable (iii) Economic modernization
22. A mixed economy may be defined as 'an economic system in which both the private enterprise and a degree of state monopoly (usually in public services, defense, infrastructure, and basic industries) coexist'.
23. (i) False (ii) True (iii) False
24. (i) Social justice (ii) Heavy industries (iii) Resources

4.9 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What is the meaning of Satyagraha?
2. Why is Gandhi considered a philosophical anarchist?
3. Why was Roy criticized for his idea of radical humanism?
4. What was Roy's opinion on the Western form of parliamentary democracy? What form of democracy did Roy prefer?
5. What is the basis of the caste system in India?
6. Write a short note on the life of B.R. Ambedkar.
7. What was Ambedkar's idea of an ideal social structure and highlight his role in the framing of Indian Constitution.
8. What is meant by a mixed economy?
9. What does the Nehruvian model emphasize?
10. Why is Nehru called a visionary?
11. Write a note on economic policies of Nehru.
12. What are the objectives and responsibilities of the Planning Commission?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the basic philosophy of Gandhism.
2. Explain the various techniques of Satyagraha that Gandhi advocated.
3. Gandhi believed that the individual was the soul of the social system. Discuss
4. Discuss the meaning and philosophy behind Gandhian socialism.
5. Discuss Roy's opinion in the 1920s and contrast it with his opinion of Marxism in the 1940s.
6. The concept of radical humanism is the greatest contribution of Roy to modern Indian political thought. Discuss.

7. Roy's radical humanist philosophy in some ways brought Roy close to Gandhi, yet Roy was a fierce critic of Gandhian philosophy. Discuss
8. Critically evaluate Roy's contribution to Indian political thought.
9. Give an account of the movement launched by Dr Ambedkar for the uplift of the depressed classes.
10. Analyse the major political ideas of B.R. Ambedkar and his views on the Indian Political System.
11. What was the purpose of forming Bahiskrita Hitakarini Sabha? Explain.
12. What are the salient features of 'mixed economy'? Explain.
13. Critically evaluate successes and failures of five-year plans in India.
14. What were the major achievements and shortcomings of Nehruvian model of development?
15. What are the various theoretical critiques of the Nehruvian Model of Development? Do you agree with them?

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4.10 FURTHER READING

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