



INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
IDE
Rajiv Gandhi University



MAHIS -502

History of India (1857-1947)-I

MA HISTORY

3rd Semester

Rajiv Gandhi University

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RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY

Arunachal Pradesh, INDIA - 791 112

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Authors

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About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

About IDE

The formal system of higher education in our country is facing the problems of access, limitation of seats, lack of facilities and infrastructure. Academicians from various disciplines opine that it is learning which is more important and not the channel of education. The education through distance mode is an alternative mode of imparting instruction to overcome the problems of access, infrastructure and socio-economic barriers. This will meet the demand for qualitative higher education of millions of people who cannot get admission in the regular system and wish to pursue their education. It also helps interested employed and unemployed men and women to continue with their higher education, Distance education is a distinct approach to impart education to learners who remained away in the space and/or time from the teachers and teaching institutions on account of economic, social and other considerations. Our main aim is to provide higher education opportunities to those who are unable to join regular academic and vocational education programmes in the affiliated colleges of the University and make higher education reach to the doorsteps in rural and geographically remote areas of Arunachal Pradesh in particular and North-eastern part of India in general. In 2008, the Centre for Distance Education has been renamed as "Institute of Distance Education (IDE)."

Continuing the endeavor to expand the learning opportunities for distant learners, IDE has introduced Post Graduate Courses in 5 subjects (Education, English, Hindi, History and Political Science) from the Academic Session 2013-14. The Institute of Distance Education is housed in the Physical Sciences Faculty Building (first floor) next to the University Library. The University campus is 6 kms from NERIST point on National Highway 52A. The University buses ply to NERIST point regularly.

Outstanding Features of Institute of Distance Education:

(1) At Par with Regular Mode

Eligibility requirements, curricular content, mode of examination and the award of degrees are on par with the colleges affiliated to the Rajiv Gandhi University and the Department(s) of the University.

(ii) Self-Instructional Study Material (SISM)

The students are provided SISM prepared by the Institute and approved by Distance Education Council (DEC), New Delhi. This will be provided at the time of admission at the IDE or its Study Centres. SISM is provided only in English except Hindi subject.

(iii) Contact and Counseling Programme (CCP)

The course curriculum of every programme involves counselling in the form of personal contact programme of duration of approximately 7-15 days. The CCP shall not be compulsory for BA. However for professional courses and MA the attendance in CCP will be mandatory.

(iv) Field Training and Project

For professional course(s) there shall be provision of field training and project writing in the concerned subject.

(v) Medium of Instruction and Examination

The medium of instruction and examination will be English for all the subjects except for those subjects where the learners will need to write in the respective languages.

(vi) Subject/Counseling Coordinators

For developing study material, the IDE appoints subject coordinators from within and outside the University. In order to run the PCCP effectively Counseling Coordinators are engaged from the Departments of the University. The Counseling-Coordinators do necessary coordination for involving resource persons in contact and counseling programme and assignment evaluation. The learners can also contact them for clarifying their difficulties in then respective subjects.

SYLLABUS
History of India 1857-1947)-I

UNIT I: EMERGENCE OF NATIONALISM- I

- a) Intellectual Movement
- b) Emergence of Middle Class
- c) Role of Literature and Press
- d) Economic Nationalism

UNIT II: EMERGENCE OF NATIONALISM- II

- a) Predecessors of Indian National Congress
- b) Foundation of Indian National Congress
- c) Programmes and Policies of the Early Nationalists

UNIT III: PEASANT'S REVOLT

- a) Background-Santhal Movement
- b) Indigo Revolts
- c) Decan Riots and Mophila Uprising

UNIT IV: RISE OF MILITANT NATIONALISM

- a) Role of Extremists of Militant Nationalism
- b) Nationalism, Swadeshi Movement and Revolutionary Activities
- c) Muslim Politics and the Foundation of Muslim League
- d) Growth of Communalism

UNIT V: SOCIO-RELIGIOUS REFORMS

- a) Dayanand Saraswati and Arya Samaj
- b) Aligarh Reform Movement-Sayyid Ahmed Khan
- c) Jyotiba Phule
- d) Veerrasalingam

INTRODUCTION

The period between 1857 and 1947 is extremely crucial in the history of India. The advent of the Europeans for the purpose of trading later led to colonization by the British, the Dutch, the Portuguese and the French in India. Under the British rule, India was exploited for its economic resources to a great extent. However, their rule also led to various reforms in the social, educational, commercial and judicial spheres. The World War I and World War II played an important role in arousing the spirit of nationalism among the Indians. Various freedom fighters fought for the independence of the country in their own way. Finally, India became independent on 15th August 1947 and became a republic on 26th January 1950 when the Constitution of India was enforced.

This book, History of India (1857-1947), contains topics such as the emergence of nationalism, the peasant revolts, social change and religious dissent, socio-religious reforms, impact of World War I, emergence of Gandhi in Indian politics, the Congress left wing, and Independence and Partition.

This book 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 the Introduction followed by the Unit Objectives for the topic. The content is then presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, and is interspersed with Check Your Progress questions to reinforce the student's understanding of the topic. A list of Questions and Exercises is also provided at the end of each unit. The Summary, Key Terms and Activity further act as useful tools for students and are meant for effective recapitulation of the text.

This book is divided into FIVE units.

Unit 1: Describes the emergence of nationalism with regard to the intellectual movement, role of the middle class, and role of literature and press. It also discusses economic nationalism.

Unit 2: Discusses the predecessors of Indian National Congress, foundation of Indian National Congress, and programmes and policies of the early nationalists. the

Unit 3: Covers the peasant revolts broadly focusing on the background of the Santhal movement, Indigo revolts, Deccan riots and Moplah uprising.

Unit 4: Discusses social change and religious dissent in relation to militant nationalism and settled agriculture, nationalism, Swadeshi movement and revolutionary activities, muslim politics and foundation of the Muslim League.

Unit 5: Explains the socio-religious reforms introduced by Dayanand Saraswati, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Jyotiba Phule, and Veerrasalingam.

UNIT 1 EMERGENCE OF NATIONALISM - I

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Unit Objectives
- 1.2 Intellectual Movement
- 1.3 Emergence of the Middle Class
- 1.4 Role of Literature and Press
- 1.5 Economic Nationalism
 - 1.5.1 Nationalism and Economic History
 - 1.5.2 Influence of Marx
 - 1.5.3 Indian Economy in the Mid-eighteenth Century
 - 1.5.4 Rural and Urban Economy — The Transition
- 1.6 Summary
- 1.7 Key Terms
- 1.8 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 1.9 Questions and Exercises
- 1.10 Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Renaissance is a form of rebirth and Renaissance in India was highlighted by the quest for knowledge and development of science and arts. Leading reformists of that time had eagerly and enthusiastically taken up this task. Rammohan Roy had founded the Brahmo Samaj. He had pioneered movements for socio-religious reforms among Hindus. His influence on politics, social life, education and religion alike, was very strong. The Arya Samaj was founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati on almost the same lines as the Brahmo Samaj. The Ramakrishna Mission was set up by Swami Vivekananda on 1 May 1897. The motto of this mission was to assist in welfare services. He was a promoter of Yoga and the Vedanta philosophy in India as well as the West. The Prarthana Samaj (prayer society in Sanskrit) was a movement to bring about reforms among Hindus, in terms of religion and social beliefs, in Maharashtra.

The Theosophical Society is a global organization, with universal brotherhood as its main goal. The base of this organization was awareness of life and its many forms. It was set up for the betterment of humanity. In the latter part of 1882, this society shifted to Adyar in Chennai. The society has a commendable library of rare oriental manuscripts written on palm leaves and parchments. These manuscripts are very valuable in terms of ancestry and archaeology.

Reform movements for Indian Muslims began in the second half of the 19th century. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was the most prominent intellectual among Muslims, who strived hard to develop and educate Muslims. If the forerunner of regeneration among the Hindus was Rammohan Roy, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan can be accredited with the same title among Muslims of India. He founded the Translation Society which translated Western knowledge into Urdu. This society was later renamed as the Scientific Society. However, his greatest accomplishment was the setting up of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, at Aligarh. This college grew into a global centre of study.

The 19th and 20th centuries also witnessed well-known social reformers like Dr B.R. Ambedkar, Jyotiba Phule and others. Many struggles were spearheaded by these social reformers against the caste system, caste oppression and untouchability, in a number of ways.

1.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the rise of intellectual movement in the 19th century
- Describe the emergence of the middle class
- Explain the role of literature and press
- Discuss economic nationalism

1.2 INTELLECTUAL MOVEMENT

In India, during the 18th century, there were clashes, crises, calamities and problems between various groups of people. Uncertainties in the political scenario created hindrances in the evolution of Indian culture. The British made use of this scenario to fulfill their vested interests and deeply influence the lifestyle and culture of India. The manner in which India responded to this strategy of the British is the highlight of the contemporary history of India of the 19th century.

There was evolution from the Medieval Age to the Modern Age. Indians were exposed to new thought and ideas, owing to their encounter with the western forces. Hence, it is not surprising that a significant social and cultural evolution swept throughout the country. Indians were awakened from their lethargic sleep by the Renaissance of the 19th century and were filled with a desire to break away from the bonds that enslaved them. Bipan Chandra quotes, 'Thoughtful Indians began to look for the strength and weakness of their society and for ways and means of removing the weaknesses. While a large number of Indians refused to come to terms with the West and still put their faith in traditional Indian ideas and institutions, others gradually came to hold the elements of modern western thought that had to be imbedded for the regeneration of their society. They were impressed in particular by modern science and doctrines of reason and humanism. While differing on the nature and extent of reforms, nearly all 19th century intellectuals shared the conviction that social and religious reforms were urgently needed.'

The impact of British rule on the economic conditions and society of India was a factor that primarily contributed to the socio-cultural evolution of the 19th century. The imperialism of the British united the people of India politically and administratively. A uniform legal system and methods of communication were launched by the British rulers. The structure of the traditional economy fell apart when the British took over the country. In terms of economy and lifestyle, many Indians were interconnected. The economic exploitation by the colonial power played a significant role in igniting the spirit of nationalism. The growth of nationalism was motivated by the centralization of British rule in India. A new middle class emerged as a result of the influence of the West and its policies. This middle class operated like a creative minority group and directed its efforts to destroy all traditions. Thus, it helped in the rise of an enlightened India, which was filled with patriotism and rationalism. This dominant middle class seriously examined the Indian

society and tried their best to remove all ills from it. The revolution in India was also supported by the advent of Christian missionaries since the beginning of the 19th century. These Christian missionaries promoted literacy in many parts of India and a large amount of development work was taken up by them. Their faith was an attraction to some sections of the people of India.

The missionaries worked to condemn Hinduism through their functioning and satire. This ignited strong fundamental and rational responses. On one hand, those who were traditional and old-fashioned were stubborn in their opposition towards Christianity and on the other; the liberals carried on with their introspection and worked to remove the social ills from their own religion.

Social and cultural enlightenment was also stimulated by the popularity and growth of western education. K.M. Panikar emphasized that English, introduced as a language, promoted a feeling of unity throughout the country, in the absence of which India would have been divided into as many parts as there are languages in India. According to Naoroji, 'The introduction of English education with its great, noble, elevating and civilizing literature and advanced science will forever remain a monument of good work done in India.' A.R. Desai quotes, 'the study of the English language unfolded the treasures of the democratic and nationalistic thought crystallized in precious scientific works.'

Young men, who had received their education in English, were critical about every Hindu tradition and custom. They even resorted to the use of intoxicating drinks to exhibit a feeling of modernism. However, they were rational in their examination of every aspect of life. This was instrumental in ushering in modernization. The British government zealously established many types of reforms such as removal of caste inequalities and prejudice towards women in Indian society. It caused the forces of development within India to become active. Media, news tabloids and literary works also played important roles in the spread of nationalism. The vivacious culture of India also supported the emergence and progress of Renaissance. India responded positively to this historical crisis.

When the influence of the West impacted India, the people were happy to accept the positive aspects of the western culture and got used to the changing situation. Hence, it can be concluded that many forces together resulted in a new evolution that led to the Renaissance in Indian way of thinking. This spirit of the Renaissance that was based on logical thoughts, led to development of a desire to reform.

The socio-cultural revolution of the 19th century played an important role in the Renaissance, in the history and culture of India. It modernized the history of India by ushering a flood of new ideas in an era of revolution within society, politics, economy, religion and culture. Socio-cultural evolution also transformed the definition of religion. Religious beliefs were scrutinized rationally. This rationalism brought about reforms with in Hinduism and worked to eliminate vices from it. It strengthened religion and prepared it to face the challenges of time. The essence of reformed religious thought comprised tolerance, universal brotherhood, adjustment and introspection. Social lifestyle was also subjected to revolutionary changes. A large number of medieval customs were discarded by the society itself. There was absolutely no support for social superstitions. A campaign was led by socio-cultural reformers against caste system, child marriage, female infanticide and several other social ills. A foundation was laid which established a base to uplift the downtrodden, fought for the cause of equality and campaigned for the freedom of women from social slavery. The socio-cultural awakening caused revival of a profound liking for India's glorious past. The people were filled with pride and

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ceased to remain lethargic and inactive. The spread of western education worked as a stimulus to give rise to a creative way of thinking and stirred ideals to inspire works of literary and artistic nature.

The politics of 19th century India was also impacted by socio-cultural awakening. Strong patriotic feelings were invoked in the minds of the Indian youths by the philosophies of learned saints and intellectuals. This played a significant role in the growth of nationalism and struggle for freedom. N.S. Bose fittingly says, 'The growth of political consciousness leading to the beginning of the national movement for independence was one of the striking trends of the Indian awakening. The remarkable transformation in the life and thought of the people, a new era of social, religious and educational reforms ushered in by great men of the age naturally accelerated the growth of Indian nationhood.' It was indeed true that the socio-cultural awakening of 19th century ignited a revolution in India and was a significant landmark in the birth of modern age.

1.3 EMERGENCE OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

Before the advent of the process of colonization of India through both political and armed means, the question of capitalism did not really rise. Though there were traders in India, there was no 'bourgeoisie' or 'middle class', as a distinct unit of society. It has been argued by many historians that the empire and the conditions of colonial rule helped in the creation of a capitalist society and was the agent of change in society.

While studying this phenomenon, it must be understood that the concept of the middle class actually arose due to certain conditions in European history. There were many constituents of this so-called middle class which included:

- Artists and others engaged in the performing arts
- Intellectuals, novelists, writers and
- Industrial bourgeoisie (those engaged in trade and manufacture)

While this term was not used by many Europeans for the local population, Viceroy Dufferin saw them as, 'certain number of leading natives who were well-meaning, intelligent and patriotic.'

This was a tacit agreement that there were a number of people, perhaps a minority, who were present. However, many did not ascribe to this thought and as late as 1893, Aurobindo Ghosh, an Indian freedom fighter and philosopher, described this group as the 'new middle class' which comprised traders, graduates, officials, doctors, barristers and journalists. Aurobindo Ghosh was of the view that they were not representatives of India in totality. However, this term has since gained wide acceptance while referring to such a class of people based on professional academics and intellect. In India, the term 'middle class' is applied to various groups that have varying scope of social standing and experience. It is a class neither in just the economic nor Marxist sense of the term. It comes with gender, caste and religious dimensions. This class also has a stamp of education which is colonial and western. To top it all, this group aspires to take on the leadership of India. It has displayed a 'cultural entrepreneurship' that has enabled it to define a culture which others would like to emulate to become socially mobile in the upward direction. While this concept of the middle class can be seen in the light of the advancement caused by colonial rule, can one assume that such a group existed for hundreds of years prior to British rule in India? This question becomes important when we consider the recent historiographical

Check Your Progress

1. What primarily contributed to the socio-cultural evolution of the 19th century?
2. What promoted the growth of nationalism in India?

developments that investigate India's potential indigenous modernity prior to the coming of colonialism.

Chris Bayly, a British historian, has said that:

The group of people comprising Hindustani-writing literati, Indo-Islamic notables, religious leaders, and officers of the state participated in public debates about rights, duties and good kingship. This group of elect people, who were also joined by common people from time to time as participants in common public discussions, can be considered as constituting a public sphere in precolonial India. They also represented the 'opinion of the locality' to the authorities.

Now the question arises as to whether there was any continuity between the 'group of people described by Bayly' in India before the colonial period and the 'middle class' of the colonial period. Intuition tells us that any such continuity should not be present. During the colonial period, there was a huge disconnect between the logic of the Indian society and the logic of the ruling state. The patronage given to this class by the traditional ruling elite disintegrated. This included the disuse of the traditional Indian languages like Persian and Urdu which were slowly replaced by English. The education system was changed. There was a shift from the earlier perception of the so-called middle class and a realignment with the new thought processes.

The essays of Dipesh Chakrabarty, Tanika Sarkar and Partha Chatterjee more or less seem to display a commonality of perspective. Based on this perspective, the middle class appears to be formed of educated elite, a group between the colonial rulers and the semi-literate or illiterate rural majority.

According to this perspective:

- The social universe of the colonial India was or may be viewed as a split of a private/spiritual and a public/material domain.
- Indians had no participation or equality as far as the public domain was concerned.
- Indians moved to the private domain to stress the sovereignty of the rising concept of nation.
- Indians defied all interference by the colonial power in their private domain.
- Indians professed that the Indian culture was superior to the western culture. They used this validity and uniqueness as the foundation for Indian nationalism
- The women of India have the task of acting as custodians of Indian culture.

According to B.B Misra, an Indian historian, the term middle class mainly refers to civil servants, salaried executives, proprietors of modern trading firms and merchants and such where the criteria are income and income source.

Jawaharlal Nehru said that the middle class had no capacity to perform either manual or technical work. They had been uprooted from their original culture, remained conservative socially, and were modern only in outlook, that too superficially. As can be noted from above, it seems quite possible that in a loosely defined manner, there was a presence of components of the middle class in India and as such the semblance of or the roots of a capitalist society.

One feature of commercial capitalism which needs to be looked at is the effect of monetization affecting India. This was connected with commercialization of both agrarian

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and urban economy, and the development of markets through distortion caused by trade and increasing European intervention in Indian markets. This affected both trade and manufacture. This was impacted because of the colonial occupation creating political monopoly and control over the taxation system to systematically benefit first the East India Company and then the British government directly. This helped to destroy competition and drive prices downwards in an increasingly competitive world caused by the effects of the Industrial revolution. The corollary was that until the mid-nineteenth century, India's integration into a colonial empire was marked by a broad-based process of under development of which deindustrialization was merely a part, and included the process of relative demonetization.

1.4 ROLE OF LITERATURE AND PRESS

The Indian Press had an important role to play in developing nationalism among the citizens of the country. Indian nationalists used the press as a powerful media to spread the message of nationalism. They also used the press to diffuse the spirit of patriotism and political ideas. The press was highly successful in mobilizing public opinion and promoting nationalism. Vernacular came to the rescue and newspapers and dailies such as *Amrit Bazar Patrika*, *Samachar Darpan* was instrumental in stimulating the growth of nationalism. The dailies blatantly exposed the fallacies of the foreign rule. In the words of B.B. Majumdar, 'Western education and the Indian press were the two of the most important agencies destined to infuse into the people of India the spirit of national unity and to inspire them to achieve independence without bloodshed.' Indian literature produced during this time was highly nationalistic and was thus responsible for creating a sense of national consciousness. The works of prominent Indian writers such as Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya and Rabindranath Tagore in Bengali, Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar in Marathi, Subramanyam Bharati in Tamil and others were instrumental in instilling a spirit of nationalism in the minds of the common people.

1.5 ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

Economic history of India is a late discipline. It started with critiques of imperialism and colonialism in the second half of the 19th century. In the 1850s, Karl Marx wrote a series of articles on the economic impact of colonialism. He further developed his critiques in *Capital* in the 1860s. Among the Indian writers, Mahadev Govind Ranade published his essays on economy less as a critique of colonialism than as a blueprint for development of the Indian economy. The most scathing attack on colonialism was Dadabhai Naoroji's *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* in which he argues that India's poverty was mainly due to the drain of wealth by the British government through tribute and home charges. R. C. Dutt, the first Indian ICS, published his *Economic History of British India*. Other economists like GB Joshi and Prithwis Chandra Ray, more or less on these lines, wrote the history of Indian economy in the British period.

A new dimension to the study of Indian economy opened up at the international level in the Comintern. M. N. Ray as the sole Indian representative in the Comintern contributed to the economic policy discussion in the organization, the value of which was recognized even by Lenin. A number of Soviet scholars joined a discussion on the impact of colonialism on India and the prospect of economic growth of India. A great debate

Check Your Progress

3. In the Indian context, what do you understand by the term 'middle class'?
4. India's integration into a colonial empire was marked by a broad-based process of development of which industrialization was merely a part. (True/False)
5. Name two daily newspapers that helped in promoting nationalism in India.
6. Name two writers whose writings contributed to nationalism in India.

raged on the role of the Indian bourgeoisie. These discussions governed the Communist movement in India even after the dissolution of the Comintern in 1945. After Independence, a professional discipline of economic history developed.

One of the earliest western writers Morris D Morris centered his argument of underdevelopment of independent India on her social structure. He was criticized by BR Tomlinson who accused Morris of a kind of circular logic and over simplification as if 'Indian industrial growth was retarded because she faces the distressing paradox, the high cost of being poor; while the most easily identifiable factor that restricted industry was shortage of capital. Irfan Habib questioned Morris's failure to address issues like de-industrialization in the 19th century or 'deleterious effects of currency manipulation by British interests'.

Indian scholars, thereafter, started working on industrial history, labour history, agrarian history, capital market and class contradiction. Habib is the foremost historian writing extensively on agrarian India. A K Bagchi worked on Private Investment in India. Deindustrialization under British rule was a major focus of economic historians. Morris D Morris, Dipesh Chakrabaty and Ranajit Dasgupta contributed immensely to labour history. The stage of economic development encompassing agriculture and industry are the major point of contention among Indian economists.

In the 1970s, Ranajit Guha set up a new school of historiography with his study of East India Company's role in India, namely the subaltern school. Gradually economists started probing tribal economy, environment and women's questions suggesting that the colonial period displayed a disjuncture from the pre-colonial period. Researches in the 1990s made a shift from looking at the colonial policies, such as, revenue to agro-ecological conditions, market conditions and socio-cultural factors to determine the agrarian relations and divisions within the peasantry. Though studies on the larger administrative policies continued, focus was shifted towards select problematic areas like irrigation (M. Mufakharul), jute economy of Bengal (Omkar Goswami), rural credit market (Shahi Amin) and agrarian relations in Bengal (Sugata Bose). Some historians, however, took a revisionist position in respect to the question of de-industrialization. A leading voice in this category is that of Tirthankar Roy.

1.5.1 Nationalism and Economic History

M. G. Ranade is considered the pioneer of Indian nationalist economics. A teacher of economics, Ranade wrote mostly on poverty. He considered it a legacy of the pre-colonial India and said the heightened awareness towards this endemic was a product of the British rule. Poverty, he said, was a byproduct of India's overdependence on agriculture. He, however, made no extravagant claim for the past nor did he put the blame for all ills entirely on foreign rule. He pointed out that traditionally the economy of the country did not represent a balanced growth. Agriculture was not supported by industries or the manufactures or distributors of the products, a collective interplay of all sections of the economy. Also, the fact that machine-made imported goods were cheaper than the domestic handicraft products was a cause of economic decline. Ranade was of the opinion that even if the Government of India had not helped the process in any way, British merchants and manufacturers would eventually have asserted their predominance in the Indian market. But what led to a rapid disintegration of the domestic economy was the government's support of the British interest. Ranade's approach has been termed as a balanced growth argument. Basing his argument on the lines of German economist Friedrich List, Ranade defines economic development as the full and all-round

development of the productive powers of society. In his initial writings, he often highlighted the government's failure to correct the imbalances in the economy through its policies. He argued the government was more focused on exporting raw materials and improving channels of communication while ignoring its own industrial needs. 'This dependency has come to be regarded as a plantation, growing raw produce to be shipped by British agents in British ships, to be worked into fabrics by British skill and capital, and to be re-exported to the dependency by British merchants to their corresponding British firms in India and elsewhere.'

Again borrowing from List, Ranade talks of stages of growth, typically an economy should pass through. He applies these conditions to the Indian situation to gradually move from an agricultural and handicraft economy to agriculture along with manufacture and commerce. It was Ranade's understanding of economic development as a historical process that inspired his vision of India's industrialization. He wanted India to be industrialised but was aware that it would not be an easy task. Ranade was one among the modern historians who advocated the government's assistance with labour migration as a means of economics development. He believed migration would relieve the pressure of population on the land. However, due to the immense dependency on land, even a low rate of population growth would have an adverse impact on the economy. Hence, he advocated emigration as he believed it would not only lessen the pressure on land, but indirectly benefit the economy.

Interestingly, though Ranade wanted more government support in industrializing India, he did not favour tariff protection. He argued the state could only support the industrial moves, but the maximum effort should come from organized private support. From this we cannot conclude that Ranade was an enthusiast of laissez-faire or socialism. He was aware of the obstacle Indian would face in becoming an industrial country. Ranade's approach to economic policy was guided by an over-riding objective: the development of productive capacity.

Contemporary historians as well as others enthusiastically received Ranade's push for industrial development they did not support his idea of capitalist development in agriculture. GV Joshi, a follower of Ranade, favoured small peasant farming, which was to be maintained by vigorous tenancy legislation, cheap credit, and a low land tax. Such a policy required just the kind of continuing, long-run, legal and financial government intervention in agricultural activity which Ranade had criticised. He was highly critical of the investments in railways and wrote the same capital could have been used elsewhere. In fact, railway investment was seen as a substitute for investment in industry.

R. C. Dutt

A contemporary of Ranade, Dutt, too, was concerned with poverty. He held the British policies responsible for recurring famines, low productivity and decay of domestic industry in India. He admitted that shortage of rainfall led to famines but blamed the government for lack of resources to the peasants. He took a different route from that of Ranade and claimed the emergence of industry not only destroyed the domestic cottage industry but also led to a decline in agricultural productivity and increased the pressure on land. Oppressive taxation policies and insensitive administrative policies have aggravated the degradable situation of the peasants. According to him, the low standard of living of people was due to the high density of population, low agricultural prices, the land tenure system and the agrarian structure. Dutt wrote, 'While British political economists professed the principles of free trade from the latter end of the eighteenth century, the British

nation declined to adopt them till they had crushed the manufacturing power of India. In India the manufacturing power of the people was stamped out by protection against her industries, and then free trade was forced on her so as to prevent a revival.' He said Indians paid 40 per cent more tax than the taxpayers of Great Britain and Ireland.

To check poverty, Dutt suggested two steps. The first was to revive the cottage industry to remove unemployment and underemployment outside cities. He also wanted the government to extend the irrigation facilities to decrease dependency on monsoon. Second, he wanted the government to be economical in its expenditure and lower the rate of interest on public debt. Dutt's aim was to curb the flow of wealth outside India.

Dutt's book, *Economic History of India*, is considered to be the most important historical work by a nationalist historian. It gives an authoritative and important account of socio-economic conditions of the masses under the colonial rulers. Like Ranade, he believed that political and economic policies were complementary to each other.

Bipan Chandra

Bipan Chandra has presented his view that the capitalist nature of the Indian economy was acquired by the British and their ways of the capitalist economy. Although there was distinction between the rich and the poor even before the coming of the British, money was not the most powerful commodity in the society. So, although there were numerous aspects that were of fascinating interest during the British rule of India, Bipan Chandra points out that the liberation movement, that was of course the most fascinating feature of the British period, and the change of the economic structure of the Indian society were the two most intriguing aspects during those times.

Bipan Chandra feels that the change of economic structure experienced by India during the British reign was a part of the change that was experienced worldwide under the European occupation of various colonies. He was of the opinion that the history of capitalism shows that it was not an independent move of any colony and that capitalism has always affected nations in a cluster. Bipan observed that although the Indian nation was deemed to be a democratic nation after independence, it was not a complete democratic structure as pure democracy is not possible under a capitalist environment. The methods of production and trade went through drastic changes after the British colonization.

Bipan Chandra also points out that the agrarianism and its rise was also something that happened during the British period. This was because of the fact that although the feudal structure still existed even during the times of the Mughals, the exploitation of the farmers was not so drastic. The British came to India with a frame of mind that was capitalistic to its core and they wanted to turn the traditional agricultural system in India into a capitalist agricultural system.

1.5.2 Influence of Marx

In the 1940s and 1950s, economists had lost interest in studying Indian economic history, and the focus had shifted to political history. But Marxists ideas gave a new spur to the research, and we see new interpretations after Independence. In the 1950s, N K Sinha wrote three volumes on economic history of Bengal. Sumit Sarkar interpreted this change in historical sensibilities as something that has emerged from the 'conjuncture of the 1950s and 1960s, marked by a strong and apparently growing Left presence in Indian political and intellectual life... It was not mainstream British or American historiography, not even writings on South Asian themes, but a journal like *Past and Present*, the 'transition

debate', and the work of historians like Hill, Hobsbawm and Thompson . . . that appeared most stimulating to Indian scholars exploring new ways of looking at history.'

As said earlier, Marxists ideologies opened up a whole new dimension of history writing, including economic history. Historian and economists now dealt with those aspects which were never discussed earlier. Issues such as demography, domestic trade, banking and currency were researched. In fact, Marxists ideologies influenced study of ancient and medieval history. According to Sarkar, studies on economic history saw major advancement. Agriculture, industrialization, and de-industrialization were some of the topics of discussion under the Marxist purview. Amiya Bagchi's study of manufacturing employment in nineteenth-century Bihar may be the most important modern study of de-industrialization and sparked a renewed discussion and debate which drew participants from India as well as around the world. His main thesis of his work on Private Investment of India was that 'before the First World it was the governmental policy of free trade, and after the war it was the general depression in the capitalist system combined with the halting and piecemeal policy of tariff protection adopted by the Government of India, that limited the rate of investment in modern industry.' With this argument, Bagchi questioned all the thinkers who had debated that lack of development and slow growth of India was due to a shortage of capital and entrepreneurship.

Trithankar Roy

A professor at the London School of Economics, Roy based his arguments on continuity from colonial to post colonial period. According to him, focusing at colonialism as the driver of India's economic history fails to capture the strings of continuity arising from the economic structure and social conditions. To him, the production process arising out of imperial demands led to economic growth based on labour-intensive production and natural resources. He saw the drawback in the dearth of public and private investments, lack of literacy, social inequalities and high population growth. Roy believes Independence did not bring a departure to these conditions, which, in fact, continued till 1990s. India shut itself from participating in the global economy and missed the economic boom the world economies experienced. After liberalization when India opened its gates to the world activities, the manufacturers were the most to benefit, who were intensive in semi-skilled labour. This he terms was 'welcome reversion to the colonial pattern of growth'.

Giving statistical proof, Roy shows that agriculture remained the mainstay of India's economy even after 50 years of Independence and a major contributor to the GDP (gross domestic product). He further argued there was no significant change in the workforce today compared to that a century ago. He argues that 'India was more open economy in the colonial period relative both to the eighteenth century and to the first 40 years of its Independence. International flows of income and capital were also relatively larger in the colonial period than before or after'.

He further argued that 'money supply in colonial India was mainly influenced by the balance of payments. The primary objective of monetary policy was to stabilize the exchange rate. Stabilization of prices and outputs was meant to happen automatically. However, when Indian interests and Britain's interests came in conflict, stabilization in Britain's external account was usually in the minds of those who decided Indian affairs'.

For Roy, development and underdevelopment were not two sides of the same coin rather Britain and India in the 19th century were two different coins, influenced by

global factors and by mutual interaction, but also by their differences. He argued that it would not be correct to think that the two countries would have taken the development path the same way, albeit for colonialism in India. He thought it was implausible.

In *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Volume II, introduction, Sabyasachi Bhattacharya has raised doubts on whether Roy's theory of reordering of craft and production in the twentieth century and perhaps a revival can be extrapolated into the colonial period in general. Though Roy has given several cases studies of leather, brass carpet making and so on, Bhattacharya says the 'changing organization of production and increasing subordination of the craftsmen fail to get sufficient attention' in his essays.

1.5.3 Indian Economy in the Mid-eighteenth Century

The period between the 18th century and the middle of the 20th century saw the economy of India subjugated to the needs of the British empire and the various pockets of European influence scattered along the coastline of India. Along with agricultural resources, luxury trade became an important part of the economy. This was in close comparison with the Marxist statements of the capitalist elites using the poor, where the poor barely met their ends and the affluent class had much more than they needed.

The early 18th century (the period from 1707 onwards) saw a decline of the Mughal empire. The decline became rapid under the rule of Farrukhsiyar who ruled between 1713 and 1719. It was during his reign in 1717 that the British were allowed to trade in Bengal without any duties. This period saw the rise of the Maratha empire. Besides the Marathas, the large territories under various Nawabs were almost totally independent only giving titular homage to the Mughal emperor. Despite the decline of the Mughal empire, the tax administration was almost intact. It is said that in 1750, the Indian economy was almost as big as that of the Chinese economy which was by then the largest economy in the world. This happened after Robert Clive's victory over the Nawab of Bengal in the Battle of Plassey. The battle established the Company rule in Bengal which expanded over much of India for the next hundred years. This allowed the British East India Company the right to collect taxes or *diwani*. This was followed by the Battle of Buxar in 1764 which further strengthened the Company's influence over a larger area in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. The growth steadily continued after the victories in the Anglo-Mysore wars between 1766 and 1799; and the Anglo-Maratha wars between 1772 and 1818. Victories in these wars gave the East India Company virtual control over most India south of the Sutlej. The British followed a two pronged policy of expansion. The first comprised outright annexation of Indian states. The second form of expansion was through the form of alliances with princely states. This enabled the British to extend their influence and increase their revenue without the burden of a direct cost of administering the areas or the political cost of subjugating entire local populations.

Under this policy the East India Company began tax administration over an empire spread over 250 million acres. It is reported that the annual revenue was of the order of £111 million by 1800. Most of this revenue was diverted to assist the British Crown during the Napoleonic wars.

Economic impact of British imperialism

Whether the British rule had a great impact on the Indian economy has been bitterly debated by historians and even civil servants and parliamentarians. British politician Edmund Burke was one of the first to claim that Warren Hastings of the East India Company was responsible for the 'ruination' of the Indian economy and society.

Among the Indian historians this has been a common theme. The 18th century British rule laid the groundwork for the destruction of the traditional Indian economy. Such was the effect of inordinately high taxes that it depleted the food stocks of the peasants and resulted in the famine of 1770, which wiped out more than one third of the population of Bengal.

Dadabhai Naoroji was one of the first to propound the 'economic drain theory'. This theory essentially laid the ground for how the British rule and policies were structured in a manner so that there was a systematic drain of wealth from India to the coffers of the British.

P. J. Marshall, another British historian has taken a contrary view. His point of view is that the British generally continued with the same model of tax collection. His contention is that the British relied on the regional rulers and hence if there was a breakdown of the economy, it was more to do with the inherent inability of the local rulers to maintain prosperity.

1.5.4 Rural and Urban Economy — The Transition

It can be said that India in the 18th century saw two phases — one which was ending and the other that was about to begin in the mid-18th century. The East India Company was a trading entity which transformed into a power centre by the end of the century through wars and consolidating areas under its control. This transition brought in a change in the nature of the Indian economy. The Indian economy primarily catered to domestic demand and was more of a rural nature. The arrival of the European power changed this nature and production began on large-scale, mainly for export. It was still the cottage industry that fed to the domestic demand.

Modern industry (or large-scale industry) involved use of machinery, regulation and factories subject to some form of modern managerial practices. By contrast, in traditional industrial firms, machinery, size, regulation and hierarchical management played no significant role. Both traditional and modern industry shared one feature: intensive use of labour and/or locally available raw materials.

ACTIVITY

Search on the Internet and draw a comparative chart stating the difference in the economic conditions of India during the reign of Babur, Humayun and Akbar.

DID YOU KNOW

Akbar had a liberal attitude towards all religions. This liberal attitude also helped him a lot in the expansion of his territory. He laid the foundation of a new religion '*Din-e-Illahi*.' Although *Din-e-Illahi* was not a religion in the true sense of the term since it didn't have any holy-book or formal base. He founded this religion to create a unified social order which could transcend the difference based on religion. *Din-e-Illahi* was based on the basic principles of the major religions such as Hinduism, Islam and Parsi faith.

1.6 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- In India, during the 18th century, there were clashes, crises, calamities and problems between various groups of people. Uncertainties in the political scenario created hindrances in the evolution of Indian culture. The British made use of this scenario to fulfill their vested interests and deeply influenced the lifestyle and culture of India.
- Bipan Chandra quotes, 'Thoughtful Indians began to look for the strength and weakness of their society and for ways and means of removing the weaknesses. While a large number of Indians refused to come to terms with the West and still put their faith in traditional Indian ideas and institutions, others gradually came to hold the elements of modern western thought that had to be imbedded for the regeneration of their society. They were impressed in particular by modern science and doctrines of reason and Humanism. While differing on the nature and extent of reforms, nearly all 19th century intellectuals shared the conviction that social and religious reforms were urgently needed.'
- The impact of British rule on the economic conditions and society of India was a factor that primarily contributed to the socio-cultural evolution of the 19th century. The imperialism of the British united the people of India politically and administratively. A uniform legal system and methods of communication were launched by the British rulers.
- When the influence of the West impacted India, the people were happy to accept the positive aspects of the western culture and got used to the changing situation. Hence, it can be concluded that many forces together resulted in a new evolution that led to the Renaissance in Indian way of thinking. This spirit of the Renaissance that was based on logical thoughts, led to development of a desire to reform.
- The Socio-cultural revolution of the 19th century played an important role in the Renaissance, in the history and culture of India. It modernized the history of India by ushering a flood of new ideas in an era of revolution within society, politics, economy, religion and culture. Socio-cultural evolution also transformed the definition of religion.
- The concept of the middle class actually arose due to certain conditions in European history. There were many constituents of this so-called middle class which included: (i) Artists and others engaged in the performing arts (ii) Intellectuals, novelists, writers and iii. Industrial bourgeoisie (those engaged in trade and manufacture).
- According to B.B Misra, an Indian historian, the term middle class mainly refers to civil servants, salaried executives, proprietors of modern trading firms and merchants and such, with the first two included where the criteria are income and income source.
- The Indian Press had an important role to play in developing nationalism among the citizens of the country. Indian nationalists used the press as a powerful media to spread the message of nationalism. They also used the press to diffuse the spirit of patriotism and political ideas.

- The works of prominent Indian writers such as Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya and Rabindranath Tagore in Bengali, Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar in Marathi, Subramanyam Bharati in Tamil and others were instrumental in instilling a spirit of nationalism in the minds of the common people.
- Marxists ideologies opened up a whole new dimension of history writing, including economic history. Historians and economists now dealt with issues such as demography, domestic trade, banking and currency.
- The period between the 18th century and the middle of the 20th century saw the economy of India subjugated to the needs of the British empire and the various pockets of European influence scattered along the coastline of India.

1.7 KEY TERMS

- **Agrarian:** Of or relating to cultivated land or the cultivation of land
- **Capitalism:** An economic and political system in which a country's trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit
- **Monetization:** Establishing something (e.g. gold or silver) as the legal tender of a country
- **Nationalism:** Patriotic feeling, principles, or efforts
- **Renaissance:** Revival

1.8 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. The impact of British rule on the economic conditions and society of India was a factor that primarily contributed to the socio-cultural evolution of the 19th century.
2. The growth of nationalism was motivated by the centralization of British rule in India.
3. In India, the term 'middle class' is applied to various groups that have varying scope of social standing and experience.
4. False
5. *Amrit Bazar Patrika* and *Samachar Darpan*
6. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya and Rabindranath Tagore
7. To check poverty, Dutt suggested two steps. The first was to revive the cottage industry to remove unemployment and underemployment outside cities. He also wanted the government to extend the irrigation facilities to decrease dependency on monsoon. Second, he wanted the government to be economical in its expenditure and lower the rate of interest on public debt. Dutt's aim was to curb the flow of wealth outside India.
8. A professor at the London School of Economics, Roy based his arguments on continuity from colonial to post colonial period.
9. The battle established the Company rule in Bengal which expanded over much of India for the next hundred years. This allowed the British East India Company the right to collect taxes or diwani.

1.9 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What triggered the intellectual movement in India?
2. List the main constituents of the middle class.
3. Who were the eminent personalities linked to the nationalist movement through their writings?
4. What was Bipan Chandra's view on economic nationalism?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe in detail the intellectual movement in India.
2. Write a short note on the emergence of the middle class in India.
3. Explain the role of literature and press in Indian nationalism.
4. What do you understand by economic nationalism? Discuss in detail.

1.10 FURTHER READING

- Byres, T.J., Harbhans Mukhia. 1985. *Feudalism and Non-European Societies*. New Delhi: Routledge Publishers.
- S. Cromwell, Crawford. 1987. *Ram Mohan Roy: Social, Political and Religious Reform in 19th Century India*. US: Paragon House.
- Habib, Irfan. 2001. *Economic History of Medieval India: A Survey*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors.

UNIT 2 EMERGENCE OF NATIONALISM - II

Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
 - 2.1 Unit Objectives
 - 2.2 The Nationalistic Awareness
 - 2.2.1 Formation of Political Associations (upto 1885)
 - 2.3 Formation of the Indian National Congress
 - 2.3.1 Early Nationalists and their Programmes
 - 2.4 Summary
 - 2.5 Key Terms
 - 2.6 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
 - 2.7 Questions and Exercises
 - 2.8 Further Reading
-

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The earlier reformers understood that colonization was the root cause to India's poverty and economic backwardness. The destruction of the rural and local self-sufficient economy and modern trade practices and setting up of factories on an all-India scale had increasingly made India's economic life a single whole and interlinked the economic fate of people living in different parts of the country. Furthermore, the introduction of the railways, telegraph and unified postal systems had brought the different parts of the country together and promoted mutual contact among the people, especially among the leaders. As a result of the spread of modern western education and thought during the 19th century, a large number of Indians imbibed a modern rational, secular, democratic and nationalist political outlook. The spread and popularity of the English language helped nationalist leaders of different linguistic regions to communicate with each other.

This unit continues discussion on the emergence of nationalism. It focuses on the predecessors of the Indian National Congress, the foundation of the Indian National Congress and the programmes and policies of early nationalists.

2.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the early reformers of India
 - Describe the foundation of Indian National Congress
 - Explain the programmes and policies of the early nationalists
-

2.2 THE NATIONALISTIC AWARENESS

Although unique to the modern world, the growth of nationalism as a phenomenon can be traced to the Middle Ages. By the Middle Ages, nation states had begun to be formed with definite boundaries. These nation states had a definite political system and a uniform

law for the people inhabiting the state. People lived under the same political, social and economic system and shared common aspirations. The middle class had a significant role to play in the formation of the nation-states. In European countries like Italy and Germany, nationalism as a political ideologue emerged only in the nineteenth century. The French Revolution of 1789 ingrained the idea of nationalism and nation state. Since the nineteenth century, whenever there has been a call for a new sovereign state, violence has made its appearance. Two forces were always at work—nationalism and democracy. India as a nation was no exception to this rule. The mid-nineteenth century saw the growth of nationalism in India. Colonial rule, destruction of the old social and political order, rise of a new social class—all contributed to the development of nationalism in India. The religious and social movements also contributed to the growth of nationalism.

During this period, reform movements were largely being swayed by two important intellectual principles — rationalism and religious universalism. A rational secular outlook was replacing blind faith that had crept into tradition and custom. Universalism was not purely philosophy. It affected political and social outlook till religious particularism took root in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The main objectives of this movement were liberal ideas, national unity, and progress. These could be achieved by removing the backward elements in traditional culture as well as the repressive elements in colonial culture and ideology. Jettisoning casteism and idolatry had to be done alongside an emphasis on reviving the vernacular languages. The plan included restoring the indigenous education system by restoring the ancient arts and medicine and reconstructing traditional Indian knowledge. The socio-religious movements were an essential part of the growing nationalist consciousness. At this point it was important to make Indians feel proud of being Indian i.e. proud of their culture and heritage. This movement succeeded in doing that. The colonial cultural hegemonization process was stopped in its tracks.

In 1857, the British completed hundred years of stay in India since the war of Plassey. During this time the Indian rulers were unhappy for the loss of former glory and the peasants were discontent at having been reduced to serfs. The traditional crafts men and artisans were robbed of their livelihoods. The colonial powers had full control over trade, commerce, and industries. This led to a steady outflow of India's wealth. This period saw a lot of aggressiveness from the British government in consolidating the princely states and strengthening the power of the colonial rulers. Dalhousie was responsible for the rising discontent among native states. Lord Canning, who succeeded him shortly before the revolt, could read the writing on the wall and said grimly, 'We must not forget that in the sky of India, serene as it is, a small cloud may arise, at first no bigger than a man's hand, but which, growing larger and larger, may at last threaten to burst and overwhelm us with ruin'.

Renaissance in India has been a great causal factor in the rise of modern Indian nationalism. It may also be regarded as an attempt on the part of scores of cultural factors to revive and reassert them: a sort of defensive mechanism against the impact of an alien political power in the country. A new humanist and cosmopolitan interpretation began to prevail upon the old belief. A radical trend emerged with representatives like Anantaranga Pillai, Abu Talib, Henry Vivian Derozio, and Raja Rammohan Roy.

There were a number of causes for the emergence of Indian nationalism. Some of these causes are as follows:

- (i) **British imperialism:** It facilitated in uniting Indians as during the British rule, the whole country came under one sovereign power. Before the arrival of the

British, South India was separated from the rest of the country except for short intervals.

- (ii) **Role of transport and communication:** The advancement in the field of transportation and communication helped in accelerating the pace of the movement as leaders of the country were able to reach out to all Indians. The leaders were able to meet one another frequently and spread their ideas to parts of the country.
- (iii) **Administrative unification of india:** During the British rule, the administrative system was highly centralized. The British used modern administrative system to unify the whole country administratively. After the chaotic condition in the 18th century, due to waging of wars by European companies, the British rulers made efforts to establish peace and unified the country through their administrative system.
- (iv) **Influence of India's past:** Many European scholars such as Max Muller, Monier Williams, Roth, and Sassoon conducted historical researches on ancient Indian history. According to them, India had a glorious past and had a rich cultural heritage. These scholars appreciated the Vedas and Upanishads to a great extent. They also said that Indo-Aryans are from the same ethnic group to which Europeans belong. These studies and researches boosted the morale of Indians and instilled the spirit of nationalism and patriotism in them.
- (v) **Modern western thought and education:** Sir Charles E. Trevelyan, T.B. Macaulay and Lord William Bentick introduced English as a medium of instruction in the education system of the country. The introduction of English language was aimed at filling some clerical posts at the administrative level. However, it exposed the Indians to liberal and radical European thought. The outlook of European writers aroused the spirit of nationalism in Indians. Indians also learnt the ideals of secularism and democracy from these writers. Thus, English language became an important cause of Indian nationalism.
- (vi) **Impact of socio-religious reform movements:** Some of the prominent social and religious reformers of this period were Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Debendra Nath Tagore, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, and Vivekanand. These reformers influenced common people to a great extent.

When reformers learnt about western philosophy, ideals and science, they started examining the social practices, customs and beliefs of India in the light of western knowledge. These ideas gave rise to various social and religious reform movements like the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Theosophical Society, Ramakrishna Mission and many other movements for the reformation of Muslim, Sikh and Parsi societies.

These movements were aimed at reformation and re-organization of society. Therefore, these movements promoted the ideas of equality, liberalism and enlightenment, and attacked idol worship, superstitions, caste system, untouchability and hereditary priesthood. In this way, reform movements also helped in developing the spirit of nationalism and patriotism.

- (vii) **Influence of contemporary European movements:** Contemporary strong currents of nationalist ideas, which pervaded the whole of Europe and South America also stimulated Indian nationalism. The American Revolution of 1776

infused strong aspirations for liberation and nationalism. In Europe, the national liberation movements of Greece and Italy in general and of Ireland in particular encouraged Indians to fight for their independence. Indians were also greatly inspired by the French Revolution. We find Surendranath Banerji delivering lectures on Joseph Mazzini and the 'Young Italy' Movement organized by him. Lajpat Rai often referred to the campaigns of Garibaldi and the activities of Carbonaris in his speeches and writings.

- (viii) **Racialism:** Indians were discriminated and were considered inferior. They were not allowed to share train compartment with the British. They were humiliated by the British. The law and police system of the British was partial towards Englishmen. Whenever, an English person was involved in a dispute with an Indian, the court used to favour the White. Indians were not allowed to enter a number of public places. Thus, the contempt of the British towards Indians made them come together to fight against the British.
- (ix) **Economic exploitation:** The British destroyed the local self-sufficient economy of India and introduced modern trade and industry. Indians realized that they have been exploited by the British. Under British rule, the economic system of India was made in such a way that it befitted the Englishmen.

The interest and welfare of Indians was not kept in mind. The value of Indian rupee in terms of English pound was kept less to promote import from England and discourage export from India. Indian agriculture was encouraged to produce raw materials for the industries of England. This factor made Indians dependent on England for finished goods. Later free trade policy was introduced to help the British industrialists in exporting goods to India without any hassles. All these factors led to increase in public debt.

The extravagant civil and military administration, the denial of high posts to Indians, the ever-mounting 'Home Charges', and the continuous drain of wealth from India resulted in stagnation of Indian economy. Periodical famines became a common feature of Indian economic life. During the second half of the 19th century, 24 famines occurred in various parts of India taking an estimated toll of 28 million lives. What is worse is that even during the famine times, export of food grains from India continued. The acknowledged high priest of the 'Drain theory' was Dadabhai Naoroji. Indian nationalists like Romesh Chandra Dutt, G.K. Gokhale, Justice Ranade, K.T. Telang etc., developed the 'theory of increasing poverty in India' and attributed it to Britain's anti-India economic policies. This developed a hatred for foreign rule and love for Swadeshi goods and Swadeshi rule. The spirit of nationalism received a powerful stimulus in the process.

- (x) **Ilbert Bill controversy:** Lord Ripon made an attempt to address the problems of Indians but Ilbert Bill controversy enraged the Europeans. The objective of this Bill was to bring Indian judges on the same level as that of the European judges in Bengal Presidency. According to this Bill, Europeans could be tried by Indian judges. This Bill enraged all the Europeans and all of them stood against this Bill. Later, the Bill was modified which defeated its original objective. Though this Bill could not favour Indians, yet it made them realize that organized agitation can help them.
- (xi) **Lord Lytton's policies:** The following short-sighted acts and policies of Lord Lytton acted like catalyst and accelerated the nationalist movement:

- (a) To ensure that Indians are not able to share their opinion on a mass scale, Lytton passed Vernacular Press Act in 1878. This Act put a lot of restrictions on the Press. All Indians condemned this Act.
- (b) Lord Lytton organized the grand Delhi Darbar in 1877. At this time, South India was facing a severe famine. Many people condemned this indifference of Lord Lytton. To show this contempt, one of the journalists of Calcutta remarked 'Nero was fiddling while Rome was burning.'
- (c) Indians criticized Lytton a lot for the money he spent on the second Afghan War. This money was taken from the Indian treasury.
- (d) Before the rule of Lytton, the maximum age limit for Indian Civil Service (ICS) Examination was 21 years. He lowered this age limit to 19 years with the help of a regulation that was passed in 1876. This age limit made it almost impossible for Indians to sit for this examination.
- (e) Lytton passed one more Act in 1878 named the Arms Act. According to this Act, Europeans were given permission to keep arms, however, Indians could not keep arms without a licence. This Act clearly showed his policy of racial discrimination and his contempt towards Indians.
- (f) In order to help the British manufacturers, Lytton removed the import duty on cotton manufactures.

2.2.1 Formation of Political Associations (upto 1885)

The British domination gave rise to some forces, which ultimately challenged the British imperialism. For instance, the British forced English as medium of instruction in the education system of India, this went against the British as Indians came across the ideas of nationalism, political rights and democracy. These ideas resulted in a number of political associations, which were not known to Indians like then.

Many political associations were formed after 1836. In 1866, Dadabhai Naoroji organized the East-India Association in London. The objective of this association was to influence British 'to promote Indian welfare'. After some time, he opened its branches in various cities of India.

Political associations in Bengal

Raja Rammohan Roy was the first Indian leader to start socio-political reform movements in India. He was greatly influenced by Western ideas. He supported a number of popular movements all over the world. In 1821, when constitutional government was established in Spain, Rammohan Roy celebrated the event in Calcutta.

Rammohan Roy demanded liberty of the Press, appointment of Indians in civil courts and other higher posts, codification of law etc. The task of organizing political associations was left to the associates of Rammohan Roy.

- (i) **Bangabhasha Prakasika Sabha:** The first such association called 'Bangabhasha Prakasika Sabha' was formed in 1836. The association discussed various topics related to the policy and administration of the Government. It also sought redressal by sending petitions to the Government.
- (ii) **Zamindari Association:** Formed in July 1837, it was more popularly known as the Landholders' Society. It was founded with an objective to safeguard the interests of the landlords in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. Although limited in its objectives, the Landholders' Society marks the beginning of an

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organized political activity. It used the methods of constitutional agitation for the redressal of grievances. The Landholders' Society of Calcutta cooperated with the British India Society, which was founded by Mr. Adams in London in the year 1839. The association functioned till 1844.

(iii) **Bengal British India Society:** This society was formed in April 1843. The objective of this society was the 'collection and dissemination of information relating to the actual condition of the people of British India...and to employ such other means of peaceful and lawful character as may appear calculated to secure the welfare, extend the just rights, and advance the interests of all classes of our fellow subjects.' This organization merged with Zamindari Association in 1851 and formed the British Indian Association.

(iv) **British Indian Association:** Due to the failure of the Landholder's Society and the Bengal British India Society, the two associations were merged on 29 October 1851 to form a new British Indian Association. This association was dominated by members of the landed aristocracy and the primary objective of this association was to safeguard the interests of this class. However, the association followed a liberal approach and when the time came for the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company, it sent a petition to the Parliament in 1852. In this petition, it appealed for the establishment of a separate legislature of a popular character, separation of judicial from executive functions, reduction in the salaries of higher officers, abolition of salt duty, abkari and stamp duties. The appeals of the association were partially met and the Charter Act of 1853 provided for the addition of six members to the Governor-General's Council for legislative purposes. The British Indian Association continued its existence as a political body till 20th century even though it was over-shadowed by Indian National Congress.

(v) **India League:** Babu Sisir Kumar Ghose founded this association in September 1875. The objective of this association was 'stimulating the sense of nationalism amongst the people'. This association also aimed at promoting political education.

(vi) **Indian Association:** Within a year, the India League was superseded by the Indian Association. It was founded by Ananda Mohan Bose and Surendranath Banerjee on 26 July 1876. The Indian Association hoped to attract not only 'the middle classes' but also the masses, and therefore, it kept its annual subscription at ₹5 as opposed to the subscription of ₹50 p.a. fixed by the British Indian Association. Soon, the Indian Association became 'the centre of the leading representatives of the educated community of Bengal.' The Indian Association merged with the National Congress in December 1886.

Lytton's unpopular measures whipped up political activity in India. A regulation of 1876 reduced the maximum age for appearing in the ICS Examination from 21 to 19 years. Since the examination was held only in London, young Indians had to face innumerable difficulties. The Indian Association took up this problem and organized an all-India agitation against it, which was popularly known as the Indian Civil Service Agitation.

Check Your Progress

1. Fill in the blanks with appropriate words:

(a) The objective of introducing English language in the education system was to fill some _____ at the administrative level.

(b)

_____ of 1776 infused ideas of liberation and nationalism in educated Indians.

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

(a) The national liberation movements of Greece, Italy and Ireland encouraged Indians to fight for their independence.

(b) Free trade policy was made to favour Indian manufacturers.

Political associations in Bombay

- (i) **Bombay Association:** Bombay Association was founded on the lines of the British India Association of Calcutta on 26 August 1852. The Bombay Association sent a petition to the British Parliament urging the formation of new legislative councils which should have Indian representative as well. The Association condemned the policy of exclusion of Indians from higher services, and lavish expenditure on sinecure posts given to Europeans. This association did not survive for long.
- (ii) **Bombay Presidency Association:** Policies of Lytton and Ilbert Bill controversy caused political turmoil in Bombay. This led to the formation of Bombay Presidency Association in the year 1885. It was formed by the popularly called brothers-in-law: Mehta, Telang and Tyabji, representing the three chief communities of Bombay town.
- (iii) **Poona Sarvajanik Sabha:** This was established at Poona by Justice Ranade and others in the 1870s, with the objective to serve as a bridge between the Government and the people. The Bombay Presidency Association and the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha worked in close collaboration.

Political associations in Madras

- (i) **Madras Native Association:** This was set up as a branch of British Indian Association, Calcutta on 26 February 1852. The Madras Native Association also sent petition to the Parliament on the eve of the passing of the Charter Act of 1853. It made demands similar to that of the British Indian Association and the Bombay Association. However, the Madras Native Association was not popular.
- (ii) **Madras Mahajana Sabha:** This was formed by M. Vijayraghavachari, G. Subramanya Iyer, Ananda Charlu, Rangayya Naidu and others on 16 May 1884. It was aimed at coordinating the activities of local associations and providing a focus for the non-official intelligence spreading through the Presidency. It held two popular conferences: one was from 29th December to 31st December 1884, and second on 1st and 2nd January 1885. It demanded expansion of legislative councils, representation of Indians in legislative councils, separation of judicial from revenue functions, etc.

From the 1920s onwards till the last stages of the freedom struggle, Congress adopted Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's policy of non-violence and civil resistance. The period was also marked by Muhammad Ali Jinnah's constitutional struggle for the rights of minorities in India. Somehow left out of the mainstream freedom struggle, legendary figures like Subhas Chandra Bose later found it feasible to adopt a militant approach to attain freedom. Others like Swami Sahajanand Saraswati wanted both political and economic freedom for India's peasants and toiling masses. Poets like Rabindranath Tagore used literature, poetry and speech as mechanisms for political awareness. During the Second World War, campaigns such as the Quit India movement (led by 'Mahatma' Gandhi) and the Indian National Army (INA) movement (led by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose) immensely jolted the roots of the colonial tree in India and eventually resulted in the withdrawal of the British. Ultimately, these movements culminated in the Indian Independence Act 1947, which created the independent dominions of India and Pakistan. India remained a Dominion of the

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Check Your Progress

3. Fill in the blanks with appropriate words.
 - (a) The objective of the East India Association in London was to promote _____ welfare.
 - (b) Bengal British India Society was formed in April _____.
4. State whether the following statements are true or false.
 - (a) Babu Sisir Kumar Ghose was the founder of India League.
 - (b) Policies of Lytton and Ilbert Bill controversy caused political turmoil in Madras.

Crown till 26 January 1950, when the Constitution of India came into force, establishing the Republic of India. On the other hand, Pakistan remained a dominion till 1956.

2.3 FORMATION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The Indian National Congress was formed due to the efforts of a number of people. Presence of number of political associations across the country, and spread of the ideals of patriotism and nationalism prepared the foundation of the Indian National Congress. It was formed in the year 1885 but its origin is not known. According to Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, its origin is 'shrouded in mystery'. However, many people believe that A.O. Hume laid its foundation under Lord Dufferin. He formed the Indian National Congress to 'provide a 'safety-valve' to the anticipated or actual discontentment of the Indian intelligentsia and to form a quasi-constitutional party similar to Her Majesty's Opposition in England.' According to W.C. Banerjee, the First Congress President, the Indian National Congress was formed by Lord Dufferin, Viceroy of India. He also believed that Lord Dufferin formed it because he wanted a political organization which can understand the 'real wishes' of the people so that the British government could prevent political outbursts in the country.

On 1 March 1883, in an open letter, Hume had appealed to the students of Calcutta University to set up an organization in India. He officially clarified that his objective was 'to form a constitutional method to prevent the spread of dissatisfaction caused by western ideas, education, inventions, and machines and it was essential to take measures for the security and continuity of the British Government'. Some scholars believe that Ripon advised Hume to form an organization of educated Indians. Recently, some scholars analysed Dufferin's correspondence to Hume as well as the activities of the early nationalists, they concluded that the theory of 'safety valve' is a myth.

The Indian National Congress was founded on 28 December 1885 at Sir Tej Pal Sanskrit Vidyalaya, Bombay. It will not be correct to say that it was a sudden event rather it was as Bipan Chandra states, 'the culmination of a process of political awakening that had its beginnings in the 1860s and 1870s and took a major leap forward in the late 1870s and early 1880s'. Also, a lot of attempts were made by Indian Nationalists for the formation of a political organization on all-India scale. For instance, two National Conferences were organized by Indian Association.

A.O. Hume succeeded in forming an All India Party, which was attended by 72 delegates. Most of the Indian leaders could not attend this session as a National Conference was going on in Calcutta at the same time. The objectives of both these organizations were same. The Indian National Conference was later merged into the National Congress. It would be wrong to believe that he laid the foundation of the Indian National Congress single-handedly as many people were involved in its formation. Most of the leaders were able to accept Hume because they felt that he would not be biased towards any region or caste. It is because he did not belong to any of these groups and he had a sincere love for India.

Some of the members of the Indian National Congress were Pherozeshah Mehta, W.C. Banerji, Anandamohan Bose, Badruddin Tyabji, Surendranath Banerji, and Romesh Chandra Dutt. This association was different from others as none of the earlier associations had complete independence as their agenda. The Congress made

some demands, which can be divided into three categories: political, administrative and economic.

(i) Political demands

- Greater power to the Supreme Council and local Legislative Council
- Discussion on budget to be held by the council
- Representation of the council through local bodies like Universities and Chambers of Commerce
- Creation of Legislative Assembly in Punjab, Awadh (NWP) and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP)

(ii) Economic demands

The Congress sessions, between 1855 and 1905, regularly passed resolutions for:

- Reduction in land revenue
- Establishment of agricultural banks
- Reduction in home charge and military expenditure
- Ending unfair tariffs and excise duties
- Enquiring the causes behind India's poverty and famines
- Providing more funds for technical education
- Development of Indian industries
- Better treatment for Indian coolies in foreign countries
- Change in forest laws so that tribal can use forest

(iii) Administrative demands

- ICS examination in India as well as England
- Increase Indian volunteer force
- Understanding of Indian needs on the part of administration
- Separation of Judiciary from Executive power and extension of trial by jury
- Higher posts in the army for Indians

Objectives of the Congress

The primary objective of the Congress was to make people feel that they belong to a single nation—India. The diversity in India in terms of caste, creed, religion, tradition, language made this a difficult task. However, it was not impossible. Many important people like Pherozshah Mehta, Dadabhai Naoroji, K.T. Telang and Dinshaw Wacha, attended the first session of the Indian National Congress. The objectives of the Congress laid down by W.C. Banerjee, the President of the first session of the Indian National Congress, are as follows:

- Promoting personal intimacy and friendship among people who are working for the cause of the country
- Eradicating prejudices related to race, creed and provinces through friendly interaction
- Consolidating the sentiments of national unity
- Maintaining authoritative record of the educated Indians' views on the prominent issues of the day
- Determining methods by which native politicians can work towards public interest during the next twelve months

- Training and organizing public opinion
- Formulating and presenting popular demands before the government through petitions

The Congress was supported by people of all religions. W.C. Banerjee, the first President of the Indian National Congress, was an Indian Christian. The second President was Dadabhai Naoroji, who was a Parsee. The third President was Badruddin Tayabji who was a Muslim. The fourth and fifth Presidents were George Yule and William Baderburn who were Britishers.

2.3.1 Early Nationalists and their Programmes

We have already seen that some of the educated Indians were playing major roles in cultivating a sense of nationalism. Some of the early nationalist, also known as the moderates, were the ones who set up the Indian national Congress. Here are some of the prominent names:

1. **Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912):** He was of Scottish descent. He joined the Bengal Civil Service in 1849 and made a lot of efforts to remove the social maladies of the country. His superiors did not favour him, thus, he had to retire in 1882. He took initiative to form the Indian National Congress in 1885. In 1889, he helped in setting up the British Committee of the Congress in London as well. This committee started its journal named 'India'.
2. **Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917):** He was known as 'the Grand Old Man of India'. He was associated with the Indian National Congress right from its inception and became its president thrice: in 1886, 1893 and 1906. He was the first Indian to become a Member of the House of Commons on the Liberal Party's ticket. During his stay in England, from 1855 to 1869, he educated British public on Indian affairs through the London Indian Association and the East India Association. A book by Naoroji 'Poverty and Un-British Rule in India' was published in 1901. This book had statistics to prove that the drain of wealth from India to Great Britain was the cause of growing poverty in India.
3. **Pherozeshah Mehta (1845-1915):** He was born in a middle class Parsi family of Bombay. He was one of the founders of the Bombay Presidency Association and the Indian National Congress. He was also a pioneer of the Swadeshi and founded the famous Bombay Chronicle in 1913.
4. **Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925):** He was an eminent leader who passed the ICS examination in 1871 and started his career as an Assistant Magistrate at Sylhet. A controversy with the Government led him to leave the job. He was the founder of the Indian Association in 1876. In 1883, he convened a National Conference which was the precursor of the Indian National Congress. He presided over the Congress sessions twice. He was elected the first President of the Indian National Liberal Federation in 1918 and in 1921, he became a minister in Bengal.
5. **Badruddin Tyabji (1844-1906):** He was the first Indian barrister at Bombay High Court and was nominated to Bombay Legislative Council in 1882. He was one of the founders of the Bombay Presidency Association and the Indian National Congress. He was the President at the third Congress session in Madras in 1887. He helped Muslims in the causes of educational advancement and social reforms

as the Secretary and then as the President of the Anjuman-i-Islam of Bombay. He strongly pleaded for the education of women.

6. **Womesh Chander Banerjee (1844-1906):** He represented the Calcutta University in the Bengal Legislative Council. He was the first Congress President at Bombay in 1885. He left India in 1902 to settle in England to practise before the Privy Council. He financed the British Committee of the Congress in London and its journal 'India'.
7. **Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946):** He was born and educated at Allahabad. He started his career as a lawyer and as an able Parliamentarian. He was a member of the Provincial and Central Legislatures for several terms. He promoted the use of indigenous products and helped in organizing the Indian Industrial Conference and the UP Industrial Association at Allahabad in 1907. In 1926, he organized his own Nationalist Party. He also established the Banaras Hindu University and for several years served as its Vice-Chancellor.
8. **Tej Bahadur Sapru (1872-1949):** He was a conscientious and successful lawyer who specialized in constitutional law. He helped Mrs Besant to build up the Central Hindu College at Banaras and to establish the Banaras Hindu University in collaboration with Malaviya. He entered politics during the Home Rule movement and associated in drafting Nehru Committee Report of 1928. He participated in the Round Table conferences as well.
9. **Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915):** He was a follower of Mahadev Govind Ranade who was popularly known as the Socrates of Maharashtra. He joined the Deccan Educational Society founded by Ranade. He edited the quarterly journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha. He played a great part, officially and unofficially, in the formulation of the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909. His principles attracted Gandhiji, who became Gokhale's pupil. In 1905, he laid the foundation of the 'Servants of India Society' for the training of national missionaries and to promote, by constitutional means, the true interests of the Indian people.
10. **Kashinath Trimbak Telang (1850-1893):** He was a co-founder of the Bombay Presidency Association. He was one of the leading men who founded the Congress and became its first 'hardworking secretary'. He was active in the sphere of social reforms and was the President of the National Social Conference. He rose to the position of a High Court Judge.
11. **Rashbehari Ghose (1845-1921):** After obtaining the Law degree, he enrolled himself as an advocate at the Calcutta High Court. He became a member of the Bengal Legislative Council in 1889. He was the Chairman, Reception Committee of the Congress, in its Calcutta session in 1906. He was also the President-elect for the Surat session of the Congress in 1907. He was deputed by the Congress to proceed with its delegation to England and forward its point of view before the British Government.

Since its inception in 1885 till the time India won its Independence in 1947, the Congress was the largest and most prominent Indian political organization. In its initial stages, the Indian National Congress was a political unit, however, in due course of time it supported the cause of social reform and human development. The Indian National Congress is said to have also provided impetus to the spirit of nationalism. In its early stages, there was unity in the Indian National Congress and it was marked by the learning of democratic methods and techniques. The leaders of the INC believed that the British

government was responsive to their needs and were willing to make changes accordingly. However, over a period of time, the Indian masses became disillusioned with the concept of nationalism. They suddenly became aware that their petitions not as fruitful as expected and that the British subtly avoided taking any action. Even in the phase of dissatisfaction, there were some Congress leaders who believed in the methods of the British government and came to be known as moderates. Since these moderate leaders failed to produce desired results, a new stream of leaders came up who were known as the extremists. These extremists disagreed with the traditional methods of moderates that were limited to writing petitions and conducting agitations to get themselves heard. The extremists were not satisfied with a dominion status and demanded complete independence from the British government.

Moderate

Due to the low-level of political awareness, the achievements of moderate nationalists were not immense. However, by 1907, the moderates were pushed to the background with the emergence of an extremist class in the Congress. The failure to produce any results for the welfare of the people resulted in the creation of an extremist group and the division of Congress into two factions. Leaders of moderate phase mainly came from Bombay, Bengal and Madras. For example, Badruddin Tayabji, Dada Bhai Naoroji, Pherozshah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, K.T. Telang and Govind Ranade were from Bombay. Wumesh Chander Banerji, Anand Mohan Bose. Surendra Nath Banerji and Ramesh Chandra Dutta were from Bengal. Similarly, Subamanya Ayer, Anand Charlu, and Raghavacharya were from Madras. Very few leaders like Madan Mohan Malaviya and Pundit D. P. Dhar came from north India. These moderate leaders treated British rule as a blessing. They sincerely believed that the British rule would make India a developed democratic and liberal country. They had the illusion that the British would introduce modern institutions and remove superstitious belief. They saw England as a source of inspiration and treated English as their political, guru. Many of these nationalist leaders had anglicized life style. All they wanted and expected from the British was a 'reform package' for Indians.

The moderates believed in peaceful methods to get their demands across. They believed in writing petitions and peaceful protests. Though the Moderates failed to make the same impact as the extremists, they petitioned a number of reforms during this time.

1. Constitutional reforms: The Moderates demanded the expansion and reform of the existing Legislative Councils from 1885 to 1892. They demanded the introduction of the system of direct elections and an increase in the number of members and powers of the Legislative Councils. It is true that their agitation forced the Government to pass the Indian Councils Act of 1892 but the moderates were not satisfied with what was given to the people of India. No wonder, they declared the Act of 1892 as a 'hoax.' They demanded a large share for the Indians in the Legislative Councils. By the beginning of the 20th century, the Moderates put forward the claim for Swarajya or self government within the British Empire on the model of the other self-governing colonies like Australia and Canada. This demand was made from the Congress platform by Gokhale in 1905 and by Dadabhai Naoroji in 1906.

2. Demand for economic reforms: The Congress opposed the British attempt to develop in India the basic characteristics of a colonial economy, namely, the transformation of India into a supplier of raw materials, a market for British manufactures and a field of investment for foreign capital. Moderates took

note of all the three forms of contemporary colonial economic exploitation, namely through trade, industry and finance. They organized a powerful all-India agitation against the abandonment of tariff-duties on imports and against the imposition of cotton excise duties. The moderates carried on agitation for the reduction of heavy land revenue payments. They urged the Government to provide cheap credit to the peasantry through agricultural banks and to make available irrigation facilities on a large scale. They asked for improvement in the conditions of work of the plantation labourers. They demanded a radical change in the existing pattern of taxation and expenditure which put a heavy burden on the poor while leaving the rich, especially the foreigners, with a very light load. They demanded the abolition of salt tax which hit the poor and lower middle classes hard. The moderates complained of India's growing poverty and economic backwardness and put the blame on the politics of the British Government. They blamed the Government for the destruction of the indigenous industries like the traditional handicrafts industries in the country. They demanded the rapid development of the modern industries which would help in the removal of India's poverty. They wanted the Government to give tariff protection to the Indian industries. They advocated the use of Swadeshi goods and the boycott of British goods. They demanded that the economic drain of India by England must stop. Most of them opposed the large scale investment of foreign capital in the Indian railways, plantations and industries on the ground that it would lead to the suppression of Indian capitalists and the further strengthening of the British hold on India's economy and polity.

- 3. Administrative and miscellaneous reforms:** Moderates criticized the individual administrative measures and worked hard to reform the administrative system which was ridden with corruption, inefficiency and oppression. They demanded the Indianization of the higher grades of the administrative services; the demand was put forward on economic, political and moral grounds. Economically, the high salaries paid to the European put a heavy burden on Indian finance, and contributed to the economic drain. Indians of similar qualifications could be employed on lower salaries. Europeans sent a large part of their salaries back to England and also got their pensions in England. That added to the drain of wealth from India. Politically, the European civil servant ignored the needs of the Indians and favoured the European capitalists at the cost of their Indian counterparts. It was hoped that the Indianization of the services would make the administration more responsive to Indian needs. Morally, the existing system dwarfed the Indian character, reducing the tallest Indian to permanent inferiority in his own country. Moderates demanded the separation of the judiciary from the executive so that the people might get some protection from the arbitrary acts of police and bureaucracy. They were opposed to the policy of disarming the people of India by the Government. They opposed the aggressive foreign policy against India's neighbours and protested against the policy of the annexation of Burma, the attack upon Afghanistan and the suppression of the tribal people in North-Western India. They wanted the Government to spend more money on the spread of education in the country. They also took up the cause of the Indians who had been compelled by poverty to migrate to the British colonies in search of employment. In many of these foreign lands they were subjected to severe oppression and racial discrimination.

4. Defense of Civil Rights: They opposed the restrictions imposed by the government on the modern civil rights, namely the freedom of speech and the press. Almost from the beginning of the 19th century, politically conscious Indians had been attracted to modern civil rights especially the freedom of the press. As early as 1824, Raja Ram Mohan Roy had protested against a regulation restricting the freedom of the press. In the period from 1870 to 1918, the main political task was that of politicization of nationalist ideology. The press was the chief instrument for carrying out this task. Indian newspapers began to find their feet in 1870's. The Vernacular Press Act of 1878, directed only against Indian language newspapers, was conceived in great secrecy and passed at a single sitting of the Imperial Legislative Council. The act provided for the confiscation of the printing press, paper and other materials of a newspaper if the government believed that it was publishing seditious material and had flouted an official warning. Indian nationalist opinion firmly opposed the Act. Various public bodies and the press also campaigned against the Act. Consequently, it was repealed in 1881 by Lord Ripon. Surendranath Banerjee was the first Indian to go to jail in performance of his duty as a journalist. But, the man who is most frequently associated with the struggle for the freedom of press during the nationalist movement was Bal Gangadhar Tilak. In 1897, B. G. Tilak and many other leaders were arrested and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for condemning the government through their speeches and writings. The Natu brothers of Poona were deported without trial. The entire country protested against this attack on the liberties of the people. The arrest of Tilak marked the beginning of new phase of the nationalist movement.

Failure of the Moderates

The basic weakness of the moderates lay their narrow social base. Their movement did not have wide appeal. In fact; the leaders lacked political faith in the masses. The area of their influence was limited to the urban immunity. As they did not have the support of the masses, they declared that the time was not ripe for throwing out a challenge to the foreign rulers. That was likely to invite mature repression. However, it must not be presumed that moderate leaders fought for their narrow interests. Their programmes and policies championed the cause of all sections of the Indian people and represented nation-wide interests against colonial exploitation.

Critically evaluating the work of the Moderates, it appears that they did not achieve much success. Very few of the reforms advocated by them were carried out. The foreign rulers treated them with contempt. The moderates failed to acquire any roots among the common people and even those who joined the Congress with high hopes were feeling more and more disillusioned. The politics of the moderates was described as 'halting and half-hearted.' Their methods were described as those of mendicancy or beggary through prayers and petitions.

Moderates failed to keep pace with the yearnings and aspirations of the people. They did not realize that the political and economic interests of the Indians and the British clashed and consequently the British people could not be expected to give up their rights and privileges in India without a fight. Moreover, it was during this period that a movement started among the Muslims to keep away from the Congress and that ultimately resulted in the establishment of Pakistan. In spite of their best efforts, the moderates were not able to win over the Muslims.

The social composition of Congress remained, by and large the same till 1905. A. O. Hume tried his best to bring Muslims and peasants into the Congress fold, but with little success. The Muslim elite, especially from Aligarh, felt that they would lose from the elected councils and that the Hindus would dominate (Hindus were in majority in most places). The Muslim elite also opposed competitive examinations for the recruitment into civil services, as it was based on modern English education and the Muslims were far behind the Hindus in this field. They feared Hindu domination in the civil services too. All these factors kept Muslims away from the Congress; neither did the Congress give a serious look into inducting Muslims. This was a big mistake, as they realized in later years.

Thus, it is clear that the Congress was not only concerned with the issues of zamindars, capitalist and English educated professionals, but it also showed concern for almost all the sections of the society. The objectives of the Congress were never the reason for calling it 'moderate', rather its methods and style of functioning. The early Congress leaders believed in the constitutional method of struggle, i.e., through petitions, speeches and articles. One important reason for this was the social composition of early Congress leaders. They came from successful professional background (most of them were lawyers, journalists and academicians) and their personal life-style was anglicised. Perhaps, the first lesson they learned from the British was how to write applications and give petitions. Moreover, politics, for most of them, remained a part-time affair.

ACTIVITY

Evaluate any present day scenario where people are united for a common cause, although differ in their ideologies to achieve it.

DID YOU KNOW

The Vernacular Press Act stated that any magistrate or commissioner of police had the authority to call upon any printer or publisher of a newspaper to enter into a bond or undertaking not to print a certain material and could confiscate any printed material it deemed objectionable. The affected party could not seek redress in a court of law.

2.4 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- 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, casteism, etc. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dayananda Saraswati and Swami Vivekananda were a few of the reformists of those times.
- A radical trend thus emerged with representatives like Anantaranga Pillai, Abu Talib, Henry Vivian Derozio, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, etc.

- The Theosophical Society was founded in the United States by Madam H.P. Blavastsky and Col. H.S. Olcott, who later came to India and established the headquarters of the society at Adiyar, near Madras, in 1886. The Theosophical Movement soon grew in India under the leadership of Annie Besant, who had come to India in 1893.
- The national awakening among the Indian Muslims took place at a slower rate than the Hindus. There were historical and religious reasons for this. A number of Hindu kingdoms had emerged during the period of dissolution of the Mughal Empire, after Aurangzeb. Muslims were alienated. They were particularly hostile in their resistance to the British rule. As a result, they were debarred from any contact with the new culture and education, which the British introduced in India.
- From the 1920s onwards till the last stages of the freedom struggle, Congress adopted Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's policy of nonviolence and civil resistance. The period was also marked by Muhammad Ali Jinnah's constitutional struggle for the rights of minorities in India.
- During the Second World War, campaigns such as the Quit India movement (led by 'Mahatma' Gandhi) and the Indian National Army (INA) movement (led by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose) immensely jolted the roots of the colonial tree in India and eventually resulted in the withdrawal of the British.
- The primary objective of the Congress was to make people feel that they belong to a single nation- India. The diversity in India in terms caste, creed, religion, tradition, language make this a difficult task.
- The Congress was supported by people of all the religions. W.C. Banerjee, the first President of the Indian National Congress, was an Indian Christian. The second President was Dadabhai Naoroji, who was a Parsee. The third President was Badruddin Tayabji who was a Muslim. The fourth and fifth Presidents were George Yule and William Baderburn who were Britishers.
- The Congress made some demands, which can be divided into three categories: political, administrative and economic.
- The Dufferin Committee in (1888) had the following recommendations:
 - (i) Extension of the Presidency council and multiplying their functions
 - (ii) Providing representation to important ideas
 - (iii) Representation of Muslim candidates
 - (iv) Few seats to be reserved for nominated candidates.

2.5 KEY TERMS

- **Bureaucratic:** Of or relating to or resembling a bureaucrat or bureaucracy
- **Despotism:** The exercise of absolute power, especially in a cruel and oppressive way
- **Radicalism:** The political orientation of those who favour revolutionary change in government and society

2.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. (a) Clerical posts; (b) The American Revolution
2. (a) False; (b) True
3. (a) Indian; (b) 1843
4. (a) True; (b) False
5. The Indian National Congress was founded on 28 December 1885 at Sir Tej Pal Sanskrit Vidyalaya, Bombay.
6. W.C. Banerjee was the first president of the Indian National Congress.
7. Moderate
8. Constitutional method

2.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on Henry Vivian Derozio.
2. Enlist the political demands of the Congress.
3. What were the economic demands of the Congress?
4. Mention the recommendations of the Dufferin Committee.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on the early reformers of India.
2. Discuss the foundation of Indian National Congress.
3. What were the programmes and policies of early nationalists?
4. What were the objectives of the Congress?

2.8 FURTHER READING

- Chandra, Bipin. 2009. *History of Modern India*. New Delhi: Orient Longman.
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UNIT 3 PEASANT REVOLTS

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Unit Objectives
- 3.2 Background of the Santhal Movement
- 3.3 Indigo Revolts
 - 3.3.1 Causes of Peasant Revolts
 - 3.3.2 Role of Caste and Religion in the Peasant Movement
- 3.4 Deccan Riots and Moplah Uprising
- 3.5 Summary
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- 3.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 3.8 Questions and Exercises
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3.0 INTRODUCTION

Peasant movements are integral to the study of social movements and pertain mainly to the realm of struggle with the agricultural policies of the state. The history of the peasant movements is long and is mostly traced to the many uprisings across the world. The earliest peasant uprisings took place in the feudal and semi-feudal societies where people were burdened by taxes. The uprisings were a reaction to the violent exploitation. The recent such movements are safely categorized into the definitions of social movements, which usually include less violent uprisings where demands of the exploited revolve around revision of prices for agricultural produce, improved wages and working conditions of labourers and farm workers as well as at increasing agricultural production.

The Indian peasantry is not a homogenous category and is understood mainly in terms of its relationship with the land. They can be broadly categorized as supervisory agriculturists, owner-cultivators, share-croppers, tenants and landless labourers. The relationship with the land is thus important even when discussing a peasantry movement. Locally, peasants in India are referred to as *kisans* or *kheduts*.

In India, peasant agitation was first reported during the British rule. The colonial policies with regard to land and its economics caused severe losses to the traditional handicraft industry. It also led to change in the ownership pattern of land and caused overcrowding of land. Peasants were forced into massive debts and impoverishment. This led to peasantry agitation during colonization and peasant movements in the post-colonial period were influenced by these uprisings. In 1929, for instance, the Kisan Sabha movement was launched in Bihar by Swami Sahajanand Saraswati. He had formed the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha (BPKS) in order to mobilize peasants and urge them to agitate against zamindars who had uprooted their occupancy rights. The movement picked up momentum and soon spread to the entire country. Such radical developments led to the formation of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) at the Lucknow Session of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1936. Its first president was Swami Sahajanand Saraswati.

Independent India witnessed two more important peasant movements. These were the Shetkari Sangathan and the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) movement. The former was led by Sharad Joshi, while Mahendar Singh Tikait was the chief of the BKU

movement. Both the movements are important for they were futuristic and tried to influence the political leadership and their policies around pricing, taxation and even their approaches to economic planning and development vis-à-vis agriculture. The present unit deals with the peasant uprisings that took place simultaneously with the freedom struggle in the country. Special reference is made to the Santhal Movement, Indigo Revolts and Deccan Riots and Moplah Uprising.

The present movements are quite in contrast to their former counterparts. Yet, many peasant uprisings have occurred in the last decades, and peasants from all over the country have joined these movements to fight the structures of hierarchy and exploitation. One movement has led to many others. For instance, after the Santhals began agitation on June 30, 1855 in Bagnadihi, it was followed by the Indigo Strike in Pabna in 1860 and Bogra Uprising in 1872, the Maratha Peasant rising in Poona and Ahmednagar in 1875-76. All this culminated in the massive demands all over the country by the peasantry to fight the exploitation at the hands of the zamindars and moneylenders.

3.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the background of the Santhal Movement
- Describe the indigo revolts
- Discuss the Deccan riots and Moplah uprising

3.2 BACKGROUND OF THE SANTHAL MOVEMENT

The Santhals were unassuming people who worked under primitive agricultural conditions. Sir George Campbell paid tribute to them as being 'most industrious and even skilful clearers of the jungle and reclaimers of the soil.' With the establishment of the Permanent Zamindari Settlement (1793), the lands which they had cultivated for centuries were overnight turned over to the zamindars. This was followed by pressing demands for increased rents. The Santhals found these new arrangements disturbing. Being peace-loving by nature, they started retreating from the districts of Cuttack, Dhalbhum, Manbhum, Barabhum, Chhotanagpur, Palamau, Hazaribagh, Midnapur, Bankura and Birbhum. Hounded from their homelands, 'with great industry they cleared the forests in the plains skirting the Rajmahal Hills and, bringing large tracts of land under cultivation, started life anew.' At that time this area was called Daman-e-Koh.

The Santhals' belief was that the land belongs to the one who first tilled it. If pressed beyond that, they would rather retreat further into the woods and make new reclamations in places where they would not be molested. Unfortunately, however, they reached extreme limits of retreat, and found themselves on the borders of the plains of the Ganges at the very place where the competition for land was keenest and where rack-rents were too high. Their peaceful existence in the new settlements was not to remain undisturbed for long. The same class of zamindars who had hounded them out of their lands in their former districts was to harass them again soon. As long as the forest lands were not cleared, the zamindars kept themselves away. However, once the land was made suitable for cultivation, they were not slow in coming up to claim proprietorship of the soil and demand rents. 'Greedy Zamindars', reported the Calcutta Review of 1856, 'living near the borders of the Daman had begun for some time to cast a wistful eye on their lands.' The Rajas of Maheshpur and Pakur were hated by the Santhals

because they granted leases of Santhal villages to non-Santhal Bengali zamindars and moneylenders. The zamindars, the police, the revenue and court exercised a combined system of extortions, oppressive exactions, forcible dispossession of property, abuse and personal violence and a variety of petty tyrannies upon the timid and yielding Santhals. A usurious interest on loans of money ranging from 50 to 500 per cent; false measures at the haut (weekly market) and the market; willful and uncharitable trespass by the rich by means of their untethered cattle, *tattoos* (small ponies), ponies and even elephants, on the growing crops of the poorer race; and such like illegalities have been prevalent. There have even been instances of the Santhals paying security for the good conduct of their oppressors; embarrassing pledges for debt also formed another mode of oppression. Besides the zamindars, there were the moneylenders too harassed the santhals.

The rates of interest as described above were incredibly high. The Santhal saw his crops, his cattle, even himself and family appropriated for debt which though ten times paid, remained an incubus upon them still.

Seeing the opportunity of good trade and profitable money-lending, many *moira* and *bania* families from the districts of Burdwan and Birbhum, and Bhojpuri and Bhatia families from Shahabad, Chaprah, Betiah and Arrah, had migrated to the Santhal areas. Barahait, the capital town of the hills, was reported in 1851 to be a substantial village with a large population and about fifty families of Bengali traders. Two markets were held there every week. The Santhals brought their produce to Barahait where the traders bought it at a price far below its true value. Large quantities of rice, bora, mustard and several other oil seeds were carried on bullock carts by the merchants to Jangipur on the Bhagirathi. From there on, they were sent to Murshidabad and Calcutta. Much of the mustard was exported to England. On top of this, there was also oppression from Europeans employed in railroad construction. The Calcutta Review of 1856 cites cases of forced abduction of two Santhal women, and even murder and some unjust acts of oppression such as taking kids, fowls, etc., without payment on the part of the Europeans employed on the line of the railroad. The oppression by the zamindars, moneylenders, traders and Europeans and the government officers had inflicted great sufferings on the Santhal peasantry. The peacefulness of the Santhals was taken for timidity. The extent of oppression was intensified as time went by. All this was causing great discontent. The Pakur Record of the Calcutta Review of 1856 indicated that in 1854, some time before the actual start of the movement, the village committees of the Santhals seem to have begun in right earnest to cogitate what might be the proper course for them to pursue. When finally they took the road to open insurrection, it was forced on them by a long course of oppression silently and patiently submitted to by those unsophisticated people. As far as the government was concerned, it had learned nothing from earlier Santhal uprisings in 1811, 1820 and 1831. The warnings of the seething discontent were given by the events in 1854. After consultation among themselves, the leading Santhals began robbing the mahajans and the zamindars of their ill-earned wealth. These were well-merited reprisals for their unprovoked cruelties. The feelings of the Santhal peasantry were forcefully expressed by Santhal Gocho when he was unjustly harassed by police. This was the warning of the coming storm. However, the apparent calm prevailing towards the end of 1854 was taken to have been caused by cowardice on the part of the Santhals.

The repressive measures instituted by police only added fuel to the fire. Early in 1855, nearly six to seven thousand Santhals from Birbhum, Bankura, Chhotanagpur and Hazaribagh assembled for the purpose of avenging the punishment inflicted on their comrades in the last year. They complained that their comrades had been punished

while nothing had been done to the *mahajans* whose exactions had compelled them to take the law into their own hands.

The decisions of this meeting were circulated to all the other Santhals by the symbol of a sal tree, which is still used as a sign of unity and for the purpose of passing the word around. As a result, a large gathering of over 10,000 Santhals representing 400 villages met at Bhagnadihi on the night of 30 June 1855. It was decided that the time had come for the Santhals to rise as one and get rid of the control exercised by their oppressors. On the instructions of the meeting, 'letters were then written by Kirta, Bhadoo, Sunno and Sidhu, addressed to the government, to the commissioner, collector and magistrate of Birbhum, to the Darogas of Thanahs Dighee and Rajmahal and to several zamindars among others'. In their letters, the Santhal leaders declared their solid determination to get rid of the oppression by the zamindars and the mahajans and to take possession of the country and set up a government of their own. Although the government remained deaf to the Santhals' warnings, other non-Santhals resident in the area threw their support behind the Santhal peasantry. The Santhal peasants raised the flag of open armed insurrection against the unholy trinity of their oppressors—the zamindars, the mahajans and the government. Seeing the strong demonstration of the outraged Santhals, the zamindar's agents, moneylenders and traders took to their heels. The insurgents were not slow to consolidate their early gains. Establishing full control over the area between Borio and Colgong, they started moving towards Bhagalpur and Rajmahal.

The government, still officially expressing innocent surprise at the insurrection, was making large-scale preparations to suppress it. All available police and military forces were being alerted for immediate action. Orders were also issued to the zamindars and *darogas* of the neighbouring *paraganas* to aid in suppressing the insurrection. The insurrection was spreading rapidly. Like all popular insurrections, the technique of guerilla fighting and assembled battalions was combined by the insurgents. The appearance of the Santhal insurgents on the Indian arena was a novel experience. Here were the first people's armies, composed of rebellious peasants marching against their oppressors. It was a supreme tribute to their organization and voluntary discipline that, without any previous military training, such large numbers of persons, exceeding 10,000, assembled and disassembled at a very short notice. The postal and railway communications between Bhagalpur and Rajmahal were completely severed. The insurgents were in control of the area lying between the two cities. The high road between Pirpainti and Sakriguli was in the hands of the insurgents. The government's panic was 'intense'. The situation was entirely out of control. The military was empowered 'to take all the measures considered necessary for the extirpation of the rebels'. With this began the most brutal suppression of the rebellion. In spite of the brutality, the insurrection was spreading to Godda, Pakur, Maheshpur, Murshidabad and Birbhum. Isree Bhakt, Tilak Bhakt and Thootha Bhakht of Litiparu were notorious even amongst the Bhakts for devising and exercising inhuman cruelties on the debtors and making them pay for their crimes with their lives. Now the Santhal forces were being helped by a large number of low-caste dikus (non-Santhals). With their ranks reinforced by a brotherly bond which cut across all lines of castes and religions, they marched to Sangrampur and from there on, under the combined leadership of Sjdhu, Kanhu, Chand and Bhairab, laid siege to Pakur. They were successful in capturing it in three days. The government was now counter-attacking with full force. The zamindars and the indigo-planters also threw their resources on the side of the government. Many of the zamindars in the Bhagalpur and neighbouring districts lent their elephants for service with the different detachments operating over the battlefield.

With all the forces thus assembled, the government moved with ruthlessness to suppress the insurrection. In all, thirty-six Santhal villages were destroyed. The Rajmahal Hills were drenched with the blood of the fighters. Despite the murderous repression, the Santhal insurgents, even by the middle of August, were still estimated to exceed 30,000 men in arms. Many of them were proceeding towards Monghyr into the village of Mulheapur. No repressive measures were regarded too drastic to be tried against the Santhals.

Finally, in August, 1855 A.C. Bidwell, commissioner of the Nadia Division, was appointed as the Special Commissioner to carry out the measures necessary for the entire suppression of the insurrection.

Despite their unflinching heroism, the Santhals were facing a hopeless task. The rest of India was quiet and the entire army of a mighty empire was moving against them. The number of troops engaged against them ran into tens of thousands. The apologists of this criminal suppression by the government loudly proclaimed the 'inhuman cruelty' displayed by the Santhals and justified the harsh punitive measures employed against them. In order to gauge the cruelty of the government towards the Santhals, one only has to compare the pent-up vengeance of the Santhals against the moneylenders, erupting with volcanic fury from the anger repressed for decades, with what the government did. Out of a total of thirty to fifty thousand insurgents, fifteen to twenty-five thousand were murdered before the insurrection was finally suppressed. Kanhu and other leaders of the insurrection were captured by the third week of February 1856 near Operbandhoh, north-east of Jamatra and were executed.

A large number of the Santhal peasants were taken hostages and prisoners. Others were sentenced to long-term imprisonments varying from seven to fourteen years. Witnesses against the prisoners were hard to obtain, indicating the kind of support they had among the population.

The Great Santhal Insurrection was cruelly suppressed. This was not the end of the oppressions against the Santhals, or in fact, against peasant in other parts of India. On the contrary, the oppression was intensified. And yet, the Santhal insurrection was successful in one important aspect. The Santhal area, which had up to then been administratively broken up and merged into the neighbouring districts, was now reorganized into a separate entity known as the Santhal Paraganas. The Santhals had succeeded in forcing recognition of their special status as a national minority. The din of the actual battles of the insurrection has died down. But its echoes have kept on vibrating through the years, growing louder as more peasants from various places joined the fight against zamindari oppression. The clarion call that summoned the Santhals to battle on that fateful night of 30 June 1855 at Bagnadihi was to be heard in other parts of the country at the time of the Indigo Strike of 1860, the Pabna and Bogra Uprising of 1872, the Maratha Peasant rising in Poona and Ahmednagar in 1875-76. It was finally to merge with the massive demand of the peasantry all over the country for an end to the oppression of the zamindars and moneylenders.

3.3 INDIGO REVOLTS

The Indigo Revolts are considered a milestone in the history of India's freedom struggle.

Peasant Uprising in Bengal and Bihar

During 1859-60 one of the most popular of the peasant uprisings in the country occurred in the form of the conflict of Indigo cultivators in Bengal. The uprising was the result of

the British forcing peasants to cultivate indigo and sell them at cheaper rates to the colonizers despite knowledge that the same would leave the peasants' lands infertile. When the peasants refused, the British tortured, beat them and forced them to cultivate indigo. The peasants found support in the Bengal intelligentsia and thus revolted. The movement began in Bengal's Nadia district and soon spread across districts of Burdwan, Birbhum and Bangladesh (Khulna and Pabna). Such widespread support to the movement forced the government to appoint a panel to investigate and mitigate the system.

Despite efforts, the standoff could not be resolved and the exploitation of the peasants as well as the resistance from their side continued. Soon, the movement spread to Bihar and indigo cultivators from Darbhanga and Champaran joined the uprising in 1866-68. In 1870s in East Bengal, now Bangladesh, unrest broke out among the peasants. However, the exploiters, i.e. the zamindars reacted with force and harassment; the land of the peasants was taken away, their properties illegally seized, including their crops and chattels. The zamindars also used force to raise rents and prevent peasants from acquiring occupancy rights.

Resistance is a long tradition among the Bengal peasants. It was in 1782 when the peasants of North Bengal rebelled against the East India Company. Between 1872 and 1876, the peasants collaborated and formed a union to impose a 'No Rent Policy' and fought against the oppressive zamindars and their agents. This led the government to suppress the peasants and put a violent end to the revolt. It only led to create more uneasiness and unrest among the peasants, forcing the government to promise to look into the oppression by the zamindars.

Peasant Movement in Maharashtra

In 1875, the districts of Pune and Ahmednagar shook with major agrarian unrest. Until then, the British government directly settled its revenue with the peasants in Maharashtra. However, it raised the revenue fivefold, leaving the peasants with no choice but to seek loans from moneylenders who charged high interest rates in turn. This forced the peasants to mortgage their lands or sold them to the moneylender who kept on acquiring land illegally. Having lost patience, the peasants revolted towards the end of 1875 and launched large-scale agrarian riots. The police failed to curb the rioting and the peasants' resistance and military had to be called in Pune to stop them. The peasants were supported by the Maharashtrian intelligentsia and thus continued to agitate against high revenue rates and the failure of the government to provide them with cheaper loan rates.

Uprisings in Kerala and Assam

The states of Kerala and Assam also witnessed peasant unrest at the same time. High land revenue assessment worsened the situation in Assam and peasants refused to pay the increased revenue to their landlords. They also launched strike against those revenue collectors who tried to seize their lands. As the situation worsened, the police used force to suppress the peasants. Many protestors lost their lives at the hands of the policemen. Even though these movements did not directly challenged the British rule, they mobilized peasants in large numbers to every situation of oppression and exploitation. Peasants challenged the British as they tried to dominate their lives and took control in the garb of law and order. As they were non-literate and ignorant to the manipulation of the British, the exploitation of the peasants only served the interests of the British colonizers. Yet, such movements and rebellions in the 19th century consolidated the force of the colonized and were among the first source of resistance against imperialism that was yet to find its

voice and stronghold. After some economic and political developments towards the beginning of 1930s, the condition of the peasants too started to undergo change.

3.3.1 Causes of Peasant Revolts

Peasant uprisings in India were the result of several factors. Some of the important ones are discussed below:

1. Deteriorating economic conditions

Scholars have argued that the peasants revolted against their oppression and exploitation after their economic situation plunged due to continuing price rise and famine. Such changes to the economic structure only led to increased manipulation of the peasants, further deteriorating their condition. Studies which were carried out on the peasants' condition during the pre and post independence period have argued that at the time when the uprisings took place, they were under severe economic constraints. The unrest in North India between 1918 and 1922, for instance, was the result of the rise in the prices of inferior food-grains which were consumed by tenants and agricultural labourers.

Rise in the prices of essential commodities, especially during the time of the First World War, was another important factor that led to the spread of unrest in the rural society of Oudh. Their depressed conditions after the War, forced the peasants of Kheda in Gujarat to join the Satyagraha in 1918. Similarly, their poor economic conditions were also the important factors that influenced the beginning of peasants' movements in Telangana (1946-51) and Tebhaga (1946-47) in Andhra and West Bengal respectively. Even in the late 1960s and 1970s, the peasants' revolts started given the steep rise in prices of essential commodities. On the other hand, a section of scholars has argued that there is no correlation between the peasants' struggle and the rise in prices of commodities.

2. Famine and other epidemics

A regular feature of the Indian subcontinent during the 18th and the 19 centuries was famine. It continued to wreck havoc on the Indian people and its economy even after independence though it was addressed a drought and not famine. A section of scholars has argued that since the Indian peasantry was dependent on the authority for its survival, it did not revolt against its oppression. N.G. Ranga and Swami Sahajanand Saraswati have observed: "It is a sad commentary on the political capacity of our people that despite such terrible sufferings of the masses and the mass-deaths of workers and peasants and the outbreaks of cholera and other epidemics, in the wake of starvation and consumption of horrible things (ending in cannibalism also), no real and effective mass protest was organized by anyone or any organization against such inhuman state of things."

Paul Greenough, in his analysis of the Bengal famine, has argued that the peasant proprietors and labourers shared a relationship based on the principle of 'reciprocity' wherein the former felt a moral responsibility towards the later in times of distress and hardship. While such a relationship breaks during the times of crises like famine, Greenough argued that because the starving peasants have 'docile' character, they do not revolt. However, these arguments have been challenged by several scholars. Nonetheless, numerous studies on peasants' revolt have indicated that famine were a contributory factor in causing rural unrest and disturbances. Famines, this section of scholars have said, caused a deep divide between the rayiats and labourers and such a division was a reflection of their differing class interests. During famine, agricultural

labourers and other subaltern groups, including women, jointly led protests, which often turned into riots. While social scientists and historians have referred to famine as a cause, they are yet to explore its role in causing peasants' uprising in a greater detail.

3. Forced labour (*begar*)

During the 18th and the 19th century, the practice of *begar*, *veth* or *vethi* (i.e. forced labour) was widely prevalent. While it continues to persist in different forms, during that time it was performed mainly performed by peasants, including those who belonged to the upper castes. However, he services performed by the agricultural labourers and members of the lower castes differed. They had to perform jobs like supplying water to the zamindars, their rulers and families; constructing buildings, roads, dams and carrying dead and wounded soldiers to their destination during and after war. *Begars* were severely exploited; they were also beaten and starved by their masters. Women who worked as *begars* were exploited and molested. No matter the weather or the time, there were no considerations for the *begars*. They demanded carts or animals to be able to carry their load but it was rejected. The authorities subjected them to several other cruelties, leading to the death of several *begars*.

Under such situation in 1922-23, peasant uprising in Andhra Pradesh was launched. Its immediate cause was forcing the tribal people of the Andhra Agency for free labour to construct highway between the thick jungles and low hills from Narsipatnam to Chitapalli. During the peasant movement in Oudh from 1919-22, the peasants pledged to not sell their labour without pay; those who violated the pledge were socially boycotted. The poor peasants and labourers of Telangana also revolted against the *begar* system. In Gujarat, the poor Rajputs of Banaskantha initiated an uprising against this system in the early 1950s. In eastern parts of the country, the system continued to persist till the late 1960s, but the peasant revolted in what is popularly known as the Naxalite movement.

4. Excessive taxation

To meet the expenses of their royal families, the landlords or the rulers imposed various kinds of harsh taxes on the peasants. These were customary taxes and new taxes were invented and imposed as and when the rulers thought it prudent. Not all the reasons under which the taxes were imposed were real concerns of the rulers. For instance, in a district of Uttar Pradesh, a landlord imposed what was called 'gramophoning' tax, after his son desired to buy a gramophone. When the wife of another landlord suffered a septic on her leg, he imposed what was called 'Pakwan cess' to collect money from the peasants for her treatment. A contributory factor to the Oudh revolt and also to various peasant uprisings between 1897 and 1915 was the imposition of such indiscriminate taxes. The Telangana movement was also started after the Nizam imposed excessive taxation.

5. Increase in the land rent

In Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, and also in parts of Andhra Pradesh in the early nineteenth century, the increase in land rent by zamindars was an important contributory factor to peasants' uprisings besides the rising taxes. The tenants as cultivators were evicted by moneylenders, landlords or government officers and this caused widespread disturbances in the 19th century. In Bihar and Bengal in the 1870s, the East India Company auctioned land for the collection of land revenue making government officers and traders owners of land. The new owners pushed forward steep rent and also evicted the cultivators to get more rent from them. The rebellion of 1857 was in many ways the result of the

collusion between the British and Indian moneylenders, which allowed urban traders and the latter to usurp land.

This public sale of land not only divested common people of their small holdings but also from the aristocracy of their lands. Both the classes were thus discontent and collaborated their efforts to rise against the British. Such was the discontent that the revolt of 1857 provided a necessary outlet and the exploited saw it as an opportunity to get their land back. While the revolt is often studied vis-à-vis religion, the questions of peasants' rights and hereditary holdings were also important factors.

The Rent Act, also called the Imperial Act XIX of 1868 in Oudh, for instance, gave those tenants an inheritable right of occupancy who were able to prove their former ownership of land, with thirty years preceding the annexation. However, the control of the landlords was so strong that the tenants failed to prove their ownership while the landlords successfully evicted the tenants from their land. These factors led to unrest in Oudh and eventually uprisings in the 1920s and 1930s. The Moplah uprising in Malabar in the 1880s and 1920s, the peasant movements in Rajasthan in the early twentieth century and the Telangana struggle from 1946-51 were also the result of similar circumstances. Tenants, sharecroppers and agricultural labourers asserted for their rights on the land they cultivated even in the post-independent India. In the Telangana movement in Andhra Pradesh, Tebhaga movement in Bengal in the late 1940s, the Pardi Satyagraha during 1950s in Gujarat, the land grab movement and the Naxalite movement that developed during the late 1960s, the Bhoomi Sena and Shramik Sangathana movements in the 1970s in Maharashtra, distribution of equal land to cultivators was one of the central issues.

Launched by Vinoba Bhave in the early 1950s, the Bhoodan Movement also centred around distribution of land to cultivators. The movement sought to counter leftist movements and followed a peaceful and non-violent path to acquire land from those who held more than what was required and to distribute it among the poor cultivators and landless labourers.

6. Changes in the mode of production

Peasant unrest was fuelled by changes in the modes of production in agriculture that disturbed the traditional agrarian settings and relationships. Land became a marketable commodity under the British rule and agriculture was commercialized during the late 19th century. Banington Moore has argued: "Where a large-scale commercial agriculture has resulted in proletarianization of peasantry, and consequently in snapping of the old traditional bonds of caste etc., the possibilities of insurrection are much greater". On the other hand, Majid Siddiqi has observed that with increased commercialization of agriculture between 1860 and 1920, landlords who earlier collected rent in cash started preferring exchange of rent in grain, the price of which was high.

Despite promises, commercializing agriculture did not lead to any large-scale modernisation of agriculture. Also, commercializing did not lead to any changes in the feudal agrarian relationships. This meant that middlemen, whether money-lenders, traders or local businessmen (many of them were landowners themselves), and also rich peasants, made money illegally and manipulated the interests of the peasants openly. The burden on the peasants grew enormously due to commercialization of agriculture in regions such as Malabar, Bengal and Telangana. This caused peasants' uprisings. There was a significant gap between marketization and the capitalist mode of production and the interest of the farmers, which led to mobilizations among the latter.

7. Low wages

A central issue in the struggles of peasants in both the pre and post colonial period was the demand for higher wages. It remains one of major issues in such struggles post independence. As early as 1907, agricultural labourers in Travancore and Kerala launched strikes to seek increase in wages. These strikes continued for a long period of time. It was also a central issue in the Telangana uprising as well. In 1944, the Warlis of Urribergaon taluka in Maharashtra also launched a strike seeking higher wages for agricultural operations and forest work. Demand for respectable wages mobilized agricultural labourers even during the 1960s and 70s leading to the formation of the Naxalite movement in West Bengal, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. Agricultural labourers in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and other states too have launched several struggles during the 1960s and later seeking implementation of the Minimum Wages Act, timely wages, lunch break, etc. Women labourers have also launched revolts against sexual discrimination, humiliation and sexual violations perpetrated on them by officials of upper castes and classes.

3.3.2 Role of Caste and Religion in the Peasant Movement

Different scholars have put forward different arguments pertaining to the role of religion and caste in peasant movements. Barrington Moore, for instance, has argued that the caste system and the Hindu religion only served to obstruct the development of peasant movements in the country. K.K. Sarkar, in his study on the Kakdwip Tebhaga movements, has observed a lack of unity among peasants belonging to different caste and classes due to observation of the rigid caste structure. In his study on the land grab movement in Uttar Pradesh, Rajendra Singh has argued that the factors of caste and communalism served big blows to the movement as a whole.

Other studies have shown that caste and religion served as important factors in organizing and mobilizing peasants towards a common interest. For instance, in the satyagrahas of Kheda and Bardoli, caste organizations were used to invoke unity within and among various castes. Shah has observed: 'In a nutshell, the language of both the direct and indirect communication media during this (Bardoli Satyagraha) political movement was highly indigenous and full of familiar referents. Political issues were conveyed to the people through social and religious symbols which appealed to the tradition-bound masses.'

Even the Ramayana, the sacred text of the Hindus, was used by peasant leaders as a religious symbol to mobilize the masses. Scholars have argued that the existence of caste groups helped the peasant uprisings in the sense of building greater cohesion among them. In fact, some have argued that the irreconcilability between class and caste did not exist in the rural society of Oudh and the peasants united as a group of exploited people whether they were tenants or poor peasants or agricultural labourers and irrespective of their caste and religion.

For instance, during the strike of indigo cultivators in Bihar in 1860, Hindu and Muslim tenants stood together to fight for their rights. Caste differences ceased to exist when the movement was launched in Oudh during the 1920s. In West Bengal during the late 1860s, tenants and jotedars of the same caste fought against each other on economic issues. This was also a peasant movement. It is important to locate a movement in its context. Numerous studies have also suggested that while in some movements, factors such as caste and religion brought peasants together, in others they hindered the process of mobilization. In one movement, caste took the form of class and united the peasantry while in the other it blocked the movement.

3.4 DECCAN RIOTS AND MOPLAH UPRISING

The peasants were exploited by both the colonial government and the zamindars. This was the main reason that the peasants revolted against the colonial rule. Let us study the two popular peasant movements in detail.

The Deccan Riots

The Deccan Riots of 1875 highlight the social transformations brought about in rural Maharashtra in western India during the first five decades of British rule. The riots lay bare the relations between two important and well-defined rural social groups, namely, the cultivators and the moneylenders.

After the East India Company was dissolved, the administration of India passed directly into the hands of the Crown. If we closely consider the agrarian unrest, it has a long history.

There was always enough cause for Indian peasants to revolt against the colonial rule. Some of the reasons that heightened the revolt were the difficult conditions under which the peasants worked – uncertain weather, the mendacity of moneylenders, oppressive taxation or revenue assessments, fluctuating prices of crops, poor or negligible government subsidies, the support of large families, among many others.

Owing to such disturbances in most parts of western India, in the year 1875, a committee was appointed by the Government of Bombay. This committee reported on the 'riots in Poona and Ahmednagar.' The same year witnessed some more riots including one in the village of Supa, in Bhimthari taluka of Poona including some damage to property and another one in a nearby village where the outbreak took the form of murderous assault upon moneylenders.

This committee further came to be known as The Deccan Riots Commission. The Commission noted that such outbreaks were very common at that time. Just a little loophole anywhere would ignite the peasants. The riots of 1875 in Poona and Ahmednagar were, in short, rooted in acute agrarian distress.

Let us examine the history and the root cause of such riots. Between 1819 and 1821 the area fell into the possession of the British. The British formed a wrong estimate of the financial capabilities of the peasants. They would burden them with an over-assessment for twenty years with consequences that were disastrous.

This over-assessment drained the country of its agricultural capital and thus resulted in the impoverished condition of the peasants. The introduction of the Revenue Survey and Assessment in 1832 improved the condition of the peasants to some extent but the problem of indebtedness remained unsolved. The peasants were placed in a position of shame, discomfort and bondage in relation to the moneylender. The assessment was enhanced by the government in the year 1875. This served as a catalyst for the cultivators to revolt further. During the Santhal Rebellion of 1855, the peasants were influenced by a rumour that the government would release the cultivators from their debts to the moneylenders. When the promises remained unfulfilled, it further fuelled the peasants.

Some modern scholars argue that indebtedness could not have caused the riots. For the Kunbis who were the main agricultural sects of Poona and Ahmednagar, borrowing was a habit of life, and indebtedness not a novel situation into which they had been precipitously thrown; also the revolt-stricken villages suffered comparatively smaller increases in taxation so the re-assessment could not have instilled the villagers to revolt.

Along with this, the moneylenders were not receptive to the idea of the repossession of debtor's lands as they gained from this tight-knit web of commerce.

The upper-caste moneylenders, particularly the Brahmins indigenous to the area were spared to an extent. The immigrants like the Marwari and the Gujars were the ones who were victimized. This foreignness of the Marwari money-lenders was also one of the causes of the revolt.

Charlesworth in his essay, *The Myth of the Deccan Riots* asserts that, 'the central problem of the Deccan Riots is really not what caused them but why so momentous a non-event has been considered so important. Could the appointment of a committee conceivably have led to the purportedly exaggerated prominence ascribed to the riots?'

Florence Nightingale while writing on the demoralization of the moneylenders and the borrowers in a major English periodical just a few years after the riots, lamented, 'No one in England took any interest in the affairs of India. No one in Britain seemed much aware of the Deccan Riots Commission and the laborious report produced by its members. No one Englishman in Parliament or press has asked the result. There is not a single Member of Parliament who has called for it. We do not care for the people of India.'

Despite the committee's apparent interest in the riots, politics may have had a greater role to play in its deliberations. One of the committee's four members was an official from the United Provinces (U.P.). He was expected to support reforms which acknowledged the shortcomings of the principles by which western India had been governed. The inadequacies of the Bombay administration was also highlighted. The U.P. and Bombay governments were engaged in serious disagreements over the respective merits of their revenue and administrative systems.

The Deccan Riots Commission was generally appointed to investigate agrarian distress, the condition of the peasants, land tenures and to take substantial steps to improve these conditions. From the riots, the interest of the commissioners shifted to the agrarian conditions which had given rise to turbulence. They had no clue that these riots would take a political form and take shape of a nationalist moment.

A violent campaign against the British rule was launched in the year 1879 by Vasudeo Balwant Phadke. He aimed to establish an Indian republic by driving the Britisher's out. However, his insurrection met with limited success. Someone betrayed Phadke to claim a bounty offered by the British. He was later arrested and deported to Aden, where he died of a hunger strike in 1883.

The Moplah Rebellion

In 1921 in the Malabar region occurred the Moplah Rebellion. It was a conflict triggered by religious revivalism among the Muslim Moplahs. The Muslim Moplahs were deeply disillusioned with the rule of the British and at the same time carried a deep resentment against the land-owning Hindu Nair community which also supported the British. With its strong fundamental Islamic undercurrents, the movement called for 'freedom from the foreigners'.

Many political events preceded the Moplah rebellion. A rumor that British rule had concluded with the successor of Mohammed having conquered Delhi led to the first incident of rebellion on August 20, 1921, at Tirurangadi where the protesters focused on ousting the limited British presence from the area. Arsonists destroyed and set government properties on fire. With the help of the police, the British District Magistrate of Calicut

attempted to arrest armed Moplah leaders. The clashes produced first casualty of the rebellion but succeeded in driving out the British officials, planters and merchants from the area. Members of the other religion were made to undergo forcible conversions; their places of worship were also desecrated. This forced the British to call in the Army to take control of the situation.

The hilly terrains of the Malabar region proved to be difficult for the Army to launch a crackdown on the Moplah rebels. Besides, the weather was also not on the side of the state. Moreover, the commander of the Madras Military District, General Burnett-Stuart, had under his command a British cavalry regiment, a brigade of Field Artillery, two British battalions, including 2nd Dorsets and seven Indian battalions (including a battalion of Pioneers), and a company of the Madras Sappers and Miners. But only few members of these units were available as the Army was undergoing reorganization post the Great War. Since the Moplah rebels were only insufficiently armed as compared to the British, it was felt that the latter would be enough to take control of the situation.

When summoned for support, General Burnett-Stuart ordered two Army units to be deployed from Bangalore to Malabar. Shortly, a whole force was moved to the region to control the Moplahs. The Army asked the Moplahs to surrender but they refused and took shelter in a mosque. In the meantime, the British troops burnt the town of Tirungadi in response to the murder of its officers and a policeman by the Moplahs. The same night, the Moplahs clashed with the Army; around 40 of them surrendered which included notorious ringleader, Ali Musliar. While the operation proved useful, it also cost the Dorsets its personnel and 4 of its men were killed.

The Moplahs broke into small groups after this operation and spread throughout the country 'looting, plundering and committing outrages, but carefully avoiding contact with the troops'. Moplahs were systematically searched and arrested by the troops later. It was reported by Colonel Herbert who was leading a column for five days from September 2 that:

"The weather had been miserably wet and the Moplahs most elusive, while the transport animals suffered severely from lack of a shoeing smith and proper supply of veterinary medicines. For political reasons the Government of India refused to proclaim martial law and refused to send re-enforcements."

The Dorsets' Headquarters (HQ) was then shifted to Malapuram, with the battalion being deployed across the Malabar. Companies and even single platoons controlled villages in their surrounding area. Their aim was to limit the Moplahs' freedom of movement, thereby helped the Battalion's 'raiding columns'. Several columns were formed by the Dorsets, one of which was involved in a battle on September 24 near Nilambur. The Moplahs put up a strong resistance and the army lost three of its personnel. The Moplahs also lost many of its members. In one of the battles, the army killed 24 insurgents but lost two of its members and one was severely wounded. In another ambush, however, Colonel Herbert and a private guard were wounded while Lt Harvey was mortally wounded.

By October, it was clear to the Indian government that would be no solution to the operation even after two months. In some parts of the district, the Moplahs were still not under control and the local population was under terror of the insurgents. The government then deployed a large number of Ghurkha battalions to the area and organized a huge drive to get hold of the terrorists. The command of the battalion had been taken by Major Saunders, who was commanding the depot at Bangalore. The drive with Ghurkhas, armoured cars and D Company Dorsets moving forward swept through the country driving the Moplahs to the edge. The operation was successful and thirty rebels were

killed without any British casualties. A few days later, A and D Companies launched another successful operation and drove out the insurgents in large numbers. It was reported that:

'This was the most serious blow the insurgents had so far received, nearly 250 Moplahs being accounted for, without any British casualties, while four days later the Malapuram and Perintalmanna garrisons co-operated most successfully against another large party and inflicted nearly 50 casualties on it, without suffering any losses themselves.'

Such operations had the desired effect and by November, surrenders became a regular feature. The more active leaders remained in hiding but they were only a few in number and thus their activities curtailed.

Return to Barracks

Beginning November 20, the Dorsets started leaving Malapuram by train for Bangalore, having been relieved by the Suffolks. Its final number of casualties comprised an officer and nine men and 15 wounded persons.

'Fitness and discipline had been severely tested, the troops had had to endure considerable hardships and the Moplahs were not enemies to be lightly regarded.'

Even though they were operating in small sub-units, the officers and junior personnel had shown great courage and shown 'initiative and skill'. While some argued that the operations were insufficiently important to deserve a battle-honour, the Indian General Service Medal 1908, which was issued with a bar 'Malabar 1921', had been fully earned.

ACTIVITY

Conduct a research to draw a comparative analysis between Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan.

DID YOU KNOW

During the peasant revolts in Bengal and Bihar, a large number of sannyasis and fakirs who were being fleeced by the British rulers through various forms of exactions, played an important role in organizing the peasants. This was called the Sannyasi Rebellion. Along with the peasants and the sannyasis and fakir, there were also village artisans — the famous silk weavers of Bengal, who had been made to slave for the British merchants — and the thousands of unemployed soldiers from the disbanded Mughal army. Led by Majnu Shah, Bhabani Pathak, Debi Chaudhurani and a host of heroic figures, the rebellion continued till the beginning of the 19th century and was marked by daring attacks on the East India Company's offices in different parts of Bihar and Bengal, killing of notorious Indian landlords and money-lenders as well as of oppressive British traders and army officers, and both guerilla and positional warfare against the British army.

3.5 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- The Santhals were unassuming people who worked under primitive agricultural conditions. Sir George Campbell paid tribute to them as being 'most industrious and even skilful clearers of the jungle and reclaimers of the soil'. With the establishment of the Permanent Zamindari Settlement (1793), the lands which they had cultivated for centuries were overnight turned over to the zamindars.
- The Rajas of Maheshpur and Pakur were hated by the Santhals because they granted leases of Santhal villages to non-Santhal Bengali zamindars and moneylenders. The zamindars, the police, the revenue and court exercised a combined system of extortions, oppressive exactions, forcible dispossession of property, abuse and personal violence and a variety of petty tyrannies upon the timid and yielding Santhals.
- The Santhal area, which had up to then been administratively broken up and merged into the neighbouring districts, was now reorganized into a separate entity known as the Santhal Paraganas.
- One of the most popular events of peasant revolt was the conflict with Indigo cultivators in Bengal during 1859–60. The peasants were forced to cultivate indigo and sell them at cheaper rates to the British. The cultivation of indigo would make their lands infertile and fallow forever. Upon refusal, the peasants were tortured and beaten, ruthlessly and brutally and were forced to cultivate indigo.
- The indigo cultivators of Bihar revolted in a large scale in Darbhanga and Champaran in 1866–68. Unrest broke out amidst peasants in the 1870s in East Bengal (now Bangladesh).
- The Carnatic wars were fought in the middle of the eighteenth century. These wars consisted of many independent rulers and their kingdoms. They fought for succession as well as territory. These wars were described as a diplomatic or a military struggle amongst the French East India Company and the British East India Company for power. Due to these military wars, the British East India Company formed its dominance among the European trading companies in India. The French Company was shoved towards a corner and it was restricted mainly to Pondicherry.
- The Moplah Rebellion, which occurred in Malabar during 1921, was a conflict triggered by religious revivalism among the Muslim Moplahs. It was based on deep disaffection with British rule, and a strong sectarian resentment against the land-owning Hindu Nair community, who sided with the British. The rebellion had a strong fundamental Islamic and espoused '*freedom from the foreigners*'.

3.6 KEY TERMS

- **Moneylender:** A person whose business is lending money to others who pay interest
- **Rebellion:** An act of violent or open resistance to an established government or ruler
- **Zamindar:** A landowner, especially, one who leases his land to tenant farmers

3.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. The Santhals' belief was that the land belongs to the one who first tilled it.
2. Zamindars
3. The indigo revolt started in the Nadia district of Bengal and spread across Burdwan, Birbhum and Bangladesh (Khulna and Pabna).
4. 'No Rent Policy'
5. Malabar
6. Dorset

3.8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Who were the Santhals?
2. How was the Santhal Parganas formed?
3. What do you understand by indigo revolt?
4. What led to the Deccan riots?
5. What was the significance of the Moplah rebellion?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on Santhal movement.
2. Discuss in detail the Indigo revolt.
3. Describe in detail the Deccan riots.
4. Write a descriptive note on Moplah uprising.

3.9 FURTHER READING

Chopra, P.N. 2003. *A Comprehensive History of Modern India*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.

Grover, B.L. 1997. *History of Modern India*. New Delhi: S. Chand & Company Limited.

UNIT 4 RISE OF MILITANT NATIONALISM AND COMMUNALISM

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Unit Objectives
- 4.2 Rise of Extremists or Militant Nationalism
 - 4.2.1 Factors that Led to the Rise of Extremism
 - 4.2.2 Objectives and Methods of Extremists
- 4.3 Nationalism and Swadeshi Movement
 - 4.3.1 Swadeshi Movement
 - 4.3.2 Role of Students, Women, Muslims and the Masses during Swadeshi Movement
- 4.4 Revolutionary Activities
- 4.5 Muslim Politics and the Foundation of Muslim League
 - 4.5.1 Formation of All India Muslim League
- 4.6 Growth of Communalism
 - 4.6.1 Anti-Muslim British Policy
 - 4.6.2 Role of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan
 - 4.6.3 Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 and Communalism
 - 4.6.4 Communalism: An Interpretation of Indian History
 - 4.6.5 Militant Nationalism with Communal Overtone
 - 4.6.6 Foundation of the Muslim League
 - 4.6.7 Jinnah's Two-Nation Theory
 - 4.6.8 Hindu Communalism
- 4.7 Summary
- 4.8 Key Terms
- 4.9 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 4.10 Questions and Exercises
- 4.11 Further Reading

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The freedom struggle of India was the result of the basic contradiction between the colonial rule and the Indian people. Except for some businessmen, big landlords and some princes directly benefiting from the colonial rule, almost all Indians were exploited by the colonial rulers. The colonial government in India, which was guided by the imperialist government in Britain and worked for the benefits of the merchants, capitalists and aristocrats of Britain, was a completely foreign government. It never worked in the interest of the Indian people. It was this exploitative and foreign character of the British colonial rule in India that led to revolts by the Indians against this government. This also resulted in establishment of Indian National Congress in 1885. The Indian intelligentsia, which had earlier believed in the benevolence of the British rule, later criticized it for exploiting the country and draining away its wealth.

Colonial rule, destruction of the old social and political order, rise of a new social class—all contributed to the development of nationalism in India. The religious and social movements also contributed to the growth of nationalism.

This unit deals with social change and religious dissent in the context of nationalism in India.

4.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the rise of militant nationalism
- Describe the factors that led to the Swadeshi Movement and revolutionary activities
- Explain the nature of Muslim politics and the foundation of the Muslim League
- Interpret how communal ideas grow in India

4.2 RISE OF EXTREMISTS OR MILITANT NATIONALISM

The closing decade of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new and younger group within the Indian National Congress, which was sharply critical of the ideology and methods of the old leadership. These 'angry young men' advocated the adoption of Swaraj as the goal of the Congress, which was to be achieved by more self-reliant and independent methods. The new group came to be called the extremists in contrast to the older one which began to be referred to as the moderates.

The militant form of nationalism was first found in the teachings and preaching of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Swami Dayananda Saraswati. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was inspired by the *Bhagavad Gita* and visualized a united India. Swami Vivekananda, who was called the prophet of nationalism by Bipin Chandra Pal, added spiritual dimension to the idea of nationalism. He inspired the youth of his time, more than anyone else. The root of extremism lies in two important factors—the policies of colonial rule, and the failure of moderate leaders to attract younger generation and common people.

4.2.1 Factors that Led to the Rise of Extremism

Following are the factors led to the rise of extremists:

- Enlightenment of the true nature of British rule
- Civil Services examinations was disallowed
- Partition of Bengal
- The Indian Council Act, 1892, failed to introduce an elective element in India and provided for selection of some members
- Adoption of the Tariff and Cotton Duties Act of 1894 and 1896 by the Indians
- Curbing freedom of press (1904) and controlling universities through Indian University Act (1904)
- Defeat of Russia (1904-05) by Japan inspired the educated youth
- Circulation of Vernacular newspaper went up from 2,99,000 in 1885 to 8,17,000 in 1905. Some of the popular journals like *Kesari* (Marathi) and *Bangabhasi* (Bengali) opposed the moderate Congress
- The famine of Maharashtra in 1896

4.2.2 Objectives and Methods of Extremists

The new turn in Indian politics found expression in two forms—the formation of the extremist group within the Congress and the growth of terrorism or revolutionary movement in the country at large. Four prominent Congress leaders—Lokamanya Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai, defined the creed of the new group, gave articulate form to its aspirations and guided its operations. One of the earliest leaders who criticized the moderate politics systematically, in a series of articles titled 'New Lamps for Old' was Aurobindo Ghose. He did not like the constitutional method of struggle based on English model and attacked the soft attitude of the Congress. He told them not to take inspiration from England but to take inspiration from French Revolution (1789-99). He also suggested bringing the proletariat (working) class in the national movement. The emerging leaders in the Congress, like Bipin Chandra Pal, Ashwini Kumar Dutta, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, were not happy with the 'prayers' and 'petitions' methods. They were in favour of self-reliance, constructive work, mass contact through *melas*, public meetings, use of mother tongue in education and political works. They argued that 'good government is no substitute for self-government'. The issue of Swadeshi Movement widened the gap between the moderates and the extremists. The extremists wanted to spread the movement in the entire country and complete non-cooperation with the government. Lajpat Rai and Tilak were more aggressive in their ideas and plans.

Lajpat Rai thundered 'no national is worthy of any political status if it cannot distinguish between begging rights and claiming them'. He further argued that 'sovereignty rests with the people; the state exists for them and rules in their name'. But the true founder of militant nationalism was Bal Gangadhar Tilak. He criticized the moderates in his unique style— 'we will not achieve any success in our labours if we croak once a year like a frog'. He was quick to set the political goal of India, i.e., 'Swaraj' or self-government instead of reform in administration. He showed greater confidence and ability when he declared 'Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it'. He was a pioneer in many ways. He used religious symbols and festivals, like Ganesh festival since 1894, to mobilize people and he made patriotic-cum-historical cult through Shivaji festival since 1896 to inspire the youth. He even carried out the no-revenue campaign in 1896-97, during severe famine in Maharashtra. He called upon the government to take those measures of relief, which were provided under law in the Famine Relief Code. Through his paper, *Kesari*, he made an appeal to the people to refuse to pay taxes. He wrote angrily, 'Can you not be bold even in the grip of death'. He also started Boycott Movement on the issue of countervailing Cotton Excise Duty Act of 1896. It should be clearly understood that the extremists' demand for Swaraj was a demand for 'complete freedom from foreign control and full independence to manage national affairs without any foreign restraints'. The Swaraj of the moderate leaders was merely a demand for colonial self-government within the Empire. The methods employed by the two groups (moderates and extremists) were different in their tempo and approach. The extremists had no faith in the benevolence of the British public or parliament, nor were they convinced of the efficacy of merely holding conferences. The extremists also affirmed their faith in passive resistance, mass agitation and strong will to suffer or make self-sacrifices. The new leadership sought to create a passionate love for liberty, accompanied by a spirit of sacrifice and a readiness to suffer for the cause of the country. They strove to root out from the people's mind the omnipotence of the ruler, and instead give them self-reliance and confidence in their own strength. They had deep faith in the strength of the masses and they planned to achieve Swaraj

through mass action. They, therefore, pressed for political work among the masses and for direct political action by the masses. The extremists advocated boycott of the foreign goods, use of *swadeshi* goods, national education and passive resistance.

4.3 NATIONALISM AND SWADESHI MOVEMENT

The growth of nationalism during the second half of the nineteenth century was one of the most significant features of Indian history. Various factors contributed to the growth of nationalism. Though pre-colonial India had a self-sufficient economy based largely on agriculture, Indians as such were not integrated, neither economically nor socially. Colonization helped in unifying a country as diverse as India. The British conquest of India was followed by the establishment of a centralized government, which brought about political and administrative unification. Introduction of common laws and institutions gradually began to unite India. Gradually the sense of nationalism seeped in among Indians and by the year 1885, Indian National Congress was formed. In the words of Edwyn Bevan, 'the British Raj was like a steel-frame which held the injured body of India together till the gradual process of internal growth had joined the dislocated bones, knit up the torn fibres and enabled the patient to regain inner coherence and unity'. Thus, establishment of political unity, uniform system of administration, law and currency generated the idea of India as a nation. We have already discussed in unit 2, the various factors that were responsible for the growth of nationalism.

4.3.1 Swadeshi Movement

The Swadeshi movement was born as a unified reaction against the partition of Bengal in 1905 and continued up to 1908. In fact, it was the most successful of all the pre-Gandhian movements. Primarily, the scheme of partition was opposed through a comprehensive use of conventional 'moderate' means of press campaigns, petitions and several meetings, massive conferences at the Calcutta town hall, etc. When such measures and techniques bailed, it led to a search for new means like boycott of British goods, Rakhi Bandhan and Arandhan.

At the theoretical level, two significant trends can be specified in the Swadeshi movement—(i) constructive Swadeshi and (ii) political 'extremism'. The weapon of 'boycott' was used to make Swadeshi movement successful. Constructive Swadeshi comprised self-help through the means of Swadeshi industries, national schools and attempts at village improvement. It found expression through the business ventures of people such as Prafulla Chandra Roy or Nilratan Sarkar; national education movement started by Satishchandra Mukherjee; and development work in villages by reviving the traditional Hindu Samaj outlined by Rabindranath Tagore. Aswini Kumar Datta's Swadesh Bandhav Samity also played a key role in the effort for reconstruction. Rabindranath termed this perspective of development *atmashakti* (self-strengthening).

However, it appealed little to the excited educated youth of Bengal. They were more drawn to the doctrine of political 'extremism'. Their basic difference with the proponents of constructive Swadeshi was regarding methods. In April 1907, the classic statements were given by Sri Aurobindo Ghosh in this regard in a series of articles. These were later reprinted as the 'Doctrine of Passive Resistance'. He envisioned a programme of 'organized and relentless boycott of British goods, official education, justice and executive administration'. All this was to be backed up by the positive

development of Swadeshi industries, schools and arbitration courts. Moreover, he looked forward to civil disobedience, 'social boycott' of loyalists and the option of waging armed struggle if the British repression crossed the limits of endurance.

There was another controversy over cultural ideas between the modern nationalists and the proponents of Hindu revivalism. In general, the Swadeshi mood was strongly linked to the efforts to associate religious revivalism with politics. The method of Swadeshi vows in temples was first used by Surendranath Banerjee. Usually, the national education plans possessed a very strong revivalist content. Further, 'boycott' was planned to be enforced through traditional caste sanctions. Such aggressive brand of Hinduism usually got inextricably reflected in the pages of *Bande Mataram*, *Sandhya* or *Yugantar*. Nonetheless, Brahma journals such as *Sanjibani* and *Prabasi* were very critical of this view.

The Hindu revivalist tendency, along with the British propaganda that the new province would fetch more jobs for the Muslims, achieved significant success in turning the upper and middle classes of Muslims against the Swadeshi movement. In spite of powerful pleas for communal unity given by an active group of Swadeshi Muslim agitators such as Ghaznavi, Rasul, Din Mahomed, Didar, Liakat Hussain, etc., East Bengal witnessed communal riots. For maintaining Hindu images, a few Hindu *zamindars* and *mahajans* started to levy an *Ishvar brtti*. As such a huge section of the Muslim community in Bengal remained detached from the Swadeshi movement. Hindu *bhadralok*, whether believing in moderate or extremist politics, took an active part in the movement.

Rabindranath Tagore and other men of letters realized this limitation of the spontaneity of the movement. Rabindranath, though substantially influenced by revivalism for some time, driven by all the communal strife, in a series of outstandingly perceptive articles in mid 1907 pointed out that just blaming the British for the riots was an oversimplification of the situation.

Along with such cultural limitations, the history of boycott and Swadeshi movement clearly illustrates the limitations of a movement launched by the intelligentsia in the sense that it possessed broadly bourgeois aspirations but had little real bourgeois support. During the initial stages, boycott attained some success. Hence, in September 1906, the Calcutta collector of customs observed a decline in the sales of Manchester cloth. Nonetheless, the decline was more born of a quarrel over trade terms between Calcutta *marwari* dealers and the British manufacturers. Significantly, the biggest decline was for items such as shoes and cigarettes where the demand was basically from the middle-class Indian gentry.

Despite such limitations, the Swadeshi mood brought about considerable revival in handloom, silk weaving and some other traditional arts and crafts. Further, several attempts were undertaken to promote modern industries. Hence, in August 1906, Banga Lakshmi Cotton Mills was started and there were some reasonably successful ventures in the fields of soap, matches, porcelain, chrome and cigarettes.

A significant diversity is noticeable within the national education efforts in Swadeshi Bengal. It ranges from the schemes for vernacular technical teaching to *Santiniketan* founded by Rabindranath and the Dawn Society of Satish Mukherjee. These comprised the attempts to combine the traditional and the modern in a plan for 'higher culture' for selected youths. In March 1906, the National Society of Education was set up as a parallel university. National education possessed negligible job prospects and hence failed in attracting the bulk of students, still a few institutions like Bengal National College or Bengal Technical Institute continued their operations.

The appearance of *Samitis* was an achievement of the Swadeshi times. Most of these *Samitis* were quite open bodies by 1908 and performed various activities like physical and moral training, social work during religious festivals, propagating the Swadeshi message in various forms, and organizing schools, crafts arbitration courts and village societies, apart from implementing the techniques of passive resistance.

Unfortunately, the Swadeshi movement indirectly alienated the common Muslim public from the mainstream of national politics. They followed a different course which culminated in the formation of the Muslim League (1906) in Dacca. However, it also helped in providing a new dimension to the Indian nationalist movement through giving the Gandhian conception of mass *satyagraha* without taking a recourse to violence.

Significance of Swadeshi movement

Although the Swadeshi movement was not immediately successful in unifying the partitioned Bengal, still its significance cannot be underestimated. It is because of the following factors:

- The Swadeshi movement was fairly different from the earlier movements conducted by the national leaders. In this movement, a programme of direct political action was undertaken which was opposed to the policy of 'prayer and petition'.
- During the initial stages, the Swadeshi movement tried to bring about the annulment of the partition of Bengal. However, finally its efforts assumed a bigger dimension to incorporate the objective of attaining complete freedom from the foreign domination itself.
- The 'boycott' aspect of the Swadeshi movement comprised the aim of pressurizing the mill-owners of Manchester economically so that they could bring pressure upon the British government, for the annulment of Partition. However, with the passage of time the 'boycott' did not keep limited to the British goods alone. It was applied on a broader scale to incorporate everything that was foreign, specifically British.
- The cultural aspect of the Swadeshi movement was also very significant. Bengali literature flourished during the Swadeshi days. The patriotic compositions and creations of Rabindranath Tagore and Rajanikanto Sen magically touched the patriotic sense of the masses.

4.3.2 Role of Students, Women, Muslims and the Masses during Swadeshi Movement

The students of Bengal played a prominent part in the Swadeshi agitation. They propagated and practised Swadeshi and took the lead in organizing picketing of shops selling foreign items. The government on its part tried its best to suppress the students. It issued orders to penalize such schools and colleges whose students were actively involved in the Swadeshi agitation. Their grants-in-aid and other privileges were withdrawn. Further, they were disaffiliated and their students were not allowed to compete for scholarships and were restricted from all governmental services.

Penalizing action was taken against students found guilty of participating in the nationalist agitation. A good number of them were fined, expelled from schools and colleges, arrested and at times beaten by the police. However, the students refused to be cowed down.

An amazing aspect of the Swadeshi agitation comprised the active participation of women. Many women belonging to traditionally home-centred urban middle classes took part in processions and picketing. Afterwards, they participated in the nationalist movement at a very active level.

Moreover, many prominent Muslims participated in the Swadeshi movement. These included Abdul Rasul (the famous barrister), Liaquat Hussain (the popular agitator) and Guznavi (the businessman). Maulana Abul Kalam Azad joined one of the revolutionary terrorist groups. However, majority of the middle and upper class Muslims remained neutral. Many others, following the Nawab of Dhaka (who got a loan of ₹14 lakh from the government), even supported partition under the belief that East Bengal would come to have a Muslim majority.

This kind of communal attitude, as was nurtured by the Nawab of Dhaka and others, was greatly encouraged by the government officials. In a speech made at Dhaka, Lord Curzon stated that one of the reasons for the partition was 'to invest the Mohammedans in Eastern Bengal with a unity which they have not enjoyed since the days of the old Mussalman Viceroy and Kings.'

Swadeshi Movement began as an anti-partition agitation in Bengal and boycott was first suggested by Krishna Kumar Mitra in *Sanjivani*. The boycott of British products was followed by the advocacy of Swadeshi and to buy indigenously produced goods as a patriotic duty. The leaders of Bengal felt that mere demonstrations, public meetings and resolutions were not enough and something more concrete was needed and the answer was Swadeshi and boycott. Mass meetings were held all over Bengal and big crowds took the oath of Swadeshi. Patients refused to take foreign medicines and were willing to face the consequences. People burnt foreign clothes and foreign cigarettes. The Swadeshi Movement was an immense success.

Self-reliance meant assertion of national dignity, honour and self-confidence. In the economic field, it meant indigenization of the industry. Many textile mills, soap and match factories, national banks and insurance companies were started. A prominent part was played by the students of Bengal in the Swadeshi agitation. They picketed the shops selling foreign cloth and other foreign goods. Women also joined processions and picketed the shops dealing in foreign goods. The programmes of Swadeshi and boycott went hand in hand. As a consequence of the Swadeshi movement, there was a flowering of nationalist poetry, prose and journalism. The leader of Bengal took up the work of national education in right earnest. National educational institutions were opened by them and literary, technical and physical education was given there. On 15 August 1906, a National Council of Education was set up and Aurobindo Ghose was appointed the first Principal of the National College.

4.4 REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES

Even the reactionary activities of the extremists school of leaders could not satisfy the Indian youth. They opposed the British with the use of violence through pistol and bomb. The revolutionary terrorist movement in India strongly affected the Congress and the British government. Revolutionary terrorist groups restricted their strengths only to remain more agile and effective. The movement, however low the number it attracted, had an impact on India: its people, the Congress and the British rulers.

Revolutionary activities in Maharashtra

The Chapekar brothers (Deodar and Balkrishana Chapekar) shot dead Lt. Ayerst in 1897 at Poona, although Rand, the president of the Plague Committee was the real target. They were arrested, convicted and hanged. Similarly, Bal Gangadhar Tilak was sentenced to jail for provoking terrorism through his writings.

Revolutionary activities in Bengal

Bengal became the hotbed of terrorist activities. In 1908, Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose threw a bomb at Kennedy's carriage assuming it to be that of Kingsford, the judge of Muzaffarpur. Previously, the concerned judge had awarded capital punishment to many youths. Two ladies died in the incidence and Prafulla shot himself dead before he could be captured by the police. On the other hand, Khudiram was tried and hanged.

In Calcutta, Aurobindo Ghosh organized the revolutionaries. He tried to strike terror in the minds of the British officials by killing some British officers. In Alipore conspiracy case, Aurobindo, his brother, Barinas and others were captured and tried. Namenda Gosling, the approver in the case, was shot dead. A similar fate awaited the Public Prosecutor and the Deputy Superintendent of police. Although Aurobindo was acquitted but his brother and the others were deported to Andaman. Sateen Bose and Kanai Dutta, who had killed the approver, were sentenced to death. Another revolutionary named Baghdad Jain was killed in an encounter with police in 1915. He was involved in the Dacca conspiracy case.

Revolutionary activities in Punjab

Punjab also became a centre of revolutionary activities under the leadership of Lala Hardayal, Avado Bihar, Amir Chandra, J.M. Chatterjee, etc. The revolutionary associations like 'Kitty Kinas Party' and 'Naujawan Sabha' were also set up.

Chandra Shekhar Azad founded 'Hindustan Republic Association'. It was later rechristened as 'Hindustan Socialist Republic Association'. Its leading members like Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukh Dev were sentenced to death for their involvement in the Kakori train robbery, bombing the Assembly hall and other terrorist activities. In fact, Punjab became a smouldering volcano for the British government.

The Europeans were attacked at Lahore. Several riots occurred at Rawalpindi under the leadership of Ajit Singh.

Revolutionary activities in Madras

The youths of Madras were inspired by the visit of Bipin Chandra Pal to Madras and his inflammatory speech. Chidambaram Pillai demanded total independence for India for which he was arrested. As a protest the crowd turned violent in Tuticorin and Tirunelveli. The police opened fire to disperse the crowd. The officer who had ordered firing was killed by Vanchi Ayer.

Revolutionary activities in the rest of India

At various places in western India as well the revolutionary terrorism made its presence felt. In 1909 Jackson, the Magistrate of Nasik was shot dead. He was very unpopular among the general public. The Ahmedabad bomb case and the Satara conspiracy cases were other noteworthy terrorist activities in the region.

At Dehra Dun, a bomb was thrown at Viceroy Lord Harding by Rasbehari Bose. Some of the Viceroy's attendants were killed. In an encounter with British police in 1931, Chandra Shekhar Azad was shot dead at Alfred Park in Allahabad.

Revolutionary activities abroad

Even abroad the revolutionary activities continued in full swing. After the murder of District Magistrate Rand, Shyamji Krishna Verma of Kathiawar went to London and started Home Rule Society in due course of time.

In 1906, V.D. Savarkar went to London and joined 'Indian Society'. It promoted revolutionary terrorism. Madan Lal Dhingra, one of the members of this society, killed Sir William Curzon Willy, the ADC to the Secretary of State of India.

Among the revolutionary activities abroad, the role of Gadar Party can never be denied. Lala Hardayal, a revolutionary young man from Punjab, established Gadar Party and also published a weekly paper *The Gadar*. It aimed at bringing about a revolution in India to set the country free from the British. Lala Hardayal was ordered by the USA government to leave the country due to his engagement in the anti-British propaganda.

During the World War I, the Indian revolutionaries abroad approached the German government for help. They further sought help from the Muslims of Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan to overthrow the British empire in India. Sardar Ajit Singh and Sufi Amba Prasad went to the Middle East to unite the defeated Indian soldiers and garner their support.

Raja Mahendra Pratap led an Indo-German mission to Afghanistan and set up a free government there. The Komagata Maru case fanned the fire of revolutionary terrorism. This Japanese ship which took revolutionary Sikhs to Canada was denied anchoring in the port in Canada and returned to Calcutta. The passengers revolted not to board train for Punjab arranged by the British government. Some of them died due to the government's strict action. All these happenings inspired the terrorist movement in Punjab.

The revolutionary terrorists carried out political dacoities at Amritsar, Jullundur and Ludhiana in Punjab. These revolutionary activities lasted abroad till 1945 when Subhas Chandra Bose met a mysterious death. The revolutionary activities, both inside the country and abroad, could not succeed because these were confined just to the educated middle class people of India.

There were specific causes which were responsible for the failure of revolutionary activities. Some of them are: lack of sympathy from the upper class Indians; various types of organizational and financial problems coming across the revolutionaries; indifference of Indian National Congress towards the militant nationalist thought; tough and repressive measures taken by the government; and last but not the least, the appearance of Gandhiji on the scene.

Bhagat Singh, representative of the dissatisfied Indian youth who disapproved of Gandhian policies, offered revolutionary alternatives. He emerged as an extraordinary revolutionary and martyr of the Indian anti-colonial movement. He studied the European revolutionary movement and was particularly attracted to anarchism and communism. Being an out and out atheist, socialist and communist, it was not long before it dawned on him that just overthrowing the British was not enough. He realized that the socialist reconstruction of Indian society was essential, for which the workers needed to seize political power. In the words of Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt:

By Revolution we mean that the present order of things, which is based on manifest injustice must change. Producers or labourers, in spite of being the most necessary element of society, are robbed by their exploiters of their labour and deprived of their elementary rights. The peasant who grows corn for all, starves with his family; the weaver who supplies the world market with textile fabrics, has not enough to cover his own and his children's bodies; masons, smiths and carpenters who raise magnificent palaces, live like pariahs in the slums. The capitalists and exploiters, the parasites of society, squander millions on their whims.

This was their understanding of revolution which they expressed following the (assembly bomb case) on 6th June, 1929.

Their argument was that a 'radical change' was required and that it could only be brought about by those who realized that it was necessary to reorganize society on socialist. For this purpose, it was felt necessary to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is clear from the actions and slogans associated with the Lahore Conspiracy Case that Bhagat Singh and his comrades were followers of Communism. On January 21, 1930, they appeared in court with red scarves. The moment the magistrate was seated they raised the following slogans: 'Long Live Socialist Revolution', 'Long Live the Communist International', 'Long live the people', 'Lenin's name will never die', and 'Down with Imperialism.' The text of the following telegram was read by Bhagat Singh in court:

On Lenin Day we send hearty greetings to all who are doing something for carrying forward the ideas of the great Lenin, we wish success to the great experiment Russia is carrying out. We join our voice to that of the International working class movement. The proletariat will win. Capitalism will be defeated. Death to Imperialism.

Bhagat Singh criticized the individual terrorism that existed among the revolutionary youth of his time. He realized that there was a need for the Communist Party to work towards mass mobilization. Bhagat strongly believed that the party had to organize the workers and the peasantry. The fight for the small economic demands through the labour unions, according to him, was the best means of educating the common masses for a final struggle to achieve political power. He also felt that the Communist Party should shoulder the additional responsibility of organizing a military department.

In his own words: 'I am not a terrorist and I never was, except perhaps in the beginning of my revolutionary career. And I am convinced that we cannot gain anything through these methods. One can easily judge it from the history of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. All our activities were directed towards an aim, i.e., identifying ourselves with the great movement as its military wing. If anybody has misunderstood me, let him amend his ideas. I do not mean that bombs and pistols are useless, rather the contrary. But I mean to say that mere bomb throwing is not only useless but sometimes harmful. The military department of the party should always keep ready all the war-material it can command for any emergency. It should back the political work of the party. It cannot and should not work independently.'

Bhagat Singh: Biographical profile

Bhagat Singh was born on 26 September 1907, in a middle class family of Sandhu Jats settled in Jullundhar, Punjab. He belonged to a generation caught between two decisive phases of the Indian national movement — the extremist phase of Lal-Bal-Pal and the Gandhian phase of non-violent mass action.

Two leaders who worked in Punjab in the first decade of the 20th century were Sardar Ajit Singh, Bhagat Singh's paternal uncle and Sardar Kishen Singh, Bhagat Singh's father. Both opposed the mainstream leadership of the Indian National Congress, Lala Lajpat Rai in particular. Both brothers were radical in trying to attempt to mobilize the masses against the British at every available opportunity.

In 1887, the Chenab Colony was formed by the Punjab government through the diversion of the Chenab river into a system of canals. This transformed central Punjab, which was otherwise lying barren and waste, into fertile agricultural land. This colony was supposed to serve as a model for the rest of Punjab. A paternalistic form of administration and supervision was planned for it. The intention was to establish healthy and strong agricultural communities capable of demonstrating to other Punjabis the benefits of proper sanitation, careful economic planning and co-operation with the government in the form of a higher standard of living.

The Punjab Colonization of Land Bill was introduced in October 1906, in the local Legislative Council. The Bill established retroactive conditions pertaining to sanitation, tree planting and construction in the Chenab colony. Any breach of conditions would invite fines collected just like revenue. Section 31 ruled that courts would have no jurisdiction in the colony. In November, the government increased the occupier rate (charge on canal water) drastically.

In the Bari Doab canal area, the government had been lenient and exacted lower rates hoping that this leniency would ensure the loyalty of the Sikh Jats in the districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Lahore. These Sikh Jats formed the majority of the recruits for the Indian Army.

The farmers of the colony were not happy with the administration in the colony. They were against the extra legal fees that the Bill aimed at legitimizing. Graft and corruption had galvanized the whole colony into opposing the entire system of interference and paternalism. In 1903, a retired postal office, Sifaj-ud Din Ahmed, started the *Zamindar*, a newspaper, that publicized the plight of the colonists. This discontent soon turned into political opposition.

Bhagat Singh's grandfather Sardar Arjan Singh eloquently explained why the British were against the Bill and the problems they were creating for the Indians. Sardar Arjan Singh had settled in Banga, Lyallpur, after migrating from the canal area and was aware of the difficulties that plagued the residents of the area.

On March 22 and 23, 1907, public meetings were organized to raise protest against the Bill. While the meetings represented the interests of the rich only, Sardar Arjan Singh dispatched representatives from the 'Bharat Mata Society' to launch a protest against the colonizer at the meeting venue. The newspaper authorities had asked Lala Lajpat Rai to give a speech on the issue. It was Bhagat Singh who later explained the differences of opinion between Sardar Arjan Singh and Lala Lajpat Rai while writing on the national movement in Punjab. He wrote: 'Before leaving (for Lyallpur) Lalaji sent a message to Sardar Ajit Singh saying that the government should be thanked for (a previous) amendment and then asked to repeat the law.' Sardar Arjan Singh was against 'thanking the government' and replied to Lala Lajpat Rai saying: 'We shall prepare the masses for a no revenue campaign'.

Bhagat Singh explained the details of the meeting as follows: 'Lalaji was received by a large rally and consequently reached the pandal two hours late. In the meanwhile, Sardar Ajit Singh gave a speech. He was an impressive speaker. His tireless style of

speech made the audience enthusiastic and by the end, he had a large following of people. By the time Lalaji reached the pandal, the masses were with the Bharat Mata Society; Lalaji was Punjab's finest orator but the style, the fearlessness and determination with which he spoke was something else. He received an ovation after every line. After the meeting many people dedicated their lives to the motherland.'

The account of this meeting has been mentioned by scholar N. Gerald Barrier too, who wrote stating: 'Lajpat Rai attempted to be moderate, but as happened frequently with his speech making, the crowds' frenzy drove him to use phrases and ideas verging on what the British termed 'sedition'. After the meeting, Lajpat Rai went on a lecture tour in the United Provinces, while Ajit Singh began to organize the farmers of Amritsar and Lahore. Under Ajit Singh's leadership, the colonists passed a resolution supporting a boycott of British goods and started a campaign to ensure that nobody paid the new water rate. The price of disobedience was social ostracism by the offender's caste or a fine of ₹ 500. The Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, Denzil Ibbetson, believed sedition in the province to be taking two directions. First, Ajit Singh was trying to spread disaffection among the troops and the students and secondly, the 'fomenters of unrest' were corrupting the yeomanry. He asked the Government of India for permission to deport Ajit Singh and Lajpat Rai so as to be able to 'strike terror in the minds of those concerned'. Ajit Singh was deported to Mandalay. Sardar Kishen Singh, though less prominent than his brother was also part of this agitation and was put into jail.'

Ajit Singh and Kishen Singh were released from the jail soon after the Bill was repealed in 1907. Bhagat Singh was born in the same year, in the month of September. He was originally christened as Bhaganwala, which means the child of god, by his grandmother.

It was in the District Board Primary School in Banga that Bhagat Singh received his primary education. After a severe earthquake that shook Kangra in 1916-17, Bhagat Singh's father shifted base to Lahore in order to organize relief work for the victims. Bhagat Singh was simultaneously admitted to D.A.V. High School in Lahore. He later admitted in his writings that his father inspired him to devote his life to the cause of the nation and its freedom.

Bhagat Singh's first letter was to his grandfather. At the age of 12, he wrote to Sardar Ajit Singh to inform that he had effortlessly passed his school exam. Two years later, he wrote to him again, this time to apprise him of the plan of the railway staff to go on a strike. This letter was dated November 12, 1921, and revealed his knowledge of the Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement against the British.

In 1923, Bhagat Singh joined the National College, Lahore, which was affiliated to the Punjab Quami Vidya Pith and was founded and managed by Lala Lajpat Rai and Bhai Parmanand. The college was set up as an alternative to the institutions run by the Government, introducing the concept of 'Swadeshi' to the field of education. The college was established with the philosophy of producing 'self-reliant and aggressive men and women that were required by India for progress.

Bhagat Singh's academic record was rather impressive. He was a member of the college dramatics society and seemed to have been popular with not just the teachers and students of his own college but also of other colleges. His energy, youthfulness, commanding voice and strong physique impressed everyone.

Bhagat Singh was fluent in Urdu, Hindi, Gurmukhi, English and Sanskrit. In one of his writings, he says that he was liked by some professors and disliked by others but

was never an industrious or studious boy. He says that he was a shy boy who was pessimistic about his future and career. He did not get a chance to indulge in feelings of vanity.

By the time he was 16, Bhagat Singh was totally dedicated to the cause of national liberation. In 1924, his family pressurized him to get married. Finding it impossible to convince his parents of his determination to remain single, he left his house in Lahore. He travelled to Kanpur with an introduction by Jai Chandra Vidyalankar for Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi.

He left a note addressed to his father where he asked for forgiveness and reminded his parents that he was meant to serve his country as was stated by his grandfather during his thread ceremony. Bhagat Singh told his classmate and friend, Jaidev Gupta, that the path he had decided to tread was full of possibilities. Before him, his two uncles who had chosen a similar path had left their wives widowed. Therefore, he did not want to add another widow to the clan. In fact, he even insisted that Chhabil Das, his professor should not get married. When Chhabil Das asked him why he should not tie the knot with someone who would be an encouraging companion and would also support his cause, Bhagat Singh could not reply.

Bhagat Singh worked with Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi for a year bringing out a weekly nationalist newspaper called *Pratap*. Here, Bhagat Singh worked under the alias Balwant. He met people like B.K. Dutt, Shiv Venna and B.K. Sinha who became his good friends. With Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi's efforts, Bhagat Singh, eventually accepted the post of headmaster of a National school near Aligarh.

In 1924, Bhagat Singh became a member of the Hindustan Republican Association, a year old organization started by Sachindranath Sanyal. Chandra Shekhar Azad was the main organizer of the association, and he later became a very good friend of Bhagat Singh. As a member of the HRA, Bhagat Singh began consider the philosophy of the bomb seriously. He realized that British imperialism could be fought only with an armed revolution. He travelled from one village to another recruiting people and activating the villages in the United Provinces.

In 1925, Bhagat Singh returned to Lahore and within the next year, he and his colleagues launched a militant youth organization called the Naujawan Bharat Sabha. In April 1926, Bhagat Singh contacted Sohan Singh Josh and through him the 'Workers and Peasants Party' responsible for bringing out the monthly magazine *Kirti* in Punjabi. Bhagat Singh joined the editorial board of the magazine and worked with Josh for the next year. In 1927, he was first arrested for his association with the Kakori case accused for an article written under the pseudonym Vidrohi (Rebel). He was also charged with the responsibility of a bomb explosion at Lahore during the Dussehra festival. However, he was let off owing to his good behaviour against a heavy security of ₹ 60,000.

In 1928, Bhagat Singh and Chandra Shekhar Azad were only ones associated with the Kakori case who were absconding. With all the other leaders in prison, they were the only ones left to lead the Hindustan Republican Association.

Many, including Ajoy Ghosh swear by the passion and power with which Bhagat Singh spoke. According to him, 'All those who met Bhagat Singh then and afterwards have testified to his remarkable intelligence and to the powerful impression he made when talking. Not that he was a brilliant speaker. But he spoke with such force, passion and earnestness that one could not help being impressed. We talked the whole night and as we went out for a stroll... it seemed to me that a new era was dawning for our party. We knew what we wanted and we knew how to reach our goal'.

Even the reactionary activities of the extremist school of leaders could not satisfy the Indian youths. They opposed the British with the use of violence through pistol and bomb. They maintained that the tyranny and oppression of the government was to be handled with one-point programme, i.e., by murdering the British officers involved in atrocities.

Revolutionary terrorist tradition

From 1927 to 1928, Bhagat Singh studied the history of the revolutionary movement in India. His articles, mostly written for *Kirti*, dealt with the Babbar Akali Movement, the Kakori case, the Delhi bomb case, individual revolutionaries, the necessity for the youth to join the revolutionary movement and the need to evolve an alternative to the mainstream leadership of the Congress and particularly, Lala Lajpat Rai.

The first article Bhagat Singh wrote for the *Pratap* in 1926 was about the Babbar Akali movement, which was an attempt by Sikhs to liberate the country from the British and also to liberate their Gurudwaras from the corrupt Mahants. This outfit comprised of members from the rural areas of Bist Doab. The movement was led by soldiers who had left the army to join the Non Co-operation movement. It was decided to murder Sunder Singh Majitha, Bedi Kartar Singh, Mahant Devdas of Nankana, C.M. Bowring, the Superintendent of Police and C.M. King, Commissioner, Jullunder. This was a way of retaliating against the massacre of 140 Sikhs that Mahant Narayandas organized in Nankana Sahib on the February 21. The Babbar Akali group, however, was unable to kill anybody but the attempt at Bowring's assassination had landed them in jail. This is known as the Akali conspiracy case of 1921.

The movement impressed Bhagat Singh so much that he began to learn Gurmukhi after the Nankana Sahib massacre. He was most impressed by the fearlessness with which these men were willing to embrace death (six of the leaders were sentenced to death and executed on the 27 February, 1926). Bhagat Singh in his writings urges readers to visualize how these men must have taken the pledge to forsake their families and sacrifice their life for the country, 'What a beautiful, bewitching and pure vision it must have been. What are the heights of self-sacrifice? Where are the limits of courage and fearlessness?'

The members of the Hindustan Republican Association stopped the train carrying the government treasury at Kakori, near Lucknow and looted the train. The leaders, Ramprasad Bismil and Ashfaqullah were sentenced to death in April 1927.

Bhagat Singh was impressed by the camaraderie that existed between the accused and the willingness and happiness with which they accepted their death sentence. The article ends with a comment on those who do not sympathize with the accused, 'We sigh and think we have done our duty. We do not have that fire, we do not suffer, for we have become corpses. Today they are sitting on a hunger-strike and suffering and we are silently watching the show. May God grant them the strength and courage they need in their last few days.'

Bhagat Singh saw Kartar Singh Sarabha as his 'mentor, friend and brother'. Sarabha was born in 1896 in Ludhiana. After completing college, he went to America in 1912, where he encountered racial discrimination and realized what Indians were subjected to abroad. He organized Indian workers in San Francisco who were willing to sacrifice their life and wealth for the cause of India's liberation. In 1913 the *Ghadar* newspaper was launched by Sarabha. Sarabha came back to India in 1914 and got in touch with the leaders of the revolution. In February 1915, Sarabha and Rash Behari Bose decided to

infiltrate the army and tried to trigger off a revolt. They did not succeed because a member of their group betrayed them and Sarabha was arrested and sentenced to death.

In May 1928, *Kirti* reprinted an article published in the Bombay newspaper *Shradhanand* on 'terrorism' and its true meaning. Being a member of the editorial board, Bhagat Singh and his comrades actively participated in the debate on the contemporary ideology of terrorism. The article was an attempt at defending terrorism by going against the definition of terrorism as an unjust, coercive and destructive force. The article highlighted the fact that while in the West '...every country is attempting to increase the arms at its disposal. On the other hand, here in India, it is considered a sin to take up arms.' It appeals to the readers to not equate violence with crime, for 'when patriots take up arms for the sake of their country and its safety, when they eliminate exploitation and oppression or when they avenge the injustice done to the oppressed and go to the gallows, they use violence but they do not spread terror'. Bhagat Singh and his comrades sought to distinguish between crime and terrorism, saying that even though they were both associated with violence, the intention behind them is different.

Bhagat Singh, despite being aware of the revolutionary terrorist tradition that had existed in the country as a mode of protest against the British, especially in the Punjab, stayed away from his predecessors because:

- (i) The revolutionary leaders had failed to accept the logic of atheism and could not proclaim it publicly.
- (ii) There was no concept of a post-independence society. Though the immediate goal was to destroy the British Empire, no political alternative had been worked out.

For Bhagat Singh, the turning point came when the leadership of the Hindustan Republican Association fell on his shoulders. Without delay he articulated the necessity of having a political ideology, and that was to be Marxism.

From 1926, Bhagat Singh began to study so that he was well equipped to counter criticism from opponents, present strong arguments and defend them. The most important need was to clearly state the ideals for which they were fighting. There was sufficient time for studying as there had been no real agitation in 1926.

Marxism and Bhagat Singh

Bhagat Singh became a revolutionary once he arrived in Kanpur. Kanpur, being an industrial city had a sizeable population consisting of urban proletariat. From the year 1926 onwards, Bhagat Singh had even come in contact with Sohan Singh Josh as well as the Workers and Peasants Party. This marked the turning phase in his life.

From 1926, as Bhagat Singh began studying the history of the revolutionary movement in India and the world, he was able to appreciate the need to fight imperialism through a broad-based people's movement. He quoted extensively from Lenin and Trotsky while writing notes in prison. He read the *Communist Manifesto* and realized that a bourgeois revolution was not the solution for a country oppressed by capitalism.

He also realized that without violence it would not be possible to bring about a change in the social structure. The perception of the existence of class cleavages in society also led to the understanding that violence would be imperative to bring about a change in the social structure.

The Communist Party of India was formed in 1925-26 and went underground almost immediately after its inception. Before six years were up, Bhagat Singh was executed.

Organization and Strategy

The first organization that Bhagat Singh became an active part of was the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) in 1924. His association with HRA taught him two things that were mandatory for a political organization:

- (i) To seek the company of like-minded individuals so that despite the size of the organization being small, the party could continue to function and operate smoothly.
- (ii) The need to launch a newspaper, along with notices and pamphlets, to convey revolutionary ideas to the people and evoke their interest in revolutionary activities

As part of the editorial team of *Kirti*, Bhagat Singh got to work with Sohan Singh Josh and the 'Workers and Peasants Party'. This association made him realize the significance of forming a revolutionary party in Punjab and recruiting new people for the cause of the revolution. Bhagat Singh was active in Punjab and together with his comrades he formed the Naujawan Bharat Sabha. However, nobody knows clearly as to who were his comrades or what role he played in founding the group. This Sabha was described by many as a revolt of the middle class against the leadership of the Congress; as a party of the middle class who wished to be free from the imperialist yoke. The first conference of the Sabha was held from the 12th to the 14th of April 1928.

The same year, Bhagat Singh also shouldered the responsibility of the Hindustan Republican Association with Chandrashekhar Azad. Bhagat Singh first changed the name of the organization to the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. There was a central committee, with provincial committees as well as committees at the district level under it. These committees were responsible for taking all major decisions, which in turn were binding to all. The HSRA collapsed when Azad was shot in 1930. There were personal issues, conflicts and charges due to which the atmosphere was corrupted. However, as the Workers and Peasants Party worked in collaboration with the Naujawan Bharat Sabha, the latter was able to withstand the collapse of the HSRA and even managed to take its place in Punjab.

The Naujawan Bharat Sabha welcomed any man or woman between 18 and 35 years of age who approved of and agreed to its aims and objects of establishing a completely independent Republic of labourers and peasants throughout the country.

The organization was divided into the following:

- The Naujawan Bharat Sabha Conference
- The Naujawan Bharat Sabha, Punjab
- The Naujawan Bharat Sabha according to districts
- The Naujawan Bharat Sabha according to tehsils
- The Naujawan Bharat Sabha according to police stations
- The reception committee of the Naujawan Bharat Sabha

A central body was created in 1928. Within a year, branches were opened in different parts of Punjab and even in Peshawar. The party was no doubt organized very well because it managed to deal with paucity of funds, arms as well as manpower. It built a close-knit unit that facilitated decision-making and helped prevent espionage and infiltration. The prominent leaders were Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Rajguru, Bhagwaticharan Vobra, Kedarnath Sehgal and Chandra Shekhar Azad.

In October, 1928, the British government of India appointed the Simon Commission to look into the possibility of granting India the chance to rule itself. The fact that this Commission did not have any Indian representative made it the focus of popular attack in Lahore. Lajpat Rai led a demonstration that asked the Simon Commission to return to England. In retaliation, the police resorted to lathi charge. Lala Lajpat Rai who was already old and weak, died subsequently.

The revolutionary terrorists, although critical of Lajpat Rai's politics, vowed to avenge his death. Bhagat Singh, with Sukhdev, Rajguru and Azad, assassinated the Assistant Superintendent of Police, J.P. Saunders, who was believed to have hit Lala Lajpat Rai directly. The quartet then went underground.

At a time when there was no television, the radio and newspapers were the only available means of spreading information. Polemical pamphlets were published. However, not everybody read these pamphlets. Therefore, groups garnered support by courting arrest and then carrying on propaganda challenging the trial. Within the prison, they tried to foment an agitation amongst the native policemen. Most of us know Bhagat Singh as that immortal freedom fighter whose most common photograph shows him smiling, seated on a cot, with crossed feet, handcuffs and tilted head. This image was taken when he was the first arrested in the Dussehra bomb case.

The nature of colonial oppression was such that the rights of prisoners, political prisoners in particular, were infringed upon. This posed an opportunity of confrontation with the British regime. The press developed enough to ensure that any confrontation would be reported to the public.

The government introduced the Public Safety Bill in March 1928, in the Legislative Assembly. The bill was rejected by the Indian members in 1929. The Viceroy tried to pass it as an ordinance. The Naujawan Bharat Sabha passed resolutions that opposed this and the Trade Dispute Bill and it finally decided to intervene directly. On 8 April 1929, Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt threw a small explosive in the Assembly and waited to be arrested. Bhagat Singh's trial began in May and on 6th June, Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt, as representatives of the HSRA, declared that they had dropped the bomb on the floor of the Assembly Chamber to register their protest 'on behalf of those who had no other means left to give expression to their heart-rending agony.' They said that their aim was to 'make the deaf hear'.

On 12 June, Bhagat Singh was sentenced to transportation in the Assembly Bomb case. On the 15 June he launched a hunger strike to bring about jail reforms. On 10 July 1929, the trial of the Lahore Conspiracy Case began and ended on the 7 October 1930, with a death sentence. Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were hanged on the 23 March 1931.

4.5 MUSLIM POLITICS AND THE FOUNDATION OF MUSLIM LEAGUE

The anti-partition movement of Bengal was entirely the handiwork of the national leadership of Bengal and not just of a particular section of the movement. At the initial stage, its prominent leaders belonged to the moderate faction, e.g., Surendranath Banerjee and Krishna Kumar Mitra. However, during the later stages militant and revolutionary nationalists took over the movement. Actually, both the moderate and militant nationalists functioned in unity during the course of the movement. The anti-partition movement

began on 7 August 1905. On this day, in the Town Hall of Calcutta a massive demonstration against partition was organized. Starting from this meeting, the delegates spread the movement to the various parts of the province.

The Partition came into effect on 16 October 1905. Throughout Bengal, it was declared as a day of national mourning by the leaders of the protest movement. It was observed as a day of fasting. There were *hartals* in Calcutta. In the early morning hours, people walked barefooted and took bath in the Ganga. The national song, '*Amar Sonar Bangla*,' was composed by Rabindranath Tagore for the occasion. It was sung by massive crowds peacefully doing the rounds in the streets. The song was in fact adopted as its national anthem by Bangladesh in 1971 after liberation.

The streets in Calcutta buzzed with the slogans of '*Bande Mataram*' which overnight became the national song of Bengal and very soon became the theme song of the national movement as well. The Raksha Bandhan ceremony was used in a new manner. Hindus and Muslims tied the *rakhi* on one another's wrists to mark the unbreakable unity and harmony among the Bengalis and between the two halves of Bengal. A great demonstration took place in the afternoon when the veteran leader Ananda Mohan Bose laid the foundation of a Federation Hall to symbolize the unity of Bengal.

Purification of their religion was the main aim of the Islamic socio-religious movements in India. Some of the important socio-religious movements in Islam in the country have been the Ahmadiyya movement, the Faraizi movement, the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement and the Aligarh movement, among others. To motivate the Muslims to join these socio-religious movements, their initiators drew upon the dynamics of the society. However, not all these movements wanted to achieve the same end; their aims and objectives differed and so their strategies. Thus, while some of them wanted to "purify the religion", others tried to form and propagate the idea of an Islamic state that would follow "a sanctified form of Islam and also re-establish the religion to its proper position".

The Ahmadiyya Movement

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at (community) movement was launched by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad on 23 March, 1889. The movement was envisioned as a contribution to the revitalization of Islam. The movement was introduced by the Ahmadis, who considered themselves to be a part of the Muslim community. They were also among the earliest of the Muslim communities to settle across many Western countries, including Britain.

Ahmadis or Ahmadi Muslims are the names given to the followers of the Ahmadiyya movement. They also claimed to observe the Islamic religion and practices in their pristine form. However, their opinions on some of the beliefs of Islam brought them at loggerheads with the orthodox Muslims since the movement was launched. The orthodox Muslims argued that the Ahmadiyyas were not a part of the Muslim community. To support their argument, the orthodox Muslims cited the Ahmadiyyas' belief on the death and return of Jesus Christ, their concept of jihad in its peaceful format and their view of the finality of prophethood with particular reference to the interpretation of Quran 33:40.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908), however, claimed himself to be a Mujaddid, a divine reformer of the fourteenth Islamic century, the promised Messiah and Mahdi awaited by the Muslims. The Ahmadis emphasized that humanity's final dispensation lay in the Islamic religion, as was revealed by the Mohammad, and thus it needed to be

restored in its pristine form and true essence which had been lost for many centuries. However, the Ahmadiyyas share many of their beliefs with the Islamic religion, including the prophethood of Muhammad, reverence for historical prophets, and belief in the oneness of God (tawhid). Ahmadiyyas also accept Quran as their holy text, face the Kaaba during prayer, accept the authority of Hadiths (reported sayings of and stories about Muhammad) and practice the Sunnah. The only difference is that to their belief, the central is the faith upon Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the promised *messiah* and *mahdi*. The Ahmadis considered themselves to be the revivalists of the Islamic religion and also its peaceful propagators. They emphasized on the implementation of the Kalima (the fundamental creed of Islam), believing it to be linked to the Islamic principles of the rights of God and the rights of His creation (mankind).

As per the belief of the Ahmadis, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was commissioned by the supreme god as true reflection of Muhammad's prophethood and gave him the duty to remind the mankind of their duties towards god and his creation. The Ahmadiyya perspective argues that the Christians erred vis-à-vis the rights of god and gave a mortal human being the status of god. It is on this account, the Ahmadiyya further argued, that in Islamic eschatology Mahdi was the name given to the promised reformed. Mahdi refers to the 'Guided One' — a title referring to the One who is naturally guided and is an heir to all truths and in whom the attribute of 'guide' of the Almighty is fully represented. Furthermore, the Ahmadis argued that even the Muslims erred vis-à-vis the rights of creation. They pointed to the belief of jihad and said the Muslims raised their swords unjustly in the name of jihad, without understanding the real meaning of the concept and its purpose in Islam. Thus, the Ahmadis called the prophet Isa Messih ('Jesus the Messiah') — which refers to his function towards the re-establishment of the rights of people and reformation of their "distorted, violent notion of jihad". The view is similar to the argument that Jesus Christ came to Earth essentially to reform the hearts and attitudes of the Jewish nation. Ahmadiyyas also give preference to their faith over the pursuit of material things. This is a fundamental principle of Ahmadiyya teachings, which emphasizes on the present times which are synonymous with materialistic pursuits.

In present times, the Ahmadiyyas have been reduced to a minority and are marginalized across several Islamic countries. Separate rules for the Ahmadiyyas in these countries entail severe prosecution and their systematic oppression and exclusion over the years has led Ahmadiyyas to migrate and settle in better places.

Distinct Ahmadiyya Beliefs

The Muslims and the Ahmadis share some of the central values of Islam (like following prayers, charity, fasting) as well as the six articles of belief, some of the distinct Ahmadiyya beliefs include the following:

- (i) The prophecies that Jesus Christ had a second coming were only metaphorical and not literal. It was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who fulfilled all such prophecies and also the second coming of Jesus. They believe he was the promised Mahdi and Messiah.
- (ii) Divine revelation continues. While Quran's message is final for the entire mankind, God continues to communicate with the mankind through His chosen individuals in the same way that He did in the past. Thus, all of god's attributes are eternal.
- (iii) Contrary to the mainstream Islamic belief, Jesus was crucified. He also survived the Rise of Militant Nationalism four hours on the Cross. He was later revived from a swoon in the tomb. As per the Ahmadis and beliefs of communalism,

Jesus died in Kashmir of old age whilst seeking the Lost Tribes of Israel. His remains are believed to be entombed in Kashmir under the name Yuz Asaf. Ahmadis argue that Jesus foretold the coming of Muhammad after him and the Christians have misinterpreted it.

- (iv) No new religion or law was brought about by Jesus Christ. That is, Jesus was not a law-bearing prophet and was the last in the line of Israelite prophets who appeared within the dispensation of Moses, akin to that of David, Solomon, Jeremiah and Isaiah.
- (v) That 'Messiah' and 'Imam Mahdi' are same person. It is through his teachings, his prayers and influence and those of his followers that the religion of Islam will be able to defeat the anti-Christ or Dajjal in a period similar to the time it took Christianity, which was then in its early stages, to rise. They further argue that the Dajjal's power will slowly fade away, ushering in the final victory of Islam and the age of peace.
- (vi) That every seven millennia, the history of religion which is cyclic, is renewed. Since the time of the Biblical Adam, the cycle of time is split into seven epochs or ages. It is parallel to the seven days of the week, with periods for light and darkness. They argue that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad appeared during the sixth epoch as the promised Messiah before the initiation of the seventh and final age of mankind. This is so because a day spent in the estimation of God is like a thousand years of man's reckoning. Ghulam Ahmad argued that just as the sixth day of the week was reserved for Jumu'ah (congregational prayers), similarly in his age the world would unite under one religion, which is Islam.
- (vii) There exist two Ahmadiyya groups which hold different beliefs regarding the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad. One of these is the Ahmadiyya Muslim community. It believes that perfection was brought upon prophethood by Muhammad and that he was the last law-bearing prophet and the apex of humankind's spiritual evolution. They argue that while new prophets will come, they will only be subordinates to Muhammad and will not be able to supersede his excellence nor alter his teachings or introduce any new law or religion. On the other hand, the Lahore Ahmadiyya movement argued that Muhammad was the last of prophet and no prophet, new or old, will come after him.

Faraizi Movement

Faraizi movement was a significant socio-religious reform movement, formed by Haji Shariatullah during the nineteenth century. Its main objective was to put into practice and impose 'mandatory religious duties ordained by Allah'. Hazi Shariatullah contended that the responsibility of the Faraizis was to follow every religious duty that had been propagated by the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet.

Improper beliefs and behaviour of Indian Muslims made Shariatullah uncomfortable and he called upon them to purify their religion and duly follow its practices. He impressed upon them to return to faraiz (the obligatory duties of Islam), specifically the profession of faith (kalimah). Moreover, he urged them to attend daily prayers (salat or namaz), fast during Ramadan (sawm or rozah), pay the poor tax (zakat) and also go to pilgrimage to Mecca (Haj). They also criticized practices of worship held at the shrines of various Islamic saints, rituals connected with the birth of a child or with circumcision and also the intense wailing at ceremonies to honour the Shiah heroes, al-Hasan and al-Husain.

Dudu Miyan and Naya Miyan are two important leaders of the Faraizi movement, besides Hazi Shariatullah. R

Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah Movement

A significant movement of the Islamic community was the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement. It was founded by Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi. He was born on 29 November, 1786, in Rai Bareilly. In 1806, his initiation into the Islamic religion, also called as *baiat*, came from Shah Abdul Aziz at Delhi. Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi became one of his religious disciples. He was also introduced to the three sufi orders at the same time. Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi aspired to create an Islamic state where a purified form of Islam would be followed and where religion will be established in its original position of political and cultural supremacy. He thus propagated his own vision of a purified and restored Islam. However, this was an armed movement and the struggle was started in April 1824 where the followers of the movement called for removal of erroneous innovations, all elements of polytheism and idolatry and rejection of customs and rituals from the Indian, Roman and Persian civilisations.

The followers of the movement collected funds and recruited people for the spread of the movement. In Peshwar in November 1826, the followers started their fight with the Sikhs from Yusufzai which was dominated by the tribal population. However, the war did not last for long and despite success in the form of capture of the city of Peshwar in 1830, the followers of the movement had to abandon the city the same year. In 1831, Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi and many of his followers were killed during the battle of Balakot, giving the movement a severe blow. While his followers have attempted to revive the movement many times after his death, these were not successful.

Aligarh movement

Another prominent socio-religious Islamic movement was the Aligarh movement. Its leader was Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who was born in a well-to-do family. His childhood was spent in and out of the Mughal court. He was well-versed with the work of Shah Wali Ullah and also studied Arabic and Persian according to the older pattern. His personality closely resembled that of a courtier or government official than an ulama. This was despite the fact that he received no religious education. Sayyid Ahmad Khan was of the belief that it was with the fortunes of the Muslims, especially those who resided in northern India, where the future of Islam rested. His writings attracted large number of followers and he formed many public forums to spread his ideas. Soon after, he became a prominent leader of the Muslim community.

4.5.1 Formation of All India Muslim League

On 1 October 1906, under the leadership of Aga Khan, a 35-member delegation assembled at Simla to present a proposal to Lord Minto. The proposal appealed for a proportionate representation of the Muslims in government jobs, appointment of Muslim candidates in the administrative services, judiciary and others. This assembly of the Muslims came to be known as the Simla Deputation. However, the Simla Deputation did not yield positive results; it worked as a catalyst for the formation of the All India Muslim League (AIML).

Under the strong leadership of the Aligharians, the movement for a separate Muslim created a political awakening among the Muslims. The ideology of exclusivism sowed the seeds of communalism, which gradually led to the formation of the AIML. It was established in 1906 in Dhaka under the leadership of Nawab Sallimullah, Chairman

of the reception committee and convener of the political meeting. A 56-member provisional committee was constituted. Prominent Muslim leaders from different parts of the country joined the Muslim league. Few Congress leaders like Ali Imam, Hasan Imam, Mazharul Haque (barristers from Bihar) and Hami Ali Khan (barrister from Lucknow) were included in the committee. Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk were jointly made the secretaries. After Mohsin-ul-Mulk's death in 1907, Viqar-ul-Mulk took charge of the league. The Muslim League held its first session in Lahore in December 1907 with Adamjee Peerbhoy as its President.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, a prominent Congress leader, though in favour of the Muslim League, did not join it until 1913. He even successfully contested against the League candidate for election of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. However, within the Congress, he tried to bargain for one-third reservation for his community. The formation of AIML (All-India Muslim League) was a major landmark in the history of modern India. The first ever political party exclusively for Muslims had the following objectives:

- (i) To promote feelings of loyalty among the Muslims for the British government and remove any misconceptions.
- (ii) To increase the political rights and interests of the Muslims in India and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the government.
- (iii) To prevent the rise among the Muslims of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the afore-mentioned objects of the League. Initially, the AIML was an organization of urbanized elite Muslims that went on to become the sole representative body of Indian Muslims with the support of the British government. In order to face the challenges of the modern political system, the league successfully achieved a separate electorate within three years of its establishment. The electorate was a considerable achievement for the party and the Lucknow Pact of 1916 gave a separate identity to the Muslims; another landmark in the separatist movement launched by the AIML.

4.6 GROWTH OF COMMUNALISM

Communalism is basically an ideology. It is the belief that in India Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians are from different and distinct communities. Inherent in communalism is the second notion that the social, cultural, economic and political interests of the followers of one religion are dissimilar and divergent from the interests of the followers of another religion. When religious 'communities' are seen to be mutually incompatible, antagonistic and hostile communalism is said to be at its apex. Thus, at this stage, the communalists assert that Hindus and Muslims cannot have common secular interests, and that their secular interests are bound to be opposed to each other.

To look upon the communal problem in India merely as the Hindu-Muslim question or of religious antagonism between the Hindus and the Muslims is misleading. Apart from the Hindus and the Muslims, there was third party in the Communal triangle—the British rulers who interposed themselves between the Hindus and the Muslims and thus, created a communal triangle of which they remained the base.

4.6.1 Anti-Muslim British Policy

The strongest arm of the communal triangle was the British rulers. They were neither the true friends of the Muslims, nor the foes of the Hindus; they were the true friends of British imperialism and acted on the tested and tried maxim divide and rule.

Until the seventies of 19th century, it suited the imperial interest to support the Hindus and they did it. The early British economic and educational policies benefited the Hindus more than the Muslims. The result of these policies was the catastrophe of 1857. Even before the Mutiny of 1857, the Muslims had revolted against the British Government under the Wahabi leaders.

The British Government ruthlessly suppressed the movement; but it manifested itself in the form of the mutiny. The prime movers in the mutiny of 1857 were the Muslim Wahabis. As the British considered the Muslims to be responsible for the Mutiny, they were treated very severely after 1858.

However, a change in British policy is perceptible towards the 1870s. The Hindus, politically more advanced than the Muslims, demanded more share for Indians in higher services, agitated for grant of political rights, introduction of representative government, etc. The Hindu posed a serious menace to the stability of British rule in India than the politically, economically and educationally backward Muslims. This marked the beginning of a change in British policy towards the two communities. W. W. Hunter's book, *The Indian Mussalmans* (published in 1871) described 'the Muslims too weak for Rebellion', pleaded for a change of official attitude towards the Muslims community. Theodore Beck, the first British principal of the newly started Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, played a notable role in mobilizing Muslim opinion and influencing British policy towards the Muslims. He urged the Muslims to support the British for their safety.

4.6.2 Role of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan

Sayyid Ahmad Khan (Figure 4.1) became a staunch opponent of the Indian National Congress and he fell into line with the British imperialists.

Principal Beck was able to convince Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan that 'while an Anglo-Muslim alliance would ameliorate the condition of the Muslim community, the nationalist alignment would lead them once again to sweat, toil and tears.'



Fig. 4.1 Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan

Sayyid Ahmad Khan started his political career as an advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity. He had described the Hindus and Muslims as 'two eyes of the beautiful bride that

was India.' He had declared in 1884 at Gurdaspur that the Hindus and Muslims should try to become of one heart and soul and act in unison. 'If united, we can support each other. If not, the effect of one against the other would tend to the destruction and downfall of both,' he said. Contrast with this, Sir Sayyid's speech at Meerut on 16 March 1888, where he maintained that the Hindus and Muslims were not only two nations, but as two warring nations who could never lead a common political life, should ever the British quit India. The Muslim demand for separate electorates almost synchronized with the introduction of the system of election in the constitution of local bodies. Speaking in the Central Legislature in January 1883 on Ripon's Bill for establishment of local self-government in the Central Provinces, Khan referred to the vital difference between different races and religions and the unequal or disproportionate progress of education among different sections of the population. He said that the fear that any system of election, pure and simple, would result in the larger community overriding the interest of the smaller community. A true devotee of the Muslim cause, Sayyid Ahmad Khan was fully aware of Muslim backwardness in the fields of education and politics and came to the conclusion that India was not fit for the introduction of Western political institutions like representative or responsible government, for his community could not get its due share in it. His policy was based on fear of permanent domination of Muslims by Hindus educationally, economically and politically.

The Anglo-Indian administrators were quick to work on Muslim apprehensions and strove to drive a wedge between the Hindus and the Muslims. The three English principals of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, Beck, Morrison and Archbold, gave the pro-British and anti-Hindu bias to the Aligarh Movement. The Aligarh Movement worked to instil into the minds of the Muslims a spirit of loyalty towards the British Crown and worked consciously and deliberately to keep them away from the mainstream of Indian political life. In August 1888, Sayyid Ahmad Khan set up the United Indian Patriotic Association with the avowed object of countering the Congress propaganda and policy in England and in India. This was followed a few years later (1893) by the exclusively sectarian Muhammadan Anglo Oriental Defence Association of Upper India to keep the Muslims aloof from political agitation and to strengthen British rule in India.

4.6.3 Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 and Communalism

The Morley-Minto Reforms introduced the system of separate electorate under which all Muslims were grouped in separate constituencies from which Muslims alone could be elected. This was done in the name of protecting the Muslim minority. But in reality, this was a part of the policy of dividing Hindus and Muslims and maintaining British supremacy in India. The system of separate electorates was based on the notion that the political and economic interests of Hindus and Muslims were separate. This 'notion was unscientific because religions cannot be the basis of political and economic interest or of political groupings. What is even more important, this system proved extremely harmful in practice. It checked the progress of India's unification, which had been a continuous historical process. It became a potent factor in the growth of communalism in the country. Instead of removing the educational and economic backwardness among the middle class Muslims and integrating them into the mainstream of Indian nationalism, the system of separate electorates tended to perpetuate their isolation from the eloping nationalist movement. It encouraged separatist agencies. It prevented people from concentrating on economic political problems, which were common to all Indians—Hindu or Muslim.

4.6.4 Communalism: An Interpretation of Indian History

British writers on Indian history also served the imperial cause by initiating, developing and emphasizing the Hindu-Muslim approach in their study of Indian history and development of Indian culture. This communal approach to history also imitated by Indian scholars and fostered the communal way of thinking. For example, the ancient period of a history was described as Hindu Period and the medieval period labelled as Muslim Period of Indian history, implying thereby that religion was the guiding force behind politics throughout the course of Indian history. True, both the rulers and the ruled, not often used religious slogans to suit their material and political ambitions, but it was certainly a distortion of history to infer-as was done by these writers-that all Muslims were the rulers and all Hindus were the ruled. In fact, the Muslim masses as poor, if not more, as the Hindu masses and were thoroughly oppressed and exploited by the Muslim rulers and their Hindu collaborators. All the same, this communal approach Indian history did foster divisive communal tendencies in Indian politics in the last quarter of the 19th century and first of the 20th century.

4.6.5 Militant Nationalism with Communal Overtone

Unfortunately, while militant nationalism was a great step forward in every other respect, it was to some extent responsible for the growth of communalism. The speeches and writings of some of the militant nationalists had a strong religious and Hindu tinge. In their search for national heroes and hero myths, the militant nationalists referred to Maharana Pratap, Shivaji and Guru Gobind Singh as national heroes and the Muslim rulers like Akbar, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb as 'foreigners'. The straight logic was that Pratap, Shivaji and Gobind Singh were nationalists because they were Hindus, and Mughal emperors were foreigners because they were Muslims. In reality, struggle between Pratap and Akbar or Shivaji and Aurangzeb to be viewed as a political struggle in its particular historical sitting. Besides, it was too much to assume that nationalism of the 20th century existed in the medieval period of Indian history. They emphasised ancient Indian culture to the exclusion of medieval Indian culture. They tried to abandon elements of composite culture. For example, Tilak's propagation of the Shivaji and Ganapati festivals, Aurobindo Ghosh's semi-mystical concept of India as mother and nationalism as religion, the terrorists' oath before goddess Kali and the initiation of the anti-partition agitation with the dips in Ganga could hardly be attached to the Muslims.

This does not mean that militant nationalists were anti-Muslim or even wholly communal. Most of them including Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Aurobindo and later Gandhiji were strong believers in Hindu-Muslim unity. True, the references to Hindu theology were intended to involve the politically inert masses into the nationalist struggle by explaining to them nationalism couched in a language within their comprehension, i.e., religious phraseology, but it did have the undesired effect of rousing Muslim communal susceptibilities-feelings cleverly exploited by the British rulers.

Economic backwardness: In the absence of any avenues of gainful employment in trade and industry, the British Indian Government remained the biggest employer to which the educated youth, hopefully, looked for their means of livelihood. The rulers to promote rivalry and discord among different sections of society cleverly used this enormous patronage in higher and subordinate service. This led to demoralization and conflict and the government could play one group against the other. Our nationalist leaders were fully aware of the mischievous character of this bait, but the hunger, rather compulsion, for loaves and fishes blinded them to its dangerous potentialities.

4.6.6 Foundation of the Muslim League

The separatist and loyalist tendencies among a section of the Muslim intelligentsia and the big Muslim nawabs and landlords reached a climax on 30 December 1906, when the All India Muslim League was founded under the leadership of the Aga Khan, the Nawab of Dhaka and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk. Founded as a loyalist, communal and conservative political organization, the League made no critique of colonialism, supported the partition of Bengal, raised the slogan of separate Muslim interests, demanded separate electorates and safeguards for Muslims in government services, and reiterated all the major themes of communal politics and ideology enunciated earlier by Sir Ahmad and his followers. The aims of the League were as follows:

From its very inception, the Muslim League was a communal body established to look after the political rights and interests of the Muslim community alone. Its political activities were directed not against the foreign rulers but against the Hindus and the National Congress. It, played into the hands of the British who announced that they would protect 'special interests' of the Muslims.

To increase its usefulness, the British also encouraged the Muslim League to approach the Muslim masses and to assume their leadership. It is true that the nationalist movement was as also dominated at this time by the educated town-dwellers but in its anti-imperialism, it was representing the interests of all Indians-rich or poor, Hindu or Muslim. On the other hand, the Muslim League and its upper class leaders had little in common with the interests of the Muslim masses, who were suffering as much as the Hindu masses at the hands of foreign imperialism.

This basic weakness of the League came to be increasingly recognized by the patriotic Muslims. The educated Muslim young men were, in particular, attracted by radical nationalist ideas. The militantly nationalist 'Ahrar Movement' was founded at this time under the leadership of Maulana Mohammed Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Hasan Imam, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and Mazhar-ul-Haq. These young men disliked the loyalist politics of the Aligarh School and the big nawabs and zamindars.

Similar nationalist sentiments were arising among a section of the traditional Muslim scholars led by the Deoband School. The young Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who propagated his rationalist and nationalist ideas in his newspaper *Al Hilal*, which he brought out in 1912 at the age of 24, was also a prominent Muslim scholar.

In 1911, war broke out between the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) and Italy and during 1912 and 1913, Turkey had to fight the Balkan powers. The Turkish ruler claimed to be the Caliph or religious head of all Muslims; moreover, nearly all of the Muslim holy places were situated within the Turkish Empire. A wave of sympathy for Turkey swept India. A medical mission, headed by Dr. M. A. Ansari, was sent to help Turkey. Since Britain's policy during the Balkan War and after was not sympathetic to Turkey, the pro-Turkey and pro-Caliph or Khilafat sentiments tended to become anti-imperialist. In fact, for several years (from 1912 to 1924), the loyalists among the Muslims Leaguers were completely overshadowed by nationalist young men.

Unfortunately, with the exception of a few persons like Azad who were rationalists in their thinking, most of the militant nationalists among Muslim young men did not fully accept the secular approach to politics. The result was that instead of understanding and opposing the economic and political consequences of imperialism, they fought imperialism on the ground that it threatened the Caliph and the holy places. Even their sympathy for Turkey was on religious grounds. Moreover, the heroes and myths and cultural traditions

they appealed, belonged not to ancient or medieval Indian history but to West Asian history. It is true that this approach did not immediately clash with Indian nationalism. Rather, it made its adherents and supporters anti-imperialist and encouraged the nationalist trend among urban Muslims. But in the long run, this approach too proved harmful, as it encouraged the habit of looking at political questions from a religious point of view. In any case, such political activity did not promote among the Muslim masses a modern, secular approach towards political and economic questions.

The elections results were a great disappointment to the Muslim League and Jinnah. It could not gain a majority even in the Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal. Jinnah who had parted company with the Congress in 1928, settled down in London in 1932 to practice law.

He returned to India in 1935 and led the Muslim League to the polls. The poor election results convinced Jinnah that the only way to counteract the Congress was to inflame communal feelings among the Muslims.

In Uttar Pradesh, the Congress rejected a demand for a coalition with the Muslim League, which fanned the fires of Muslim frustration. Some of the Congress leaders in Uttar Pradesh feared that if the Muslim League was brought into the ministry the Congress agrarian programme would suffer. The Uttar Pradesh legislature during the years 1937-46 justified the apprehensions of the Congress leaders. The Congress stood for democracy, socialism and a common Indian nationality, the League tried to promote the interests of only the Muslims in India.

Jinnah proclaimed that Muslims could not expect any justice or fair play at the hands of the Congress. Throughout the twenty-seven months of the Congress rule in the provinces, the League kept up intense propaganda climaxed by the Pirpur Report in the late 1938, the Shareef Report on Bihar in March 1939 and Fazul Haq's Muslim Sufferings under Congress Rule in December 1939. The charges included failure to prevent encouragement of Hindi at the cost of Urdu and the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education, which was ironically enough devised largely by two eminent Muslim educationists, Zakir Husain and K. G. Saiyidin. The Congress suggested an enquiry by Sir Maurice Gwyer, the Chief Justice of the Federal Court, but the Muslim League turned down the proposal. Jinnah asserted that India was not one nation, and that the Muslims of India constituted a separate nation, and therefore, entitled to a separate homeland of their own.

The Muslim League propaganda gained by the existence of such communal bodies among, the Hindus as Hindu Mahasabha, who, too accepted the two-nation theory. They actively opposed the policy of giving adequate safeguards to the minorities so as to renovate their fears of domination by the minorities. Interestingly enough, the communal groups-Hindu as well as Muslims-did not hesitate to join hands against the Congress.

Another characteristic feature the various communal groups shared was their tendency to adopt pro-government political attitudes. It is to be noted that none of the communal groups and parties, which talked of Hindu and Muslim nationalism, took active part in the struggle against foreign rule. They saw the people belonging to other religions and the nationalist leaders as the real enemies.

The communal groups and parties also shied away from social and economic demands of the common people, which as we have seen above, were being increasingly taken up by the nationalist movement. In this respect, they increasingly came to represent the upper class vested interests.

Communalism also became, after 1937, the only political recourse of colonial authorities and their policy of 'divide and rule'. This was because, by this time, nearly all the other divisions, antagonism and divisive devices promoted and fostered earlier by the colonial authorities had been overcome by the national movement, and had become politically non-viable from the colonial point of view. The Non-Brahmin challenge in Maharashtra and South India had fizzled out. The Scheduled Castes and other backward classes could no longer be mobilized against the Congress except in stray pockets. The Right and Left wings of the Congress also refused to split. Inter-provincial and inter-lingual rivalries had exhausted themselves much earlier, after the Congress accepted the validity of linguistic states and the cultural diversity of the Indian people. The effort to pit the zamindars and landlords against the national movement had also completely failed. The elections of 1937 showed that nearly all the major social and political props of colonialism lay shattered. The communal card alone was available for playing against the national movement and the rulers decided to use it to the limit, to stake all on it. They threw all the weight of the colonial state behind Muslim communalism, even though it was headed by a man, M. A. Jinnah, whom they disliked and feared for his sturdy independence and outspoken anti-colonialism.

The outbreak of World War II in September 1939 further strengthened the reliance on the communal card.

4.6.7 Jinnah's Two-Nation Theory

The British Government harped on 'the issue of minorities' and some talked of the unbridgeable gulf between the Congress and the Muslim League. Mahatma Gandhi held that it was a domestic problem, which would disappear if the British withdrew from India. At the Ramgarh session of the Congress, held in March 1940, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the President, emphasized the heritage of a common nationality between the Hindus and the Muslims in India and significantly remarked, 'Whether we like it or not, we have now become an Indian nation, united and indivisible'. Various factors fanned communal bitterness and at its annual session, held at Lahore in March 1940, the Muslim League enunciated the theory that the Muslims are not a minority but a 'nation' and they must have their separate homeland. It was of the view that 'the areas in which the Muslims were numerically in a majority, as in the north-western and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute independent states in which the constituent units would be autonomous and sovereign'. Indeed, the influence of the Muslim League over the Muslims had increased much by that time. Gandhi's reaction to the Lahore resolution was prophetic, 'I can never be a willing party to the vivisection. I would employ every non-violent means to prevent it. For it means the undoing of centuries of work done by numberless Hindus and Muslims to live together as one nation. Partition means a patent untruth.'

4.6.8 Hindu Communalism

Simultaneously, Hindu communalism was also being born and Hindu communal ideas were arising. Many Hindu writers and political workers enjoyed the ideas and programmes of Muslim communalism and the Muslim League. From the 1870s, a section of Hindu zamindars, moneylenders and middle-class professionals began to arouse anti-Muslim sentiments. Fully accepting the colonial view of Indian history, they talked and wrote about the 'tyrannical' Muslim rule in the medieval period and the 'liberating' role of the British in 'saving' Hindus from 'Muslim oppression'. In UP and Bihar, they took up, correctly, the question of Hindi, but gave it a communal twist, declaring totally

unhistorical, that Urdu was the language of Muslims and Hindi of Hindus. All over India, anti-cow slaughter propaganda was undertaken in the early 1890s. The campaign was, however, primarily directed not against the British but against Muslims; the British cantonments, for example, were left free to carry on cow slaughter on a large scale.

ACTIVITY

List the points of conflict between the moderates and extremists in the Indian National Congress during the initial stages of the national movement.

DID YOU KNOW

Bhagat Singh, in an article, 'Emergence of Punjab in the Freedom Movement', mentions that he and his brother were inspired by Bal Gangadhar Tilak's extremism:

Having seen their enthusiasm at the 1906 Congress Convention in Calcutta, Lokmanya was pleased and in bidding them adieu, gave them the responsibility of strengthening the movement in the Punjab.' On returning to Lahore, both brothers 'started a monthly newspaper called Bharat Mata to propagate their ideas'. Since they had no money and no influence among the rich, says Bhagat Singh, they had to collect everything necessary for propaganda work themselves. This they did by attracting a crowd in the market by ringing a bell and giving a lecture 'on how foreigners had destroyed India's industry and commerce'. This was followed by an announcement that an important meeting would be held within the week at the Bharat Mata office. After the first two meetings held on two consecutive Sundays, a decision was taken to hold a meeting every Sunday. Many people joined the group including Lala Lalchand 'Phalak', the 'national poet' of the Punjab, Lala Pindidas, Dr. Ishwari Prasad and Sufi Amba Prasad. Sardar Ajit Singh and Mahant Nandkishore were elected the President and Secretary of the group now organised as the 'Bharat Mata Society.'

4.7 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- The closing decade of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new and younger group within the Indian National Congress, which was sharply critical of the ideology and methods of the old leadership. These 'angry young men' advocated the adoption of Swaraj as the goal of the Congress, which was to be achieved by more self-reliant and independent methods.
- The militant form of nationalism was first found in the teachings and preaching of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Swami Dayananda Saraswati.
- The root of extremism lies in two important factors—the policies of colonial rule, and the failure of moderate leaders to attract younger generation and common people.

- The new turn in Indian politics found expression in two forms—the formation of the extremist group within the Congress and the growth of terrorism or revolutionary movement in the country at large. Four prominent Congress leaders, including Lokamanya Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai, defined the creed of the new group, gave articulate form to its aspirations and guided its operations.
- The issue of Swadeshi Movement widened the gap between the moderates and the extremists. The extremists wanted to spread the movement in the entire country and complete non-cooperation with the government.
- The growth of nationalism during the second half of the nineteenth century was one of the most significant features of Indian history. Various factors contributed to the growth of nationalism. Though pre-colonial India had a self-sufficient economy based largely on agriculture, Indians as such were not integrated, neither economically nor socially. Colonization helped in unifying a country as diverse as India.
- Swadeshi Movement began as an anti-partition agitation in Bengal and boycott was first suggested by Krishna Kumar Mitra in *Sanjivani* in 1905. The boycott of British products was followed by the advocacy of Swadeshi and to buy indigenously produced goods as a patriotic duty.
- The Anti-Partition movement was entirely the handiwork of the national leadership of Bengal and not just of a particular section of the movement. At the initial stage, its prominent leaders belonged to the moderate faction, e.g., Surendranath Banerjea and Krishna Kumar Mitra. However, during the later stages militant and revolutionary nationalists took over the movement.
- The students of Bengal played a prominent part in the Swadeshi agitation. They propagated and practised Swadeshi and took the lead in organizing picketing of shops selling foreign items.
- The movement for a separate Muslim created a political awakening among the Muslims. The ideology of exclusivism sowed the seeds of communalism, which gradually led to the formation of the AIML. It was established in 1906 in Dhaka under the leadership of Nawab Sallimullah, Chairman of the reception committee and convener of the political meeting.

4.8 KEY TERMS

- **Colonization:** The establishment of colonies
- **Extremist:** One who resorts to or advocates extreme action
- **Revolutionary:** People engaged in or promoting political revolution

4.9 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Swami Dayananda Saraswati
2. Partition of Bengal
3. Self-government
4. Ram Mohan Roy, Vidyasagar

5. Bengal
6. Self-reliance
7. Bhagat Singh wrote for *Pratap* and *Kirti*.
8. Lala Lajpat Rai and his speeches inspired Bhagat Singh most.
9. *Rakhi*
10. To promote feelings of loyalty among the Muslims for the British government and remove any misconceptions.

4.10 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What were the two roots from which extremism stemmed?
2. State two factors leading to extremism.
3. Define 'swaraj'.
4. How did the Swadeshi movement begin?
5. What was the 'Simla Deputation'?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the rise of militant nationalism in India.
2. Write a short note on the objectives of extremists.
3. Describe nationalism in relation to the Swadeshi Movement.
4. How was the All India Muslim League (AIML) formed?

4.11 FURTHER READING

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UNIT 5 SOCIO-RELIGIOUS REFORMS

Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Unit Objectives
- 5.2 Social Reform Movements
 - 5.2.1 Nature of Social Reform Movements
 - 5.2.2 Social Composition of the Leadership of Reform Movements
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5.0 INTRODUCTION

Religious and social welfare led to the introduction of many reform movements within the Hindu society in medieval India. Through these reform movements, their initiators sought to oppose many social and religious practices as well as political situation in the country. They took monumental steps to achieve their ends. It is important to remember that the India of the eighteenth and twentieth century differed culturally and politically. While on one hand in the eighteenth century, India had a traditional cultural society, it was also on the verge of emerging as a new nation. With the nineteenth century, came the transition in the country's religious, social, economic, political, and cultural spheres. The colonizers and their rule transformed the administration, legislation, trade, network of communications, industrialization and urbanization in the country affecting the traditional pattern of the Indian life and the society as a whole. The cultural field was influenced by British scholars, educators and missionaries even though Indian traditionalists and reformers were unsure of the transformation and called for slow and deliberate changes in the social and religious attitudes and customs.

This unit discusses socio-religious reforms with regards to the contributions made by Dayanand Saraswati, Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Jyotiba Phule and Veerrasalingam.

5.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Describe the need for Dayanand Saraswati to establish the Arya Samaj
 - Discuss the Aligarh Reform Movement
 - Discuss the contribution of Jyotiba Phule
 - Discuss Veerasalingam's contribution as a socio-religious reformer
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5.2 SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENTS

India saw various reform movements, including the Brahmo Samaj movement, the Prarthana Samaj movement, the Arya Samaj movement, the Aligarh movement and the Ahmadiya movement, which closely influenced the national movement and deliberately sought to influence the political, administration and legislation authority. Therefore, even the political movements eventually became all-India nationalist movements. We find that the earlier social reform movements were closely tied with religious motivation and improvement, but those introduced in the nineteenth century the relationship of the two concept theories fluctuated and many a times their fate were decided by secular and rationalistic motives.

We shall now discuss some of the important concepts related to social reform movements.

5.2.1 Nature of Social Reform Movements

The nature of social reform movements can be best understood by comparing them with revolts. A condition of dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of society precedes both social reform movements and revolts. Similarly, a group of persons directs its concerted action towards the attainment of its clearly defined objectives. Both social reform movements and revolutionary movements make an appeal to the non-active members of the society to reject the legitimacy of the present order and to seek legitimacy for their ideology.

Reformists are more or less satisfied with the basic values of governing society, but are dissatisfied with some of its norms and institutions and want to change them. Revolutionaries, on the other hand, are dissatisfied not with any one particular aspect of society but with the basic values themselves. Again, the reformists look to the existing political authority for legitimacy as also for implementation of the reforms, while the revolutionaries are out to destroy the existing political authority. However, violence is not a necessary accompaniment of revolt. It is possible to bring about a revolution without bloodshed. On the other hand, a social reform movement may involve violence.

A social reform may invite the ire of many conservative and orthodox groups of the society. We may cite the cases of the Nadars and the Mahars in this context. The Mahars were a community in Maharashtra. They were considered to be untouchables. Under the leadership of Dr B.R. Ambedkar, they were able to free themselves from the shackles of caste bias. In 1956, about eighty per cent of the Mahar community converted to Buddhism to get rid of the stigma that was attached to their community. Their efforts

paid off and today they do not face any social or cultural biases. Similarly, the Nadar community of Tamil Nadu was another community that faced social discrimination. They were considered to be belonging to the lower caste and were not allowed to associate themselves with the higher castes. This led to confrontations in the society and there was a social reform movement in which the Nadars fought for their rights and privileges.

Conditions under which reformist claims are made

When a certain section of the society is dissatisfied with some of the social, political or economic norms and institutions, they seek ways for articulating their dissatisfaction. Such an articulation of reformist demands has a meaning only in societies in which the authority structure not only permits such articulation, but is also willing to act upon it if it found them to be rational and desirable. The political climate which allows this has existed in the US, UK, and also during the British rule in India. However, societies in which even a reformist sentiment is not permitted, open expression and association are prevented and shared dissent either fails to emerge as a collective action demanding change or is forced into secret and illegal activity. For example, prior to Independence of India, there had been several revolutionary attempts in the country. However, these revolutions failed to gain popular support because a section of the Indian society was already engaged in making reformist demands, and the British government was not only prepared to listen to these demands but was also ready to act upon them as exemplified by the abolition of *sati*, the education of women, etc.

5.2.2 Social Composition of the Leadership of Reform Movements

A point of view was prevalent for a considerable period of time that the leadership of reform movements comes from the 'displaced elites', for example, the abolitionist movement in the US and the social reform movement led by Raja Rammohan Roy in India. In both these movements, members of the erstwhile elite groups had provided leadership. The rationale for the 'displaced elite' theory is that if there is a loss of status in one dimension of social hierarchy, it is sought to be compensated for by acquiring a higher status in another dimension.

However, the 'displaced elite' theory can explain the leadership composition of only some reform movements and not all. For example, the leadership of the movements for the upliftment of the Harijans in India was not provided by the elite class but by the leaders belonging to the lower strata of caste hierarchy. The leaders such as Dr Ambedkar and Jyotirao Phule did not belong to the upper echelons of the society. However, it is to be noted that the Harijan leaders who led the reform movement occupied a high status in their own groups.

Why did most of the leaders of reform movements belong to the high status group? The reference group theory explains it. This theory points out that when an individual is dissatisfied with his present conditions or status, he tends to emulate another individual or group of higher status as his model to improve his condition. All reform movements are characterized by dissatisfaction with the present conditions and a desire to improve them. This desire can be translated into behaviour relatively easily if the leadership comes from a person or a group which has a high status.

5.2.3 Social and Religious Reform Movements in India

The major effect of national awakening in the nineteenth century was seen in the field of social reform. The newly educated gentry increasingly revolted against rigid social conventions and outdated customs. They could no longer tolerate irrational and dehumanizing social practices. They were inspired by the humanistic ideals of social equality and egalitarianism.

Nearly all the religious reformers contributed to the social reform movement. This was because the backward features of Indian society, such as the caste system and inequality of sexes, had religious sanctions in the past. In addition, certain other organizations, such as the Social Conference, the Servants of India Society and the Christian Missionaries, worked actively for social reforms. In the twentieth century, especially after 1919, the national movement became the main agency of social reform.

Objectives of social reforms movements

The social reform movements tried to maintain two objectives:

- Emancipation of women and extension of equal rights to them
- Removal of caste rigidities and in particular abolition of untouchability

Women as the focus of social reforms

India has an ancient tradition of giving women a status equal to that of men. But over centuries social values got distorted and women came to be more and more repressed. They became victims of social vices, such as enforced widowhood, child marriage and *sati*. The condition of upper class women was worse than that of peasant women since the latter worked actively in the fields and enjoyed relatively greater freedom of movement.

The right of women to inherit property was generally inequitable – Hindu women had no right to property. However, in Islam, a daughter could inherit half the amount of property that the son inherited. The Indian women were entirely financially dependent on men. They were denied even the benefits of education.

The nineteenth century witnessed the first strings for change in the status of women. The socio-religious reformers were influenced by the status the Indian women enjoyed in the Vedic society as well as by the impact of liberal Western philosophy. They were also convinced that national upliftment and progress were not possible without women's emancipation. Ultimately, the nationalist movement and the efforts of Mahatma Gandhi created the climate conducive to bring about, to some extent, the desired change in the status of women.

In the nineteenth century, the efforts of the social reformers were mainly directed towards spreading education among women, encouraging widow remarriage, preventing child marriage, decrying *purdah*, campaigning against polygamy and encouraging middle class women to take up employment. As a result of concerted efforts of enlightened reformers, social legislation was initiated for the abolition of *sati*, legalization of widow remarriage and the banning of female infanticide.

The Civil Marriage Act of 1872 made marriage secular; raised the age of marriage of girls to fourteen years and accepted widow remarriage as well as inter-caste marriage. It also banned polygamy. The Property Act of 1874 widened the concept of *streedhan* to include earnings by women.

A major effort was made to promote education among women in the nineteenth century. The efforts of several voluntary Indian organizations, Christian missionaries and the government (after the Woods Despatch of 1854) encouraged women education. Another important development was the birth of several independent women movements. Enlightened men had worked for the upliftment of women till the early twentieth century. Many women leaders, such as Sister Nivedita, Annie Besant and Margaret Cousins, fought for the rights of women. In 1923, the Women's Indian Association was formed. The All India Women Conference (1927) is even today an important organization for actively safeguarding the rights of women.

With the spreading of education among women, efforts were made to train nurses to serve the poor, sick and the distressed. The Pune Seva Sadan started by Ramabai Ranade opened branches in different parts of the country to train nurses and midwives. Similar work was done by the Sewa Sadan Society started by Behramjee Malbari.

Elimination of untouchability through social reforms

The caste system was not only humiliating and inhuman but was also a cause of social disintegration. The castes were carefully graded into a hierarchy of status. The untouchables suffered from discrimination and restrictions. Even their touch was considered impure and their very shadow was avoided by those who considered themselves to be upper-caste. There were severe restrictions on their dress, food and place of residence. They could drink and use water only from wells and tanks that were specifically reserved for them. They were not allowed to enter temples. Their children could not attend a school with children of upper caste Hindus; they were considered suitable only for menial jobs.

The caste system proved a major obstacle in the growth of unity, national feeling and the spread of democracy. Even Muslims, Christians and Sikhs have practised untouchability, though in a less virulent form. A number of forces diluted the rigorous caste system during the British rule. The spreading of English education, introduction of modern industries, greater mobility due to the railways and buses and growing urbanization made it difficult to prevent contact among persons of different castes, especially in the cities. Restrictions regarding eating and drinking water during travel were relaxed. The modern commerce and industry opened new fields of activity for all. A Brahmin or an upper caste merchant would hardly miss the opportunity of trading in skins or shoes. In rural India, free sale of land unsettled the caste balance. Close connections between caste and vocation could hardly continue in a modern industrial society.

The growth of modern democracy and rationalist ideas in the nineteenth century also undermined the caste system. Many social and religious reformers raised their voice against it. The Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ramkrishna Mission and Theosophical Society condemned the inhuman practice of untouchability.

Yet another factor which weakened the caste system was the growth of the national movement. People's participation, public demonstrations and meetings and *satyagraha* struggles softened caste consciousness. As caste system was antithetical to liberty and equality, the Indian National Congress opposed it and fought for equal civic rights and freedom for all individuals without any discrimination.

Gandhi, throughout his life, emphasized the need for abolition of untouchability through his public activities. In 1932, he founded the All India Harijan Sangh. He

firmly believed that even if his campaign against untouchability might not succeed fully, yet it would certainly bring about a greater awareness about the inhumanity involved in the practice of untouchability and a change of heart among the caste Hindus.

The growth of consciousness among the lower castes with the spread of education and awakening also contributed to the weakening of the caste system. The lower castes became conscious of their basic human rights and began to assert themselves. They gradually built up a powerful movement against their customary exploitation by the higher castes. Dr B.R. Ambedkar was in the forefront of this struggle. He launched a movement to improve the socio-economic conditions of the lower castes. Numerous *satyagraha* movements were launched all over India by the depressed classes against the ban on their entry into temples and such other restrictions.

The British government was afraid of rousing the hostility of the orthodox sections of the Indian society and was not interested in the political or social progress of India. Thus, no appreciable improvement in the social status of the depressed castes was possible. The struggle against untouchability gathered momentum only after India became independent.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the pioneer of religious reform, was the first advocate of social reconstruction and introduction of western education in modern India. He was the father of constitutional agitation in India. Raja Ram Mohan Roy headed the intellectual movement generally known as the Indian Renaissance or the re-establishment of the glory of the ancient Indian culture. When he came onto the stage of Indian history, ancient Indian values had slowly given way to formalism in the religious and social life of the people. Religion had assumed the shape of either extreme asceticism or excessive ritualism. It was perhaps the darkest age in modern Indian history, an age in which an old society and polity had crumbled and no new one had yet been built in its place. India then essentially required a religion with a wholesome basis and practicability.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, India saw another religious movement known as the Theosophical Movement. It was in the United States of America that Madama H.P. Balvatsky and Colonel H.S. Olcott laid the foundation of the Theosophical society in 1875. Its object was to promote the study of esoteric religious philosophies of the East. In 1879, Balvatsky and Olcott came to India and established a society at Adyar, near Madras in 1886. But the success of the Theosophical Movement in India was due to Annie Besant who joined the society in 1889. The Theosophical Movement aimed at the quest of the Hindu spiritual wisdom. The society also promoted education among all sections of the society. It established a central Hindu school at Benaras in 1898 which later developed into a college and ultimately into the Banaras Hindu University in 1915.

5.2.4 Bhakti Movement

The Bhakti movement includes many schools of thought. This movement refers to the revolutionary revivalist ideas propagated by Sankara in the 9th century. Born in Kaladi, Kerala, Sankara sought to give a new orientation to Hinduism. However, the concept of *advaita* or monism was very abstract to attract the common man.

There was also a strong reaction against the *advaita* concept of *Nirgunabrahman*, which refers to God without attributes as the idea of *Sagunabrahman* emerged, which referred to God with attributes. Born in the 12th century in Sriperumbudur near present Chennai, Ramanuja preached the concept of *Visishtadvaita*. He argued that God was *sagunabrahman*, i.e. the process of creation and all the objects of creation were real

and not illusionary as was contended by Sankaracharya. Thus, he said, god, soul and the matter were all for real. God, on the other hand, was also the inner substance and the remaining souls were his attributes.

Ramanuja also advocated the concept of *prabattimarga* or path of self-surrender to achieve god. At the same time, he invited the downtrodden castes to join the path to Vaishnavism.

In the beginning of the thirteenth century, Madhava, from Kannada region, propagated the ideologies of *Dvaita* or dualism of *jivatma* and *paramatma*. According to his philosophy, the world was not an illusion but a reality. He argued that god, soul, and matter were unique in nature. Significant preachers of Vaishnavite bhakti in the Telangana region Nimbarka and Vallabhacharya.

An important disciple of Vallabhacharya was Surdas who popularized the Krishna cult in north India. A great devotee of Krishna was Mirabai, who was also a famous female saint-poet. She became popular in the state of Rajasthan for her *bhajans*. At the same time, Tulsidas, a worshipper of Lord Ram composed the famous Ramcharitmanas, which is the Hindi version of Ramayana.

The great apostles of the Bhakti cult in the 14th and the 15th centuries were Ramananda, Kabir and Nanak. Even though they drew inspiration from their old masters, they gave the people a new path to follow. They influenced people to shun old superstitions and start on the path of salvation through Bhakti or pure devotion. However, as compared to the early reformers of the Bhakti movement, they were not associated with any particular religion and also negated the ideas of rituals and ceremonies. They promoted the idea of one god, and condemned polytheism. Moreover, they were against any form of idolatry and contended that Bhakti was the only means of salvation. All of them also promoted and emphasized the fundamental unity of all religions.

Ramananda

Born in Allahabad, Ramananda was originally a follower of Ramanuja. However, he broke apart soon and founded his own sect and preached his disciples at Varanasi and Agra in Hindi. A devotee of Lord Ram, Ramananda was the first among many Bhakti propagators to use the vernacular language to promote his ideas. Some of the principles of Ramananda sect were simplification of worship and freedom of people from the traditional ideas of caste. These were the two of Ramananda's most important contributions to the Bhakti movement. The most important was his opposition of the caste system; Ramananda in fact chose his disciples from all sections of the society, disregarding caste. Some of the famous disciples of Ramananda were:

- Kabir, a Muslim weaver
- Raidasa, a cobbler
- Sena, a barber
- Sadhana, a butcher
- Dhanna, a Jat farmer
- Naraharai, a goldsmith
- Pipa, a Rajput prince

All together, the Bhakti movement was very significant in the history of Indian reform movements. A number of its preachers spoke and wrote in vernacular languages and thus had a wide reach. Indirectly, the movement contributed towards the development

of many regional languages such as Hindi, Marathi, Bengali and Kannada. People felt connected with the movement through these languages and thus, their propagators were successful in appealing to the masses. Since most preachers of the Bhakti movement condemned the caste system, a large number of people of the lower castes joined the movement and were raised in the position of the traditional caste hierarchies. Women also found a central place in the movement and with that, their respect increased in the society. Most importantly, the movement broke away from the complexities of rituals in bhakti or devotion and gave people a simple religion, based only on pure thoughts and sincere devotion to god. Thus the movement helped to develop new ideas of life of charity and service to fellowmen.

Bhakti Movement in south India

The *Salva Nayanar* and *Vaishnava Alvar* saints of south India were the first to propagate and broaden the bhakti movement among various sections of the society without regard for caste and sex between the seventh and the tenth centuries. Some of these saints belonged to the lower castes and some were also women. These saints preached bhakti in an intensely emotional and poetic manner and promoted religious equality. They criticized meaningless rituals and travelled through the country singing, dancing and advocating bhakti. Both Alvar and Nayanar saints used Tamil, and not Sanskrit, as a medium to preach and compose devotional songs. This made it a popular movement.

Both the Alvar and Nayanar saints were critical of Buddhists and Jains who held positions of privilege at the royal courts of South Indian kings of that time. With their style of religion and preaching, they won over many followers of Buddhism and Jainism, both of which had become by then intolerant, rigid and formal religions.

The Alvar and Nayanar saints also made the bhakti movement accessible to all people irrespective of caste and gender and tried to break away the authority of the orthodox brahmins. But this movement had its limitations as well. These are listed as follows:

- The movement did not attempt to consciously oppose Brahmanism, the varna system and caste system at the social level.
- The movement was assimilated with the caste system and the lower castes continued to suffer from various social disabilities.
- The movement did not do away with idol worship, mantra recitation, religious pilgrimage and other brahminical rituals.
- The movement targeted mostly the Buddhists and Jains

Since these bhakti saints did not question the ideological and social foundation of caste system, this movement ended up in enforcing the existing system rather than weakening it. Ultimately, when the movement climaxed in the tenth century, it was little by little incorporated into the standard brahminical establishment. But despite these failures, the bhakti movement in south Indian was successful in standing up for religious equality. As a result, the Brahmins accepted the right of the lower caste to do the following:

- Preach
- Gain access to bhakti as a mode of worship
- Gain access to the Vedas

Bhakti and the south Indian *acharyas*

When the popularity of the *bhakti* movement in south India was declining, the doctrine of *bhakti* was being defended at a philosophical level by some Vaishnava Brahmin scholars, also known as *acharyas*. Some of them are as follows:

- **Ramanuja:** He was the first of the *acharyas* to justify the *bhakti* movement at a philosophical level. He tried to strike a delicate and a careful balance between orthodox brahminism and *bhakti*, which was accessible to all. Though he did not support the prospect of lower castes gaining access to the Vedas, he advocated *bhakti* as an egalitarian mode of worship to encompass all, including Shudras and outcastes. He did not believe in caste distinctions and made efforts to get the society rid of untouchability.
- **Nimbarka:** He was a Telugu Brahmin who is believed to be a younger contemporary of Ramanuja. He spent most of his time in Vrindavan and Mathura, in north India and was devoted to Krishna and Rama.
- **Madhava:** He was also a south Indian *bhakti* philosopher who belonged to the 13th century. He did not disagree with the orthodox brahminical opinion of preventing Shudras from studying the Vedas and believed that the movement provided alternative ways of worship to the Shudras.
- **Ramananda and Vallabha:** They were prominent Vaishnava *acharyas* who lived mostly in North India during the Sultanate period and gave new direction to Vaishnava *bhakti*.

Sufism

The liberal reform movement within Islam is referred to as Sufism. The movement traces its origin in Persia and it spread into India in the eleventh century. **Shaikh Ismail** of Lahore was the first Sufi saint who started to preach his ideas. From India, the most famous Sufi saint was **Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti** who made Ajmer in Rajasthan the centre of all his activities. The disciples of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti are referred to as Sufis of the Chishti order. **Bahauddin Zakariya** was another well-known Sufi saint who was influenced by a famous mystic called **Shahabuddin Suhrawardi**. His disciples are called *sufis* of the Suhrawardi Order.

A famous Sufi saint of India also was **Nizamuddin Auliya**. He belonged to the Chishti order and is considered by his disciples to be a mighty spiritual force. The Sufi movement had a great reach and most of these saints are revered till today, not only by Muslims but by people of all religions, especially Hindus. The tombs of most of these saints are places of pilgrimage for devotees of both communities.

The Sufis stressed on the elements of love and devotion as the means of reaching and realizing god. The Sufis believed that to love god was to love humanity and thus, service to humanity was tantamount to the service of god. In the doctrine of Sufism, self-discipline was considered an essential condition to gain knowledge of god by sense of perception. The Sufis laid great stress on inner purity, even though orthodox Muslims emphasized on the external conduct of a person. As mentioned above, the Sufis considered love and devotion as the only means of attaining salvation, breaking away from orthodox Muslims who believed in blind observance of rituals.

For Sufis, it was paramount to have the guidance of a *pir* or a guru on the path of salvation. They believed that without his guidance, spiritual development was impossible.

Among its followers, Sufism also inculcated the spirit of tolerance. Other ideas emphasized upon by the Sufis were meditation, good actions, repentance for sins, performance of prayers and pilgrimages, fasting, charity and suppression of passions by ascetic practices.

These were the liberal and unorthodox ideas of Sufism which has a profound influence on the medieval Bhakti saints. Mughal emperor Akbar was also greatly influenced by the Sufi saints and this helped shape his ideas of religion and also his religious practices and policies. At the time when the Sufi movement was gaining popularity in India, the Bhakti cult was also forming roots within the Hindu community. However, these were the two parallel movements which were based on the doctrines of love and selfless devotion. These movements also contributed greatly in bringing the two communities closer. Yet, the trend did not hold strong for long.

Popular Monotheistic Movement and Vaishnava Bhakti Movement

Both the monotheistic movement and the Vaishnava bhakti movements started in northern India around the same time – following the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate and advent of Islam. Owing to this reason, common causes are cited for the rise and spread of both the movements, and the biggest cause includes the influence of Islam on Hinduism. However, the popular monotheistic movement arose and peaked in the Sultanate period, while the Vaishnava movement began in the Sultanate period but climaxed during the Mughal period.

Popular Monotheistic Movement

Kabir was the earliest and without doubt the most influential personality in the monotheistic movements that was initiated in the fifteenth century. He hailed from a family of weavers, who had indigenously converted to Islam, and spent a substantial part of his life in Varanasi (Kashi).

The monotheistic saints who followed him either claimed to be his disciples or mention him with reverence. Many of his verses were included in the Adi Granth, the Sikh scriptures. These are an indication of his All position among his contemporary and succeeding monotheists.

Ravidas was the next generation of monotheists. He was a tanner by caste, who also lived in Varanasi and was influenced by Kabir's ideas. Dhanna was a Jat peasant from Rajasthan. Other prominent saints of the same period were Sen (a barber) and Pipa.

The preachings of Guru Nanak and his ideas were quite similar to those of Kabir and other monotheists, but later veered in another direction to give rise to the emergence of Sikhism. The basic similarities, in terms of ideology, of the teachings of Nanak, Kabir and other saints are what make them an integral part of the monotheistic movement.

Nanak belonged to a caste of traders called khatri and was born in Nankana Sahib, Punjab. In his later life, he travelled far and wide to preach his ideas. Eventually he settled in a place in Punjab now known as Dera Baba Nanak, where he attracted large numbers of disciples. He composed hymns which were incorporated in the Adi Granth by Guru Arjan, the fifth Sikh Guru, in 1604.

Vaishnava Bhakti Movement

Ramananda was an extremely well-known scholar saint of the Vaishnava bhakti movement in northern India. Initially, he lived in South India but later settled in Varanasi. He is

thought to have bridged the gap between south and north India bhakti traditions. However, he deviated from the ideology and practice of the south Indian acharyas in three important respects:

- (i) He considered Rama, and not Vishnu, as the object of worship and devotion. According to him, Rama was the symbol of a supreme God, and he was hailed as the founder of the Ram cult in north India within the framework of Vaishnava Bhakti tradition.
- (ii) He preached in the language of the common people, and not in Sanskrit.
- (iii) He made the movement accessible to all, irrespective of caste and gender.

Vallabhacharya, a Telugu Brahmin, was also a well-known Vaishnava preacher of the Sultanate period. He was born in Varanasi and was the founder of *Pushchimarga* (way of grace) – also known as *Vallabha sampradaya* (Vallabha sect). He advocated Krishna bhakti.

Surdas was a famous Krishna bhakti saint-poet, who along with seven other Krishna bhakti poets belonging to the *ashtachhap*, were thought to have been the disciples of Vallabha. Tulsidas championed the cause of Rama bhakti while Surdas, Mira Bai and many others popularized Krishna bhakti.

The philosophy of the Bhakti movement helped to give a boost to the then society in many ways. Bhojpuri, Magadhi and Maithili; Avadhi and Braj; Rajasthani, Punjabi, Kashmiri, Sindhi and Gujarati; and other Indo-Aryan dialects also took on new shapes and dimensions through Bhakti poetry.

Remarkable advancement was seen in literature of famous Bhakti saints of Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra during the medieval times. For instance, Sri Chaitanya's hymns, ballads, legends and dramas based on the interpretation of Krishna enriched Bengali literature.

Apart from literature, the social and religious scenario in medieval India was also affected by the Bhakti movement. Although the Bhakti movement was primarily local in nature, it got a tremendous fillip from Islam and its practitioners. The movement created a fertile meeting ground for the religiously devout. It spoke at length about social equality and denounced rituals and the caste system. This movement was a departure from the traditional and rigid to radical and new. It created the idea of a society that had its foundation securely anchored in justice and equality and in this people irrespective of caste and creed were given the opportunity to fully develop their moral and spiritual stature. Appendix I discusses at length the next wave of reform movement in the religious and social sphere in India.

The Bhakti movement created far-reaching effects on the outlook of the people. The challenge of the alien faith put Hindu thinkers on their guard. They tried to simplify their religion by simplifying their creed and worship and by condemning the caste system the rigours of which were driving many into the Muslim fold. To the depressed and downtrodden, they preached the consoling doctrine of Bhakti as the panacea for all their ills. The chief effects of the Bhakti movement are as follows:

- **Removal of bitterness between Muslims and Hindus:** The Bhakti movement increased the scope of tolerance between Hindus and Muslims and helped to eliminate religious acrimony between them. It helped them see each other's perspective and drove home the twin principles of equality and peaceful coexistence. Owing to the contribution of the various Bhakti saints, thinkers and

reformers, much of the resentment between the two communities was greatly reduced. Both the Hindus and Muslims started to worship saints, gods and goddesses of the other community.

- **Progress of Islam was checked:** Low-caste people who were detested and socially shunned were turning in large numbers to convert to Islam. The Bhakti movement presented the masses with the idea of unity of godhead and brotherhood of man. This appealed to them and prevented large-scale conversion to Islam. In order to bring in reformation in Hinduism, the bhakti saints and philosophers warned the Hindus to eliminate their traditional practices of caste distinction, idol worship and religious rituals. Their warnings and teachings had the preferred impact and the religion underwent rapid transformation in order to develop a liberal attitude.
- **Wholesome effect on Indian rulers:** The kings who ruled India at that time were positively influenced and, subsequently, started to treat their subjects in a generous and impartial manner. It created statesmen including Sher Shah Suri and Akbar.
- **Rise of vernacular literature:** The Bhakti movement gave way to the growth of vernacular literature. Poets, saints and reformers preached their message in the language of the masses in order to make it easily understandable and easy to implement. Thus, vernacular literature in Punjabi, Bengali, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu became the means to express.
- **Setback to Brahmin ascendancy:** Bhakti reformers stressed upon laying the foundation for an egalitarian society. They severely criticized caste distinctions, unnecessary religious rites and rituals, and animal sacrifices. This movement posed a severe setback to the Brahmins and the priestly class.

5.3 DAYANAND SARASWATI AND ARYA SAMAJ

Dayanand Saraswati was born in a well-to-do Saryupareen Brahmin family of Kathiwar, Gujarat, on 12 February 1824. Since India's Independence in 1947, Kathiwar has been renamed Rajkot. His father's name was Karshanji Lalji Tiwari and his mother's name was Yashodabai. His parents named him Mulshankar because as per Hindu astrology, he was born under *mul nakshatra*. His childhood was fairly comfortable. He was educated in Sanskrit, the Vedas and other religious texts, because his father wanted him to be a priest, following the family tradition. However, Dayanand had a questioning mind and some key incidents that happened in his childhood led him to question Hindu beliefs and the existence of God. As a young boy, on the night of *mahashivratri*, he stayed up all night to wait for Lord Shiva to visit and accept the offerings the family had made, while his entire family slept. Instead, Dayanand was shocked when he found that a mouse ate all the sweets and Lord Shiva did not do anything to stop the mouse. He started to question the belief in a god who could not protect his own offerings. Dayanand felt that he could not expect such a god to protect him and the rest of the humanity. He told his father that they should not worship such a helpless god. Some other key incidents which led him to question the existence of god were the deaths of his uncle and younger sister from cholera. Dayanand asked such profound questions of his father that his father got worried for him.

As per the tradition of the times, his parents wanted to get him married when he was 12, but he refused and left home in 1846 to show the seriousness of his decision. After he left home, he became a mendicant and felt lost because of his disillusionment with Hinduism. He started to study the old Sanskrit texts in his quest for God. For over two decades, he looked for a God to believe in and eventually met Swami Virajananda in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh. Swami Virajananda became Dayanand's guru. His guru persuaded him to shed all old beliefs and texts and start afresh. Swami Virajananda wanted Dayanand to study the Vedas as he believed them to be most foundational writings of Hinduism. Dayananda remained Swami Virjananda's pupil for two and a half years and after he finished his lessons, his guru asked him to spread the awareness of the Vedas to all the people of India, as his *guru dakshina*, or fees for the knowledge he had acquired from his teacher.

5.3.1 Mission of Saraswati's Life

The mission of Dayananda's life was to spread the idea of 'universal brotherhood through nobility' as it was given in the Vedas. But first, he had to work out a way to reform Hinduism by eliminating from it the needless and corrupt practices of elaborate and exaggerated ceremony. Many individuals who were afraid of this enlightenment tried to threaten him with death and many attempts were made to assassinate him. The only way to spread his message effectively was to travel and Dayanand was fully dedicated to his mission. He argued fervently with priests and religious scholars on his travels and mostly won the debates because of his knowledge of the Vedas and strong arguments rooted in logic.

In 19th century India, Hindu priests did not want laymen to read the Vedas and so it was widely discouraged. Instead, elaborate rituals like taking a dip in the Ganges River and feeding large numbers of priests on special occasions was encouraged. For Dayanand, this was a self-serving and superstitious practice which he wanted to put an end to. He wanted the nation's people to go back to the original teachings of the Vedas and at the same time reject these needless practices. He was also strongly against other abhorrent practices like sati, dowry, early marriage and untouchability prevalent falsely under the guise of Hinduism and religion. He exhorted Indian citizens to educate its women, use swadeshi products, and to understand the importance of cows for national prosperity and to adopt Hindi as the national language.

Swami Dayananda critically, logically and scientifically analysed all religions, including Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism. Besides this, he was strongly against idol worship which was prevalent in Hinduism. He penned his thoughts in the treatise, *Satyartha Prakash*. Swami Dayanand Saraswati was the founder of the Arya Samaj sect within Hinduism. Within this sect, there is no idol worship even though it is a variation of Hinduism. The teachings of Arya Samaj were not restricted to a specific class of individuals like other reform movements within Hinduism, but rather, it was addressed to the world as a whole. The principles of Arya Samaj professed universalism for every living being and did not discriminate among sects, faiths, communities or nations.

Arya Samaj promotes conversion to Hinduism. Dayananda's idea of dharma is defined in the 'beliefs and disbeliefs' portion of the book, *Satyartha Prakash*. He said, 'I accept as *dharma* whatever is in full conformity with impartial justice, truthfulness and the like; that which is not opposed to the teachings of God as embodied in the Vedas. Whatever is not free from partiality and is unjust, partaking of untruth and the like, and opposed to the teachings of God as embodied in the Vedas—that I hold as *adharma*.'

He also said, 'He, who after careful thinking, is ever ready to accept truth and reject falsehood; who counts the happiness of others as he does that of his own self, him I call just.'

The core message of Dayananda's teachings was essentially respect and reverence for fellow beings, in keeping with the Vedic notion of the divinity inherent in every individual. The Vedas profess that the body is the temple within which the divine soul or 'atma' resides. The soul is considered divine because it is connected directly to the Creator or Parmatma.

The ten principles of the Arya Samaj contained the philosophy of 'All actions should be performed with the prime objective of benefiting mankind'. This philosophy was widely different from the generally observed dogmatic rituals and idol worship. During his own lifetime, he considered *moksha* to be a merely selfish cause which benefited only a single individual and did not help others. Dayanand's idea of 'back to the Vedas' became widely popular and thinkers outside India too were influenced by it. In fact, Sri Aurobindo also decided to find answers to his own psychological queries in the Vedas.

Dayananda Saraswati wrote over sixty texts, which included a fourteen volume rationalization of the six Vedangas, an incomplete commentary on the Ashtadhyayi (Panini's grammar), a number of small treatises on morality and ethics, Vedic rituals and sacraments and on criticism of other faiths like Advaita Vedanta, Islam and Christianity. His main writings are *Satyarth Prakash*, *Sanskarvidhi*, *Rigvedadi Bhashya Bhumika*, *Rigved Bhashyam* (upto 7/61/2) and *Yajurved Bhashyam*. He also founded the Paropakarini Sabhain Ajmer in order to publish and preach his ideas and Vedic texts.

In 1883, the Maharaja of Jodhpur invited Dayananda to stay at his palace and become his guru. The Maharaja was keen to learn from Dayanand. One day, when Dayananda was visiting the Maharaja's, he found the Maharaja with a dancing girl, Nanhi Jan. Dayananda tried to persuade the Maharaja to give up such unethical activities and abide by dharma. This reprimand did not go down well with the young girl who decided to take revenge. She gave Dayananda's cook a bribe, who agreed to poison Dayanand. The cook mixed poison and powdered glass in Dayanand's milk which he would drink before going to bed. Immediately after drinking the milk nothing happened and Dayananda fell asleep. However, he woke up a little while later with a burning pain in his stomach. He understood immediately that someone had poisoned him. He immediately tried to empty out his stomach but it was already too late as the poison had gone into his bloodstream. Dayananda's pain increased to excruciating levels, so much so that he never left the bed again. A number of doctors tried to cure him but they all failed. Slowly, his body was beset by bleeding sores. When the cook saw the kind sage suffering, he felt overwhelming guilt and confessed to Dayanand. However, just before he died, Dayanand forgave him and gave him money to flee the country or he would be caught and punished. The news of his untimely death caused a wave of shock all over the country and many prominent individuals expressed their sadness:

'A man of spirit has passed away. Pandit Dayananda Saraswati is gone, the irrepressible, energetic reformer, whose mighty voice and passionate eloquence for the last few years raised thousands of people in India from lethargic, indifference and stupor into active patriotism is no more.' — *Col Henry Steel Olcott Swami*. Dayananda Saraswati is certainly one of the most powerful personalities who has shaped modern India and is responsible for its moral regeneration and religious revival.

— *Subhash Chandra Bose*

Vedic Schools

In the second part of the 19th century, Swami Dayanand attempted to reform the customs prevalent in native India. To formalize the reform, he established 'Vedic Schools'. The curricula of these schools centered around Vedic values, culture and religion. First such school was at Farrukhabad in 1869. The first batch had 50 students.

Owing to the success and popularity of this school, four more schools were established—Mirzapur (1870), Kasganj (1870), Chhalesar (1870) and Varanasi (1873). These Schools served as the practical and formalized application of Swami Dayanand's dream of religious and social reform. However, the schools did not enjoy the initial success everywhere because of their radical practices—pupils were not allowed to indulge in idol worship, and instead *havan* and meditative prayer was performed every evening. The prayer included mantras from the Vedas. Severe and swift disciplinary action was taken against students who broke the rules. At the same time, all meals, lodging, clothing and books were free for the students. Even non-Brahmins were encouraged to study Sanskrit and the Vedas. The schools were unique because they included only those texts which considered Vedic teachings to be foremost and universally correct. This practice followed in schools was essential for the social revival of Vedic culture in India. Some of the challenges faced by these schools were:

- There was a scarcity of qualified teachers who agreed as wholeheartedly with the Vedas as Swami Dayanand did.
- There were very few textbooks which Swami Dayanand approved for being used for instruction. There was a lack of funding because very few prominent, rich people of the times agreed with Swami Dayanand's ideas.
- Most students shied away from the strict discipline followed at the school and there was low attendance.
- Very few students achieved good grades that would have justified their studying in the Vedic Schools.

As a result of all these challenges, a few of the schools had to close down very soon after they opened. By 1874, Swami Dayanand had realized that unless he managed to garner considerable public support, his dream of spreading Vedic education would fail. After this realization, he decided to put in a large part of his resources for the propagation of his beliefs about reform. Once Swami Dayanand withdrew his attention from the schools, they collapsed quickly and the last one shut down in 1876.

5.3.2 Setting up of the Arya Samaj

During his travels, Swami Dayanand found out about many of the pro-Western Indian thinkers and reformers of the time, such as Nobin Chandra Roy, Rajnarayan Basu, Debendra Nath Tagore and Hemendranath Tagore. All of them were active members of the Brahmo Samaj, which had been instituted in 1828. Their views were strikingly similar to those of Swami Dayanand, as far as religious beliefs and practices, and social systems were concerned. A book called *Brahmo Dharma* was written by Debendranath Tagore, which was meant to be taken as the manual for living an ethical and spiritual life for the members of the Brahmo Samaj. Swami Dayanand read it when he stayed in Calcutta.

In June 1874, Dayanand started dictating lectures to his scribe, Pundit Bhimsen Sharma. The lecture covered his ideas and beliefs related to Dharma, Vedas, the soul,

childrearing, education, God, the government and his vision for the future of India and other major nations of the world. He continued dictating these lectures till September 1874. The collection of lectures was published in the form of *Satyarth Prakash* or 'the light of meaning of truth' at Varanasi in 1875. This collection turned out to be the cornerstone for the establishment and ideals behind the organization which evolved into Arya Samaj.

Swami Dayanand was invited by Hargovind Das Dvarkadas, who was the secretary of the local Prarthana Samaj, to Rajkot in 1874, to lecture devotees. He decided to allow attendees to select the topics they wanted the discourse to be on, rather than delivering prepared lectures as usual. The attendees selected eight different topics and Swami Dayanand easily delivered impromptu lectures on each of them. Not just that, all present were impressed at the level of insight and the depth of knowledge Swamiji possessed. The members of the Prarthana Samaj were so impressed with the discourses that they bestowed many gifts on Swamiji and decided that the Samaja as it was would be dissolved and instead would be reorganized under Swamiji's leadership. It is for this Samaj that Swamiji chose the name 'Arya Samaj' or the Society of Nobles. Initially, Swami Dayanand formulated a list of 28 guidelines for the Arya Samaj in Rajkot. He printed these guidelines for distribution as well.

Swami Dayanand's next trip was to Bombay and immediately upon his arrival there in January 1875, he was greeted with the appeal to establish an Arya Samaj there. Swamiji wanted to avoid needless debating and discussions and so started a voluntary membership drive. Almost immediately, more than a hundred people joined up. During the time when the membership drive was going on, Swamiji held a similar discourse as he had done at Rajkot. An attendee asked the Swami, 'Should we set up a new Samaj?' Dayanand answered: 'If you are able to achieve something for the good of mankind by a Samaj, then establish a Samaj; I will not stand in your way. But if you do not organize it properly, there will be a lot of trouble in the future. As for me, I will only instruct you in the same way as I teach others, and this much you should keep clearly in mind: my beliefs are not unique, and I am not omniscient. Therefore, if in the future any error of mine should be discovered after rational examination, then set it right. If you do not act in this way, then this Samaj too will later on become just a sect. That is the way by which so many sectarian divisions have become prevalent in India: by making the guru's word the touchstone of truth and thus fostering deep-seated prejudices which make the people religion-blind, cause quarrels and destroy all right knowledge. That is the way India arrived at her sorry contemporary state, and that is the way this Samaj too would grow to be just another sect. This is my firm opinion: even if there be many different sectarian beliefs prevalent in India, if only they all acknowledge the Vedas, then all those small rivers will reunite in the ocean of Vedic wisdom, and the unity of dharma will come about. From that unity of dharma there will result social and economic reform, arts and crafts and other human endeavours will improve as desired, and man's life will find fulfilment: because, by the power of that dharma all values will become accessible to him, economic values as well as psychological ones, and also the supreme value of moksha.'

As a result of this discourse and the membership drive, the Arya Samaj in Bombay was set up on 10 April, 1875. At first, there were 100 members, including Swami Dayanand. While members wanted and requested Swami Dayanand to be the Guru or the president of the Samaj, he declined and requested to be regular member instead.

Principles of Arya Samaj

The Arya Samaj considered 'aum' to be the only proper and highest name of God. The second big Arya Samaj was established at Lahore on 24 June 1877. At the time of the establishment of the Lahore Arya Samaj, it was decided that the 28 guidelines Swami Dayanand had previously drafted were too voluminous and should be made more concise and simpler. Also, the bylaws were to be put in a separate document. All those present were in favour of this move, including Swamiji and the ten principles of the Arya Samaj, as we know them today, were formulated.

These principles are the following:

1. God is the efficient cause of all true knowledge and all that is known through knowledge.
2. God is existent, intelligent and blissful. He is formless, omniscient, just, merciful, unborn, endless, unchangeable, beginning-less, unequalled, the support of all, the master of all, omnipresent, immanent, un-aging, immortal, fearless, eternal and holy, and the maker of all. He alone is worthy of being worshiped.
3. The Vedas are the scriptures of all true knowledge. It is the paramount duty of all Arya Samaj is to read them, teach them, recite them and to hear them being read.
4. One should always be ready to accept truth and to renounce untruth.
5. All acts should be performed in accordance with Dharma, that is, after deliberating what is right and wrong.
6. The prime object of the Arya Samaj is to do good to the world, that is, to promote physical, spiritual and social good of everyone.
7. Our conduct towards all should be guided by love, righteousness and justice.
8. We should dispel Avidya (ignorance) and promote Vidya (knowledge).
9. No one should be content with promoting his/her good only; on the contrary, one should look for his/her good in promoting the good of all.
10. One should regard oneself under restriction to follow the rules of society calculated to promote the well being of all, while in following the rules of individual welfare all should be free.

Then onwards, all the branches of the Arya Samaj that were set up, were founded on these 10 principles. At the same time, each branch has a certain degree of freedom to determine the bylaws they will follow. All members must uphold the 10 main principles entirely, without exception. At the same time, besides these principles, there is nothing else there is no binding force on any member. Due to this lack of rigidity, initially, Arya Samaj was an attractive proposition for people from many different religions; a large number of Muslims, Sikhs and Christians converted to Arya Samaj.

Socially, Arya Samaj believed in simple weddings that appealed to lower income classes and poor people. The Samaj also promoted inter-caste marriages in order to root out casteism.

On the basis of its own guidelines, Arya Samaj was against social evils like polytheism, idolatry, animal sacrifice, ancestor worship, pilgrimage, priest craft, the belief in *avatars* or incarnations of God, the hereditary caste system, untouchability and child marriage because all these lack Vedic endorsement.

5.4 ALIGARH REFORM MOVEMENT—SAYYID AHMAD KHAN

One of the prominent socio-religious movements within Islam in India has been the Aligarh movement, led by Sayyid Ahmad Khan.

Sayyid Ahmad Khan was of the belief that the future of Islam was in hands of the Muslims, especially those who were residents of northern parts of India. Through the myriad of his writings, he made followers and formed variety of public forums to spread his ideas. Sayyid Ahmad Khan argued that the dilemma of Muslims in the country was due to the education that also disseminated elements of English knowledge within the Islamic context. To counter such an education, he advocated the idea of opening those educational institutions which would impart 'proper' education to the Muslims. Thus, in June 1875, he established the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College of Aligarh. The district contributed significantly to the education of the Muslim elite, and soon, its significance grew. At the same time, Sayyid Ahmad Khan became a prominent leader of the Muslim community.

One of the main objectives of founding the college was to prepare Muslims to serve the Qu'an and also give the society educated, honest, public-spirited leaders who can confidently work with the British government and also protect the interests of the Muslim community. With an educational perspective, the Aligarh movement also sought to purify Islam. It made a significant break from similar movements in the past which sought to purify the religion and bring it to its past glory. The Aligarh movement also sought to create an 'administrative elite class' which could govern people along with the colonizers than focusing its attention on the ulama.

Sir Sayyid started to propagate education through the 1850s among the Muslims. He pursued studies of different subjects, including European jurisprudence and realized along the way the advantages of education of Western style which colleges across the country had started offering by that time. Even though he was a devout Muslim, Sir Sayyid was critical of the influence of traditional dogma and religious orthodoxy, which made Indian Muslims wary and suspicious of British influences. He was deeply worried for the welfare of the Muslim community and, as scion of Mughal nobility who had been reared in the finest traditions of Muslim elite culture, Sir Sayyid could anticipate the decline of Muslim political power across the country.

He was aware that the British and Muslims shared historical animosity, which had been heightened after the uprising of 1857. It, thus threatened to further deteriorate their relationship and marginalize the Muslims for many generations to come. Thus, Sir Sayyid sought to promote cooperation with the British authorities and promoted loyalty amongst Indian Muslims to the empire. He was also committed to uplift of downtrodden Muslims and thus founded a modern madrassa in Muradabad in 1859 which became one of the first religious schools to impart scientific education.

5.5 JYOTIBA PHULE

Mahatma Jyotiba Govindrao Phule (11 April 1827–28 November 1890), also known as Mahatma Phule, was an activist, thinker, social reformer, writer, philosopher, theologian, scholar, editor and revolutionary. Jyotiba Phule and his wife Savitribai were the pioneers

of women's education in India. The influence of Phule's thoughts and actions can be seen in the fields of education, agriculture, caste system, women and widow upliftment and elimination of untouchability. He is most known, however, for his efforts to educate women, mostly those from the lower castes. In September 1873, Jyotiba, along with his followers, formed the Satya Shodhak Samaj (Society of Seekers of Truth) with the objective of liberating the lower-most castes of India—the Bahujans, Shudras and Ati-Shudras—and preventing the exploitation and atrocities inflicted on them. His fight to win equal rights for peasants and the lower castes have earned him a place among the leading social reformers of Maharashtra.

5.5.1 Early Life of Phule

Jyotiba Govindrao Phule was born in the Satara district of Maharashtra, in a family belonging to the Mali caste—a caste perceived to be inferior by certain sections of the society. His father Govindrao was a vegetable vendor; his mother had died when he was nine months old. Jyotiba had to leave school after his primary education to help his father on the family's farm. However, his intelligence was recognized by a Muslim and a Christian neighbour, who persuaded his father to allow him to attend the local Scottish Mission school, from where he completed his schooling in 1847.

The turning point in Jyotiba's life came in the year 1848. His friend, a Brahmin, invited him to his marriage. When Jyotiba joined the wedding procession, the bridegroom's family members insulted Jyotiba since he belonged to a 'low' caste. This was Jyotiba's first direct encounter with the highly divisive caste system. Influenced by Thomas Paine's book *Rights of Man* (1791), Phule developed a keen sense of social justice, becoming passionately critical of the Indian caste system. He argued that education of women and the lower castes was a priority in addressing social inequalities.

5.5.2 Religious Beliefs

Though a Hindu, Jyotiba Phule was committed to the idea of the Bhakti tradition and his idol was Chhatrapati Shivaji. Phule referred to Shivaji as the 'destroyer of the Muslims', a community that Phule believed was as degenerative a force as the Brahmins.

Attack on the sanctity of Vedas

Phule began his critique of the caste system with an attack on the Vedas, a very important religious text of the Hindus. Phule referred to the Vedas as constituting of 'idle fantasies', 'palpably absurd legends' and a 'form of false consciousness'. Phule argued that social problems were the result of the belief that it was god who had inspired or created all religious books. He said it was a ploy of the established religious and priestly classes to maintain their supremacy through the texts and therefore they supported the texts. 'If there is only one God who created the whole mankind, why did He write the Vedas only in Sanskrit language, despite His anxiety for the welfare of the whole of mankind? What about the welfare of those who do not understand this language?' asked Phule. He also contended that it was not wise or teneable to believe that the Vedas, or any other religious texts, were the words of the god or were created by Him. To believe in the sanctity of the texts, was equivalent to ignorance and prejudice, he added.

Phule argued that all religions and their texts were made by men who had selfish interests and thus, the texts were representative of the interest of those classes which were trying to protect their own ends by exploiting the others. For his time, Phule's ideas were bold and revolutionary. He held that each religious text was a product of its time

and therefore comprised 'truths' that had no permanent or universal validity. Thus the texts were not free of biases or prejudices and only highlighted the self interest of the authors of the texts.

Fight against blind faith, ritualism and superstitions

Phule also put forth the ideas of a new social system, which he argued would be based on the ideas of freedom, equality, brotherhood, human dignity, economic justice and where society will free of exploitation. Such a society, Phule said, could be created only when the existing unequal and exploitative social and religious systems would be overthrown and the values on which they were based were replaced. Phule also challenged and transformed many misleading myths held by women and members of the lower castes. Phule called ideas such as belief in fate, astrology, rituals, and godmen as irrational and absurd.

5.5.3 Phule's Concept of God and Religion

Phule was a monotheist (belief in one god). To him, god was the creator of this entire universe and, therefore, all humans were his children. Phule did not believe that a man/woman needed an intermediary, i.e. a priest, to reach god. He also did not believe that man needed to practise elaborate rituals or asceticism to reach god. Phule was particularly critical of mythology and religious books. According to him, Hinduism had been based on the exploitation of the Shudras and domination of the Brahmins. The entire caste system had been devised to this end by the upper castes. Phule's idea of the perfect religion was the one based on the principles of liberty and equality. He called it Sarvajanic Satya Dharma in which a true devotee sought the truth but without the aid of a Guru or a text. Phule also did not support the belief that the members of a family must practise the same religion, thus, becoming one of the earliest advocates of the concept of religious freedom. Phule believed that there was some truth in all the religious texts and scriptures though none of them could claim to reveal the ultimate and whole truth.

Phule, along with his wife Savitribai, played an important role in fighting for social reform and women's rights in India during the British Rule. The two worked towards tackling some of the major social problems of the times, including women's liberation, widow remarriages and removal of untouchability.

On 24 September 1873, Jyotiba formed the Satya Shodhak Samaj (Society of Seekers of Truth) with himself as its first president and treasurer. The main objectives of the organization were to liberate the lower caste, especially the Shudras and Ati Shudras, and to prevent their exploitation by the upper-castes. The Satya Shodhak Samaj refused to regard the Vedas as sacrosanct. It opposed idolatry and denounced the *Chaturvarnya* (four-tiered caste) system. The Samaj propounded the spread of rational thinking and rejected the need for a Brahmin priestly class as the educational and religious leader.

5.6 VEERESALINGAM

A social reformer from Andhra Pradesh, Rao Bahadur Kandukuri Veeresalingam (16 April 1848–27 May 1919) was also known as Kandukuri Veeresalingham Pantulu. He is popularly considered as the man who brought about a renaissance in the Telugu community and Telugu literature, despite his birth in an orthodox Niyogi Telugu Brahmin family. The ideas of the Brahmo Samaj deeply influenced him, particularly those propagated by Keshab Chander Sen.

As he involved himself with social reforms, Veeresalingam first started a Telugu journal and the first prose he wrote was for women and their welfare. He encouraged women's education and founded a school in Dowlaiswaram in 1874. He also started a social organization called *Hitakarini* (Benefactor). 'The denigration of women has ruined our society,' wrote Veeresalingam and thus dedicated his entire life to the welfare of the women in the Indian society. Another magazine he started was *Vivekavardhini* (Knowledge Improver) at Davaleswaram, in which too he spread the ideas of improving the position of women in society. He was also critical of popularity of superstitious beliefs among people and rampant corruption among government officials.

Veeresalingam set up a press in Rajahmundry after his magazine became popular. The magazine was earlier printed in Chennai. Later, he launched *Satithitabobhini*, a special magazine for women. With this, he sought to enlighten women about their rights and also formed the Rajahmundry Social Reform Association in 1878. Initially, the activities of the organization centered on supporting the anti-nautch movement to discourage the hiring of nautch girls for celebration. Later, it also supported the cause of widow remarriage. Veeresalingam organized the first widow remarriage on 11 December, 1881 between Gogulapati Sreeramulu and Gowramma, who was the bride. Many police officials of the British attended the marriage. Pyda Ramakrishnayya of Kakinada financially supported the marriage. Despite such a support at the time when widow remarriage was a taboo, this marriage too came under severe opposition from the society. Yet, it did not deter his determination and Veeresalingam slowly succeeded in bringing about a change in the mindset of people. Gradually, widow remarriage became acceptable.

After he had organized a third widow marriage, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar sent a message congratulating Veeresalingam. Encouraged by the response, Veeresalingam also established a widow orphanage. But his progressive and revolutionary thoughts attracted severe criticism and opposition. However, he continued to fight and sought to abolish the practice of child marriage and *Kanyasulkam* (a kind of dowry given by the groom to the bride's parents). His efforts had a wide-reach and in 1881, his contemporary social and religious reformer from Kolkata, Sivanath Sastri, met him at Rajahmundry during one of his missionary visits.

Sastri later wrote about the meeting: 'The next day I went by boat to Rajahmundry and I shall gratefully remember the love and affection of Veeresalingam and the hospitality of his wife. Veeresalingam's wife is a remarkable person. On one hand, she is strong willed, powerful and dutiful, on the other, she is soft-hearted and dedicated to the well being of others. It is because Veeresalingam got a wife like her that he was able to carry on with his work in spite of social oppression.'

5.6.1 Activity and Literary Work

Brahmo Samaj leader Atmuri Lakshmi Narasimha deeply influenced the life of Veeresalingam. His participation in reforms and his literary works have been written in detail by Sivanath Sastri.

'In the history of the Brahmo Samaj, he established the first Brahmo Mandir in Andhra, at Rajahmundry in 1887. He constructed a widows' home, which was a two-storied building and a similar one for the Social Reform Association at Madras. He started the first theistic high school, the Hithakarini School at Rajahmundry in 1908. During the same year, he willed away all his property for the benefit of Rajahmundry widows' home and the school and placed them under the management of an association, the Hithakarini Samaj. The movement spread from Rajahmundry to Coconada (presently

Kakinada), Parlakimedi, Palakole, Narsapur, Vijaywada and Tenali. He is also credited with the setting up of Brahma Samaj at Bangalore.'

ACTIVITY

Write an essay on the influence of English education in colonial India. How did it contribute to the social reforms that took place in India?

DID YOU KNOW

- Women were held in high esteem in ancient Indian society, and were often considered superior to men. Literature of that period was rife with evidences to suggest that women had the power to destroy kingdoms and mighty rulers. Veda Vyasa's Mahabharata tells the story of the fall of Kauravas because they humiliated queen Draupadi. Valmiki's Ramayana tells about the fall of Ravana where he forcibly abducts and tries to marry Sita. Polyandry was also prevalent.
- Widow remarriage and women leaving their husbands were socially permissible. In the Vedic age, women actively participated in religious ceremonies and assemblies. Although they were dependent on their male relatives, they were not secluded from various domestic and social affairs.
- Polygamy was common, it was not practised much in ancient India. Child marriages were not known. Women could choose their husbands, as mentioned in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

5.7 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- Dayanand Saraswati was born on 12 February in 1824, in the town of Tankara, near Morvi (Morbi) in the Kathiawar region (since India's independence in 1947 Rajkot district) of the princely state of Gujarat, into an affluent and devout Saryupareen Brahmin family. His parents were Karshanji Lalji Tiwari and his wife Yashodabai.
- Dayanand's mission was to teach humankind about universal brotherhood through nobility as spelt out in the Vedas. His first step was to take up the difficult task of reforming Hinduism with dedication despite repeated attempts on his life.
- While Dayanand wanted the people to follow the Vedic life, he also exhorted the nation to accept social reforms like the abolition of untouchability, *sati*, and dowry, education of women, *swadeshi* and importance of cows for national prosperity as well as the adoption of Hindi as the national language.
- From June to September 1874, Swami Dayanand dictated a comprehensive series of lectures to his scribe, Pundit Bhimsen Sharma, which dealt with his views and beliefs regarding a wide range of subjects including God, the Vedas, Dharma, the soul, science, philosophy, childrearing, education, government and the possible future of both India and the world.

- Swami Dayanand drafted a list of twenty-eight rules and regulations for the Rajkot Arya Samaj, which he later had printed for distribution. Swami Dayanand reached Bombay on 29 January 1875, and immediately the appeal to establish an Arya Samaj there was renewed.
- The Aligarh movement was another prominent Muslim socio-religious movement in India and was led by Sayyid Ahmad Khan.
- Sayyid Ahmad Khan was born into a prestigious family of Delhi and spent his childhood in and out of the Mughal court. He studied Arabic and Persian according to the older pattern and also studied the work of Shah Wali Ullah. Though he did not receive a religious education, he demonstrated a personality more akin to a courtier or government official than to an Ulama.
- The animosity between the British and Muslims before and after the rebellion (Independence War) of 1857 threatened to marginalize Muslim communities across India for many generations Sir Syed intensified his work to promote co-operation with British authorities, promoting loyalty to the Empire amongst Indian Muslims.
- Mahatma Jyotiba Govindrao Phule (11 April 1827–28 November 1890), also known as Mahatma Phule, was an activist, thinker, social reformer, writer, philosopher, theologian, scholar, editor and revolutionary. Jyotiba Phule and his wife Savitribai were the pioneers of women's education in India.
- Jyotiba Phule was a Hindu who believed in and followed the Bhakti tradition. His idol was Chhatrapati Shivaji. He called Shivaji 'destroyer of the Muslims', a community Phule believed was as degenerative a force as the Brahmins.
- Rao Bahadur Kandukuri Veeresalingam (16 April 1848–27 May 1919), also known as Kandukuri Veeresalingham Pantulu, was a social reformer of Andhra Pradesh. He was born in an orthodox Niyogi Telugu Brahmin family. He is widely considered as the man who first brought about a renaissance in Telugu people and Telugu literature. He was influenced by the ideals of Brahmo Samaj, particularly those of Keshub Chunder Sen.

5.8 KEY TERMS

- **Sacrosanct:** (esp. of a principle, place, or routine) Regarded as too important or valuable to be interfered with
- **Theosophist:** One who is involved in Religious philosophy or speculation about the nature of the soul based on mystical insight into the nature of God
- **Tutelage:** Protection of or authority over someone or something; guardianship

5.9 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. The Salva Nayanar and Vaishnava Alvar saints of south India were the first to propagate and broaden the bhakti movement.
2. Some famous sufi saints were— Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti, Bahauddin Zakariya, Sahabuddin Suhrawardi and Nizamuddin Auliya.
3. Kabir was the most influential personality in the monotheistic movements.
4. Dayanand left home at the age of 12 as he refused to marry young and went on the quest for God.

5. The core message of Dayananda's teachings was essentially respect and reverence for fellow beings, in keeping with the Vedic notion of the divinity inherent in every individual.
6. Arya Samajis believed in simple weddings that appealed to lower income classes and poor people. The Samaj also promoted inter-caste marriages in order to root out casteism.
7. Sayyid Ahmad Khan
8. Islam
9. Satya Shodhak Samaj
10. Liberty, equality
11. Veerrasalingam
12. The magazine Vivekavardhini talks about improving the position of women.

5.10 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Name some of the major works by Dayanand Saraswati.
2. State three principles of Arya Samaj.
3. What did the Aligarh Reform Movement focus on?
4. What was Jyotiba Phule's concept of God and religion?
5. What was Veeresalingam's literary contribution?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the philosophies of Arya Samaj in detail.
2. What was Sayyid Ahmad Khan's contribution in the Aligarh Reform Movement?
3. Write a short note on Jyotiba Phule as a socio-religious reformer.
4. Describe Veeresalingam's contribution to society.

5.11 FURTHER READING

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Contact us:

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