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Rajiv Gandhi University



MAPOLS-503

Modern Indian Political Thinkers

MA POLITICAL SCIENCE

3rd Semester

Rajiv Gandhi University

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Modern Indian Political Thinkers

**MA [Political Science]
Third semester
MAPOLS – 503**



RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY

Arunachal Pradesh, Indian – 791 112

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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, Postgraduate, 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.

SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

Modern Indian Political Thinkers and Constitutional Development

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Unit 2 Gandhian Thought - Special reference to the concept of Non-Violence Satyagraha and Sarvodaya.	Unit 2: Gandhian Thoughts)
Unit 3 Socialism and Social Justice - Ideas of J. P. Narayan, M.N Roy, Ram Manohar Lohia & B.R. Ambedkar.	Unit 3: Socialism and Social Justice
Unit 4 Religion and Communal Politics in India - The Main ideas of Savarkar, Hedgewar, Syed Ahmed khan and Jinnah.	Unit 4: Religion and Communal Politics in India
Unit 5 Communist Movement and Thought in India - S.A. Dange - M.S Nambudripad - R P Dutt.	Unit 5: Communist Movement and Thoughts in India (Pages 107- 116)
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INTRODUCTION

The period between 1707 and 1950 is extremely crucial in the history of India. The advent of the Europeans for the purpose of trading eventually led to the domination of India by the British, who ruled over India for a long time. The First World War and the Second World War played an important role in arousing the spirit of nationalism among people. Various freedom fighters fought for the independence of the country in their own way.

The Indian independence struggle included various political organizations, philosophies and movements. All of them aimed at ending the British rule in India. The Indian National Congress, along with Mahatma Gandhi, played a major role in the Indian national movement. The Indian independence movement was fuelled by two ideologies— modernism and extremism. Both these ideologies strived for Purna Swaraj, but in different ways. Finally, India became independent on 15 August 1947 and became a Republic on 26 January 1950 when the Constitution of India was enforced. During this period of struggle, India witnessed the arrival of several social and political thinkers. Early thinkers like Rammohan Roy, Dayanand Saraswati and Vivekananda showed the path to new thoughts and acted as catalysts to a new awakening. They were followed by people such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Later on, we saw the emergence of Gandhi as well as Communist thinkers such as S. A. Dange, M.N. Roy and R.P. Dutt.

This book discusses in detail the ideologies of thinkers mentioned above and many others. The book also critically assesses the socio-political and economic factors that led to the rise of these thinkers. The final sections of the book discuss the Indian freedom movement.

This book, *Modern Indian Political Thinkers and Constitutional Development*, has been designed keeping in mind the self-instruction mode (SIM) format. It 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 ten units:

- Unit 1: Gives an overview of the foundation of modern Indian thought
- Unit 2: Examines the thoughts of Gandhi with respect to Independence
- Unit 3: Traces the study of socialism and social justice
- Unit 4: Analyses religion and communal politics in India
- Unit 5: Identifies Communist movement and thoughts in India
- Unit 6: Describes the social, economic and political impact of British rule
- Unit 7: Discusses early phases of the Indian national movement
- Unit 8: Discusses final phases of the Indian national movement
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UNIT 1 FOUNDATION OF MODERN INDIAN THOUGHT

Structure

UNIT 1 FOUNDATION OF MODERN INDIAN THOUGHT

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INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will learn about different founders of modern Indian thought. The unit will begin with a discussion on Raja Rammohan Roy.

Raja Rammohan Roy was a religious, social and educational reformer who challenged traditional Hindu culture and indicated the lines of progress for Indian society under British rule. He is rightfully called the 'Father of Modern India'. He founded the Brahmo Samaj in 1828, along with Dwarkanath Tagore and other Bengalis, which was an influential Indian socio-religious reform movement during the Bengal Renaissance. Roy's influence was apparent in the fields of politics, public administration, education, as well as religion. He is known for his efforts to abolish the practice of sati, the Hindu funeral practice in which the widow immolated herself on her husband's funeral pyre.

The unit also deals with the life and times of Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati, who was a Hindu religious scholar, reformer and the founder of the Arya Samaj. He was the first to give the call for Swarajya-' India for Indians' - in 1876, later taken up by Lokmanya Tilak. Denouncing idolatry and the ritualistic worship prevalent in Hinduism at the time, he worked towards reviving Vedic ideologies. Subsequently, the philosopher and President of India, S. Radhakrishnan, called him one of 'makers of modern India,' as did Sri Aurobindo Ghosh. One of his notable disciples was Shyamji Krishna Varma, who founded the India House in London and guided other revolutionaries. Others who were influenced by and followed him were Madam Cama, Pran Sukh Yadav, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, Lala Hardayal, Madan Lai Dhingra, Ram Prasad Bismil, Bhagat Singh, Swami Shradhanand, Sukhabodhananda, MahatmaHansraj and Lala Lajpat Rai. One of his most influential works is the book, *Satyarth Prakash*, which contributed to the Indian independence movement. He was a sanyasi (ascetic) since boyhood, and a scholar who believed in the infallible authority of the Vedas.

Dayanand advocated the doctrine of karma and scepticism in dogma and emphasized the ideals of brahmacharya (celibacy) and devotion to god. The Theosophical Society and the Arya Samaj were united from 1878 to 1882, becoming the Theosophical

Society of the Arya Samaj. Among Maharishi Dayanand's major contributions are promotion of equal rights of women, such as the right to education and reading of Indian scriptures and his translation of the Vedas from Sanskrit into Hindi, so that the common person might be able to read them.

The unit will conclude with a discussion on the life, contributions, ideals and philosophy of Bengal's significant social reformer—Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda (12 January 1863-4 July 1902), born Narendranath Dutta, was the chief disciple of the 19th century mystic Ramakrishna Paramahansa and the founder of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission. Vivekananda introduced Hindu philosophy, especially Vedanta and Yoga, to the Western world. He is also credited with raising interfaith awareness and bringing Hinduism to the status of a major world religion. He was a major force in the revival of Hinduism in modern India and is perhaps best known for his inspiring speech at the Parliament of the World's Religions at Chicago in 1893, through which he introduced Hinduism to the world.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the life of Raja Rammohan Roy, including his early life and social, political and religious career
- Discuss the social reforms undertaken by Dayanand Saraswati
- Discuss the Arya and the Brahma Samaj
- Explain Vivekananda's contribution in propagating Hinduism
- Discuss Vivekananda's Vedanta philosophy

RAJA RAMMOHAN ROY

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

In 1805, Rammohan Roy joined the service of the English East India Company in Bengal, and continued to work there up to 1814. After his retirement, he settled in Calcutta and devoted himself entirely to the service of the people. In 1814, he started the Atmiya Sabha. In 1828, he founded the Brahma Samaj. He went to England in 1831 on a special mission to plead the cause of the Mughal emperor of Delhi. While he was still

busy in that work, he died at Bristol on 27 September 1833. He was given the title of Raja by the Mughal emperor Akbar II.

Social changes

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

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

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

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

His deep knowledge of Christianity and the *Bible* and his admiration for the Christ and his teachings are all reflected in the various books he wrote. His book, *The Precepts of Jesus*, reflects his deep respect for Jesus Christ and his teachings. His knowledge of Sanskrit enabled him to translate many old Hindu scriptures like the Upanishads and Shukracharya's works into Bengali. *Gayatri Artha* and *Atmanantratma Vivek* are two of his famous works. The main reason for all this research and writings was to influence the Indian society with the concept of belief in one Supreme Self and God. He deeply desired that all religious and social superstitions could be eradicated from the India cultural and social psyche. His book *Manazarat- ul-Adiyem* showed the common message of all religions, in order to bring about religious harmony in India. He tried to allay the fears that Hindus had about the goals and aims of the Christian missionaries. Roy fought for the freedom of the press. He himself founded and edited a Bengali journal called the *Samvad Kaumudi*, which was among the earliest Indian-edited newspapers. He carried on a vigorous agitation against the Press Regulations of 1823. He submitted a memorial to the Supreme Court in which he dwelt on the benefits of a 'free press'. His agitation for the freedom of the press must have paved the way for the final emancipation of the press in 1885.

Raja Rammohan Roy was a man of reason and great rationality. He had deep faith in the universal message of all religions, but also did not hesitate to reject ideas or concepts that were unreasonable and irrational. During his stay in England from 1831 to 1833, the Raja joined protest march for reform in the administrative system of British India. He was the first Indian to be consulted on Indian affairs by the British Parliament. While giving his evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, he suggested reforms in practically all branches of Indian administration.

Raja Rammohan Roy, along with many other modern thinkers of that time like, Dwarkanath Tagore (father of Devendranath Tagore), Prasanna Kumar Tagore, Kalisankar Ghosal, Brindaban Mitra, Brajmohan Majumdar, Nandkishore Bose, Siva Prasad Mitra and Ram Chandra Vidya Vagish, set up the Atmiya Sabha in 1814 in Calcutta. However, his ideas of one God and influence of Islam and Christianity and his rejection of caste system shocked many traditional and conservative Hindus and

thus the Atmiya Sabha could not sustain itself beyond a point, and by 1819, it ceased to exist.

Brahmo Samaj

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

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

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

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

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

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

According to Rabindranath Tagore, Raja Rammohan Roy 'inaugurated the modern age in India'. He has also been described as the 'Father of Indian Renaissance' and the 'Prophet of Indian Nationalism'. Behind all of his ideas of social and religious reforms, there lay the thought of bringing about the political regeneration of his countrymen. To quote him, 'I regret to say the system adhered to by the Hindus is not well-calculated to promote their political interest. The distinction of castes, introducing division and sub-

divisions among them, has entirely deprived them of political feeling, multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise. It is, I think, necessary that some change should take place in their religion at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort'.

Tomb of Raja Rammohan Roy

Rammohan Roy's tomb was built by Dwarkanath Tagore in 1843, ten years after Roy's death in Bristol on 27 September 1833. Roy's tomb is located in the Amos Vale Cemetery on the outskirts of Bristol. In 1845, Dwarkanath Tagore arranged for Rammohan's remains to be removed and returned to India through Roy's nephew, who had accompanied Dwarkanath to Britain for this purpose. Rammohan's relics were cremated by his family near Kolkata on February 28, 1846.

In September 2006, representatives from the Indian High Commission came to Bristol to mark the anniversary of Rammohan Roy's death. During the ceremony, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh women sang prayers of thanks in Sanskrit. Following this visit, the Mayor of Kolkata, Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharya, who was amongst the representatives from the Indian High Commission, decided to raise funds to restore the tomb. In June 2007, businessman Aditya Poddar donated £50,000 towards the restoration of Rammohan's memorial after being approached by the Mayor of Kolkata for funding.

Legacy of Raja Rammohan Roy

Rammohan Roy was a major shaper of modern India. Consciously influenced by Christianity and by the social agenda of many missionaries, he was convinced that India's culture and religious tradition was rational and of profound spiritual value. Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first PM, describes Roy as a 'new type' of thinker 'combining in himself the old learning and the new.' 'Deeply versed,' wrote Nehru, 'in Indian thought and philosophy, a scholar of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic, he was a product of the mixed Hindu-Muslim culture' of that part of India. Nehru cites Oxford's second Boden Professor of Sanskrit, Sir Monier Williams, on Roy as the world's first scholar of the science of comparative religion. While he remained rooted in Hinduism, Roy admired much of what he saw in Islam, Christianity and in the other religions which he studied, and believed that the same fundamental truths were the basis of all these religions.

Rammohan Roy held that the first principle of all religions is the 'Absolute Originator.' Against the criticism that it contained very little lasting worth, he set out to retrieve from India's heritage what could withstand the scrutiny of a rational mind. He went further than others in what he was prepared to abandon, which for him included the Vedas. For other reformers, such as Dayanand Saraswati, the Vedas contained all religious truth as well as ancient scientific knowledge, and were not to be thrown away. The organization he founded, the Brahmo Samaj, was a pioneer of social reform, an important promoter of education and of India's autonomy and eventual independence. Its basic ideals, including gender-equality and its rejection of class-based privilege, have become part of the social framework of Indian society, at least in theory.

Rammohan Roy abhorred many practices that had become entrenched in Indian society. These included the marriage of girls five or six years old, the burning of a wife on her dead husband's funeral pyre, whether she is willing or not, meaningless observance of festivals and worshipping for show, the worship of several gods and ranking gods as

high and low, and so on. He had a high regard for Hinduism, but he felt that the Hindus had yet to understand their religion correctly.

Rammohan felt that there should be equality between men and women and that people should give up superstitious beliefs. Many of Rammohan's friends accepted his line of thinking. An association of such close friends was formed. It was called 'Atmiya Sabha' (The Society of Friends). Religious discussions took place there. The members had to give up idol-worship. They had to spread the Society's views on religion among the people. Many scholars opposed Roy's views on religion, Rammohan replied to such objections by writing articles. The people read them and understood what was said in the sacred books.

DAYANAND SARASWATI

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 as Rajkot. Saraswati's 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 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 Dayanand 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. Dayanand 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. Dayanand 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.

Mission of Saraswati's Life

The mission of Dayanand'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 Ganga 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.

Dayanand critically, logically and scientifically analysed all religions, including Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism. Besides this, he was strongly against idol worship that was prevalent in Hinduism. He penned his thoughts in the treatise, *Satyarth Prakash*. He went on to found 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 also promoted conversion to Hinduism. Dayanand's idea of dharma is defined in the 'beliefs and disbeliefs' portion of *Satyarth 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 Dayanand'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.

Saraswati wrote over sixty texts, which included a fourteen volume rationalization of the six Vedangas, an incomplete commentary on *theAshtadhyayi(PanmVs 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 *YajurvedBhashyam*. He also founded the Paropakarini Sabha in Ajmer in order to publish and preach his ideas and Vedic texts.

In 1883, the Maharaja of Jodhpur invited Dayanand to stay at his palace and become his guru. The Maharaja was keen to learn from Dayanand. One day, when Dayanand was visiting the Maharaja's palace, he found the Maharaja with a dancing girl, Nanhi Jan. Dayanand 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 Dayanand'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 Dayanand 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. Dayanand'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 Dayanand 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 Dayanand 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 India. To formalize the reform, he established 'Vedic Schools'. The curricula of these schools centred around Vedic values, culture and religion. The 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 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.

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, Debendranath 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, child rearing, 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.

In 1874, Swami Dayanand was invited by Hargovind Das Dvarkadas, who was the secretary of the local Prarthana Samaj, to Rajkot 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 Dayanand possessed. The members of the Prarthana Samaj were so impressed with the discourses that they bestowed many gifts on Dayanand and decided that the Samaj as it was, would be dissolved and instead would be reorganized under Saraswati 's leadership. It is for this Samaj that Dayanand 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.

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. Saraswati 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, Dayanand 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 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' or 'Om' 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 that Dayanand had previously drafted were too voluminous and should be made more concise and simpler. Moreover, the bylaws were to be put in a separate document. All those present were in favour of this move, including Saraswati 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 members of the Arya Samaj 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 wellbeing 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 no other 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 lacked Vedic endorsement.

SWAMIVTVEKANANDA

Narendranath Dutta, better known Swami Vivekananda, was born on 12 January 1863 in Calcutta (now Kolkata). He had interest in a myriad of fields—philosophy, religion, history, social science, literatures and others. He also showed interest in reading scriptures, such as, the Vedas, Upanishads, the *Bhagavat Gita*, the Puranas and other epics. As a young boy, he questioned superstition, customs and discriminations based on caste. He would often engage in discussing spiritual matters with his father. For the first time, the question of existence of god came to his mind.

Narendranath began his education at home. He enrolled into the Metropolitan Institution of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in 1871. Later on, he joined the General Assembly's Institution. During these years, he read about the history of the Europeans nations and Western logic and philosophy, including the writings of David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, and Charles Darwin. Narendra was fascinated with the evolutionism of Herbert Spencer and even translated Spencer's book on education into Bengali. He was well versed in Sanskrit.

His early belief on religion was formed by the Brahmo Samaj's concept of formless god. He felt his knowledge on philosophy was unsatisfactory and experimented with the thought of whether religion and god could be a part of one's growing experiences and the same could be internalized. This question bothered him so much that he met prominent citizens of Calcutta and asked them whether they met god 'face-to-face'. He never got any satisfactory answers. It was through his association with Ramakrishna and his mission that he got his answer on god.

Ramakrishna's influence on Vivekananda

Vivekananda writes on his first interaction with Ramakrishna thus,

The magic touch of the Master that day immediately brought a wonderful change over my mind. I was astounded to find that really there was nothing in the universe but God! ... Everything I saw appeared to be Brahman I realized that I must have had a glimpse of the Advaita state. Then it struck me that the words of the scriptures were not false. Thenceforth I could not deny the conclusions of the Advaita philosophy.'

Narendranath's meeting with Ramakrishna in November 1881 proved to be a turning point in his life. About this meeting, Narendranath said:

' [Ramakrishna] looked just like an ordinary man, with nothing remarkable about him. He used the most simple language and I thought "Can this man be a great teacher?". I crept near to him and asked him the question which I had been asking others all my life: "Do you believe in God, Sir?" "Yes", he replied. "Can you prove it, Sir?" "Yes". "How?" "Because I see Him just as I see you here, only in a much intense sense." That impressed me at once. [] I began to go to that man, day after day, and I actually saw that religion could be given. One touch, one glance, can change a whole life.'

Narendra was inspired by his principal Reverend W. Hastie to visit the Ramakrishna Mission at in Calcutta (Kolkata). Being a follower of the Brahmo Samaj, Narendra initially revolted against the ideologies of the mission and its creator. He was against idol worship, especially against the worship of Kali by Ramakrishna, and polytheism. He even rejected the Advaitist Vedantism of identity with absolute as blasphemy and madness. But was soon drawn towards the personality of Ramakrishna and visited him frequently.

Narendra, who always had queries and sought reason behind all actions, bombarded Ramakrishna with questions, which were answered patiently. Ramakrishna also did not ask Narendra to abandon reason and scientific questioning. Within five years, Narendra was transformed from a restless, impatient and inquisitive youth to a mature man who renounced material possession and emotional attachment in search of god. With time, he accepted Ramakrishna as his guru.

In his last days, Ramakrishna gave the monastic robe (ochre in colour) to Narendra and a few other disciples which signified the initiation into the first monastic order. Following the death of his guru, Narendra and a few other disciples started living the life of sanyasis. Narendra's fellow disciples saw a leader in him and, during this phase, he acquired the name of Vivekananda. The name was given by the Maharaja of Khetri, Ajit Singh. This group of sanyasis spent their time meditating, discussing the philosophical teaching of their guru Ramakrishna, Adi Shankara, Ramanuja, and even Jesus Christ, and spreading the message of love and brotherhood.

In January 1899, Vivekananda set up an ashram (or math) for the disciples of Ramakrishna at Belur, near Kolkata. The ashram was established in memory of his master and to carry and spread Ramakrishna's teachings.

The preacher

In 1888, Vivekananda felt the urge to explore and discover the true India. In 1890, he sought the blessing of Ramakrishna's wife, Ma Sarada, to begin his journey. He travelled extensively from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari for five years as Parivrajaka, a wandering monk. He only had a kamandalu (water pot), a staff, and two books— the *Bhagavad Gita* and *The Imitation of Christ*. His travel brought him face-to-face with the real India and he was moved by the appalling poverty and the suffering of the people. He resolved to work towards their uplift. He himself travelled mostly on foot at times, took the train where his admirers bought the tickets. He also visited important centres of learning, acquainting himself with the diverse religious traditions and different patterns of social life.

While travelling to the Himalayas, it is said he had a vision of the macrocosm and microcosm, which seems to reflect in the jana yoga lectures he gave later in the West. In January 1891, he travelled to Jaipur, where he studied Panini's *Ashtadhyayi* under a Sanskrit scholar. He travelled further to Ahmedabad and Porbander, where he stayed for almost nine months. During his travelling years, he studied philosophy and Sanskrit from learned pundits. He even worked with a court pandit who translated the Vedas. Vivekananda travelled to south India at the end of 1892. It is said he meditated on a rock, considered to be the last point of India, for three days. The rock is now named the Vivekananda rock.

Vivekananda realized India was not prospering because of her negligence towards the masses. He saw in spite of poverty, the masses adhered to religion. But they had never been enlightened by the stimulating principles of Vedanta and how to apply them in practical life. He claimed, 'an empty stomach is no good for religion'. The need, he said, was to feed the poor and provide them the bare requirements. Living under repression for centuries, the masses lost the self-confidence and failed to improve their lives. He said people had to acquire two kinds of knowledge, first was secular knowledge to improve their economic conditions and the second was spiritual knowledge to infuse self-confidence and reinforce their morality. He was also convinced that educating the masses would strengthen the poor and wanted to work for the uplift of the country. The Ramakrishna Mission acted as a machinery to aid Vivekananda in achieving his goal.

Parliament of Religions

Vivekananda heard about the World's Parliament of Religion that was to take place in Chicago in 1893. His admirers in India wanted him to participate. Vivekananda too felt that the global platform would be apt to spread the message of his master, and decided to go to the United States to attend the parliament. He also thought he could seek financial help for his project of uplifting the poor. His travel was financed by his disciples from Chennai and the Raja of Khetri. Vivekananda left for America from Mumbai on 31 May 1893. On his arrival, he learnt that to attend the parliament, he required credentials from any bona fide organization, which he did not have.

When Professor John Henry Wright of Harvard University learnt that he did not have the required reference to speak, Wright is quoted as have said, 'To ask for your credentials is like asking the sun to state its right to shine in the heavens.' Wright addressed a letter to the chairman in charge of delegates stating, 'Here is a man who is more learned than all of our learned professors put together.' Representing India, Vivekananda addressed the audience saying, 'Sisters and brothers of America!' To these words he got a standing ovation from a crowd of seven thousand.

He greeted the youngest of the nations in the name of 'the most ancient order of monks in the world, the Vedic order of sannyasins, a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance.' In this context, he quoted two verses from the Gita, 'As different streams with their sources in different places mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take, through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee!' and 'Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths that in the end lead to Me.' He went on to say, 'I do not come,' 'to convert you to a new belief. I want you to keep your own belief; I want to make the Methodist a better Methodist; the Presbyterian a better Presbyterian.... I want to teach you to live the truth, to reveal the light within your own soul.'

Although the speech was a short one, it voiced the spirit of the parliament and its sense of universality. It also caught the attention of the press. Newspapers called him the 'the greatest figure in the parliament of religions' and 'the most popular and influential man in the parliament'. His speeches had one theme—universality—and stressed on religious tolerance. Following his success at the Parliament of Religion, Vivekananda spent nearly two years giving lectures in various parts of America.

He later founded the Vedanta Society of New York. He travelled to England twice where he met Miss Margaret Noble, an Irish lady, who later became Sister Nivedita. He also interacted with Max Müller, the renowned Indologist at Oxford University who wrote Ramakrishna's first biography in the West. From the West, he also set his Indian work in motion. He advised his followers and brother monks to launch a campaign of social service. 'Go from door to door amongst the poor and lower classes... and teach them religion. Also, let them have oral lessons on geography and such other subjects. No goodwill come of sitting idle and.. .saying 'Ramakrishna, O Lord!'—unless you can do some good to the poor.'

In 1895, the periodical called *Brahmavadin* was started in Madras, with the money supplied by Vivekananda, for the purpose of teaching Vedanta philosophy.

1.4.1 Founding of Ramakrishna Mission

The Ramakrishna Mission was founded on 1 May 1897, immediately after Vivekananda's return to Kolkata. He considered it a tool for social service. The ideals of the Mission are based on karma yoga. It was his first step towards an organized socio-religious movement to awaken and aid the masses through educational and cultural programmes. The mission worked extensively towards medical and relief work.

Vivekananda set up two more monasteries—one at Mayavati on the Himalayas, near Almora, called the Advaita Ashrama and another at Madras. He started two journals also, *Prabuddha Bharata* in English and *Udbhodan* in Bengali.

Vivekananda's teachings and principles

Vivekananda believed the Vedanta, based on the interpretation of Adi Shankara, best expressed the essence of Hinduism. He summarized it in the following words: 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or mental discipline, or philosophy--by one, or more, or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details.' He maintained, 'So long as even a single dog in my country is without food my whole religion is to feed it and serve it, anything excluding that is nonreligious.'

Vivekananda claimed it was Ramakrishna who taught him that 'Jiva is Shiva' (each individual is Divinity itself). This became his mantra, and he coined the concept of *daridra narayana seva*, or the service of god in and through (poor) human beings.

He claimed through moksha people could achieve the light of oneness, which is essential to eliminate the distinctions between men. What is achieved is compassion for those who fail to or are unaware of this oneness and there arises a determination to help them. He believed that one could not be free unless all are free. Even the desire for personal salvation has to be given up, and only tireless work for the salvation of others is the true mark of the enlightened person.

The Ramakrishna Math and the mission were founded on the principle of *atmano mokshartham jagat-hitaya cha* (for one's own salvation and for the welfare of the world). His advice to his followers was to be unselfish and have faith (shraddha). He encouraged the practice of brahmacharya (celibacy) and attributed his physical and mental strengths and eloquence to this.

Vivekananda and science

Vivekananda wrote five books during his lifetime and several more were published posthumously. His first two books, published in 1896, were on Karma Yoga and Raja Yoga. His two other books were on the philosophies of Vedanta and one was a collection of his lectures.

He believed experience was the best book of knowledge. And religion is the only science where there was no surety because it did not teach science as experience. However, there were some who taught religion through experience. They were called mystics. And these mystics from every religion taught the same truth. He saw a co-relation in this science and mathematics. He explains, as mathematics across the world was the same, similarly, the mystics did not differ. Religion deals with the truths of the metaphysical world just as chemistry and the other natural sciences deal with the truths of the physical world.

According to him, to understand science, one had to study nature. The book one should read to understand religion was the human mind and heart. 'The sage is often ignorant of physical science, because he reads the wrong book—the book within; and the scientist is too often ignorant of religion, because he too reads the wrong book—the book without,' he said. He believed all science has its particular method and even science of religion had.

In his paper read at the World's Parliament of Religions, Vivekananda also hinted about the final goal of physics. 'Science is nothing but the finding of unity. As soon as science would reach perfect unity, it would stop from further progress, because it would reach the goal... Physics would stop when it would be able to fulfil its services in discovering one energy of which all others are but manifestations. All science is bound to come to this conclusion in the long run. Manifestation, and not creation, is the word of science today, and the Hindu is only glad that what he has been cherishing in his bosom for ages is going to be taught in more forcible language, and with further light from the latest conclusions of science.'

The great electrical engineer Nikola Tesla, after listening to Vivekananda's speech on Sankhya philosophy, was much interested in its cosmogony and its rational theories of the Kalpas (cycles), Prana and Akasha. His notion based on the Vedanta led him to think that matter is a manifestation of energy.

Last years of his life

In 1899, Vivekananda went to the US once again. He founded the Vedanta Society at San Francisco and New York. He also founded Shanti Ashrama (peace retreat) at California. In 1900, he went to Paris to attend the Congress of Religions. The addresses became memorable for the scholarly penetration evinced by Vivekananda related to worship of the linga and authenticity of the *Gita*. The hectic travelling took a toll on Vivekananda's health. He returned to Belur Math in 1900. He passed away on 4 July 1902. Vivekananda's ideologies inspired several freedom fighters and continue to do so.

ACTIVITY

Find out more about the religious atmosphere in Raja Rammohan Roy's family and write a brief note on it.

Do You KNOW

Vivekananda established the first vedanta society in New York in 1894.

SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learned that:

- Raja Rammohan Roy, also known as the 'Father of Modern India' was a pioneer social reformer in the colonial period.
- Rammohan Roy's impact on modern Indian history concerned a revival of the ethics and principles of the Vedanta school of philosophy as found in the Upanishads. He preached about the unity of God, made early translations of Vedic scriptures into English, co-founded the Calcutta Unitarian Society, founded the Brahma Samaj and campaigned against sati.
- Roy sought to integrate Western culture with features of his own country's traditions. He strived for the betterment of Indian society, in many ways by using his writing skills, by establishing different societies and by his fight against eradication of social evils, etc.
- Roy started newspapers like *Sambad Komudi*, *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* and *Jam-i-Jahan*, which he used as his mouthpiece to propagate his views on the socio-religious conditions of contemporary Indian society.
- The Brahma Samaj was an institution founded by Raja Rammohan Roy. It was an important instrument against existing social problems.
- Dayanand Saraswati was born on 12 February 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. A number of incidents in his early childhood resulted in Dayanand's questioning the traditional beliefs of Hinduism and inquiring about god.
- Dayanand's mission was to teach humankind about universal brotherhood through nobility as spelt out in the Vedas.

- Saraswati believed that Hinduism had been corrupted by its divergence from the founding principles of the Vedas and that Hindus had been misled by the priests making rituals and prayers more elaborate and exaggerated.
- Between 1869 and 1873, Swami Dayanand Saraswati made his first attempt at reform in his native Gujarat. This attempt took the form of the establishment of 'Vedic Schools' which put an emphasis on Vedic values, culture and religion to its students.
- 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. The resulting manuscript was published under the title *Satyarth Prakash* or *The Light of Meaning of Truth* in 1875 at Varanasi. This voluminous work would prove to play a central role in the establishment and later growth of the organization which would come to be known as the Arya Samaj.
- Swami Vivekananda was born in Calcutta (now Kolkata) on 12 January 1863, and was given the name Narendranath Dutta.
- Since his childhood, Vivekananda evinced much interest in the Hindu scriptures like the Vedas, the Upanishads, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Puranas and so on. Even when young, he questioned the validity of superstitious customs and discrimination based on caste and refused to accept anything without rational proof and pragmatic test.
- Narendranath's initial beliefs were shaped by Brahmo concepts, which include belief in a formless god and deprecation of idol.
- Five years under Ramakrishna transformed Narendra from a restless, puzzled, impatient youth to a mature man who was ready to renounce everything for the sake of god-realization. In time, Narendra accepted Ramakrishna as guru, completely surrendering himself as a disciple.
- It was in early 1892 that Vivekananda heard of the Parliament of the World's Religions and was urged by his followers to attend it.
- On 1 May 1897, Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission—the organ for social service. The ideals of the Ramakrishna Mission are based on karma yoga.

KEY TERMS

- **Sati:** It refers to a social practice whereby the widow was burnt along with her dead husband on his funeral pyre.
- **Idolatry:** It refers to the worship of idols, a physical image or an object.
- **Dogma:** Dogma is an established belief of a particular religion or organization.
- **Omniscient:** It means complete knowledge.
- **Vedanta:** Vedanta is the end part of the Veda that deals with self-knowledge.
- **Advaita:** A strand of Hindu philosophy that deals with the non-duality of Jeeva (microcosm) and Brahman (macrocosm).

ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Raja Rammohan Roy's first public writing was a pamphlet in Bengali in which he denounced idol-worship.
2. The name of the Bengali journal that Roy edited was *SamvadKaumudi*.
3. The Mughal emperor Akbar II gave Rammohan Roy the title of Raja.
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 Dayanand'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 outcasteism.
7. Narendranath was a member of the Brahmo Samaj and believed that god did not have any form.
8. Narendra built the Ramakrishna Math at Belur near Kolkata in memory of his 4 master and to carry spread his teachings.
9. Vivekananda attended the World's Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893.
10. Vivekananda started two journals, *Prabuddha Bharata* in English and *Udbhodan* in Bengali.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What are the aims and objectives of the Brahmo Samaj?
2. What are the principles of the Arya Samaj?
3. What was the mission of Dayanand Saraswati?
4. What prompted Vivekananda to establish the Ramakrishna Mission?
5. What are the main teachings of Vivekananda?
6. Write a short note on Vivekananda's address to the World Parliament of Religion in Chicago.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Examine why Rammohan Roy is considered the 'Father of Modern India'.
2. Discuss Dayanand Saraswati's early life.
3. Describe the similarities between the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj.
4. What are the contributions of Swami Dayanand Saraswati as a social reformer?
5. How did Vivekananda present Hinduism to the Western world?
6. Examine Vivekananda's Vedanta philosophy.

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UNIT 2 GANDHIAN THOUGHTS

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INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will be introduced to the political thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi was the foremost of the Indian freedom fighters and was one of the primary figures responsible for turning the freedom struggle into a mass movement. For his contributions to the freedom struggle, he was given the title of the 'Father of the Nation'.

In the unit, you will learn about the major achievements of Gandhi during his lifetime. Further, you will learn about Gandhian ideas of politics and liberalized religion, his concept of non-violence or *ahimsa*, his theory of *satyagraha*, his attitude towards the state and morality, and other facts.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Explain the fundamental ideas and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi
- Explain the major influences of Gandhi
- Discuss the forms and techniques of satyagraha

- Explain the concept of society and individual and anatomy of Gandhi's socialism
- Elaborate on the theory of trusteeship, democratic socialism, and the concept of sarvodaya

LIFE OF M.K. GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi was one of our greatest national leaders. He was born on 2 October 1869 and was named as Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. He studied law in England, and after returning to India, he started legal practice. In last decade of the 19th century, Gandhi went to South Africa. Here, he found that the South African government subjected Indians to enormous discrimination and extremely humiliating treatments. He decided to launch campaigns in South Africa against such treatment and became renowned as a champion of truth, non-violence and preserving the dignity of human beings. He returned to India in 1914, and dedicated the remaining years of his life to the cause of freedom for his motherland.

Gandhi became the foremost leader of the Indian National Congress after his return to India. This period of the freedom struggle came to be known as the Gandhian era (1920-1948). During this period, for the first time in the history of the world, a man led millions of people of a dependent country and taught them the practical use of techniques like non-violence, non-cooperation and civil disobedience. In 1942, Gandhi called upon the British to 'Quit India'. Five years later, the British left India, granting it complete independence (on 15 August 1947).

Gandhi in South Africa

Gandhi's visit to South Africa in 1893 changed the course of his life. His experience in South Africa helped him to become a great leader. At Maritzburg, the capital of Natal, Gandhi was thrown out of the railway train compartment by a white policeman despite having a valid ticket, and left to shiver in the cold on the railway platform. On this incident Gandhi wrote,

'I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights or go back to India or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insult and return to India finishing the case? The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial, only a symptom of the deep disease of colour-prejudice. I should try if possible to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs, I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of the colour prejudice.'

This incident became a turning point in Gandhi's life. Gandhi decided to fight and remained in South Africa till 1914 to champion the cause of 'coloured' people. He organized the Natal Indian Congress, and during the Boer War and the Zulu Rebellion, organized medical camps and helped the government. He published the *Indian Opinion* in 1904 as a mouthpiece of coloured people. During his journey from Johannesburg to Durban, he read John Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, which had a deep impact on Gandhi's philosophy. He was greatly influenced by this work and started his Satyagraha against the discriminatory policy of the government of South Africa.

Major Influences on Gandhi

The major influences on Gandhi's life may be summed up as follows:

- His mother's sense of self-sacrifice, spirit of service, religiousness and fasting
- His father's spirit of renunciation

- Influence of Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Vaishnavism and the Bhagavat Gita
- Plain living and high thinking of Raichand Bhai and the works of Tolstoy and Ruskin had profound influence on Gandhi. In his autobiography, Gandhi wrote, 'Three moderns have left a deep impression on my life, and captivated me. Raichand Bhai by his living contact, Tolstoy by his book, *The Kingdom of God is Within You* and Ruskin by his *Unto This Last*
- The holy *Quran* and other books on Islam
- Thoreau's concept of passive resistance

These major influences helped Gandhi achieve his ideals in life.

BASIC IDEAS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The following are the basic ideas of Mahatma Gandhi:

(i) No political creed, but application of eternal truths

In 1936, Mahatma Gandhi said that there was no such thing as Gandhism, and he was not prepared to leave a sect after him. Gandhi said,

'There is no such thing as Gandhism, and I do not want to leave any sect after me. I do not claim to have originated any new principle or doctrine. I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal truths to our daily life and problems. There is, therefore, no question of my leaving any code like the code of Manu'.

Gandhi's ideas were influenced by the writings of Ruskin, Thoreau and Tolstoy. He was also influenced by the Vedas, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Bible*, the *Quran*, and the other scriptures. It is essential to point out that Gandhi's political thought was mixed with religious principles.

(ii) Spiritualization of politics

Gandhi is said to be a saint amongst politicians and a politician among saints. He was not a politician in the ordinary sense of the term. He exhibited uncommon tact and intelligence in choosing the time, as well as the methods and techniques to be used in launching his non-violence agitation. This made him the ideal for all political leaders, who were struggling for India's independence. A great contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to political theory and politics is political action guided by morality or spirituality. According to Gandhi, the leaders must be inspired by a sense of sacrifice and service. He stressed on the importance of means and stated that right and just means should be adopted to achieve right and just ends. Thus, according to him, ends and means are the same looked at from different angles.

(iii) The state, a soulless machine, destroying individuality

As an advocate of non-violence and philosophical anarchism, Gandhi was against the state. His anti-state attitude was justified on historical, moral and economic grounds. According to Gandhi, the state uses force, and its existence cannot be justified on moral grounds. By the use of force, the state deprives the moral value of the individual's action. The individual has a soul, but as the state is a soulless machine, 'it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence.' The state hinders progress by destroying individuality and it does great harm by its increasing reliance on force.

Gandhi's ideal is a stateless democracy, in which there is a federation of village communities, functioning on the basis of voluntary cooperation, and peaceful coexistence. Gandhi states, 'Thus every village will be a republic or panchayat having full powers.' It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world. Such a society is necessarily highly cultured in which every man or woman knows what he or she wants and knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour.

(iv) Decentralization, labour and classless society

While in a democracy, there is a great deal of centralization and inequality. Gandhian philosophy puts emphasis on decentralization with equality, non-possession and labour being the ideals of this society. Gandhi writes,

'If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. Then there would be no cry of over-population, no disease and no such misery as we see around... There will be no rich and no poor, none high and none low, no touchable and no untouchable.'

While in the state, as it exists now, the growth of individuality is thwarted; in a stateless democracy, every individual is given the maximum freedom to devote himself to the service of society, according to his calibre or capacity. According to a critic, 'Gandhi was a firm believer in a classless, egalitarian society in which there would be no distinctions of rich and poor, high and low. In some respects, he went further even than the orthodox socialists, in as much as he would not exempt anyone from obligatory socially useful body-labour.'

Gandhi was against high-centralized production and pleaded for decentralized production. The idea is not to do away entirely with machinery as such, but to prevent the concentration of power in the hands of a few people.

The salient features of Gandhian economy are as follows:

- (i) Intensive, small-scale, and cooperative farming as opposed to mechanized, large-scale or collective farming
- (ii) Development of cottage industries
- (iii) Private ownership subject to the benefit of society
- (iv) Proper balance of animal, human and plant life
- (v) Provision for social justice and equally economic opportunities to all
- (vi) Organization of economy through decentralization and village panchayats
- (vii) State based on non-violence or ahimsa

Mahatma Gandhi is against violence in thought, word and action. According to Gandhi, ahimsa is based on the principles of non-violence and love for all. Gandhi maintained, 'Ahimsa is not the crude thing it has been made to appear. Not to hurt anyteang thing is no doubt a part of ahimsa. The principle of ahimsa is hurt by every evil thought, by undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill to anybody. It is also violated by our holding on to what the world needs.' He believed that the state is not an end but it is means for the welfare of the people. He is opposed to the view that the state is above, nothing is outside the state and nothing is against the state. He is unwilling to accept thestate as the highest group and an end is itself.

The ideal, however, is that the state functions on the principle of ahimsa. It is possible when there is goodwill and crime is absent. Such a state where justice prevails represents the *Ramarajya* (Kingdom of Lord Ram).

People in the Gandhian state have various rights and duties. As a thinker who dislikes the absolute sovereignty of the state, Gandhi allows the citizen the right and duty of disobeying the laws of the state, where necessary. He is against the use of force by the state. Force should be used in minimum for the sake of maintenance of law and order. The police should think that it is to serve as the servants of the people and not their masters.

(vi) Property as trust and not as instrument of exploitation

Gandhi is against the use of property as an instrument of exploitation. Capitalism and exploitation should be removed through non-violent methods. Those who have property must regard it as trust and not as an instrument of exploitation. Gandhi's theory of trusteeship makes no distinction between private and non-private property. All property is held in trust, no matter who owns it, and what its nature or quantity is. It applies not only to tangible and transferable property, but also to places of power and position. It implies the transformation of the present capitalist system of society into an egalitarian system. Property is not to be a source of profit but a source of people's welfare. Gandhi said, 'No one should have property more than what one needs.'

(vii) Good end and good means

Gandhi was in favour of good end through good means. To him, the end can never justify the means. To realize the Gandhian ideal state, only fair means are to be adopted. Nonviolence and truth form the soul of Gandhi's technique. Regarding means and ends, Gandhi observed, 'The means may be linked to seed, the end to a tree, and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and ends as there is between the seed and the tree.' Thus, the end and means should be invariably good.

(viii) Harmony between nationalism and internationalism

Gandhi put emphasis on the importance of nationalism in its noblest form. He was against nationalism based on violence and aggressive tactics. He was in favour of world peace, and wanted to bring about a harmony between nationalism and internationalism. People in a country should be patriotic, but they should be friendly towards the people of other countries. He said, 'My nationalism is intense internationalism.'

SATYAGRAHA

Gandhi used the word satyagraha in 1906 to express the nature of the non-violent action undertaken by Indians in South Africa against the racist government. With his involvement in the Indian National Movement, he adopted it as a technique of love-force, soul-force, non-violence, aiming constantly at the search and pursuit of truth. To him, satyagraha is the vindication of truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but on one's own self. It is the eternal insistence on truth. Satyagraha is based on non-violence and as such it does not permit violence in any form. Ahimsa and satyagraha are synonymous with Gandhi. Satyagraha emphasizes always the purity of means as well as the purity of the ends. It is a moral weapon in the hands of a morally strong person to fight injustice, tyranny or evil and can be applied in any sphere. Gandhi said, 'It is force that may be

used by individuals as well as communities. It may be used as well in political as in domestic affairs. Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and invincibility'.

Evil should be resisted through the techniques of satyagraha, a moral weapon based on soul force, which is superior to physical force. According to a critic, satyagraha means 'clinging to truth', and as truth for Gandhi is God, satyagraha in the general sense of the word means the ways of life of one who holds steadfastly to God and dedicates his life to him. The true satyagrahi is accordingly a man of God.

Satyagraha is the weapon of the non-violent struggle. Mahatma Gandhi has explained the meaning of satyagraha as follows:

The term satyagraha was coined by me in South Africa to express the force that the Indians there used for full eight years and it was coined in order to distinguish it from the movement then going on in the United Kingdom and South Africa under the name of passive resistance. Its root meaning is holding on to truth, hence truth-force. I have also called it love-force or soul-force.'

Satyagraha may assume the form of (a) non-cooperation, (b) fasting, (c) striking, (d) civil disobedience, (e) picketing and (f) Hijrat, i.e., voluntary exile. A satyagrahi, in order to fight the non-violent struggle, has to prepare himself for it by self-discipline, purity, courage and civility.

Before practicing satyagraha in public life, a satyagrahi must practice it in domestic or personal life. Like charity, Satyagraha must begin from home. An individual in search of truth, whether in domestic or public life, has a heavy burden of ethical code over his shoulders. He is a man of peace. The aim is self-realization through social service and sacrifice. Satyagraha is a weapon to counteract the evils and difficulties that come in the way of realization of truth. It is a weapon to be used for public good and never for personal gains. It is not to be resorted to defend immoral acts and wrongly earned gains. There is no place for ill-will and hatred in satyagraha. A satyagrahi does not think, in relation to his enemy in terms of victor and vanquished.

Satyagraha may not be confused with passive resistance. It is true that both are peaceful techniques of meeting aggression and bringing about social and political changes. However, there are differences between the two. Passive resistance as practiced is a political weapon of expediency, but Satyagraha is a moral weapon based on the superiority of soul force over brute force. Passive resistance is the weapon of the weak, but Satyagraha can be practiced only by the brave. Passive resistance aims at embarrassing the opponent into submission, but a satyagrahi aims at winning the opponent from error by love and patient suffering. There is hardly any place for love for the enemy in the case of passive resistance. In satyagraha, there is no room for ill-will. The independence activist and Gandhi's personal secretary Mahadeo Desai observed,

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

2.4.1 Forms and Techniques of Satyagraha

The techniques of satyagraha may take the form of non-cooperation and civil disobedience or fasting and strike. As regards to non-cooperation, Gandhi pointed out that oppression and exploitation can be checked by non-cooperation of people. If people refuse to cooperate with the government, the latter cannot function. Gandhi said,

'Even the most despotic government cannot stand except with the consent of the governed, which consent is often forcibly procured by the despot. As soon as the subject ceases to fear the despotic force, his power is gone.'

Non-cooperation may manifest itself in the form of hartals, or picketing. Hartals involve stopping of work as a measure of protest and its object to strike the imagination of the people and the government. Hartals to be effective are to be voluntary and no violence is to be used. Only persuasive methods are to be employed. Gandhi wrote,

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

Another form of satyagraha recommended by Gandhi is civil disobedience. This is regarded by him as 'complete, effective and bloodless substitute of armed revolt.' Bad laws are to be challenged and violated. Civil disobedience implies 'the register's outlawry in a civil, i.e., non-violent manner.' Gandhi put the greatest emphasis on the word 'civil'. He said,

'Disobedience to be civil, must be sincere, respectful, restrained, never defiant, must be based upon some well-understood principle, must not be capricious and must have no ill will or hatred behind it. Its use must be guarded by all conceivable restrictions. Every possible provision should be made against outbreak of violence or general lawlessness. The area as well as scope should also be limited to the barest necessity of the case.'

The leaders, and not the satyagrahis, are to decide which laws are to be violated. Another form of satyagraha suggested by Gandhi is fasting. This is considered by him as a strong weapon against oppression and Gandhi recommended the greatest caution in resorting to fasting. Fasting is not meant for all occasions, but only on rare occasions. It can be undertaken for self-purification or for the purpose of resisting injustice and converting the evil-doer. Fasting is to be undertaken only by those who have spiritual fitness. It requires purity of mind, discipline, humility and faith. Gandhi's view is that fasting rouses conscience and fires the loving hearts to action.

Those who bring about radical changes in human conditions and surroundings cannot do it except by raising ferment in society. There are only two methods of doing this - violence and non-violence. Non-violent pressure exerted through self-suffering and by fasting touches and strengthens the moral fibre of those against whom it is directed.

The last method of satyagraha is in the form of strike. However, Gandhi's view of strike is different from that advocated by Socialists and Communists. According to him, strike is a voluntary, purificatory suffering undertaken to convert the wrong doers. Gandhi does not believe in the theory of class war. His view is that industry is a joint enterprise of labour and capital and both of them are trustees. The strikers are required to put forward their demands in very clear terms. Those should not be unjust. Those should be within the reach of the capitalists to concede. The strikers are required to learn some

manual craft so that during the strike period, they do not have to depend upon the strike fund.

Gandhi recommended satyagraha even in the case of foreign invasion. He explained his method in these words:

'A non-violent man or society does not anticipate or provide for attacks from without. On the contrary, such a person or society firmly believes that nobody is going to disturb them. If the worst happens, there are two ways open to nonviolence. To yield possession but non-cooperate with the aggressor. Thus supposing that a modern edition of Nero descended upon India, the representatives of the States will let him in but tell him that he will get no assistance from the people. They will prefer death to submission. The second way will be the non-violent way. They would offer themselves unarmed as fodder for the aggressor's cannon. The underlying belief in either case is that even Nero is not devoid of a heart. The unexpected spectacle of endless rows upon rows of men and women simply dying rather than surrender to the will of an aggressor, must, ultimately melt him and his soldiery.'

When China was being conquered by Japan during the 1930s, Gandhi said,

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

In 1916, Gandhi laid down certain principles to be observed in the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati. Those principles of behaviour are truth, non-violence, non-stealing, non-possession and celibacy. A true satyagrahi is required to practice those ideals, in his day-to-day private and public life. In course of time, Gandhi favoured a few more virtues and qualities to be borne by a satyagrahi. Those qualities are soul-force, moral discipline, honesty, 'spiritual kinship with the opponent', implicit faith in human nature and goodness, self-inflicted suffering for truth and a will to crucify the flesh by fasting and humility. A satyagrahi is not to harbour anger, suffer the anger of the opponent, retaliate or insult his opponent. If a satyagrahi violated the rules prescribed by him, Gandhi preferred to stop the movement than to see the violation of those rules. Purity and non-violence of the persons engaged in a cause were always fundamental to him.

Satyagraha is based upon the moral development of the satyagrahi. He is to 'overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, himsa by ahimsa.' He is to treat his opponent as a member of his own family and the family method was to be employed to iron out the differences. A satyagrahi is to trust his opponent even if the latter plays him false. A satyagrahi is required to have an open mind and whenever he realizes that his own opinion is wrong, he should confess his mistake and revise his judgement accordingly. Gandhi stated, 'Confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before.' A satyagrahi is to meet his enemy, not to attack him, but to compromise with him. A satyagrahi can compromise on non-essentials, and not fundamentals or the basic moral issues involved in the conflict.

A satyagrahi has double responsibility. He is responsible to himself, i.e., to his own inner conscience and to the people. According to Gandhi, if there is a conflict between the two, a satyagrahi should submit to the public opinion if the matter does not conflict with his moral conscience very often; he has to depend upon his conscience for guidance. There can be situations for a satyagrahi when he should not surrender his personal moral intuitive judgment to mass opinion and follow the dictates of his conscience and leave free his followers to pursue their own course of action.

Satyagraha is related to the concept of love and non-violence. A satyagrahi must have a sound basis for his love and affection. A satyagrahi makes a distinction between the evil and the evil-doer. He wins the heart of the opponent through love and persuasion. He should not be obliged to accept things as they are. His aim is to secure social justice. The non-violence of a satyagrahi has its impact. The wrong-doer gets tired of committing wrong in the absence of resistance. Gandhi states,

'All pressure is lost when the victim betrays no resistance. I seek entirely to blunt the edge of the tyrant's sword, not by disappointing the expectation that I would be offering physical resistance. The resistance of the soul would at first dazzle him and at last compel recognition from him which recognition would not humiliate but uplift him.'

According to Gandhi, satyagraha is non-violent coercion. The aim of the satyagrahi is to move the heart of the enemy only by love and not by giving or causing any injury to him. Satyagraha is a weapon that only well-disciplined soldiers can use. He who leads the life of an honest and truthful man, can use it effectively. The user should be fearless. There are two other things viz., non-stealing and non-possession, which are very important. Gandhi wrote,

'Possession implies provision for the future. A seeker after truth, a follower of the Law of Love cannot hold anything tomorrow. God never stores for the morrow. He never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment. If, therefore, we repose faith in His Providence, we should rest assured that He will give us every day our daily bread, meaning everything that we require.'

Gandhi stated,

'Theoretically, when there is perfect love, there must be perfect non-possession. The body is our last possession. So a man can only exercise perfect love and be completely dispossessed if he is prepared to embrace death and renounce his body for the sake of human service. But that is true in theory only. In actual life, we can hardly exercise perfect love, for the body as a possession will always remain with us. Man will ever remain imperfect and it will always be his part to try to be perfect'

According to Gandhi, humility and self-restraint must be practiced by the satyagrahi because they give him strength and force. At the time of the 1930 movement, Gandhi made the following rules for the Satyagrahis:

'The Satyagrahi must harbour no anger, must suffer the anger of his opponent, putting up with assaults but refusing to retaliate; but he must not submit out of fear of punishment or the like to any order given in anger. He must refrain from insults and swearing; he must protect opponents from insults or attack, even at the risk of his life. He must not resist his arrest for the attachment of his property, but if he has got any property in his possession as a trustee, he must refuse to surrender it even though in defending it he might lose his life. As a prisoner he must behave in an exemplary manner; as a member of his unit in the struggle, he must obey the orders of his leaders although he may resign in the event of serious disagreement. He may not expect guarantee for maintenance of his dependants.'

If satyagraha is a way of life for an individual, it is also a means of group action by which, through collective non-violent resistance, conflicts are settled and the cause of truth is vindicated. Gandhi has suggested various precautions and ethical codes to be followed while undertaking satyagraha as a group action. For instance, it must be nonviolent. The enemy should not be embarrassed. Gandhi put emphasis on 'open-dealing' in satyagraha. Everything, including discussions or settlement of the dispute, should be done openly. The reason is that truth and secrecy cannot go together. Satyagraha is a

struggle for righteousness and virtue. It is a vindication of the right of opposition to coercive authority. No force in the world is as effective as satyagraha. It is progressive in character.

Gandhi's advocacy of the right of Satyagraha is a great contribution to political thought. As a moral technique for waging the battle of national freedom, satyagraha gained dramatic and historic character. According to Stanley Jones, satyagraha is the greatest contribution of Gandhi to the modern world. D.E. Smith describes Gandhi as a revolutionary leader on account of his developing the technique of Satyagraha.

The question arises whether the ideas of Gandhi are relevant for us today when we see ourselves surrounded in our day-to-day lives by so called satyagrahas, dharnas, fasts unto death and gheraos. Gandhi laid emphasis on means as well as on ends. It is suggested that if the Gandhian spirit is imbibed by the new generation, many problems can be solved without taking recourse to violence. Gandhi's technique can be employed successfully to fight the evils of corruption, black-marketing or injustices in economic, industrial or social life. Without bloodshed, Gandhism can be a complete revolution.

GANDHI'S CONCEPT OF SOCIETY AND INDIVIDUAL

Gandhi believed in the concept of the individual being the soul of the social system. According to Gandhi, the individual is the centre of the social system, but there is interdependence of the individual and the society. However, the individual is the root and the society is the fruit. Gandhi rejects both unrestricted individualism that ignores social obligations, as well as the other extreme view, i.e., individual is a cog in the social machine. Gandhi said,

'I value individual freedom but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to the present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the wellbeing of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member.'

Society must provide maximum opportunities to the individual for his development that consists of selfless service to society and willing fulfilment of social obligation. If the society fails in discharging its duty, resistance is justified.

According to Gandhi, individuals acquire the right of resistance, or the violation of the law of the state becomes a right and a duty of an individual when the laws are: (a) not of people's own making, (b) repugnant to public or private morals, (c) not promoting social good, (d) oppressive in nature and cause, all round harassment, hardship, humiliation, oppression and tyranny.

Thus, resistance becomes moral and just in the name of dictate of conscience, individual freedom, self-government and social good. Of course, the manner of resistance must be of specific character and be in conformity with the Gandhian general principle of purity of means. Gandhi's prescriptions are: (1) non-violent resistance, (2) civil resistance, and (3) civilized resistance. The resistances shall assume the form of non-cooperation and civil disobedience, or satyagraha. Those who resist the State in the name of morality, justice, dictate of conscience or freedom and self-government, should

adopt non-violent techniques or the techniques of satyagraha and must be prepared to suffer the consequences of such resistance.

Gandhi wrote,

'Government of the people is possible only so long as they consent either consciously or unconsciously to be governed. There is no government that can control an individual without his sanction. Voluntary obedience to the laws of the State and the society should be there so far as they are not repugnant to public or private morals. Willing obedience to social restraint for the sake of the wellbeing of the whole society enriches both the individual and society of which he is a member.'

Gandhi was a philosophical anarchist for whom state was an unacceptable institution. Like Marx and the anarchists, he thought that the state is an instrument of exploitation based on violence and sustained by violence. According to him, by the use of violence, the state suppresses the individuality of man. For Gandhi, the individual is the centre of the social system, and the political structure. The state is meant to promote the interest of the individual and to provide him adequate opportunities for the development of his personality, which consists in rendering selfless service to the society. Thus, according to Gandhi, the state is a means to an end and the end being the all-round development of the individual.

The rights of the individual, according to Gandhi, are not created by the state. They are created by the individuals who, by due performance of their duties, qualify themselves for the enjoyment of their duties. The state only recognizes these rights. The individual has the right to resist the state for the vindication of his rights, born out of due performance of one's duty. According to Gandhi, rights have their source in due performance of duties. If one performs his duties to the society, rights will automatically follow. Rights and duties are related as cause and effect, the latter being the cause, and the former being the effect.

Gandhi did not believe in an institution like the state that is based on violence. His ideal condition of human existence is a condition of statelessness. However, as a practical idealist he realized that due to the imperfections of the individuals, the state is often felt as a necessary evil. Hence, the individuals should obey the state and the principles of political obligation or what constitutes the basis of political obligation.

Gandhi as a philosophical anarchist was not only critical of the state, but also of all governments extraneous to individuals. He understood swaraj in the sense of self-government of the self by the superior self, or the control of the individual behaviour, passion, greed and selfishness, by the dictates of conscience. Hence, in his *Hind Swaraj*, he observed 'real home-rule is self-rule or self-control'. However, as a practical man, he felt that since individuals are incapable of perfect self-control and their conduct does not become completely self-regulated, there is need for some form of government external to man. However, the government must be democratic in nature, i.e., democratic both in form and content. Such a government must be: (i) free from foreign control, (ii) promote the welfare of all members of the society, (iii) based on the equality of all members of the society irrespective of the religion, race, caste, sect or place of birth, (iv) secular in nature, (v) free from domination by any section of the community, (vi) based on the principle of democratic decentralization, (vii) based on the principle of village self-government and (viii) based on mutual toleration.

ANATOMY OF GANDHIAN SOCIALISM

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

If socialism is defined as a political and economic theory according to which the means of production, distribution and exchange should be owned and controlled by the people, everyone should be given an equal opportunity to develop his talents and the wealth of the community should be fairly distributed, then Gandhi may be called a true socialist. Gandhi visualizes a social structure in which every attempt is made to ensure everybody's rise. Let us now examine the main tenets of Gandhian socialism.

Equitable Distribution of Wealth

Gandhi believed in the concept of economic equality and advocated, 'a wise regulation of riches and absolute social justice.' He once wrote,

' Socialism is a beautiful word and so far as I am aware, in socialism all the members of the society are equal, none low, none high. In the individual body, the head is not high, because it is the top of the body, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as parts of the individual body are equal, so are the members of the society. This is socialism.'

This statement clearly reveals the concept of equality as embodied in Gandhian socialism. On another occasion, he wrote,

T am working for winning Swaraj for those toiling and unemployed millions, who do not get even a square meal a day and have to scratch along with a piece of stale 'Roti' and a pinch of salt.'

Gandhi was a practical man. He realized that complete equality is an improbability. Hence, he pleaded for equitable distribution. As he says, 'My ideal is equal distribution but so far as I can see, it is not to be realized. I therefore work for equitable distribution of wealth.'

He felt that disparity of income should be reduced to a reasonable limit. In the ideal Constitution of India, which had his approval, Gandhi pleaded, 'Every citizen shall have the right to obtain a minimum living wage through honest work or employment.' No servant of the State shall be paid more than Rs. 500 per month. Inheritance taxes on a graduated scale shall be levied on property above a fixed minimum.

The following types of wealth that are now owned by the private capitalists shall become national property:

- All the land shall belong to the State. Private landlords and zamindari systems of land tenure will, therefore, cease to exist. The state shall grant long lease to those farmers who actually till the soil.
- All key industries shall be owned by the nation.
- Mines, rivers, forests, roads, railways, airtransport, post and telegraph, shipping and other means to public transport shall be national property.

Gandhi was in favour of culmination of all forms of economic exploitation through non-coercive technique. He regarded accumulation of capital as immoral and a social crime. There should be no accumulation and no useless possession of wealth in society.

The doctrine of equal distribution means that each man's need should be fulfilled. Gandhi, in his later years, subscribed to the Marxian formula of 'each according to his need.'

Theory of Trusteeship

Gandhi was not altogether in favour of the abolition of private property. He believed in the principle of trusteeship under which the rich could possess all their wealth in trust for the good of the people. He did not want to give unlimited power to property owners. According to Gandhi, they should become trustees of their surplus wealth for the good of the society.

The theory of trusteeship is a cardinal point of the economic policy that Gandhi had advocated for independent India. Gandhi strongly believed in the concept of *aparigraha* (non-possession) and contended that 'a thing not originally stolen must nevertheless be classified as stolen property if we possess without need for it.' When in 1929 Gandhi advocated his theory of trusteeship, he expected good response from the capitalists in India. But in actual practice, when the response was very poor, he revised his view and accepted the idea of 'statutory trusteeship'. In the beginning, he assumed that trusteeship would be inherited by the son, but later on in 1938 he declared that a trustee has no heir but the public.

Gandhi never idealized private property. As K.G Mashurwala aptly writes,

'He (Gandhi) would like to dispossess every person of all kinds of belongings. If he tolerates the institution of private property, it is not because he loves it or holds it to be necessary for the progress of humanity but because he had yet to discover a truthful and non-violent method of abolishing that institution.'

Bread Labour

Gandhi's idea of bread labour is based on the principle of dignity and sanctity of labour. According to Gandhi, the real wealth of the nation consists of labour. The idea that man should earn his bread by the sweat of his labour greatly influenced him. The theory of bread labour postulates that every healthy individual must labour enough for his food, and his intellectual faculties must not be exercised in order to obtain a living or amass a fortune, but only in the service of mankind.

Further, Gandhi wrote, 'If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. There will then be no rich and no poor, none high, none low, no touchable and no untouchable.'

Gandhi rightly realized that labour has its unique place in any civilized nation. Although he did not blindly support the Ricardian or Marxian theories of labour, yet he adhered to the moral idea of the sanctification of labour. He not only preached it, but also practiced it in South Africa. Every individual must work. 'Everyone should deem it a dishonour to eat a single meal without honest labour.'

Decentralized Order

Gandhi advocated decentralization both in the political and economic spheres. He was well aware of over-centralization. Centralization is a form of regimentation and authoritarianism and it 'makes the world so complex that the common man fails to understand the forces that are working in his life and society.'

In order to raise the common man into a high pedestal of glory, a large measure of decentralization of both political and economic power is necessary. Gandhi wanted to

evolve a decentralized structure of power and economy based on the effective reconstruction of self-reliant and self-sufficient village communities. The strength of the nation can be built only if the villagers lead a life of peace, harmony, goodwill and self-sufficiency. Hence, Gandhi advocated for powerful village panchayats and promotion of small-scale and cottage industries. As IB. Karipalani writes, 'Decentralization in industry and devolution of power in politics are the only means by which humanity can hope to establish a social order based upon equality and justice and free from economic and political exploitation.'

Democratic Socialism

Gandhi was a socialist at heart. It is a political blasphemy to deny that Gandhi was a socialist. His socialism was not a blind imitation of the West. Rather, it had a few unique features. Gandhi wrote,

'I have claimed that I was a socialist long before those I know in India avowed their creed. My socialism was natural to me and not adopted from a book. It came out of an unshakeable belief in non-violence. No man could be actively nonviolent and not rise against social injustice, no matter where it occurred, unfortunately. Western socialists have, so far as I know, believed in the necessity of violence for enforcing socialistic doctrines.'

Gandhi believed in democratic socialism. He was not prepared to sacrifice the individual at the altar of the state and was opposed to dictatorship of any kind, either of the capitalists or of the proletariat. Gandhi's socialism is to be achieved through democratic means.

Non-violent Socialism

What makes Gandhian socialism practically different from communism is its faith in 'ahimsa' or non-violence. That is why Gandhism is often called 'Marxism minus violence.' Gandhi had firm faith in non-violence. He was convinced that social justice can never be achieved by the means of force. Nothing permanent can be built on violence. What is gained by violence may be lost before superior violence. Hence, he wanted to bring a social revolution through non-violent ways. He wanted to convert human nature by persuasion, not by coercion. He wrote, 'Some have called me the greatest revolutionary of my time. It may be false, but I believe myself to be a revolutionary— a non-violent revolutionary.'

Moral and Spiritual Socialism

Gandhian socialism is not only non-violent, but also moral and spiritual. Gandhi believed in the purification of means and ends. He was convinced that noble ends cannot be achieved by evil means and contended 'our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means.' 'This socialism', he wrote, 'is as pure as crystal. It requires crystal-like means to achieve it.'

Gandhi believed in the fundamentals or ethics that love is better than hate, peace is better than war, cooperation is better than conflict, and persuasion is better than coercion. While Marx put emphasis on matter, Gandhi put emphasis on spirit or life.

To Marx, religion is 'the opium of the people', but to Gandhi, 'the existence of the world in a broad sense depends on religion.' Gandhi rejected the Marxist theory of class war, which preached permanent antagonism between the have and the have nots or between

the capital and labour. He is not of the opinion that 'capital and labour need to be antagonistic.' Further, he wrote,

'A labourer's skill is his capital. Just as the capitalist cannot make his capital fructify without the cooperation of labour, even so the working man cannot make his labour fructify without the cooperation of capital They would get to respect each other as equal partners in a common enterprise.'

Agrarian Socialism

Gandhi developed his socialist ideas against the background of Indian economic life. India is essentially a land of villages where more than 85 per cent of the population depends upon agriculture. Unless villages prosper and rise, the true development of the country would not be possible. Hence, Gandhi wanted to reconstruct and rejuvenate the villages through various schemes, particularly through small-scale and cottage industries. His ideal is a decentralized rural economy consisting of small, self-sufficient village communities. While Marx's socialism is urban and industrial, Gandhian socialism is rural and agrarian in character. Gandhi was not altogether opposed to machinery and industrialization. His object was 'not to destroy the machine but to impose limitations on it.' He wanted to save the toiling masses from the clutches of unemployment and starvation.

Indigenous Socialism

As stated earlier, Gandhi developed his socialism against the background of Indian life. It is thus wrong to charge Gandhi of having diluted the meaning of socialism. His humanism inevitably leads him to be a socialist. He is a socialist because he wants to put an end to exploitation, injustice and inequality in society—a society in which the poorest of the poor should feel that it is his country, and in which people would be guided by devotion to social ends and social service instead of private gains and selfishness.

Gandhian socialist edifice was built, as far as possible, by the indigenous materials. Being influenced by the exalted life of abnegation of Buddha and the doctrine of sacrifice of Hindu philosophy, Gandhi put emphasis on non-accumulation, non-stealing and non-possession. Believing in the conception of aparigraha, i.e., non-possession, Gandhi contended that 'a thing not originally stolen must nevertheless be classified as stolen property, if we possess it without need for it.' On another occasion he wrote, 'Real socialism has been handed down to Gopal, then where is the boundary line? Gopal literally means shepherd; it also means God. In modern language it means the State, i.e., the people.'

The first verse of the Upanishad, which contains the doctrine of 'renounce and enjoy' had also considerably influenced Gandhian socialism.

Hence, Gandhian socialism is essentially Indian in character. Gandhi had Indianized socialism. It is not a blind imitation of Western socialism or orthodox Marxism. We may brand it as an indigenous or 'Swadeshi' socialism. Gandhians claim that present-day socialists in India need to give up all false pretensions of being called socialists and have a fresh look at Gandhian socialism that is a good panacea to solve many ills of our society.

GANDHISM AND COMMUNISM

Gandhism is a school of thought that expresses Mahatma Gandhi's views on political, social, economic and religious matters from time to time. Various scholars have collected

these views and compiled them under Gandhism. It is, thus, not a set of doctrine or dogmas, rules or regulations, injunctions or inhibitions, but a way of life. It indicates a new attitude or restates an old one towards life's issues and offers ancient solutions for modern problems.

As Gandhian principles in some aspect resemble those of the communists, it is often said that 'Gandhism is communism minus violence.' Both are humanitarian philosophies that stand for the poor and downtrodden people. Both ardently believe in the equality of all human beings and uphold the doctrine, 'To each according to his needs'. In spite of apparent few similarities, vital differences exist between Gandhism and Communism. Hence, it is wrong to say that Gandhism is 'communism minus violence'.

Table 2.1 presents a brief comparative analysis of Gandhism versus Communism.

Table 2.1 Comparative Analysis of Gandhism and Communism

Gandhism	Communism
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It believes in classless society. 2. According to it the State should be given minimum functions. ' 3. It believes that capital should be used for social good and the capitalist should treat himself as the trustee of capital. 4. According to Gandhism poor and down trodden should be brought to the front and given their due place in the society. 5. It believes in non-violence. 6. It does not believe in class-war. 7. It advocates democracy. 8. It believes in spiritualism and moral uplifting of humanity. It combined religion with politics. 9. It believes that means justify the ends. Good and hobbles means are essential for achieving good ends. 10. It does not allow the use of force in any circumstances because that is bound to result in hatred. 11. It hates the sin but not the sinner. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It also believes in a classless society. 2. According to it the State is all powerful during the transitional period. In fact it believes in the withering away of the States. 3. It believes that capital is a theft and as such it should be taken away from those who have hoarded it and that should be put under the control of the State. 4. It wishes to establish regime of the working class who are also poor and down-trodden. 5. It openly advocates violence. 6. It believes in class-war. 7. It advocates dictatorship of the working class 8. It believes in materialism. In fact, Marxism believes that religion is opium for the people. Both should be separated 9. According to this philosophy ends justify means and therefore, all means should be adopted in order to achieve the ends. 10. Use offeree, where necessary, should not be avoided. In fact it gives

Evaluation of Gandhian Thought

The influence of Mahatma Gandhi on Indian politics has been tremendous. Every decision of Gandhi on the political situation in India was of great significance to all; to his admirers as well as critics. As a freedom fighter, Gandhi actually showed that the principles of truth and non-violence were not the mere theme of an idle talk, but the core of actual action. He became a dynamic force in the political and spiritual life of India. Indians could never have fought against the powerful British government by using force, because the latter could have suppressed them by using still greater force, which they commanded.

The symbolic use of the weapons of non-violence and satyagraha were responsible for spreading patriotic fervour throughout the country. Decentralization of political power, democracy of village communities, decentralized production, bread labour, elimination of exploitation, prison reforms, private property to be held in trust, the state functioning as an agency of service on the basis of non-violence, and so on, clearly show the strengths of Gandhian thought. It is true that to vest absolute power in the state is risky. Decentralization of political power and decentralization of production, when introduced judiciously, will do immense benefit to a country. Gandhian thought lays great emphasis on service and cooperation and expresses itself strongly against power as a weapon.

The world cannot forget Gandhi, the apostle of truth and non-violence who lived the life of an ascetic. He said about himself, 'The law of complete love is the law of my being.' George Marshall remarked that 'Mahatma Gandhi is the spokesman for the conscience of all mankind.' Commenting upon Gandhi's assassination, George Bernard Shaw said, 'It is dangerous to be too good.' Gandhi was a great thinker, a great leader, a great reformer, a great philanthropist and a great revolutionary. Paying due homage to Gandhi, Sir Stafford Cripps observed, 'I know of no other man of any time or indeed recent history, who so forcefully and convincingly demonstrated the power of spirit over material things.'

Sarvodaya

The leaders who followed Mahatma Gandhi's constructive programmes include Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Kaka Kalekar, Jay Prakash Narayan and K.G Mashruwala. Regarding the establishment of the sarvodaya society, a detailed plan was published on 20 January 1950. In such a society, there will be freedom for all and utmost equality; there will be no class and castes; no exploitation nor injustice; and equal opportunity for each for fullest development. Man will be the centre of such a society, but self-interest will not be the basis of social organization. Life in such a society will be an integrated whole, so that work, art and play will form a unified pattern making possible the growth of an integrated human personality. Further, there will be complete equality in a sarvodaya society and no one would be oppressed under the tyranny of another person. It will be an ideal society and love and cooperation would be its bases. Truth and non-violence will dominate this society.

Sarvodaya is Gandhi's most significant socio political movement. Like satyagraha, this also comprises two terms, 'sarva' meaning one and all and 'uday' meaning wellbeing or upliftment. This combination thus indicates overall boost or development of all as the definition of sarvodaya.

Gandhi first came across this righteous concept in the form of a book titled *Unto This Last*, by John Ruskin, which he read in South Africa in 1904. The effect of this book was so strong that it changed Gandhi's outlook towards life. He resolved to change his life according to the ethics of the book.

Three fundamental codes of belief formed the basis of Ruskin's ideology:

- An individual's benefit is in the benefit of everyone
- A lawyer's work is as respectable as that of a barber; in as much as everyone has equal right to earn their living from their work

The life of labour, i.e., the life of one who tills soil and that of the handicraftsman are the lives that are worth living

This system of belief made Gandhi feel obligated towards the society. He recalled these beliefs in his autobiography, 'The first of these I knew. The second, I had dimly realized. The third had never occurred to me. *Unto This Last* made it clear as daylight for me that the second and third were contained in the first. I arose with the dawn, ready to reduce these principles to practice'.

Despite, sarvodaya being a social philosophy in its basic form, India's pressing post-independence requirement demanded that it be changed into an urgent political set of guidelines. Its aim was to free the social classes from inequality and the best way to put it into practice was with the help of political resolve and state machinery. For Gandhi, and for India, this was an indication of grassroot level boost which started in the villages with the most deprived classes, and then progressed to cover the higher social sections.

Nevertheless, to Gandhi, this was a physical expression of sarvodaya. The more profound philosophies served as an inherent spiritual link for him. His quest for God guided him to the establishment of the most deprived, and in the noble service of this lowest of the lowly man, Gandhi glimpsed God. This became his worship and the soul of the deprived became his pilgrimage. Gandhi's exalted aspiration seemed to be getting fulfilled by service to the poorest of the poor. A justification to this perception is given by Gandhi himself, when he wrote in *Socialism of My Conception* in 1936, 'Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities, social, political, religious; have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour, simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all. And this cannot be done except through one's country.'

After 1948, Gandhi's associates carried forward this movement. The chief torchbearers of sarvodaya were Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Jaiprakash Narayan and Dada Dharmadhikari. Their competent leadership and incessant striving propelled sarvodaya from a mere initiative to a historic movement,

Sarvodaya puts emphasis on land. All wealth, including land, will be considered as common property to be used for common benefit. The class distinctions will vanish; everyone will work for society according to their capacity and receive from society in accordance to their needs. Production will be for consumption and mutual sharing, and not for profit. To put an end to bureaucratization of the economy, decentralization of production will be preferred in the new society. The economy will pre-eminently be based on small and cottage industries. There are two reasons ascribed for that. First, in a country like India, where capital is short and the size of labour supply too big, any attempt at industrialization through high technology is destined to fail. Second, the decentralization of production would prevent bureaucratization of the economic system and benefit the masses. There will be no state in such a society. The state will not be abolished at once in such a society. The society will move gradually from a good government to a society without a government. The supporters of the sarvodaya society were not in favour of indirect democracy, because in such a democracy there are political parties, which propagate wrong things. In a representative democracy, all decisions are taken by majority and there is no regard for the minority. In such a government, all powers are concentrated in the hands of the government and its officials. Therefore, the sarvodaya leaders were against this democracy and they suggest a government by the village. Acharya Vinoba Bhave wrote that village disputes should be solved in the villages. Then it would become a kingdom of God where there would be no conflicts

and tensions. Vinobaji's *bhoodan* movement aimed at ushering in a new society on the basis of the sarvodaya principles.

The Sarvodaya principles are highly commendable. They promote everything good that we strive for—selflessness, high morals and cooperation. If practised, it can only lead to betterment of the individual and mankind as a whole. However, it would not be wrong to state that the concept is more visionary than applicable. Human beings fundamentally come with a lot of flaws and so does society. Non-violent revolution, for one, cannot succeed without the backing of a party. Also, the fact that a society will exist that will have all its citizens live together in harmony is a pipe dream that will, as things stand, never be realized. Still, it would be a folly to dismiss the concept as too Utopian and having no place in the real world. Even if humans achieve a portion of the principles advocated by the concept, much can be achieved.

ACTIVITY

Research the attitude of the American press towards India's freedom struggle, especially Gandhi's non-violent techniques. Write a report on your findings.

DID YOU KNOW

Gandhi lived for over twenty years in South Africa

SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learned that:

- Mahatma Gandhi was born on 2 October 1869. He became renowned in South Africa as a champion of truth, non-violence and the dignity of the human being.
- Gandhi returned to India in 1914, and dedicated the remaining years of his life to the cause of freedom for his motherland.
- Gandhism is a school of thought that expresses Mahatma Gandhi's views on political, social, economic and religious matters from time to time. Various scholars have collected these views and compiled them under Gandhism.
- Gandhi's ideas were influenced by the writings of Ruskin, Thoreau and Tolstoy. He was also influenced by the Vedas, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Bible*, the *Quran*, and the other scriptures. It is essential to point out that Gandhi's political thought was mixed with religious principles.
- Gandhi's ideal is a stateless democracy, in which there is a federation of village communities, functioning on the basis of voluntary cooperation, and peaceful coexistence.
- Gandhi was against the use of property as an instrument of exploitation. Capitalism and exploitation should be removed through nonviolent methods. Those who have property must regard it as trust and not as an instrument of exploitation.
- Gandhi used the word satyagraha in 1906 to express the nature of the non-violence action undertaken by the Indians in South Africa against the racist government. With his involvement in the Indian National Movement, he adopted it as a technique of love-force, soul-force, non-violent in nature, aiming constantly at the search and pursuit of truth.

- Gandhi believed in the concept of the individual being the soul of the social system.
- As the Gandhian principles in some aspect resemble those of the communists, it is often said that 'Gandhism is communism minus violence.' Both are humanitarian philosophies that stand for the poor and downtrodden people.
- The leaders who followed Mahatma Gandhi's constructive programmes include Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Kaka Kalekar, late Jay Prakash Narayan and late K.G. Mashruwala.

KEY TERMS

- **Gandhism:** It is a school of thought that expresses Mahatma Gandhi's views on political, social, economic and religious matters.
- **Stateless democracy:** It refers to a democracy in which every individual is given the maximum freedom to devote himself to the service of society according to his calibre or capacity.
- **Ramarajya:** It refers to the Kingdom of the Hindu Lord Ram, considered to be an extremely just kingdom.
- **Satyagraha:** It means the vindication of truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but on one's own self.
- **Hartal:** It refers to the stopping of work as a measure of protest and its object to strike the imagination of the people and the government.
- **Socialism:** A political and economic theory according to which the means of production, distribution and exchange should be owned and controlled by the people, everyone should be given an equal opportunity to develop his talents and the wealth of the community should be fairly distributed.

ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Mahatma Gandhi first went to South Africa in the year 1893.
2. The major influences on Gandhi's life may be summed up as follows:
 - (i) His mother's sense of self-sacrifice, spirit of service, religiosity, and fasting
 - (ii) His father's spirit of renunciation
 - (iii) Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Vaishnavism and the Bhagavad Gita
3. Gandhism is a school of thought that expresses Mahatma Gandhi's views on political, social, economic and religious matters from time to time. Various scholars have collected these views and compiled them under Gandhism.
4. A great contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to political theory and politics is political action guided by morality or spirituality.
5. The techniques of satyagraha may take the form of non-cooperation and civil disobedience or fasting and strike.
6. Gandhi's ideas were influenced by the writings of Ruskin, Thoreau and Tolstoy.
7. According to Gandhi, individuals acquire the right of resistance, or the violation of the law of the state becomes a right and a duty of an individual when the laws are:

- (a) not of people's own making, (b) repugnant to public or private morals, (c) not promoting social good, (d) oppressive in nature and cause, all round harassment, hardship, humiliation, oppression and tyranny.
8. The rights of the individual, according to Gandhi, are not created by the state. They are created by the individuals who, by due performance of their duties, qualify themselves for the enjoyment of their duties. The state only recognizes these rights.
 9. What makes Gandhian socialism practically different from communism is its faith in 'ahimsa' or non-violence.
 10. As an advocate of non-violence and philosophical anarchism, Gandhi was against the state. His anti-state attitude was justified on historical, moral and economic grounds. The state uses force, and its existence cannot be justified on moral grounds. By the use of force, the state deprives the moral value of the individual's action.
 11. Gandhi was against high centralized production and pleaded for decentralized production. The idea was not to do away entirely with machinery as such, but to prevent the concentration of power in the hands of a few people.
 12. In a sarvodaya society, there will be freedom for all and utmost equality; there will be no class and castes; no exploitation nor injustice; and equal opportunity for each for fullest development. Man will be the centre of such a society, but self-interest will not be the basis of social organization.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What was Gandhi's idea of stateless democracy?
2. What are the salient features of Gandhian economy?
3. Write a note on satyagraha.
4. How is hartal a form of satyagraha?
5. What is the anatomy of Gandhian socialism?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the various influences on Gandhi's thought and philosophy.
2. 'Gandhi spiritualized politics and liberalized religion.' Elaborate.
3. Critically examine Mahatma Gandhi's concept of non-violence or ahimsa.
4. Discuss Mahatma Gandhi's theory of satyagraha.
5. Examine critically Gandhi's attitude towards the state.
6. 'Mahatma Gandhi's concept of sarvodaya is a panacea for all ills.' Examine.
7. Discuss the concept of indigenous socialism as advocated by Gandhi.

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UNIT 3 SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Structure

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 - 3.2.2 Radical Humanism
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INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, you were introduced to the political thoughts of Gandhi. In it, you learnt that Gandhi agreed with many of the maxims of socialism, and considered himself to be a socialist. His political ideas have been labelled by theorists as Gandhian socialism. In fact, the idea of socialism has left a deep imprint on numerous Indian political thinkers, especially from the independence and post-independence generation. This unit will discuss some of these thinkers. The unit will also discuss the thoughts of B.R. Ambedkar.

This unit will begin with a discussion on the basic ideas of M.N. Roy. Roy was a radical Indian political thinker who influenced socialist and Marxist thought in India and abroad. This unit will then discuss the political and social ideas of B.R. Ambedkar. It will examine Ambedkar's social ideas, the problem of Hindu order, the evils of the caste

system, the question of reservation for the backward sections of the society, and so on. This unit will conclude with a discussion on Jayaprakash Narayan and Ram Manohar Lohia's conception of socialism.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Explain the ideas of M.N. Roy and discuss his criticism of Marxism
- Compare M.N. Roy and Gandhi's concepts of nationalism
- Explain the three-varna system propounded by Ambedkar
- Interpret Ambedkar's ideas on untouchability and the caste system
- Explain Jayaprakash Narayan's political ideology
- Discuss the ideas of Ram Manohar Lohia

M.N. ROY

Manabendra Nath Roy was a unique personality in the history of modern India. He was one of the extremists in India's struggle for independence. He actively participated in the armed struggles that took place in India in the early part of the 20th century. He had also actively engaged in the revolutionary struggles that took place in Mexico and China during mat time. He had the rare distinction of having worked with the world revolutionary leaders like Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin. In the beginning, he was a great champion of Marxism. But later on, he changed his ideology. He lost faith in Marxism and expounded his theory of 'Radical Humanism' or 'New Humanism'. He criticized the Marxian concept of the dialectical materialism and the theory of surplus value. He was also a critic of parliamentary democracy. Like Jayaprakash Narayan, he had faith in the concept of party-less democracy or organized democracy without parties.

Roy was born on 6th February, 1886, in 24 Parganas district of Bengal. In his earlier days, he was known as Narendranath Bhattacharya. He attained his early education in Calcutta. He was deeply influenced by the philosophy and works of Swami Vivekananda, Bankim Chandra and Dayanand Saraswati. After the partition of Bengal in 1905, he started his revolutionary activities. He got his political training in the course of the swadeshi movement of Bengal. He had close contact with Jatin Mukherjee and worked with the leaders of the Yugantara group, which was known for its revolutionary activities in Bengal. Roy was also deeply influenced by the political ideas of Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and S.N. Bannerjee.

In 1910, M.N. Roy was arrested in connection with the Howrah conspiracy case. During the First World War, Roy took an active part in the revolutionary activities. He remained in charge of smuggling of arms and ammunitions from Germany to India. In 1915, he went to Java to get arms and ammunitions. After his return, he was arrested in a case in Calcutta. After his release from jail, M.N. Roy fled to the Dutch Indies. He also went to Japan, China, the U.S.A., Mexico, Germany and Russia. In December 1915, he reached San Francisco. He worked for some time with the Indian revolutionaries who were preparing for a national struggle in India. At this time, he changed his name from Narendra Nath Bhattacharya to Manabendra Nath Roy.

From there, Roy went to Mexico. Here, he wrote several articles about India's poverty and the methods in which the British were exploiting Indian resources. In Mexico, he founded the first communist party outside Russia and became its Secretary-General. In 1920, he was invited by Lenin to visit Russia. He became an advisor of the Bolshevik party on the colonial question. Lenin described him as the 'symbol of revolution in the East.' Roy attended the Second Congress of the Communist International and worked with its colonial commission. Lenin presented a thesis on the national and colonial questions to the commission. But Roy criticized this draft of Lenin. He was asked by Lenin to prepare an alternative draft. Roy, in this thesis, suggested that revolution in the colonies would not be a communist revolution. The communists had to cooperate with the national bourgeois democrats in the struggle against imperialism, but they should not surrender to the bourgeoisie. Lenin, while preparing the final draft on the subject, incorporated the views of Roy.

In Russia, Roy took the charge of training and organization of the Asiatic Communists in the Eastern University of Moscow. He prepared a report on the conditions in India, and at Lenin's suggestion, converted the report into a book in 1922 titled, *India in Transition*. In 1927, Roy went to China as an adviser to the Communist Party of China. But he failed in his mission, and just one year after, he was expelled from the Communist Party. He came back to India in 1930.

In March 1931, he attended the Karachi session of the Indian National Congress. He was arrested in 1931 and was imprisoned for six years in the Kanpur Conspiracy case. After his release from jail in 1936, Roy joined the Indian National Congress and became member of the A.I.C.C. However, he was very critical of the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. He opposed the non-violent policy of Gandhi. In 1939, he organized the League of Radical Congressmen and the next year, he formed a new party called the 'Radical Democratic Party.' When the Second World War broke out, Roy considered that it was an international civil war in which the forces of democracy and Fascism fought against each other.

He strongly opposed the rise of Fascism and Nazism in Europe. Hence, he gave full support to the British government in the fight against the Fascists. This view of Roy was diametrically opposite to that of the Congress policy. In 1942, the Quit India movement was started by the Congress Party. Roy opposed this movement. He failed to realize that by opposing the Quit India Movement, he had completely alienated himself from the mainstream of the nationalist movement of the time. Despite popular opposition to these policies, he continued to criticize the Congress and regarded its leaders as 'the representatives of nascent Indian Fascism.' Because of this extreme view, Roy lost his prestige and influence. After the independence of India, he dissolved his 'Radical Party' in 1948. Roy died on 25th January 1954.

M.N. Roy propounded a different school of thought. From a nationalist, he became a Marxist, and later, he changed to a radical humanist. He was a prolific writer. In 1922, he wrote *India in Transition*, where he called the Indian National Struggle as a bourgeois movement. In his book *India's Problem and its Solution*, Roy criticized the Congress policy. In 1926, Roy wrote *The Future of Indian Politics*, where he advocated that the philosophy of Marx was a continuation of the past philosophies. Some other important books written by M.N. Roy are - *New Humanism*, *The Problem of Indian Freedom*, *New Orientation*, *Revolution and Counter Revolution in China*, and so on. He also contributed many articles to various journals and papers.

Influence of Marx

M.N. Roy was at first deeply impressed by the philosophy of Karl Marx. He considered Marx as a merciless critic of social injustice in the traditions of the great Jewish Prophets. Roy considered Marx as a humanist and a lover of freedom. Socialism of Marx was founded on this '*Kingdom of Freedom*'. He had profound faith in the creativity of man. He regarded Marxism as more than a mere political and economic approach or a mere technique of revolution. As Roy observed, 'As a philosophy, Marxism is the outcome of the development of thought from the dawn of history. Therefore, it is the heritage of humanity; it is the ideological equipment belonging to everybody for a better world.'

Roy accepted, even in his 'humanist' phase, some of the principles of Marxism. First, he was a staunch materialist and a thorough Marxist. Like Karl Marx, he regarded matter as fundamental, real and independent. According to him, even mind was the product of matter at a high stage growth. Materialist philosophy, according to Roy, was corroborated by the latest scientific knowledge. Second, like Karl Marx, he regarded the capitalist system of economy as unjust, rotten and outdated. He was of the opinion that industry should be controlled by the people themselves. Like Marx, he worked on the fundamental principle that there should be no exploitation of the poor by the rich. Third, Roy supported the idea of Marx that for any action to be successful, it must be in consonance with a clear thought and plan. However, for any plan or action to be effective, it should also be based on the existing structure of things. Fourth, like Marx, Roy believed that knowledge has its roots in the physical universe. To quote him, 'To seek the knowledge of the phenomena of nature in a hypothetical supernatural sense, is logically absurd and philosophically inadmissible.' He regarded sensation, actions and perceptions as the source of knowledge.

Roy's Criticism of Marxism

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

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

1. Roy argued that the idea of materialism in Marxism was dogmatic and unscientific. He interpreted the term 'materialism' in a different way. As he wrote, 'Our approach to the problems of political theory and practice is claimed to be free from any dogmatic pre-supposition. Otherwise, we could not pretend to be advocates of scientific thought. Those who regard Marxism as a closed system of thought cannot also pretend to subscribe to the iconoclastic principles of radicalism which knows no dogma and respects no authority.'
2. Roy criticized the Marxist interpretation of history. According to him, it provides insignificant role to mental activity in the social process. The Marxist philosophy confines history to materialistic objectivism. However, the intelligence of human beings and their cumulative actions are very powerful social forces. Hence, Roy emphasized non-materialistic aspects of history.
3. Roy was also critical of the Marxist concept of economic determinism. As he observed, 'Economic determinism cannot be the social philosophy which is required'

to lead civilized mankind out of the present crisis.' He was of the view that the new social order should combine planning with freedom and should be led by the ideal of collective welfare and progress. Roy further said that 'the materialist conception of history fails when it dismisses ideal systems (ideologies) as mere superstructures of economic relations, and tries to relate them directly with the material condition of life.'

4. According to Roy, the principal defect of Marxism is its denial of individual freedom. In his opinion, as there was complete regimentation in Marxism, there was no place for individual freedom and individual was a slave in the name of freedom. To quote him, 'History is made by the operation of the productive forces; there is little man can do about it, he must recognize the necessity and then he is free. Once you realize that you cannot be free, that you are bound hand and foot to some mysterious forces of production, then you are free.' Marx did not pay adequate attention to the worth and significance of the individual.
5. Roy was very critical of Marxist theory of dialectical materialism. To quote him, 'the dialectic process does not leave any room for the greatest revolutionaries, armed with the philosophy of Marxism, to change the world. The irreconcilable contradiction between dialectic materialism and the programme of a revolutionary reconstruction of society is the basic fallacy of Marxism.' He did not agree with the historical interpretation as given by Marx. Roy also had doubts about the Marxist theory of class struggle.
6. M.N. Roy argued that Marx's view regarding the disappearance of the middle classes has been proved to be false. Instead, the middle class has emerged as a powerful and forceful factor that has moulded national policies and programmes. The expansion of the economic process leads to the increase in the numbers of the middle class.
7. Roy was also highly critical of Marx's rejection of the liberal concept of individualism. Marx was against individualism due to the influence of Hegel's theory of moral positivism. Roy argued that moral positivism resulted in the minimization of the role of the individual. In this context M.N. Roy observed, 'The Marxist conception of freedom means slavery for the individual and a society composed of voluntary slaves can never be free.' He was of the view that by rejecting the liberal and utilitarian concept of individual, Marx betrayed his earlier humanism.
8. Roy felt that the ethical foundations of Marxism were weak because of their relativistic and dogmatic character. Marx expounded the radical behaviouristic concept that in the process of struggles with nature, individual changes his own nature. There is nothing constant in human nature. According to Roy, the psychological foundation of Marxism philosophy was also weak. In opposition to Marx, Roy accepted that there is something constant and permanent in human nature that is the basis of our duties and rights. According to Roy, the subordination of individual to the dominance of the forces of production was a neutralization of his autonomy and creativity. Morality was not the product of materialistic forces. In opposition to the Marxian ethics, Roy presented humanist ethics, which exalts the sovereignty of the individual and believes in liberty and justice. To Roy, there was something constant and permanent in ethical values.

9. M.N. Roy also opposed the Marxism concept of violent revolution. He was for a non-violent cultural revolution in order to bring socio-economic and political changes in the society.

Radical Humanism

In the last phase of his life, M.N. Roy became an exponent of 'new humanism' or 'radical humanism'. In the initial years, M.N. Roy championed the cause of Marxism. However, later, he became a great critic of Marxism and came to the conclusion that communism provided no solution to worldly problems. Hence, he advocated for a new philosophy called radical humanism.

Just after the end of the Second World War, Roy was deeply thoughtful about the contemporary problems of the world. He re-examined the communist and democratic doctrines and theories. He found that communism in Russia had established a regime of tyranny and slavery. In the communist system, according to Roy the individual had been reduced to the position of a helpless pawn in the hands of blind economic force. Roy also saw the defects of parliamentary democracy in Europe. Hence, he thought of organized democracy and cooperative economy as the solution to the crisis of the post-Second World War period. The radical humanism provided a philosophical foundation to both organized democracy and cooperative economy.

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

M.N. Roy was of the view that new humanism or radical humanism was the perfect answer to the crisis faced by the humanity. For him, the major problem is to guarantee individual freedom against the encroachments of the totalitarianism of the great Leviathan. Hence, he advocated that this new humanism would revive faith in man concerning his various potentialities. He regarded it as the only remedy not only to communism, but to all forms of institutionalism. As he observed, 'Democracy can be established only by reassertion of the humanist tradition. Man is the true measure of his world. Being inherently rational, he can always learn from experience. He develops his intellectual faculties and moral values in his efforts to secure a better life for himself.'

M.N. Roy argued that man is a part of physical nature on account of his biological descent and there is nothing extra-natural in man. Man is the product of biological evolution and everything in man which deals with biological evolution is thus traceable. Soul or atma, which is beyond the body and mind cannot be traced. Thus, to a radical humanist, there is no soul or atma. The theory of soul and God has no place in radical humanism.

Another consequence is that, man himself must be law-governed like physical nature and he is an integral part of the physical universe that is a moral order governed by laws inherent in it. M.N. Roy named these laws as natural laws and these are derived from experience. The rational nature of man discovers these laws by establishing casual relations in nature.

He was of the view that reason or brain has grown as a result of man's link with physical universe and the stimulus provided by it, after the growth of the nervous system in man. Hence, reason results 'from the consciousness of man's being an integral part of law-governed physical nature.' Man is rational by instinct, therefore, to a radical humanist, all super-human, religious and super-natural powers have no values. There is no room for supernatural things and factors whose existence cannot be scientifically proved. A radical humanist is interested only in those things which can be shown to human life. A person who believes that God has created the world and that the destiny of an individual is determined by his fate or will of God can never be a humanist. Hence, a radical humanist has no faith in any transcendental entity called God or the absolute. In this, Roy observed, 'The radical humanism had taken over tradition of the founders of modern civilization, the tradition of the revolt of man against the tyranny of God and his agents on this earth.'

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

M.N. Roy was of the view that the slogan for individual liberty was hallow in the 19th century liberalism. He ought to revive the liberty of the individual. He used the word 'radical' before humanism and hence his humanism included radicalism. For him, the greater the rationalism of the individuals composing a society, the larger would be the measure of liberty enjoyed by them. The aim of radical humanists was to organize society in a rational manner. The more rationality, the greater would be the liberty. According to Roy, the individual will not be fully free unless and until the society is organized on a rational basis. In his views, the state and the society have been established to preserve and protect individual liberty. But, unfortunately, some mechanism and devices are trying to dominate over man and are suppressing his freedom. Religion or morality is also destroying individual freedom imposing on human mind the chains of superstitions and supernatural beliefs. Roy in this context observed, 'radical' had taken over the tradition of modern civilization, the tradition of the revolt of man against the tyranny of god and his agents on this earth. Roy viewed marriage, family and class as the hindrances to human development and freedom. He also viewed society and class as the greatest obstacles to individual freedom. He felt that society should be understood as means to an end and not end in itself.

Materialism is another fundamental principle of M.N. Roy's philosophy of radical humanism. Though he was a strong supporter of Marxism, yet he differed from Karl

Marx in many respects. He remained a materialist, but believed that the Marxist doctrine of materialism was dogmatic and unscientific. He took the scientific method of Marx in his philosophy of radical humanism. Roy regarded matter as real and independent. Mind is the outcome of matter. In his view, there was no difference between the organic and inorganic matter. All living bodies were created out of certain chemical matters. Roy believed that mind was the product of matters at a higher stage of development. On the basis of matter, M.N. Roy explained the origin of life and mind. Biological evolution takes place from physical universe. He was of the opinion that all living bodies were formed out of certain chemical matters and their combination resulted in the creation of other matter. Roy argued that mind was a characteristic of matter at a higher stage of development. He argued that there was a constant inter-penetration and interdependence between man and matter. He thus tried to establish a close relationship between an individual's mind and matter.

Roy called this radical humanism as 'new humanism'. It aimed at a secular, rational morality for opening a new perspective before the world. In this new humanism, the human dignity, personality, sovereignty and creativeness of man could acquire meaning. Roy argued that this new or radical humanism aimed to emancipate man from the belief that there is a transcendent source of his humanness. It allowed man to think freely. This spiritual liberation would restore confidence in man and would encourage him to take part in the collective human effort to build a free society.

The new humanism of Roy was cosmopolitan in its outlook. It replaced the spirit of nationalism by the spirit of world brotherhood. Like Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo, M.N. Roy also believed that a confraternity of morally and spiritually liberated individuals is the fundamental requirement for the realization of a better and healthier society. The new humanism aims at a 'commonwealth' and fraternity of free men. Thus, M.N. Roy was a strong advocate for a world federation. As he observed, 'New humanism is cosmopolitan. A cosmopolitan commonwealth of spiritually free men will not be limited by the boundaries of national states—capitalist, fascist, socialist, communist, or of any other kind—which will gradually disappear under the impact of the twentieth century renaissance of man.' Roy made a distinction between cosmopolitanism and internationalism. He openly advocated for a spiritual community. He believed that a true world government could only be built open the neutralization of nation states. Hence, this view of Roy is regarded as a philosophy of cosmopolitan humanism.

Criticism

M.N. Roy's philosophy of radical humanism has been criticized on the following grounds:

- (i) Though Roy criticized Marx and Lenin, he failed to completely move away from the influence of Marxism. He failed to give logical and adequate reasons as to how matter was capable of producing life. Hence, without giving any satisfactory alternative concept of materialism, he rejected the Marxist theory of dialectical materialism.
- (ii) Roy builds his theory on the presumption that man is essentially a rational being. Everything is to be decided by reason. But Roy has failed to explain clearly the term reason. Further, he has not taken into account the irrational aspect of human nature.
- (iii) M.N. Roy has also condemned religion as a hindrance in the development of freedom. However, this view of religion is not correct. From the beginning of

human civilization, religion has played a very significant role in the cultural and intellectual development of mankind.

- (iv) Another presumption of Roy is that physical and social beings are governed by the same laws. But this analogy is not correct.

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

M.N. Roy's Concept of Organized Democracy

M.N. Roy's was a critic of democratic institutions. Like Jayaprakash Narayan, he was against the concept of the western model of parliamentary democracy. He argued that parliamentary institutions were not doing any useful work for the wellbeing of the people. Political power was concentrated in the hands of a few people. It had destroyed individual freedom. Hence, Roy was opposed to the centralization of power. He openly advocated for decentralization of power and authority.

Roy's concept of democracy revolves round the central theme of individual freedom and welfare. His democracy was both political and economic. It was radical, organized, party-less and participatory. As a democrat, he was strongly opposed to Fascism and Nazism. He also supported freedom of all, including women.

Before discussing Roy's views on democracy, it is essential to know his criticism of western democracy. According to him, there was no individual freedom in the western model of democracy. These democratic states accept the ideal of individual freedom only in theory. In actual practice, the individual is suppressed under collective control in the name of collective welfare. Here the people lose their sovereign power to the representatives once the election is over and remain powerless till the next election comes. Roy was of the opinion that in the past, the political power was concentrated in the hands of a few persons. The people never have any control over the affairs of the State. To Roy, these democratic institutions have destroyed the initiative of the people. As he observed, 'parliamentary democracy by its bureaucratic method of political administration and by its support to private monopolies in finance, industry and land, had sapped the very source of democratic initiative among the people.'

In order to correct this defect of parliamentary democracy, Roy advocated radical or organized democracy. It would be based on decentralization of power and organization of powerful and autonomous local people's committees. In this system, there would be no democratic centralism and democracy would be organized from below, instead of being imposed from the above.

M.N. Roy strongly opposed the role of political parties in democracy. According to him, the emergence of political parties in the working of democracy has brought in its wake all the evils of party politics. He wrote 'With the rise of party system, the idea of popular sovereignty became a constitutional fiction. The political parties encourage hollowness and insincerity, lead to spoils system and debase moral standards. In the

modern democratic states, there is rule by a party which constitutes only a small fraction of the people, in fact, a rule by minority over majority.' According to Roy, the system of party-politics leads to division, bribery and corruption. The main aim of political parties is to capture political power by all means. They do not hesitate to capture power using unscrupulous and corrupt means. Money power plays a very important role in politics. In the struggle for power, political parties ignore the principles of morality and public interest and welfare. Roy was of the opinion that the people above corruption stay out of the scramble for power. He held the view that in the name of the welfare state and public well-being, the party in power restricts freedom of the people. He, therefore, suggested the system of organized democracy for securing the real freedom of the individual.

M.N. Roy's concept of organized democracy was based on ideas of decentralisation and party-less democracy. In his scheme of organized democracy, there was no place for any political parties. The people themselves enjoyed the powers. It was 'direct democracy with small cooperative commonwealth.' This system would be based on local democracies.

M.N. Roy put forward certain conditions for the success of organized democracy. The most important condition was that the people would have high cultural standard. Power should be vested in those persons who have high moral character. Since people have not attained high moral and intellectual standards, Roy argues that in the initial stages there would be both elective and selective democracy. Rousseau's theory of direct democracy was in a sense accepted by Roy, because the latter's ideal was to ensure the direct participation of the entire adult population through the people's committees. The realization of this scheme, in fact, depends on the efforts of the morally and intellectually advanced sections of the population of the State.

M.N. Roy had drafted a model constitution for free India based on the basis of his concept of organized democracy. The first part of the constitution contains the rights and fundamental principles. As per Roy's constitution, the supreme sovereignty is vested in the people who have absolute right to change or modify any political unit. The people would exercise their sovereign power through people's committees in villages, towns and cities.

Roy advocated for the system of direct democracy where the power flows from the people. He suggested for people's committees in order to purify politics and go eliminate the party system. As he himself observed, 'Political ends can be achieved without capturing power. Politics can be practiced without a party organization. There will be a people's committee in each village, city or town, elected annually on the basis of adult suffrage.' Roy was of the opinion that these people's committees would be centre of organized democracy which would bridge the gap between the State and Society. These would simultaneously be the units of State and central social institutions of the local people. With the participation of more and more people in the affairs of the State, the danger of the State becoming powerful at the expense of individual liberty would be reduced. According to Roy, these local committees would nominate candidates for seeking election to provincial council and to the federal assembly. Again in Roy's view, these people's committees would have the power to initiate legislation and to demand a referendum on any legislative or executive measure.

According to Roy, each province shall have a provisional people's council consisting of the Governor and deputies of the people. The Governor shall be elected directly by the people of the province for a term of five years. The deputies of the people will also be elected directly by the people. The Governor shall be elected directly by the people of

the province for a term of five years. The deputies of the people will also be elected directly by the people of the province for a period of four years. According to Roy, it will legislate on all matters except those reserved for the Federal Assembly. Roy also suggested Federal Union for free India which would include both the British India and the Indian provinces. He was of the view that all provinces in India would be formed on the basis of linguistic and cultural homogeneity. Roy also argued for the creation of a Federal Assembly that would consist of elected representatives of the Federal Union.

Criticism

M.N. Roy's concept of organized democracy has been criticized on the following grounds:

1. Roy's idea of the party-less and powerless democracy is neither useful nor original. Critics argued that M.N. Roy's concept of organized democracy had no mass appeal.
2. M.N. Roy and afterwards Jayaprakash Narayan also advocated for a party-less democracy. However, political parties are inevitable in a democracy. Democratic institutions cannot function without the existence of political parties. Even Roy's concept of organized democracy was not possible without political parties.
3. Roy could not properly understand the relation between the individual and society. He puts too much stress on the importance of individual liberty. In the process, he failed to understand the importance of society.
4. Roy laid a lot of emphasis on the role of people's committees. It needs a high degree of character and public spirit among the people.

Hence, critics have argued that M.N. Roy's concept of organized democracy is impracticable. It may work successfully only in small countries where the people are very intelligent and have high moral character and integrity.

M.N. Roy and Mahatma Gandhi

In the initial stage, M.N. Roy had paid glowing tributes to Mahatma Gandhi. However, in the later years, he became a critic of Gandhi. In his work, *One year of Non-Cooperation* published in 1923, Roy had praised Gandhi and compared him with St. Thomas Aquinas and Savonarola. He praised the following contributions of Gandhi—the use of mass action for political purpose, consolidation of the Indian National Congress, the liberation of the national forces from governmental repression by the slogan of non-violence and the adoption of the techniques of non-cooperation, non-payment of taxes and civil disobedience. Roy was of the view that through the non-cooperation movement, the agrarian movement, the proletarian movement and the nationalist movement, we are moving towards national independence.

Radical humanism brought Roy nearer to Gandhi. Both accepted the individual as the central point of all social thought and action. Both stood for decentralization of political and economic power. Both also suggested party-less democracy for purifying politics.

However, there were some fundamental differences between Roy and Gandhi. Roy was a materialist and rationalist, while Gandhi was a moralist and relied more on his inner voice. In later years, M.N. Roy became a critic of Gandhi. He called Gandhism as a 'mass of platitudes and self-contradiction.' He regarded Gandhian philosophy as status quoist in nature. Roy had also criticized Mahatma Gandhi's concept of non-violence. He argued that the concept of non-violence had induced the people to remain in a state

of inactivity. Roy regarded the Gandhian concept of non-violence as a mask for holding social exploitation. He viewed the Gandhian ideas of non-violence as a 'subtle intellectual device to cover up the capitalist exploitation of the country.' In his book, *India's Problem and its Solution*, he criticized Gandhi's ideology. He showed his dissatisfaction with the constructive programme of the Congress adopted at Bardoli in February 1922. In its place, he pleaded for the creation of a revolutionary mass party that would organize mass strikes and resistance.

According to Roy, Gandhi had not included any economic programme for enlisting mass support. He criticized the Gandhian economics as reactionary. As he observed, 'Gandhism was not revolutionism but weak and watery reformism.' Similarly, he called the Indian National Congress as the 'spinner's association'. In this context M.N. Roy wrote, 'The social basis of Gandhism is cultural backwardness, its intellectual mainstay superstition. The Gandhian Utopia is a static society, a state of absolute social stagnation.' While Gandhi advocated for small and cottage industries, Roy was for modern industrial progress. Further, according to him, Gandhism did not have any plan for organizing the proletariat against the landlord and capitalists. He described the Quit India Movement 'as the mischief of whipping up forces which undermined the Indian home front.' He was not prepared to accept the ethical or spiritual basis of the Gandhian programme.

Roy's Contribution to Indian Political Thought

M.N. Roy is one of the most learned of modern Indian writers on politics and philosophy. His book, *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution* is a major contribution to the history of political thought by an Indian writer.

A critical study of his ideas shows that Roy was an ethical revisionist. Unlike the medieval Indian saints and the contemporary social reformers and political leaders, Roy developed his humanist philosophy with flesh, blood and brain. Democracy became the base of this philosophy and rationalism its centre. As an Indian scholar rightly observed, 'Roy remains unparalleled to the realm of human affairs as an exponent at a time particularly when the East and some countries of the West were passing through feverish turmoil for self-determination and emancipation.'

Before analysing the achievements of Roy's work, it is pertinent to look at the shortcomings of his philosophy. Roy started as a Marxist, but later he became a radical humanist. His radical humanism is not an original theory. Dr V.R Verma compares M.N. Roy with Edward B. Brownstone, a German revisionist, who supplemented the Marxian theory with Kantian ethics. Similarly, Roy also tried to supplement materialism with humanist ethics.

Roy failed to provide any original sociological interpretation of Indian culture. He strongly criticized the medievalism, primitivism and spiritualism of Indian culture. One of the critics described him as a 'rootless critic of everything Indian and Hindu.'

M.N. Roy rejected the concept of morality in politics. As he said, 'politics cannot be spiritual and moral politics is often the refuge for cheats and humbugs.' Roy remained mostly in the background as his political philosophy had no mass appeal. His political philosophy was largely ideal and Utopian rather than practical and real.

Roy's analysis of Indian nationalism was totally incorrect. He was wrong in calling nationalism as an antiquated cult. His criticism of the Congress party as a 'Fascist party' and as 'spinner's association' reflected his poor understanding of the Congress Party and the national movement.

Hence, M.N. Roy is regarded more as a critic than an original and constructive thinker. Among all his ideas, radical humanism has the most lasting effect on the succeeding political philosophy. It proclaims the sovereignty of man. It maintains that a rational and moral society is possible because man by nature is rational and moral, new humanism is cosmopolitan. In later years, Jayaprakash Narayan was influenced by the concept of the party-less democracy of M.N. Roy. Even the philosophy of radical humanism has a tremendous influence on the democratic socialist movement in India. John Gunther in his book, *Inside Asia*, described M.N. Roy as 'a figure in three revolutions,' that is, Russian, Chinese and Indian. Paying a glowing tribute to Roy, a renowned Indian scholar observed 'Roy started his political career as a revolutionary and ended as a liberal humanist. He made a vain attempt to bring heaven on earth. However, he soon realized that if heaven cannot be achieved, the earth can at least be repaired. He died as a disillusioned man but possibly not a wholly disappointed man.'

M.N. Roy could not remain in any political organization for a long time. He was a great champion of individual liberty. He also had a great faith in democracy. He criticized the Western model of democracy and suggested reforms to democratic institutions on the basis of decentralisation of authority. Even today, Indian political leaders are following Roy's ideas on decentralisation and Panchayati Raj. He also put forward the idea of the creation of a planning authority to plan the national economy. Thus, Roy has some lasting contribution to Indian political thinking.

Roy's patriotism was beyond any dispute. At the age of fifteen, he went out of India in search of arms to overthrow the British government. He stayed in Europe for a long time to find out ways and means of liberation of India. As a communist, he also suggested that the communist party should fight for India's freedom. His ideas on radical humanism, scientific politics and cosmopolitanism have far reaching influence in the realm of the 20th century political thoughts.

IDEAS OF B.R. AMBEDKAR

Bhim Rao Ambedkar was born on 14 April 1891 (Vaiasaldia Purnima) at a place called Mhow, near Indore in Madhya Pradesh, where his father was serving as the headmaster in the Army School. He was the fourteenth child of his parents (of whom only five, three sons and two daughters, had survived), Ramji Sakpal and Bhima Bai. His mother died early when he was only five and he was brought up by his father's sister Mira Bai. Bhim Rao came from the Mahar group of untouchables, which was the largest group of untouchables in Maharashtra. In the view of some scholars, mahars, who were the original settlers in Maharashtra, were pushed aside by the invading Aryans. It is also claimed that the very name of the state Maharashtra (literally, great nation) was originally 'Mahar-rashtra', the land of the mahars.

Bhim Rao's family had a military background. His father Ramji Sakpal and grandfather Maloji Sakpal had rendered military service to the British. His mother also had a military background, his father was a Subedar Major from the village of Murad in the Thane district of Maharashtra. Mhow, which is on the border of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, had itself been a military centre, i.e., a cantonment area.

Suffering from all the possible disabilities, segregation and discrimination, Bhim Rao's family was kept out of the mainstream of the Maharashtra social and political setup. It thus came to belong to the humanistic Bhakti tradition of the Kabir panth.

As a young boy, Bhim Rao was sent to the local Marathi school, where his official name was registered as Bhima Ramji Ambavadekar. The family preferred the ancestral village rather than the caste as his surname. Later on, Bhim Rao started his high school education in the government high school of Satara. At school, he became a victim of segregation like every other untouchable boy. He was asked to sit away from them and was forbidden to mix and play with them. His Sanskrit teacher refused to teach him as Sanskrit was regarded as the divine language and the untouchables were not considered eligible for learning it. Hence, though Bhim Rao wanted to study Sanskrit, he was forced to study Persian instead.

Ramji Sakpal shifted to Bombay on termination of his services in 1904. Initially, the family had to live in a chawl in Parel. At this stage, Bhim Rao was transferred to a high school in Parel and subsequently to the famous Elphinstone High School, from where he passed his matriculation in 1907. Bhim Rao was the first Mahar boy who had passed his matriculation with distinction.

Here, it may be noted that as per the tradition of his time, Bhim Rao was married when he was just in the fifth standard at the age of fourteen. His bride Rama Bai, the daughter of Bhiku Valangkar, was just nine years old at the time of her marriage.

Bhim Rao continued his college education at Elphinstone College with the help of a monthly scholarship of Rupees 25 per month offered by the ruler of Baroda, Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaikwad who was well-known as a reform-minded king. The great Professor Max Muller supplemented Bhim Rao's education with the gift of books and clothes. He was still in college when he became a father. His first son was Yashwant. He passed his B.A. in 1913 with English and Persian as his main subjects.

After his graduation, he took up service in the princely state of Baroda. Here he suffered humiliation even at the hands of his lowest subordinates. He had no option but to resign his job, as he could not suffer injustice and indignity.

In 1913, he had an opportunity to go abroad for his advance studies. He joined Columbia University in New York, the United States, as a Gaikwad scholar and was the very first Mahar to undertake foreign studies. In 1915, he received his M. A. from Columbia for his dissertation 'Ancient Indian Commerce'. In June 1916, he registered for his Ph.D. based on the thesis "*National Dividend for India: A Historical and Analytical Study*", which was finally accepted by Columbia University for the award of Ph.D. in June 1917.

In October 1916, he moved from Columbia to the London School of Economics and Political Science where he joined M.Sc. (Economics) and D.Sc. (Economics). He also joined the Gray's Inn for the degree of Bar-at-Law. His admission into these prestigious institutions in London was greatly facilitated by the introductory letters written by his Columbia Professor R.A. Seligman. However, he was called back by the Maharaja of Baroda and was appointed his military secretary. He had to leave his job in utter disgust in view of the continued harassment and ill-treatment at the hands of the caste-ridden society. On his return to Bombay, he was appointed professor of political economy in the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics at the attractive salary of Rupees 450 per month. Even here, he was treated as a pariah by his caste-Hindu colleagues, which led to his resignation in March 1920. Thereafter, he returned to London to resume his higher studies. However, before he left for London, he had started a weekly paper called *Mook Nayak* (Leader of the dumb) to champion the cause of the depressed classes in India.

He was awarded the degree M.Sc. (Economics) by the University of London in 1921 for his thesis 'Provincial Decentralization of Imperial finance in British India'. Next year, he was called to the Bar. At the same time, he also submitted his thesis entitled "The problem of the Rupee" for his D. Sc in 1923. Upon completion of studies in London, Bhim Rao moved to Germany to study Economics for three months at the University of Bonn.

In June 1923, he finally returned to India to start his career as a lawyer in Bombay High Court. However, as an untouchable barrister, he did not have a good practice and had to supplement his income by working as a part-time professor of law at the Batliboi's Institute of Accountancy.

It was in July 1924 that Ambedkar started his political career by establishing the Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha (The excluded classes welfare association) to raise the educational level and the economic status of the depressed classes as well as to ventilate the hardships of these classes. He established this institution in collaboration with Sir Chimanlal Setalvad in 1927. He started his paper *Bahishkrit Bharat* to articulate grievances and voice the interests of the depressed classes.

In 1927, he was nominated to be a member of Bombay legislative council. Next year, he was appointed professor of law in the Government Law College, Bombay. He represented the untouchables in the Second Round Table Conference held in London. In 1932, the Ramsay MacDonald Award conceded the demand for separate electorates for Untouchables. Ambedkar was also present at the Third Round Table conference held in London in 1932-33.

On his return to India, he founded the Independent Labour Party which contested elections held under the Government of India Act of 1935. His party had fielded seventeen candidates of whom 15 were returned to the House. In June 1935, he became the principal and Perry professor of jurisprudence in Bombay's Government Law College. In 1942, the British Indian Government picked him up as a member of the Executive Council of the Governor General of India and was given the charge of Labour. He held this post until July 1946.

In 1946, he published his scholarly work *Who were the Shudras?* He dedicated this work quite appropriately to Jyotiba Phule whom he described as 'the greatest Shudra of modern India', who made the lower classes of the Hindus conscious of their slavery and to the highest classes who had preached the gospel that 'for India, social democracy was more vital than Independence from foreign rule.'

In November 1946, he was elected to the Constituent Assembly of India first from Bengal (and later from his home state of Maharashtra). Thereafter, he was elected by the Constituent Assembly as the Chairman of its prestigious Drafting Committee. The Chairmanship of the Drafting Committee involved the very onerous task of finalizing and presenting to the Constituent Assembly, the final Draft of the Constitution of India and to clarify and defend its controversial provisions. On account of the role he played in this capacity, he was universally acclaimed as the 'Architect of the Indian Constitution.'

When India attained her freedom from the British rule on the midnight of 15 August 1947, he was appointed by Nehru as the Minister for Law in his cabinet. After over a year, he had to resign from his job owing to his serious differences with Nehru on the issue of Government's policy towards the Hindu Code Bill. However, in 1952, he was elected to the Rajya Sabha, a status which he enjoyed until his death in December 1956.

It was in 1948 that, after the death of his first wife, Dr Ambedkar married Dr Sharda Kabir, a Maharashtra Brahmin. She lived with him until the last moment of his life. In June 1952, his old alma mater, the Columbia University honoured him with the Degree of L.L.D. (Honoris Causa) in recognition of the work done by him in connection with the drafting of India's Constitution. The University lauded him as 'one of India's leading citizens, a great social reformer and a valiant upholder of human rights.'

Since 1949, he started participating actively in the World Buddhist Conferences held in Kathmandu and Rangoon. In September, of the same year, he published the Buddhist prayer book called the *Buddha Upasna Pantha*. In 1955, he formed the Bharatiya Buddha Mahasabha. It was in 14 October 1956 that he left Hinduism to become a Buddhist in Nagpur. Next month, he participated in the annual session of the World Buddhist Conference held in Kathmandu where he was praised as a Nav Buddha. He passed away on 6 December 1956 after a prolonged illness.

As a great scholar of his times, Dr Ambedkar authored the following most notable books and brochures:

- *The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and its Solution*, 1923
- *The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India*, 1925
- *Annihilation of Caste*, 1936
- *Thoughts of Pakistan*, 1946
- *Ranade, Gandhi and Jinnah*, 1943
- *What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables*, 1945
- *Who were the Shudras?*, 1946
- *State and Minorities*, 1947
- *The Untouchables*, 1948
- *Maharashtra as a Linguistic State*, 1948
- *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, 1945
- *Buddha and his Dhamma*, 1957

Besides these monumental works, the following works were published after his demise in 1956:

- *The Rise and Fall of Indian Women*, 1965
- *Dr Ambedkar on Buddhism*, 1982
- The unpublished works of Babasaheb Ambedkar appearing in 8 volumes under the title *Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar: The Writing and Speeches*, 1979

He also published two newspapers one after another. The first newspaper launched by him was a Marathi fortnightly called *Mook Nayak* which was renamed as *Bahishkrit Bharat* in 1927.

He was also responsible for establishing a number of educational institutions for the benefit of all, including the scheduled castes, the depressed and the oppressed people of India, for instance:

- i. Siddhartha Collage of Arts and Science, 1946
- ii. MilindMahaVidalaya, 1951
- iii. Sidhartha College of Commerce and Economics, 1953; and Siddhartha College of Law, 1956

Finally, he was instrumental in establishing the following associations, institutions and political parties:

- BahishkritHitkariSabha, 1924
- SamtaSainikDal, 1928
- Independence Labour Party, 1936
- People's Education Society, 1945
- MumbaiRajyaKanisthaGaokamagal Association, 1955
- Bhartiya Baudh Mahasabha, 1955
- Republican Party 1956

Phases of His Public Life

The three-and-a-half decade long public career of Dr Ambedkar can be studied under the following five major phases:

- 1918-1928:** During which he established himself as a lawyer and launched a series of satyagrahas to safeguard the interest of the depressed classes
- 1929-1936:** During which he clamoured for separate electorate for the Dalits
- 1937-1946:** During which he held a number of public offices and used them for the benefit of the depressed classes
- 1946-1950:** In which he prepared the draft of the Constitution of India which earned him the title of modern Manu
- 1950-1956:** In which he relinquished Hinduism and adopted Buddhism

Thus, Dr Ambedkar was a renowned professor, barrister, legislator, constitution-framer, cabinet minister, social reformer and the uncrowned leader of the Dalits, the depressed and oppressed classes of India for whose emancipation, welfare and upliftment he lived and died. The multi-faceted work of Dr. Ambedkar made him the most eminent Mahar, architect of Indian Constitution, and posthumously earned him the highest state decoration of the Bharat Rama.

Social Ideas

As a Mahar, Dr Ambedkar had himself suffered a lot of indignities and discrimination at the hands of the so-called upper castes, and was, thus, always eager to bring revolutionary changes in the traditional social system of India. He wanted to rescue the oppressed and the suppressed classes from the yoke of Brahminism and casteism. This, he thought, could be possible only through the efforts of the oppressed and the suppressed people themselves, as he knew that the rights are never given in charity or donation. Like the freedom fighter Bal Gangadhar Tilak, he maintained that one has to fight for them, clamour for them and, struggle against the prevalent social structure, tradition, practices and belief.

Problem of the Hindu social system

For Ambedkar, the very first problem of Hindu social system was the one relating to the origin of the Shudras. In his famous book entitled *Who were the Shudras?* Ambedkar mentions that the principle of graded inequality was the basis for determining the term 'associated life' as amongst the four varnas. In his opinion, the Arya Samajis believed that the four varnas of the Indo-Aryan society had been in existence from the very

beginning. They believed that the Vedas were 'eternal and sacrosanct'. Ambedkar thought that the certain portions of the Vedas, specially the Purusha sukta, were fabricated by the Brahmins to serve their own purpose. In his view, the Arya Samajis had done a great mischief by preaching that the Vedas were 'eternal, without beginning, without end and infallible'. Such observations resulted in making the Hindu society a static society.

The Purusha sukta made the chatur varna system a sacred and divine institution. It originally described the Brahmins as the mouth, the Kshatriyas as the arms, the Vaishyas as the thighs and the Shudras as the feet of the punish. The great Hindu lawmaker, Manu, also enunciated afresh the ideal of Purusha sukta. He also emphasized that the 'Veda is the only and the ultimate sanction for dharma'. He invested the social idea of chatur varna contained in purusha sukta with the degree of divinity and infallibility which Ambedkar thought, it did not have there-before.

Original three-varna system

Ambedkar also put forth his prepositions about the Shudras. According to him:

- (i) The Shudras were one of the Aryan communities of the solar race
- (ii) There was a time when Indo-Aryan society recognized only three varnas. The Shudras were not a separate Varna, but a part of the Kshatriya varna
- (iii) Then, at some point of time, there started an unending struggle between the Shudra kings and the Brahmins, in which the Shudras were subjected to various tyrannies and indignities and were excluded from the Kshatriya classes
- (iv) Brahmins hated the Shudras, inflicted tyrannies and indignities on them and refused to invest the Shudras with the sacred thread
- (v) Due to loss of sacred threads Shudras became socially degraded, fell below the rank even of the Vaishayas and came to form the fourth varna. They were, thus, downgraded from the second to the fourth varna which was created especially for them

Status of the Shudras

Ambedkar has summarized the status of a Shudra as follows:

- a. He was to take the last place in the social order
- b. He was considered impure, and therefore, no sacred act could be done within his sight and within his hearing
- c. He was not to be respected like the other classes
- d. His life had no value and anybody could kill him, without having to pay any compensation and even if some compensation had to be paid, it had to be of a smaller value as compared with that of the Brahmin, the Kshatriya and the Vaishya
- e. He could not acquire knowledge and it was a sin and a crime to give him education
- f. He could not acquire property and the Brahmin could take his property at his pleasure
- g. He could not hold any office under the State
- h. His duty and salvation lay in his serving the so-called higher classes
- i The higher classes were not to marry a Shudra, they could, however, keep a Shudra woman as a concubine; but if a Shudra touched the women of a higher class, he was to be severely punished

He was born in servility and was to be kept in servility forever

Untouchability and Ambedkar

Untouchability meant 'pollution by the touch of certain persons by reason of their birth in a particular caste or family'. This practice of untouchability is peculiar to the Hindu social system. Ambedkar devoted his book *The Untouchables: Who are They?* to discuss the origin of untouchability. He did not regard Hindu civilization as a civilization in the true sense because it had continued to suppress and censor a large section of humanity. These so-called 'untouchables' were not only suppressed and enslaved, they were also not allowed to live inside the village along with the other castes, the so-called higher-castes. As a matter of fact, from the very beginning, they lived outside the village.

Unlike the Shudras, the untouchables were outside the four-fold varna system. The Shudra was a savarana, i.e., the one possessing a varna. As against him, the untouchable was the avarna, i.e., outside the varna system. Since the avarnas were outside the varna system, they were also made to live on the outskirts of the village and not inside the village. The system of separate and distinct quarter became a perpetual and permanent feature of the Indian village system. As far as the mahars of the Maharashtra were concerned, they always lived outside the village, because they belonged to a tribe different from the one to which the settled tribes belonged. They were known as the 'broken men' who belonged to a different tribe, different blood, who were as such given quarters outside the village.

Evils of caste system

Ambedkar had provided a fairly long list of the evils which had polluted the Hindu caste system. According to Ambedkar,

- (i) The membership of caste was confined to those who were born in it and it was therefore an exclusive membership
- (ii) Its members were forbidden to marry outside the caste
- (iii) They were prevented from possessing arms, so that they may not revolt against their oppressors and exploiters
- (iv) They were denied the right of education
- (v) They were denied the right to property
- (vi) They were assigned the jobs, not on the basis of their capacities, but on that of the social status of their parents. There was no readjustment of occupations and therefore the caste became a direct cause of much of unemployment
- (vii) The caste system embodied the arrogance and selfishness of a perverse section of Hindus who considered themselves superior enough in social status to set a fashion who had authority to force in on their so-called inferiors
- (viii) The self-styled high caste people also claimed the right of excommunication which often meant death

At the hands of these people, virtue had become caste-ridden and morality had become caste bound.

Ambedkar had ventured to explain as to why there was no social revolution in India, despite the highly discriminatory and oppressive social system. He finds the answer in the conspiracy of the people of the higher caste to reduce the lower classes to a system of total disability. They were deliberately denied the means to escape and were made to become reconciled to their eternal

servitude. They were denied military service,

their suffrage, their political weapon, and education. The system of chatur varna denied these weapons to the masses of these people and paralysed and crippled them completely. They, thus, were left with no option but to accept their servitude.

Ambedkar also thought of certain ways to help these classes to overcome their servitude. The most important of these were:

- (i) The dignity behind the caste, and the shastras which sanctioned it, should be destroyed
- (ii) The system of scaling the caste in a graded order should be abolished
- (iii) Inter-caste marriages should be encouraged as it would disturb the caste spirit
- (iv) The monopoly of the Brahmins over education should be abolished and education be made universal
- (v) The monopoly of the kshatriyas over armaments and their exclusive right to constitute the nation's army should be abolished and recruitment to army should be by open, fair and equal competition
- (vi) They should be given the right to vote and to contest elections, at par with all other classes so that they too have equal opportunity to participate in their governance

According to Ambedkar, the Brahmins enslaved the mind and the Baniyas enslaved the body, and having done it, they divided the spoils which belong to the governing classes. He also thought that Brahminism was opposed to democracy and the values that democracy stood for, that is, the values of justice, liberty, equality, fraternity and the rule of law.

In order to purge the Hindu religion of these inhumanities, Ambedkar made the following suggestions:

- a. There should be one and only one standard book of Hindu religion acceptable to all Hindus. On the other hand, preaching of any doctrine, religious or social, contained in the Vedas, the Shastras, or the Purnanas, should be penalized
- b. The priesthood should be abolished. It must at least cease to be hereditary. There must be a state examination for priesthood
- c. It should be made penal for a person who has no sanad (certificate or degree) to officiate as a priest
- d. A priest should be the servant of the state, and like any other civil servant, should be paid by the state and should be subject to the disciplinary action by the state in the matter of his morals, beliefs and forms of worship, in addition to his being subject along with other citizens to the ordinary law of the land
- e. The number of priests should be limited by law according to the requirements of the state, like other civil services. This would be the only the effectively way to kill the spread of Brahminism. He was of the view that 'Brahminism is the poison which has spoiled Hinduism. If Hinduism is to be saved it-can be saved only by killing Brahminism'

Question of Reservation

Dr Ambedkar was of the view that there is no link between the Hindus and the depressed classes, just as there was practically nothing in common between the Hindu and the Muslims. And, if the then British Government had agreed, in principal, to create a separate

electorate for the Muslims, there should also be a separate electorate for the depressed classes. Just as the Muslims and the Sikhs had emerged as distinct communities, the depressed classes should likewise be treated as a separate community. Hence, separate electorates and separate constituencies should be created under the Government of India Act to give adequate representation to the depressed and the backward classes. The matter was considered at length at the Round Table Conferences and given shape under the Poona Pact.

Ambedkar had asked for the reservation of twenty-two seats out of one hundred and forty in elections to the then Bombay Legislative Council.

Since the separatist demands of both Jinnah and Ambedkar were in line with the traditional imperialist policy of 'divide and rule', the British accepted their demand for equal but separate identities. It was later on sanctified by the Government of India Act 1935. When in 1946, the Constituent Assembly started functioning, and Dr Ambedkar was elected as the Chairman of its drafting committee, he insisted not only on continuing the system of reservation, but also extending it further. He was able to have his demand accepted and incorporated in the Constitution of India, which gave the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes reservations to the extent of 15 and 7.5 per cent respectively. For this purpose, a separate state-wise schedule was annexed to the Constitution. This reservation was provided in respect of the Parliament, the state legislature, public-services and educational institutions.

Dr Ambedkar was probably the only non-Muslim who had supported Jinnah's demand for Pakistan, as it was in consonance with his own demand for separate electorates. At this point, his major argument was that the so-called higher classes of Hindus had separated the Shudras from the Kshatriya class (the second class) and downgraded them lower than even the Vaishya class by creating a fourth category for them. Their social ranking was, thus, lowered from the second to the fourth. Moreover, the people who came from various migrating tribes were deliberately kept out of the varna system and were treated even lower than this fourth class and by keeping them outside the four-fold varna system; they were called the avarnas, the outsiders, and therefore, the untouchables.

Ambedkar's argument was that since these classes have been suppressed, oppressed and exploited and have been treated as the neglected classes, and since Hinduism has never accepted them as one of its part, they should politically, electorally and administratively be kept separate. No section of the high caste Hindus had accepted them as their own integral part. Therefore, to think of integrating them socially and emotionally in the future would also remain a dream. This was the main premise on which he had totally disagreed with Gandhi. Gandhi thought it would be possible for the Hindu society to amalgamate and integrate socially and emotionally in the mainstream, not only the religious minorities, but also the variety of socially, educationally and economically weaker castes. However, by maintaining this, Gandhi was simply giving vent to his idealism, forgetting his own recurrent measures in the direction of restoration of communal unity, including his Hindu-Muslim unity fasts had, at best, received only a temporary success, and despite devoting a major part of his life to the amelioration of Hindu-Muslim, he had miserably failed to bring about communal unity on a durable basis, the most horrible aftermath of whose failure had resulted into the partition of India on communal lines and the bloody events that followed thereafter.

One of Gandhi's closest sabarmati ashramites, G. Rama Chandra Rao (Gora), went on to observe in his book entitled *An Atheist with Gandhi* that if Gandhi was not

assassinated in 1948 and was allowed to live for a few months or years more, he himself might have become an atheist.

Ambedkar was probably more realistic than Gandhi in thinking that those who have been kept separated for centuries would ever remain separated. They would never be able to get assimilated either in the mainstream of Hinduism or in the mainstream of Indian society, in view of the inflexible attitude of the so-called high caste Hindus, especially its militant section. Hence, the only way to bring up the so-called Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes on an equal footing was to keep them as a distinct and separate class or entity. Hence, as a champion of the depressed classes, Ambedkar stood for the philosophy of 'Equal but Separate'. This he thought was the only way to ensure to them the benefits of the high ideals of justice, liberty, equality, fraternity and the rule of law, which were the basic values on which the very edifice of our Constitution was created.

Unfortunately, once these classes emerged as separate entities, the political parties competed with one another to treat them as their vote-banks, rather than working for their all-round welfare and solving their problems.

Subsequently, this question not only got politicized, but was also taken to the courts. The Supreme Court, in its historical verdict, declared that it is the prerogative of the State to make reservations for any class or classes of citizens, but justice demands that the total number of reservations should not exceed 50 per cent. When V.P. Singh became the Prime Minister, he sought to extend the reservation to an extent which was far in excess of the Supreme Court's upper limit of 50 per cent. Not only did the politicians and political parties vie with each other to increase the quota of the reservation, but some states wanted to increase reservations to the extent of even 70 per cent or more. Yet, these steps temporarily resulted in unprecedented acts of violence, including acts of self-immolation by students who believed that 'merit' was being downgraded and being subordinated to the 'caste' factor. This instance was an unforeseen consequence of V.P. Singh's attempt to extend the benefits of reservation to the other backward classes as well, i.e., the socially and economically backward classes and other Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Hindu Code

Ambedkar was of the view that in India, there is a uniform civil code of laws covering almost every aspect of human relationship, except marriage and succession. The Hindu Code Bill drafted by him introduced only four new factors in the existing law. These were:

- Abolition of the doctrine of rights by birth
- Absolute right over property to women
- Equitable share to daughter
- Provision for divorce not only to men, but equally to women as well

If the Hindu Code Bill, with these provisions, could be adopted, it would be consistent with the provisions of Article 15 of our Constitution which directs the State not to discriminate against any citizen on ground of 'birth', it would also be in accordance with the Article 13 of the UN Charter which lays down 'encouraging the progressive development of international law and its codification.'

Dr Ambedkar, along with sixteen other members of the Select Committee of the Constituent Assembly, which was entrusted with the job of amending and codifying

certain branches of the Hindu law, presented to the Constituent Assembly its report on 12 August 1948. The report contained nine points: preliminary; marriage and divorce; adoption; minority and guardianship; joint family property; women and property; succession, maintenance and miscellaneous.

Later on, he drafted the Hindu Code Bill along with these subjects. It was aimed at removing the legal obstacles in the social advancement of women. However, it was opposed by the orthodox section of the members of the Parliament, including a number of Congressmen. The Congress Party did not support the Hindu Code Bill. Prime Minister Nehru permitted the Congress members to vote on the Bill according to their conscience. This resulted in the dropping of the Hindu Code Bill and this marked the occasion for Ambedkar's resignation from the Nehru Cabinet.

Conversion to Buddhism

For Ambedkar, Buddhism was important not only because he agreed with its tenets and institutions, but also because it enabled him to reconstruct more scientifically and satisfactorily the history of ancient India, says K. Raghavendra Rao, the author of *Makers of Indian Literature: Babsaheb Ambedkar*. According to Ambedkar, 'ancient Indian history must be exhumed. Fortunately, with the help of the Buddhist literature, ancient Indian history can be dug out of the debris which Brahmin writers have heaped upon it in a fit of madness.' He characterized Buddhism as a revolution almost as great as 'The French Revolution'. Starting off as a religious revolution, Buddhism grew into a multi-pronged revolution: social, cultural and political. He suggested that the distinctiveness and profundity of the Buddhist revolution could be seen from an examination of the pre-revolutionary system, the ancient regime of India.

Ambedkar paints a sketch of the degraded condition to which the Aryan civilization had sunk, prior to the advent of the revolution. It was, in short, a society riddled with social evils such as gambling, drinking and sexual immorality of all varieties. Buddha was the first and perhaps the greatest of the social reformers India had produced. His religion spread everywhere, spilling beyond the borders of India. It succeeded not only because of the content of its teachings, but also because of the charismatic personality of its founder, who himself lived by his teachings. Through his own example, he showed what a pure life was, what was right conduct, and by implication, exposed the impurity and the immorality of the Aryan Brahmanical life of his time.

There are five principle of Buddhism, known as panch shila. These are:

- Not to kill
- Not to steal, lie, be unchaste
- Neither to drink intoxicant liquor nor to eat at forbidden times
- Not to dance, sing or attend theatrical or other spectacles, use garlands, scents and ornaments
- Neither to receive money, nor to use high or broad beds

These apparently negative virtues stemmed from the cardinal virtues of love and wisdom. These Buddhist precepts constituted a direct challenge to the caste system that had defiled the essence of the Aryan Brahmanical order. Buddha preached against the caste order and freely admitted Shudras to his Bhiku order. He also opposed the lower status accorded to women in the ancient regime and admitted them to the highest ranks in his order. Buddhism opened up its educational system to both, the Shudras and women.

It was in this context and due to these compelling reasons that Dr. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism and advocated it as an ideal, not only for India, but for the whole strife-ridden world. His acceptance of Buddhism was not merely a negative gesture of leaving Hinduism, but was a positive act of commitment to a superior religious way of life. This is why he was hailed 'Nav Buddha'.

Political Ideas

Though Ambedkar was not primarily a political theorist, he did work with a fairly definite political and legal thinking, which is widely reflected in the views he expressed on a variety of subjects, especially on the floor of the Constituent Assembly of India. Ambedkar regarded the State as a necessary institution, which he thought, exists for the performance of the following three sets of goals:

- (i) In the first place, it has individualistic functions as its goals. He subscribed to the view that 'The right of every subject to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness and to free speech and free exercise of religion' is sacred.
- (ii) In the second place, he also expected the state to perform judicial functions and maintained social, political and economic justice within the society, by eliminating or at least reducing inequalities of class, caste and religion. It must ensure the maintenance of law and order functions.
- (iii) In the third place, the state is required to see that every individual citizen enjoys 'freedom from want and freedom from fear.'

By performing these functions, the state would act as a servant and an instrument of public welfare and would thus, essentially be democratic.

Ambedkar had a marked preference for democracy, not only because it gives largest possible participation to the people in the governance, but also because it ensures immense opportunities of challenge and change, without necessarily shedding unnecessary blood. It is a system which is neither hereditary, nor does it allow political power to be vested in or to be identified with a particular person. People elected through the system of universal adult franchise hold the reins of power.

Ambedkar was generally in favour of the parliamentary form of democracy because he thought it to be the best available system. However, in view of the then prevailing extraordinary and highly abnormal circumstances in India, he personally preferred a presidential form of government as that would protect and promote India's security, unity, integrity and sovereignty. It would be a highly centrifugal system, as it would not only divide powers between the Centre and states, but would also effectively ensure political stability. Hence, in his view a presidential form of government, unlike the parliamentary system, would imply a kind of federal system ensuring not only division of powers, but also encourage the strengthening of democratic federalism. He had come to this conclusion by studying the views of the thinkers and writers like Alexander Pope, who had publically expressed his view that 'Power corrupts its possessor and absolute power corrupts absolutely.' Hence, ideally speaking, the State would be good or viable that is based on the division, decentralization and maximum diffusion of power. Such a system would protect not only a strong central government, but also the rights and freedom, of the minorities who would generally be treated at par with others.

Citizens' rights and freedoms

Ambedkar was of the view that a democratic federal framework would ensure that every citizen has minimum set of equal rights and freedoms and would not deprive them

of the benefits of their profession. He also believed that the guarantee of minimum freedom and rights alone would not make any state an ideal state. In his view, each and every citizen should be able to enjoy all the freedoms and rights in consonance with similar freedoms and rights available to all others in the State. He believed that however rich a state may be, it will have to provide these basic rights equally to one and all.

The rights and freedoms which Dr Ambedkar wanted the citizens of every liberal democracy to possess and enjoy are the rights which he succeeded to include in the list of Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in our Constitution. These are, in fact, the rights which are intended to improve the quality of democracy and also help people in improving the quality of their own. However, the most important of these rights, which he was able to think of and provide, was the right to constitutional remedies which enables every citizen to have his violated rights restored by approaching the Courts to issue appropriate writs. He believed that if this right is not ensured to the citizens, all other rights would lose their importance as the state would go on delimiting and restricting these rights and these would, one day, virtually disappear. He regarded fundamental rights as the very soul of democracy, the fountain of democracy and the fragrance of democracy.

Reservation for backward sections of society

Ambedkar was eager that not only elaborate sets of rights be available to all citizens, without discrimination, but that, by itself, would not meet the ends of justice. This is because in India there are a number of classes and sections of people that have been historically, socially, educationally and economically backward. These include the Shudras, the avamas, the scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes and the other socially, economically and sexually backward citizens of India. These have always been kept apart and away from the society and have never been allowed to get themselves assimilated in the mainstream of the Indian society. Therefore, the state will have to make special efforts to ensure these rights to them on the basis of priority, so that they are also able to come up to a normal level to enjoy the rights and freedoms which others would ordinarily be enjoying in any case.

Linguistic reorganization of the state

In order to promote the cause of unity of India on the one hand, and reduce social tensions on the other, he was eager to reorganize Indian provinces on a national linguistic basis. Such a reorganization would curb casteism, communalism, regionalism and fundamentalism. He was not willing to allow the state to reorganize itself on any other basis, as that would seriously threaten the unity and integrity of India. Here, it may be recorded that Ambedkar was also eager to encourage the various scripts and languages, whether regional, provincial or sectional. The scripts may vary, but in the interest of the unity of India, the language should be one, so that it may serve as a cementing force, and not a divisive force. That is why, of all the languages spoken in India, he wanted Hindi to be the official language not only of the Central government, but also of all the provinces, so that it becomes a strong denominator of India's unity and integrity.

Views regarding India's partition

As stated earlier, Ambedkar was probably the only non-Muslim leader of India's struggle for freedom who openly defended the Partition of India into India and Pakistan on

communal grounds. He was of the considered view that every community should have the right and the autonomy to preserve, protect and enrich its culture and religion, and to that end, every community which has all the essential elements of a nation should have the right to secede and declare itself as an independent sovereign state. Therefore, he not only supported Jinnah's demand for Pakistan, but also asked the creation of an independent sovereign Dalitistan. He declared that those who have deliberately been kept separate for decades and centuries should have the right to live separately so that they are no longer oppressed, suppressed and exploited.

Religion and politics

Ambedkar was strongly in favour of a secular state, i.e., a state which does not accord to any religion the status of a state religion. This view of Ambedkar was in contravention of his defence of Pakistan which, in any case, was to be an Islamic state. This is indicative of a clear contradiction in his views.

However, apart from his defence of Pakistan, Ambedkar wanted the state to accord to every religion the status of equality and did not advocate its interference with any religion. He also did not want the state to impose or levy a religious tax, nor did he want the state to force people's conversion to others religions, because otherwise, a citizen would lose the freedom of voluntary conversion. Hence, he wanted every province, having a distinct majority—religion of its own, to protect, preserve and enrich its religion, as that would be in accordance with, and not opposed to, the spirit of federalism.

Critical Evaluation

During his life time, Dr Ambedkar ventured to bring about a total change in the social, economic and political realm of Indian society, and in this effort, he succeeded to a very large extent. He dedicated his life towards the eradication of untouchability and related issues. Like the Indian liberal moderates of the First World War era of our freedom struggle, like Naoroji, Ranade and Gokhle, he gave precedence to social reform and considered the task of political independence only as a second priority. His position was reforms first, freedom afterwards. Similarly, he dedicated his life as much to improve the condition of Indian women as he had done for raising the status of the Dalits. The oppression, suppression and exploitation that Dalits and women had to suffer at the hands of the male and Brahmin dominated society was, in fact, a blot on the face of India. Just as he wanted reservation for the Dalits, he was equally eager to bring about the Hindu Code Bill to improve the condition of women. And, when he thought he would not be able to reform Hinduism during his lifetime, he got disgusted and left Hinduism labelling it as un-curable and un-reformable. He not only adopted Buddhism, but also encouraged his followers to adopt Buddhism.

Dr Ambedkar would be remembered by the generations to come as a great social reformer, a jurist and one of the most prominent framers, rather, the guiding spirit of the Constitution of India. For his unprecedented contribution and services, not only to Dalits and women, but to the nation as a whole, that he was posthumously decorated with the highest civilian award of India, the Bharat Ratna.

IDEAS OF JAYPRAKASH NARAYAN

Jayaprakash Narayan was born in a middle class Kayastha family on 11 October 1902. He was the fourth child of Babu Harsoodayal and Phool Rani. He began his eventful life

in a small village on the border between UP and Bihar. Traditionally, the Kayasthas of UP and Bihar were known for their loyalty to the government and were very service-minded. It was for this reason that Babu Harsoodayal, who himself was an officer in the canal department, could not think of any career for his sons other than government service. Jayaprakash was sent to the village school for primary education and to Patna for matriculation and further education. In school, Jayaprakash proved to be a remarkable child due to his calm, thoughtful and reserved nature. He had sharp intelligence and mature expression. At the age of twelve, he completed his primary education at Sitabdiara and proceeded to Patna for further studies.

Jayaprakash had an eventful life in school at Patna. He came in contact with national activities through his association with Saraswati Bhawan, which was then a centre of national leaders. It was there that he got the inspiration to think about national problems. Jayaprakash proved to be a brilliant student. He was courageous, and resisted unjust authority from the beginning of his life. He studied science at Patna, up to the intermediate examination.

The period between 1914 and 1922 proved to be particularly significant in Jayaprakash's life. He was attracted towards Gandhi due to the latter's simplicity and support in favour of non-violence. Gandhi made the first experiment of his method in 1917, in the Champaran district of Bihar. Jayaprakash was so inspired by the non-violent movement of Gandhi that he made up his mind to lead a simple life and work for the national interest.

Jayaprakash was married to Prabhavati Devi when he was hardly eighteen years of age. His father-in-law, Brij Kishore Babu, was an established nationalist leader of Bihar. Through him, Jayaprakash came into contact with some important political leaders of Bihar and was introduced to the national problems.

The non-cooperation movement was launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1921. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru visited Patna and gave a call to the people to join the movement. Inspired by this call, Jayaprakash left his studies to take part in the movement, although he was scheduled to appear for his F. A. examination. This marked the beginning of his long political career. Jayaprakash resumed his studies in 1922 when Gandhi called off the movement due to mob violence. An important fact which strikes our attention is that Jayaprakash passed his F.A. in science with a first class in 1922. Besides Gandhi, Jayaprakash was attracted towards Bal Gangadhar Tilak who had called upon Indians to follow the ideals of the *Gita*.

Jayaprakash had a longing to pursue higher studies in science. He thought of going abroad to fulfil this desire, as he disliked the idea of studying in government-run institutions. With the consent of his parents and wife, he left for the US on 16 May 1922. He was there till 1929. He had to undergo great hardship to carry on his studies. He enrolled in California University as a science student, but due to financial reasons, he had to shift from one university to another. He had to work at different places to support himself. He studied in the Universities of California, Chicago, Iowa, Ohio and Wisconsin. He made many friends in America and became very popular.

In the United States, Jayaprakash Narayan met East European intellectuals and was attracted towards Marxism. He wrote that it was at 'Madison, Wisconsin, the home of Follette progressivism, that in the company of Jewish and European born fellow students I drank deep at the fountain of Marxism.' Simultaneously, he was influenced intensely by the writings of M.N. Roy, which completely converted him to Marxism.

Jayaprakash was impressed by the Marxian philosophy of revolution. He said: 'The Marxian science of revolution seemed to offer a surer and quicker road to it than Gandhiji's technique of civil disobedience and non-cooperation.'

The writings of Anatole France, Ibsen and Gorky also had a great impact on his thinking. His interest in Marxism gradually increased and he started taking a keen interest in the activities of the American Communist Party. He then decided to change over to the study of social science. He felt that knowledge of social science was essential to deal with the real problems of India, which pertained to socio-economic development. Hence, he decided to make a complete study of the socialist theory and joined Ohio University to study the social sciences. By then, he had made friends with many Marxist intellectuals. He did his MA in sociology and wrote a thesis on Social Variations.

Jayaprakash returned to India in 1929 and played a significant role in the struggle for freedom. In spite of his Marxist convictions, Jayaprakash had a high personal regard for Gandhi and his leadership. At the Lahore session of the Congress, he was attracted towards Jawaharlal Nehru and joined the Congress as secretary of the Labour Department. Very soon, he became such an important leader of the Congress that the British government arrested him in 1932. As a revolutionary thinker, he was not happy with the functioning of the Congress. In 1934, Jayaprakash organized the Congress leaders. He did this to force the Congress to adopt a radical programme. In spite of his extreme approach, he was liked by many Congress leaders including Mahatma Gandhi. The government, however, considered Jayaprakash as a regular law-breaker. In a resolution submitted to the Ramgarh Congress of 1940, he pleaded for collective ownership and control of all large-scale and heavy production. He asserted that the state should nationalize heavy transport, shipping, mining and heavy industries.

Jayaprakash was imprisoned by the British from 1940 to 1946. He became a hero during the 1942 revolutionary movement. In 1942, he escaped from Hazaribagh jail, along with five of his comrades, by scaling the high prison wall. He then secretly organized the struggle for freedom. He was arrested again in 1943 and kept in the Lahore Fort along with Dr Ram Manohar Lohia as a 'state prisoner'. In April 1946, he was released from prison. In 1946, Mahatma Gandhi proposed the name of Jayaprakash for presidency of the Congress, but the proposal was not accepted by the Working Committee. In 1948, Jayaprakash broke away from the Congress and formed the Praja Socialist Party. From 1948 to 1951, Jayaprakash and Ram Manohar Lohia worked hard to build the Praja Socialist Party. However, they were comprehensively defeated in the first general elections for independent India.

Jayaprakash became disillusioned by the defeat of the socialists in 1952. In 1953, there were talks and discussions between Jawaharlal Nehru and Jayaprakash on the issue of increasing cooperation between the Congress and the Praja Socialist Party in the areas of national reconstruction and development. But the talks could not yield any concrete result. In 1954, he resigned from the national executive of the Praja Socialist Party and offered himself as a Jivan-Dani to the sarvodaya movement. He founded the India-Pakistan conciliatory group in 1962. He worked successfully to bring about the ceasefire in Nagaland in 1964. The prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award was given to Jayaprakash in 1965, as a symbol of recognition for his services to the people.

During 1960 to 1974, Jayaprakash remained engaged in the work of sarvodaya. The founding of the Gandhi Vidya Samaj at Banaras and Tarun Shanti Sena, Shanti Sena Vidyalaya were some of his notable works. In 1972, he created a conducive climate for the large number of dacoits to lay down arms unconditionally.

In 1973, he advocated the idea of mass action for a complete change in the political and economic life of India. He tried to make the people conscious of the sociopolitical situation. He appealed to the members of the Indian Parliament to change their ways, but there was no response. He thought of organizing people, especially the youth, to save democracy by means of total revolution. In November 1974, he gave a call for total revolution or 'sampoorna kranti'.

He asked the political leaders of the opposition parties to create a strong basis for total revolution. When the Janata Party was formed before the Lok Sabha elections in 1977, it was clear that they had accepted the advice of Jayaprakash. Towards the closing years of his life, he gave a message to the nation in which he stressed the building of a free, progressive and Gandhian India.

Socialist Ideas

Jayaprakash Narayan was an Indian socialist intellectual. He had a clear idea about the economic foundations of politics. Mahatma Gandhi regarded him as the most leading authority on socialism.

The Indian National Congress had passed a resolution on fundamental rights and economic policy at the Karachi session in 1931. The resolution said 'The state shall own or control key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, water- ways, shipping and other means of public transport.' Jayaprakash was the general secretary of the Congress in 1931. He had conducted the Civil Disobedience Movement effectively when all other important leaders were arrested. In 1932, he himself was arrested and sent to Nasik Jail. Along with him were other important leaders like Ashok Mehta, N.G. Gore, S.M. Joshi and Masani. It was in Nasik Jail that the blueprint of the Congress Socialist Party was worked out. Jayaprakash was the moving spirit behind the idea and became the main organizer of the movement.

After his release from Bihar Jail, he organized the All India Congress Socialist Conference at Patna in 17 May 1934. By that time, he had come to believe that dictatorship under the grab of revolutionary Communism could not be the proper alternative to capitalism. He decided to work out his own interpretation of Marxism, taking into account India's culture, together with the prevailing social and economic conditions. The first annual session of the Congress Socialist Party (a group within the Indian National Congress) was held in Mumbai on October 21-22, 1934. Among other things the programme of the Bombay session included: (i) transfer of all power the producing masses; (ii) economic life of the country to be planned and controlled by the state; (iii) socialisation of key and principal industries; (iv) state monopoly of foreign trade; (v) redistribution of land to peasants; (vi) encouragement and promotion of co-operative and collective farming by the state; (vii) recognition of the right work or maintenance by the state; (viii) non-discrimination between the sexes by the state; and **(ix)** repudiation of the so-called public debt of India.

Before Independence, Jayaprakash said that the establishment of the Socialist Party within the Congress was justified as the programme of the Congress did not include the socialist ideas of the time. Jayaprakash criticized khadi and charkha, disregarding Gandhi's views on it. He was also equally critical of Communist strategy and differentiated it from Marxist principles. He began to think that the Congress was under the control of important capitalists and could do no good for the common man. He thought that Marxism provided the real solution to India's problems. As a Marxist, he was opposed to Parliamentary democracy and the institutions of ballot boxes and the

party system. He wanted the end of exploitation of the cultivator by landlords and pleaded for the redistribution of land. He was critical of Gandhi's ideas of class collaboration and trusteeship.

In due course of time, his views on communism changed and he became critical about some of the views of the communist. After careful thinking, he came to the conclusion that social change should come about through conscious revolution involving the masses instead of by violent revolution. He was a great supporter of human freedom. He considered centralisation of political and economic authority as dangerous for the establishment of socialism. He emphasized the purity of means. He thought of socialism as a new social order in which the precious human values of liberty, equality and fraternity were to be ensured. Jayaprakash realised that socialism could be the real basis for India's freedom. He advocated collective ownership and control of all large-scale and heavy industries. He asserted that the state should nationalize public transport, shipping, mining and heavy industries. It is clear that his earlier socialism was influenced by the ideas of American and British Socialists.

Jayaprakash had tried to organize a guerrilla movement against the British after escaping from Hazaribagh Jail. He was re-arrested in September 1943. From 1943 to 1946, while he was in jail, he developed a dislike for Marxism and he came out of jail as a convinced social democrat.

Jayaprakash was in search of a political faith for the sake of freedom and human progress. He was always prepared to revise his ideas to suit the political and economic conditions. He considered socialism as a complete theory of socio-economic reconstruction. He was of the view that socialism is much more than a theory of personal ethics. As a socialist, he pointed out that the rampant inequality in the social and economic fields was due to the disproportionate control over the means of production. Hence, he insisted that society provide a kind of arrangement where the economic obstacles that hindered the power and facilities of man were removed. He stood for social and economic equality in life and not for psychological standardization. According to him, socialism is a theory and technique of widespread planning. He stated that its aim is a 'harmonious and well balanced growth of the whole society.' On the basis of the personal experiences, it became quite clear to him that in a society where it was possible for the people to bring about social change by democratic means, it would be 'counter-revolutionary' to resort to violence. He was also convinced that real socialism could not exist in the absence of democratic freedom. Consequently, he rejected the theory of the dictatorship of a bureaucratic oligarchy.

In his book *From Socialism to Sarvodaya*, he laid down the objectives of socialism. These referred to: (1) elimination of exploitation and poverty; (2) provision of equal opportunities to all for self-development; (3) full development of the material and moral resources of society and utilization of these resources in accordance with the needs and wishes of society as a whole, rather than in accordance with the dictates of the profit motive; (4) equitable distribution of national wealth and social, educational and other services between all who work and serve the society; and (5) a system of social organization which serves these ends. He stated, 'My picture of socialist India is the picture of an economic and political democracy. In this democracy, man will neither be a slave of capitalism nor of a party or the state; he will be free. He will have to serve society which will provide him with employment and the means of livelihood, but within limits he will be free to choose his vocation and station in life. He will be free to express his opinions and there will be opportunities for him to raise his moral stature.'

Jayaprakash elaborated his views on democratic socialism. According to him, 'In the socialist society of our conception, the individual, i.e., the worker is free and the state has no power to deprive him of his rights and privileges, except through the due process of law.' He stated that the Gandhian method could be the only way of realizing the ideal of democratic socialism. This means that he favoured democratic methods and realized the necessity for decentralization. He emphasized the importance of means in relation to the end of social reconstruction. In other words, means must be morally consistent with the ends. He stated 'I for one have come to believe that for the achievement of socialism, a strict regard for means is of the highest importance. Socialism means a form of society in which the individual is a cultured, civilized being, is free and brave, kind and generous, by strict adherence to certain human values and standards of conduct.'

He interpreted socialism in the context of Indian needs and important values in Indian culture. He advocated the reduction of land revenue, limitation of expenditure and nationalization of industries. According to him, the fundamental, social and economic problem in India was to eliminate the exploitation of the masses, and this could be achieved if the people, through their own efforts, could control their political and economic destiny. He realised the need for village reorganization and insisted like Gandhi that villages should be made self-governing and self-sufficient units. This involved an extreme reform of land laws. He believed that the land should belong to the actual cultivator and he supported co-operative farming. In his book *Towards Struggle*, he wrote 'The only solution is to clear away all the vested interests that lead in any manner whatever to the exploitation of the tiller of the soil; liquidate all agrarian debts; pool the holdings and establish co-operative and collective farming, state and co-operative credit and marketing system and co-operative subsidiary industries.' He was of the view that co-operative efforts could only provide the balance between agriculture and industry. The fundamental economic problem in Asia, particularly in India, is agrarian reconstruction. Hence, the state has to set up its own industries and also explore the other avenues of economic rehabilitation. He considered the present individualistic organization of agrarian sector was dependent upon 'co-operative and collective farming.'

Jayaprakash held the view that democratic socialism is preferable to revolutionary socialism. He said that the aims of the socialist order was not the establishment of a party dictatorship, but the creation of a society of free and equal people, a society based on certain values of human and social life, values which could never be sacrificed in the name of theory of the party line. He made a number of suggestions for the solution of basic problems of society by means of socialism. According to him, a socialist should aspire to some basic values. A decentralised state is essential to make socialism realistic from the political point of view. Nationalisation of industry is not enough, decentralisation of economic power is necessary, and peaceful democratic means must be used to achieve the objective of a socialist state. He tried to reconcile Marxism with Gandhism.

Jayaprakash openly pleaded for Gandhism on the basis of its emphasis on the essential values of life, stress on purity of means and decentralization of political and economic power. Emphasising Gandhian socialism he declared, 'Socialism in this country would neglect Gandhism at its peril.'

Jayaprakash worked as a socialist for nearly twenty-four years, i.e., from 1930 to 1954. He was a leading spokesman of Indian nationalism and his socialism was not opposed to the important values of Indian culture. He considered socialism to be a way of life. He gave top priority to the solution of the economic problems of the country. He pleaded for the creation of conditions necessary for the realization of equality of

opportunities. Jayaprakash stressed upon popular initiative and mass involvement for achieving social change.

Sarvodaya: Participatory Democracy

In the general election of 1952, the Praja Socialist Party suffered a defeat throughout the country; searching for answers for the defeat, Jayaprakash began to be criticized by his colleagues for giving up the strategy of class struggle. Even his close friends doubted his sincerity. However, he did not lose heart. He carried on his struggle to realize the long desired goal. He tried to convince Jawaharlal Nehru to introduce socialistic measures and offered co-operation. But as his attempts did not yield any result, thus he decided to leave party and power politics. At that time, Vinoba Bhave had started his campaign of bhoodan and sarvodaya in the country. Jayaprakash saw in bhoodan a practical solution to the land problem. A new idea of revolution in the form of sarvodaya, without any reference to power, struck his mind. He was persuaded to believe at the Bodhgaya Sarvodaya Sammelan (1953) that 'I am persuaded that unless socialism is transformed into sarvodaya, these goals would remain beyond its reach and just as we had to taste the ashes of independence, so future generations might have to taste the ashes of socialism.'

Jayaprakash's great passion for freedom was responsible for bringing him to sarvodaya. He felt that this method was more effective and original compared to the traditional socialist methods. According to him, this was the practical form of Gandhian philosophy for the realization of social revolution. He resigned from the Praja Socialist Party in 1957. He wrote, 'I decided to withdraw from party and power politics not because of disgust or sense of any personal frustration but because it became clear to me that politics could not deliver the goods, the goods being the same old goals of equality, freedom, brotherhood, peace.' He wholeheartedly devoted himself to the work of bhoodan and sarvodaya. It became clear to him that a new social order could not be worked but through the instrument of party and state power.

Jayaprakash believed that the democratic system should involve the masses. Otherwise, the ideals of liberty, equality and justice could not be achieved. He agreed with the view of Harold Laski and said that the worth of democracy must be judged by the amount of voluntary activity within it. The formal institutions like Parliament, assemblies and elected governments alone do not constitute democracy. There cannot be true democracy unless it lives in the life of the people. There can be hardly any democracy if differences on the basis of economic status, social status and castes persist. In the year 1959, Jayaprakash prepared his thesis 'Reconstruction of Indian Policy' which was published by the Bharat Sarvaseva Sangha. The thesis showed the striking impact of his experience in Yugoslavia. He was particularly attracted by the experiments which were being carried out in Yugoslavia. There he found that the leadership still thought in terms of the traditional Marxist ideal of a classless society and wanted to evolve a society free from the burdens of administrative power. They had started the decentralisation of authority, and for that purpose, they had changed the name of the Communist Party to the League of Communists. They had strong workers' councils and these councils managed their own factories and made their own appointments. The people's committees managed their local municipalities which had immense powers including those of the police and the running of factories. The elections were indirect. All these things led Jayaprakash to believe that Yugoslavia, despite its leadership at the top, had the maximum participating democracy and maximum participating socialism.

In his thesis 'The Reconstruction of Indian Polity' Jayaprakash rejected the theory of Parliamentary democracy with a multi-party system, and advanced the view of a 'party-less democracy' or 'participating democracy'. He made a fervent plea for the reconstruction of Indian polity in the light of Gandhian principles. His main purpose was to broaden and deepen democracy by strengthening its foundations. He did not suggest any alternative democracy, but made an attempt to evolve a fully participating democracy.

Jayaprakash maintained that democracy, as introduced in India, had a weak and narrow base. He wrote 'It is an inverted pyramid that stands on its head. Our obvious task is to set this picture right and stand the pyramid on its base. It was an example of swaraj from above. People had the feeling of being left out in this swaraj.' He said that the people participate in this democracy only for a short while, at the time of the general elections, and thereafter they have no contact or access to the government. Only a few people had benefited from the attainment of swaraj and these few who belonged to the educated middle class, constituted a narrow base of Indian democracy.

Jayaprakash was a great humanist and human considerations were always uppermost in his mind. He argued that the western concept of democracy, as government by consent, is inadequate. His criticism of the parliamentary system of democracy was mainly based on the belief that the common man is reduced to a non-entity in such a system. The benefits of such a system reached only the economically and politically powerful sections. Jayaprakash urged for immediate contact between the government and the people and this was possible only through decentralization of authority. However, mere extension of local self-governing institutions was not his only idea as a guide for future generations of India. He said 'The problem of present day civilization is social integration. The problem is to put man in touch with man, so that they live together in a meaningful, understandable, controllable relationship. In short, the problem is to recreate the human community.' He emphasized that the human community should become the ideal of future social reconstruction.

He elucidated his concept of participating democracy in his pamphlet 'Swaraj for the People' which was published in 1961. He wrote 'In order that the people might participate in the government, the government must be brought as near to the people as possible. This would require a thorough-going system of political and economic decentralisation.' Jayaprakash set forth the necessary conditions for the realization of participating in democracy. He said that the principles of education of the people, noninterference by political parties in the functioning of decentralised political units like panchayats, trust in people, availability of resources with local bodies, control over administration by the panchayats and acceptance and adoption of Panchayat Raj should be recognised by all. He asserted that the panchayat is the only way to the evolution of a participating democracy. He laid down some conditions which were to be fulfilled before panchayati raj could lead to the evolution of a participating democracy.

For the assemblies and the Lok Sabha, Jayaprakash suggested a procedure for selection of the representatives. Each gram sabha should send two delegates to the Electoral College after seeking general consent. The electoral college should set up candidates for election. In such a system, the multi-party system which has corrupted the politics of the country should be abolished. He contended that parliamentary democracy based on the multi-party system had vitiated the Indian society. Therefore, he advocated that this system be replaced by the real democracy, involving the masses in its working.

Jayaprakash observed that political decentralization is bound to remain nominal unless followed by economic decentralization.

Jayaprakash analysed the evils of party politics. He saw sarvodaya as the only way out of the prevalent decadent situation. Re-organization of life on the basis of self-reliant, self-governing people was highly essential. His picture of 'Gram Raj' was nothing but self-dependent small units of society with a completely decentralised system of political power and production. While Jayaprakash had put his faith in the traditional socialist methods of bringing about social revolution, he became conscious of the importance of the Gandhian method when the bhoodan movement was started.

Jayaprakash was actively engaged in the work of sarvodaya and other works of social reconstruction during the period from 1960 to 1974. He founded the Gandhi Vidya Samaj, Tarun Shanti Sena and Shanti Sena Vidyalyayas. The Gandhian type of nonviolent satyagraha on a mass scale appeared to him as a more effective method of social change. He started a weekly *Every Man* in 1973. He explained 'The journal will stress the following freedoms as being essential to any democratic society: freedom of expression, freedom of worship, freedom of peaceful protest, demonstration and of other forms of peaceful social action including satyagraha.' He stressed on the importance of moral values and individual freedom and warned the people against the growing social evils.

Jayaprakash said that sarvodaya is people's socialism. He observed 'The remedy is to create and develop forms of socialist living through the voluntary endeavour of the people, rather than seek to establish socialism by the use of the power of the state. In other words, the remedy is to establish people's socialism rather than state socialism.' He insisted on a band of selfless workers who would be prepared to live and move in the midst of the masses and help them reorganize their lives on a self-reliant and self-controlling basis.

Total Revolution

In the 1950s, Jayaprakash withdrew from party and power politics and was engaged in the work of social reconstruction through non-violent means, but the growing moral degeneration in Indian social and political life made him very unhappy. It pained him to see India languishing in social and economic slavery. Though he had grown old, Jayaprakash was young in spirit. In 1973, the idea of massive action was popularized by him, for a radical change in the political and economic life of India. He made efforts to enlighten the people about the decadent social situation and appealed to the members of the Indian Parliament to take positive steps. His appeal got a poor response. As a result, he thought of organizing people, especially the youth to save democracy, and for a total revolution in the country. By that time the students' agitation in Gujarat was in full swing. The agitation forced the dissolution of the state assembly. This kind of agitation encouraged Jayaprakash in his thinking. He could see great strength in the uncommitted youth of the country.

He was of the view that in a democratic system, if a political party continues in power over a long period of time, it gets corrupted, because power corrupts even the most incorruptible. He thought that the Congress Party was no exception to this. He sensed a danger to the country on account of unchecked degeneration of values in the social, political and economic life of the people. Jayaprakash was convinced that only a massive effort by the people themselves could stop the process through which democracy was slowly degenerating into a one-party dictatorship. He contended that the people in general, particularly the young and enlightened sections of the country, could take on the

responsibility of replacing the corrupt system by a cleaner, less authoritative and more participating form of democracy, leading to total revolution.

Jayaprakash with his long political experience had come to the conclusion that a complete change in the social and economic structure of the country could be brought about only by using Gandhian methods. Vinoba Bhave had already taken up the work of non-violent to carry on Gandhian thought. But it could not become an active movement for social revolution. There were some obvious reasons for this. Vinoba preferred to remain away from pressing social problems. The Bhoodan movement and Gram Raj could have resulted in a great social revolution had Vinoba acted like Mahatma Gandhi. Jayaprakash felt that no movement could be successful without the involvement of the masses. In March 1974, the students of Bihar had started an agitation. Jayaprakash took this opportunity to turn it into a people's movement for complete social change.

The students' stir in Gujarat provided encouragement to the students of Bihar who organized themselves to launch a movement against corruption, injustice, unemployment, high prices and misrule. The students of Bihar made an appeal to Jayaprakash to lead the movement in the interest of the people of Bihar and in the greater interest of the country. Jayaprakash thought that the Bihar student's agitation could be converted into a popular revolution. He also planned to broad-base the movement for saving democracy in India from its gradual degeneration into dictatorship.

Jayaprakash had strong faith in Gandhian ideas and methods. He conducted the movement peacefully by virtue of well-known techniques of satyagraha, picketing and disobedience of unjust authority. He advised the students of Bihar to give due respect to the wishes of people. But the government of Bihar resorted to repressive measures. Within a short period, the student's movement spread to the whole state, involving various cross-sections of the people. Large numbers of workers in the rural and urban areas jumped into the movement. It developed into a mass movement. Jayaprakash made tours of the country to awaken the people to the ideals of the movement. The people of the country watched the movement with great interest. Jayaprakash made it clear that he was leading the movement for total revolution and complete change. It was not intended only to remove the Bihar Government from office.

When the Bihar movement had developed into a massive people's movement in October 1974, Jayaprakash announced a four-fold programme of action. By this, he wanted to paralyse the administration, introduce gram swarajya, and establish people's legislative assembly and peoples' government. A massive demonstration was organized at Patna on November 4, 1974, to express popular support to his programme. Jayaprakash wanted that the people should themselves take up the responsibility of administration. He said 'People or Janata sarkar will be a small unit of democracy at the village, panchayat or block level, at all three levels, if possible. These small units of democracy are conceived as instruments of people's power both in their peaceful struggle against injustice and tyranny and for the reconstruction of society on the basis of equality, and the elimination of poverty, oppression and exploitation.'

Jayaprakash gave priority to social reconstruction. For this purpose, he called upon the people of Bihar and the people of India in general to rise above individual and party interests. His purpose in leading the Bihar students' movement was to prepare the ground for a complete change in the prevalent structure and system of Indian polity and society. This is the reason why he gave the clarion call for total revolution.

He believed that only through a peaceful revolution could the conditions of the people be improved. He placed before the people of the country a very comprehensive

ideal in the form of total revolution. As he was committed to socialism and humanism, he wanted to direct his energy for eradicating corruption from the political and social life of India. He was determined to create conditions for fulfilling the minimum basic needs of the people. His total revolution was an attempt to bring about the Gandhian humanist vision of an ideal society.

He called upon the people to be prepared for a long struggle. He presented a detailed strategy of the movement that included propaganda for public education and constructive programmes for creating consciousness about social evil such as the dowry system, caste conflicts, communalism and untouchability.

He had asked the people of India to revise their thinking and attitude towards democratic function in India. He urged upon the necessity of a strong opposition in the country. He called upon the political leaders of the Opposition parties to create a sound basis for total revolution. But the Janata Party, which came to power in 1977 as a result of this movement was unable to abide by its unanimous pledge taken at the samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi, due to international squabbles. This made the country slip back into the old order of political in-fighting. The dream of Jayaprakash remained unfulfilled despite his life-long struggle.

J.P.'s Contributions to Indian Political Thought

Jayaprakash is the most outstanding personality in the field of Indian socialism. His socialism is not only a philosophy of social and economic reconstruction of Indian society, but also a philosophy of moral and spiritual rebirth of life.

Jayaprakash was a great humanist revolutionary. Towards the closing years of his life, he gave a message to the nation in which he explained why he had been struggling all along. He said 'The India of my dreams is a community in which every individual and every resource is dedicated to the service of the weak community, dedicated to 'Antodaya' to the well-being of the poorest and weakest. The India of my dreams is a community in which every citizen participates in the affairs of the community.' Jayaprakash pleaded for the maintenance of conditions which are necessary for the realization of equality of opportunities. In his opinion, the economic minimum was a precondition for the splendence of the fruits of culture.

The idea of the participatory democracy conceived by Jayaprakash is a valuable one. It constitutes an important contribution to political theory. It is an extension of the Gandhian system of decentralization and Vinoba's idea of gram swarajya.

In terms of foreign relations, Jayaprakash accepted the idea of a world community. He said that the world community alone could do justice to the suppressed sections of humanity. He felt that it is the task of the intellectuals to enhance the concept of the world community.

IDEAS OF RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

Ram Manohar Lohia was born in Akbarpur village in Ambedkar Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh. He was influenced and initiated into the freedom struggle by his father Hira Lai, with whom Lohia attended numerous protest assemblies during his formative years. At the age of 10, Lohia contributed in his own way to the freedom struggle - on the death of Lokmanya Tilak, he organized and led a strike comprising his school mates.

Lohia's father was an ardent follower of Mahatma Gandhi, which contributed to his son's inclination towards swaraj. Gandhi's spiritual maturity and self-control influenced Lohia to follow his footsteps. As a 10-year-old, he had already proved his allegiance to Gandhi and the independence movement by participating in a satyagraha march. In 1921, Lohia met Jawaharlal Nehru and over the years, both Gandhi and Nehru contributed immensely to the development of Lohia's personality and political ideas. What began as only an acquaintanceship with Nehru transformed into close friendship. However, even as a young man, Lohia never minced his words. He admired Nehru, and at the same time, disagreed with him over many key ideological issues.

In 1928, as a student leader, Lohia organized a protest against the Simon Commission which had been sent by the British government to prepare a report on granting dominion status to India without considering the opinion of its citizens. Lohia studied for his PhD in Berlin, Germany. In Europe, Lohia attended the League of Nations Assembly in Geneva where India was represented by the Maharaja of Bikaner, an ally of the British Raj. Lohia took a strong exception to this and launched an immediate protest from the visitor's gallery. As a result, Lohia became popular in India overnight. In Berlin, he helped in the formation of the Association of European Indians and became the secretary of this club. The organization's focus was on preserving and expanding Indian nationalism abroad.

After receiving his doctorate, Lohia returned to India and joined the Indian National Congress. Lohia was inclined towards socialism and played an important role in the formation of the Congress Socialist Party, an organization within the Indian National Congress, in 1934. He wrote extensively on the possibility of a socialist India for the party's journal, *Congress Socialist*. In 1936, upon his election to the All India Congress Committee, Lohia revived the party's near-defunct foreign affairs department. Nehru himself appointed Lohia as the secretary of this department. During his tenure of two years, Lohia helped concretize India's foreign policy.

During the Second World War, Lohia saw an opportunity to topple the British Rule in India. He travelled across the country, instigating the citizens through his speeches to boycott all government institutions. As a result, Lohia was arrested on May 24, 1939. However, the British authorities feared his arrest could cause a youth uprising and, thus released him from prison just a day later.

A determined Lohia then wrote an article titled *Satyagraha Now* in Gandhiji's newspaper *Harijan* on June 1, 1940. Six days later, he was re-arrested and imprisoned for two years. While passing the judgment, the magistrate had observed: 'He (Lohia) is a top-class scholar, civilized gentleman, has liberal ideology and high moral character.' In a meeting of the Congress Working Committee following Lohia's imprisonment, Gandhi had said, 'I cannot sit quiet as long as Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia is in prison. I do not yet know a person braver and simpler than him. He never propagated violence. Whatever he has done has increased his esteem and his honour.'

In prison, Lohia was severely tortured and harassed by the jailors. In December 1941, all imprisoned Congress leaders, including Lohia, were released in a desperate attempt by the British authorities to stabilize the country which was reverberating with the demands for independence." In 1942, the Indian National Congress launched the Quit India Movement under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi. Prominent leaders, including Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad, were put behind bars to muzzle nationalistic voices. The responsibility to guide and lead the struggle of the nation towards independence fell on the shoulders of the Socialist cadre, which

included senior leaders like Lohia. He went underground to escape arrest and from there, published posters and documents to awaken the people's spirit of 'do or die'.

Along with freedom fighter Usha Mehta, Lohia started a secret radio station called Congress Radio from Bombay to inspire people towards revolution. He also edited *Inquilab* (Revolution), a monthly publication of the Congress. Other senior leaders like Aruna Asaf AH, Abdan Shaikh and Madiha also took active part in the Quit India Movement. While remaining underground, Lohia visited Calcutta to revive the movement in the state. He changed his name to escape arrest even as the police was closing in on him. Lohia then fled to Nepal's dense jungles. There, Lohia met many Nepalese revolutionaries, including the Koirala brothers, who remained his allies for the rest of their lives.

Lohia was finally captured in May 1944 from Bombay and was taken to the notorious Lahore prison, which was known to perpetrate torture on prisoners. Lohia too was subjected to inhuman treatment by jail authorities to extract information from him. He was released in 1946 under the pressure put on the British authorities by Mahatma Gandhi.

As India's tryst with freedom approached, the antagonism and clashes between the Hindus and Muslims increased. Lohia vehemently opposed Partition and wrote extensively against it. He appealed to the two communities in the regions affected by riots to stay united, ignore the divisive forces and adhere to Gandhi's ideals of nonviolence. On August 15, 1947, as political leaders hovered in Delhi to take over the reign of the country, Lohia stayed by Gandhi's side who was lamenting the consequences and killings brought about by Partition.

Goa and Nepal

In 1946, soon after his release from prison by the British authorities, Lohia went to Goa for rest. He was accompanied by his communist friend Juliao Menezes, the author of the anti-Catholic and anti-Portuguese work *Contra Roma e alem de Benares* (Against Rome and Returning to Benares). Menezes had later revealed that he had invited Lohia to Goa to disturb peace and encourage revolution in the state which was under the Portuguese rule. On the other hand, Nehru had publicly stated that Goa was a foreign territory and Indian politicians would not intervene in its internal affairs. He had said: 'Eighteen years ago, a Congress committee was started in Goa by Mr. Tristao Braganza Cunha, and for some years, he was a member of the All-India Congress Committee. Later, under the constitution of the Congress, such foreign committees were not affiliated.'

Thus, despite being a tourist and clearly an outsider as far as the Congress leadership was concerned, Lohia inspired struggle and launched a satyagraha in Goa. He began intervening in the local political affairs, influenced the small Goan Communist movement and fostered sedition. He was arrested by the Portuguese administration, while delivering a public speech, was imprisoned and later sent to British India. Gandhi supported Lohia and responded to his arrest stating, 'The little Portuguese settlement, which merely exists on the sufferance of the British government, can ill-afford to ape its bad manners. In free India, Goa cannot be allowed to exist as a separate entity in opposition to the laws of the free state. Without a shot being fired, the people of Goa will be able to claim and receive the rights of citizenship of the free state. The present Portuguese government will no longer be able to rely upon the protection of the British arms to isolate and keep under subjection the inhabitants of Goa against their will. I would venture to advise the Portuguese government of Goa to recognize the signs of the times and come to honourable

terms with the inhabitants, rather than function on any treaty that might exist between them and the British government.'

Gandhi added, 'It is ridiculous to write of Portugal as the Motherland of the Indians of Goa. Their mother country is as much India as is mine. Goa is outside British India, but it is within geographical India as a whole. And there is very little, if anything, in common between the Portuguese and the Indians in Goa.'

Amid growing support, Lohia tried to re-enter Goa on September 28, 1946, but was arrested at the Colem Railway Station, put into solitary confinement. He was banned from entering Goa for the next five years. Lohia desisted from entering Goa for the third time on the advice of Gandhi and Nehru.

In Nepal, with support of his socialist and communist friends, Lohia initiated a struggle to bring the country within the Indian domain and free them from the clutches of monarchy. However, contradictions failed his attempts; while on one hand, the Koiralas supported him, on the other hand, the Nepalese citizens were not keen on merger with India.

Lohia was not only influenced by socialism, but also practiced it. He deeply favoured the use of Hindi as the official language of India. Lohia argued that the use of English hindered people's thoughts, 'was a progenitor of inferiority feelings and deepened the gap between the educated and uneducated public'. He called upon the people: 'Come, let us unite to restore Hindi to its original glory.' He also recognized the importance of a nation's economic strength and encouraged the citizens to join the post-freedom reconstruction activities. Lohia urged people to construct canals, wells and roads voluntarily in their neighbourhood. He volunteered to build a dam on the river Paniyari, which stands strong till date and is also known as the 'Lohia Sagar Dam'.

Lohia once said, 'Satyagraha without constructive work is like a sentence without a verb.' He felt that public work could unite and bring a sense of awareness in the community. Lohia felt that as a democracy, the Parliament was obliged to listen to the citizens who elected them. He, thus helped create a day called 'Janavani Day' on which people from around the country could assemble and express their grievances to the members of Parliament. The tradition still persists.

In 1963, when Lohia entered the Parliament for the first time, the country had evolved a one-party government through three general elections. He wrote a pamphlet titled '25000 Rupees a Day', the amount spent on Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's daily activities. Lohia felt this was an obscene sum spent on a leader in a country whose majority population lived on 3 annas (less than one-quarter of a rupee) a day. Lohia called it an important issue, one which required a special debate in Parliament. The controversy is still remembered as the Teen Anna Pandrah Anna (3 annas 15 annas) controversy.

Lohia was neither a Marxist nor an anti-Marxist. Unlike Marxist theorists, Lohia argued that caste, more than class, was the prime deterrent to India's progress. Caste, according to Lohia, was a form of class in the Indian context. He said that class was a mobile caste since the country was anyways dominated by ideas of the upper castes constituted by the Brahmins and the Baniyas. Lohia said caste restricted one's social and economic opportunities, which in turn constricted people's ability. This, he argued, further restricted opportunity. Where caste prevails, Lohia said, opportunity and ability were restricted to ever-narrowing circles of people. In his own party, the Samyukta (United) Socialist Party, Lohia promoted lower caste candidates by giving them electoral

tickets and senior party positions. With this, Lohia aimed to ensure people accepted and voted for his party's candidates, irrespective of their caste.

Lohia's Views on Capitalism and Marxism

Lohia argued early that Marxism and capitalism were similar in as far as their views on industrialization were concerned. He stated that industry was no solution for the Third World. In fact, in 1951, Lohia had warned the Americans that their lives would soon be taken over by big industries. He called Marxism the 'last weapon of Europe against Asia' and propounded the 'Principle of Equal Irrelevance', declining both Marxism as well as capitalism. He perceived capitalism as the doctrine of 'people living upward of 40 degrees north of the equator'. Lohia preferred search for an appropriate technology, which could reduce hard work, but at the same time, not put the common man at the mercy of machines. He considered capitalism to be 'the doctrine of individual, free enterprise, mass production and balance of power based- peace'. Lohia rejected capitalism and believed it encouraged only poverty and war. According to Lohia, capitalism could destroy national freedom. He further perceived communism as part of capitalism and said that 'it only seems to smash the capitalist relations of production'. According to him, both capitalism and communism were 'part of a single civilization as both are driven by continuous application of science to economy and rising standard of living'.

Revolutionary Thinker

Lohia was always concerned with the welfare of the masses. Besides his revolutionary ways during the civil disobedience movement, his concern was to bridge the divide between the rich and the poor, and the elimination of caste and irrelevant industry, Lohia also sought to promote equality between the sexes, discourage discrimination on the basis of colour and preservation of individual privacy. Lohia also believed in joint action. He supported the overthrow of a government which misused its power, even if it had to be done before the completion of its official term. Lohia gave action to his words. He was the first parliamentarian to move a no-confidence motion against the Nehru government, which had by then been in office for 16 years.

Lohia is popularly known as a maverick socialist. He often surprised his supporters as well as opponents through his words and actions. In one instance, he astounded everyone by calling on the Indian government to produce the bomb, after the Sino-Indian War of 1962.

Lohia's Anti-English View

Ram Manohar Lohia wanted that the nation's administration, its judicial system and its elite professions should not remain alienated from the masses. He thus argued against the continuation of English as the medium of administration, the judiciary and higher education, including education of the professions. However, there are some wrong notions about his views on language. Many considered him a zealot of the Hindi language. However, this is an incorrect view. Lohia was not per se opposed to the English language, but warned that it was impossible to make the colonial language the lingua franca of men and women in India.

People, especially in the South, were vary of his so-called anti-English views, however, when he explained that he wanted English to be replaced by regional languages, that prejudice did not remain.

Lohia understood that as the link language, English could be replaced by Hindi only, and he offered reservations in Central jobs for non-Hindi

speaking people. Many scholars are of the opinion that the fact that a significant proportion of people in India are illiterate has to do with opposition to Lohia's language policy.

Lohia was in favour of abolishing private schools and establishing better municipal (government) schools, which would be open to students from all castes. He saw this approach as a mean to abolish the caste system. At the annual convention of the Socialist Party, Lohia formulated a plan to decentralize the power of the government and give more powers in the hands of the people. He also set up the Hind Kisan Panchayat to give ear to the problem of the farmers.

As a socialist, Lohia sought to unite socialist from across the world to form a potent global platform. He died on 12 October 1967 in New Delhi and left behind no property or bank balance.

ACTIVITY

Conduct a comparative study of Gandhi and Ambedkar's view on caste.

DID YOU KNOW

M.N. Roy founded the Mexican Communist Party

SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learned that:

- Manabendra Nath Roy was a unique personality in the history of modern India.
- M.N. Roy propounded a different school of thought. From a nationalist, he became a Marxist, and later, he changed to a radical humanist.
- M.N. Roy was at first deeply impressed by the philosophy of Karl Marx. He considered Marx as a merciless critic of social injustice in the traditions of the great Jewish Prophets.
- In the later years, Roy had serious differences of views with Stalin. He became a great critic of Marxism and came to the conclusion that communism provided no solution to worldly problems.
- In Roy's book, Reason, Romanticism and Revolution, he observed, 'The abolition of private property, state ownership of the means of production and planned economy, do not by themselves end exploitation of labour nor lead to an equal distribution of wealth.'
- According to Roy, the principal defect of Marxism is its denial of individual freedom.
- The concept of radical humanism is the greatest contribution of M.N. Roy to modern Indian political thought.
- Roy called this radical humanism as 'new humanism'. It aimed at a secular, rational morality for opening a new perspective before the world.
- In the initial stage, M.N. Roy had paid glowing tributes to Mahatma Gandhi. However, in the later years, he became a critic of Gandhi.
- M.N. Roy called Gandhism as a 'mass of platitudes and self-contradiction.' He regarded

Gandhian philosophy as status quoist in nature. Roy had also criticized Mahatma Gandhi's concept of non- violence.

- B.R. Ambedkar dedicated his life to the eradication of untouchability and the issues with which it had identified itself.
- Like the Indian liberal moderates of the First World War era of our freedom struggle, that were in line with Naoroji, Ranade and Gokhale, he would give precedence to social reform and consider the task of political independence only as a second priority. His position was 'reforms first, freedom afterwards'.
- Ambedkar dedicated his life as much to improve the condition of Indian women as he had done for raising the status of the Dalits.
- Jayaprakash Narayan was born in a middle class Kayastha family on 11 October 1902. He was the fourth child of Babu Harsoodayal and Phool Rani. He began his eventful life in a small village on the border of Ut* and Bihar.
- Jayaprakash was a socialist intellectual. He had a clear idea of the economic foundations of politics. Mahatma Gandhi regarded him as the most leading authority on socialism.
- Jayaprakash interpreted socialism in the context of Indian needs and important values in Indian culture. He advocated the reduction of land revenue, limitation of expenditure and nationalization of industries.
- Jayaprakash's great passion for freedom was responsible for bringing him to Sarvodaya. He felt that this method was more effective and original compared to the traditional socialist methods.
- Jayaprakash is the most outstanding personality in the field of Indian socialism. His socialism is not only a philosophy of social and economic reconstruction of Indian society, but also a philosophy of moral and spiritual rebirth of life.
- Ram Manohar Lohia was born in Akbarpur village in Ambedkar Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh.
- Lohia argued early that Marxism and capitalism were similar in as far as their views on industrialization were concerned. He stated that industry was no solution for the Third World.
- Lohia was always concerned with the welfare of the masses. Besides his revolutionary ways during the civil disobedience movement, his concern was to bridge the divide between the rich and the poor, and the elimination of caste and irrelevant industry, Lohia also sought to promote equality between the sexes, discourage discrimination on the basis of colour and preservation of individual privacy.
- Ram Manohar Lohia wanted that the nation's administration, its judicial system and its elite professions should not remain alienated from the masses. He thus argued against the continuation of English as the medium of administration, the judiciary and higher education, including education of the professions.

KEY TERMS

- **Radical humanism:** Humanism propounded by Roy that accepted man as the centre of that humanism that banishes every type of supernatural agency from the human world.
- **Chatur-varna:** It refers to the four caste systems in the Indian society.

- **Shudras:** It refers to the lowest stratum in Indian society, often considered untouchables due to their menial jobs.
- **Sarvodaya:** It refers to the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity promoted by Jayprakash Narayan.
- **Bhoodan:** It was a movement started by Vinoba Bhave where wealthy landowners were persuaded to give a portion of their land to poor farmers.
- **Total revolution:** A mass movement against corruption, injustice, unemployment, high prices and misrule, started by Jayprakash Narayan.

ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. M.N. Roy was a unique personality in the history of modern India and he was deeply influenced by the philosophy and works of Swami Vivekananda, Bankim Chandra and Dayananda Saraswati. He is treated as one of the extremists in India's struggle for independence.
2. Roy advocated for a new philosophy called new humanism or radical humanism. It is found in his later works like *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution*, *New Humanism*, and *The Problems of Freedom*. Radical humanism provided the philosophical foundation to both organized democracy and cooperative economy.
3. Radical humanism brought Roy nearer to Gandhi. Both accepted the individual as the central point of all social thought and action. Both stood for decentralization of political and economic power.
4. B.R. Ambedkar was born on 14 April 1891 at a place called Mhow near Indore in Madhya Pradesh and died in 1956.
5. According to Ambedkar, the very first problem of Hindu social system was the one relating to the origin of the Shudras.
6. According to Ambedkar, the Shudras had the last place in the social order and their life had no value and anybody could kill him, without having to pay any compensation.
7. Untouchability means pollution by the touch of certain persons by reason of their birth in a particular caste or family.
8. Jayprakash Narayan was convinced that only a massive effort by the people themselves could stop the process through which democracy in India was slowly degenerating into a one-party dictatorship. He contended that the people in general, particularly the young and enlightened sections of the country, could take on the responsibility of replacing the corrupt system by a cleaner, less authoritative and more participating form of democracy, leading to total revolution.
9. Jayprakash Narayan's socialism constituted that the economic life of the country needed to be planned and controlled by the state, there had to be state monopoly of foreign trade, land needed to be redistributed to peasants and such an arrangement had to be provided by society where the economic obstacles which hindered the power and faculties of man were removed.
10. Ram Manohar Lohia was highly influenced by his father Hira Lai, a Gandhian, with whom he attended freedom protests. Gandhi's concept of swaraj, self-control and satyagraha influenced

him so much that he followed his footsteps. A close

association with Nehru too contributed to the development of Lohia's personality and political ideas.

11. Lohia went to Goa after coming out of jail in 1946. He went on to inspire the freedom struggle and launched a satyagraha in Goa. He began intervening in the local political affairs, influenced the small Goan Communist movement and fostered sedition. He was later arrested and sent back to British India.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note comparing M.N. Roy and Gandhi's political philosophies.
2. What were the phases of Ambedkar political life?
3. Who was Jayprakash Narayan? Why was he attracted towards Marxism?
4. Write a short-note on sarvodaya from Jayprakash Narayan's viewpoint.
5. What was Lohia's contribution to the Indian freedom struggle?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe M.N. Roy's views on democracy.
2. Discuss M.N. Roy's concept of radical humanism or new humanism.
3. Discuss M.N. Roy's critique of Marxism.
4. Discuss the main ideas of Ambedkar on untouchables.
5. Critically discuss the main political ideas of Ambedkar.
6. Explain the concept of total revolution propounded by Jayprakash Narayan.
7. Discuss Lohia's political ideology.

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UNIT 4 RELIGION AND COMMUNAL POLITICS IN INDIA

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Unit Objectives
- 4.2 Main Ideas of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar
 - 4.2.1 Life and Works
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 - 4.3.1 Life and Works
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INTRODUCTION

Briefly, communal politics in India refers to conducting politics for the benefit of one's religion, rather than the wider society. India has had a long history of communal politics. It was the British colonialists, following the policy of divide and rule, who first sowed the seeds of communal politics in India. It eventually resulted in India's partition into two separate nations.

Despite the Partition, India's independence leaders were fervently against the ideas that communalism entailed. They dreamed of a secular society, where all religions would be treated equally. In the post-independence era, the ideas of secularism were adopted by all major political parties. However, the last twenty years have seen a spectacular disintegration of the old political patterns and parties that had ruled the politics of the Nehruvian period. It has resulted in a rise of communal politics. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for the scholars of political science to gain an understanding of the ideas and origins of communal politics.

The mixing of religion and politics is a risky thing because the religious approach is diametrically different to democratic outlook. Religion is a personal matter and if it is permitted to feature in public associations, it will distort politics and be harmful to society at large. Thus, if we want to strengthen democracy and provide a concrete base to it and make its functioning successful, it is essential that the people do not mix their religion with politics. It is not right to think that legal ruling will help separate politics from religion. Until the outlook of the public undergoes changes and people rise higher than their trivial beliefs and differences, it is impossible to keep religion and politics away from each other. However, only by keeping them away from each other, will it be possible to keep a democratic system intact.

In this unit, we will learn about the growth of communal politics in India from the early 19th century to 20th century.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Elaborate on the main ideas of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar
- Explain the beliefs of Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar
- Summarize the theories of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan
- Discuss the main ideas of Mohammad Ali Jinnah

MAIN IDEAS OF VINAYAK DAMODAR SAVARKAR

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was born in Bhagur, Nashik, in Maharashtra on 28 May 1883. Savarkar was a famous poet, writer and a playwright, who became an Indian revolutionary and politician. He propounded the idea of liberty as the ultimate ideal. He instigated the movement for religious reforms against the caste system in Hindu culture and promoted reconversion of the converted Hindus back to the Hindu religion. He coined the term 'Hindutva', which he emphasized as being distinctive from Hinduism. His concept of Hindutva was associated with social and political disunity. Hindutva was based on following 5 elements:

- i. Utilitarianism
- ii. Rationalism and Positivism
- iii Humanism and Universalism
- iv. Pragmatism
- v. Realism

Savarkar began his revolution while continuing with his education in India and England, where he was a proud associate of the India House and laid the foundation of student societies such as Abhinav Bharat Society and the Free India Society. His publications promoted the cause of complete independence of India through revolutionary means. One of his publications *The Indian War of Independence*, which was dedicated to Indian rebellion of 1857, was banned by British authorities. He was taken into custody for his connections with a revolutionary group, The India House, in 1910. During his imprisonment, Savarkar made a failed attempt to run away while being moved from Marseilles and was given two life term sentences for a total tenure of 50 years and moved to the Cellular Jail of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

While in jail, Savarkar continued with his work explaining the concept of Hindutva. He was freed in 1921 under certain restrictions, and after signing a plea of clemency, in which he gave up revolutionist activities.

After his release from jail, Savarkar travelled extensively and became a forceful orator and writer and promoted Hindu political and social unity. In later years, he took the charge of president of Hindu

Mahasabha and propagated the idea of India as a Hindu Rashtra. He also opposed the Quit India movement in 1942, naming it a 'Quit

India but keep your army' movement. He fiercely criticized the Indian National Congress for accepting the country's partition and was also one of the prime suspects in its leader Mahatma Gandhi's, assassination which however, could not be proved.

Life and Works

Savarkar had two brothers—Ganesh and Narayan—and a sister, Mainabai. His elder brother, who took over the family's welfare after their parents died, became a major influence on Vinayak's teenage life. Vinayak had formed a group of youths named Mitra Mela that boosted revolutionary and nationalist activities.

In 1901, he got married to Yamunabai, the daughter of Ramchandra Triambal Chiplunkar, who supported his university education. Subsequently, he got into Fergusson College of Pune in 1902. His sources of inspiration were radical political leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai, and incidents such as, the political struggle against Bengal partition and the growing Swadeshi campaign. Later years saw him getting involved in various nationalist activities at various levels. In 1905, during Dussehra, he organized a bonfire of foreign goods and clothes. He formed a group with his fellow students and friends called Abhinav Bharat. Due to his involvement in such activities, he was barred from college. However, he was still allowed to continue with his Bachelor of Arts degree. After graduation, the nationalist activist Shyam Krishana Verma encouraged him to study law in England on a scholarship. This was the period when Tilak, upon splitting from the Indian National Congress, formed a group called as Garam Dal. The Garam Dal, did not acknowledge the moderate Indian National Congress leadership agenda, which favoured dialogue and reconciliation with the British Raj.

At India House

Savarkar visualized a guerrilla war for independence on the lines of the renowned revolution of 1857. While writing his book *The History of the War of Indian Independence*, he analysed the circumstances of the 1857 of armed uprising. He criticised British rule in India and found it unjust and oppressive. Eventually, he became the first writer to term the uprising as India's 'First War of Independence'. His book was banned from publication throughout the British Empire. However, Madame Bhikaji Cama, an expatriate Indian revolutionary got the book published in Netherlands, France and Germany, which was heavily smuggled and circulated among rising young Indians. Savarkar was looking for revolutionary methods and eventually came in contact with a veteran of Russian Revolution of 1905, from whom he learnt the process of bomb-making and circulated the same in the form of a printed manual, amongst friends. This process was in line with other methods of guerrilla warfare. Later in 1909, one of his keen followers and friend, Madan Lai Dhingra, assassinated the British MP, Sir Curzon Wylie, at a public meeting.

Arrest in London and in Marseilles

In India, Savarkar organized an armed revolt against the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909. The British police implicated Savarkar in the investigation for allegedly plotting the crime. Savarkar, anticipating evasion of arrest, moved to Madame Cama's house in Paris. However, he was arrested on 13 March 1910. He wrote a letter to a close friend planning his escape. Anticipating that he would most likely be transported back to India, he asked his friend to track the ship he would be routed through. When the ship, S. S. Morea, reached the port of Marseilles on 8 July 1910, Savarkar escaped from his cell through a

porthole and dived into the water, swimming across the shore anticipating his friend to receive him in a car. The friend got delayed in arriving, while alarms were raised and he was re-arrested.

Trial and Andaman

After reaching Bombay (Mumbai), he was taken to Yerwada Central Jail in Pune. He was sentenced to 50 years in prison that was to be carried out in the Cellular Jail in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. He was deported on 4 July 1911. Savarkar demanded for clemency in 1911. During the visit of Sir Reginald Craddock in 1913, the leaders of Indian National Congress Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel and Bal Gangadhar Tilak demanded his unconditional release. Before Savarkar was finally released on 6 January 1924 under stringent restrictions, he and his brother were transported to the jail in Ratnagiri and thereafter back to Yerwada Central Jail.

Hindutva

During his imprisonment, he became a devoted follower of Hindu culture and from thereon, he remained devoted towards this cause. While he remained in the Ratnagiri jail, he wrote *Hindutva - Who is a Hindu*, got it smuggled out of jail and published under his alias 'Maharatta'. In his publication, he argued that a Hindu was a patriotic inhabitant of Bharatvarsha venturing beyond religious recognition.

Works

Savarkar has written more than ten thousand pages in Marathi language which include *Kamala* and *Mazi Janmathep* (My Life Sentence), amongst many and also the most renowned *1857- The First War of Independence*, which was written when he was a member of India House. His other contributions include:

1. *Saha Soneri Paane* (Six Glorious Epochs of Indian History)
2. *1857 che Svatantrya Samar*
3. *Hindupadpaatshahi*
4. *Hindutva*
5. *Jatyochhedak Nibandh*
6. *Moplyanche Banda*
7. *Maazi Janmathep* (My Life Imprisonment)
8. *Kale Pani*
9. *Shatruchya Shibirat*
10. *Londonchi batamipatre* (London News Letter)
11. *Andamanchya Andheritun*
12. *Vidnyan nishtha Nibandha*
13. *Josheph Mazzini*
14. *Hindurashtra Darshan*
15. *Hindutvache Panchapran*
16. *Kamala*

17. *Savarkaranchya Kavita* (Poems by Savarkar)

18. *Sanyasta Khadg*

Arrest and acquittal in Gandhi's assassination

Subsequent to Mahatma Gandhi's assassination, Nathuram Godse was arrested along with his alleged accomplices and conspirators. He was then the member of Hindu Mahasabha and also a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Swayamsevak. Savarkar was arrested in 1948 charged with murder, conspiracy to murder and abetment to murder in Mahatma Gandhi's assassination. However, he was acquitted due to a lack of evidence.

On 8 November 1963, Savarkar's wife, Yamuna died and on 1 February 1966, he decided to go on atmaarpan (fast until death). Before his death, he wrote an article which was titled 'atmahtya nahi atmaarpan', where he argued that when one's life mission is accomplished and ability to serve the society is left no more, it is better to end the life at will instead of waiting for the death to come of its own.

MAIN IDEAS OF HEDGEWAR

Dr Keshav Baliram Hedgewar was an individual devoted to the cause of the Hindu community. He believed that Hindus only were the sons of India, and the existence and future of the nation was not independent to their existence in the future. He worked towards this throughout his life to achieve this goal. He founded the Hindu nationalist organization the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

Life and Works

Dr Hedgewar was born on 1 st April 1889. While in Neel City High School in Nagpur, he was allegedly expelled for stridently singing the nationalist song Vande Matram and violating the conditions issued by the British government. However, he did not stop here, intending to participate in the freedom struggle, he went to Yeotmal for higher studies. After returning to Nagpur, he became an active member of the Indian National Congress. As a member, he participated in various movements and revolts and was imprisoned on several occasions.

Revolutionary preparations

During the First World War, all revolutionaries from across the country and abroad consented to utilize the opportunity of attacking the British who were involved in war with the Germans. Under the direction of Bhaoji Katre and Dr Hedgewar, the revolutionaries began to collect arms and money throughout the country for the proposed revolution. Dr Hedgewar had once put on a military uniform and took away the British stock of guns stored at Nagpur Railway Station to distribute the same to Gadar activists spread across the country. He also made an attempt to transport arms sent by revolutionaries abroad through a steamer, to be received at the Goa Port in 1912, with the help of his trusted colleague, Vaman Rao Dharmadhikari. However, the British came to know of it and the shipment was seized before it could reach the terminus.

The Germans were defeated badly, which also had resulted in the annihilation of the plans of an Indian revolution within the country.

National movement

Dr Hedgewar stated that the indiscipline and disorganized coordination within revolutionary groups and the absence of political and national awareness in the common masses were the basic

reasons for their failure in India. He realized that bravery and

self-sacrifice of some daring and patriotic individuals will not lead to independence. Hence, he was attracted towards the national movement started by the Indian National Congress.

In his association with the Indian National Congress, he participated in the freedom struggle, especially the non-cooperation movement of 1921 and was imprisoned. He came out of jail on 12th of July 1922. His pure character, sacrificial and amiable nature, patriotism and devotion towards the noble cause of Indian freedom earned him lot of love from the leaders of nationalist movement in Central Province and he rose up to a higher rank in the Congress Party. This was the time when all extremist leaders were apprehended for the all-out support by Mahatma Gandhi to the Khilafat Movement in an attempt to exploit the discontent amongst the Indian Muslims. Dr Hedgewar felt it as a sort of appeasement of Muslim communalism and was sceptical that it would sow the seeds of separation in the long run and result in the country's disintegration.

Important incident

In 1920, the-All India Congress Committee (AICC) meeting was moved under the presidential heading of Sri Vijayaraghavachari, with a resolution for cow protection. This resolution was opposed by Mahatma Gandhi in the name of Hindu-Muslim unity. Hedgewar, being an orthodox Hindu, became disillusioned due to this incident. The incident made him fear for the ruinous outcome of Hindu-Muslim unity and the supposed 'Muslim appeasement policy' of Gandhi and the Congress.

Foundation of RSS

Dr Hedgewar, for long, felt that a lack of unity and patriotism amongst Hindus was the reason for failures of various movements and that without establishing national consciousness, discipline, self-less service and self-realization, Hindus would be unable to attain freedom.

Subsequent to this realization, Hedgewar promised to remain bachelor throughout his life and decided to organize people under the banner of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh on Vijayadashami of 27 September 1925. He started the organization with a selected group of young boys who used to assemble in an open field every day for one hour. During an hour of daily meeting at this '*shakha*', the group used to be inculcated with patriotism, unity, discipline, love and respect for the country and selflessness through patriotic songs and stories of patriotic heroes.

On 7 April 1926, a *baithak* (meeting) was organized wherein 26 people participated and proposed three names:

1. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)
2. JaripatakaMandal
3. BharatoddharakMandal

Out of these names, RSS was selected unanimously.

Bharat Mata as common deity

Hedgewar realized the necessity of having a common deity to be worshiped by every member of the shakha and also a common ideal. Consequently, he declared that regardless of caste, religion or language, everybody is the son of 'Bharatmata'. Henceforth, Bharatmata would be the common deity of India and would help them strive for all-

round progress, national development and to take the nation to the pinnacle of glory. From that moment, the RSS incorporated this objective with their prarthana which starts with Namaste Sada Vatsale Matrubhume (Oh my beloved motherland, salutation to thee) and ends with Param Vaibhavamnetu Metat Swarasthram (Oh God, please give us strength and bless us to enable us to take our nation to the pinnacle of glory). The prayer concludes with unifying slogan 'Bharat Mata ki Jai'.

Idea behind starting the shakha

Hedgewar's idea behind starting shakhas was to inspire swayamsevaks, that is, the RSS members, to dedicate themselves to the noble and generous task of nation building. He proposed the swayamsevaks to attain higher education and move out at different places for the purpose and spread the work of RSS across the country.

Death

Hedgewar was ill for a long time. His condition worsened on 21 June 1940 and his doctors decided to go for lumbar puncture. Before lumbar puncture could be performed on him, he called Sri Guru Golwalkar and other important workers of the Sangh and expressed his last wish for Guru Golwalkar to take over the responsibilities of the Sarsanghchalak (head) of the sangh. He took his last breath on 21 June 1940.

MAIN IDEAS OF SIR SYED AHMAD KHAN

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, commonly known as Sir Syed, was born on 17 of October 1817. He was a social activist and Muslim philosopher in India in the 19th century. Born into the Muslim nobility, Sir Syed was bestowed with the title of Javad-ud- Daulah by Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar II in 1842.

During the Indian Revolution of 1857, he was accused of being loyal to the British. Subsequent to the Indian rebellion, he wrote *Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind*, a daring critique of the policies of British, which he blamed was the reasons for the rebellion. He was a strong believer that the future of Muslims was at risk because of their conventional mind-set. As a result of this, he started encouraging the western style of scientific education by launching modern schools and journals e.g., the establishment of the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College (Aligarh Muslim University) in 1875. This university was established on the sole objective of advancing social and economic development of Indian Muslims.

Early Life and Works

He was born in Delhi, which was then the capital of the Mughal Empire and became an educator, politician, an Islamic reformer and modernist. He and his family had migrated first to Iran from Saudi Arabia and then to Afghanistan, at the time of Akbar.

His elder brother initiated the city's first printing press in the Urdu language, along with a journal called the *Sayyad-ul-Akbar*. He pursued with his studies of medicine for many years but could not complete them because of financial constraints that occurred after his father's death. He rejected employment in the Mughal court and accepted the editorship of his brother's journal.

Career

Social reforms within the Muslim society was started by Abdul Latif, who started the Mohammedan Literary Society in Bengal. Sir Syed founded the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College. He fought against ignorance, superstitions and evil customs prevailed in Muslim society and believed that they would not progress unless they acquired western education and science. Realizing the political decline of the Mughals, he got enrolled into the British East India Company's civil services where he was appointed as *Serestadar* in the court of law at Agra. He was promoted as a Munshi in 1840 and in 1858, was appointed to a high-ranking position in the courts of Muradabad.

Causes of the Indian Revolt

While working in the courts of the East India Company, Sir Syed obtained some close information pertaining to colonial politics which he accumulated and shared as the root cause of Indian revolution in his renowned booklet, *Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind*, in 1859. He rejected the contribution of Muslim elites in the conspiracy, who feared the diminishing influence of the Muslims. On the contrary, he suggested the British Government appoint Muslims in the administration to assist the government.

Scholarly works

Sir Syed's career as an author began at the age of 23, while he was working as a jurist. He wrote around 6000 pages in Urdu. His contribution came out in a series of publication in Urdu on religious subjects. In 1842, his work brought him the recognition of a great scholar on religious and cultural subjects. His writings helped in creating cordial relations between the British and the Muslim community.

Syed Ahmad throughout his life, spared time for literary and scholarly pursuits, which had wide range and scope that included—history, politics, archaeology, journalism, literature, religion and science. Some of his works are as follows:

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2. Act No. 14 (Limitation) 1859-1864
3. Act No. 16 (Regarding registration documents)-Allyson, 1864
4. Act No. 18 (Worked for Women Rights) Act 1866

Religious Works

1. *Ahkam Tu'am Ahl-Kitab*, Kanpur- 1868
2. *Al-Du'a Wa'llstajaba*, Agra-1892
3. *Al-Nazar Fi Ba z Mas a 'il Imam Al-Ghazzali*, Agra
4. *Izalat ul-chain as Zi 'al Qarnain*, Agra - 1889
5. *Zila al-Qulub ba Zikr al-Mahbub Delhi*, 1843
6. *Khulq al-Insan ala mafi al-Quran*, Agra, 1892
7. *Kimiya-i-Sa'dat*, 2fasl, 1883

8. *Mazumm ba nisbat tanazzul ulum-i-diniya waArabiya wafalsafa-i-Yunaniya. Agra, 1857*
9. *Namiqafi Bay an Mas 'ala Tasawwur al-Shaikh, Aligarh, 1883*
10. *Rah-i-Sunnatdarrad-i-bid"at, Aligarh, 1883*
11. *RisalaIbtal-i-Ghulami,Agra., 1893*
12. *Fisala ho wal Mojud, 1880*
13. *Risala Tahqiq Lafzi-i-Nassara, 1860*
14. *Tabyin-ul-Kaiam fl Tafsir-al-turat-wa 7 Injil ala Mullat-al-Islam (The Mohomedan Commentary on the holy Bible)*
15. *Tafsir-ul-Qura'n Vol. I Aligarh, 1880*
Vol. H Aligarh, 1882, Agra-1903
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18. *Tohirfi Usui al-Tqfsir, Agra, 1892*
19. *Tarjama Fawa 'id al-afkarfi amal al-farjar, Delhi 1846*
20. *Tarqimfi qisa ashab al-kahfwal-Raqim, Agra, 1889*
21. *Tasfiyadal 'Aquid (being the correspondent between Syed Ahmed Khan and Maulana Muhammad Qasim of Deoband)*
22. *Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind(Reasons for the Indian Revolt of 1857) 1875*

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2. *Asar-us-Sanadid (i) Syed-ul-Akhbar, 1847, (II) Mata-i-Sultani, 1852*
3. *Description des monument deDelhi in 1852, D'a Pre Le Texte Hindostani De Saiyid Ahmad Khan (tr. By Garcin De Rassy), Paris, 1861*
4. *Jam-i-jum, Akbarabad, 1940*
5. *Silsilat-ul-Muluk, Ashraf ul Mataba', Delhi, 1852*
6. *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi (Edition), Asiatic society, Calcutta, 1862*
7. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri (edition Aligarh, 1864)*

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1. *Al-Khutbat al-Ahmadiyafi 'IArab wa 'ISirat al-Muhammadiya: Aligarh, 1900, English translation, London-1869-70*
2. *Sirat-i-Faridiya,Agca, 1896*

3. *Tuhfa-i-Hasan*, Aligarh, 1883

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2. *Lecture Indian National Congress Madras Par*, Kanpur, 1887
3. *Lectures on the Act XVI of 1864*, delivered on the 4th Dec, 1864 for the Scientific Society, Aligarh, 1864
4. *Musalmanon ki qismat kafaisla* (taqarir-e-Syed Ahmad Khan wa Syed Mehdi Ali Khan etc.) Agra, 1894
5. *On Hunter s: Our Indian Mussulmans'* London 1872
6. *Present State of Indian Politics* (Consisting of lectures and Speeches) Allahabad, 1888
7. Sarkashi Zilla Binjor, Agra 1858

Lectures

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2. Lecture dar bab targhib wa tahris talim itfal-i-Musalmanan, in 1895, Agra 1896
3. Lecture Madrasaat ul-Ulum Aligarh Key Tarikhi halat aur jaded Waqi'at Par, Agra, 1889
4. Lecture Ijlas Dahum Muhammadan Educational conference, Agra, 1896
5. Lecture Muta'liq Ijlas Yazdahum Muhammadan Educational Conference, Agra, 1896
6. Majmu'a Resolution Hayd Dah sala (Resolution passed by the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Educational conference from 1886 to 1895) ed. By Sir Syed Ahmad, Agra 1896
7. Report Salana (Annual Report of the Boarding House of Madrasat-ul-Ulum 1879-1880)

Political Career

In 1878, Sir Syed was nominated for the Viceroy's Legislative Council, and in the same year, he laid the foundation of the Muhammadan Association to promote political cooperation within Muslims across the country. Later, in the year 1883, he instituted the Muhammadan Civil Service Fund Association to promote and facilitate the entrance of Muslim graduates in the Indian Civil Services.

All India Muslim League (AIML)

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan supported the organization of All India Muslim League and his educational propositions and political activism motivated elite Muslims to help AIML. The foundation of All India Muhammadan Educational Conference was originally laid in 1886 to promote western education, science and literature, in particular amongst Muslims in India.

Legacy

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was the most powerful Muslim politician in India and was a renowned mentor of 19th and 20th century entrepreneurs and politicians of the Muslim

community. He spent the last 20 years of his life in Aligarh. He was also nominated for the membership of the Civil Service Commission in 1887, by Lord Dufferin and awarded with LL.D Honoris Causa from Edinburgh University.

The Aligarh Muslim University was one amongst the most recognized universities. Pakistan also honoured him by establishing Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology in Karachi, a leading technical institute in the country. Sir Syed Government Girls College in Karachi was also named in his honour. Sir Syed died on 27th March 1898, and was buried besides Sir Syed Masjid, inside the campus of the University.

MAIN IDEAS OF MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAH

Mohammad Ali Jinnah was a lawyer and politician who is known today as the founder of Pakistan. He was a member of the Indian National Congress, however, he split from it in the 1920s believing it to be a 'Hindu party' who could not protect Muslim interests in India. He later joined the Muslim League, becoming its main leader, and led the demand for the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. His split from the Congress came about as a result of the Nehru report and his own 14 point proposals.

Jinnah submitted a proposition of 14 points as a constitutional reform plan to protect the political rights of Muslims in independent India, wherein he tried to get more rights for Muslims. His proposals were in contrast with the Nehru report (1928) that was prepared by leading members of the Congress including Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose. By in large, the majority of the recommendations of the Nehru report were rejected by the Muslim League. Jinnah presented his 14 points which covered the interests of Muslims and stated that he was 'parting ways' with the Congress and expressed his inability to work with it in the future. Leaders of the Muslim league prompted him to revive the Muslim League and give it a direction. As a result of this, these points became their demand, ultimately paving way for the creation of Pakistan as a separate country.

Background

Muslim leaders, Aga Khan and Mohammad Shafi were critical about the Nehru Report claiming it to be a death warrant due to the manner in which some of its points were formulated. After Jinnah's return from England, in March 1929, the Muslim League organized a session under his presidential leadership. While addressing the members of the group, he amalgamated Muslim perspectives under 14 items which later became known as Jinnah's 14 points.

Fourteen Points

1. The form of the constitution should be federal with the residuary powers vested in the provinces
2. All cabinets at central or local level should have at least 1/3 Muslim representation
3. All legislatures in the country and other elected bodies should be constituted on the definite principle of adequate and effective representation of minorities in every province without reducing the majority in any province to a minority or even equality
4. In the Central Legislature, Muslim representation shall not be less than one third

5. Representation of communal groups should continue to be by means of separate electorate as at present, provided it shall be open to any community at any time to abandon its separate electorate in favour of a joint electorate
6. Any territorial distribution that might at any time be necessary shall not in any way affect the Muslim majority
7. Full religious freedom, i.e., freedom of belief, worship and observance, propaganda, association and education shall be guaranteed to all communities
8. No bill or resolution or any part, thereof, shall be passed in any legislature or any other elected body if three fourths of the members of any community in that particular body oppose it as being injurious to the interests of that community or in the alternative, such other method is devised as may be found feasible and practicable to deal with such cases
9. Sindh should be separated from the Bombay Presidency
10. Reforms should be introduced in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Balochistan on equal footing as in the other provinces .
11. Provision should be made in the constitution giving Muslims an adequate share, along with the other Indians, in all the services of the state and in local self-governing bodies, having due regard to the requirements of efficiency
12. The constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim culture and for the protection and promotion of Muslim education, language, religion, personal laws and Muslim charitable institution and for their due share in the grants-in-aid, given by the state and by local self-governing bodies
13. No cabinet, either central or provincial, should be formed without there being a proportion of at least one-third Muslim ministers
14. No change shall be made in the constitution by the Central Legislature except with the concurrence of the state's contribution of the Indian Federation

Reactions

Jinnah's fourteen points evoked mixed reactions throughout the nation. The Indian National Congress unanimously rejected Jinnah's suggestion, with Nehru referring to it as 'Jinnah's ridiculous 14 points'. The Muslim League brought these points to the notice of common masses of the Muslim community. The British, sensing an opportunity to divide the Indian freedom struggle on religious lines, invited Jinnah to attend the round table conferences (1930-1932) where Jinnah supposedly represented the 'Muslim' point of view.

Jinnah's fourteen points played a significant role in the Partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. In these points, he advocated the protection of Muslim rights, however, at the same time, contradictorily, he also suggested protection of the rights of all religious groups.

ACTIVITY

Select any one historical figure discussed in this unit. Write about the policies that you agree or disagree with and why.

DID YOU KNOW

The patriotic song *Saare Jahan Se Achcha*, was written by Muhammad Tabal, who was a philosopher, poet and politician in British India.

SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- Communal politics in India refers to conducting politics for the benefit of one's religion, rather than the wider society.
- India has had a long history of communal politics. It was the British colonialists, following the policy of divide and rule, who first sowed the seeds of communal politics in India.
- Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was born in Bhagur, Nashik, in Maharashtra on 28 May 1883. Savarkar was a famous poet, writer and a playwright, who became an Indian revolutionary and politician.
- Savarkar coined the term 'Hindutva', which he emphasized as being distinctive from Hinduism.
- While in jail, Savarkar continued with his work explaining the concept of Hindutva.
- Savarkar was freed in 1921 under certain restrictions, and after signing a plea of clemency, in which he gave up revolutionist activities.
- Savarkar was arrested in 1948 charged with murder, conspiracy to murder and abetment to murder in Mahatma Gandhi's assassination.
- Dr Keshav Baliram Hedgewar; was an individual devoted to the cause of the Hindu community. He believed that Hindus only were the sons of India, and the existence and future of the nation was not independent to their existence in the future.
- Dr Hedgewar, for long, felt that a lack of unity and patriotism amongst Hindus was the reason for failures of various movements and that without establishing national consciousness, discipline, self-less service and self-realization, Hindus would be unable to attain freedom.
- Subsequent to this realization, Hedgewar promised to remain bachelor throughout his life and decided to organize people under the banner of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh on Vijayadashami of 27 September 1925.
- Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, commonly known as Sir Syed, was born on 17 of October 1817. He was a social activist and Muslim philosopher in India in the 19th century.
- Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was the most powerful Muslim politician in India and was a renowned mentor of 19th and 20th century entrepreneurs and politicians of the Muslim community.
- Mohammad Ali Jinnah was a lawyer and politician who is known today as the founder of Pakistan.
- Jinnah was a member of the Indian National Congress, however, he split from it in the 1920s believing it to be a 'Hindu party' who could not protect Muslim interests in India.

- Jinnah submitted a proposition of 14 points as a constitutional reform plan to protect the political rights of Muslims in independent India, wherein he tried to get more rights for Muslims.
- Jinnah's fourteen points evoked mixed reactions throughout the nation. The Indian National Congress unanimously rejected Jinnah's suggestion, with Nehru referring to it as 'Jinnah's ridiculous 14points'.
- Jinnah's fourteen points played a significant role in the Partition of India and the creation of Pakistan.

KEY TERMS

- **Uommunalism:** It means loyairy ana commitment to the interests of your own minority or ethnic group rather than to society as a whole.
- **Playwright:** A playwright is a person who writes plays.
- **Hindutva:** Apolitical ideology that reinforces a strong or aggressive sense of Hindu identity and seeks the creation of a Hindu state, as opposed to a secular state.
- **Utilitarianism:** The doctrine that actions are right if they are useful or for the benefit of a majority.
- **Rationalism:** It is a belief or theory that opinions and actions should be based on reason and knowledge rather than on religious belief or emotional response.
- **Pragmatism:** It is an approach that assesses the truth of meaning of theories or beliefs in terms of the success of their practical application.

ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Savarkar was a poei, wmer ana a playwright, who later became an Indian revolutionary and politician.
2. Savarkar's publications, *The Indian War of Independence*, which was dedicated to Indian rebellion of 1857, was banned by British authorities.
3. Savarkar has written more than ten thousand pages in Marathi language which include *Kamala and Mazi Janmathep* (My Life Sentence), *Saha Soneri Paane* (Six Glorious Epochs of Indian History), *1857 che Svantrya Samar*, etc.
4. Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar founded the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).
5. On 7 April 1926, a baithak (meeting) was organized wherein 26 people participated and proposed three names:
 - Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)
 - Jaripataka Mandal
 - Bharatoddharak Mandal
 - Out of these names, RSS was selected unanimously.
6. Sir Syed was bestowed with the title of Javad-ud-Daulah by Emperor Bahadur

ShahZafarIinI842.

7. Sir Syed established the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College (Aligarh **Muslim** University) in 1875.
8. The foundation of All India Muhamniadan Educational Conference was originally laid in 1886 to spread western education, science and literature, in **particular** amongst Muslims in India.
9. Mohammad AH Jinnah submitted a proposition of 14 points as a constitutional reform plan to protect the political rights of Muslims in independent India, wherein he tried to get more rights for Muslims.
10. Jawaharlal Nehru referred to Jinnah's fourteen pointproposal as 'Jinnah's ridiculous 14points'.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What are the five elements of the philosophy of Hindutva?
2. Why was Savarkar arrested in Marseilles?
3. What was Hegdewar 's role in the National Movement?
4. List the legal literary works of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.
5. Which is the most prominent part of the legacy of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Write a note on the main ideas of Vinayaka Damodar Savarkar.
2. Discuss the beliefs of Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar in detail.
3. Discuss the role played by Sir Syed in the education of the Muslim community in India.
4. Describe the fourteen point proposal of Mohammad Ali Jinnah as well as the reaction to it.

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UNIT 5 COMMUNIST MOVEMENT AND THOUGHTS IN INDIA

Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Unit Objectives
- 5.2 S.A. Dange
 - 5.2.1 Early Life and Works
 - 5.2.2 Foundation of the Communist Party of India
 - 5.2.3 Formation of Maharashtra
 - 5.2.4 Birth of CPI(M)
- 5.3 E.M.S. Namboodiripad
- 5.4 R.P. Dutt
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 Key Terms
- 5.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 5.8 Questions and Exercises
- 5.9 Further Reading

INTRODUCTION

In India, the communist movement emerged from the freedom movement. The Communist Party of India was set up in Tashkent by migrant Indian revolutionaries. However, the seeds of its origins lay in the Indian subcontinent. The idea for the Indian Communist movement took root after the socialists in India heard about the October Revolution in Russia. From the very beginning, the colonial powers tried to ruthlessly curb the communists. The proofs of this are the conspiracy cases in Peshawar, Lahore and Kanpur. These were meant to nip in the bud communist ideas in India.

However, communism did not die out and left its mark on other reformers and reform movements. In fact, communism lay behind the emergence of radical trends inside the Congress after the First World War. A large number of young Indians were inspired by the anti-imperialist and fierce ideology of the communists and became militants, including the Gadar fighters of Punjab, the colleagues of Bhagat Singh, the revolutionaries of Bengal, the militant working class fighters of Bombay and Madras presidencies and radical anti-imperialist Congressmen from different parts of the country.

The communist movement played a great role in shaping the freedom movement. After Independence, it continued to have an influential role in Indian politics. This unit will look at the ideas of three important Indian communist thinkers, i.e., Shripad Amrit Dange, E.M.S. Namboodiripad and R.P Dutt.

Shripad Amrit Dange was the founder of the Communist Party of India (CPI) and a committed activist of the Indian trade union movement. Before independence, he played a great role in the freedom struggle and after Independence, became a leading opposition party politician. Elamkulam Manakkal Sankaran Namboodiripad, was a communist leader, a Socialist-Marxist logician, an activist, writer, historian, social analyst and the first chief minister of the state of Kerala. Namboodiripad led major land and academic transformations in Kerala that are now being replicated by

other states of India. It was mainly due to his pledge and leadership that the Communist Party of India (Marxist), of which he was a principal policy-making member and general secretary for 14 years, had turned out to be such a dominant political force in India, playing an imperative role in India's new epoch of alliance politics. Ranjani Palme Dutt was the son of an Indian physician. He was one of the leading figures in the Communist Party of Great Britain from the 1920s to the 1960s. He was a loyal follower of Leninism and Stalinism and saw the British state as inclined towards fascism, proved by the British Empire.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Explain the beliefs of S. A. Dange
- Discuss the life and works of E. M. S. Namboodiripad
- Describe the thoughts of R.P. Dutt

S.A. DANGE

Shripad Amrit Dange was the founder of the Communist Party of India (CPI) and a committed activist of the Indian Trade Union Movement. Under the British imperialists, Dange was placed under arrest communist and trade union activities and was imprisoned for a period of 13 years. After Independence, the Communist Party became the main opposition party to the Congress with Dange becoming the leader of opposition. In the 1960s, a sequence of happenings like the Sino-Soviet split and the Sino-Indian war in 1962 and the revelation that while in jail, Dange had written letters to the British Government, offering them collaboration, resulted in a split in the Communist Party of India in 1964. The separate Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M) turned out to be even stronger in terms of both, strength and performance in the Indian elections.

Dange, who continued to be the chairman of the CPI till 1978, was removed from office that year because most of the party workers were against his politics of providing support to the Indian National Congress and Indira Gandhi. He was disqualified from the CPI in 1981. He joined the All India Communist Party (AICP), and later on, United Communist Party of India. By the end of his life, Dange had become side-lined in the Indian Communist movement. Nevertheless, Dange was an eminent writer and founder of the *Socialist*, the first socialist weekly in India. He also played an important role in the formation of Maharashtra state. Dange's contribution to Indian political thought is thus of great significance.

Early Life and Works

Dange was born on 1 Oth October 1899 in a village called Karanjaon in Niphad Taluka of Nashik in Maharashtra. He belonged to a wealthy landowning family. He went to Pune for his studies, but was expelled from the college for organizing a movement against the compulsory teaching of the *Bible*. When he took voluntary assignment in textile mill areas of Bombay (Mumbai), he had a first-hand experience of the working conditions of the workers. His active involvement in politics took place when he participated in the nationalist movement against British rule. He was deeply inspired by Bal Gangadhar Tilak who was a veteran leader of Indian National Congress from

Maharashtra. Dange discontinued his education and joined the Non-cooperation Movement in 1920 led by Mahatma Gandhi. The Russian Revolution of 1917 acted as a catalyst and fuelled his interest in Marxism.

Gandhi vs Lenin

Dange published a pamphlet under the title of *Gandhi vs Lenin*, bringing out a comparison between the approaches of Mahatma Gandhi with that of Lenin. In this work, Lenin, emerged the better amongst the two. His work proved to be a landmark. The prominent Marxist leader M. N. Roy read the article and came down to Bombay to meet him. An entrepreneur owning a flour mill in Bombay, Ranchoddas Bhavan Lotvala also read the content and was overwhelmed by it. Lotvala sponsored his studies for many years and they jointly built up a library of Marxist Literature and published renditions of classics. In 1922, they came out with an English weekly known as the Socialist.

Influence of Bolshevik Revolution

The second decade of the 20th century witnessed an economic crisis known as the Great Depression. Britain, in particular, witnessed industrial strikes. In India too, the workers movement started gaining steady momentum in this period. There was a great influence of Bolshevik ideas, subsequent to the Russian Revolution in 1917, evident from the political events in many countries outside Russia.

Meeting with M.N. Roy

The ex-member of *Anushilan Samiti* M. N. Roy visited Moscow in April, 1920. The Anushilan Samiti, early in the 20th century, was supposedly the most significant secret revolutionary organization operating in East Bengal. The Lenin Government in Russia expressed interest in Roy and urged him to form an Indian Communist Party. Roy and other Indian emigrants formed a party known as the Communist Party of India on 17th October, 1920 in Tashkent. Upon his return to India, Roy read the article *Gandhi vs Lenin* and went to meet Dange. Dange in those days was associated with Lotvala and both were interested to spread Marxist philosophy in India. Dange, by that time, had already attained popularity as an important Indian Marxist.

Foundation of the Communist Party of India

The British colonial government viewed the communist movement in India as a threat. In the 1920s, they imposed conspiracy cases against people who they suspected were involved in the communist movement.

In December 1925, different communist groups jointly organized a meeting in Kanpur under the chairmanship of Singaravelu Chettiar and Dange; Muzaffar Ahmed, Nalini Gupta and Shaukat Usmani were the other organizers. The meeting came out with a resolution to form a Communist Party of India with its headquarters in Mumbai and also opt for a more open and non-federated platform under the name of Workers and Peasants Party (WPP).

Initial years of the labour movement in India

N. M. Joshi, who was a philanthropist, had sympathy with the working class and therefore formed the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) along with Lala Lajpat Rai. Dange, writing about the AITUC founding session, stated that initially, the AITUC did not have cohesive thoughts about the direction of the trade union movement amongst its members, but it was sympathetic to the Indian National Congress.

In Bombay, in the year 1923, workers came together and formed the Gimi Kamgar Mahamandal. This group entered into a long textile strike in 1924. This Mahamandal, along with its activists, were brought by Dange under the umbrella of the Communist party. Later, the Gimi Kamgar Mahamandal split. The communists formed their own union, known as the Gimi Kamgar Union, at the time of general strike in 1928, under the leadership of Dange as general secretary. Dange, along with his associates, Muzaffar Ahmed and Shaukat Usmani, were arrested by the British because of their active involvement in the strikes.

The CPI and the Independence Movement

The viewpoint of the international communist organization, known as the Comintern (Communist International), deeply influenced the responses of Communist Party of India to the freedom movement. The policies of the Comintern were directed by Joseph Stalin, who in turn, was mostly concerned about Russian geo-political interests. Consequently, the CPI had to oppose popular nationalist sentiments on many occasions, which led to its popular base being battered.

Until 1934, the CPI regarded the Indian National Congress' movement against British rule as a bourgeois reactionary movement. It carried out its own subversive activities against the British. CPI declared its support to the Congress only in 1938 after the Comintern assumed Georgi Dimitrov's thesis of popular front against imperialist oppression. Communist leaders like Dinkar Mehta, Sajjad Zaheer, E.M.S. Namboodiripad and Soli Batliwala took up membership of the national executive of the Congress Socialists Party. The CPI, in 1939, was banned by the British for its initial anti-War or inactive stance against Adolf Hitler and his policies. However, when Hitler attacked Poland, the CPI declared the Second World War was an 'Imperialist War'. Later, when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union, they termed it as 'People's War'. The Communist Party of India was legally recognized by the British colonial government when the Soviet Union sided with Great Britain in the war.

CPI on the eve of Independence

CPI was not in a political dominant situation when the British Government decided to surrender power to Indians for two reasons:

- i. Their dissociation with the Quit India Movement resulted in them losing public support
- ii. The CPI portrayed the Congress as a bourgeois party despite its mass base and support

The CPI also lost its international image during Second World War. As a result, it fell into confusion and looked for advice. P. C. Joshi arranged Dange's visit and meeting with Soviet leaders Andrei Zhdanov and Mikhail Suslov, on the day India got freedom, i.e., 15th August 1947.

Internal strife within CPI in the 1950s

Since Independence, the party relentlessly argued over the issue of support to the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Jawahar Lai Nehru. P. C. Joshi, the then general secretary of the party, was in favour of the support, but was disregarded and cornered by radicals who claimed 'Ye Azaadi Jhooti Hai'. Joshi, who favoured collaboration with the Congress was side-lined and B.T Ranadive became the new general secretary on 28 February 1948, in Calcutta (now Kolkata).

Stalin's intervention

In the beginning of 1950, members of the CPI were at odds over the issue of 'How to acquire political power in India'. The radical group promoted the 'Chinese Path' to capture power through violence, while Dange's group demanded the acceptance of the 'Indian path', i.e., to adopt a moderate path to capture power within the limits of the Indian Constitution. The debate resulted in an open fight between C. Rajeshwara Rao belonging to the 'Chinese Path' and Ajoy Ghosh belonging to the 'Indian Path'. Both of them established their own centres. Subsequently, the CPI was on the verge of a split. On 30 May 1950, Soviet Communist leaders mediated and invited both the leaders to Russia for discussions with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1951. As a result of the discussion, the CPI decided to follow the Indian path to achieving political power.

Formation of Maharashtra

Post-independence, most of the princely states merged into the Indian Union. Some of the Deccan States, including Kolhapur, merged into the Bombay state that was created from the former Bombay Presidency in 1950. The States Re-organization Committee was appointed by the Government of India to establish states based on linguistic lines. This committee suggested the formation of Bombay as the bi-lingual state for Maharashtra and Gujarat, making Bombay the capital. Bombay state, though created on November 1, 1956, raised political conflict in both the areas. The CPI advocated the creating of a state of Maharashtra.

In the all-party meeting of political parties in Pune under the leadership of Keshavrao Jedhe, a joint Maharashtra Council (Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti) was formed. Dange, who had been elected to the 2nd Lok Sabha in 1957 from Bombay City (Central), along with S. M. Joshi, N. G. Gore and P. K. Atre struggled for Samyukta Maharashtra. Their movement resulted into the birth of the Marathi dominant state of Maharashtra.

Birth of CPI(M)

The CPI split in October 1964 when the left faction of the CPI openly since challenged the preparation of a party programme. The conflict erupted on 11th April 1964 when 30 members from the left faction and two centrist leaders, Namboodiripad and Jyoti Basu, walked out of the National Council Meeting of the CPI and submitted an appeal to all Indian communists to renounce Dange's leadership. The National Council suspended these 32 leaders from their membership of the CPI.

The ousted leaders decided to form a separate party in the Tenali convention and resolved to hold a party congress of the left faction of the CPI at Calcutta. Consequently, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was formed in Calcutta and adopted its own political programme under the leadership of P. Sundarayya, who was elected as the general secretary of the CPI (M).

Later on, the Communist Party of India began to strongly oppose the Congress and collaborated for the purpose with the CPI (M), but soon their difference resurfaced and they once again parted their ways. Since 1970 onwards, the Communist Party of India along started supporting Congress again and Dange played a major role in this amalgamation. However, Dange's support of the emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi disillusioned supporters of the party. Dange was later sidelined and expelled from the CPI. After his expulsion, Dange and his wife Ushatai formed the All India Communist

Party. It did not get much reclaim and merged into the United Communist Party of India. On 22 May 1991, Dange died in a Bombay Hospital at the age of 92.

E.M.S. NAMBOODIRIPAD

Elamkulam Manakkal Sankaran Namboodiripad was born on 13 June 1909. Popularly known as E.M.S, he was elected as the first chief minister of Kerala. He was the first Indian politician not belonging to the Congress party to be elected into office in post-Independence India and also was the leader of the first democratically elected communist government anywhere in the world. He initiated revolutionary land and educational reforms in Kerala that had far reaching impact on the society in the state.

Personal Life

E.M.S was born in Peritalmanna taluk of the Malappuram district, into an upper caste Brahmin family. In the early years, he was associated with many leaders and fought with them against casteism and conservatism that existed in the Namboothiri community. During his college days, he was deeply associated with the Indian National Congress and the Indian independence movement. He wrote several books and was the author of several literary works and history of Kerala.

Socialism

He was one of the founder leaders of the Congress Socialist Party, an organization within the Indian National Congress, and was elected as its All India Joint Secretary from the year 1934-1940. In the year 1939, he was also elected for the Madras Legislative Assembly. E.M.S was always committed to his passion of the socialist ideal and worked towards the economic upliftment of the unfortunate working class population. These inclinations within him made him join the ranks of the Indian communist movement. During the Sino-India war in the year 1962, he was among the leaders who aired China's view on the border issue. Before becoming the general secretary in 1977, E.M.S served as a member of the central committee and the politburo of the CPI(M). He held the post of general secretary of the CPI(M) until 1992. He died in 1998.

Election to state government

During his political career, EMS was defeated only once in public elections when he lost to K.P. Kuttikrishnan Nair of the Indian National Congress. EMS led the communists to victory in the first election for the state government in 1957, making him the first communist leader in the world to come to power in a democratic manner. EMS was appointed as the first chief minister of Kerala on 5th April 1957. As he took charge, his government introduced the land reform ordinance and the education bill; two bills that changed the course of the state. The Central government under Nehru controversially dismissed EMS's government in 1959, allegedly under pressure from the United States.

EMS again became the chief minister of Kerala in the year 1967, as a leader of a seven party coalition that included the Muslim League. As chief minister, EMS established a factory which was Asia's first mechanized coir factory named as Floorco in Pozhikkara, Paravur.

EMS was a leader of the opposition in the Kerala legislative assembly twice for the years 1960-1964 and 1970-1977. He influenced society in Kerala through his vision on decentralization of power and people's planning. He also started the Kerala literacy

movement. He also wrote many books and was the author of several literary works in Malayalam. Kerala published all his books under the title *EMS Sarichika*. He was a well-known journalist as well.

In his personal life, EMS was married to Arya Antharjanam and had two sons and two daughters. He died at the age of 79 on 19 March 1998.

R. P. DUTT

Rajani Palme Dutt was born on 19 June 1896 in Cambridge, England. He was a leading journalist and theoretician in the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB). His father Upendra Dutt was an Indian surgeon, and his mother Anna Palme Dutt, was Swedish and the great aunt of the future prime minister of Sweden Olof Palme. Dutt completed his education at the Perse School, Cambridge, and Balliol College, Oxford, where he obtained a first class degree in classics. Dutt married an Estonian, Salme Murrik, the sister of Finnish writer Hella Wuolijoki in 1922. His wife came to Great Britain in 1920 as a representative of the communist international.

Political Career

In 1919, Dutt joined the Labour Research Department, a left wing statistical bureau. In the following year, he joined the newly formed Communist Party of Great Britain and in 1921 founded a monthly magazine called *Labour Monthly*, which he edited until his death. In 1922, Dutt was named as editor of the CPGB's weekly newspaper, *The Workers Weekly*. He acted as a co-ordinator between the Communist Party of India and the Communist International. From 1923 until 1965, he was a member of the executive committee of the CPGB and was the party's chief theorist for many years. In 1923, Dutt first visited Soviet Russia where he attended deliberations of the executive committee of the Communist International.

In 1924, he was elected as an alternate to the ECCI presidium. In 1925, due to some illness, he was forced to step down as editor of the *Workers Weekly*. Dutt spent several years in Belgium and Sweden as a representative of the Comintern.

Dutt advocated Stalin's line of communism. In 1939, when Harry Pollitt, the general secretary of CPGB supported United Kingdom's entry into the Second World War, Dutt supported Stalin, forcing Pollit to resign temporarily. After Stalin's death, Dutt's reaction to Khrushchev's secret speech attacking Stalin downplayed its significance.

According to historian Geoff Andrews, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was still paying the CPGB around 15,000 pounds a year 'for pensions' into the seventies, recipients of which 'included Rajani Palme Dutt'.

R.P Dutt and the Indian freedom struggle

RP Dutt did not believe in Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence. Though he was critical of Gandhi's ideology, he acknowledged Gandhi's contribution to the India's national movement. According to Dutt, swaraj or liberation signifies economic liberation which would bring about a classless society. Dutt emphasized the need to focus more on peasants and workers. He believed that independence was not simply freedom from foreign domination, but the end of class divisions and exploitations. He was critical of western form of parliamentary democracy for it was a 'mockery of popular representation and whose so called liberties are an obvious sham.' Dutt was of the

opinion that the Indian struggle for independence should be a struggle of the working class against the political and economic exploitation of the British capitalists and the Indian bourgeoisie, who had entered into an alliance with the former. Hence, he considered it to be a 'dangerous delusion' to think of the capitalist development in India as a national development. He believed that India's struggle for independence should be the struggle for 'social liberation.'

Through the journal, *Labour Monthly*, Dutt continuously raised the demands of the workers and peasants in India and also supported India's demand for independence. In India, R.P. Dutt functioned as a correspondent of *The Daily Worker* and conducted interviews with the leadership of the Congress Party.

Some important books written by him were—*Modern India* in 1926, *Fascism and Social Revolution* in 1934, *India Today* in 1940, *World Politics 1918-35*, *Crises of Britain and British Empire* in 1949, *The Problems of Contemporary History* in 1963 and the *Internationale* in 1964. In the book, *Modern India*, he explained the tactics and methods that the Indian Communists should adopt to achieve his ideal of swaraj.

ACTIVITY

Talk to people in your neighbourhood or society and find out how many have communist preferences and why.

DID YOU KNOW

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) was in power continuously from the year 1977 to 2011. It has also been in power intermittently in the state of Kerala and Tripura.

SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learned that:

- In India, the Communist movement emerged from the freedom movement.
- From the very beginning, the colonial powers tried to ruthlessly curb the communists. The proofs of this are the conspiracy cases in Peshawar, Lahore and Kanpur. These were meant to nip in the bud communist ideas in India. However, communism did not die out and left its mark on other reformers and reform movements.
- The communist movement played a great role in shaping the freedom movement. After independence, it continued to have an influential role in Indian politics.
- Shripad Amrit Dange was the founder of the Communist Party of India (CPI). Under the British imperialists, Dange was placed under arrest and trade union activities and was imprisoned for a period of 13 years.
- Dange published a pamphlet under the title of *Gandhi vs Lenin*, bringing out a comparison between the approaches of Mahatma Gandhi with that of Lenin.
- The viewpoint of the international communist organization, known as the Comintern (Communist International), deeply influenced the responses of Communist Party of India to the freedom movement.

- Elamkulam Manakkal Sankaran Namboodiripad was born on 13 June 1909. Popularly known as E.M.S, he was elected as the first chief minister of Kerala.
- E.M.S. was the first Indian politician not belonging to the Congress party to be elected into office in post-Independence India and also was the leader of the first democratically elected communist government anywhere in the world.
- Rajani Palme Dutt, best known as R. Palme Dutt, was a leading journalist and theoretician in the Communist Party of Great Britain.

KEY TERMS

- **Trade union movement:** An organized attempt by workers to improve their status by united action (particularly via labour unions) or the leaders of this movement.
- **Socialism:** It is an economic system based on the state ownership of capital.
- **Leninism:** A political theory that advocates the practice of the dictatorship of the proletariat, led by a revolutionary vanguard party.
- **Stalinism:** The ideology and policies adopted by Stalin, based on centralization, totalitarianism, and the pursuit of communism.

ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Shripad Amrit Dange was the founder of the Communist Party of India (CPI).
2. Dange was born on 10th October 1899 in a village called Karanjgaon in Niphad Taluka of Nashik in Maharashtra.
3. Dange published a pamphlet under the title of *Gandhi vs Lenin*, depicting a comparison between the approaches of Mahatma Gandhi with that of Lenin.
4. Elamkulam Manakkal Sankaran Namboodiripad became the leader of the first democratically elected communist government in India.
5. E.M.S was elected for the Madras Legislative Assembly in the year 1939.
6. E.M.S was appointed as the first chief minister of Kerala on 5th April 1957.
7. Rajani Palme Dutt was born in 1896 on Mill Road in Cambridge, England.
8. In 1921, Dutt founded a monthly magazine called *Labour Monthly*, which he edited until his death.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What were the factors that influenced the early life and works of S. A. Dange?
2. How did Dange compare Gandhi with Lenin?
3. How was the Communist Party of India founded?
4. What were Namboodiripad's socialist ideals?

5. What were the activities of R. P. Dutt from 1923 till 1925?

Long-Answer Questions

1. Explain the beliefs of S. A. Dange.
2. Discuss the life and works of E. M. S. Namboodiripad.
3. Describe the views of R.P Dutt on Indian independence.

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