UNIT 1   RENAIASSANCE AND THE IDEA OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Structure

1.1   INTRODUCTION

This is the first Unit of the course and is being treated as the entry point to an understanding of modern world. 'Renaissance' is an Italian word meaning re-birth. But over the last two centuries the word has come to acquire a new meaning. Renaissance as we understand it today is associated with major social and cultural developments in Europe between the 13th and the 15th centuries. The contribution of the Renaissance to the emergence of modernity in early modern Europe has been for many years an appropriate entry point to the history of the modern world. However much intellectuals of the third world dislike such an euro-centric vision, there is no escape from the fact that it was in renaissance Italy and subsequently in certain parts of the sixteenth century Europe that a new view of man as a creative individual possessing the power to shape his destiny without depending on god became a major inspiration for social thinking and political action. In a loose sense this is what is conveyed by what we know as renaissance humanism. Michelangelo's painting of the creation of Adam in the Sistine Chapel, in an artistic sense was a celebration of the newly discovered greatness of man. The idea of a free and creative man was not however a consequence of renaissance social thought alone. Reformation, which came quickly on the heels of the Renaissance also, made its distinct contribution to a spirit of self-consciousness by privatizing religious practice and Protestantism fundamentally fostered an individualistic psyche.

MICHELANGELO, *The Creation of Adam* (About 1511)

1.2   THE INVENTION OF THE IDEA

It is interesting to know that, prior to the 19th century, the major socio-cultural developments in Europe during the 13th- 15th centuries were not understood and codified *as* renaissance. In this section you will become familiar with the process in which renaissance became a part of our knowledge.

In 1860, Jakob Burckhardt formulated the influential concepts of 'Renaissance' and 'humanism', in his pioneering masterpiece of cultural history, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy.* Burckhardt's book was a "subtle synthesis of opinions about the Renaissance that had grown powerful during the Age of the Enlightenment". He seemed to be confirming a story told by secular, liberal intellectuals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who were searching for the origins of their own beliefs and values, that after the collapse of classical civilization a period of darkness and barbarism had set in, dominated by the church and the humdrum of rural life. Eventually, however, a revival of commerce and urban life laid the foundations for a secular and even anti-religious vision of life. The new vision, which glorified the individual and the attractions of earthly life were strongly reinforced by the rediscovery of the pagan literature of the Antiquity. The new secular and individualistic values, which were somewhat incompatible with Christian beliefs, constituted a new worldly philosophy of life known as 'humanism', drawing its main ideas and inspiration from ancient times. Humanism subsequently became the inspiration for questioning the moral basis of the feudal and Christian inheritances in Europe.

Burkhardt's work, which dominated the 19th century perception about the Renaissance, came to be subjected to criticisms later. For a time in the late 1940s and the 1950s, the very idea of a Renaissance came under attack, when the rich growth of scholarship on medieval history made the inherited view of a dark and uncivilized Middle Ages look untenable, "as medievalists discovered squarely in the Middle Ages all the essential traits supposedly typical of the later period, and also discovered within the Renaissance many traditional elements which seemed to prove that the Middle Ages lived on into the Renaissance". Medievalists found renaissances in the sense of periods of classical revival in Carolingian France, Anglo-Saxon England and Ottonian Germany. One of these medieval revivals, the 'twelfth-century Renaissance', became a subject of major historical enquiries, since the coinage of the term by Charles Homer Haskins in his *The renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (1927). Haskins maintained that the term 'renaissance', in the sense of an enthusiasm for classical literature, was an important feature of the twelfth century and that this cultural renewal was the ancestor of subsequent civilizational progress in early modern Europe.

Yet historians have not discarded fully the concept and the term 'Renaissance' in the sense Burckhardt had used it. For historical realities, which Burckhardt had described, cannot be dismissed with quibbles about terminology. Burckhardt rightly saw the emergence of a new culture and also located one of its main sources in Italian humanism by linking it to a unique set of social, political, and economic conditions. This new culture might seem to be the product of the growth of commerce and cities in northern Italy from the late eleventh century. But urban growth and commercial expansion since the 11th century, does not explain why the new culture flowered almost at the end of the 14th century even as it is true that Italy during the 12th and 13th centuries had become the most highly developed, the wealthiest and the most urbanized region of Europe. The urban and commercial growth of Italy stands in contrast to other parts of Europe in the north of the Alps, where the scholastic philosophy, Gothic art, and vernacular literature of these centuries were clearly associated with the clergy and the feudal aristocracy of the medieval age.

1.3   DEVELOPMENTS IN ITALY

Italy too was not totally free of this older aristocratic and clerical culture. Yet the dynamic part of Italy, the north, was dominated not by clerics and feudal nobles but by wealthy urban merchants, 'and during the 12th and 13th centuries, the cities of northern Italy in alliance with the popes broke the military and political power of the German kings, who called themselves Roman emperors and attempted to assert control over northern Italy'. Strong, centralizing monarchy of the kinds that developed in France and England did not emerge in Italy. Northern Italy was dotted with virtually independent urban republics. Although the people of these urban communities were deeply religious people, the position of the clergy in Italian city life was marginal. The cities were governed by wealthy merchants and the dependent petty traders and artisans, though from the 13th century, more and more of them came under the control of military despots who offered protection from internal disorder and external invasion.

Most of these Italian towns existed as markets for local communities, as links between the surrounding country and the distant markets, generally purchasing its cereals from the vicinity. A few large urban formations, like Genoa or Florence, were centres of international trade, which had expanded so enormously during the 12th and 13th centuries that the urban communities in such sprawling towns became larger than the usual small communities in the city republics. The administration of these towns came to depend increasingly on a professional civil service with legal training. As the activity of the towns became more complex, they came to gradually acquire permanent civic institutions including a class of magistrates. This was the time when the communities came to display features of a city-state.

The city-states in practice were republican oligarchies where crucial decisions were taken by a small minority of office-holding wealthy merchants, even though a considerable part of the male population was recruited in the citizen's militia. Over time however, the existence of the city republic in many instances became precarious. The townsmen were fighting each other, a feature that Machiavelli, the great Florentine thinker of renaissance Italy explained as a result of enmity between the wealthy and the poor. The situation was further complicated by factional rivalries within the ruling groups. The city councils became so divided along factional lines that in most cities before the end of the 14th century the regime of a single individual began to be increasingly preferred. To escape the problem of civic strife, most cities turned from republicanism to *signoria* (the rule of one man), who could either be a member of the urban aristocracy or a military captain who had been hired by the city councils for organising the city's defence from external enemies. Republican survivals were exceptions, the rule of the signor became universal. With the exception of Venice, most Italian cities experienced this transformation. The signori in most cases chose to rule through existing republican institutions combining the hitherto antagonistic principles of municipalism and feudalism.

The advent of signori resulted from the fragility of republican institutions, yet the triumph of the signori did not eliminate the need for scholar administrators. The city-states with enlarged functions including diplomacy, warfare, taxation and governance in an expanding and complex urban environment was an ideal breeding ground for a certain consciousness of citizenship. Whether it fostered individualism, as claimed by Burckhardt, still remains a problem. The kind of control that the municipal authorities imposed on traders and artisans fell far short of free private enterprise, yet it is possible to argue that the development of private wealth against the backdrop of an expanding commerce and a measure of involvement of the cities' elites in the

actual governance of the city were capable of reinforcing the individualist self consciousness in some of the city's leading men.

1.4   NEW GROUPS: LAWYERS AND NOTARIES

In a society where commerce dominated the scene the most important educated groups were the lawyers and the notaries (a combination of solicitor and record keeper) who drew up and interpreted the rules and written agreements without which trade on a large scale was not possible. With the growing scale of commerce there was an acute need for men skilled in drafting, recording, and authenticating contracts and letters. These were the notaries, specialists who did not need the long and costly education provided by law schools but who did receive training in Latin grammar and rhetoric. Such training in letter-writing and drafting legal documents was often given by apprenticeship, but at major centres of legal study such as Padua and Bologna, there were full-time professional teachers who taught not only the conventional legal forms of drafting various kinds of business documents and the correct type of handwriting for documents of public record but also provided some instruction in Roman law. Unlike in the middle ages when virtually all intellectual activities were carried on by churchmen, in the Italian cities this was pursued by members of the new professions. In more than one sense they were the real precursors to renaissance humanism.

Padua, a university town especially noted for the study of law and medicine, produced enthusiasts for the language and literature of ancient Rome. An important figure in this movement was Lovato Lovati (c. 1240-1309) a judge who showed many characteristics of humanism. His younger contemporary Albertino Mussato (1261-1325), who was a notary by profession, became widely known throughout Italy. During this early phase of the growth of humanism, Florence, the city associated with the later flowering of humanistic culture, played a marginal role. The great Florentine literary and intellectual figure of this age, Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), is linked more with medieval rather than Renaissance culture whose generation in Florence, despite the persistence of old cultural beliefs, still thought about a certain conception of cultural renewal through reinterpretation of classical literature and a conscious repudiation of the values of medieval civilization. The arrival of Petrarch, a century later, brought about this change in Florentine culture, more decisively. Petrarch realised that antiquity was a distinctive civilization which could be understood better through the words and the languages of the ancients. Petrarch's stress, therefore, was on grammar, which included the close reading of ancient authors from a linguistic point of view. With language, eloquence and the study of rhetoric, the ultimate purpose of this educational programme was to project a certain idea of good life that was suffused with secular meanings.

1.5   HUMANISM

Since the nineteenth century, historians have labeled this new culture as 'humanism', though it appears nowhere in the writings of the Renaissance period itself. The term that did exist was 'humanistic studies' (*studia humanitatis),* implying academic subjects favoured by humanists. By the first half of the fifteenth century, the term 'humanist' designated masters who taught academic subjects like grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy. They were members of a particular professional group who taught humanities and liberal arts – humanitas, a classical word earlier used by Cicero as a substitute for the Greek Paideia, or culture. Cicero was trying to make the point that it was only human beings who were capable of this knowledge about their own selves.

Renaissance humanism, conceived as 'a new philosophy of life' or a glorification of human nature in secular terms, eludes precise definition. Indeed there is no definable set of common beliefs. More than a heightened sense of individualism, the primary characteristic, was the new pattern of historical consciousness that emerged first in the thought of leading 14th century . poet. Petrarch. The sense of being deeply engaged in the restoration of true civilization after many centuries of barbarian darkness – an unfair position at that - finds its first clear statement in the works of Petrarch, and some such claim is common to virtually all of those writers - like Salutati, Poggio, Valla and Ficino to name a few - whom historians identify as the leading personalities in the history of Italian humanism. The humanist self-image as free agents of civilization was sharpened by such historical consciousness which enabled them to distinguish their time as an age of light from the preceding one of darkness. They believed that a dark age had set in after the decline of the Roman Empire as a result of the invasion of the barbarians. The humanists belonging to different generations returned to this theme of belonging to a new time, inventing the concept of the middle ages between the collapse of Rome and the cultural renewal in the age of renaissance. Leonardo Bruni, for sometime the chancellor of Florence, in his history of Florence or Flavio Biondo in a work covering the period from the sack of Rome by Alaric in 410 A.D. to the writer's own time betrayed this new sense of modernity.

The sense of the novelty of their age was entwined with a conscious imitation of the works of the ancient Greek and Roman writers. A certain consciousness of the newness of their time turned the great figures of renaissance into believers in progress. Without doubt, the poet Petrarch (Francesco Petrarca, 1304-74) was its first great figure, the real founder of the new culture, who tried to bring back to life the inner spirit of ancient Roman civilization. His love for ancient Latin literature was dovetailed with a repudiation of the inherited medieval culture. He transformed classicism into a weapon in a struggle to regenerate the world and to create a distinctive new culture built on the solid foundation of a lost but retrievable antiquity.

1.6   NEW EDUCATION

Petrarch's dream of a cultural and moral regeneration of Christian society, based on the union of eloquence and philosophy, had important implications for education. In late medieval and renaissance Italy, there were three types of schools other than the universities and schools conducted by religious orders exclusively for their own members. Most of the teaching at all three levels was done by self-employed schoolmasters who took tuition-paying pupils and, working either alone or with one assistant, taught them whatever subjects their parents paid for. But many towns in northern Italy also organized community schools, in which the local government selected and hired a schoolmaster, who was bound by a very specific contract to teach certain subjects up to a certain level. Communal schools began to appear in the 13th century. Communal schools in small towns ensured that competent preparation for university study would be available for the sons of the ruling elites.

Despite the growth of humanism, in the 14th century the curriculum of these schools did not change much. The textbooks used were predominantly medieval and Christian in origin, and many of them had been deliberately compiled for classroom use in teaching correct Latin and sound moral principles. This medieval curriculum aroused the contempt of Petrarch and virtually all later humanists, who attacked this curriculum on the ground that most of its intellectual content, was inadequate and that its moral indoctrination had no relevance in the lives of the citizens of Italian cities. Leonardo Bruni acknowledged that it was Petrarch who had outlined a programme of study

by which the classical ideas would be achieved. It included grammar, rhetoric, poetry, moral philosophy and history. The humanists also insisted upon the mastery of classical Latin and Greek, so that the ancient authors could be studied directly to the exclusion of medieval commentaries.

The humanists taught in a variety of ways. Some founded their own schools where students could study the new curriculum at both elementary and advance levels; some humanists managed to find their way into universities where teaching continued to be dominated by law, medicine and theology and the humanist curriculum had a peripheral presence. The majority achieved their mission by teaching in numerous grammar schools. But formal education was not the only way through which they shaped the minds of their age; literature, art and drama were the other vehicles of transmission of humanist ideas.

1.7   PRINT

The growing influence of humanist schoolmasters in the Latin grammar schools in the Italian towns did much to establish humanism as the major force in Italian culture. Yet another source of humanism's growing dominance was the new art of printing. By 1500, many classical texts had been printed in Italy, mostly in Latin. Printing, apart from standardizing the new editions of the classics also helped in their dissemination. Before printing, most books existed only in a few copies; printing increased their numbers. As a result, the cost of books also fell exposing the students to a new kind of learning instead of depending solely on lectures. A printed book promoting new ideas, could quickly reach hundreds of readers. Ideas, opinions, and information moved more widely and more rapidly than ever before. Surely one reason why the humanistic culture of Italy spread more rapidly across the Alps toward the end of the 15th century is that books were circulating in print.

1.8   SECULAR OPENINGS

One of the most important features of the renaissance is a beginning of a loosening control of religion over human life. In this sense it may be said that renaissance created conditions for the emergence of a secular ideology. A new focus on humanism also fed into this secular opening. But it is important to understand exactly how, and to what extent, this secular opening was created. Although humanism may have challenged the conventional authorities of the academic world, including scholastic theologians, it was not necessarily meant to be a challenge to Christian faith or to Catholic orthodoxy. Petrarch, for example, expressed doubts about his own spiritual beliefs, but he never doubted the truth of Christianity. He also objected to the Italian scholasticism of his time not on the ground that it was too religious but that it was materialistic and at times subversive of the teachings of the church. Salutati did endorse the active secular life for most people and followed that course in his own life, but he still respected the monastic ideals. In the 1390s he and his family were attached to a revivalist movement that was based on traditional forms of devotion. The inherent and general irreligiosity of Renaissance humanism is to a large extent a creation of 19th century historiography.

This is not to imply that men were not interested in worldly things, even when the educated classes as well as plain folk were deeply moved by religious revivalism and devotionalism. Certainly renaissance Italians were strongly attracted to material wealth, to power, and to glory. Yet those who preferred to live a happy and successful life were not necessarily irreligious, even though humanism as a culture of the talented urban people in the wealthy Italian town was giving rise to a secular morality.

Fransceco Barbaro, a Venetian humanist of the first generation, wrote a tract concerning marriage which repudiated the traditional ideas of poverty and defended acquisition of wealth as a virtue. Bracciolini Poggio (1380-1459), who was the most celebrated excavator of lost manuscript in Florence, in a tract *On Avarice* defended acquisition of wealth, going to the extent of justifying usury which had always been condemned by orthodox Christianity as an unchristian act, as a legitimate form of business. In addition numerous humanist treatises like for example *On Civil Life* written by Matteo Palmiry upheld the superiority of an active life over one of contemplation. Such opinions did express values of the prosperous classes. This set of values was secular; it regarded marriage, wealth and politics as natural and worthy of pursuit. Yet they were not fundamentally anti-Christian. Their authors were practical moralists who presented a moral code appropriate for the ambitious people, rather than monks, while accepting that there could be a spiritual life beyond one's worldly existence.

The glorification of secular life, however, was more a literary reflection of changing social attitudes than an aspect of classical studies. The classical studies nonetheless contributed to the glorification of human nature, even though humanists were also conscious of its frailties. Lorenzo Valla (1406-1457), who believed that study of history led man to live a life of perfection, in his work, *On Pleasure*, condemned within a profoundly Christian mentality the conventional Christian injunction against pleasure. In some other writings, there was a rejection of the view that wise men should suppress passion, on the ground that such suppression was thoroughly unnatural. The theme of human dignity occupies a central place in such works to the degree that in a number of places, as the one written by Marsilio Ficino, a neo-Platonist thinker of Florence, human nature was endowed with super natural power. Human beings occupying a crucial middle position in the great chain of being was the point of contact between the material world and the world of god. Such sentiments had already informed the writing of the 13th century humanists like Leonardo Da Vinci. Ficino's glorification of human nature takes the pursuit of the human glory beyond the everyday life of the middle class Florentines. Ficino, despite his knowledge in platonic philosophy on which he regularly lectured before students in his platonic academy, was a believer in magic and astrology. Ficino belonged to a circle of some prominent intellectual figures, which included a young prince of Medici family whose name was Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola. Mirandola's most famous work, *'Oration on the dignity of man'*, published in 1496 deals with the theme of human dignity by suggesting that of all God's creation man received complete freedom to choose his own place in the Great chain of being. By his own free choice man creates himself either in a spiritual fashion or in the manner of a beast. His view of human nature did not look towards divine grace but celebrated worldly achievement.

The secular morality of the humanists, therefore was grounded in a belief in man's intellectual and moral capacity, a new sense of history, and a highly sophisticated mode of learning. Faith in human capacity came form the realisation that the educated could attain wisdom without the help of priests or intellectuals. The conception was strengthened by a renewed acceptance of the ancient proposition that virtue was knowledge. Behind this lay a belief that knowledge could elevate human beings. These attitudes constituted an idea not just of individualism but also a different ideal of public man, setting out not just a few new assumptions about humanity but also a normative procedure for assessing human actions.

In the 15th and 16th centuries, the scholars, the artists, the architects, the musicians and the writers, all those who shaped the culture of Humanism, began to experience a more general sense that their society had entered upon a new age, an age which

has removed the 'darkness' of the preceding centuries: the 'Renaissance'. While this interpretation of history was an exaggeration of what they were professing, it was yet undeniable that a new vision of man was being created. The 'new man' was considered sovereign in the world and, with his reason and creative powers, was able to refashion the world in accordance with his will.

Increasingly, the *studium humanitatis* and the general cultural climate of the Renaissance produced texts which showed this deepening interest in the essence of what made man more civilized, humane being and which were therefore called *humanist literature.* Texts written on a variety of subjects sought to expose what man was and could do both as an individual and as a member of society. The autobiography, in which a person tells his own, unique story of his life was born in humanist circles. A fine example of this kind of writing was the one written by the famous goldsmith and sculptor, Benvenuto Cellini (1500-71), it was a secular and realistic work which told the story of his life. His readers were persuaded to see the world around him through his eyes, not according to all sorts of idealizations which the Church had earlier imposed on Christian communities.

Thus, Cellini writes of the necessity to record one's deeds, and in the process informs the posterity about his experience and engagement with reality. He writes about the ancient monuments that inspired him, giving an idea of the sense of life and movement in Michelangelo's work, often graphically describing Michelangelo's quarrels with his competitors. Another instance of this genre of writings is Vasari's *Lives of the Artists*, in which the author, who was himself an artist, reflected on the achievements of some of his contemporaries in relation to their personalities, in short describing the place of the creative individual in society. His work, as those of other great names of the renaissance like Niccolo Machiavelli was informed by the sentiments that all men were capable of achieving wisdom and glory – a feeling which merged into the new humanist ideas in the intellectual circles. This enabled them to understand afresh the history of texts, in the process laying out the groundwork for classical scholarship of modern times. A consequence of such intellectual interest enabled the humanists to develop a new understanding of man in society.

The moral basis of this ideal was derived from the belief in man's capacity to understand truth on the strength of his reason and worldly sense – an idea that the intellectuals of the renaissance had inherited from classical learning. At one level this human capacity was looked upon as a divine gift; at another level human achievement depended on free choice which implicitly acknowledged a certain self definition of goals and responsibilities by an individual, who was as much capable of sound decisions as of faulty strategies. The description of man incorporated both virtue and vice. The historian Buckhardt wrote about the development of the individual as an aspect of this new consciousness, attributing this to the material life and political culture of the Italian city states. This new consciousness created the ideal of the universal man in the sense of a certain recognition of the individual personality and private achievements. To men like Machiavelli pursuit of glory was a perfectly human virtue.

1.9   REALISM VS. MORALISM

Apart from the pursuit of glory, the self-development of an individual personality through cultivation of 'arts and sciences' emerged as another social ideal allowing a great flowering of creative activity. The cult of artistic personality was the other side of the same coin – an ideal which figures prominently in Vasari's *Lives* who linked artistic excellence to a psychology of achievement. To some extent Vasari had followed

the procedure which had been adopted by the celebrated Roman biographer Plutarch. Plutarch had presented before the humanists a vision of man in society whose achievements were results of their pursuit of glory and entwined with a certain conception of virtue.

The idea was attractive and powerful because of its intense realism. Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527), a Florentine scholar, who, in his famous 1513 tract *The Prince*, describes the role of man in that segment of society which is called politics. Machiavelli, too, was secular and a realist; he showed that the will to power was a dominant motive in human action though often coated with nice words of religious and ethical nature. Upon a closer look it revealed itself as pure self-interest; and more importantly there was nothing wrong about it. Machiavelli's political thought is often interpreted as "the activation, in one sense or another, of a pagan morality, without being contaminated by Christian asceticism". It is also argued that being a realist he suggested a dual morality. What was moral in the public sphere might have been immoral in one's private life. Machiavelli's condonation of cunning on the part of a ruler in the larger interest of the realm, is the well-known example of the dual morality. Machiavelli apparently was interested more in what men did in the public sphere than what they preached. Scholars like Quentin Skinner have painstakingly argued that this was essentially a pre-Christian pagan morality where success was worshiped as virtue. Even though Machiavelli had a gloomy opinion about the way life was governed by fortune, he placed a large premium on the appropriate initiatives by men to overpower fortune. In a sense this was a celebration of man as a self-determining being.

Such a dynamic concept of man which appears with the renaissance, like humanism, cannot be precisely defined. It certainly implied an individualistic outlook and has often been described as 'renaissance individualism'. In a way it fell far short of the individualism of a mature bourgeois society, yet it was bourgeois individualism in its embryo. Probably the ideal of the self-made man which renaissance humanism proclaimed was suggestive of the way the individuals were capable of shaping their own lives rather than the more mundane pursuit of power and money. This ideal was closely tied with certain versatility or many-sidedness of human nature going against the ordered existence that was imposed on man by Christianity and feudalism. The Christian concept of man was founded on the idea that man necessarily had a depraved existence and could be delivered only by the grace of god. At another level he was a member of a feudal order or an estate. The status of an individual either as a member of a feudal order or as a member of the Christian community allowed him an extremely narrow range of freedom. One could of course rebel against the church and could be condemned as a heretic. But even that rebellion was staged in the name of the Christ, always weighed down by the belief in man's essential sinfulness derived from the Biblical notion of the original sin. The renaissance view of man replaced this with the dynamic view in which "the two extreme poles were the greatness of man and also his littleness".

Whether great or small, man began to be looked upon as a relatively autonomous being, 'creating his own destiny, struggling with fate, making himself'. This was no more than an idealised image of actual man, backed up adequately by a pluralism of moral values reversing a value system based on the seven cardinal sins and seven cardinal virtues of medieval Christianity. The pluralism of moral values appears boldly in the way the renaissance intellectuals began to respond very differently to different human propensities. If the striving for power was perfectly acceptable to Machiavelli, to some others, like Thomas More, it was a source of much mischief. To put it simply the renaissance experienced the development of what may be labeled

as realistic ethics, suggesting a situation where values became relative and contradictory calling upon man to look for the appropriate measure to distinguish between good and bad against the background of a significant transformation of social life.

The new ideal of man presumes a larger amount of freedom of action which the medieval Christian community did not allow. The city state was one sphere in which it became increasingly evident that man is the maker of his own world together with others instead of being determined by either Christian or feudal rules of conduct. One of the consequences was the gradual fading away of the old notion of sin. The man of the age began to measure his action by their success or the lack of it. The emergence of such practical atheism was an important aspect of renaissance thinking about man. It also existed as the basis of the rational Christianity or a tolerant religion of reason taking its position against dogmatism and allowing a certain freedom of individuality and choice. Ficino, for example, made a significant attempt to reconcile some of his platonic philosophical ideas with Christian thoughts imbued with the awareness of the creative power of man. The great renaissance figures discovered that the attributes of god in fact were the attributes of man as well. One can perhaps think of an attempt towards the deification of man as one of the wonders of the world. There are many illustrations from renaissance sculptures where human heroes appear as divine figures. Michelangelo's David looks like a Greek god. A man like Ficino not only argued that god created man, but also stressed that once created, man created himself over and over again. Ficino also spoke of the eternal restlessness and dissatisfaction of human mind returning to the same dynamic concept of man which refused to acknowledge any limits like an early modern merchant motivated by boundless opportunities for profits.

This vision of the greatness of man dovetailed with man's essential frailties. Machiavelli himself believed that 'all men are bad and ever ready to display their vicious nature partly because of the fact that human desires are insatiable'. The most powerful motive Machiavelli sees as the incentive for every human action is self-interest. The vileness of human nature therefore had nothing to do with any deliberate design for evil and what Machiavelli described as human nature is synonymous with the general ethical belief of the emerging bourgeois society in which reliance was placed mainly on the unbiased observation of facts and behaviour. This precisely was the ethic of experience which occupies a central place in Machiavelli's definition of human nature when he writes that 'the desire to acquire possession is a very natural and ordinary thing, and when those men do it who can do it successfully they are always praised and not blamed'.

Artists presented this new vision of man as well. For the material remains of classical culture were now sought as assiduously as the surviving ancient texts: the 15th and 16th centuries saw the birth of archaeology. Numerous works of art were discovered in the ruins of ancient Rome, and the finds reinforced the new view of man that had been developing in the previous century. A multitude of paintings and sculptures of 'perfectly' proportioned men and women was the result. A new, ideal-type human being was created, which has captured our imagination through the ages. Early in the 14th century life like frescos of Giotto di Baondone, had brought about significant changes in the artistic visualization of human figure breaking away from the mechanical style of the middle ages. In 1416, the Italian sculptor Donatelo broke new ground with figures like his nude David, anticipating the more well known work on the same subject by Michelangelo in 1503. Leonardo da Vinci painted Monalisa, which has remained as one of the symbols of female beauty in modern times.

"St. George," bronze copy of a marble statue by Donatello, 1415

Besides incorporating the secularist and individualist aspects of humanism, the reborn age or Renaissance should be called realistic as well. In painting, attempts were made to represent everything as it appeared. Though not totally absent in the previous ages, one can certainly maintain that for many centuries realism had been relatively unimportant. Already in the 14th and 15th centuries, during the first phases of humanist culture, painters increasingly attempted to reproduce reality, casting off preconceived ideas about what was morally or religiously acceptable. Increasingly, what the eye could measure or observe was painted incorporating distance, depth and colour in order to make the painting more realistic. In sculpture too people were individualized, with recognizable faces, whereas the art of the preceding centuries had been a component of an architectural background - reliefs more than free-standing figures; in the changed context sculpted images presented man according to his newly-won vision of himself as an independent and free personality, displaying a certain pride in the beauty of the body, both the male and, in view of the conventions of the preceding age, the female too.

"Mona Lisa," oil painting by Leonardo da Vinci, 1503-06

Whereas woman for a long time had been 'stereotyped due to the limits imposed upon her role by the society, she now seemed to regain some stature as an individual person, in whose body the perfection of God's creation was made as visible as in the male'. This was the case even when paintings and sculptures served religious purposes, and were composed in such a way that they aroused an appropriate devotional reaction in the viewers, like the Madonna and her child by the Italian painter Raphael or the huge frescos, mosaics and statues that adorned walls and ceilings and cupolas in the Church.

"THE GRAND-DUKE'S MADONNA," OIL PAINTING BY RAPHAEL, 1505

Inevitably, trade and travel, military conquest and diplomatic contacts linked the new culture of the Italian towns and courts with the world beyond. The new culture was admired and imitated all over Europe although, of course, by the better educated and the wealthy, only. For both south and north of the Alps, Humanism and the Renaissance were elite phenomena. Only very few of the new ideas and thoughts filtered down to the ordinary man who, after all, could not read or write the polite language, lacking, as the cultivated mind of the age saw it, the ability to acquire virtue and wisdom.

Yet in the 15th and early 16th centuries, the educational institutions in northern Europe produced many humanists. Like their Italian colleagues, they too, began to focus on the classical Greek and Roman texts along with the holy books of the Christians. Desiderius Erasmus, one of the most famous of these north European humanists, in a series of treatises, tried to lay down the rules for an educational system that despite its Christian foundation, came to be animated by the critical spirit of Humanism. Indeed, one should not forget that, contrary to what often has been suggested, most people living the culture of Renaissance and humanism did not display a 'heathenish', pagan spirit but remained firmly tied to a view of man and the world as, essentially, redeemable only by a Christian God.

By the beginning of the 16th century humanist values had begun to refashion the intellectual life of northern Europe. John Colet and Sir Thomas More popularised them in England, Jacque's Lefevre'd Etaples and Guillaume Bude in France, Conrad Celtis and Hohann Reuchulin in Germany and Erasmus in Holland were the leading humanists in early 16th century Europe. But unlike Italy, where professionals dominated the humanist movement and gave it a secular character –even atheist in some cases – in European humanism the leading protagonists were mostly members

of the clerical order. Their reassessment of Christian theology set the stage for the Reformation by calling upon Christians to practice religion in the way it had been stated in the ancient texts of the Christian religion, by discarding unnecessary and unpalatable rituals, condemned as later accretions to a simple religion. With the advent of the Reformation, the humanist 'Self Congratulation on living in a golden age' was eclipsed by theological battles of the time. 'The waning of the Renaissance' had begun. Yet the new view of man as a free rational agent was a principle to which the post-Renaissance philosophy returned over and over again, inspired by the belief in a distant god who created man but allowed him complete freedom to live his life freely, in pursuit of happiness 'here and now'.

1.10   SUMMARY

This unit has tried to explain to you the different ways in which the Renaissance created the condition for the making of a new world. It starts by explaining that significant commercial, socio-cultural and literary developments in Europe during the 13th-15th centuries came to be viewed and conceptualized *as* Renaissance only in the 19th century. The Renaissance was marked by the emergence of a new culture with roots in Italian humanism. This culture was the product of a set of unique social, political and economic conditions prevalent in parts of Europe from the late 11th century onwards. These conditions were most conspicuous in the northern part of present-day Italy with the growth of commerce and cities. These developments brought about an important shift in the centres of political power from the clerics (men associated with the Christian Church) and feudal nobles to wealthy urban merchants. At the same time there was also a tendency towards a consolidation of political power. These crucial developments along with the emergence of new social groups (lawyers and notaries), new ideologies (humanism and tendencies towards secularism) and new technologies (print) cumulatively transformed the socio-cultural and political landscape of Europe. These developments also created new forces which, in the centuries to follow, worked towards a greater cohesion and integration of the world.

1.11   GLOSSARY

Euro-centric Vision : a way of looking at history and the world that places Europe and its history at the centre.

Oligarchies : a small group of people in control of state power in the society. This term was generally used for the rulers of the city-states in medieval Europe.

Pagan : used here to refer to small religious tradition that existed outside, and prior to, the dominant world religious traditions.

Antiquity : used here in the sense of a distant past prior to the middle ages in the history of Europe.

Usury : the practice of money lending at a high rate of interest.

Theology : used here in the sense of the study of god and religious subjects.

UNIT 2   THE ENLIGHTENMENT

Structure

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Eighteenth century Europe witnessed very wide sweeping changes in all spheres of life. Although these changes did not occur at the same time or at the same pace in all countries, they structured a distinct historical era – one that laid the foundations of the modern age. The Enlightenment or the Age of Reason, as it came to be known subsequently, marked a sharp break from the past. Even though its anti-clericalism echoed the sentiments of the Renaissance and the Reformation it neither endorsed the paganism of the former nor did it share the faith of the latter. It clearly identified two enemies: religion and hierarchy, and attempted to displace the centrality accorded to both in social and political life. The Enlightenment men were not irreligious or atheists but they were bitterly opposed to and intolerant of the institutions of Christianity and they sought to challenge them by articulating a conception of man, history and nature that relied heavily upon the world-view expressed by the new discoveries in the natural sciences. At the most general level, the Enlightenment used the scientific method of enquiry to launch a systematic attack on tradition *per se*. They questioned blind obedience to authority, whether that of the priest or the ruler. Nothing was any longer sacred and beyond critical scrutiny. The new social and political order that the Enlightenment thinkers aspired for expressed the optimism that came with the advancement of material and scientific knowledge. They strongly believed that human beings were in a position to create a world in which freedom, liberty and happiness will prevail over all else. Even though this vision was very widely shared it was most clearly evident in the writings of Voltaire, Diderot, d'Alembert and Condorcet in France, Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith and David Hume in Scotland, Christian Wolff and Immanuel Kant in Germany and marchese di Baccaria in Italy. The writings of these theorists best express the spirit of the Enlightenment and its influence upon the modern age. In this Unit we are going to discuss some of the essential features of the enlightenment.

2.2   THE IDEA OF PROGRESS

The idea that is constitutive of the Enlightenment and central to this historical epoch is the idea of progress. Through it the Enlightenment expressed the twin belief that – a) the present was better and more advanced than the past, and b) this advancement has resulted in the happiness of man. Both these claims about progress in history were based on the assessment of the changes that were taking place around them. The scientific discoveries of Copernicus, Kepler and Newton and their applications by Galileo led them to believe that human beings could fully understand the functioning of the universe and gain an unprecedented degree of control over their natural and

physical environment. This sentiment was further reinforced by the changes that were taking place in the traditional organization of life. The incorporation of new technologies in the field of agriculture and in the manufacturing of goods had meant significant increase in the sphere of production. Coupled with improved communications, development of roads, canals, and the growth in internal and foreign trade, they believed they were standing on the threshold of a new era: an era that would be marked by abundance, perfectibility of man and the institutions of society. At the most general level there was a feeling that we are now moving towards a condition in which, to quote Gibbons, 'all inhabitants of the planet would enjoy a perfectly happy existence'.

Theorists of the Enlightenment were convinced of the achievements and superiority of their age. They saw in history a movement from the dark ages to the civilized present. This did not mean that human history was slowly but steadily moving in one direction or that every stage marked an improvement over the previous one. While pointing to progress in history they were primarily saying that there was a marked improvement in the quality of life in the present era. More specifically, the *Philosophes* (philosophers who espoused this vision in France) were claiming that there has been a tangible and undeniable advancement in every sphere of life since the Reformation. For Chastellux, flourishing agriculture, trade and industry, the rise in population and the growth in knowledge were all indicators of the increase in felicity. The latter meant that their age was a much happier one. It was marked by peace, liberty and abundance. It was, to use Kant's words, the best of all possible worlds.

Unlike many of his contemporaries Kant was however of the view that happiness was not the main issue. It was not simply a question of increase or decrease in the levels of happiness because civilization, even in its most perfect form, could not bring about the happiness of men. Hence it was not to be judged in those terms. Civilization, according to Kant, provided a setting in which men can test and prove their freedom. The present merited a special place in so far as it had created conditions in which men can encounter the most important category of reason, namely, freedom.

The belief that man had advanced from the 'barbarous rusticity' to the 'politeness of our age' was characteristic of the Enlightenment. Indeed, this reading of the past and the present marked a sharp break from the earlier conceptions of history. The Greeks, for instance, saw history as a cyclical process comprising of periods of glory followed by periods of decline and degeneration. The Middle Ages, under the influence of Christianity, had little place for mundane history. Nothing in real history mattered because hope and happiness lay in the other-world. Man's fall from grace had meant the loss of idyllic existence. Consequently, for them, it was only through redemption that men could hope to improve their present condition. The Renaissance broke away from this Christian reading of history but it had a pessimistic view of human nature. The Renaissance men believed that the achievements of antiquity, in particular, of Greek and Roman civilization, were unreachable. They embodied the highest achievements of humankind that could not be surpassed. The Enlightenment, in sharp contrast to all this, focused on the 'here' and 'now' and saw in it unprecedented growth, accompanied by moral and intellectual liberation of man. Johnson is reported to have said, "I am always angry when I hear ancient times being praised at the expense of modern times. There is now a great deal more learning in the world than there was formerly; for it is universally diffused". The Scottish philosopher Dugald Stewart was even more unequivocal in affirming the progress in the present world. He argued that the increase in commerce had "led to the diffusion of wealth and 'a more equal diffusion of freedom and happiness', than had ever existed before". Technological innovations that accompanied capitalism

meant that men were "released from the bondage of mechanical labour and…free to cultivate the mind". The present was thus seen as the age of progress where there was unprecedented advance in every sphere of life.

While the present was seen as 'spreading the light' of reason, the Enlightenment designated the past as `primitive' and `barbaric'. It was, in its view, riddled with superstition and dogma, and guided by religion and blind obedience to authority. Above all, it was marked by the absence of individual freedom. The present, by comparison, was designated as `civilized' and `enlightened': an era in which reason was expected to prevail. The theorists of Enlightenment believed that there were primarily two obstacles to progress – wars and religion. Both these could be, indeed they needed to be, destroyed by reason. Once that was done then the world would be a better place. It would, in the words of Condorcet, move from bondage to ultimate perfection of freedom and reason.

Reason was, in a sense, the key to the earthly utopia. It was an instrument that individuals could use not only to interrogate all received forms of knowledge but also to lead a virtuous, rational and happy life. For the *Philosophes*, reason was an ally of experience. It embodied a non-authoritarian source of knowledge that can be tested and proved. In the Preface to The System of Nature, Holbach wrote: "[R]eason with its faithful guide experience must attack in their entrenchments those prejudices of which the human race has been too long the victim…. Let us try to inspire man with courage, with respect for his reason, with an indistinguishable love for truth, to the end that he may learn to consult his experience, and no longer be the dupe of an imagination led astray by authority…". Theorists, such as Holbach, believed that reason could liberate men from the oppressive power exercised by religion and, at the same time, provide them knowledge of the truth. Men had therefore to be taught to use reason and to act in accordance with its potentialities. This was the main Enlightenment project.

2.3   SCIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

The growth in scientific knowledge had given the Enlightenment grounds for being optimistic about the present and the future. Its spokesmen asserted with conviction that civilization was moving in the right direction and that it must continue to move in that direction. The apparent progress in material and social life also gave them a sense of grandeur. They felt that there were no limits on what human beings could know and accomplish. The development of human faculties and the advance that had been made by the sciences and by civilization as a whole, gave them enough reason to assert that nature had placed no limits on our hopes. The belief that human beings could achieve whatever they set out to do was closely linked to the Enlightenment idea of progress. Progress indicated the increasing ability of individuals to control their natural and social environment. According to the Enlightenment thinkers, the visible improvement in human life was the result of active and effective application of reason for controlling physical and social environment. *Vice-versa,* the success that their generation had in controlling their environment and harnessing the forces of nature for the betterment of humankind affirmed the belief that scientific application of reason would lead to the liberation of man. It could create an ideal world in which individuals could strive to combine the virtues of knowledge with liberty.

Three points need to be emphasized here. First, the Enlightenment thinkers linked knowledge with the natural sciences. The method of systematic observation, experimentation and critical inquiry used in the physical sciences was, in their view,

the only viable basis of arriving at the truth. Knowledge must be demonstrable. It must be backed by proof that is accessible through reason and the faculties of the human mind. Based on this conception of knowledge, the Enlightenment posited a dichotomy between metaphysical speculation and knowledge. The Middle ages, under the influence of Christianity, had assumed that the world created by God could not be known by human beings. It was, by definition, inaccessible to human reason. The truth about man and the universe could only be 'revealed', and hence, known through the holy scriptures. "Where the light of reason does not shine, the lamp of faith supplies illumination". This was the avowed belief of the Middle Ages. The Enlightenment rejected this view and maintained that things that could not be known by the application of reason and systematic observation were chimerical. What could not be known must not even be sought for it constitutes the realm of the metaphysical, if not the non-sensical.

Second, the Enlightenment began with the view shared by the leading scientists of their times: namely, that the secrets of the universe could be apprehended completely by man. These theorists were convinced both of the intelligibility of the universe and of the ability of individuals to understand it completely. They believed that while discussing nature we ought to begin not with the authority of the scriptures but with sensible experiments and demonstrations. In *Les Bijoux Indiscrets,* Diderot compared the method of experimentation to a giant who could in one blow destroy the grand systems created by metaphysics and idle speculation. The latter were simply buildings without foundations so they could easily be knocked down by the power of scientific reason.

Third, science had provided a new and fairly different picture of man and the universe. Instead of positing a world of things that are ordered by their ideal nature or by some prior purpose, it presented nature as a self-regulating system of laws. The Enlightenment theorists embraced this world-view and like their counterparts in the natural sciences they aimed to discover laws that govern society and human nature. Identifying laws and establishing patterns entailed the study of cause and effect relationships. It required the search for an antecedent event that is necessary and sufficient for explaining an occurrence. The *Philosophes* abandoned the search for final causes and focussed instead on the examination of an efficient cause; that is, they tried to specify an antecedent event whose presence is necessary for the occurrence of a given phenomenon and whose absence would imply the non-occurrence of that phenomenon.

The study of cause-and-effect relationships was central to the Enlightenment conception of science. According to Francesco Algarotti "things are concealed from us as though by a heavy fog especially those things that are most often before our eyes. Nature has hidden from us the primary and elementary effects almost as thoroughly, I should say, as she has hidden the causes themselves. Thus, if we cannot find the order of mutual dependence of all parts of the universe, nor discover first causes, perhaps…you will think it no small achievement to show the relationship among effects that appear to be very different, reducing them to a common principle, and to extract by observation from particular phenomenon the general laws which nature follows by which she governs the universe". This conception of scientific enquiry marked a sharp departure from the Aristotelian world-view that had dominated the study of nature before this. In place of using observation as a tool for categorizing and classifying things, it now urged the discovery of causes in an attempt to explain `why' certain things happen and also to predict the occurrence of such events in the future. Discovery of causes, in other words, was a means of increasing man's control over his environment – both natural and social.

While endorsing this conception of science the *Philosophes* were nonetheless aware that knowledge would have to be built from small foundations. Yet, they were firm in their belief that the little that we had learnt by method of observation and causal analysis had vastly extended our knowledge; and, that it alone could reveal to us the truth about the world. "[T]hanks to observations with the microscope our vision has penetrated into the deepest recesses of bodies, and that by observations with the telescope it has scanned the breadth of the heavens to enrich natural history and astronomy with a thousand wonderful discoveries. Only through the study of observations has Chemistry been perfected so that it is now succeeding in analyzing bodies into their component elements and is on the verge of being able to put them together again. Only in this way has nautical sciences made such progress that now we can speed from one hemisphere to the other in great safety. It is undeniable …that in Medicine, where hypothetical systems are dangerous, only sober reason and ... passionate observation can bring improvement and development. What then remains for us? Nothing but the responsibility to observe ourselves attentively…." for this alone will lead our "mind towards truth".

Working with this conception of knowledge the Enlightenment thinkers attempted to observe and systematically explain the world around them and the society in which they lived. They focussed on the observable and attempted to understand the complexities of individual and national character by relating them to other physical and social elements that are given to empirical investigation. Montesquieu examined the connections between political and civil laws of a country and its physical character – the climate, temperature and other demographic configurations. Adam Ferguson and David Hume undertook a scientific analysis of the mind by examining empirically the process of socialization. The manner by which individuals internalize moral, social and intellectual ideas and come to acquire a notion of virtue and propriety was a subject that received their attention. Even as they studied the process of 'moral education' they believed that men of reason could only accept data that is given in observation. Hence, almost all of them focused on the empirical manifestations of objects and in their work they tried to build relationships between observable dimensions of different phenomena. Through systematic observation of concrete particulars, these philosophers sought to arrive at the general principles and laws by which nature and society are governed.

Theorists of Enlightenment believed that the world was like a machine, controlled by and functioning in accordance with certain general laws. Consequently, by discovering these underlying laws they hoped to understand the mysteries of the universe and gain control over them. Knowledge was intended to serve, what Habermas calls, a technical interest. Its purpose was to enable individuals to gain greater control over their environment so that they can protect themselves against the ravages of natural forces and, at the same time, harness the energies of nature in a way that is advantageous to humankind.

To the Enlightenment mind, increasing degree of control over physical and social world, and the success of technological applications indicated progress and truth. Indeed, they signified scientific knowledge and validated its claim to truth. Although technical success was favoured for the sake of improving human condition, what was desired above all was freedom and happiness. It was believed that the ability to explain and control natural and social environment would enable individuals to construct a world in which these twin goals can be realized. To quote Hume, "happiness was the end to which all human life was directed and as society provides men with these ideas which made life intelligible and happiness possible, men can find happiness in society". Hume was not alone in claiming this. Most of his

contemporaries maintained that expanding knowledge of the laws of the universe would enable humankind to fashion their lives and create a perfect society. At the very least, it will give men the satisfaction of knowing that they have the correct methods of enquiry, consequently they will never `relapse into barbarism'.

What needs to be reiterated here is that the Enlightenment thinkers did not simply associate knowledge with science, they wanted to apply the "experimental method" used in the physical sciences to the study of society. Like the natural scientists they searched for laws of human nature and laws of social development. Montesquieu maintained that "[E]verything which exists has its laws: the Diety has its laws, the material world its laws, the spiritual beings of a higher order than man their laws, the beasts their laws, and man his own laws…. As a physical being, man is governed by invariable laws in the same way as other bodies". However, as an intelligent being he continuously violates those laws and creates new ones. With this basic understanding he analyzed two kinds of laws: those that are common to all men and all societies, and those that are peculiar to a society. While both were to be analyzed and discovered, the former was regarded to be particularly important. In fact, by identifying and enumerating the qualities that are common to all men they hoped to determine those customs and institutions which were in harmony with the universal natural order and sort those that did not have a place in that order. Discovering the constant and universal principles of human nature was thus of the utmost importance, especially for the task of reconstructing a better and more perfect world.

2.4   SCIENCE VERSUS RELIGION

Science was, for the Enlightenment, more than a method of enquiry. It was synonymous with a rationalist orientation. In the attempt to create conditions in which men would be free to explore their potentialities to the fullest, the theorists of Enlightenment launched a thorough critique of the institutions of Christianity and, with it, of existing religions and sects. Almost all of them, from Voltaire to Holbach, wrote about the harmful effects of religion over individual and social life. Voltaire pointed to the violence engendered in the name of religion. "It is asked why, out of the five hundred sects, there have scarcely been any who have not spilled blood?" And why "there is scarce any city or borough in Europe, where blood has not been spilled for religious quarrels'. He noted further, "I say that the human species has been perceptibly diminished because women and girls were massacred as well as men…. In fine, I say, that so far from forgetting these abominable times, we should frequently take a view of them, to inspire an eternal horror for them; and that it is for our age to make reparation by toleration, for this long collection of crimes, which has taken place through the want of toleration, during sixteen barbarous centuries".

The Enlightenment critique of religion stemmed from the understanding that religion has been a source of oppression in history. It was the basis of intolerance and hatred among men. It promoted inequality and 'unfreedom' of man. "It is as a citizen that I attack religion, because it seems to me harmful to the happiness of the state, hostile to the mind of man, and contrary to sound morality', wrote an Enlightenment thinker. What was perhaps equally important for the Enlightenment was the role that religion played in the Medieval Ages. Under the hegemony of the Established and Unified Roman Catholic Church men were expected to renounce reason and place their faith instead in revealed truth. Religious authorities spoke of the limits of human reason and asked individuals to listen passively to the voice of tradition as communicated by the Church. Theorists of Enlightenment were particularly critical of this world-view. The attempt to propound a doctrine that could not be questioned by men and that gave men a fixed view of the world and their role in it was, in their

view, inimical to reason. "Instead of morality the Christian is taught the miraculous fables and inconceivable dogmas of a religion thoroughly hostile to right reason. From his very step in his studies he is taught to distrust the evidence of his senses, to subdue his reason…and to rely blindly on the authority of his master".

The Enlightenment thinkers attacked the Church for promoting superstition and ignorance. On the one hand, its doctrine was anchored in miracles and mysteries that were irreconcilable with reason, and, on the other, it was intolerant of true knowledge. This perception of religious institutions and religion was reinforced by the hostile attitude of the Church towards the new thinking that came with the Copernican Revolution. The persecution of the scientists and the philosophers for their beliefs led Voltaire to comment that "those who persecute a philosopher under the pretext that his opinions may be dangerous to the public are as absurd as those who are afraid that the study of algebra will raise the price of bread in the market; one must pity a thinking being who errs". It is to break free of a "frantic and horrible" persecutor that the Enlightenment thinkers derided the Church and all existing religion.

Anti-clericalism and rejection of existing religions does not however imply that the *Philosophes* were atheists. Indeed many of them provided rational grounds for accepting the presence of a supreme creator. Diderot went a step forward. He rejected atheism. To quote him: "Atheism leaves honesty unsupported; it does worse, indirectly it leads to depravity". Thus, while their critique of Christianity led them to question the belief that the world was created in seven days, they nevertheless believed that the world was a "beautifully crafted machine" and it must have been designed by a Supreme Being according to some rational plan. Belief in a creator did not however imply an acceptance of a religious orientation or the faith that a religion embodies. Voltaire wrote, "He who recognizes only a creating God, he who views in God only a Being infinitely powerful, and who sees in His creatures only beautiful machines, is not religious towards Him any more than a European, admiring the King of China, would thereby profess allegiance to that prince. But he who thinks that God had deigned to place a relation between Himself and mankind; that He has made him free, capable of good and evil; that He has given all of them the good sense which is the instinct of man, and on which the law of nature is founded; such a one undoubtedly has a religion, and a much better religion than all those sects….".

While pointing to the injustices perpetrated by existing religions, theorists of the Enlightenment presented a new 'natural religion' – Deism – that did away with rituals and supernatural elements and anchored itself in the principles of tolerance and equality of all persons. Explaining the distinctiveness of a person who affirms this new faith Voltaire writes, " It is he who says to God: 'I adore and serve you'; it is he who says to the Turk, to the Chinese, the Indian, and the Russian: 'I love you'. He doubts, perhaps, that Mahomet [Mohammad] made a journey to the moon and put half of it in his pocket; he does not wish that after his death his wife should burn herself from devotion; he is sometimes tempted not to believe in the story of the eleven thousand virgins, and that of St. Amable, whose hat and gloves were carried by a ray of the sun from Auvergne as far as Rome. But for all that he is a just man. Noah would have placed him in his ark, Numa Pompilius in his councils; he would have ascended the car of Zoroaster; he would have talked philosophy with the Platos, the Aristippuses, the Ciceros….". Philosophers like Voltaire cast the true believer of this new religion in their own image.

Deism expressed the beliefs and the vision of the *Philosophes,* and through it they articulated their belief that there is a Supreme Being, that all creatures in the world were His creations and they deserve to be treated with kindness and without cruelty.

The natural religion was thus a religion of humanity. It was expected not to be a source of derision and hatred among men, instead it was to incorporate true principles of human nature and a universal system of morality that arises from the latter. Although tolerance was central to the new religion, the *Philosophes* denounced all those creeds of Christianity that claimed a right to destroy all those that differed from them. These theorists showed no signs of tolerance towards those who perpetuated religious intolerance. Indeed their main aim was to destroy all traces of religious fanaticism that were visible in their world.

2.5 OF MAN AND SOCIETY

The Enlightenment demolished the Heavenly City of St. Augustine but they never lost faith in the ability of human beings to construct a new society in which peace, liberty and abundance would prevail. While they denied the possibility of miracles happening, they continued to believe in the perfectibility of the human species. With complete confidence in rationalist will and a humanist pride in the capacity of human beings to overcome all hurdles they hoped to construct a world in which there will be a steady increase in felicity. They were aware that this was a difficult task. "To prolong life, clear the roads of assassins, keep men from starving and give them hope of enjoying the fruits of their labour" would, they knew, require more than just political stability. It would need a moral and intellectual revolution and it was this that the *Philosophes* hoped to accomplish through their writings. Their belief in scientific rationality and the accompanying critique of the institutions of the Church and existing forms of religion, were essential components of this bigger agenda of social and cultural revolution.

The *Philosophes* saw scientific knowledge as power, consequently, those who tried to challenge it were identified as men who wished to keep everyone in ignorance. They were seen as the 'enemies' of humankind. However, the Enlightenment did not merely target religious institutions. Anti-clericalism may have been the predominant sentiment but it was blind obedience to authority *per se* that they were most critical of. Whether the authority was that of the priest or the ruler, tradition or custom, each was subject to the same critical gaze. To put it in another way, fighting the dogmatism of religion and its institutional structures was an important pillar in their struggle for freedom but it was by no means the only one. Challenge to religious authority was supplemented by a parallel attack on the absolutist monarchies that existed all over Europe in the post-reformation period. Writing in defense of the liberty of the individual, Diderot asserted that "no man has received from nature the right to command others…. Liberty is a gift from heaven, and every person of the same species has the right to enjoy as much liberty as he enjoys reason".

Theorists of Enlightenment cherished liberty and freedom. For them, these were the highest and the most cherished values, and they were critical of despotism for not sufficiently safeguarding these values. Liberty required, on the one hand, a government in which one has the freedom to depose a tyrannical ruler and, on the other, the option to elect people whom one is expected to obey and be governed by. A democratic regime based on the principle of popular sovereignty followed from their defence of liberty. Although many of them were skeptical of the possibility of establishing a popular, democratic government, they maintained that power that comes from the "consent of the people" alone is legitimate, and advantageous to society. Montesquieu added another dimension to the discussion on political liberty. He maintained that liberty entails two elements: 1) a moderate government and 2) not being compelled to do anything other than what one should do. Experience shows that individuals are easily tempted to misuse their power for personal ends.

It is therefore essential to place limitations upon the exercise of power. Montesquieu spoke of the need to curb the power of each wing of the government. "When legislative power is united with the executive power in a single person, or in a single body of the magistracy, there is no liberty, because one can fear that the same monarch or senate that makes tyrannical laws will enforce them tyrannically. Nor is there liberty if the power of judging is not separated from the legislative and from executive power. If it were joined to legislative power, the power over the life and liberty of the citizens would be arbitrary, for the judge would be legislator. If it were joined to executive power, the judge could have the force of an oppressor. All would be lost if the same man, or the same body of leading men or of the nobility or of the people, exercised all these powers, to make the laws, to carry out public decisions and to judge crimes or disputes among individuals….".

A government in which the three aspects of government – namely, formulation of laws, execution of laws and arbitration or interpretation of laws – are separated and each wing checks the powers of the other is only one dimension of a system committed to protecting the liberty of its citizens. It had to be supplemented by the privilege of being governed by one's own laws or by people of one's choice. A democratic government was regarded to be important for giving power to the individual. Most Enlightenment theorists recognized that power to the people may not translate into freedom of the people. The latter entailed "doing what one should want to, and in not being compelled to do what one should not want to".

Liberty did not however imply the freedom to follow one's whims or to do that which is not permitted by law. Almost all of them accepted the importance of law. For them, obeying laws was a necessary condition of protecting liberty. If individuals were to follow their own impulse by infringing the law then there would only be anarchy in society. Political liberty could exist only when individual citizens acknowledge the centrality of law and subject themselves to its command. Indeed, the presence of political and civil laws was seen as a continuous reminder to the individual of his duty to his fellow citizens. Some theorists of Enlightenment even represented law as an embodiment of reason. For them laws place the necessary restraint upon passions of individuals to violate the natural order and, at the same time, they induce men to channel their sentiments in a direction that facilitates social and civil life in the world. Individuals, in their view, can enjoy liberty only when public safety is ensured and crimes of all kinds are reduced, if not eliminated. It was regarded to be the task of the legislature to ensure this; in particular, to ensure that crime of all kinds becomes less frequent, even if that means using powerful means at its disposal to prevent disorder in society.

The point that needs to be emphasized here is that the Enlightenment men accepted that individuals tend overwhelmingly to pursue their own interest and this can be a cause of political disorder. Laws were, for this reason, considered necessary to place certain restraint upon unchecked pursuit of one's own private interest. However, they felt that it was equally important to see that punishments for defying the law are in proportion to the evil produced by the act. Marcese di Baccaria in fact spoke of the need to devise a universal scale for measuring crime and for determining the punishment proportionate for it. If we could have a universal scale of this kind, Baccaria believed, it would be possible to measure the degree of liberty and slavery, humanity and cruelty that exists in different nations. What must also be mentioned here is that the Enlightenment was concerned not only with the excesses perpetrated by despotic regimes but also by the inhumanity of man to man, and it was the latter that they hoped to minimize. Reforming the system of government and the practices incorporated in existing laws was but a means to realize this end. In other words,

civility for the Enlightenment meant something more than rule of law. Obeying laws was necessary but what was equally necessary was that laws reflect the principle of general reason. Indeed, obedience was emphasized because laws were supposed to create conditions in which individual liberty is protected and enhanced.

The discourse on crime and punishment formed a part of the Enlightenment's larger concern for creating a free and enlightened society. Just as the natural scientists hoped to achieve greater control over the physical elements through their knowledge, the social scientists believed that their understanding of the laws of human nature and society would enable them to eliminate evil and create a better world. Theorists of Enlightenment were full of optimism in this regard. They felt that all limitations could be overcome and a free world could be created. In part this optimism was fostered by the new forms of production introduced by the capitalist economy and the technological innovations spurred by the growth of scientific knowledge.

The Enlightenment thinkers favoured freedom of enterprise. Adam Smith argued that even though individuals seek this freedom to further their own private gain, nevertheless the pursuit of self-interest is likely to promote the interest of society as a whole. Freedom of enterprise would lead to growth in production, more employment opportunities, and this would benefit all citizens. Although these philosophers defended capitalist enterprise and argued that a life of virtue did not entail forsaking commercial society, they created space for themselves away from the world of business, politics and fashion. In the salons, coffee-houses and taverns of the emerging modern cities they would meet, discuss and express opinions that would be among the most influential ideas of their times. More importantly, men, and sometimes even women, would meet as friends and as equals. Addison and Steele saw coffee-house conversation as a form of social interaction that "taught men tolerance, moderation and the pleasure of consensus. It also taught them to look at their own behaviour with a critical detachment which was difficult to acquire in public life". The Enlightenment theorists placed considerable stress on the spirit of critique. For them virtue lay in teaching ourselves to be critical of our beliefs and in learning how to review our opinions in the light of experience. Cultivating skeptical habits of mind would, according to Hume, help to release men from the bondage of myth and prejudice which corrupts the mind and generates enthusiasm that can stand in the way of human happiness.

Education was to play an important role in this regard. The Enlightenment had tremendous faith in the power of human beings brought up rationally from infancy to achieve unlimited progress. They also entrusted the state with the responsibility of changing the structure of laws and institutions, and undertaking the work of reform. Surrounded by a world that was full of promise for a better tomorrow, the Enlightenment thinkers wished to instill the spirit of tolerance and minimize crime and torture. They were of course aware that knowledge about human nature and society would not automatically create virtue, but they believed that it could certainly shed light upon ignorance and warn us against the misuse of power.

2.6 SUMMARY

The ideas of the Enlightenment, in particular, its faith in scientific method of investigation, its optimism that the new era of scientific-technological advancement and industrialization would lead to a world filled with happiness for all and its attempts to create a social order based on the principles of human reason, tolerance and equality, effected a profound social and intellectual revolution. Although votaries of Enlightenment had little political clout in the first half of the 18th century, theirs was

perhaps the most popular voice by the end of that century. Certainly it was the most effective in determining what constitutes a 'modern' outlook. The distinction that they posited between tradition and modernity, religion and science, their reliance on reform and state initiatives for re-structuring society provided a model of development that would be endorsed not only in the advanced industrialized societies but also in the colonized world. Indeed, all over the world Enlightenment was to become synonymous with modernity.

The influence of Enlightenment is evident as much in the modernization theories that dominated the study of societies in the mid-twentieth century as it is in the social reform movements of the nineteenth century in India. The former invoked Enlightenment's understanding of the past and present, tradition and modernity to rank societies and to construct a model of a modern, democratic polity. The latter drew upon the humanist liberalism of the Enlightenment and attempted to bring religion and custom in line with the principles of human reason. They subjected traditional practices to critical scrutiny and struggled to change those that violated the fundamental principles of equality and tolerance. So strong was the impact of the Enlightenment upon these reformers that they welcomed the new ideas that came with the British rule and believed that when they ask for self-government it would be granted to them. Although the exploitative nature of the colonial rule is readily acknowledged today, the Enlightenment conception of individual and its faith in scientific knowledge and free enterprise continue to dominate the popular imagination even today.

UNIT 3 CRITIQUES OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Structure

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The Enlightenment embodied the spirit of optimism. Its advocates believed that they lived in a world marked by greater wellbeing and happiness of all. There was visible progress in every walk of life and indeed the possibility that men could now shape their future. Reason and scientific rationality had emancipated men from the "empire of fate" so that they could advance firmly and surely towards the apprehension of truth and the creation of a world free from scarcity, hunger and disease. This vision of liberation and progress was accompanied by the understanding that men now had the "determination" and the "courage" to use their intelligence to challenge religious dogmas and discover for themselves the laws by which the natural and the social world are governed. The enlightened mind could therefore think of controlling nature, harnessing its energies for the advantage of humankind and shaping a better social world.

3.2   THE ROMANTICS

The Enlightenment understanding of man, society, history and knowledge did not however go unchallenged. By the end of the 18th century itself the Enlightenment faced a challenge from a group of intellectuals who were identified as Romantics. They questioned almost every aspect of the enlightenment thinking – from its conception of truth, science and reason to its belief in the idea of progress. The Enlightenment had represented the present as an advance upon the past, the Romantics, by contrast, saw in it the deterioration of the human condition. Jean Jacques Rousseau argued that the development of arts and sciences had resulted in the social and moral degeneration of man. Division of labour, differentiation of functions and applications of technology had, in his view, corrupted men and destroyed their idyllic existence. Indeed it had created a hiatus between nature and man. While man in his natural state was guided by the principle of pity – that is, " a natural aversion to seeing any other sentient being perish or suffer, especially if it is one of our kind" the progress of civilization had made him egoistic and self-centred. Above all, it had resulted in the loss of freedom for the self. Men led an alienated existence now, subordinated to the order of time and work that is imposed by industrializing capital.

Romanticists like Rousseau sought salvation in the "natural order". For them, it was only in the natural order that man's truest and deepest needs could be satisfied. Further, in contrast to that ideal world the present appeared as a disappointment, if

not a complete failure. It was an object of bitterness and resentment. Consequently, several romanticists idealized the past. Some even wanted to turn the clock back. These writings, attempting to glorify the past echoed the sentiments of the disinherited aristocratic class and they were congenial to their demand for returning to feudalism. However, this was not the defining attribute of Romanticism. The Romantics rejected the present society, harked back to the pre-modern world and created the image of a "natural" man primarily to challenge the mechanistic and instrumental rationality of the new capitalist order. Through its representations of the past and other civilizations it sought to reveal the limitations of the modern world-view and the scientific rationality that underpinned it.

The Romantic rebellion was, in many ways, the 'other', that is, the negation, of Enlightenment. It affirmed values that opposed everything that Enlightenment stood for. The Enlightenment had elevated reason to the position of sovereign authority. It believed that reason had the ability to discover the absolute truth, both about the meaning of history as well as the working of the universe. The *Philosophes* assumed, on the one hand, that reason rules over the universe and, on the other, that it was supremely important to man. Reason could enable us to understand the functioning of this intricately designed machine, called nature, discover its laws and apply that knowledge to control the physical and the social world. This idea that reason either "controls everything or could be made to do so" was fundamentally challenged by Romanticism. The challenge took many different forms. At the most immediate level, the Romantics pitted passions against reason. Against the carefully controlled and mathematically precise observations of the scientist, they placed the reason of the heart and extolled its virtues.

In Enlightenment thought reason was closely linked to scientific rationality. Its applications were expected to yield truth – i.e., knowledge of universals as well as knowledge that is universally applicable. By referring to reason of the heart, the Romanticists questioned this basic conception of universality and truth. Against the notion of objectivity of taste and permanence of the truly beautiful, Romanticism affirmed the value of the contingent. They stressed inward conviction and juxtaposed it to judgements oriented to externalized standards. Not only did they resist conformity to impersonal laws, they maintained that the "single narrow door to truth lay within us. By looking within ourselves, into our inner consciousness we come to understand and know the truth".

The Scottish Enlightenment thinker, David Hume, had once suggested "If we take in our hand any volume, of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance, let us ask, Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to flames; for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion". Romanticism consciously sought to retrieve that which the Enlightenment had consigned to the flames. They focussed on the magical and the mystical and exalted the unknown over the known in a bid to reject the Enlightenment conception of truth and science. On the one hand, they challenged the need to adhere to laid down procedures and methods of observation and generalization, and, on the other, they focussed on the "exotic, deviant or the special case, counterposing these to the probable or average case". Romanticism conferred a special status on the unique, and, along with it, defined individuality in terms of departure from social norms and conventions. Against the classical unities of time and place, they welcomed a "melange of times, tones, moods and places".

The Enlightenment had viewed the world as a harmonious, integrated whole. Romanticism, on the other hand, perceived it as an "incongruous assemblage" and

tension filled conjunction of parts" that could not add up to a single, coherent, unified whole. The totality was at best a mosaic, characterized by plurality and dissonance. The use of standardized techniques and procedures by the Enlightenment was based on the assumption that the universe – both natural and social – had a patterned regularity. It functions in accordance with certain laws that can be discovered by the application of human reason and scientific method. By emphasizing dissonance of parts and uniqueness of events Romanticism rejected this assumption of Enlightenment thinking. In its view the world defied neat categorization and was not amenable to the kind of systematic, analytical study that was the hallmark of science. The writings of these theorists were filled with imagery of twilight, blurring boundaries and absence of clear-cut distinctions. Their works of art depicted pictures of the natural forces and elements that defied human control. While the Enlightenment art told a story of clear, calm skies in which man was in control of his destiny, Romanticism presented a turbulent world in which chaos and uncertainty prevailed, reminding human being of the limits of their knowledge and the finitude of their existence.

By concentrating on the singular and the unique, on the one hand, and the mystical and the unknown, on the other, Romanticism drew attention to the failure of human reason. If the Enlightenment expressed optimism that the world could be known fully by the human mind, Romanticism pointed to that which resisted explanation by human reason and scientific knowledge. Romanticism did not simply reverse the antinomies that defined the Enlightenment, they challenged the philosophy of Realism that informed the latter. Scientific rationality was anchored in the belief that truth can be arrived at through an accurate description of the external world. Romanticism challenged this notion of realism in three ways. First, it questioned the possibility of apprehending truth through the methods employed by science; second, it retrieved categories that had no place in a world that is experienced as fact; and third, it redefined the notion of truth emphasizing the capacity of the individual to create new meanings and values.

The idea that truth entails an accurate description of an external reality that is known through sensory perception and systematic observation was the constant object of doubt and criticism within Romanticism. In response to Newton's *Opticks* Thomas Campbell wrote:

"Can all that optics teach, unfold

    Thy form to please me so,

As when I dreamt of gems and gold

    Hid in thy radiant bow?

When science from Creation's face

    Enchantment's veil withdraws,

What lovely visions yield their place

    To cold material laws!" (from *To the Rainbow*)

In a similar vein Keats also rebelled against the reduction of the rainbow to prismatic colours. Such representations, in his view, deprived it of its poetry and aesthetic quality, and in the process failed to fully experience or perceive this object.

While some Romanticists questioned the loss of truth through the analytic-synthetic method of the sciences, others, like Rousseau, gave a privileged place to emotions and feelings. The Enlightenment had dismissed these categories as subjective, and

unable to grasp objective truth, but Rousseau held them to be crucial to the understanding of the self and society. Further, he emphasized the role of the individual and maintained that the creative originality of the artist is better able to capture the truth of the external world. The Enlightenment *Philosophes* attempted to discover the world, i.e., to unveil the truth that was already there. In contrast to this, the Romantics stressed the capacity of the individual to create new meanings and values. The idea that truth is an object of construction and creation rather than discovery was subsequently developed by Nietzsche to provide a critique of the Enlightenment and even its Romantic critics.

3.3   NIETZSCHE

Romanticism had lamented the loss of meaning in the modern world. To fill this void they turned to nature, religion and tradition. Nietzsche, writing in the late nineteenth century, questioned just this. While accepting the spiritual wasteland in which the modern man walks alone, he maintained that neither proximity to nature nor religion could provide the *free* man with peace, joy or certainty. Speaking passionately against a return to the past, he wrote: "The barbarism of all ages possessed more happiness than we do – let us not deceive ourselves on this point! – but our impulse towards knowledge is too widely developed to allow us to value happiness without knowledge, or the happiness of a strong and fixed delusion: it is painful to us even to imagine such a state of things! Our restless pursuit of discoveries and divinations has become for us as attractive and as indispensable as hapless love of a lover…. Knowledge within us has developed into a passion, which does not shrink from any sacrifice and at bottoms fears nothing but its own extinction….It may be that mankind will perish eventually from this passion for knowledge! - but even that does not daunt me…."

For Nietzsche there was another reason why man could no longer rely on custom and tradition. Tradition oppresses: it appeals to a higher authority, an authority that is obeyed not because "it commands what is useful to us but merely because it commands" . The free man cannot therefore depend upon it. He is an individual, defying custom and norms of received morality. It is his will to depend on nothing but himself. Since the free man of the modern age cannot find solace either in religion or tradition, there are just two options before him; a) he may abandon the search for an ultimate meaning; and b) he may create meaning by his own will and action.

In exploring these alternatives Nietzsche did not merely reject the Enlightenment and its Romantic alternative, he questioned the entire tradition of western rationalist thought, beginning with Plato. For Nietzsche all schools of thought had one thing in common: they had firm belief in themselves and their knowledge. They believed that they had arrived at the truth. In the Athenian world of ancient Greek city-states Plato claimed that reason could give man access to the ultimate reality – the world of forms. In recent times, the Enlightenment claimed that the application of scientific method has yielded the truth about the world. Each in its own way thus claims that it has *discovered* the truth about the external world that exists independently of us. Further, that this truth has been arrived at impersonally and objectively; i.e., in terms of qualities that inhere in the objects themselves.

Men have, according to Nietzsche, lived in this state of "theoretical innocence" for centuries believing that they possess the right method for discovering the nature of ultimate reality, and for determining what is good and valuable. Working under the influence of these childish presuppositions they have failed to realize that the external world is in itself devoid of all meanings and values. Whatever has value in the present

world "has it not in itself by its nature". Rather a value was "given to it, bestowed upon it, it was *we* who gave and bestowed! We only have created the world which is of any account to man".

In making this argument and suggesting that man is a "creator, a continuous poet of life", Nietzsche was not undermining the significance of cognition. For Nietzsche knowledge remains a supreme value, but if pure knowledge as revealed by reason or experiments is the only end then we would have to follow whatever direction these faculties take us in. We have to be prepared, for instance, to follow the path that experimental reason leads us towards, be that of nuclear energy or genetic engineering. However, this would be complete "madness". Knowledge has to be mediated by values that we regard to be worth affirming, values by which we may wish to construct the world.

The role of the artist is therefore of the utmost importance. For it is the work of an artist that *creates* and unravels for us alternative worlds. While men of science aim to discover what is already there, the artist gives shape to a world, expressing human ideals. For this reason Nietzsche maintained that poetry and myths were a valuable source of knowledge for us. In Nietzsche's works the artist was not just the 'other' of the modern rational scientist. He was, first and foremost, a creator; and as a creator he embodied the ability to transcend the boundaries of the social and what is designated as the rational. The artist as such stood alone, challenging the moralism implicit in western philosophical traditions.

Thus it was through Nietzsche and the Romanticists that some of the basic tenets of the Enlightenment came to be questioned in a fundamental way. In particular the view that the present was the most advanced and civilized era in the history of humankind became subject to scrutiny. Critiques of the idea of progress, reason and industrial rationality sought to displace the centrality accorded to science in the Enlightenment scheme of things. The critics, by and large, accepted that the new age of capitalism, scientific discovery and industrialization had provided a much "softened" world for the mortals. It had offered a benign ethic of health, vitalism and welfare but the problem was that these developments challenged the existing conceptions without offering any alternative vision of the meaning of life. Consequently, the critics searched for an alternative to the industrial society, especially to the instrumental and technical rationality that permeated the present. Romanticism of the late 19th century only marked the first step in this direction. Subsequent theorists carried this task forward by pointing to – a) limitations of the Enlightenment project of progress; b) the exploitative nature of the capitalism; and c) the violence implicit in modern science.

3.4   KARL MARX

The early writings of Karl Marx showed that capitalist mode of production generates four types of alienation: alienation of man in the workplace; alienation of man from his product; alienation of man from his species life; and, alienation of man from man. For human beings, work is a means of self-expression and development of one's potential. However, in capitalism work ceases to fulfil this requirement. The industrial unit divides the work of production into small fragments; it compartmentalizes jobs such that each individual repeatedly performs the same differentiated and narrowly specialized task. Under these circumstances, work becomes a routine, if not a drudgery. At the same time, individual gets alienated from the end-product of their creation. They can no longer relate to the product that emerges from these factories. Even though the worker through his labour creates all the products, from the simplest to the most complex machines, yet, they appear to him as reified commodities in the

market. He can no longer own them as his creations. In fact he confronts these objects as a stranger and is dominated by them. Work thus becomes a mode of oppressing men. Instead of being a means of self-realization and fulfillment it is transformed into a repressive activity. The instrumental rationality that governs the workplace also extends to the social space. The urban industrial towns in which men live also function on the principle of utility and need. Men see each other as objects of use value and relate to each other on that basis primarily. Their alienation is thus complete: it extends from the economic domain to the social and the political.

3.5 MARCUSE AND THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL

For Marx, freedom could not effectively exist in such a society. The world that Enlightenment had fantasized about could not possibly ensure liberation of men. Not even the most progressive expressions of that rationality – namely, science and industrialization - could provide for a society in which men could realize their potential. Towards the end of the 18th century, Romanticism had spoken of the moral ambiguity of the newly emerging order. It had also hinted at the loss of freedom in the age of industrialization. These themes were revived in the second half of the 20th century by the New Left, most notably in the writings of Herbert Marcuse. In his book, *One Dimensional Man*, Marcuse characterized the post-enlightenment industrial society as "irrational" and "repressive". Despite the apparent progress and increase in productivity, this society, in his view, was "destructive of the free development of human needs and faculties". To many it may appear that political freedom is protected in this society and there has been an expansion in the liberties enjoyed by men. Today there is more to choose from: many different newspapers, radio stations, TV channels and a whole gamut of commodities in the market – from different varieties of potato chips to motor cars and washing machines. Yet, men have no real capacity to make choices of their own.

Men's needs are constantly shaped and manipulated by the media industry that furthers the interests of a few. It moulds and constructs images that determine the choices we make at home, in the market place and in social interactions. In a world where "false" needs are fashioned by the media there is no effective intellectual freedom or liberation of man. Men act and participate as "pre-conditioned receptacles of long standing". Indeed through their actions they reinforce the instruments of socio-economic control and their oppression. According to Marcuse, the modern industrialized world constituted a "more progressive stage of alienation". Its seeming progress, "the means of mass transportation and communication, the commodities of lodging, food and clothing, the irresistible output of the entertainment and information industry carry with them prescribed attitudes and habits, certain intellectual and emotional reactions which bind the consumers more or less pleasantly to the producers, and through the latter, to the whole. The products indoctrinate and manipulate; they promote a false consciousness which is immune against its falsehood. And as these beneficial products become available to more individuals in more social classes, the indoctrination they carry ceases to be publicity; it becomes a way of life. It is a good way of life, it militates against qualitative change. Thus emerges a pattern of one-dimensional thought and behaviour". More importantly, as men and women share in the same images and ideas there is less and less the possibility of challenging the present and seeking alternatives to it.

In a world where images, presentation and appearance count more than even the content, these theorists felt there could be no real freedom, or for that matter, the possibility of "communicative rationality" asserting itself in the "life-world". For Marcuse as well as for other members of the Frankfurt School the Enlightenment

had transformed what was once liberating reason, engaged in the fight against religious dogma and superstition, into a repressive orthodoxy. It had done this by visualizing reason as an instrument of control; and, as a tool for gaining mastery over the world rather than critical reflection and reconstruction. Instrumental reason that was concerned primarily with efficiency, economy and utility could not be expected to liberate man or to construct a better world.

3.6 CRITICS OF SCIENCE

In the second half of the twentieth century, a similar doubt is raised about science. Can science create a better world: a world in which individuals can enjoy freedom and happiness? The Enlightenment had answered this question in the affirmative. Its optimism emanated, in part, from its view that science had revealed the truth. Its method had enabled men to know the external reality, the world around us, while technological application had facilitated control over that reality such that it could now serve the interest of man. Science had in this dual sense made man the master of the universe. Men may not have designed that magnificent machine but they were certainly in a position to control and manipulate it to suit their ends. Science symbolized this faith and it was for this reason that the Enlightenment had given it a special status in the order of things. This faith in science has been challenged in the late twentieth century. Among other things the critics maintain that modern science and technology promote violence, and cannot therefore be a means for improving the human condition or shaping a better, more peaceful, world.

In India this point of view is best represented in the writings of Ashis Nandy, Vandana Shiva and Claude Alvares. All of them see a link between science, technology, oppression and violence. For these analysts science is intrinsically violent. Both science and technology are violent ways of handling the world; hence, their "use for violent purposes is assured". In collusion with colonialism and imperialism, science unleashed violence against traditional ways of life. Today, it has resulted in the vast accumulation of armaments and nuclear arsenal, all of which threaten the very existence of life on earth. In addition, it has resulted in concentration of power in the hands of few. Science does not simply downgrade tradition, it positions scientific knowledge against everyday experience and received knowledge. In the process it gives a special position to the technocrat, the specialists. In the scientific world-view, it is these men of knowledge rather than ordinary citizens who are empowered. Likewise, development and progress sanctioned by science has uprooted people from their natural surroundings and has resulted in the displacement of countless people from their land. Heavy industries and big dams have dislodged communities without any real possibility of rehabilitating them, taken over their land and resulted in the destruction of valuable agricultural land. At the same time, it has alienated communities from the resources that are crucial to their very existence.

According to Vandana Shiva, science is not merely responsible for the creation of sophisticated weapons of mass destruction, it is destructive even in its peaceful applications. In activities like agriculture and health, where the professed objective is human welfare, science remains largely violent. Scientific agriculture has resulted in aggressive and "reckless pillage" of nature. While traditional modes of farming left time for nature to regenerate itself, today the pattern of crop cultivation has generated problems at various levels. The use of new seeds, which promise higher yield, has destroyed bio-diversity and the richness of nature. Excessive exploitation of ground resources through cultivation of at least three crops each year, primarily for purposes of sale in the market, has left the farmer poorer. The condition of soil has deteriorated and it has created an environment that is "favourable for multiplication of disease".

In the area of health similarly, there is an increase in iatrogenic illness. In fact "iatrogenic illness cause more deaths than road accidents". In university hospitals in America, one out of five patients contract iatrogenic illness and one out of 30 die because of it. In other words, for these theorists, science has not yielded a safer and better world. While increasing productivity and cure for several diseases, it has created newer forms of illnesses, upset the balance of nature and worsened the condition of life for the ordinary man.

As we observed earlier, Romanticism had contrasted the world ushered in by industrializing capital and science with the ideal existence of man in nature. It had challenged the Enlightenment idea of progress by glorifying nature and seeking a return to it. If Enlightenment had credited science with advancing the happiness of man, Romanticism blamed it for increasing alienation, violence, loss of peace and security. It warned humankind of the disasters that come with science and its technological applications, and craved for the cosmic order that is supposed to be there, present in nature. It is this reliance upon tradition and the natural order that distinguishes Romanticism from the postmodern critiques of Enlightenment.

3.7   POSTMODERNISM

Postmodernism, taking its cue from Nietzsche, problematizes not just science but also philosophy and religion. Each of these intellectual engagements, in its view, seeks foundations; that is, they look for absolute and unconditional basis of reality and claim to arrive at the truth. The only difference being that while religion locates the absolute in the world beyond, science points to the laws of nature as constituting the foundations of the world and philosophy places its faith in the capacity of reason to unearth that absolute truth. What remains unaltered is that each of them looks for, and seeks to **discover** the truth that is already there. Against this worldview, postmodernism asks us to abandon the search for foundations and universal truth. Like Nietzsche, the postmodernist thinkers assert that knowledge does not involve discovering a meaning that is already there, pre-contained in the text. For the postmodernists, the task of every inquiry is, and must be, to deconstruct the text: to read it in a way that allows new meanings to emerge from it. Nietzsche had argued that the history of the west, from the time of Plato onwards, reveals a "tyranny of the mind". Plato claimed that philosophers armed with the power of reason would penetrate the world of appearances and arrive at the truth. He therefore banished the poets from the Republic. In recent times, the Enlightenment bestows the same faith in systematic observation and experience. Both are convinced that they possess the absolute truth and the perfect method to arrive at it. Countless people have, over the years, sacrificed themselves to these convictions. Believing that they knew best they imposed their ways upon others.

The idea that we know the truth, that we and we alone have access to it, has been a source of fanaticism in the world. Postmodernists add to this Nietzschean sentiment to say that it has also been the source of totalitarianism. To protect freedom that the modern man so deeply cherishes we must therefore abandon this search for absolute truth. And realize instead that others also believe that they know the truth and are acting in accordance with it. Intellectual arrogance must therefore give way to a sense of deeper humility: that is, to a framework wherein meta-narratives give way to particular histories of people living in a specific time and place, and space is created for the co-presence of multiple projects and knowledge systems.

3.8   SUMMARY

To conclude, critiques of Enlightenment today have taken a new turn. Romanticism had only questioned the Enlightenment system of valuation, its assessment of the present modern era. Where Enlightenment had seen with progress and the march of reason, Romanticism only found moral degeneration and loss of freedom for the self. It challenged the Enlightenment by reversing its priorities and judgements. Postmodernism, by comparison, treads the path shown by Nietzsche and rejects the very search for some "good" values and morals. It therefore questions not merely the Enlightenment idea of knowledge and the process by which we can arrive at the truth. Rather it rejects the very idea of absolute truth and, with it, of a single method of inquiry that can yield knowledge. Postmodernism thus charters the path of anti-foundationalism where all signs of permanence, certainty and universality are wiped clean. It is not possible here to discuss the idea of the self and the world that anti-foundationalism itself ushers in, but we may with Nietzsche say that it is one in which "taste" and "*proportionateness* are strange to us".

SOME EXERCISES FOR THIS BLOCK

Unit 1 : Renaissance and the Idea of the Individual

1. How did developments in trade and commerce create conditions for the Renaissance?

2. What was the process through which religion began to lose its dominate position in European Society?

Unit 2 : The Enlightenment

1. What was the essence of the idea of progress as espoused by the Enlightenment thinkers?

2. How did Enlightenment thinkers understand the relationship between science and religion?

Unit 3 : Critiques of Enlightenment

1. What are the main ways in which the Romantics differed from the Enlightenment thinkers?

2. How did Karl Marx and the Frankfurt School advance the ideas initiated by the Enlightenment thinkers?

SUGGESTED READINGS FOR THIS BLOCK

(Block-2 of the Foundation Course in Humanities and Social Sciences, FHS-1, for B.A. students of IGNOU. (Specially recommended for those students who may not have studied Modern World earlier. They may read it before going through this Block).

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Keke wich, Lucille (editor), *The Renaissance in Europe: A Cultural Enquiry (The Impact of Humanism),* UK Open University, Oxford, 2000.

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Munck, Thomas, *The Enlightenment: A Comparative Social History,* London, 2000.

UNIT 4   THEORIES OF THE STATE

Structure

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The State is central to our understanding of modern societies and politics. It is a truism to mention that State plays a crucial role in the functioning of modern society. What then is the State? This appears to be a simple question but when we attempt to answer this we find the answers elusive. In the course of answering this question we would realize that our understanding of politics itself is to a great extent linked with our understanding of the State.

Today it is impossible to think of life without the framework of the State. The State has come to be equated with civility and identity. Although there are enough sceptics and critics who decry the institutions and the practices of the State, it has become an integral part of everyday life. It would not be an exaggeration to say that we start and end our lives within its confines and the recognition of the State in both these matters is rather crucial. This should amply illustrate the significance of the concept and our need to study it. Besides most of our fundamental concerns and the debates surrounding it (for instance around the concepts of rights, obligations, laws) acquire meaning only in the context of the State.

Our attitude to the State is to a great extent determined by our conceptualization of it. From the point of view of an active citizenship it is important to include a critical and insightful understanding of the State as part of any meaningful political education. All this makes the study of the State significant.

Having highlighted the importance of studying the concept of the State, it needs to be mentioned that it is done of the most problematic and ambivalent conceptss in politics. its ambivalence being a consequence of its certain yet elusive character. So overwhelming is the importance of the State in contemporary societies that politics is itself conflated with the State, the appropriateness of this conflation is the subject of a rather lively debate in political theory.

Differing historical experiences have led to differing perceptions and practices of the State. Yet all States do have a territory, legal system, judiciary and monopoly of

force and so on. The idea of an impersonal and sovereign political order is an intrinsically modern idea and by extension also the idea of citizenship. The gradual erosion of feudal ties and controls meant a redefinition of political authority and structures as well. The idea of the modern State which we will examine in this unit emerges around this time. In fact it was only towards the end of the sixteenth century that the concept of the State became central to European political thought.

4.2   UNDERSTANDING THE STATE

It was around the time of the Enlightenment that major enquiries into the basic nature and structure of the State began to be made in a systematic manner. The new concerns focussed on the distinctions between the new, modern State that had come into being and the traditional state systems. The new concerns also focused on the relationship between the State and society. The Enlightenment thinkers were particularly concerned with the question of where the State ended and the society began. It was as a result of the intellectual efforts of the Enlightenment thinkers that we are today in a position to address some key questions regarding the nature of the State. Some of these questions are: What is the State? How long has it been with us? What are its main features? These are all important questions and need to be answered before we proceed to enquire into the theories of the State.

State can be defined as the centralized, law making, law enforcing, politically sovereign institution in the society. In other words, it is useful to understand and define the State in terms of the functions it performs. Put briefly and simply, the State

l   Comprises a set of institutions with ultimate control over the means of violence and coercion within a given territory;

l   Monopolizes rule-making within the territory;

l   Develops the structures for the implementation of the rules;

l   Regulates market activity within the territory; and

l   Ensures the regulation and distribution of essential material goods and services.

However, in modern times, that is to say during the last three hundred years or so, a whole new set of functions have been added to this. It has been argued that a major task of the modern state system in Europe was to enable the development of industrialism. It was also under industrialism that the modern State came to enjoy tremendous powers. It also became so omnipotent that it became virtually impossible to think of human life outside the framework of the State. The state is all pervasive today, but was it always like this? Was there a time when people could live without a state? This leads us to the second question: how old is the State?

Living in modern times we tend to take the State for granted as if it has always been a part of human society. Moreover, we also tend to take some of the features of the modern State – national, representative, centralized, interventionist – for granted. We need to recognize that not only were these features not always a part of the State, the State itself was not *always* there. Therefore the question on the life of the State can be answered by suggesting that although there is nothing exclusively modern about the State, it nonetheless does not have a very long life in human history. It is therefore best to look upon State as a *contingency* and not a perennial feature of human life. If we were to divide the entire human history into three phases – pre-agrarian, agrarian and industrial – then the State certainly did not exist in the pre-

agrarian phase of human life. In the elementary situation of the hunters and gatherers, there was no surplus and no division of labour. As a result, there was no need for any political centralization. However, once humans took to agriculture and consequently to a more settled life, a division of labour and a more complex form of human organization began to emerge. It was then that gradually a State came into being to extract surplus, regulate the division of labour, maintain exchange mechanism and settle disputes whenever required.

However not all the agrarian societies had a State. Only the large and the more complex ones did. Small, primitive, simple and elementary agrarian societies could still manage their affairs without a State. Although the State had arrived in the human world at this stage, it was still an option and not an inevitability. Some agrarian societies had a state and some did not.

It was however in the third phase of human society, i.e., under industrialism that the State ceased to be an option and became an integral and necessary part of human society. With a limitless increase in the division of labour and an increasing complexity of human life, people have found it impossible to manage without a State. So it would be fair to say that in the beginning, i.e., in the pre-agrarian stage of human life there was no State. Then, under agrarian conditions, some human societies had a State and some did not (we can even say that some *needed* a state and some did not). But under industrial condition there is no choice but to *have* a State. State under modern conditions is no longer an option but a necessity.

The range of the nature of state-systems in human history has varied a great deal. There have been small kingdoms, city-states as well as large empires. However under modern conditions, a new type of State – nation-state – has emerged and pervaded the modern world (you will read more about nation-state in Unit 10 of Block 3). We can say that the history of State in modern times is the history of nation-states. It is this nation-state – centralized, interventionist, representative – that has been the object of theorizing by various scholars. We can now turn to some of the theories that have propounded about the modern State.

4.3 LIBERAL CONCEPTION OF THE STATE

Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) and Jean Bodin (1530-96) were amongst the earliest writers to articulate the new concerns, although it was Thomas Hobbes (1588-1642) nearly a century later who addresses the question sharply. The questions that arose were seeking answers to basic issues like, what is the State? The State's origins and foundations were examined, as also its relationship with society and the most desirable form of this relationship, its functions and of course whose interests should the State represent, and then at the end of it all how would the relationship between States be governed?

Thomas Hobbes offers a brilliant analysis of the State and related issues. He represents a point of transition, between a commitment to the absolute State and the struggle of liberalism against tyranny. Without going into too many details, liberalism can be explained as that worldview which gives central importance to the idea of choice, this choice is to be exercised across diverse fields like marriage, education, enterprise, work and profession and of course political affairs. This ability to choose is what characterizes a rational and free individual and politics is about the defence of these rights and any interference whatsoever is to be limited and through the State based on a constitution.

Hobbes in his book 'Leviathan' acknowledges clearly the development of a new

form of power, public power characterized by permanence and sovereignty. Hobbes is a fascinating point of departure for our discussions on the modern theories of the State, because he combines within him many profoundly liberal and at the same time many illiberal arguments. Hobbes opens his account by describing human nature that he says always seeks 'more intense delight' and hence is characterized by a restlessness and a desire to maximize power. This famously reduces human society into a 'war of all against all'. The idea that people might come to respect and trust each other and co-operate and honour their promises and contracts seems remote to Hobbes. This is what he describes as, the state of nature, here life becomes to quote him ' nasty, short and brutish'. What then is the way out? It is the creation of the State, which in this case turns out to be an absolute State, and this is quite clearly a direct outcome of the dreadful life that Hobbes visualizes in the absence of the State.

He suggests that free and equal individuals should surrender their rights by transferring them to a powerful authority that can force them to keep their promises and covenants, then an effective and legitimate private and public sphere, society and State can be formed. This would be done through a social contract wherein consenting individuals hand over their rights of self-government to a single authority, authorized to act on their behalf. The sovereign thus created would be permanent and absolute. At this point it is interesting to note the liberal in Hobbes emphasizing that this sovereign would be so only as a consequence of consenting individuals, who in turn are bound to fulfil their obligations to the sovereign. It would be the duty of the sovereign however, to protect the people and of course their property.

Thomas Hobbes considers the State to be pre-eminent in social and political life. According to him it is the State that gives to the individuals the chance to live in a civilized society. The miserable life in the state of nature is altered by the emergence of the State. Then follows the creation of a civilized society. Thus it is the State that in Hobbes' conception constructs society and establishes its form and codifies its forces. Moreover the self-seeking nature of individuals leads to anarchy and violence and hence State has to be powerful and strident enough to resist this and maintain order, for order is a value that Hobbes cherishes greatly. And since it is all the consenting individuals who have created the State, the State is legitimate and represents the sum total of all individuals enabling them to carry on with their businesses and lives in an uninterrupted manner. To do all this, a giant and powerful State is envisaged, and this vision is remarkably close to the image of a modern all pervasive State that we are familiar with. His conception of individuals as being nothing more than self- interested is also a depressingly modern and familiar view.

Hobbes' political conclusions emphasizing on an all powerful State does make him profoundly illiberal, and this tension in his writings between the emphatic claims on individuality on the one hand, and the need for an all powerful State on the other hand make his arguments very exciting.

Rapid and far-reaching technological, economic, political changes apart from a good number of years separate John Locke from Hobbes. Locke is not prepared to accept the idea of an absolute sovereign, and this is a major point of departure from where he then establishes his theory of the State. For Locke the State exists as an instrument to protect the life, liberty and estate of the citizens. Locke like Hobbes saw the establishment of the political world as preceded by the existence of individuals endowed with natural rights to property, which includes life, liberty and estate.

 Locke begins with a picture of free, equal and rational men (Locke like Hobbes and in fact like most other political theorists is not thinking of women when he writes

about social and political issues) living quite amicably in the state of nature governed by natural laws. In the state of nature they enjoy natural rights, but Locke points out that not all individuals would be equally respectful of the natural laws. This creates some inconveniences, the most significant of these being inadequate regulation of property which for Locke is prior to both society and the State. Locke suggests that these inconveniences can be overcome only by the consenting individuals forging contracts to create first a society and then a State. The State is thus very obviously a creation for the purpose of the individuals and it would be they who would be the final judges in this matter. This is a very novel idea though today seems commonplace because it has become almost the central idea of liberalism. Locke holds categorically that the individuals do not transfer all their rights to the State, and whatever rights are transferred is only on the condition that the State adheres to its basic purpose of preserving the individual's life, liberty and estate. This is today one of the central ideas of liberalism and is central to our understanding of the State.

Thus Locke paved the way for representative government although Locke himself advocated constitutional monarchy and was clearly not articulating any of the now routinely accepted democratic ideas of popular government based on universal adult franchise. Yet there is no denying that it was his idea that the State should be for the protection of the rights of the citizens which made the transformation of liberalism into liberal democracy possible.

Taking off from Locke's ideas that there must be limits upon legally sanctioned political power, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), and James Mill (1773-1836) developed a systematic account of the liberal democratic State. In their account the State would be expected to ensure that the conditions necessary for individuals to pursue their interests without risk of arbitrary political interference, to participate freely in economic transactions, to exchange labour and goods on the market and to appropriate resources privately. In all this the State was to be like an umpire while individuals went about their business as per the rules of the free market, and periodic elections determined who would be in power.

The idea was that such an arrangement would lead to the maximization of pleasure for the maximum numbers as per the principle of utility, to which both Bentham and Mill subscribed. This argument was clearly advocating a limited State on the grounds that the scope and power of the State should be limited in order to ensure that the collective good be realized through individuals freely competing and pursuing utility without State interference.

Yet significantly certain kinds of interference were allowed, any individual, group or class that would challenge the security of property, the working of the market or the upkeep of public good could be held by the State. Prisons became the hallmark of this age, the enactment and enforcement of law backed by the coercive powers of the State and the creation of new State institutions advocated in order to uphold the general principle of utility.

The modern liberal democratic State which we are familiar can be traced to the writings of Bentham and Mill. However they stopped short of advocating universal suffrage (for instance workers and women were kept out of the charmed circle), finding one reason or the other to deny the vote to all individuals. For the utilitarians, democracy was not an end in itself only a means to an end. Democracy was seen as the logical requirement for the governance of a society freed from absolute power and tradition, inhabited by individuals who seek to maximize their private gains, constituted as they are by endless desires.

John Stuart Mill (1806-73) is perhaps one of the first and strongest advocates of democracy as an end in itself who saw its primary purpose as the highest and harmonious development of the individual. John Stuart Mill was deeply committed to the idea of individual liberty, moral development and the rights of minorities. He was concerned with the nature and limits of the power that could be legitimately exercised by society over the individual. Liberal democratic government was necessary not only to ensure the pursuit of individual satisfaction, but also for free development of individuality.

While he conceded the need for some regulation and interference in individual's lives, but he sought obstacles to arbitrary and self-interested intervention. To ensure all of this, Mill proposed a representative democracy. However despite the firm commitment to liberty and democracy that Mill makes, he too believed that those with the most knowledge and skills should have more votes than the rest, inevitably this would imply that those with most property and privilege would have more votes than the rest. Of course it needs to be mentioned that deep inequalities of wealth, and power bothered Mill who believed that these would prevent the full development of those thus marginalized.

4.4   ROUSSEAU

Standing apart from the liberal and democratic tradition is Rousseau (1712-1778) who might be described a champion of the 'direct' or 'participatory' model of democracy. Rousseau is uncomfortable with the idea that sovereignty can be transferred either by consent or through the ballot, actually he did not think it possible even. Rousseau justifies the need for the State by beginning his arguments in the 'Social Contract' with the description of the state of nature in which human beings were rather happy but were ultimately driven out of it because of various obstacles to their preservation (some of these obstacles that he identifies are natural disasters, individual weakness and common miseries). Thus human beings come to realize that for the fullest realization of their potential and for greatest liberty it is essential for them to come together and co-operate through a law making and enforcing body. This State would be thus a result of a contract that human beings create to establish possibilities of *self*-regulation and *self*-government. In his scheme of affairs individuals were to be directly involved in law making and obeying these laws would not be akin to obeying a sovereign authority outside on oneself but it would amount to obeying oneself and this to Rousseau constitutes freedom.

Individuals are thus to vote in disregard of their private interest, to each individual who is an indivisible part of the sovereign what matters is oly the interest of the body politic itself. Rousseau calls this general will. For Rousseau the sovereign is the people themselves in a new form of association and the sovereign's will is the will of each person. The government is thus the result of an agreement among the citizens and is legitimate only to the extent to which it fulfils the instructions of the general will and obviously should it fail to do do so it can be revoked or changed.

4.5   THE MAR XIST PERSPECTIVE

The take off point for Karl Marx (1818-83) and Engels (1820-95) in their analysis of the State is unlike the preceding accounts not the individual and his or her relation to the State. As Marx put it very eloquently 'man is not an abstract being squatting outside the world…'

Marx argued that individuals by themselves do not tell us much, it is the interaction between individuals and institutions and the society that makes the account worthwhile. He contends that the State has to be seen as a dynamic institution circumscribed by social forces and always changing. Thus the key to understanding the relations between people is the class structure. Classes they argued are created at a specific conjecture in history, the implication is that historically there was a period characterized by the absence of classes and the future could hold a classless society. With the creation of surplus produce a class of non- producers that can live off the productive activity of others emerges and this is the foundation of classes in society. Those who succeed in gaining control over the means of production form the ruling class both economically and politically. This leads to intense, perpetual and irreconcilable conflicts in society. Such struggles while becoming the motor force for historical development also become the basis for the emergence of the State.

Marx and Engels challenged the idea that the State can be neutral and represent the community or the public interests as though classes did not exist. When the liberals claim that the State acts neutrally it is according to Marx protecting a system of individual rights and defending the regime of private property, thus its actions produce results that are far from neutral. Marx is of the opinion that the dichotomy between the private and the public which characterizes the modern State is itself dubious for it depoliticizes the most important source of power in modern societies i.e. private property. That which creates a fundamental and crucial divide in society is presented as an outcome of free private contracts and not a matter for the State. However he argues, all the institutions and structures of the State defend the interests of private property and thus the claims of neutrality that the State makes are untenable.

Marxist politics would therefore require an action plan to overthrow the State and by implication the classes that uphold the State. Marx characterized the history of State broadly as having set out from a slave State, to feudal State and then to the modern State (with capitalism as its basis). The last mentioned carries within it as a consequence of heightened class struggle the possibility of revolutionary transformation and the creation of a socialist State. This would be for the first time in history a State representative of the majority. It would be controlled by the proletariat, and unlike the earlier dictatorships controlled by the property owning classes, this State would be the dictatorship of the proletariat, the toiling classes.

Eventually Marx argues that the logic of historical development would lead this State to a communist stage. Material abundance and prosperity would distinguish this State from the earlier stage of statelessness described as primitive communism by Marx. In the communist stage of society's evolution due to the absence of classes and class struggle, the State would become redundant and wither away. The State according to Marx exists to defend the interests of the ruling classes and is deeply embedded in socio-economic relations and linked to particular class interests. We can discern at least two distinct strands in Marx explaining the nature of this relationship between classes and the State.

Of the two, the more subtle position is the one that we will examine first. This position holds that the State and its bureaucratic institutions may take a variety of forms and constitute a source of power which need not be directly linked to the interests or be under the unambiguous control of the dominant class in the short term. Thus, according to this view, the State appears to have a certain degree of power independent of class forces, thus it is described as being relatively autonomous. The other view that we find often represented in Marx's writings is that the State's role is to coordinate a divided society in the interests of the ruling class, thus it sees the State as merely a 'superstructure' serving the interests of the dominant class.

Later Marxists have differed considerably with each other on the interpretations of the Marxist concept of the State. One of the most celebrated of such differences is the now famous 'Miliband vs. Poulantzas' debate.

Ralph Miliband begins by stressing the need to separate the governing classes from the ruling classes. The latter exercises ultimate control whereas the former makes day-to-day decisions. Miliband is suggesting that the ruling class does not get embroiled in the everyday business of governance, for the State is an instrument that is for the domination of society on behalf of this very class. His contention is that in order to be politically effective the State has to separate itself from the ruling class. And in doing this, it might even have to take actions that might not be in the interests of the ruling class, of course in the long run.

For Poulantzas the class affiliations of those in State positions and offices is not of any significance. He draws attention to the structural components of the capitalist State which enable it to protect the long-term framework of capitalist production even if it means severe conflict with some segments of the capitalist class. A fundamental point in Poulantza's argument is that the State is what holds together capitalism by ensuring political organization of the dominant classes that are constantly engaged in conflict due to competitive pressures and short term differences.

Further the State ensures 'political disorganization' of the working classes which because of many reasons can threaten the hegemony of the dominant classes, the State also undertakes the task of political 'regrouping' by a complex 'ideological process' of classes from the non-dominant modes of production who could act against the State. Thus in this perspective the centralized modern State is both a necessary result of the 'anarchic competition of civil society' and a force in the reproduction of such competition and division. The State does not simply record socio-economic reality, it enters into its very construction by reinforcing its form and codifying its elements.

4.6   WELFARE STATE

Marxist theory of the State as we have seen challenged the hegemony of individualism that was intrinsic to liberal and liberal-democratic theories. However from within liberalism attempts at revisiting the basic assumptions came with the reversal of the explanation of the process of social causation, and the consequent effect this had on the idea of personal responsibility that had been a feature of nineteenth century thought. The emergence of the case for the welfare State began with the argument that instead of public welfare being the cause of dependence, loss of autonomy and capacity for individual responsibility for action and the market the source of independence and freedom, the opposite was the case.

A considerable amount of re-interpretation of certain basic concepts like liberty, community and equality were undertaken, and the nature of society was no longer visualized as a loosely coordinating set of individuals bound together by common rules but lacking a common purpose rather as a more intimate form of order. People were seen as being held together by social bonds that were not merely contractual and hence they could make claims on one another as citizens engaged in a common enterprise. This made the welfare State appear less like a charity and more like a form of entitlement. T. H. Green (1836-82) was one of the first and strongest advocates of the kind of the welfare State that Europe became familiar with. It began with a redefinition of liberty and its recasting of the notions of citizenship and community, moving as it did from the earlier foundation of the State based on the subjective preferences of atomized individuals.

The theory of modern welfare State stems out of an enquiry into the alleged inadequacies of the individualistic market order rather than from a socialist or Marxist theory. The latter theories would not argue for a welfare State without the backdrop of socialism. In fact Marxists are deeply critical of the welfare State institutions since they are merely set upon existing capitalist structures. On close scrutiny of the intellectual foundations of the welfare State we would notice that it does not sanction the abolition of the market but only a correction of its defects. Hence the successful welfare State is something that would in the long run help the capitalist State.

4.7 LIBERAL-EGALITARIAN STATE

The primary concern of welfare State theories has been equality, and to realize this goal an interventionist state was advanced as an option. John Rawls on the other hand has been concerned with the justification in rational terms of socially and economically necessary inequalities. Rawls's notion of State is similar to that of Locke: the State is a voluntary society constituted for mutual protection. This civil association regulates the general conditions so that individuals can pursue their individual interests. In Rawls' conception individuals are viewed as rational agents with interests and right claims, and a State can provide a general framework of rules and conditions which enable the fulfilment of these rights and claims. Rawls bestows upon the State an active role in the integration and promotion of the lives of the individual.

Rawls believes that 'public reason' would be the basis of the liberal legitimacy of the State. This is described by him as intellectual and moral power of citizens. In Rawls' most well known work, 'A Theory of Justice' as well as in his later works there is no conscious attempt made to develop a theory of State. However a close reading of his works suggests that he has in mind a constitutional democracy based on the principle of 'public reason' where each departure from the principle of equality should be justified on the basis of the famous Rawlsian principles of justice. The State would in this framework be expected to intervene in favour of establishing the principle of justice as fairness, and establish the principle of equality of individuals.

4.8 LIBERTARIAN-MINIMAL STATE

Robert Nozick has in his work 'Anarchy, State and Utopia' (1974) expressed his deep reservations regarding a State that is allowed to intervene and in fact to the whole quest for equality. Nozick is of the view that it is only the minimal State that can be morally justified, being limited by rights bearing individuals. Nozick challenged both anarchic visions of statelessness as well as welfare oriented interventionism.

Nozick repudiated the claims of any State to 'forbid capitalist acts between consenting adults'. He argues that a State that does anything more than provide services will necessarily violate people's rights and so cannot be morally legitimate. He argues primarily against the view that a major function of the State is to achieve distributive justice on the basis of some conception of the right pattern of distribution. Nozick therefore argues that a State which is more extensive than the minimal State is bound to be non-neutral by increasing the scope for manipulations. The position that Nozick took led him to become one of most invoked philosophers of the New Right, who were arguing through the 1980s for the rolling out of the State from the society. Nozick's prescription for a minimal State seemed to fulfil these requirements and thus gave an intellectual basis for the rapid withdrawal of the State from many key areas in England, Europe and America.

4.9   GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE STATE

We have till now looked at theories of the State that are circumscribed by the western experience. Anti-imperialist movements and the subsequent de-colonization was the context of new theories of State that questioned, re-examined and in some cases moved away completely from the western vantage point. Of these Mahatma Gandhi's is a profound challenge to both the liberal and the Marxist views of the State.

Gandhi's views on the State begin from a position of deep distrust and discomfort vis-à-vis the State. He differed from the core commitment that liberals make to the idea of unbridled individualism. Hence he obviously does not subscribe to the notion of the State that has as its fundamental principle competing individuals pursuing an end defined by the interests of the isolated, atomized self.

Gandhi was equally uncomfortable with the interventionist role of the State advocated by some other theories albeit in the interest of equality. Gandhi argued that increasing State interference is immoral and opens up ever increasing possibilities of violence and corruption.

Gandhi described swarajya as the ideal State. This would imply not only self-rule as is commonly understood but it implied governance of one's self, self-control and self regulation. A situation where each individual is able to govern and control himself or herself thus making the State redundant.

Gandhi advocated an active citizenry that would be involved in decision making and control of its destiny, rather than a huge and centralized, monolithic State structure. For Gandhi such a structure would be an embodiment of violence and would lead to alienation. This was an extension of his opinion that large scale industrialization would lead to violence and alienation.

Gandhi denounced the modern State as a soulless machine, which even while engaging in ostensibly egalitarian acts unwittingly leads to violence, and in the last instance a destruction of the individual. Gandhi expected the State to ensure internal peace and external security. He was however extremely sceptical of the modern State's claims to act on behalf of something described as autonomous 'national interest'. This discussion is only a fleeting glimpse of the very interesting arguments Gandhi puts forth in his dialogue with the tradition of western political theory that we have looked at so far. Needless to add that in order to present the total picture we need to place this discussion in the larger context of Gandhi's political philosophy.

4.10 FEMINIST THEORY AND THE STATE

Feminists of the liberal persuasion do not see any harm in engaging with the State and using the State as an ally to fight for their rights. They see the State as a neutral institution from which women had so long been excluded and into which they should make an entry.

However there are many that see the above approach as being rather short sighted. Malestream (which is also mainstream) political theory and politics has all along had a way of structuring politics and political institutions that does not permit the entry, articulation and much less the realization of feminist goals. The State from this point of view is presented as male in the feminist sense. The laws thus see and treat women the way men treat women. Radical feminists would go on from here to urge abandonment of such a State. This is however not a very widely shared view, most

feminists would argue they need to engage with this State as *women*, challenging the State's spurious claims to gender neutrality, and insisting on the validity of female voices.

Marxist-feminist attitude of scepticism towards the welfare State is premised on the belief that the benign use of the State to provide welfare for its citizens simply represents the most cost-effective way of reproducing labour power. It also assumes and reinforces women's domestic responsibilities and their economic dependency on a male breadwinner within the patriarchal family. The contention is that far from freeing women, welfare provision has helped to maintain oppressive gender roles, and has led to increased surveillance of sexual and reproductive behaviour and of child rearing practices. In the 1960s at the height of political radicalism, feminists argued that collaborating with the State amounted to a sell out. Today however there is a much more open-ended and less consistently hostile attitude to the State and to conventional political activity.

Post-Modernism and the Understanding of the State

Post-modernism sees the sovereign State as a metanarrative that is part of the totalizing discourse of modernity. Michel Foucault has argued that power is exercised not only at the level of the State but at the micro levels where it is constantly being redefined and experienced. Resistance too therefore to power has to happen not just at the spectacular levels but at these micro levels. Since such an approach is questioning the existence of a centralized system of power, there is no basis within this approach for either the use or the undermining of State power.

4.11 SUMMARY

We have in this Unit surveyed the liberal, the Marxist, the welfare, Gandhian, feminist and the post-modernist conceptions of the State. Each of these short discussions is a pointer to a much larger debate and analysis that can be developed with the help of further readings. The modern nation-State emerged at a particular historical juncture, and the changes in the contemporary world seem to suggest a difficult future ahead for the nation-State. Technological, economic, financial, cultural and political changes seem to suggest a disjunction between the structure of the modern nation-State and the world around it. The future would hold answers as to the form and longevity of the institution of the nation-State as we know it.

4.12 EXERCISES

1. What do you understand by the State?

2. Write a note on the liberal conception of the State.

3. Briefly compare the conceptions of the welfare State and the minimal State.

UNIT 5 CAPITALIST ECONOMY AND ITS CRITIQUE

Structure

5.1   INTRODUCTION

A number of prominent thinkers in Europe evolved a socialist critique of capitalism that has been important to how Europeans (and others) thought about industrialization. The critique decried capitalism as exploitative and unjust, and sought alternative means of economic and social organization for future industrial development. The heavy stress on the exploitative nature of capitalist industrialization and the quest for different models distinguished the socialist critique from classical political economists who found weaknesses in capitalism. David Ricardo for instance, showed that tension and conflict were inherent aspects of capitalism: the result of increases in rent which followed naturally from initial increases in production, labour and population. Thomas Robert Malthus showed that population increases that followed from capitalist development developed exponentially, and gradually led to immiserization and catastrophe. Neither, however, offered a solution to these problems other than an expansion of capitalism (in Ricardo), or capitulation to short-lived disasters (in Malthus). Socialist critics of capitalism sought to go beyond this. Before the October Revolution of 1917 in Russia, much of this thought came from social activists and philosophers who obtained prominence as innovative writers and as eminent figures in the First and Second International. They seldom wielded great political or administrative authority, although the Social Democratic Party in Germany (SPD), the French Socialist Party (SFIO) and the British Labour Party had gained influence in the parliamentary politics of their respective countries by 1917. After 1917, socialist thought assumed a different form. It not only evolved a critique of capitalism, but suggested alternatives, based on the experiences of the Soviet state and (after 1945), of socialist economies in Eastern Europe.

The October Revolution, though, was not the only factor which was decisive to the character of socialist evaluations of capitalism. Growth of the working class movement in 19th century Europe, and popular awareness about the problems of capitalist industrialization encouraged socialists. Socialist Parties also came to power in Western and Central Europe after 1918 - giving their own version of what could be done with capitalist industrialization to strip it of its worst aspect. Equally important, the nature of the socialist critique of economic aspects of capitalist industrialization

adapted to different economic and social ideas. Hence, whereas much of the early socialist critique was either outrightly focused on justice or dealt with the labour theory of value (which was popular with classical economists), later evaluations were less wedded to labour-value theory. Thinkers approached the problem of what could be done with capitalism inspired by ideas from neo-classical economics, as in the work of the Polish economist Oscar Lange, who was preoccupied with the way prices worked. Again, in early socialism itself, some were more 'moral' and 'religious' (as in the case of Christian Socialism), whereas other trends were wholly indifferent to religion or outrightly hostile to it.

5.2 BEFORE 1917

Before 1917, various thinkers looked to innovative forms of social organization, or methods of regulating capitalism, to achieve changes in prevailing structures. They were often inspired by philosophical notions about the intolerability of the prevailing commercialization of everyday life - which, for instance, partly lay at the heart of the work of writers such as Thomas More (in his Utopia), or Jean-Jaques Rousseau (who deplored the 'unnatural' character of contemporary society). There is no hard and fast link here, though, and it is better to think of socialist ideas in the immediate context of their time.

5.2.1 Early Critics

Among socialist critics of capitalism as an economic phenomenon, many fixed on its unjust character, and sought remedies in various forms of social action. Several utopian socialists fell into this category. Robert Owen (1771-1858), a leading textile manufacturer, focused on the existence of poverty in conditions of abundance. He explained it as the result of competition among capitalists, which led to technical innovation, sudden falls in the demand for labour, decline in general consumption and contraction of production. The degeneration in human life and human character which this spiral caused, according to Owen, could only be set right by a more just link between wages (and prices), where the amount of labour spent on the object would be regularly taken into consideration. Also, he advocated a more wholesome approach to social organization. And he wanted the development of idyllic communities where profit would be near-equally shared, work-allocation proceed according to capability and strict limits be established for ownership of property. Such communities, he argued, represented a satisfying existence and would be a model for social organization. With this end in mind, he ran his New Lanark cotton mills on humane principles, and fostered cooperative communities such as New Harmony in Indiana (USA). The followers of Ricardo such as Charles Hall (1745-1825), Thomas Hodgskin (1789-1869), John Gray (1794-1850) and John Francis Bray (1809-1895), expressed similar preferences (for the encouragement of cooperative activity). The sources of their ideas were different from Owen's. Following David Ricardo's theories, they saw capitalism generating a rent increase spiral that would lead to impoverishment of the working class. The solution, they argued was a brake on competitive capitalism. For this they suggested cooperative bodies for exchange and production (Gray), and even development of communal property ownership (Bray). Such initiatives would balance the relentless pressures of capitalist competition.

In France, the unsystematic activist Charles Fourier also advocated workers' cooperatives to stem the ascendancy of capitalism. Louis Blanc (1813-1882), wanted encouragement of producer cooperative, to replace capitalist enterprise, but

demanded that such cooperatives should be formed through state intervention and state sponsored industrialization. Prudhon (1809-1868), took a slightly different line in his *What is Property* ('it is theft'): i.e. that state action should be encouraged to restore the right of the small proprietor, whose position should be preserved through the imposition of serious disabilities (in the form of taxes) on those who sought to extend their property. Such a regulatory role for the state was also sought by Sismonde de Sismondi (1773-1842), a convinced supporter of Adam Smith in his early work (*Commercial Wealth*). After travel and lengthy research, he evolved a solid critique of capitalism, and argued that it was naturally susceptible to crises and to injustice (*New Principles of Political Economy*), arguing that the only solution was some form of state regulation. Sismondi linked crisis, misery and injustice in capitalist society to the dispossession of the independent producer by the large capitalist enterprise, the subsequent dependence of labour on capital. The suffering of labour, he contended, proceeded logically from the striving of capitalists to increase production, as the quest for profit dictated. This led the economy into glut and depression. Competition and technical sophistication, according to Sismondi, merely intensified this tendency to cyclical crises; and in the crises, even if the capitalist lost, his position was hardly as bad as that of labour. Solutions to this abominable situation did not lie, according to Sismondi, in communism (which suppressed private interest). It could only lie in state intervention that restored the position of the small producer.

5.2.2   Christian Socialists

Christian Socialists in France, who were morally outraged by the degradation of labour in prevailing circumstances, took up similar arguments. Abbe Felicite Robert de Lamennais (1782-1854), advocated increased Trade Union activity and diffusion of property to contain the moral horror. Pierre Guillaume Frederic Le Play (1806-1862), the leader of the Christian Socialist movement in France, who founded the Society for Social Economy in 1863, worked for social and legal reforms which would introduce an element of 'family' into the contemporary community. Le Play was an apostle of 'solidarism' which would link classes and diminished the violent fluctuations in income and welfare. His position, and the position of Lamennais, echoed some of the sentiments of Count Saint Simon, who considered unemployment unnatural, and spoke for Christian Humanism as a means to contain untrammeled exploitation and restore harmony to industrialization. Such a spirit, he argued, though, should manifest itself not by cooperativism, but through decisive action by an elite of engineers, philosophers and scientists. Although targeted at the middle classes, and seldom critical of property, Saint Simon's ideas had a socialist ring, since he was clearly dissatisfied with capitalism and wanted a deep study of society to set its evils right. His notions influenced a series of publicists and activists whose writings had a social edge: Thomas Carlyle, Michael Chevalier, John Stuart Mill and Leon Walras. Saint Simonian ideas were also popular among capitalists who had a social mission (such as the French bankers, the Pereires) and social reformers.

5.2.3   Critique in Germany: Marx and Engels

In Germany, Saint Simon's ideas had followers in Young Hegelians - enthusiasts of G.W.F. Hegel's early revolutionary zeal. These included Johann Karl Rodbertus (1805-1875), who wanted state provision for the working class, and a gradual collapse of private property. Ludwig Feurerbach (another Young Hegelian and socialist sympathizer), though, was less at ease with the religious edge to Saint Simonianism, since he considered the preoccupation with religion the prime factor that prevented an out and out focus on the problems of material prosperity.

The most influential socialists in Germany in the mid-19th century did not follow such positions. Important was Ferdinand Lasalle (1825-1864), who founded many workers' cooperatives to allow workers access to profit. And yet more decisive in the German socialist movement were Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who, like the French thinkers Louis Blanc and Auguste Blanqui, and the British activist Hyndman, and unlike most of the advocates of cooperativism, had little respect for private property.

Marx and Engels and the major leaders of the Second International represented a distinct and unusual path in socialist thought. Here, Marx, not only associated capitalism with exploitation but also with alienation, a shortcoming which even affected those who benefited most from capitalism that is the bourgeoisie. He also argued that the collapse of capitalism was inevitable, that the dominant class of the future was the proletariat (that is the urban working class), who would not only inherit the structures provided by industrial capitalism, but would divert them from its exploitative course. Marx's analysis provided a sense of assurance that capitalism was bound to fade away. His socialism was, he argued, scientific, i.e. based on the laws of the history of social development. Working out of the assumption that social relations constitute the core of economic structure and economic activity, Marx argued that a particular social set up created an economic dispensation with which it developed tensions over time. This led gradually to change. Capitalism, like feudalism before it, was bound to change.

Marx's primary work (*Capital*), was distinguished, though, not by such broad philosophical positions, (albeit that they remained fundamental to his arguments). He was able to demonstrate exploitation of workers within capitalism with a degree of theoretical rigour that other theoreticians seldom brought to the subject. Working out from the standard notion (shared by Smith, Ricardo and others), that all value of economic activity could be reduced to labour inputs, Marx fixed on the surplus that prices included, after wages and costs had been paid, and argued that the appropriation of this by the capitalist represented the scale of capitalist exploitation. Unlike 'liberals', he did not regard that entrepreneurial functions could also be judged in labour inputs. 'Surplus value', moreover, according to Marx, came to be rendered in money and capital - an end in itself, independent of the production process and productive of rewards. Competition among capitalists, however, and consequent fall in rates of profit in industry led to increasing exploitation and a steep rise in 'contradictions' between capital and labour. This, according to Marx, would lead unavoidably to the breakdown of capitalism.

Marx did not, it should be noted, indicate how 'contradictions' would be resolved. His 'scientific socialism' provided a critique of capitalism but did not provide a forceful reference for how 'labour' should operate under capitalism - except that it should be made more aware of its rights and interests. This marked him off from 'utopians' - just as he claimed that 'utopians' lacked a proper sense of what made (and would make) capitalism intolerable. This led them to half-baked palliatives. The attitude led to a break not only with 'utopians' but also with the Anarchist, Michael Bakunin. Bakunin, who stood by his own distinct perspective to socialist ideas, which argued against capitalism's concentration and its use of the centralized state, wanted a 'syndicalist' approach to labour strategy: i.e. avoidance of participation in the activities of the state as it existed since it would be contaminating to labour. Marx clearly found such an approach one more 'utopian' fixation.

5.2.4 Changing Assumptions

Later German socialists, (primarily Karl Kautsky and Hilferding), followed many of Marx's assumptions closely, and showed the way in which the exploitative process under capitalism had become refined over the mid and late 19th century to establish the authority of 'finance capitalism' (i.e. investors and bankers) over 'industrial capitalism'. Lenin showed the way imperial expansion reinforced capitalist production in Europe. The rhetoric of such writing was redolent of a strong critique of capitalism and imperialism, and focused an attack on large-scale private property, together with the state which legitimized it, as the main villains of the drama of exploitation under capitalism.

The main departure from such perspectives came from Bernstein, in Germany. He accepted almost all the standard analysis of capitalism and imperialism that Marxists produced. But he considered that as capitalism developed, the extent of exploitation of the working class would decrease: that a greater degree of cooperation between capitalist and proletariat would emerge and capitalism acquire a robust quality which would be resistant to collapse. Such assumptions were accepted by the Fabian Socialists in Britain. This was the group that formed around Sidney and Beatrice Webb, and its ideas were circulated in Sidney Webb's Facts for Socialists (1884) and Fabian Essays on Socialism (1889). The writer George Bernard Shaw and other leading intellectuals were members of the group. They advocated close work by socialists with political parties and trade unions, and argued that socialist aims could be achieved through such political means.

Much of this argument followed from the increasingly self-evident preoccupation, among advocates of 'capitalism', with the idea that market mechanisms were not perfect: that these mechanisms may need guidance. Such a change implied that capitalism was not immutable and intransigent, and went against Marx's idea that it would be. Social policy (concerning hours of work and unemployment) in France, Britain and Germany in the late nineteenth century indicated this mutability in capitalism. So did the great authority that Trade Unions came to demonstrate in Britain and France by 1900. At a theoretical level, non-socialists began to look at economic exchange carefully and question the perfection of market mechanisms. This followed from the move among some, to question the idea that economic activity could be studied purely in terms of its labour inputs (including the entrepreneur's) - as in the case of the liberal economist Jean Baptiste Say. Working from notions that equally important was examination of economic activity in terms of the utility of production and market response to production (till now a subordinate focus of attention). Using historical evidence (from the French and German Historical Schools), as well as speculations about how consumers chose their products (by the 'marginal utility' school of William Stanley Jevons (1835-82), Carl Menger (1840-1921) Leon Walras (1834-1910) and others), a position emerged among non-socialist economists that the market could not be left alone. Once this was accepted, and once concessions were made to workers' demands, moderate 'socialism' of the non-Marxist variety did not differ excessively from the standard orthodoxy among capitalist or 'liberal' economists. For the less revolutionary, the situation showed the way to reconciliation with capitalism.

5.3   AFTER 1917

The situation seriously changed owing to the First World War, the October Revolution of 1917, the Depression of 1929 and the Second World War. The World Wars and the Depression undermined the economy of the European states so decisively that capitalism itself came into question. Alternative means of economic organization

became popular. The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (i.e. the seizure of power by the Bolshevik fraction of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party in October 1917, and its success in the Civil War that followed) provided an example that attracted attention.

5.3.1 Early Bolshevik Theories

For Bolshevik socialism was not only critical of capitalism, it rejected revisionism and it showed ways of going beyond capitalism through means other than cooperativism and piecemeal state regulation. Among the Bolsheviks, a serious economist, Nikolai Bukharin, dismissed liberal notions of the 'utility' school as unworthy of the attention of those concerned with more than the activities of the rentier or leisured class. More fundamentally, the Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin, argued, contrary to many socialists, that the state could provide a means for managing the economy for the benefit of society, once and for all overcoming exploitation and the conditions that led all society into a state of 'alienation' from the fruits of its labour. The state could, Lenin contended, restore socially wholesome priorities to society on a large scale. Hitherto, this had not been a path socialists took, even if they supported state intervention in economic affairs. For a dominant role for the state in such matters meant handing major powers over to great landowners and great capitalists (who exercised hegemony in governments in France, Germany and Britain until then). Lenin took the line, in his 'State and Revolution' that previous critics of large scale state control had been thinking of such cases where the state was run by the ruling class. The situation changed when the proletariat and socialists took over the state.

Nationalization and abolition of private property became the cornerstones of this perspective. 'Planning' also became crucial to it: the notion that it was possible, statistically, to evolve a plan of the economy and its potentials, and thereafter to 'plan' targets for it. Such ideas were evolved by various Soviet economists, and became a major ingredient in the socialist critique of capitalism. S. Preobrazhensky, for instance, pointed out that with such enormous controls and powers, the state could achieve capital accumulation itself, in the way capitalists had done it in the early stages of the industrial revolution. Through manipulation of prices, resources could be diverted from agriculture to other economic ends if necessary. The rigour with which this could be followed up was stressed by the leading 'Planner' of the late 1920s and 1930s, S. Strumilin, a great supporter of 'targets'. The 'Planned Economy' of the 1930s in the Soviet Union showed how this could work, achieving great increases in industrial production and revolutionizing the country's economy. In all this, rigorous standards of welfare were preserved, and strict curbs enforced concerning the accumulation of wealth.

With great sophistication, and with scant respect for labour theory of value (which most Soviet economists accepted), various economists outside the USSR argued for the preferability of a Planned Economy. This was true of the Polish economist Oscar Lange (1904-1959?), who, in his *On the Economic Theory of Socialism* (1938), argued that the Planned Economy could be more efficient than a capitalist economy, if adequate attention was paid to the price mechanism. His popularity was as great outside Soviet socialist circles (who regarded him with some care) as that of Michael Kalecki, another Polish economist who worked with concepts such as 'class conflict' and integrated these with important work on business cycles.

5.3.2 Changing Assumptions

Absorption of the underlying principles of this new socialist onslaught on capitalism into 'liberal' economic notions in post Depression Europe, and the ascendancy of J.M. Keynes' ideas, gradually led to the decline of the importance of the new socialist perspective in post-1945 Europe. Keynes followed up the 'marginal utility' school, and its concessions concerning the imperfections of the market, to argue for a degree of management of the economy in notions not far off those of Lange. In economies which were not 'socialist', therefore, due accommodation came to be made for the socialist challenge. Thereafter, the insights such as those of Friedrich von Hayek (1889-1992), the LSE-Freiberg-Salzburg economist, concerning the distortion that Planning invoked in the function of prices in the market assumed a degree of popularity in European circles. And this, together with the influence in Europe of the Chicago monetarists (M. Friedman and others), led to a gradual decrease in interest in the socialist challenge in late 20th century Europe. A few Keynesians, such as Nicholas Kaldor and Joan Robinson (the 'Cambridge Keynesians') continued to have some interest in the Soviet legacy. Otherwise, the crisis of the Eastern European economies in the 1970s and 1980s gave foundation to scepticism concerning socialist ideas. Wild uncertainties in the market in the developing world, however, and the major social implications of such uncertainties, have ensured a persistent interest in socialist perspectives. Trade has compelled Europeans to take account of the perspective. Socialism is thrust on Europe by the world, as it were, even if Europeans have little interest in it.

5.4   SUMMARY

It has become customary, in recent times, following the collapse of socialist projects in the Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe, to argue that socialism seldom established a powerful critique of the efficaciousness of capitalism as a system of production. Socialist thinkers, runs the rhetorical assertion, are focused on distribution, not production. Standard histories such as Eric Roll's *A History of Economic Thought*, or W.W. Rostow's *Theorists of Economic Growth from David Hume to the Present* reinforce the position through neglect of any socialist thought after Marx. Standard socialist accounts such as G.D.H. Cole's *History of Socialist Thought*, moreover, do not seriously revise the perspective. A respect for Marx and earlier socialists is evinced in non-socialist history in that they were the first to argue vigorously that distribution in capitalism would be so problem-ridded and capitalism so dissatisfying that society would *want* to overthrow it. It is assumed that time and social policy solved this problem. If there is attention to the challenge of 'planning' (Soviet style) in Europe, it is quickly assimilated into the notion that whatever needed to be added to capitalism to set it right by this route was achieved by Keynesian policy in Europe. Soviet specialists may object, but this has seldom made an impact in European accounts of the socialist critique of capitalism.

Is this a fair representation of the socialist critique and its status in Europe at various times ? Probably to an extent - since socialists rarely wrote about how to get richer unless it was through greater justice. But as standard respect for Marx indicates, distribution and production cannot wholly be delinked. A social path to prosperity is viable only as long as it is tolerable. This has meant that concerns with inequality have led to interventions in Europe about how to rework production patterns on many occasions in European history. Again, application of Soviet planning was very much about growth - addressing the question of how to provide maximum prosperity for the majority of the population in as short a time as possible. Just because there is no interest in the problems solved by the Planning mechanism in Europe today does not mean that this was always the case. Especially in Eastern Europe (even before

Soviet take-over), planning strategies attracted interest. Soviet economists faced highly unusual conditions, and their ideas were innovative, and evoked some interest. Even non-socialist historians such as Alec Nove have pointed this out. The current downturn in interest in socialist perspectives hardly means that such perspectives on growth are foreclosed for the indefinite future in Europe. In fact, the persistence of the perspectives outside Europe in the context of a 'globalized' economy merely means that they will continue to draw attention.

5.5   EXERCISE

1.   What are the essential features of the critique of capitalism as propounded by Marx and Engels?

2.   Distinguish the pre-1917 critique of capitalism from that of the post 1917 one.

UNIT 6   THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Structure

6.1   INTRODUCTION

The previous two Units of this Block focused on the transformations in the realm of State and Economy. This is the last Unit of the Block and talks about new social configurations that were ushered in by the process of modernity. Far reaching, profound and irreversible changes took place in virtually every section of the society, e.g., new demographic profile, erosion of traditional communities, declining hold of religion, secularization of life in general, massive, transfers of population both forced and voluntary – from villages to cities, creation of new and large urban centre, and creation of new jobs and occupations. All these changes were limited to, and product of, a new type of economy which established strong roots in some parts of the world around the 18th – 19th centuries. This Unit elaborates each of these aspects in detail.

6.2   THE NATURE OF MODERN SOCIETY

Modernity can best be approached against the background of what went before. A broad distinction may be drawn between agrarian and industrial; rural and urban societies. The most rapid changes with regard to these distinctions took place during the 19th and 20th centuries, when the hierarchical categories that had endured in the (mainly) agrarian societies for millenia began to change irrevocably. Industrial structures took much of their characteristic form from the rejection of pre-industrial ways, and modernity derived meaning and momentum by contrast with what went before. Thus modernization may be viewed as a process of *individualization, specialization* and *abstraction*. Firstly, the structures of modern society take as their basic unit the individual rather than the group or community. Secondly, modern institutions perform specific tasks in a socio-economic system with a complex division of labour in contrast with the peasant family. Third, rather than attaching rights and prerogatives to particular groups and persons, or being guided by custom or tradition, modern institutions tend to be governed by general rules and regulations that purport to be rationally, if not scientifically conceived.

Class society in the 19th century emerged from the estates hierarchy of feudalism. Gradually at first and then more rapidly after the advent of the industrial revolution the classifications of landlord and peasant began to be supplemented by that of capitalist and worker, although it would be simplistic to suggest that the older class divisions were replaced by the new ones. The socialist (especially marxist) political tradition, however, predicated its analyses upon the fact that capitalist relations of production were bound to subsume all social relations within its ambit, and promote the appearance of two major classes, *bourgeois* (capitalist) and worker. Alongside this, modern industrial society saw the new emergence of strata like the professionals, intelligentsia, and the lower middle class or *petty bourgeoisie.*

6.3   ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

World population had reached about 500 million by the middle of the 17th century. During this time tendencies towards population growth were checked by starvation and disease. The Industrial Revolution of the 18th century engendered certain changes. From about 1700 there was a rapid population explosion. Since then global population has increased more than eightfold, reaching 4.8 billion by the mid-1980s, and more than six billion by 2000. Thus, not only population but its rate of increase has also accelerated since the advent of industrialization. Europe's population doubled during the 18th century, from roughly 100 million to almost 200 million, and doubled again during the 19th century, to about 400 million. Europe was also the location for the pattern known as the demographic transition. Improvements in public health and food supply brought about a drastic reduction in the death rate but no corresponding decline in the birth rate. This contributed to a population explosion in the 19th-century. Only later did the phenomenon emerge of urbanized populations voluntarily lowering their birth rates. The century of Russian and Soviet industrialization that began in the 1880s also illustrates the link between industrialization and population.

The developing societies experienced rapid population growth after 1945, at rates greater than the West. Medical science reduced the high death rates, and the birth rates showed little tendency to fall. Attempts by governments to persuade non-Westerners to have smaller families failed. One result was the persistence of youthful populations in societies - people under 15 made up more than 40 percent of the populations of the Third World, as compared with between 20 and 30 percent in the industrialized world. The high birth rate in these societies was because industrialization was fragmentary, modern classes took much longer to emerge, and it remained rational for the bulk of the population to continue to have large families to share in labour and provide security for parents. Lower fertility would come, it was argued, when wealth was more evenly distributed and social security systems well established.

Economic growth became the defining feature of modern polities, especially in the first industrializing nations, of western Europe and North America. This transformed the nature of society. Underlying this phenomenon were technological change, the replacement of human and animal power by coal and oil-driven engines; the freeing of the labourer from customary ties and the creation of a free market in labour; the concentration of workers in the factory system. A pivotal role was to be performed by the entrepreneur. Later industrialisers were able to dispense with some of these - the Soviet Union industrialized on the basis largely of a regulated rather than free labour market and did away with large-scale entrepreneurship, and Japanese entrepreneurs were sustained by strong state involvement in industrialization. Certain

states - such as Denmark and New Zealand industrialized through the commercialization and mechanization of agriculture, rendering agriculture another industry.

Mechanization made a large portion of the rural labour force superfluous, and the proportion of the labour force employed in agriculture dropped steadily. This 'sectoral transformation' was one of industrialization's most obvious effects. Most workers came to be employed in the production of manufactured goods and in services rather than in agriculture. In the United Kingdom and the United States, by the mid-1970s more than 95 percent of the employed population were in manufacturing and services and less than 5 percent in agriculture. In Japan, in 1970, more than 80 percent of the employed population were in manufacturing and services, and less than 20 percent in agriculture. In pre-industrial agrarian societies, on the other hand, typically 90 percent of the adult population are peasant farmers or farm workers.

6.4   URBANIZATION

Industrialization brings a growth in trade and manufactures. To serve these activities it requires centralized sites of production, distribution, exchange, and credit. It demands a regular system of communications and transport. It multiplies the demand that political authorities establish a dependable coinage, a standard system of weights and measures, a reasonable degree of protection and safety on the roads, and regular enforcement of the laws. All these developments conduce to a vast increase in urbanization. Industrialism concentrated mass populations in cities. Modern urbanism differs from pre-industrial urbanism in quantitative reach and intensity; in new relationships between the city and society. Thus, in imperial Rome, the high point of pre-industrial urbanism, only 10 to 15 percent of Romans lived in cities. Whereas in typical agrarian societies 90 percent or more of the population are rural, in industrial societies it is not uncommon for 90 percent or more to be urban.

In the United Kingdom, in 1801 about 20% of its population lived in towns and cities of 10,000 or more inhabitants. By 1851 it was 40% and if smaller towns are included, more than half the population was urbanized. By 1901, the year of Queen Victoria's death, the census recorded 75% of the population as urban. In the span of a century a largely rural society had become a largely urban one. The pattern was repeated on a European and then a world scale. At the beginning of the 19th century, continental Europe (excluding Russia) was less than 10 percent urbanized, by the end of the century it was about 30 percent urbanized (10 percent in cities with 100,000 or more), and by the mid-1980s, the urban population was more than 70 percent. In the United States in 1800, only 6 percent of the population lived in towns of 2,500 or more; in 1920 the census reported that for the first time more than half of the American people lived in cities. By the mid-1980s this had risen to nearly 75 % the same as Japan's urban population - and more than two-fifths of the population lived in metropolitan areas of one million or more. In the world as a whole, in 1800 no more than 2.5 percent of the population lived in cities of 20,000 or more; by 1965 this had increased to 25 percent, and by 1980 to 40 percent. It is estimated that by the year 2000 about half the world's population will be urban.

There has also been a growth of very large cities. Cities of more than one million inhabitants numbered 16 in 1900, 67 in 1950, and 250 in 1985. The fastest rates of urban growth were to be found in the underdeveloped nations. For the rapidly expanding populations of overpopulated villages, cities were a means of escape and opportunity. Between 1900 and 1950, while the world's population as a whole grew by 50 percent, the urban population grew by 254 percent. In Asia urban

growth was 444 percent and in Africa 629 percent. By the mid-1980s, Africa and Asia were about 30 percent urbanized, and Latin America nearly 70 percent. Cities such as São Paulo (15 million), Mexico City (17 million), and Calcutta (10 million), had mushroomed to rival and even overtake in size the large cities of the developed West and Japan. Urbanization in the underdeveloped nations did not carry with it the benefits of industrialization. The result has been the rapid growth of slums in or on the outskirts of the big cities. About four or five million families in Latin America live in slums and the numbers in Asia are far larger.

Urbanism cannot be understood simply by statistics of urban growth. It is a matter, too, of a distinctive culture and consciousness. City life can detach people from their traditional communal moorings, leaving them morally stranded and so inclined to harbour unreal expectations and feverish dreams. In the very number of social contacts it necessarily generates, it may compel individuals to erect barriers to protect their privacy. At the same time, cities promote diversity and creativity; they are the agents of change and growth. The French sociologist Émile Durkheim, declared great cities to be 'the uncontested homes of progress', where alone minds were 'naturally oriented to the future.' Whereas pre-industrial cities were surrounded by the countryside and dependent on the peasantry, modern urbanism reversed this relationship. The countryside now became dependent on a single economic system centred on the cities. Political and economic power resided in the city; industrial and financial corporations became the dominant landowners, replacing individual proprietors. Rustic life no longer significantly affected the values and practices of the larger society. The city came to symbolize industrial society, dictate the style and set the standard for the society as a whole.

6.5 CHANGES IN WORKING LIVES AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

In pre-industrial and peasant societies families were the basic unit of production; and subsistence the aim of productive activity. From weavers in 18th-century England, to coal miners in 20th century colonial India, men, women and children could all be found performing different tasks in a co-ordinated work-process. More often than not this labour would be remunerated in piece-rates, or through the putting-out system, based on advances. The families might also be able to cultivate small plots of land, and have access to common lands or forests for fuel and jungle produce. In the Western world, the experience of industrialization disrupted the family economy. (It is noteworthy that these aspects are modified considerably in the so-called developing countries, where casual, informal and seasonal labour is widespread, and takes into its ambit the employment of children and women as members of work-gangs).

Modern industrial economic processes have done away with the economic function of the family as production sites shifted to factories. Most family members have become landless agricultural labourers or factory workers. Work for subsistence has been replaced by work in the factories, and for wages. In the less developed world, conditions remain similar to what they were in the early stages of industrialization in the West. Families struggle to maintain traditional collective unity, and continue to pool their resources, and make regular visits to homes in villages. Their wages still contribute to a common family fund. In the absence of a comprehensive system of social security, villages and families fulfill the role. Despite this, workers' lives, whatever their location, have become dependent upon the capitalist system of wage labour, and the place and functions of the family have undergone a qualitative shift. The extended families of the pre-industrial and early

industrial periods, have given way to nuclear families of parents and dependent children.

Under modern social structures, work has become the principal source of individual identity. This has been accompanied by a massive increase in the division of labour that went beyond artisanal specialization, what Adam Smith and Karl Marx called the 'detailed' division of labour, in the work task itself. The tasks involved in fabricating a product, are fragmented and allocated to several individuals as a means of increasing productivity. This division of labour is the basis for the heightened productivity of modern capitalism. The latter is also associated with the innovations of entrepreneurs like Henry Ford who introduced the moving assembly line and the 'scientific management' techniques of Frederick Taylor with his 'time and motion' studies.

In modern industrial society, economic position and relationships have become the key to social position. While wealth was always important in determining social position, it was not the central determinant. Other aspects of social being, such as membership of this or that community, race, religion, age and gender were of great importance in determining positions in the social hierarchy. But industrial society has subordinated all these principles to the economic one. The position of the individual in the production system and the marketplace gives him or her a place in a particular class. Property ownership and education levels affect market position. Karl Marx predicted that these trends (still evolving in his time) would leave two main economic classes, the propertyless workers, or proletariat, and the capitalist owners, or bourgeoisie. It is a matter of debate among sociologists of modern society whether these processes of class differentiation are still moving in the direction suggested by Marx. Although it is true that economic relationships have not completely eliminated non-economic determinations of social status, (a fact that carries a great deal of political significance), it may also be argued that the subordination of human productive activity to capitalist markets and the wage-labour form is proceeding uninterrupted.

6.6 MODERNIZATION: SECULARIZATION AND RATIONALIZATION

Max Weber called modernization a process leading to 'the disenchantment of the world.' It eliminates all the supernatural forces and symbols which pre-modern cultures use to explain natural and social phenomena; substituting for these the modern scientific interpretation of nature. Only laws and regularities discovered by the scientific method are admitted as valid explanations of phenomena. This process of secularization tends to displace religious institutions, beliefs and practices, in favour of reason and science, a process first observable in Europe toward the end of the 17th century. With colonialism, secularization was exported to the non-European world. Although religion has not been driven out from society, and although the public may hold traditional religious beliefs alongside scientific ones, religious phenomena have lost their centrality in the life of society as a whole. Right-wing political movements worldwide do indeed resort to the evocation of religious symbolism as a means of mobilizing public sentiments in favour of conservative programmes. This tendency however, does not obviate the basic fact that religious establishments have lost control of political power in the modern state.

The process of rationalization touches many more areas, such as the capitalist economy, with its calculation of profit and loss. For Max Weber, it referred to the establishment of a rational system of laws and administration in modern society. He saw the highest development of the rational principle in the impersonal and impartial rule of rationally constituted laws and procedures: the system of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy was the

modern alternative to traditional and 'irrational' considerations of kinship or culture, its power, the triumph of the scientific method in social life. Although he was aware that bureaucracy could be despotic in actual operation, Weber nevertheless believed that trained officials were 'the pillar both of the modern state and of the economic life of the West.' However, Weber stressed that modern rationalization did not lead to entire populations becoming reasonable or knowledgeable.

Modernization: Problems Of Mass Society

Another feature of modern society is the emergence of the mass phenomenon, which tends to merge rather than distinguish classes, and counter-balance the rise of modern individualism with the decline of local communities and the acceleration of political centralization. Political and cultural centralization and uniformity have been interpreted as pointers to the creation of a 'mass society'. Tocqueville a 19th C. French scholar had warned that individuals lacking identification with strong intermediate institutions would become atomized ('alienated', in Marx's language), and seek the protection of authoritarian governments. The rise of totalitarian movements in the 20th century showed that these tendencies were real and present in all modern societies. These tendencies signified a new stratification of elite and mass, and theories appropriate to that. Even a class party like Lenin's incorporated a belief in this stratification with its concept of 'vanguard' and 'rank and file'. Fascist sociology recognized only the division between leader and mass, Stalinist sociology that between Party and People, with the latter consisting of the three 'classes' of intelligentsia, peasant, and worker in non-antagonistic relationship, as a single mass.

Mass society has brought new problems, matching social progress with social pathology. Urbanization has meant crowding, pollution, and environmental destruction. The decline of religion and community has removed restraints on appetite, while competitive capitalism that stimulates expectations cannot provide everyone with the means for their realization. Modern life has seen an increase in suicide, crime and mental disorder. As mass political parties have come to monopolize civic life, individual citizens have retreated into daily life. These phenomena have put a strain on civic loyalties and the willingness of people to participate in political life. Political apathy and low turnouts at elections have called into question the democratic claims of modern liberal societies. A similar concern has been raised with regard to the spread of mass communications in the 20th century. The uniformity and conformity bred by the press, radio and television have been seen to threaten the pluralism and diversity of modern liberal polities, and a reminder of the totalitarian tendencies that lie beneath the surface of modernity.

Industrialism was found to have created new pockets of poverty. Despite steady economic growth, between 15 and 20 % of the population remained permanently below (officially defined) poverty levels throughout the industrial world. Did industrialism by its very mechanism of growth create a new category of poor who could not compete according to the 'rationality' of the new order? The communal and kinship supports of the past having withered away, there appears to have been no alternative for the failed and the rejected but to become claimants and pensioners of the state.

Some might see these as signs that modernity is fractured, that human-kind will need ultimately to re-think the utility of modernization and industrialism. Karl Marx offered the most systematic analysis of this 'alienation'. The industrial worker is estranged from his labouring activity because of the compulsions of class: he has no control over the terms and conditions of the disposal of his product. Unlike traditional artisanship, modern labour processes do not require his constructive and creative

faculties. The industrial system of production is phenomenally powerful; but this power is achieved at the cost of reducing workers, to mere labour-power, semblances of humanity. Marx believed that the high productivity of human labour in modern industrial systems could free human beings from a greater part of the burden of work; but not until modernity severed its links with capitalism.

6.7 MODERN SOCIETY AND WORLD SOCIETY

Western industrialization rapidly became the model for the whole world, and western modernity an example to be followed by all nations. Colonies or clients of Western powers, were 'developed' along these lines before they attained independence. Apparently the only viable polity in the modern world was industrial society, and only industrial societies could be active global agents. Thus Japan, humiliated by the West in mid-19th century, industrialized and became one of the most powerful societies in the world.

Japan's experience confirmed that there were several routes to modernity. Britain, Western Europe and the USA had industrialized on the basis of individual entrepreneurship and the free market economy. In Germany and Japan, the state and political elites played a major role, in organizing and planning development, and restricting foreign access to home markets in the interests of native industry. Following the Russian Revolution of 1917, there came the authoritarian model of modernization under the one-party state. Many developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America industrialized according to economic plans drawn up by political elites and imposed upon their populations. Independent India, instituted formal liberal democracy, but its industrialization was guided by the Indian National Congress, identified with the struggle for independence. There were also the African socialisms of Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana and Julius Nyerere's Tanzania, the Chinese socialism of Mao Zedong, the Cuban socialism of Fidel Castro, and the Yugoslav socialism of Josip Broz Tito. All these became models of development to certain Third World societies.

The experiences of Japan and the Soviet Union suggested a general pattern of late development appropriate to nations that attempted to industrialize in the late 19th or early 20th centuries. This involved protectionism, control of unions, and centralized banking and credit. Late developers put the state at the centre of modernization. India under colonialism underwent the ironic fate of state-sponsored economic development supervised by a foreign elite committed to the Victorian economic ideology of *laissez-faire* (a policy of non-interventions in the economic affairs) at home. In Japan, the Soviet Union and China the state supervised industrialization, made major decisions about investment, transport, communications, and education. Mass communications became agencies of mass socialization.

Industrialization has taken place within a context of world industrialization, in a world system of states of unequal power. Towards the end of the 20th century the ideological divisions between West (the developed capitalist nations) and East (the socialist nations), became obsolete with the collapse of communist regimes in the USSR and Eastern Europe. Increasingly primary emphasis is being placed on levels of economic development: the differentiation is known as the 'North-South' divide – a somewhat misleading term, not least because Australia in this divide is placed in the 'North' and North Korea in the 'South'. Some commentators also speak of First, Second, and Third Worlds.

Immanuel Wallerstein a leading American economist, argues for a single world

capitalist economy, expanding outward from northwestern Europe since the 17th century. He classifies countries according to their power within the system. There are Core countries that include the United States and Japan; 'semi-peripheral countries', include Brazil, eastern European states and China; 'peripheral countries,' include the poor countries of Africa and Asia. Wallerstein's model recognises the internationalization of the industrial economy. Nation-states, whether capitalist or communist, are becoming increasingly subordinate to world economic developments. Thus, the politics of energy procurement are global in nature, just as much as military strategy. Capital investment and growth are global issues, and multinational corporations are significant actors on the world stage, busy establishing a new international division of labour. Manufacturing units are shifted from place to place, depending on considerations such as the presence of cheap labour, compliant governments and tax-havens. In this sense multinational corporations embody the interdependence of core and periphery nations.

6.8   NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Industrialism has unfolded as a system of ceaseless innovation. In its core-countries, it has virtually eliminated the peasantry, and is now creating automated technologies that can increase productivity while displacing workers. Manufacturing once accounted for about 50% of the employed population of industrial societies, but is now shrinking to between 25% to 30%. New employment is now available in the service sector, which accounts for 50% to 66% of the work force and over half the GNP. These occupations - in government, health, education, finance, leisure and entertainment- are called white-collar jobs, and indicate an expansion in health, education and public welfare. The population in the core countries has become healthier and better educated. The 'knowledge class' of scientific and technical workers have become the fastest-growing occupational group. Pure sciences and technology have become even more closely inter-linked. This is evidenced in heavy investments in research and development, especially in industries such as information technology, pharmaceuticals, bio-genetics, aeronautics and satellite communications. The social sciences also generate complex models of sociological and economic forecasting.

Some sociologists have interpreted these phenomena as signifying a movement to a 'postmodern', postindustrial society. This may be a semantic exaggeration, given that most changes under late industrialism have flowed from the logic of capitalist industrialization itself, such as mechanizatio and technical innovation, the increase in complexity of industrial organization and the union of science with industry and bureaucracy. But these changes do add a new dimention to modern societies, such as the decline in manufacuring, and the advent of computerized information-processing that can replace masses of white-collar workers. And urbanization may give way to the decentralization and depupulation of many cities as old manufacturing industries decline and new service industries move out. Recent trends in the USA and UK indicate that the countryside has begun to gain population and the cities to lose it. Speaking globally, however, urban life continues to spread over greater areas. Metropolitan areas have merged into the megalopolises, with populations of 20 to 40 million. Chains of contiguous cities and regions with huge populations may be found in the developed as well poorer countries.

These processes embody patterns in contemporary global society. The structural forces of industrialism have produced reactions against large-scale bureaucratic organization, and movements for alternative and intermediate technologies. The

political realm too, has witnessed such a reaction. All over world, not least in Europe, there have been regional movements for autonomy or independence - ironically, globalization has kept pace with fragmentation. Areas such as Scotland in Britain, Normandy in France, the Basque region in Spain, and several regions in the erstwhile USSR have all developed such movements and aspirations. The break-up of Yugoslavia in the civil war of the 1990s was only the most extreme example of a general trend. New forms of internationalization of the world economy and polity have given rise to new nationalisms. It is arguable that the latest assertions of ethnicity, culture and 'tradition' reflect attempts by endangered elites in disintegrating states to mobilize public disquiet towards a new conservative 'mass politics'. Howsoever historians of the future will see these phenomena, it is undeniable that the process of modernization has reached a significant turning point, and the governing institutions of the post-1945 world order no longer seem capable of managing rapidly changing social, economic and political realities.

6.9   SUMMARY

This Unit has tried to introduce you to the idea that a new type of society has begun to emerge around the 18th – 19th centuries under the impulse of modern economy. The Unit also discussed some of the features of the new society. One component of this society was a new demographic pattern characterized by tremendous increase in the population brought about mainly by a decline in the death rate, followed by stability brought about by a decline in the birth rate. The new economic pressures also ushered in a process of urbanization because of the growth in trade and manufacture. Family, as a unit of production was replaced by a new production system based on factory. There was also an erosion of traditional structure of the communities, leading gradually to the creation of mass society. Simultaneously there was an increasing secularization of life following a general decline in the control that organized religion had exercised in people, lives. All these changes were profound and cumulatively they changed the profile of the world.

However, it is important to keep in mind that although these developments, described above, are generally associated with the 18th – 19th centuries, they had begun germinating a few centuries earlier. Also the entire world did not change uniformly or at the same time. These changes occurred primarily in the European and the North American societies and many pockets of the world remained untouched by them. Nonetheless, a process of change was set in motion which was to gradually bring more parts of the world into its fold. These changes also constituted a model for development for the rest of the world.

However, a transformation at such a mammoth scale has also brought dislocation and trauma of various kinds. The processes of modernisation have certainly brought material abundance - but in a differentiated pattern that is reflected in the complex nature of social classes and identities. It has brought control of the natural environment - this too, at the cost of damaging it, some would say, irreparably. Its scientific and technological achievements are impressive, indeed magnificent. At the same time, the spiritual and emotional life of humanity appears to be undergoing immense turbulence, violence and conflict. Modernity's failures and disasters take place on a global scale, the fate of the world and its inhabitants sealed together in a way no previous generations could have imagined.

6.10 EXERCISES

1. What are the ways in which human life under modern conditions is different from earlier times?

2. What do we mean by modern society?

3. How is the process of secularization a part of modern social structure?

GLOSSARY

Bourgeoisie, Bourgeois: The bourgeoisie are a social class who make their money from the capital they own. They make money from money, or from owning business. They are distinguished from the landowning aristocracy, who make their money from rents, and the working classes who make their money by their labour. Depending upon the context, sometimes they are used for the middle class or sometimes for the upper class. The word bourgeois is also used as a word for attitudes that some people believe to be typical of bourgeoisie denoting conventional, humdrum, unimaginative or selfish and materialistic, sometimes also as opponent of communist.

Alienation: A separation of individuals from control and direction of their social life. Widely used in German philosophy in the 18th & 19th century, the term has acquired a special meaning after Karl Marx. Marx claimed that human alienation was created by a socially structured separation between humans and their work. It attained its highest intensity under capitalist system where individuals were separated from ownership, control and direction of their work and were unable to achieve personal creative expression.

Petite/ Petty Bourgeoisie: A middle class of professionals and small-business people who work for themselves or own small productive facilities.

Industrial Capitalism: The process of developing Capitalist economy founded on the mass manufacturing of goods. Industrialization is associated with the urbanization of society, an extensive division of labour, a wage economy differentiation of institutions and growth of mass communication and mass markets.

Surplus Value: In Marxist theory, this is the value crated by individual labour which is left over, or remains in the product or services produced, after the employer has paid the costs of hiring the worker. It is this value which the worker produces but does not receive which allows the capitalist owner to expand their capital

Class-Conflict: It is a Marxian concept which sees it as a driving force for all historical change. Marx and Engels in their 'Communist Manifesto' had proclaimed that 'the history of hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle'. Even though class-conflict has been seen existing even in pre-modern times, e.g. between the peasants and the feudal aristocracy in medieval period, it is only in the era of capitalism that it is seemed to be getting crystallized as a struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Finance Capitalism: Finance Capitalism is a concept developed by 20th century Marxism and used systematically for the first time by Hilferding (1910). According to him, it actually denotes that state of capitalism where monopolistic banking firms join hands with monopolistic industrial firm to establish control over the sources, means and networks of production, exchange economy etc. According to Lenin, it is actually a characteristic feature of imperialism where banking firms establish their control over the world economy by selective inter linkages.

Constitutional Monarchy: A constitutional monarchy is a form of government established under a constitutional system which acknowledges a hereditary or elected monarch as head of state. Today, it is usually combined with representative democracy, representing a compromise between theories of sovereignty which place sovereignty in the hands of the people & those that see a role for tradition in the theory of government. So, while it is the Prime Minister or elected representative who actually governs the country, the king or queen is seen as symbolic head of the government.

Planned Economy: In a planned economy economic decisions are made on behalf of the public by planners who determine what sorts of goods and services to produce and how they are to be allocated. Since most known planned economies rely on plans implemented by the way of command, they are also termed as **command economies**. To stress the centralized character of planned economies and to contrast the term with the economic planning required in any rational economy, a more specific term, **centrally planned economy** is also used. They are usually contrasted with the concept of **market economy**.

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UNIT 7   BUREAUCRATIZATION

Structure

7.1   INTRODUCTION

This Unit will explain the coming of bureaucratization as an institution in the modern era. It will also attempt to show the way in which our life has been fully encompassed by different forms of bureaucracy, even those, which we think are engaged in fighting against it.

Bureaucratisation could be said to encompass the processes both of the centralization and expansion and of the professionalization of all institutions; and this happens as much in government as in the other principal structures of power like political parties, trade unions, corporations, the armed forces, and the educational, religious, legal, and medical and other technical establishments, as also what has come to be known as the non-governmental organizations.

Its principles are well-known. It consists in centralizing decision-making through a tight chain of command, appointing professional "experts" through uniform criteria of examination and certification, demanding impersonal adherence to rules and laws, and attempting a nearly full calculability of action. An official in any one of these hierarchies acts impersonally, on the basis of expertise, and obeys and issues instructions which are "legitimate", that is, framed in accordance with the law and the rules and regulations that derive from the law. The individual official may be replaced effortlessly, and the system functions like a machine with moveable replaceable parts. It is immensely attractive to all modern rulers, who are always looking for instruments of rule that are effective, politically reliable, impersonal, and professional.

But bureaucracies are only instruments of modern rulers: they are not the rulers themselves. How rulers are chosen is varied; but in most of the world it occurs through some form of election rather than rising to the top of a bureaucracy. The electoral processes are not bureaucratic even if they must submit to rules most often; but the electoral machines like political parties and their supporters are or attempt to be thoroughly bureaucratic organizations. **Thus, those at the top who ultimately rule, reach that position through processes that are not bureaucratic; but they rule through instruments that are bureaucratic.**

These occur alongside what is known as democratization. This appears as a paradox, since it is always assumed that bureaucracy and democracy are opposed in principle. Indeed they are, but they can and do coexist and even reinforce each other. But more, if we understand democracy, not as rule by the people so much as legitimation of rulers by the people through elections, then bureaucracy is fully compatible with it. Further, democracy also implies the active citizen asserting rights in numerous spheres, claiming

new rights, forming organizations to promote them, and participating in the political process. Every one of these actions by the active citizen requires powerful organization and funding; and even the active citizen furthering democracy acts through a bureaucracy. He advocates, promotes, and consolidates democracy through, among other things, more bureaucracy. For example, a non-governmental organization is set up to empower a citizen's group in some sphere of activity. It is set up first of all according to procedures laid down by the law; it must raise funds and function according to the charter permitted by law; its functioning is open to scrutiny; its officials are appointed in a hierarchy for fixed terms for their recognized expertise; and they are answerable to a general body. Not all of this might occur with the rigour that is implied by this bald statement, but this does apply to all large bodies, and it is the orientation of lesser ones. Innumerable small and often ephemeral bodies are formed to fight for the rights of citizens; but they must become bureaucracies, small or big, to do so effectively; and the largest and most famous of all of them are of course the political parties themselves.

The phases and processes through which the expansion of bureaucracy and professionalization has occurred have been necessarily uneven, both across countries and within countries. Usually, the armed forces, police, and civil services have been the first to do so thoroughly, followed by the business corporation and the political parties, and what are known as the "free" professions, those of education, the law, and medicine, with the non-governmental sector coming last. Significantly, in Europe and the Christian world in general, the Churches have been among the earliest to have become regular bureaucracies, perhaps earlier than the state itself. Between countries, Britain and Germany exhibit higher levels of bureaucracy in the first half of the nineteenth century, with France following and Russia coming far down the list; but in the course of the twentieth century, especially after World War I, all of them did so with a vigour and energy that yielded extraordinary results in World War II. It would suffice here to deal with just the bureaucracies of the state, of the party systems, and of trade unions, to suggest the manner in which all structures, including the ones that were most opposed to bureaucracy and professional career, have submitted to that very logic.

7.2   BUREACRATIZATION AND THE STATE

It is customary to note the process of formation of bureaucracy from about the fifteenth until the eighteenth century in Europe as royal absolutisms imposed themselves against feudal nobilities. However, this was more a process of centralization of power in the hands of the king, not of its professionalization in the manner of a modern bureaucracy. The king gradually monopolized power and appointed his own officials to collect taxes, administer justice, and run the armed forces, denying such powers to the feudal nobility and other estates. The nobilities and estates could now merely act as employees or agents of the king, no longer in their own right. In terms of professional capacity, the persons employed by the king were no different from those of the great feudal magnates. They were chosen for their loyalty (combined with competence of course, but often that was a limited consideration), and appointments were acts of personal whim and patronage. The king merely commanded a larger area of patronage with greater resources and higher stakes to play for. By this means the modern state, as the monopolist of the exercise of legitimate coercion, or the absolute centre of power in any single territory, was established by the eighteenth century; but its institutions were not the modern professional ones we know today.

That transformation occurred in the nineteenth century in Europe by when the challenge from feudal nobilities and local estates had been overcome, and the modern state accumulated apparently unlimited resources through industrialization. The challenge before the state was to harness and exploit these vast new resources and ever newer

sources, both material and human. Generating and exploiting material resources took the form of industrialization; doing the same with human resources took the form of social mobilization. Entirely new institutions and professions were required for these activities; and the emergence of professional bureaucracies takes place against this background. The first of these were the direct servants of the state, the civil servants and the armed forces.

The direct activities of the state vastly expanded, starting with Britain from the 1830s, and with it, the number of employees of the state. This occurred with interventions by the state in the fields of factory inspection, public health, municipal administration, school education, poor relief, all in a wave of "reform" in the 1830s, topped by the parliamentary reform of 1832 when the franchise was extended. But all these were accompanied by a comparable campaign against "corruption" and in the cause of "efficiency." By corruption the reformers meant the system of patronage in place since the sixteenth century, by which officials were appointed as personal favours, salaries were distributed for doing little or nothing (sinecures), and worse still, persons could buy their jobs, as happened especially with army officers (purchase of commissions). The sweeping reforms of the thirties and forties did away with many but not all of these practices, and appointments now began to take place against proven professional qualification, especially through the competitive examination. Thus officialdom both vastly expanded and became immensely more professional.

This was when schools became modern centres of high quality education, mutating from the Dootheboy's Hall caricatured in Charles Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby* to Thomas Arnold's public schools, celebrated in *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. Similarly, universities became centres of modern professional education, and academic scholarship itself became a new profession. In the eighteenth century, the education of an aristocrat did not require a university, but it did need the "grand tour" of the courts of Europe, to learn manners and acquire social contacts. In the nineteenth century, the grand tour was discarded, university education became indispensable, and Oxford and Cambridge assumed their formidable reputations and positions of eminence. All these systems were dominated by competitive examinations.

The process was completed in the next wave of reforms in the 1860s and 1870s, during the first government of W. E. Gladstone (1867-1874). In stages from 1870, entry into the civil service was to take place through competitive examination; purchase of commissions in the army was abolished; in 1873 seven courts of law dating from medieval times were merged into one Court of Judicature, and the obviously unprofessional judicial functions of the House of Lords were terminated; and in 1871 the Anglican Church's monopoly of teaching posts at Oxford and Cambridge was ended. Disraeli's government in 1874-1880 followed up with welfare measures which furthered the first series of the 1830s: a maximum of 56.5 working hours per week; further restrictions on the legal age for employment; the effective introduction of what has become almost a religious observance in developed countries, the weekend; regulation of working class housing; laying down standards for sewage disposal; controls on the adulteration of food and drugs; restricting the pollution of rivers; establishing safety limits for the loading of ships (the Plimsoll Line), and much else.

As may be gauged from this extraordinary series, each sphere of expansion of government activity demanded the recruitment of a fresh body of professionals, whether to inspect factories, to work out sewage disposal systems, or to control pollution. In each case problems had to be diagnosed, solutions proposed, and standards established, all of which required advanced academic competence gained from the modern university system; they then had to be enforced which required bureaucratic "efficiency"; and

more had to be prepared for as newer areas appeared for intervention with each technological advance or with "progress.". The process was never-ending; government became gargantuan and ever more "bureaucratic"; but the demand for more and more of it was insatiable. The professional took charge everywhere; and education itself became a form of investment for the accumulation of a new kind of capital that yielded the richest dividends.

This process was slower in France, despite the French reputation for absolutist states, royal bureaucracies, and Napoleonic efficiency. These high levels of professionalism and bureaucracy were attained in Paris, but the province remained in the hands of local interests to a degree greater than in Germany or Britain, although less than in the Mediterranean. Napoleon certainly conceived of bureaucracy as a perfect chain of command in which the central authority issued instructions that passed "swift as an electric current" to subordinates, that is the prefects (like the district magistrates in India) governing the 83 departments (districts), sub-prefects in the *arrondissements*, and mayors in the 36,000 communes. The model was of perfect bureaucracy, and the prefect enjoyed ample power of every kind that a government in a modernizing state can possess and hence dispensed patronage as a local potentate. For that very reason local interest groups consisting of landlords, businessmen, the Church, unions when they arose, and peasant lobbies, all competed furiously to gain control of these appointments; in effect these offices became agents of local factions and clans rather than of the state itself. Already, by 1866, 37 percent of the mayors were farmers; after they began to be elected from 1882, that trend was accentuated. By 1913, 46 percent were farmers, and in the smallest communes as many as 78 percent. Thus appointments became arbitrary; transfers were frequent according to local factional struggles, officials were overtly political rather than neutral, they were expected to ensure the election of local politicians, and they were punished or rewarded according to their performance in such matters. It was in everybody's interest to resist rationalization, and the competitive examination system was introduced only in the 1880s. But thereafter the process gathered momentum, and especially after World War I France became another typically advanced industrial society in these respects. As the above account indicates, there could be considerable differences between different states and images and ideals may be only distantly related to reality.

Russia occupied an extreme position in these respects, both before 1917 and after. In the nineteenth century, this was an undergoverned country despite the extraordinary concentration of power at the top. The towns and the provinces were left to various forms of local self-regulation (but not self-government) by local notables and factions, all in a manner that did not challenge the power of the state. Until the forties officials were astonishingly untrained, with high rates of actual illiteracy. But a new educational system was set in place from the forties, with new universities like Moscow and Kazan, and a new generation of qualified officials took up positions during that decade. In forbidding conditions they relentlessly pursued their goals of professional excellence and "progress", none of which meant democracy but certainly did mean efficiency; they were especially concerned to eliminate arbitrariness and to establish the rule of law and rational administration. It was thanks to the efforts of this generation that the "great reforms" of the sixties were carried out, that is, the abolition of serfdom, the introduction of elected local government bodies known as the zemstvo, the creation of professional advocacy and courts of law that acquired a European reputation for high standards, and increasingly higher standards in the civil services and armed forces. However, a uniform competitive examination system was never introduced and appointments remained acts of patronage. But this patronage was exercised among a widening pool of expert manpower thanks to the education system expanding and improving in quality

at so rapid a rate. The greatest extension of government was perhaps in the zemstvo and the municipalities, in the domains of public health, elementary education, agronomy, collecting statistics, maintaining communications and other aspects of local modernization. These were all jobs carried out by armies of graduates of universities and sundry higher educational institutes, especially medical, technological, or engineering institutes. They were known as the "Third Element", so called because the first was the nobility and the second was the bureaucracy in local society; but this Third Element was the backbone of the effort because they were the "experts."

In Soviet times, these processes were carried far, with high levels of professionalism and specialization, as in advanced industrial societies. Owing to the immensely rapid rate of industrialization, collectivization of agriculture, and other processes of modernization, the administrative structure was professionalized at a similar rate, not the half century and more that Britain took in the nineteenth century. The greatest stress was placed on technical education to optimize industrialization, and a vast body of competent managers and technical staff poured out of these institutes to run the economy. Just as Western bureaucracies present a public image of training in the humanities, law, and the social sciences, the Soviet image of the administrator was of technocracy; but all were uniformly professionals selected for their expertise, combined with loyalty to the regime in question. However, there were notable variations. All activity was bureaucratized and professionalized, not only the direct activity of the state and of the Party, but even of professions which are in principle utterly inimical to these forms of organization or regimentation, namely writers and artists. Even these were required to form their own organizations to carry out their creative work, like officials, within such structures. The Union of Writers is merely the most well known. This did not in fact prevent works of great significance and originality being produced, but authors were answerable to the state in this fashion. The state provided patronage and support through these institutions, and demanded from them that standards of excellence and expertise be established and enforced. It thus elaborated hierarchies of achievement and patterns of recognition, which, in the West, was substantially the work of the market.

7.3 BUREAUCRACY IN POLITICAL PARTIES

Political Parties, like all else, tended to become bureaucratic structures as they transformed themselves into large mass organizations from the 1860s and 1870s especially. In the UK, the party used to be a loose association of groups engaged in local politics, with great variations on issues of concern and forms of functioning. But then the following changes occurred: 1) From about 1867, the local party club network expanded enormously, with each party, Liberal and Conservative (or Tory), organizing its own brass band, football clubs, benefit societies, and even building societies in a great wave of mobilization that was apparently non-political, but was designed to foster political loyalties to the party that was promoting this range of action. 2) Each of them organized their own "Constituency Associations" consisting of local voluntary activists, who came to be known as the "caucus." These associations were centralized in a national party body: for the Liberal Party it was the National Liberal Federation from 1877, and for the Conservatives it was the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations (NUCCA) from as early as 1867 but acquiring momentum in the 1880s. 3) This structure allowed the central party leadership to impose strict discipline on the local party units, especially to decide electoral strategy, candidates for election, electoral alliances, and so on. The typical party bureaucrat, known as the party agent, appointed by the central command, now supervised these associations. His main job was to ensure that party supporters were entered on the voters' lists, to provide intelligence to the centre on the public mood, and to impose discipline locally.

The results were evident in the nineties for the Conservative Party which was better organized than the Liberals: in the 1850s, governments suffered 10 to 15 defeats in parliamentary votes in a year; from 1900, the average was just one per session. By 1914 the party had become a centralized bureaucratic machine that overrode local, individual variations and preferences and headed toward becoming a mass party with a larger and larger electorate. The local enthusiast, activist, or notable was overtaken by the party official from the centre, in the manner that royal bureaucracies subordinated the remnants of feudal aristocracies all over Europe between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries; and independent members of parliament were increasingly a thing of the past.

This process continued throughout the twentieth century, with the Labour Party following suit when it replaced the Liberals as the alternative to the Conservatives from the twenties. In the Labour Party also, the candidate is formally selected by the constituency body, but this is subject to central control. The sovereign body is the Annual Conference of delegates and members, but its resolutions are never binding on the party whether in government or in opposition despite the many pious and ideological statements to the contrary. The conduct of members in parliament is decided solely by the central party bureaucracy. This party makes loud claims to its being more democratic than others; but it is like any other, a mass organization run by an oligarchy through its paid bureaucracy.

The German party system developed in comparable manner. The Social Democratic Party or the SPD by its German acronym, formed in 1875, and from the 1890s rapidly became a mass party with a large trade union base like the Labour Party. Indeed, the German civil service became something of a model across the ideological spectrum, from the right wing pressure group, the Agrarian League, for corporates like Siemens and Krupp, and even for its bitter antagonist, the SPD. As with the Labour Party, the Party Congress is the sovereign body; but not only does it meet only once in two years after 1914, but the party leadership and the parliamentary party (the group of members of parliament) known as the "fraktion" in the Bundestag (parliament) has the decisive say. The conservative opposition, the Christian Democratic Union or the CDU, differs only by being a trifle looser. It has tended to be more dominated by personalities, especially Konrad Adenauer, the Chancellor (prime minister in Germany) from 1949 to 963 and party chairman until 1966. However, in fundamentals of organization, it differs little from its principal opponent, the SPD.

The contrast, to some extent, is France and the Mediterranean states. France, despite its fearsome reputation for Napoleonic bureaucracies, in fact possessed parties with weaker organizational structures than the German or British counterparts. The reason is perhaps more to do with the size of parties: the German SPD had 1.7 million members in 1914, the British Conservative Primrose League could boast more than 2 million members, while the French Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière (SFIO) had only 35-75,000 members and the Action Libérale Populaire only 250,000. In France, local influences and personalities counted for more than national organization. Local bodies of the village and canton decided on candidates, provided the election machine, organized the campaign, and grabbed the benefits in case their candidate won the election. The benefits were the usual patronage of the state, jobs, subsidies, relief, contracts and the like. The national party organization had great difficulty exercising control over deputies (members of parliaments), for, if these deputies kept their local supporters happy, there was little the national body could do. In these senses, French parties reflected the localism and patronage politics of the French bureaucracy also.

These features changed after World War II, especially with the Communist Party (PCF) being such an excellent bureaucracy in typically Stalinist fashion, with its professional training and strict enforcement of the Party line from above, to the extent of its not

allowing even direct communication between party cells at the base. These cells were required to communicate only with their superior levels, that is vertically. This, it should be noted is one of the typical features of the bureaucracy of state, where communications between departments must take place only with the permission of the head of the department and not between lower officials in the hierarchy.

The most obvious cases of party bureaucracies are those of the fascist and socialist states. The fascist bureaucracies formally submitted to the "leader-principle", that is, a single charismatic leader controlled the entire movement, the party, and where appropriate, the state itself. But in modern times a single leader cannot control personally such vast machines as those of industrial societies; and however charismatic, energetic, or able the leader or dictator, he could not be any more personal in his choice of officials than the American president is: he had to submit to the logic of bureaucratic structure to get things done. These forms of leadership were chosen differently from those of the electoral systems of the democracies, they provided a different ideological direction, and they adopted a distinct style of their own; for the rest they ruled modern industrial or industrializing societies through familiar structures of bureaucracy.

The professionalization and bureaucratization of political parties is arresting for the party having been originally conceived as an agent of democracy against the bureaucracy of the state. A considerable amount of democratic rhetoric is employed by these bodies to mobilize mass support and to further their campaigns to influence the state. But the process of representing mass electorates and securing their support imposes its inexorable logic on these organizations; and they must summon the professional to use all the techniques of management and administration to ensure the required results. In addition, parties aspire to install their own governments or actually do so, in anticipation or furtherance of which they replicate the structures and functioning of the government itself. As a result, multiple bureaucracies of professionals emerge, those of the civil service itself, and those of the respective political parties.

In the case of single party states, there are ostensibly just two such bureaucracies, those of the party and of the state. But in fact there could be many of them, all hierarchies competing for the attention of the Leader and bases for manoeuvring into the top position. Thus, even in Hitler's Third Reich, the following structures competed with each other, and each one of them could have provided the avenue to the top: the Nazi Party itself or the NSDAP; the SS, headed by Himmler, who thought of himself as the successor; the armed forces, which periodically conspired to overthrow Hitler and eventually provided the actual successor in 1945, Grand Admiral Doenitz; and the security services. This feature was more pronounced in the fascist and conservative dictatorships that spread across Europe in the inter-war years. Such competition however does not and did not take the form of elections, for which reason they are not called democratic. The most extreme and lucid case is that of the Soviet Union in which a single bureaucracy ran the country, that of the Party itself; it provided the sole arena to aspire for power; and all competition to reach the top took place strictly within it. All the other bureaucracies were strictly subordinate to it and never did challenge its monopoly, whether they were the planners, the managers, general administration, the armed forces, or the security services. As such, this single Party was, in itself, like the multiple party system of the liberal democracies, for in each case either the single Party or the multiple parties was the sole avenue to power, not the military, the paramilitaries, the civil services, the religious hierarchies, the corporate structure, the legal establishment, or the academic system. As has been noted earlier, the manner in which leaders and rulers are chosen in modern bureaucratic societies is not bureaucratic, but the instruments with which they rule are uniformly bureaucratic across the ideological divides.

7.4 BUREAUCRATIZATION IN TRADE UNIONS

Unions is the other typically democratic institution of modern times, embodying the hopes of the "exploited" to secure a just distribution of power and wealth. They are arguably also the first and most significant of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Their origins and formal procedures are quintessentially democratic: they were and are voluntary associations mostly of persons asserting their rights. Through most of the nineteenth century they were just such bodies, sprouting in factories and workplaces as and when occasion demanded, usually to protect their wages or to demand higher wages and shorter working hours. Factories were small in size, unions were also small, and the negotiations were highly personal, between a few workers and an employer.

But dramatic changes occurred from the eighteen seventies, with a new wave of industrialization, new technologies, and new structures of management. Plant size became larger, technologies diversified and grew in sophistication, and management was separated from ownership, leading to the emergence of professional management. Workers' protest actions likewise became all the more complex, larger in scope, covering many factories simultaneously, or a full industry or region, and negotiations between unions and management became more professional and less personal. Along with the professional manager there emerged the professional union official. Two new bureaucracies began to face each other, those of corporate management, and those of the unions. Just as managers required academic qualifications, examination procedures for selection, and training programmes, union officials were now selected for their qualifications, subjected to competitive selection examinations, and were thereafter trained on the job. They were no longer just workers representing other workers; they could be anybody chosen for their skills at organizing research, framing plans for action, committee work, and negotiation. Negotiating skills were especially decisive, and among them high competence in mathematics and economics, since union officials were expected to negotiate ceaselessly on costs of production, productivity, profits, wage rates, standards of living, insurances, welfare and the like. But the demand went beyond negotiation. Unions had to prepare their plans on the basis of the state of the economy, not merely of a single factory or industry; their understanding of the economy and their capacity to convince a wider public about the impact of their actions on the economy and on the rest of the population became vital.

This became ever more demanding as union action began to play a role in national elections. Political parties across the ideological spectrum, from left to right, prospected for support among unions; and the social democratic or labour parties with socialist ideologies were especially energetic and commanded the largest following among the working class. As unions supported particular political parties, they needed to plan, advertise themselves, and act in tandem with the political parties and their priorities. The party bureaucrat and the union bureaucrat had to work in unison, both leaving the rank-and-file voter and rank-and-file union member far behind. As socialist ministers entered governments from the beginning of the twentieth century, and as social democratic parties became governments or led coalition governments from the twenties, union, party, and civil service officials had to work together and on an equal footing with comparable levels of competence. For the purposes of national representation, unions built up national organizations to represent them. These were federations of unions, or head organizations, samples of which are the Trades Union Congress (TUC) in Britain, the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) in France, or the Deutsche Gewerkshaftsbund (DGB) in Germany. There could be more than one such federation in a single country, with each ideological orientation forming its own head organization

also. These are merely representative listings. Thus the original union of a single factory had first become a member of a federation of unions within an industry, and these federations then formed the national federation like the TUC. As may be imagined, these enormous bodies could be run only by full-time paid officials, not by workers taking time off work to look after the interests of other workers. These national federations also routinely negotiated and signed agreements with national federations of employers, a typical specimen of which would be the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) representing British capitalists.

How deeply immersed unions are in affairs of state and responsible for governance may be gauged from the examples of Britain and Germany after World War II. British unions emerged from the War with heady plans for 1) public control of core areas of the economy, including nationalization and extensive regulation of the private sector; 2) high levels of employment through demand management; 3) extensive welfare "from cradle to grave"; and 4) planning of investment, including even an ambitious scheme of a "manpower budget" that would make annual estimates of manpower requirements and availability so that investment could be planned to ensure adequate levels of employment. But it was all conceived in the manner that any civil servant might; there was no concession to "democracy" in these plans; and the TUC took the decision-making hierarchy for granted with workers at the bottom, and assumed that professional management, under the surveillance of the government of course, would ensure that the benefits reached workers. Democratic guarantees lay in the presence of the TUC and of the Labour Party, not of workers playing a direct role. Little of all this was achieved in fact, especially since the TUC was not committed to socialism or to planning and was merely anxious that the agony of the Depression years should not be repeated. Therefore it was satisfied with the extensive welfare system established, that about 20 percent of productive capacity was publicly owned, and that demand management kept employment levels high. Even this relatively modest achievement demanded considerable responsibility for governance and professionals to manage the role of the TUCs. They had to be good economists enough to understand that if they pressed their wage demands too far and were too successful, inflationary pressures would build up and real wages would not rise adequately, for which they would eventually have to take the blame. In like manner, they had to be nimble political managers to keep a friendly Labour government in power and to accept the constraints and responsibilities that power brought. All these were functions of professional economists, political managers, and officials, all far removed from the original ideal of a trade unionist fighting for his little union.

This is not a question of centralization of decision-making so much as of its professionalization. Thus, the British union structure is astonishingly, indeed bewilderingly decentralized, and the TUC has little control over the national federations and great industrial unions; deals are struck between unions in an industry and the corresponding employers' federation, and often lower down the hierarchy; any union could negotiate anything and any agreement could be abrogated; multiple unions flourished in an industry, the bane of British industrial relations according to some; and even on the employers' side multiple bodies flourished until the co-ordinating top body, the Confederation of British Industry was formed as late as 1965. This could pass for democracy; but it is a democracy run by officials, not workers.

German unions after the War were even more optimistic than the British because they were the only sector in Germany untainted by National Socialism. As codified at the Munich Congress of the DGB in 1949, they expected 1) co-determination (*Mitbestimmung*), that is, to run industry jointly with capitalists by having an equal number of union-appointed directors on boards of companies; 2) comprehensive welfare;

3) socialization of key industries; 4) unions to be non-partisan and organized for each industry; and 5) planning. Little was eventually achieved, chiefly because of the Cold War, the rightward political drift in Germany, and the continuous government by the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) all the way until 1963. However, what was attained was 1) advanced levels of centralization and of industrial unionism, eliminating multiple unions that had so plagued the Weimar Republic in the twenties and early thirties; 2) according to the Works Constitution Act of 1952 only one-third of the directors were to be from the unions, not half as originally hoped; 3) advanced welfare. In retrospect, this is considerable, and requires unions to play a major role in governance. In the most important two industries however, coal and steel, parity between labour and other directors had already been achieved by 1947 and was formalized in 1951. German union action is also marked by an advanced degree of "juridification", that is, any action has to be according to the law in all its detail, union membership is totally voluntary, collective bargaining may take place only between unions and managements, and strikes may be organized only by unions and not during the life of a contract. Violations of these principles attract severe penalties at law and unions must function like any corporation with full legal liability. When the DGB amended its radical Munich Programme at Düsseldorf in 1963, only nationalization was reduced in importance while co-determination retained its pride of place. Thus unions have to function, not merely as pressure groups to extract what they can for their members, but more as partners in industrial governance, and therewith as another kind of management.

However, the trends are not quite so unidirectional as implied by the above account. A constant challenge is mounted from the base, from the rank-and-file, what are known in Britain as the shop stewards and in Germany as works' councils or *Betriebsräte*. These are elected bodies at the lowest levels of organization; they represent the immediate democracy of workers; they are concerned only with the particular problems of their members; and they have been consistently more radical than the union bureaucracies. In Britain they have repeatedly erupted to challenge union leaderships' dealings with managements and governments. In Germany however, the highly regulated union system has integrated even these potentially radical and independent bodies. They have been permitted to negotiate agreements in extension of what unions themselves do, for example with respect to bonuses but not wages. Thus dualism, or the co-existence of unions and of works' councils, has been built into the system.

While the above picture may describe Western and Central Europe, the situation in the Soviet Union and East Europe (after 1945) was different in certain respects. Here also the union, party, management and state bureaucracies engaged with each other, each acting for its own constituency. However unions did not act to assert the rights of workers since they were already in a state which had abolished capitalists and capitalism, and the state itself claimed to be the promoter of the interests of workers. This matter was settled as early as 1921, at the Tenth Party Congress in Russia, when unions were denied the right to agitate on behalf of workers against management, and they had to accept the function of partnership in governance, with its necessary discipline. This was then derided as "statization" and bureaucratization. In effect in the Soviet Union, all four bureaucracies were different forms of state bureaucracies, functionally differentiated from each other like ministries, but all equally subject to the same political imperatives and leadership in a manner that was direct and constitutional. The role of the unions therefore was to ensure that the policies of the Party and of the state with respect to the welfare of workers were carried out and that productivity and discipline were maintained at appropriate levels. While labour policy was determined at the top, unions at the base engaged with management on deciding the worker's wage category, work quotas, bonuses and the like, which typically the German works' councils also dealt with. Unions participated in framing plans at the enterprise level, kept a watch on welfare and wage

aspects of the law, monitored disciplinary proceedings, and attended to all welfare matters like housing, recreation, education, and healthcare. Unions had distinct functions in the West and the East, but they belonged to networks of hierarchies of officialdom in symmetrical fashion.

7.5 SUMMARY

As may be seen now, four major bureaucracies dealt with each other, those of unions, employers, parties, and of the state; they wrangled, negotiated, conflicted, competed, or otherwise worked together from national to local levels in a complex and interlocking system of policy formation, decision-making, administration, and most of all government formation, collectively called governance. They were all professionals dealing with fellow professionals with comparable and compatible levels of qualification, work ethic, and self-interest, but each pursuing the case for its own constituency, somewhat like lawyers appearing on opposed sides in a structured legal system.

As the above account suggests, all spheres of public action have been professionalized and are run through bureaucracies. This is only to be expected of the armed forces, the civil services, and the security services, the principal arms of the state. But the complexity of modern industrial society, even in territorially limited states like Switzerland or Singapore, attains a depth which imperatively demands professional expertise and its corporate organization to be effective. The process therefore penetrates other spheres also. Thus entrepreneurship, with its origins in individual creativity and risk-taking giving rise to the legend and slogan of *laissez-faire*, has been transformed from at least the 1870s into corporate activity run by professional managers, and its origins, like most stories of origin, have entered the realm of myth. The stories of political parties and of trade unions have been told, of both setting out as self-conscious bodies of persons fighting off the pretensions and prestations of bureaucracy and capitalists respectively and themselves becoming parallel bureaucracies and partners in those structures of governance. Churches have always been tight corporate bodies that have demanded high standards of professionalism from especially the eighteenth century and are possessed of a degree of discipline and ideological certainty that would be the envy of the armed forces and communist parties. Even the academic system, while maintaining an image of freewheeling individualism, has become properly professional from the early nineteenth century, with universities and research and other specialized institutes offloading products on to the market like corporate houses, and academics being subjected to the severe test of the market place, as evidenced in the harsh slogan, "publish or perish." Academic research is increasingly expected to consist of team work led by project investigators who raise funds on the market and organize vast bodies of team research by experts, which then appear on the market in a flood of articles, conference proceedings volumes, and serial monographs. The dogma and ideology of individual free choice and action retain their seductive charm; but it is possible to sustain that subjective conviction only thanks to the pluralism of the modern world which gives us a choice as to which form of bureaucracy and structured profession we may individually submit to, not whether bureaucracy itself is acceptable or not.

7.6 EXERCISES

1) What do we mean by bureaucratization in the Modern World.?

2) What are different forms of bureaucracy?

3) What are the elements that different type of bureaucracies have in common?

UNIT 8 DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

Structure

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This Unit will make a survey of different forms of democracy historically, theoretically as well as geographically. The attempt will also be to give a range of criticisms which have been offered to the notion of democracy and democratization process. Even as it has become the most dominant principle of modern political system, democracy is still fraught with many new and contemporary challenges. A brief survey of such challenges is made towards the end of this Unit.

Most discussions of the history of democracy tend to begin with an invocation to its origins in ancient Greece. In the next section, we briefly consider the question of whether democracy in the modern world bears any similarity with democracy in ancient Greece.

Democracy has been, and continues to remain, one of the most contested concepts in the political vocabulary of the modern world. It means many different things to different people, but the fact that all manner of political regimes have sought to appropriate the label 'democracy' to legitimise themselves, clearly shows that it carries a positive normative connotation. Rather like justice and freedom, then, democracy is widely perceived to be a good thing, and a desirable attribute for a polity to possess. However, the task of determining which democracies are truly worthy of the name, or of distinguishing between polities in terms of the extent of democracy they have achieved, is a difficult if not impossible one. There are no universal standards to which we can appeal to decide such questions, so that ultimately, any person's judgement or evaluation of particular democracies is necessarily predicated on the way in which s/he understands the democratic ideal.

If judging contemporary democracies is so fraught with difficulty, the task of describing the evolution of democracy in the modern world is no less contentious. Historians disagree about the origins of modern democratic ideas, as also about the emergence of democratic

institutions. Thus, for some, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man was an early statement of democratic principles, while for others it was a manifesto of the bourgeois class which, though opposed to hierarchy based on nobility, was neither egalitarian nor democratic. Similarly, while John Locke is for some the first significant theorist of liberal-democratic ideas, for others he is at best a theorist of constitutional government (and at worst an unabashed advocate of private property rights). On this interpretation, it is Jean-Jacques Rousseau, with his faith in the direct participation of the citizens in the making of laws, who is the premier philosopher of democracy.

8.2 DEMOCRACY: ANCIENT AND MODERN

In 1992, 2500 years of democracy were enthusiastically celebrated all over the world. This was an unusual celebration for two reasons. Firstly, while anniversaries of statesmen, revolutions and the founding of nations are quite commonly celebrated, no other political ideal has ever been celebrated in this way. Secondly, democracy in the modern world is quite different from democracy as it was practised in ancient Greece 2500 years ago. The democratic ideas and practices with which we are here concerned are emphatically modern, but it would be useful to briefly note the chief features of democracy in the city-state of Athens (widely considered to be the most stable, enduring and model form of democracy in Greece) in ancient times.

Appropriately, the word democracy itself is of Greek origin. The Greek word *demokratia* is a combination of the words *demos* (meaning the people) and *kratos* (meaning power or rule). Thus, the one common principle underlying democracy in both the ancient and modern worlds is the idea of rule by the people, whether directly - through personal participation - or indirectly, through elected representatives. The important difference, of course, is in the way in which 'the people' were defined. In the ancient Greek polity, the 'demos' was rather restrictively defined, and notably excluded three main categories of persons: the slaves, women, and *metics* (the foreigners who lived and worked in the city-state). This meant that barely a quarter of the total population were members of the citizen body. Nevertheless, it is notable that the direct participation of a 40,000 strong citizen body was no mean achievement. The actual career of Athenian democracy was fairly troubled, as aristocrats, generals and demagogues made periodic attempts to control power. Their contempt for the poor - described as 'the mob' or 'the rabble' - finds echoes in the modern world, where democracy was achieved through struggle, and against considerable odds. Indeed, the struggle for democracy everywhere and throughout history, has been simultaneously a struggle against political inequality based on, and justified by, inequalities of birth and wealth.

At its best, however, Athenian democracy conveys an impressive picture of direct participation by citizens in the assembly which deliberated and took decisions on all policy matters, and met on as many as 300 days in the year. Citizens also participated directly in government, as they were chosen by lot to serve in official administrative and judicial positions.

8.3 DEMOCRACY IN THE MODERN WORLD: IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS

The story of democracy in the modern world is not merely the story of the evolution of democratic institutions in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. An understanding of modern democracy is not possible without an account of the social and political ideas, as well as of the patterns of material development in the economic and productive spheres of the societies in which modern democracy took birth. As one

of the 'characteristic institutions of modernity', democracy was the result of complex and intertwined processes of ideological, social and economic change. In Britain, this change was signalled by the Industrial Revolution that began in the middle of the eighteenth century, while in France and America it was launched by the political revolutions in the last quarter of that same century.

Britain is conventionally regarded as the first modern democracy because, in the aftermath of the Civil War (1640-1649), royal absolutism was brought to an end, and powers were transferred from the crown to the two Houses of Parliament, of which one, the House of Commons, was an elected chamber. Though the franchise continued to be highly restricted - based on ownership of property - control of the executive had effectively passed to a loose coalition of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, such that political conflict was henceforth peacefully conducted between competing elites. It was only in the nineteenth century that the expansion of the suffrage took place, beginning with the enfranchisement of the upper middle classes in the Reform Act of 1832. This was followed by the gradual extension of the franchise to the working classes, largely as a response to the pressure of political struggles by the working-class and radical movements like Chartism. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and three Reform Acts later, about two-thirds of the male population stood enfranchised. It was, however, not until 1929 that women secured the right to vote, and universal adult suffrage was only fully achieved in 1948, when plural voting was abolished in favour of the principle of one-person one-vote.

As in Britain, so also in France, the achievement of universal adult suffrage was not completed until 1946. The rather more radical tradition of democracy in France was inaugurated by the French Revolution of 1789, with its stirring call of Liberty-Equality-Fraternity. The principle of popular sovereignty was crucial to the deliberations of the National Assembly. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen proclaimed the following individual rights as the natural and imprescriptible entitlements not merely of French citizens, but of 'mankind' at large: among others, the rights of personal liberty, freedom of thought and religion, security of property and political equality. Though the Revolution proclaimed an end to both the feudal economy and two centuries of royal absolutist rule, republican democracy in France suffered many reverses. The revolutionary constitution of 1791 established something akin to universal male suffrage (though the philosopher Condorcet and some others advocated the extension of the franchise to women, this was seen as quite contrary to public opinion), and even the property requirement for the right to vote was low enough to exclude only domestic servants, vagrants and beggars. Thus, four million male citizens won the right to vote in 1791, but four years later, more restrictive property requirements were introduced, bringing down the number of voters to just 100,000 prosperous taxpayers. Universal male suffrage was reintroduced only after the revolution of 1848.

In the United States of America, too, the advance of democracy in the aftermath of the Civil War was restricted to white men, and the enfranchisement of women, as also of indigenous and black people was not achieved until the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the Declaration of Independence (1776) was the document that simultaneously effected the legal creation of the United States of America, and that of democracy in that country. Though slavery continued to be practised until the mid-nineteenth century, the American Revolution did give the modern world its first democratic government and society. Hereditary power - of monarchy and aristocracy alike - were overthrown as republican government, in which all citizens were at least notionally equal, was put in place. An important institutional mechanism of the separation of powers between the three branches of government - the executive, the legislature and the judiciary - was also effected, making it difficult for any one branch to exercise arbitrary or untrammelled power.

The ideological importance of these early - albeit limited - victories of democracy cannot be underestimated. It has been argued that the foundations of democratic ideas had been prepared by the implicit egalitarianism of the Reformation. Though the Reformation was often - as in Britain and Germany, for instance - carried through by absolute monarchical power, Protestantism nevertheless had the long-term effect of creating religious minorities, and therefore providing the grounds for doctrines of religious toleration to be articulated. The idea that God spoke directly to individuals, without the mediation of priests, also made possible and legitimate the questioning of political authority. The political ideas of the Levellers, John Locke and Tom Paine, and documents like the French Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789), and the American Declaration of Independence (1776), expressed the important ideas and principles that have underpinned democracy in the modern world.

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissole the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of natur and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new Government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to sufer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies, and such is now the necessity which constraints them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having, in direct object, the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States....

(American Declaration of Independence, 1776).

These writings and documents are also often seen as charters of liberalism, and liberalism was indeed an important handmaiden of democracy at this time. This is why it is not surprising that the beginnings of democratic theory are distinguished by a strong emphasis on the concept of liberty, rather than the concept of equality with which it later came to be identified. As their name indicates, the Levellers in seventeenth century England advanced a radical conception of popular sovereignty and civil liberties. Interrogating property ownership as the basis for political rights, they advocated a nearly universal male suffrage, though - echoing ancient Athens - servants and criminals, apart from women, were to be excluded.

John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government* (1681) is an important source-book of classical liberal ideas. In this work, Locke presents an account of a hypothetical

state of nature, governed by a Law of Nature, which mandates that no individual ought to harm another in life, health, liberty or possessions. The natural equality of men - stemming not from any equality of endowment in terms of virtue or excellence, but from the fact that they are all equally creatures of God - gives them the equal right to freedom. Though this state of nature is governed by a Law of Nature that endorses these rights, there is no agency to administer and enforce this law. Therefore, to prevent others from invading their rights or to exact retribution for such invasions, men will enforce the law as *they* interpret it. In a state of nature that is largely characterised by peace and mutual assistance, the absence of such an agency contains endless possibilities for conflict, and these are the chief inconveniences of the state of nature, which is therefore transcended through a social contract. This social contract, founded in the consent of every individual, is the basis of legitimate government. Civil law must now conform to the eternal rule that is natural law, and hence the purpose of political society and of government is the preservation of the life, liberty and property of individuals (and Locke accordingly supplements this account with a defence of private property). If the government fails to discharge the purposes for which it was created, the people have the right to resist and replace it. It is this statement of the core principles of classical liberalism - individualism, popular sovereignty and limited government - that provided the foundation for liberal democracy.

These principles were also celebrated in the American Declaration of Independence (1776), which followed Locke in describing as natural and inalienable the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness (the last widely interpreted as an euphemism for property). The continued exclusion of slaves and women from the category of those who possessed such rights is only one example of the contradiction between the universalism of liberal principles and the selectivity of liberal practices.

The French Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789) reflected the republican spirit of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in idealizing citizenship by presenting individuals as public-spirited members of a community. For Rousseau, however, representative government simply was not good enough, and the only form of free government was direct democracy in which citizens would participate directly. Of course, Rousseau was aware that gross inequalities of wealth as well as large political communities were obstacles to popular sovereignty, while liberty, welfare and public education in the context of a small city-state provided the ideal conditions for democracy.

8.4 EXPLAINING DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIZATION

Though liberal ideas found institutional embodiment in democracy, democracy was not simply the result of a fruitful exchange between political ideas and political institutions, confined to the domain of political action. We cannot understand the birth of democracy in Europe without some reference to the important material transformations that were taking place in these societies. Industrial capitalism created new social classes which questioned the stranglehold of the older elites, whose power was based entirely in the ownership of land, and demanded a share in political power. Gradually, the middle and working classes also became more vocal and assertive in claiming rights of political participation. States also, over prolonged period of time, engaged in military conflict with each other. These wars required higher levels of technology, the deployment of the industrial power generated in the society, and more intensive resource (in terms of extraction of taxes) and social mobilization by the state. All this gave to modern states a greater centrality in the life of their citizens than they had previously enjoyed. This centrality of the state naturally resulted in greater pressures for controlling the state and

sharing in the power and the resources that it commanded. The pressures for democratization were surely facilitated by these developments, as they were by the greater literacy, and new forms of communication and transport that made political organisation possible for groups that had, in the past, been ruled, without actually participating in ruling.

Some historians have suggested that these processes of democratization took place in the course of 'the long nineteenth century', the period from 1760 to 1919, beginning with the Industrial Revolution and ending with the First World War. At the inception of this period, there were no democracies, but by its end most Western states had some form of liberal democracy in operation. In Western societies, capitalist industrialization is widely believed to have been a powerful impetus to democratization. However, outside of the west, social theorists have many different explanations for the varied routes through which democratization occurs, in what sorts of historical circumstances, at what levels of material development, and so on. They have tended to search for such historical patterns to explain the nature and even durability of democracy in specific contexts, as also the past and future relationship between democracy and development.

Some scholars, like Barrington Moore, have sought to explain democratization in terms of long-term processes of historical change, especially the changing structures of power. Why, Moore asked, did England and France move towards liberal-democracy, while Japan and Germany turned to fascism, Russia and China to communism, and India proceeded in an altogether different direction. His answer was that the route to liberal democracy generally lies in a common pattern of changing relationships between peasants, lords, the urban bourgeoisie and the state. The signposts on this journey include the following: the investment of the agricultural surplus in industrial growth; a turn towards commercial agriculture and therefore greater freedom for the peasantry; a balance of power between the state and the landed aristocracy; a dynamic bourgeoisie with its own economic base leading a revolutionary break from the past; and so on.

Other scholars, also searching for a structural explanation for democratization, have argued that processes of democratization are powerfully shaped by *class power, state power* and *transnational power*. They emphasise the changing dynamics of class power in relation to the structure and form of state power, and the context of both these in transnational power, taking many diverse forms such as imperialism or economic/military dependence.

Patterns of economic development thus effect significant changes in the nature of class forces and class divisions, and both these interact with the state and political institutions to redefine society and politics. In addition, the nature of civil society, the political culture of a society, and international factors (ranging from aid to war) are also helpful in accounting for patterns of democratization. On the whole, while comparative studies can provide some illumination, it is futile beyond a point to search for a single explanation that can account for the emergence (or not) of democracy in any given country at any point in the history of the last two centuries. There is tremendous variation, across both time and space, in the forms of democracy that have evolved in different parts of the world, and no one explanation - however comprehensive - can explain them all.

This is why, though the evolution of democracy in Europe and the United States through the nineteenth century is generally treated as the exemplar of democratization, the experience of post-colonial democratization in Latin America and Asia, and of post-Communist democratization in Eastern Europe, has raised questions about the conditions under which democratic institutions take root in some countries but not in others. This is also why it is difficult to establish uniform standards for judging or comparing the nature and extent of democracy as found in the different states which claim or have

historically claimed the label of democracy. The 'real world of democracy', as the political theorist C.B. MacPherson famously called it, has been populated by many variants of democracy: from bourgeois democracy to socialist and even communist versions, each of which has insisted that *its* form of democracy is the truest and most genuine. The eagerness with which the title of democracy is claimed points, in fact, to the unparalleled legitimacy that this form of government has come to enjoy in the modern world.

As a corollary, it is important to note that it has now come to be recognized that the link between liberalism and democracy is not a necessary one. Liberal-democracy may be seen as a historically specific form of democracy, based on a culturally specific theory of individuation. It combines liberalism as a theory of the state with democracy as a form of government. As such, for societies which attach greater significance to the community than to the individual, the democratic part of liberal-democracy (such as free elections and freedom of speech) is more universalizable than its liberal component. It has, thus, become possible today to speak not only of different paths to democracy, but also of different ways of being democratic, or even being 'differently democratic'.

Despite these limitations, it is true that the twentieth century saw an unparalleled extension of democracy in terms of both its *inclusiveness* as well as its *spatial expansion.* Beginning with the extension of the suffrage to women in the older western democracies, and ending with the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa, democracy in the twentieth century surely became more inclusive. The provenance of democracy also increased in spatial terms, as - following decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s - it was eagerly adopted by most of the new nations of Asia and Africa. Many of these new laboratories of democracy did not manage to sustain it, and in the 1990s the process of democratization met new challenges in post-Communist Eastern Europe.

It is clear, then, that the history of democracy has by no means been an uninterrupted, smooth or even process. It has been marked by successes and reversals within particular democratic societies, but it has also varied across countries and continents. At all times, it is important to keep in mind the interaction between ideas and institutions mentioned earlier. This is also true of the arguments of the critics of democracy.

8.5 DEMOCRACY AND ITS CRITICS

Democracy has had its fair share of critics and even enemies in the modern world, no less than in ancient Greece. If the Athenians of the ancient world feared democracy as potential monocracy, the 19th century English political philosopher John Stuart Mill expressed his fear of the tyranny of the majority, which he equated with ignorance and a lack of education. Mill's anxiety was that democracy would mean the dominance of mediocre public opinion, elbowing out dissent and creative ideas. Nevertheless, Mill significantly improved upon his intellectual inheritance of Utilitarianism by his impassioned defence of liberty and by his insistence on various welfare measures for the working classes. This gives him a special position in the liberal tradition, as the forerunner of social-democracy and the principles of the welfare-state.

The socialist critique of democracy has its origins in the writings of Karl Marx whose attitude to democracy was somewhat ambivalent. Even as he viewed bourgeois democracy as inherently flawed, on account of its class character, Marx nevertheless endorsed the battle for democracy as an important stepping-stone on the journey of the proletariat towards revolutionary change. In the Soviet Union, however, democracy was characterised as a handmaiden of capitalism, which could not be used to realise, through peaceful means, the ascendancy of the working class.

Among the most important critics of democracy were the elite theorists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Vilfredo Pareto and Gaetano Mosca, whose ideas struck a sympathetic chord in Mussolini's fascist politics. For Mosca, all talk of democracy was ideological hogwash, because the reality was that, throughout history, society had always been divided between elites - a minority of the population which had taken the major decisions in society- and the mass of the people. The dominant minority, the ruling class, was beyond the control of the majority or the mass, which the elite theorists viewed as atomized, ignorant, politically incompetent and incapable of concerted dynamic political action. In the mid-twentieth century, this argument was taken forward in the 'realist' account of Joseph Schumpeter who said that the classical, eighteenth century definition of democracy (as an institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions by making the people decide issues through the election of legislators to carry out their will) was flawed because the people were ignorant, irrational and apathetic, and therefore the principle of popular sovereignty was meaningless. In a democracy, said Schumpeter, there must be recognition of the vital fact of leadership. The role of the people should be restricted to choosing their rulers through competitive elections, and thereafter leaving them to govern. This redefinition changed the purpose and the essence of democracy from that of vesting decision-making power in the electorate, to that of merely selecting representatives. The normative force of the democratic ideal was thus undermined.

Nevertheless, the equalising thrust of democratic institutions appears to have persisted. At least some of the anxieties of nineteenth century observers, that democracy would have an alarming impact in terms of revising social rankings and undercutting the power of hereditary elites, proved to be true. At the same time, however, democracy proved to have a certain power of containment of social divisions, to the extent that it provided peaceful avenues of political competition and prevented social inequalities from acquiring an explosive or violent form.

8.6 CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRACY

Among the important challenges to democracy at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the following may be identified :

1) Development

2) Diversity

3) Gender

4) Globalization

8.6.1 Development

Though many scholars have tried to establish a correlation between democracy and development, by exploring the extent to which democracy furthers or inhibits development, there is no conclusive evidence regarding the relationship between these. The slow pace of development in India is sometimes attributed to its adoption of democracy, while the developmental successes of the East Asian economies are attributed to their lack of democracy. However, the comparative studies undertaken by scholars present mixed results and do not conclusively establish either that democracy inhibits development or that it facilitates it. Background historical conditions, the nature of economy and society, significantly affect developmental outcomes. Logically, to the extent that people have the right to make claims upon the state and to insist that the state be responsive to their needs, democracy is potentially a

powerful weapon against poverty and deprivation. If the poor in developing democratic societies have failed to use this weapon effectively, this should be blamed not on democracy per se, but attributed to the concentration of economic and social power that predisposes the state to act in ways that are biased in favour of dominant classes and social forces.

Further, conventional notions of development (equated with economic growth) are today being fundamentally challenged and questioned, most famously in the human development perspective of noted economist Amartya Sen. Sen has drawn attention to the importance of providing people with economic entitlements and social opportunity structures, so that they may enlarge their human capabilities and enhance their ability to determine their own life-plans. So defined, development should make political participation more meaningful, even as democracy provides channels through which people can press their claims for development upon the state.

8.6.2 Diversity

Till the middle of the 20th century, classical democratic theory was ambivalent on the question of cultural diversity. The first significant challenge of pluralism in a liberal polity was the civil rights movement in the United States. More recently, immigrant populations in Europe, as well as indigenous people in Australia, Canada and the United States, have demanded cultural recognition and community rights. These claims have pointed to an important gap in democratic theory which makes a virtue of its commitment to individual equality, but remains blind to diversity, and so does not sufficiently respect cultural plurality. This can mean that minority groups, defined in terms of their distinctive cultural or racial or ethnic identity, will suffer. Individual members of such groups may be formally entitled to equal rights in the polity, but social prejudice and lack of equal opportunity may render them less than equal. In such circumstances, the neutrality of democratic theory becomes a problem, as it prevents special consideration from being given to those citizens whose formal equality is undermined by the disadvantages and prejudices that they are subject to by virtue of their cultural identity. Hence, the state must move beyond mere tolerance, which is essentially a negative value, to affirm the value of multiculturalism.

This challenge has also been difficult to accommodate because classical democratic theory has envisaged the individual, and the individual alone, as the legitimate bearer or subject of rights. Within such theory, it has been near-impossible to conceive of groups as the bearers of rights. In recent years, the communitarian critics of liberalism have argued that individuals are not the autonomous pre-social creatures that liberal theory makes them out to be. Rather, they are formed and constituted by the traditions and communities in which they are located. Hence, minorities must be given group rights in order that their cultures may be protected from assimilation by the dominant culture.

8.6.3 Gender

It is notable that, even in Europe, the home of liberal-democratic theory, the granting of the suffrage to women has been a slow process. Switzerland gave women the right to vote as recently as 1971. Even today, women in Kuwait do not possess this right. In many countries where they do possess democratic political rights, women continue to lack political and economic power. In 1993, it was estimated that women owned only 1 percent of the world's property and earned 10 percent of world income. Women account for barely 4 percent of the heads of state across the world, and 5 percent of cabinet ministers/national policy-makers. In national legislatures, they accounted for just 10 percent.

Early feminists like Mary Wollstonecraft had invoked essentially liberal notions of equality and universal individual rights to buttress the claim of women to equal rights of citizenship. Today, almost a century after female suffrage was first granted, it is clear that franchise alone had a limited potential to transform women's lives, leading 'second-wave' feminists to question the apparent gender-neutrality of the liberal conception of the individual citizen.

There are two important aspects of the feminist challenge to democracy. Firstly, feminist arguments have pointed to the male-centred character of democratic theory and institutions. The customary division between the private and the public realm, feminists argue, tends to relegate women to the private sphere characterized by subordination to patriarchal power and lack of freedom, while democracy is restricted to the essentially male-oriented public sphere. Despite ostensibly universal and gender-neutral categories of citizenship, women have continued to suffer subordination and exclusion, both within and outside the family. The availability of rights is further severely compromised for those belonging to subordinate social groups (e.g., racial or religious or linguistic minorities or lower castes in India), and especially so for women belonging to these groups. Even in their most minimal and negative conception, rights are frequently not available to large numbers of women. Let alone the right to make meaningful choices about one's life in accordance with one's conception of self-realization, basic civil and political liberties are routinely denied or severely constrained. These include, variously, the free exercise of the right to franchise, freedom of association and movement, the right to be elected, reproductive rights, etc.

This is why feminists have sought, secondly, to 'engender' democracy, by providing for greater participation for women in political processes, if need be by quota-based reservations in political parties or legislatures. The case for quotas is often justified by an appeal to Anne Phillips' argument that a *politics of ideas* (political choice between the policies and programmes of political parties, rather than on the basis of group concerns and interests) does not ensure adequate policy concern for groups which are marginalised or excluded. This suggests the importance of a *politics of presence*, in which women, ethnic minorities and other similarly excluded groups are guaranteed fair representation. In this way, feminists have attempted to rework the theory of democratic representation.

8.6.4 Globalization

The institutions of democracy as we have known it are inextricably linked to the idea of the sovereign and territorially defined modern nation-state. So are its principles and practices, whether these pertain to the nature of citizenship or the idea of self-governance through consent and representation. Thus, a democratic political community is assumed to be one whose borders are coterminous with those of a territorial nation-state. To the extent that it entails transcending national borders, globalization is increasingly changing all this. Globalization, as we know, increases the intensity of transnational flows of trade, finance, capital, technology, information and even culture. In so doing, it makes it difficult for democratic governments - particularly in the countries of the South - to control their own affairs internally and in a self-contained way. The new institutions of global governance, such as the International Monetary Fund or the World Trade Organization, perform regulatory functions but are not themselves organised in ways that are democratic or accountable. On the contrary, they reflect and reinforce the asymmetries of global power relations.

However, even as the forces of global capital and global institutional power place limits on democracy as it is practised within nation-states, globalization and the

information flows made possible by it do have a certain democratising potential too. One of the most striking examples of this is the phenomenon called 'global civil society', a term that describes the organizations, associations and movements which cut across national boundaries, and generate new types of political solidarities around issues of environmental degradation, or women's oppression, or human rights. Of course, these movements and organizations are often criticised because they are themselves unaccountable. Another form of supranational democracy and citizenship is found in the creation of regional organizations like the European Union, which seek to advance models of 'cosmopolitan democracy' beyond the nation-state. Cosmopolitan democrats believe that the era of the sovereign state is coming to an end, and there are transformative possibilities in globalization and regionalization which can lead us towards greater and more substantive democratization. Thus, while many people believe that the nation-state is the most suitable site for the practice of democracy, there are others who argue that since the practice of power in the world is being rapidly transformed, the mechanisms of democracy have also to be revisioned and possibly redesigned.

8.7   SUMMARY

As we have seen, the evolution and the practice of democracy in the modern world have varied greatly. Each of the nation-states that today claims to be democratic has arrived at its own distinctive form of democracy by a quite distinctive route. History, society and economy are powerful influences shaping democracy, as are democratic ideas and ideals. It is a mix of the material and the ideological that must explain democracy anywhere. Both, further, are dynamic forces: material conditions change, but so do the ideas and visions of what is a democratic, egalitarian and participatory society, and how it may be brought into existence. In this sense, the struggle for democracy is never concluded; it just constantly assumes new forms.

8.8   EXERCISES

1)   Differentiate between the ancient and modern forms of democracy.

2)   Briefly discuss the historical process of democratization.

3)   What are the problems with the principles of democracy? Outline different schools' criticisms in this respect.

4)   What are the contemporary concerns of democratic politics?

UNIT 9   MODERN STATE AND WELFARE

Structure

9.1   INTRODUCTION

Unit 4 of Block 2 (Theories of State) informed you about a new type of state that had emerged in the wake of industrialization. This Unit goes into a discussion of one important feature and function of the modern state: welfare and social responsibilities. The Unit will argue that in the pre-modern time charity and welfare were tasks that were generally performed by the family, community or the religious establishment. In modern times, however, the state looks upon welfare as a part of its responsibility and handles it in an institutionalized manner.

This Unit will discuss the concept of welfare state and then take up three examples of welfare states - England, Germany and Japan. In all the three models, the policy makers faced the same dilemmas on the questions of charity and welfare. For instance, who should be the real recipients of relief and help from the state? Does relief genuinely help the poor or promote indolence and idleness among them? How to ensure that the benefits of relief reach only those who need it? And, how to ensure that it does not create a group of parasites who would soon become a liability on the system? These

questions came up for debate in the context of welfare in the three countries discussed. These questions are relevant even today. This Unit will give you some idea about how these unresolved questions were debated by the thinkers and philosophers and what were the type of welfare measure and institutions, evolved by the three modern state systems.

9.2 THE WELFARE STATE

One of the defining characteristics of the modern state is seen in the responsibility it takes for the welfare of its citizens. The state regulates social and economic relations to ensure the well being of all its people. This change from a time when charity and relief provided by the family, community or Church to social welfare is seen as the process by which the modern Western European State has progressed and this history is inextricably linked with the creation of a modern sensibility. In the premodern period, it is argued, the individual could only appeal to the Church or religious groups, family or the community when faced with poverty or illness and the causes of poverty were often seen either in fate or in individual failure. Communities or individuals in distress could then appeal to the charity or benevolence of the rulers or that of their family or community. Industrialisation brought with it economic growth but also the growth of urban centres where an increasing class of people lived at subsistence levels. The modern state began to tackle the social problems that arose out of this through measures that grew in coverage both out of a strong sense of humanitarian concern as well as because of a fear of social unrest. This body of legislation developed the welfare state where not just the poor but all citizens were entitled to a variety of social benefits such as a minimum wage, access to public health systems and schemes were established for social insurance such as old age pensions, or unemployment benefits. The state moved from moral exhortation to providing assistance to help the disadvantaged and as it did so it took positive steps to reduce income disparities through taxation and special schemes to benefit those who were economically or socially disadvantaged.

How does this process take place? Is it a natural progression as societies modernise and develop? What underlies this humanitarian concern? Some historians would explain disinterested reform as serving class interests so that the ascendancy of a new class led people to think in terms of social legislation. Is there a convergence so that all societies slowly emulate the experience of the European states? The European experience has become the norm against which to measure the progress of all states but it can be argued that the history and traditions of a country can act as equally important influences on the shape and character of welfare policies and the philosophy that underlies them.

Contemporary debates about entitlements and welfare policies both in the United States and Western Europe as well as in India and other developing countries have been sharp and acrimonious criticising state assistance for removing incentives for work as well as for placing an intolerable burden on the state exchequer. Critics have also seen help to the disadvantaged as a form of 'reverse discrimination''. These debates highlight the different approach that countries have followed and an examination of the history of social legislation will allow us to understand that there is not one ideal system to which all countries have to aspire to emulate. An examination of English and German social legislation shows the differing approaches and objectives that the two countries had so that even when we talk of the West it is important to bear in mind the diversity that this word often hides. The history of social legislation in Japan shows how a non-Western society that developed within the period of Western dominance was able to develop a welfare system that owed as much to the new doctrines and ideas coming from the West as to its own historical traditions. By considering both Western and non-Western

countries it will be possible to see the complex strands that have contributed to shaping the nature of welfare in the modern world.

9.3 FROM CHARITY TO WELFARE: THE ENGLISH EXPERIENCE

England was the first European country to come under the spell of industrialisation. As a consequence, it took the lead in modern institutions like democracy and a modern representative state system: England also had a long tradition of charity. These features placed England at the centre of any debate on welfare state. In this section we will look at the English experience of charity and welfare.

9.2.1 Elizabethan Poor Laws

The European experience has been heavily influenced by the experience of Britain which has had a long history of public assistance to the poor and private charity. The poor were in earlier times wards of the Church but by Elizabethan period in the sixteenth century laws were enacted to establish a national system of relief that provided legal and compulsory help to the poor. The Poor Laws were codified in 1597-1598 and re-enacted in 1601 and under these laws the parish became the basic unit of administration to manage relief work. A compulsory tax was imposed on each household and this money was used to provide relief to the aged, the infirm but not the 'sturdy beggar'. The able-bodied poor were punished. Social reformers and social legislation was concerned with discouraging dependence on charity that would lead to idleness. They did this through forced work or punishments such as whipping. The principle that the poor laws were based on was 'work for those that will labour, punishment for those that will not, and bread for those who cannot."

In economic thought the idle poor also represented an intolerable drain on the wealth of the nation and consequently many schemes were devised to put them to work. Reformers wrote about workhouses and labour camps and the condition in the workhouses was designed to be worse than outside. Part of the concern about the drain of wealth was due to the expenditure on relief works which rose to astronomical heights from £665,000 in 1685 to £900,000 in 1701 and by 1711 it was over £2 million and that for a population of 6 million!

It was this background that put England far ahead of the other European states in its concern and policies for the poor. Many travellers were impressed and wrote glowingly of these polices. Benjamin Franklin came to England in 1766 and praised the way England looked after her poor but he also raised the question that was much debated in contemporary England, and which continues to evoke a debate even today. He wrote, "There is no country in the world where so many provisions are established for them[the poor]; hospitals, almshouses, a tax for the support of the poor…In short, you offered a premium for the encouragement of idleness, and you should not now wonder that it has had its effect in the increase of poverty.

Alexis de Tocqueville, a French scholar visited England in 1833 and wrote a *Memoir on Pauperism* (1835) where he wrote "with indescribable astonishment…[that]..one-sixth of the inhabitants of this flourishing kingdom live at the expense of public charity". He was astonished because he saw England as a developed, prosperous country, the very "Eden of modern civilisation" and noted that other European countries were poorer and the poor in England rich compared to the European poor but English poverty was

of a different type. This poverty amidst plenty had nothing to do with subsistence but for the English "the lack of a multitude of things causes poverty". This was, he wrote, also accompanied by a commitment to alleviate poverty for 'society believes itself bound to come to the aid of those who lack them. These changes brought about a more reasoned and systematic form of social action to mitigate poverty. It transformed what was private charity oven out of a moral duty into a legal obligation. Like Franklin before him Tocqueville noted that the guarantee of the means of subsistence removes the incentive to work and will promote idleness. Tocqueville, as a result, came out openly in defence of private charity. Public charity, by marking the recipient as a pauper, he wrote, stigmatises the recipient as well as creates incentives for idleness. The poor had to write their names in poor rolls and Tocqueville found this to be, "a notarized manifestation of misery, of weakness, of misconduct on the part of the recipient."

9.2.2 Poverty and Charity : Differing Perspectives

Economic development as well as social dislocation marked the capitalist transformation of the world between 1750-1850. In this situation ideas about relief and charity also began to change. The reform sentiment that gathered momentum during this period effected a range of social policies but perhaps the movement against slavery was the most dramatic of these. Electoral reforms allowed greater participation and in turn parliament was made more sensitive to popular opinion and became the vehicle for realising social legislation. The reforms of 1834 set up a Central Poor Commission to supervise the administration of poor relief that had become inefficient and corrupt. The able-bodied poor were kept out of relief system through the workhouse test since conditions in the workhouse were always harsher than outside. Yet these reforms did establish a system that carried social legislation further by regulating hours and conditions of work in factories and mines.

Concern for public health had become particularly necessary because of the cholera epidemics of 1831-3 and 1847-8 but the untiring efforts of Edwin Chadwick were equally important for a better organisation of urban life. An Act of 1848 established a central board of health on the lines of the Poor Law Commissioners that had the power to establish local boards. Other Acts enforced regulations governing education, prison conditions, and working conditions for children and women. The New Poor Laws gave rise to intense debates that centre around a distinction between the poor and the pauper. The laws it was argued was 'pauperising the poor'. This was because the laws gave an allowance to the poor. The funds for this allowance were generated through extra rates levied on tax payers. It was argued that not only did this work as a disincentive to work but it drove wages down, led to a fall in productivity, and was a burden on those who paid the extra rates but did not benefit from it. Because of this burden these people were driven to swell the ranks of unemployed agricultural labour.

The question of who are the poor was central to much of the debates and proposals for social legislation. At the end of the eighteenth century Edmund Burke had objected to the phrase 'labouring poor' arguing that there were 'labouring poor' who worked for their subsistence and the 'poor' who were the sick, infirm, or those orphaned in their infancy or incapacitated by old age. The Church had given alms regardless of whether the recipient laboured or not as did the Elizabethan poor laws. It was John Malthus who introduced an idea of ambiguity. Malthus argued against the idea that an expanding industrial economy would produce sufficient wealth to provide for the 'happiness and comfort of the lower orders of society'. Industrial growth would lead to a growth in population but agricultural production would not rise leading to a worsening of conditions for those struggling for subsistence. Any relief given to these paupers would increase their population and consequently worsen the situation as there would be a decrease in

food available for the entire poor population. The only way to break out of this vicious cycle was through the exercise of 'moral restraint'.

It was this type of thinking that supported and sustained programmes of social amelioration and created a division among social reformers. It was this thinking and these debates that are reflected in Disraeli's comment that in England now "Poverty is a crime" or in Thomas Carlyle's statement that these laws put a 'bounty on unthrift, idleness, bastardy and beer drinking.' The debates however, also had a positive effect as they shifted concerns from poverty narrowly defined to larger issues of the obligations of state and society, of the causes of social inequality, the basis of law and obligation. Thinkers such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engles argued that inequities in the system could only be changed through revolutionary change that would give the full value of his labour to the worker, others sought to return to the old community based systems that had disintegrated and some others sought to bring about legal restrictions that would regulate factory work, public health and mitigate the effects of early industrialisation.

As the general condition of the working class began to improve the stigma attached to poverty began to change and disappear. It was now narrowly focussed on the urban vagrant whom Henry Mayhew characterised as the 'peculiar poor' marked by a 'distinctive moral physiognomy'. This differentiation of the poor was taken further by Charles Booth who through careful household surveys, (published as Life and Labour of the People of London between 1889-1903 in 14 volumes) made a distinction between the very poor (paupers, street folk) and the comfortable working class. He drew a poverty line and laid the basis for providing social legislation to help this category of deserving poor and they benefited from subsequent legislation such as the Old Age Pensions Act of 1898 or the National Insurance Act of 1911.

9.3.3   Relief to Services: Change to Welfare

Poverty and its relief were now transformed into a social problem that required a different approach. It was no longer a matter of providing relief but services and these not just to a particular group of people but to all citizens. Moreover, these were not the bare minimum required but would soon be set at what the 1945 Labour Party manifesto called the 'optimum standard'. Comprehensive social legislation was made a reality with the Liberal party in 1905 under the leadership of the younger generations of liberals, Herbert Asquith, David Lloyd George and Winston Churchill and the pressure of trade unions. They were committed to waging a war against misery and squalor. Under their leadership an impressive array of legislation was enacted: Workers Compensation Act (1906), Old Age Pension Laws (1908), Trade Board Acts (1909) that was empowered to set up special commissions to fix a minimum wage for workers. The National Insurance Act (1911) which was a contributory scheme for all workers was modelled on Bismarck's scheme of 1883-9 and made friendly societies and trade unions 'approved societies' to administer the scheme reflecting the cooperation between state and voluntary bodies. Similarly measures for town planning were influenced by German laws and the Education Act of 1902 was an attempt to catch up with the German and French systems that were far more advanced.

The Liberals also enacted laws to clear slums and build proper houses for the poor in 1909. This aside from improving living conditions also fuelled a construction boom in the coming years. Lloyd George's proposed budget of 1909 which was defeated in the House of Lords was written reflecting this new philosophy of welfare. He provided for an increase in income tax as well as a super tax on the incomes of the rich. He proposed to confiscate 20 per cent from unearned increment of land values as well as levied a heavy tax on undeveloped land. These revenues were to be used for old age pensions as well as other forms of social insurance. They would also go towards changing the

social structure by breaking the monopoly of the rich nobility. There were many big landowners among the nobility, for instance the Duke of Westminister owned over 600 acres in London at this time. Though defeated the Liberals managed to enact many of these measures when they came back to power in 1910.

The post war years influenced by the economic crisis and unemployment before the war and this sense of crisis during the war fuelled the resurgence of left wing movements all over Europe. People increasingly demanded that the state had an obligation to secure the well being of its citizens. In 1942 Sir William Beveridge's Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services (1942) laid out a practical plan for a comprehensive public protection of the individual. It was on the basis of this that the Labour government of 1945 enacted laws that ended the old poor law system and created a social security system that brought together earlier elements as well as allowed for voluntary schemes as well. Education had been reorganised through the Butler Act of 1944 and in 1945 a system of family allowances was started.

9.4   SOCIAL LEGISLATION FOR SOCIAL CONTROL : GERMANY UNDER BISMARCK

In Europe Germany presents an example where a different philosophy helped to determine the nature of the welfare system. Poor relief had traditionally been left to the communes but in Prussia systematic efforts were made to provide relief for the poor. In the Rhine provinces an unsuccessful attempt had been made in 1824 to restrict working hours of children in factories. They became more concerned when they realised that these provinces were not contributing their full quota of troops because of physical problems in the population. The powers to control industry had been taken away from the guild but after the middle of the century they were given the function of social insurance. A system of state sponsored education was also developed.

Germany under the leadership of Otto von Bismarck was the first country to adopt comprehensive social legislation. Bismarck was motivated by a political vision glorifying the nation and an economic vision that stressed national self-sufficiency and paternalism. He also sought to counter the threat posed by the demands of a socialist movement. In the Reichstag he stated clearly that the purpose of enacting legislation to provide insurance against sickness and old age to workers was so that 'these gentlemen [Social Democrats] will sound their bird call in vain. The workers health was important to the nation because the worker was also the soldier that protected the state. The duty of the State, according to Bismarck was to regulate all aspects of life in the national interest. To make the nation strong it was necessary to help the weaker citizens.

The logic of the Bismarckian view can be traced to the changes brought about during the French Revolution when the levee en masse or universal conscription was introduced in August 1793 and then continued in the Law of Conscription 1798. The state now had the right to call up all its citizens to defend it. Now wars became conflicts between nations so that in democratic societies just as the state could call up all its citizens to defend it, it became the duty of the state to look after the welfare of its people. The scope of the revolutionary government in France reflected this new relationship as it carried out policies to improve and assist its people even abolishing slavery in the colonies. As David Thompson writes, "This connection between the necessities of warfare and the development of welfare was to remain constant throughout subsequent European history."

Bismarck's motives have been debated and it has been noted that he never mentioned social legislation in his memoirs. However, that is not a reliable guide because even as

Minister President of Prussia in 1862-63 he had begun to think of insurance plans for workers so that the subsequent legislation he initiated grew out of this earlier thinking. Certainly Bismarck tried hard to eradicate socialism, just as hard as he tried to control the Catholic Church, as a force in German political life. The anti-Socialist law of 1878 however failed to curb the growth of socialism and was allowed to lapse in 1890.

The German welfare system codified earlier voluntary activities by guilds, parishes and benefit societies through laws passed between 1883 and 1889, sought to provide insurance for urban workers against sickness, accident and problems of old age. These were further extended in 1911 to non-industrial workers such as agricultural workers and domestic servants so that in 1913 around fourteen and a half million people were insured. Laws regulating factories and child labour came in 1914 and unemployment insurance for workers only in 1924. In fact the German welfare system provided the most comprehensive protection to workers in all of Europe and became a model that many copied.

State Preserving Policies: Combating Socialism through Legislation

During 1883-84 Germany enacted social legislation that provided for factory inspection, limited the employment of women and children, fixed minimum hours of work, established public employment agencies and insured workers for their old age. Except for unemployment insurance Germany under Bismarck had adopted all the elements of welfare legislation. These measures were adopted because as the Emperor stated in the Reichstag in February 1879, while introducing the anti-socialist law of 21 October, 1878 that this House would not refuse its cooperation to the remedying of social ills by means of legislation. A remedy cannot alone be sought in the repression of socialist excesses; there must be simultaneously the positive advancement of the welfare of the working class. And here the care of those workpeople who are incapable of earning their livelihood is of the first importance. The statement added to the Accident Insurance Bill, March 1881 explained the motives of the legislation in clear terms that the state: should interest itself to greater degree than hitherto in those of its members who need assistance, is not only a duty of and Christianity - by which state institutions should be permeated - but a duty of state-preserving policy, whose aim should be to cultivate the conception - and that, too, amongst nonpropertied classes, which form at once the most numerous and the least instructed part of the population - that the state is not merely a necessary but a beneficent institution. These classes must, by the evident and direct advantages which are secured to them by legislative measures, be led to regard the state not as an institution contrived for the protection of the better classes of society, but as one serving their own needs and interests.

In Europe other countries also followed this path to cope with the democratisation of politics. France enacted a law to regulate the employment of women and children and it fixed ten hours a day as the maximum for all workers. Working hours were further reduced in 1905. Other laws instituted free medical services, protection to labour unions and compensation for work related injuries from the employers and finally in 1910 an old age pension system. The Italian government also passed similar laws, except it did not provide free medical services though it encouraged co-operative stores and provided nationalised life insurance.

9.5 FROM BENEVOLENCE TO COMMUNITY CENTRED WELFARE: THE CASE OF JAPAN

Unlike these polices that were marked by obligatory help on a long term basis in pre-modern Japan ideas of welfare were based on an ideology of benevolent rule where the ruler helped to mitigate the suffering of his people through timely help. To demonstrate

his compassion and re-assert his moral authority the ruler would provide relief. Relief usually followed bad harvests and often vast sums were used to purchase rice that was distributed to the people. By the early nineteenth century such aid was supplemented by construction projects that provided work. The nature of this relief was grounded in a hierarchical relationship between the lord and his people but this was also reinforced by the demands of political stability. Peasants hit by famine posed a threat to social and political stability so benevolence became a vital political instrument.

The rulers saw the political necessity of ameliorating the effects of disaster but their benevolence was not unlimited. The people who could be helped were limited to those who had no one to turn to such as orphans and the destitute. It was not meant for the able-bodied for whom moral exhortations to be diligent and thrifty were the favoured panacea. Relief measures were carried out mostly through the family and the community. Since taxes were paid collectively the richer families were motivated to help the weaker and poorer. However, the authorities, domain or central actively encouraged and helped to set up institutions to provide help in calamitous times. In some domains granaries were set up in villages to provide rice during emergencies and charity was encouraged by official commendation.

9.5.1 Taking care of the Urban Poor: Wealthy Merchants and Charity

Pre-modern Japan had a high proportion of its population living in urban centres. The capital Edo (now called Tokyo) had over a million people at its height and Kyoto and Osaka a population of approximately half a million each and there were over dozen large castle towns. These urban centres attracted people from the countryside and inevitably a class of vagabonds and those with no fixed work grew. The cities mostly administered directly by the Shogunate set up relief shelters in the mid-seventeenth century. These provided temporary help after which the people were sent back to their villages. These gradually became permanent facilities by the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. In the late eighteenth century a type of workhouse was started in Edo where the aim was to help those without a criminal background to learn new skills and become gainfully employed. This was in part a reaction to famine as well as urban riots. The inmates were also given a course of practical ethics to ensure that they were provided the appropriate moral basis to develop their lives.

Along with this a fund was created for providing temporary relief during emergencies as well as on-going help for the aged, children and the ill without relatives. The scale of the help provided can be gauged from the fact that in 1805 about 4 out of 1,000 townspeople in Edo received help. This relief system was sustained by a special tax and managed by wealthy merchants. This was then compared to Shogunal benevolence a more public and sustained relief system than the measures practised in the villages that tended to deal with specific emergencies.

9.5.2 Confucian Piety and Self-Help: The Ideas of Ninomiya Sontoku

The development of such institutions was accompanied by ideas about how to tackle poverty and provide aid to the downtrodden, poor and destitute. Ninomiya Sontoku (1787-1856) was the most famous of the philosophers coming out of a prosperous farming family who advocated self-help. He and other reformers like him preached Confucian ideas of filial piety and diligence but they did not see the social order as static. They argued that even poor peasants by working hard, being thrifty and improving productivity by using new agricultural methods could improve their lot and become wealthy. However, it must be noted that while promoting self-help they did not see the

self as the individual but rather as the community. This led them to be critical of charity as counterproductive and they placed their emphasis on mutual assistance as well as interest free loans. So in 1830 Ninomiya Sontoku wrote, "Grants in money, or release from taxes, will in no way help them in their distress. Indeed, one secret of their salvation lies in withdrawing all monetary help from them. Such help only induces avarice and indolence, and is a fruitful source of dissension among the people."

These were the different strands that together with the new ideas coming from the West that shaped the intellectual and institutional forms that welfare measures would take in the modern period. What does emerge is that certain key elements had been clearly formulated and these underlie much of the contemporary writing on the subject. These elements are that the problem of poverty can only be resolved through the joint efforts of the community and the state, the fear that relief would lead to laziness and dependence on state help and that moral suasion was an important element in resolving the problem of poverty.

9.5.3 Meiji Welfare Polices: Saving the Samurai or Charity begins at Home

The creation of the modern state in Japan began after the restoration of 1868 when the Tokugawa Shogunate was overthrown and the Meiji Government established. The Meiji government instituted a series of measures to set up the institutional structure of a modern state system grounded in the belief that it was the responsibility of the state to create a strong and prosperous country. As in many other areas the idea of welfare was heavily influenced by the earlier notions of giving relief to the needy thus the government responded to disasters and helped those without support. The biggest beneficiaries of state aid by the new Meiji government were the samurai, the erstwhile ruling group that as a class had seen its incomes decline. The government alive to the potential of political disruption instituted a scheme to commute their land rents into government bonds that would enable them to make the transition.

Government practices were also influenced by the examples now available to them from Europe. Thus the Agricultural distress fund Law of 1880 which set up reserve funds to provide grants or loans to those affected by bad harvests was modelled on regulations in effect in Prussia. Under this law during 1881-1886 over three million affected people were helped and another million families received grants. The success of this was praised in German newspapers of the day but this fund was severely curtailed after 1890 when the state withdrew its contributions. Other groups of poor who did not constitute a political threat were not so generously looked after.

9.5.4 Relief and the Poor: Dangers of Dependence

The Meiji government's centralisation policies found in civic institutions alternative centres of power that needed to be curtailed. Thus the fund managed by the wealthy merchants of Edo was abolished in 1872 despite the massive relief work it had done during the turmoil of the Meiji restoration. The basic law that looked after the welfare of the poor was the Relief Regulations of 1874. This law aimed to provide small assistance to the poor but because conditions for giving relief were so stringent that actually very few received it. In 1876 only 2,521 received it and by 1892 it had gone up to only 18,545 and this despite years of recession and distress. The idea that state welfare could debilitate the recipient remained very strong. Thus the Home Ministry wrote that 'if the elderly, sick, poor and decrepit grow accustomed to relief, in the end, will not good people lapse into idleness and lose their spirit of independence and, in particular, become reliant on the government."

9.5.5　Influence of Western Ideas on Japan

Ideas about poverty began to be influenced by western writings where the influence of John Malthus Essay on Population gave rise to a vast literature against public assistance programmes. In books such as Henry Fawcett's *Pauperism: Its causes and remedies* it was argued that poverty was due to individual failing and the answer was in self-improvement rather than government assistance. Similarly, Fukuzawa Yukichi, arguably one of the most influential Meiji thinkers, argued for a national relief law, on the basis of England's New Poor Law of 1834 but only if it served to take people off state assistance. This thinking was reflected, in the reduction of public relief by state bodies. In 1881 the Tokyo Prefectural assembly stopped funds for free medical treatment and the first popularly elected Imperial Diet of 1890 attacked the government's poor relief bill.

English liberalism and ideas of laissez-faire (non-interventionism) helped to buttress government desire to reduce expenditure on poor relief. The government sought to ensure that relief would be managed through the community and the family and in this the Civil Code of 1898 provided explicit support. In other words the state intervened to force family and neighbours to aid the poor. The state worked through private relief efforts in time of emergencies and this policy proved successful because Japan was still largely an agrarian society. The number of farm households declined slowly till WWII and this meant that family, community and mutual assistance networks continued to function effectively.

The mid-1880's witnessed economic recession and social problems so much so that the question of poverty and how to eliminate it became a central focus of discussion and debate. The influence of Bismarck's social policies in Germany provided an alternative route for some of the leading Japanese thinkers and bureaucracy involved in formulating policy. They argued that it was the responsibility of the State to raise productivity and maintain order and for this the health and well being of its population was an integral element. Bureaucrats influenced by these ideas wanted a European style welfare programme in which public assistance and social insurance for workers would be provided. The first attempt to modify the Relief Regulations, along European lines, where central funds would be disbursed through municipalities was defeated.

Redefining Japanese Welfare: The Difference from Europe

In Japan in 1902 when another attempt to propose a poor relief bill was made critics argued that it would encourage indolence, drain resources and increase the number of poor. A man who represented this new thinking was Inoue Tomoichi, who had made a close study of the welfare systems practised in Europe and written extensively on them. In his various official positions he was to exercise a great influence on policy formation. Now they began to define Japanese policy in terms of its difference from England, Germany and other European countries. Their concern was how to prevent the rise of poverty that seemed to accompany industrialisation and for this they argued that welfare is not a right but an act of mercy by the State and will be given by the central government. The healthy poor will be excluded unlike Europe where there was an on-going relief system for the healthy and able bodied poor.

Here arguments were advanced that Japan was different from the West because in Japan the family was the important unit rather than the individual. This was the reason for a low population of poor and helped to keep relief expenditure by the state down as well. They saw England as the prime example of escalating welfare expenditure. In this they were successful as the number of welfare recipients was brought down so that in 1903 it was only 3 in 10,000 Japanese. There were subsequent cuts in the central budget and the responsibility was shifted to municipalities so that even as the population

rose and inflation grew welfare expenditures fell. Government efforts were directed at preventing poverty through moral instruction.

The idea that poverty could be reduced through a proper moral curriculum and training was in part a product of the influence of the British Fabian socialists Beatrice and Sydney Webb. Beatrice Webb's Minority Report to the Royal Commission on the Poor Law (1905-1909) argued for abolishing the Poor law. Their jointly written book *The Prevention of Destitution*, (1911) suggested that while preventive measures such as minimum wages, education, medical services were important there was also an equally important need to reform the habits of the unemployed. In line with this thinking the Webbs when they visited Japan emphasised to their hosts the need to prevent the poor from developing the idea that relief was a matter of right.

9.5.6 National Objectives and Welfare: Strengthening State Control

The period after the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905) saw government policies successfully integrating and linking the individual and the state. Policies were directed at directing individual effort to fulfil national objectives and welfare polices too were drafted within this framework. Rather than poor relief the government focussed in rebuilding the community as with urbanisation and industrialisation community and village bonds had loosened if not withered away. The growth of slums in urban centres reflected the growing numbers of poor workers. In the Local Improvement Campaign (1906-1918) the government used municipalities as well as private organisations to organise community groups such as the local "repaying virtue societies (*hotokusha*) The government also encouraged local leaders to undertake social work and to that end sponsored seminars at the national and local level to teach them how to go about doing this. It also established in 1908 a central Charity Association to study issues of poverty and carry out relief work.

9.5.7 Private Charity: Emperor and Christian Groups

The government guided private work because as they said unlike the West Japan did not have a long tradition of private charity. Christian groups played a very important part both in setting up orphanages and other charitable institutions and in influencing government policy on moral reform. It was Christians such as Tomeoka Kosuke, a social reformer who were active in introducing the ideas of Ninomiya Sontoku that hard work and thrift would eliminate poverty.

The Imperial household also played a large role in contributing to welfare activities through donations. These were directed through private organisations and often motivated by a desire to curb radical political movements. Thus the largest donations were made in 1910 when twelve socialists were executed for allegedly trying to kill the Emperor. In terms of the amount of money spent private institutions continued to play a major role but the state managed many of the voluntary bodies often forcing people to donate. The thinking behind government policies continued to be that relief was not a matter of right.

9.5.8 New Ideas about Relief: Public Responsibility of the State

The years following WWI saw the emergence of Japan as a major political actor on the international scene. Internally the expansion of the economy also helped to sharpen social problems. Japanese bureaucrats as well as reformers began to now look for welfare models in Britain, Weimar Germany and the United States. Relief work had been supervised by the Bureau of Local Affairs but by 1920 a Bureau of Social Affairs was established which looked after poor relief, veteran's assistance, children's welfare

and unemployment. The bureaucrats in these offices had a different viewpoint. They argued that in these new times it was no longer possible to rely on family or neighbourhood for relief. The state must spend resources on ensuring public assistance. They saw society as the unit at which poverty could be tackled and this view was grounded in social theories emanating from Europe that said the state had a public responsibility. However, even while the state's obligation to relieve poverty now became the key element in social policy earlier ideas were not jettisoned and the family system continued to be stressed. Also the idea that public assistance must not create dependency continued to be a major strain in official documents as well as in the thinking of reformers.

The Bureau managed to institute labour exchanges (1921) workers health insurance (1922) restrictions on work hours for children, women (1923) mandatory retirement age and severance pay (1936) and seaman's insurance (1938). While debates continued about what system to adopt and various commissions studied European practices the district commissioner system developed in Osaka was an innovative contribution. In each school district the government selected a local notable or person of virtue. Each of these unpaid commissioners was responsible for two hundred households. They in turn elected representatives to an Executive Council which met once a month. The commissioners surveyed the poor in their area, provided counsel and helped organise relief funds or medical care and other social services. This system spread so that by 1931 district commissioners were in 43 prefectures and by 1942 there were nearly 74,560 commissioners (4,537 of them women). Nearly all the municipalities had adopted this system by 1942.

The district commissioner system became the cornerstone of social policy because it was cost effective and allowed timely intervention to help families in a variety of ways ranging from advice on better household management to medical care or providing relief. The commissioners could also help to correct household registers as they tracked down relatives who could provide support to destitute relatives. These commissioners came from the middle classes rather than the local notables who had been the earlier focus of relief systems.

9.5.9 The Ministry of Health and Welfare: Furthering the War Effort

The district commissioners system was followed by the Relief and Protection Law (1929) which was not in any way different in its assumptions from the earlier relief regulations but with the war in China the government established the Ministry of Health and Welfare, at the suggestion of the Army Ministry. The military wanted an efficient health policy for not only its soldiers but for the people from whom it drew its soldiers. The revised Military Assistance Law of 1937 provided for assistance with minimal requirements. Moreover, the assistance was not channelled through the family and the recipient did not lose his right to vote. Unlike earlier systems this did not make it difficult for the poor to seek state relief. Through the war all systems including the district commissioners system were directed towards the war effort. This helped in providing welfare facilities for the general population rather than just the poor. For instance, day care centres were provided for all children, as was medical care allowances to fatherless families and finally in 1938 a National Health Insurance Law that covered the whole population was passed. The war years while they did see a broadening of the scope of social legislation did neglect the destitute and infirm because it concentrated on the mobilising the nation for the war effort.

Japan's social legislation did not achieve the levels of Britain, the United States or many countries in Europe till after WWII. The history of its pre-war system shows that indigenous institutions and practices played an important role in shaping social legislation

often incorporating and building on West European and United States policies. Equally Japanese policy makers changed and adapted these ideas to suit their objectives.

9.6   SUMMARY

Surveying the history of state concern for the welfare of the people shows the varying paths that countries have taken influenced by their histories and traditions. The traditional concerns whether of relief and charity or of benevolence guided the thinking of rulers and ruled in their understanding of how to better the conditions of the poor and infirm. In the eighteenth century the capitalist transformation of the world created a global economy. The expansion of the economies of the European powers not only allowed them to carve the world into colonial enclaves but also created a larger class of people who benefited from this expansion within their own countries. The British Reform Acts of 1867 and 1883, for instance, expanded the electorate from 3 per cent to 29 per cent. This expansion changed the terms of political debate forcing the state to forge new forms of legitimacy.

Humanitarian concerns became politically important. Earlier such concerns had been expressed through the family or community, particularly religious organisations, or had been seen as acts of benevolence in times of calamity. Now the state began to see the need to provide social legislation to not only provide relief during disasters but also to improve living conditions and reduce subordination and exploitation and accommodate increased political participation. This did not follow a uniform pattern. In Germany and Japan social legislation became a vital element in the policy of social control. In this welfare legislation was a way of strengthening national power. However, the general democratisation of politics and greater political participation through the electoral process changed the forms of social control and placed greater reliance on internalised moral and cultural mechanisms. Relief and charity expanded and were transformed through social legislation that sought to provide for the needs of all its citizens from 'cradle to grave'. The questions that were raised when these policies were initially formulated still remain, namely, does state support lead to dependence and loss of initiative, are the financial costs placing an unacceptable burden on those who do not benefit from these policies, and do entitlements or reservations create special interest groups. These questions are still with us and are far from resolved, one way or the other. Even though we do not have the answer, we at least know that these questions *are* important even today and will continue to attract attention so long as economic disparities persist in the world.

9.7   EXPERIENCE

1)   How was welfare as practised in Britain different from that practised in Germany?

2)   What were the various ideas that were propagated on the concept of welfare?

3)   Write an essay on the welfare measures taken in Japan.

UNIT 10 NATIONALISM

Structure

10.1 INTRODUCTION

We live in a world that is very nationalist though not in the sense of the world having become one nation. The world today is very nationalist in the sense that nationalism has clearly emerged as the most dominant political force during the course of the last two centuries. There is no individual or a piece of territory that is not a part of some nation-state or the other. It is therefore important to try and understand this phenomenon. This Unit proposes to discuss the following issues:

- What is nation and how were nations formed

- What is nationalism and what is its relationship with nations and nation-states

- The ways in which nationalism has altered the political map of the modern world

- What are the different types of nations that have dotted the modern world

A great paradox of nationalism is that its political power is strangely accompanied by its philosophical poverty. Although the political salience of nationalism is now acknowledged by all, it did not receive much of a scholarly attention that it deserved, until the 1960s. The great nationalist experience of the world remained curiously untheorized until the 1960s. Now that the works on nationalism have poured in, in a big way, we do not as yet have anything like the final word or even a consensus position on it. According to Benedict Anderson, a pioneering scholar on nationalism, the question of nations and nationalism 'finds the authors more often with their backs to one another, staring out at different, obscure horizons, than engaged in orderly hand-to-hand combat.' (Quoted in Gopal Balakrishnan (ed.), *Mapping the Nalion, p.1*. It is also strange that those scholars, who fully acknowledge the historical legitimacy, reality and political validity of nationalism, refer to it as an 'invented tradition' (Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and*

Nationalism), 'imagined community' and a 'cultural artifact' and sometimes also as a 'myth' (Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*). The variety of issues that are still hotly debated relates to the antiquity of nations. Have nations been in existence through the centuries of human history or are they the products only of its modern phase. The various positions on it can be broadly divided between what might be called the modernists, who believe nations to be a modern phenomenon, and the primordialists, who tend to trace the history of nations to the pre-modern period.

10.2 WHAT IS A NATION: HOW ARE NATIONS FORMED

Are nations formed or is humanity inherently blessed with nations? In other words, are nations a contingency or are they an integral part of human condition? Understandably most nationalists (nationalist ideologues, writers, poets or practitioners of nationalist politics) have tended to look upon nations as given and somewhat perennial. These nations, according to nationalist perception, only needed to be aroused from their deep slumber by the agent called nationalism. In the traditional nationalist perception the role of nationalism has been seen as that of an 'awakener' who makes nations rise from their deep slumber. In the nationalist discourse nations appear like sleeping beauties waiting for their prince charming! What is missing in this understanding is the *process* through which nations themselves arrive in this world. Nations were not always there; they emerged at some point. It is therefore important not to see nationalism in its own image.

Definitions on nations have been quite scarce. It would be true to say that nations have been *described* much more than they have been *defined*. Perhaps the earliest attempt to define a nation was made in 1882 by Ernest Renan, a French scholar. He defined nation, as a human collectively brought together by will, consciousness and collective memory (and also common forgetfulness, or a collective amnesia). He called the nation as an exercise in everyday plebiscite. The strength of Renan's definition lay in providing a **voluntaristic** (as against **naturalistic)** component to the understanding of nation. He forcefully rejected the notion that nations were created by natural boundaries like mountains, rivers and oceans. He emphasized the role of human will and memory in the making of a nation. A human collectivity or grouping can *will* itself to form a nation. The process of the creation of a nation is not dependent upon any natural or objective criteria and a nation, in order to be, is not obliged to fulfil any of the objection conditions.

Renan's understanding of nation, pioneering though it was, could be criticized on three accounts. One, it overlooked the specificity of nations as a unique form of human grouping. Whereas Renan defined a nation well, he defined many non- nations as well, or groups that could not be considered nations - actual or potential. By his definition, any articulate, self-conscious human group with some degree of living together (a club, a band of thieves, residents of a locality, students living in a hostel or a university) could be called a nation. Will and consciousness are elements which can be found in many (indeed most) human groupings. This definition helps to identify a greater number of human groupings but does not go very far in distinguishing nations (actual or potential) from non- nations. It is a definition-net which, when cast into the sea of human groupings, captures the nations but also many obvious non- nations. It successfully lists all the possible human groupings which have the potential of developing into nations, but doesn't explain precisely which ones actually do. Two, the question about the role of consciousness in the making of nation is a bit tricky and complex. Consciousness must

certainly assume the object that it is conscious of. As Karl Deustch remarked, there has to be *something* to be conscious of (Quoted in Gopal Balakrishnan, *Mapping the Nation, p.79)* . In other words, nations have to first exist, if people have to develop the will and consciousness of belonging to that unit. Consciousness can only follow the making of the nation, not precede it. And if the emergence of the consciousness is of a later date than the making of a nation, then certainly consciousness cannot be seen as having contributed to the making of the nation. Consciousness can at best describe a nation, not define it. This then is the great paradox about the role of will and consciousness in the making of the nation. A human collectivity called the nation cannot exist without 'human will' (As Renan rightly pointed out); yet factors pertaining to will and consciousness cannot be sufficiently invoked to define a nation. The polemical question on their relationship will be: does a national create its own consciousness or does the consciousness create the nation? Three, it was rightly pointed out that coming from France (culturally a fairly homogeneous society that already possessed some of the features of a nation) Renan may have taken the objective factors (like language, territory etc.) that went into the making of a nation, for granted. Renan considered nations to be a specifically Western European attribute. In other words, nations, according to Renan, could only emerge in societies that were already culturally homogenous. That heterogeneous groups could also evolve (or invent, or sometimes even fabricate) homogeneity in their journey towards acquiring nationhood, was something that was not very clear to Renan.

A significant corrective to Renan's understanding was provided by Joseph Stalin in 1912. Stalin offered a much sharper and comprehensive understanding of nations. Nation, according to Stalin, was a human collectivity sharing a common territory, language, economic life and a psychological make-up. His complete definition in his own words: **'A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of the a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.'** Stalinist definition consisted of objective yardsticks as against the subjective factors enumerated by Renan. However, the Stalinist definition was not entirely without problems and he may have over stressed the role of factors like language and territory. Stalin may not have taken into consideration the capacity of many human groups to form nations *without* already being blessed by either a single language or a common territory. Jews in the 20th century, scattered through Europe and America and completely devoid of a territory they could call their own, nonetheless possessed the necessary prerequisites of a nation, without fulfilling some of Stalin's criteria (though they would fulfil Renan's).

If Renan's definition-net was too wide catching nations as well as many non- nations, Stalin's net tended to be a bit narrow, leaving out significant nations though it eliminated the risk of catching non- nations. It should then be possible to look upon Renan and Stalin as complementing rather than contradicting each other. The question then is: do Renan and Stalin, put together, cover the entire spectrum? Can an assemblage of the two definitions be considered adequate in identifying *all* the nations (actual and potential) of the world? Perhaps not.

The problem with both sets of definitions is that they are both completely rooted in Western European experience and thus leave out of their orbit a significant number of national formations which may not have shared a common territory or even language (e.g. Jews in the early 20th century, Indian Muslims in the 1940s, Poles in the late 19th century etc.). The western European experience of nation is linked directly to state and territory. Therefore drawing upon this experience, these definitions have tended to see nations in precisely these terms. But there is no reason for us to take such a restricted view of nations. The trajectories of national formations is a varied one and this variety

needs to be grasped and retained: some nations inherit empires and slice pieces of nation-states for themselves; some nations inherits states and turn them into nation-states; some nations inherit nothing - no state, no empire, no territory, no single language - and fight (not always successfully) for the creation of a nation-state. It is important to acknowledge the possibility of nations exiting without a pre-existing state and fighting precisely to create a state *of their own.* These have often been referred to as ethnic nations as against territorial nations. This distinction (between ethnic nations and territorial nations) may or may not be valid, but there is no reason for us to privilege one variety of nations over the other.

The range that is covered by the two definitions mentioned about is immense but by no means complete. Stalin and Renan certainly represent two ends of the spectrum. Whereas it is true that both 'will' and 'culture' should constitute important components in any definition of nation, neither or even both can be treated as adequate. 'Will' creates too large a package of nations and non- nations; language and territory tend to leave out significant nations. The former is too inclusive, the latter too exclusive. In fact both the components put together are not able to accommodate all nations. What then is the crucial element missing? It is here that Ernest Gellner provides the answer. In the ultimate analysis, nations are best understood *in the spirit of nationalism.* Contrary to popular belief it is not nations that lead to nationalism, but that nations are created by nationalism. Nations are not the product of some antiquity or the working of some distant historical forces (not always anyway) but they are the creation of nationalism, *in alliance with certain other factors.* Human grouping may possess the characteristics enumerated by Renan and Stalin, but they acquire nationhood only when they are imbued with the spirit of nationalism. So nations are created by the objective naturalist factors like common language, territory, history economic life; along with voluntaristic factors like will, consciousness and memory; *and nationalism.* A particular nation is created by its nationalism. The relationship between the two is somewhat like the proverbial egg and the chicken. It is difficult to determine what came first but easy to predict that they constantly reproduce each other.

The three components - will (Renan), culture (Stalin) and ideology (Gellner) - thus complete our definition of nation. The writings of the three scholars mentioned above (Ernest Renan, Joseph Stalin and Ernest Gellner) are stretched over a period of 100 years. Renan wrote his piece in 1882 and Gellner provided his definition in 1983. We can thus say that a comprehensive definition of nation that is available with us today, took over a century to evolve and is the result of a combination of many intellectual contributions.

Nation and Their Navels

On the question – how old are the nations? – there is an interesting debate between Anthony Smith and Ernest Gellner, two scholars on nationalism. Gellner belonged to the modernist lobby that firmly believed that nations were a modern creation i.e. they were the product of the modern industrial world. Pre-modern world may have occasionally thrown up nation-like formations (Kurds, Somalis or even Marathas and Rajputs in medieval India) but they were rare and did not always fulfil all the conditions. Modern world, on the other hand, is bound to (or condemned to) be divided between nations. Smith's argument was that this modernist position was somewhat insensitive to the roots, pre-history, cultural traditions, historical memories and heritages that have coalesced over generations which too have gone into the making of nations. For instance, 19th century Greek nationalism was shaped as much by the heritage of Byzantine imperial authority as by the classical democratic antiquity. Smith's argument was that nations may not have been produced entirely by the pre-existing ethnic ties, but these ties shaped the nature of nations

as much as the modern conditions characterized by industrialism, mass literacy, social mobility etc. Smith's critique of the modernist position was not that it was wrong but that it told only half the story, leaving out the other – equally important – half.

Gellner's classic response to this was to invoke the 19ᵗʰ century debate between the creationists and evolutionists on the origins of mankind after Charles Darwin had made his famous theory on the evolution of mankind. The crux of the debate, according the Gellner, was whether Adam had a navel or not. If Adam *was* created, as Biblical wisdom would have us believe, he need not have a navel. In other words, the absence of a navel would prove the creationist theory, because, apart from indicating the process through which we arrive in this world, navel serves no other purpose and it is possible for man to live navel-less. In order to live, man needs, not a navel, but a digestive and a respiratory system. It is the same story with nations. Do nations have genuine pre-existing navels (cultural traditions, ethnic ties, historical memories etc.) or do they invent them? Gellner's conclusion was that some nations may possess genuine navels, but most don't and they actually invent navels. Moreover it is possible for some nations to exist and flourish without any navels (Albania in the 19ᵗʰ century). Thus the absence of a navel is no great disadvantage just like its presence does not necessarily mean any great advantage. Nations can live navel-lessly without encountering any serious problems in their lives. So, whereas on the origin of mankind, the evolutionists got it right, on the origin of nations, the creationists (in other words modernists) got it right. If the modernist position told only half the story, Gellner concluded, that was the half that was important and the rest (like Adam's navel) did not matter.

10.3 NATIONALISM

Since our definition of nations has become so crucially dependent on nationalism, we need to answer the question: what is nationalism? In this section we would attempt to provide a definition of nationalism. We will then discuss the emergence of state and nation as constitutive elements in our understanding of nationalism and nation-state.

10.3.1 Defining Nationalism

Strangely enough, a lack of consensus on the question of nation does not quite extend to the question of nationalism. For a global definition of nationalism, it is best to again depend on Ernest Gellner: '**Nationalism is political principle that holds that national and political units should be congruent.**' Among the scholars who have grappled with the problem of nation and nationalism, he really stands out for a variety of reasons. Most of them have begun their enquiry by first trying to define nation, and from there they have gone on to define nationalism as the articulation of the nation (the desire for **autonomy**, **unity**, **identity** of the unit called nation, already defined). Gellner is probably the only one who has begun his enquiry by first defining nationalism and then having moved on to nation. His definition of nationalism covers, at one stroke, national sentiment, thinking, consciousness, ideology and movement. The definition is simple and profound. If the two concepts employed in it - **political unit** and **national unit** - are dejargonized to mean state and nation, respectively, it becomes even simpler. We, living in modern times, tend to take nation and state for granted and moreover, tend to taken them to be more or less the same thing. We do so because they appear to us as very nearly the same things. But there is no reason for us to believe that the two may have always been the same thing, or to use Gellner's words, they may have always been congruent. After all, their congruence is not a condition given to us; it is the insistence of the agent called

nationalism. For this coming together of state and nation, there are clearly three pre-conditions - there should be a state; there should be a nation; and finally, they should be nationalism to tell the other two that they are meant for each other and cannot live without each other. In other words, the present day congruence of nation and state (emergence of nation-state) is a product of three specific development in human history. When did the three happen in human history? Let us now focus on the emergence of state and nation as preconditions to the development of nation-state. As mentioned earlier we look upon nationalism as a modern phenomenon and understand it to be rooted in the transformation of the world from agrarian to industrial. We need to therefore answer two questions: Why did nationalism not emerge during the agrarian period? What was it about the industrial society that necessitated the emergence of nationalism? In this section we will also try and answer these questions by pointing out some salient features of the agrarian society and of the industrial society.

10.3.2   Emergence of State and Nation

State, as the centralized, power wielding agency, did not arrive in this world for a very long time; it may sound improbable but is true that mankind, for most of its life - about 99 percent, lived happily without a state. Human society, in its pre-agrarian stage, was a stateless society. Societies were small; forms of organization were simple; division of labour was elementary. The nature of exchange, wherever it existed, was such as could be managed easily by people themselves without having to resort to any central authority. People did not need a state and, as a result, did not have one. The pre-condition for the arrival of the state, and therefore nationalism, simply did not exist.

The first agrarian revolution - indeed the first revolution known to mankind-initiated the first major transformation in human life. It liberated a section of the population from having to fend for themselves; it could now be done by others. Those who were freed from the need to procure food for themselves were obliged to do other things. A division of labour came into being. With the passage of time this division become more complex. The availability of large surplus, segregated people from each other. Groups of people were separated and stratified. A state came into being to maintain law and order, collect surplus, resolve disputes when the need arose, and, of course, to regulate the exchange mechanism. Of course, not all agrarian societies had a state; only those with an elaborate division of labour did. Simple agrarian societies resembling their pre-agrarian ancestors, could still manage without one. State, at this stage of human history, was an option, and as an option, was crucially dependent upon the existing division of labour. A hypothetical anti-state citizen of the medieval world could still hope that under conditions of a stable division of labour, state might be dispensed with. Our medieval anti-state protagonist would certainly have been disappointed, if he had lived long enough, by the arrival of the industrial era which increased this division of labour manifold thereby ensuring a long life for the state. State, under conditions of industrial economy, was no longer an option; it became a necessity. As of today, the state is still with us, strong as ever, and the vision of a stateless society in some distant future is there only to test human credulity.

So the state has arrived and shows no signs of disappearing. What about nation, the other pre-conditions? We certainly did not hear of a nation in the medieval times, though we did hear of cultural groups and units. It is possible that nations may have grown out of these cultural units, under conditions favourable for their growth. Cultural units that existed in the medieval world were either very small (based on tribe, caste, clan or village) or very large (based on the religious civilizations of Islam and Christianity). This range was also available to political units. They were either very small (city-states or small kingdoms) or very large (Empires - Holy Roman, Ottoman, Mughal, Russian).

So the cultural units existed in the medieval world and so did the political units. They often cut across each other. Large empires contained many cultural units within their territory. Large cultural units could easily accommodate themselves under many political units. They felt no great need for any major re-allocation of boundaries to suit nationalist imperative. Nobody told them that they were violating the nationalist principle. None - either the political or the cultural unit - was greatly attracted to one-culture-one polity formula. Indeed it was not possible to implement such a formula even if the impulse had existed (which it did not). Why was it that the passion for nationalism, so characteristic of our times, was missing both from the human mind and the human heart during the agrarian times? In order to address this question, we need to focus on some of the features of the agrarian society.

10.3.3 Agrarian Society

So far our contention in this Unit has been that whereas some preconditions (emergence of state, presence of distinct cultural communities) for the development of nation-states had materialized in the agrarian period, some others (transformation of cultural communities into national communities, the emergence of the ideology of nationalism) had not. The question is: Why didn't we see the emergence of state as representative of cultural communities during the agrarian period? Why was the ideology of nationalism absent fromt the world during ther same period? What was it about the agrarian society which inhibited the growth of these preconditions to the development of a nation-state system? Some of these questions can be satisfactorily answered if we could draw a cultural map of the world. Ernest Gellner has actually drawn such a map. We reproduce it below for you.

The map consists of three major dividing lines. Line 1, the greatest social divide known to mankind, has the horizontally stratified groups of political, military and religious elite on top of the line and the numerous communities of food producers, artisans and common people below the line. Line 2 divides the three (or possibly four) types of medieval elite - political, military and religious and those who possessed knowledge through a mastery over written world. In some cases a commercial elite also joined the apex. Their method of recruitment and reproduction varied from society to society. It could be open or closed, hereditary or non-hereditary. Their relationship with each other also varied from territory to territory. The religious elite (Ulema, Clergy, Brahmin) could dominate the political elite or vice-versa. Culturally they formed different groups, but they were all united by their great distance from common people. A China-Wall stood between them and the simple peasant would dare not cross it. Indeed it was impossible for him to do so. To join the exclusive high culture, he would need at least one of the attributes like special pedigree, chosen heredity, privileged status, divine sanction and access to literacy and written word. None of it was available to him.

The third dividing line stood vertically creating laterally insulated communities of common people. They lived for centuries in stable cultural formations, not particularly informed about the presence of other groups across the vertical lines. Written word was rarely available to them. They lived their culture without ever articulating it. They could not write and to understand what was written, they relied upon the clergy or the Ulema or Brahmin. They paid their ruler what was demanded from them. In the absence of literacy they evolved their own system of communication which was context based and would be unintelligible outside the context or the community. This communication would not cut across the vertical line; indeed there was no need for it, for across the line the other cultural group would use its own evolved communication. The use of literacy for them seldom extended beyond the need to communicate. Education among these groups was like a cottage industry. People learnt their skills not in a University but in their own local environment. Only scholars, from the apex went to the Universities to learn Latin, Greek, Sanskrit or Persian. The skills acquired from the cottage industry were handed over from generation to generation. The result: the citizens of the agrarian world lived in laterally insulated cultural groupings. They did not need literacy; they used their own evolved form of communication valid only in their culture. They lived in stable cultural formations. Horizontal mobility did not exist. Vertical mobility was out of the question. They viewed (or did not view) the exclusive high-culture at the apex with an aloof distance and felt no need to relate to it. Both the ruler and the ruled felt no great need for any kind of identification with each other. Man was (and still is) a loyal animal and his loyalty was rightfully claimed by his village, kinship, caste, religious or any other form of ethnic ties. Indeed he was a product of these ties. The exclusive high-culture generally did not attempt to claim his loyalty, for to do so would be risky: it might weaken or even erode the China-Wall. In other words, it might convert the China-Wall into a German-Wall. The common peasant being so distant, felt no compulsion to express solidarity with the exclusive high-culture. There were enough loyalty evoking units available to them. No cultural bonding existed, or could possibly exist, between the ruler and the ruled. The ruler was neither chosen by the people, nor was he representative of them. The people in turn felt no need to identify with their ruler. This was the scenario in which man lived in pre-modern times.

The continuity and stability of the pre-modern world, described above, terminated with the arrival of the industrial economy and society. It is our argument that this transformation - from the agrarian to the industrial - created conditions for the rise of nations and nationalism. In the next section let us look at some of the features of the industrial society.

10.3.4   Industrial Society

The medieval man might have gone on living like this happily ever after, had an accident of tremendous consequence not occurred. The tranquility and the stability of the medieval world was shaken with a jerk by the strong tidal wave or a huge hurricane of industrialization hitting the world, though not all of it at the same time. Nothing like this had ever happened to mankind. This single event transformed the cultural map of the world profoundly and irreversibly. The industrial society, when it was finally established in *some* pockets of the world, was found to be just the opposite of the agrarian society in very fundamental ways. Five crucial features of the industrial society separated it from the agrarian world and had implications for the emergence of the nationalism.

One, it was a society based on perpetual growth - both **economic** and **cognitive**, the two being **interrelated**. Cognitive growth in the realm of technology, though not confined to it, directly fed into economic growth and the latter, in turn facilitated investments for technological updating. Changes had occurred in the agrarian world, but it was never a rule. The industrial society showed a tremendous commitment to continuous change and growth. The idea of progress was born for the first time. Technology and economy got linked to each other in a manner in which they were not in the pre-modern times. A constantly growing society would not allow any stable barriers of rank, status and caste. The two are indeed incompatible. Social structures, which had taken their permanence for granted in the agrarian world, would find it impossible to resist the hurricane of industrialism.

Two, it was literate society. Literacy in the agrarian world was confined to the exclusive high-culture, in other words to the king, priest and the scholar. The common man did not need literacy and did not have it or had it at a very elementary level which could easily be imparted by his family or the community. Industrial society, on the other hand, cannot survive without universal literacy. Why should full (or very nearly so) literacy be a precondition for the smooth functioning, indeed the very survival, of the industrial society and economy? There are in fact many reasons why it has to be so. One, industrial economy requires greater participation in the running of the economy by a much larger section of the population. These participants, drawn from very different cultural backgrounds and involved in very different tasks assigned to them, must be able to communicate with each other in order to ensure the running of the economy and the system. Drawn as they are from different cultural settings, they cannot communicate in their old idioms. They have to communicate in some standardized idiom in which all of them have to be trained. This is an enormous task and can no longer be performed by the traditional agencies (family, guild, community etc). Traditional agencies, rooted in their own cultural contexts, cannot, in any case, impart context-free education. Such training can only be imparted uniformly to all citizens by an agency as large as the State. In other words, **education which was a cottage industry in the agrarian world, must now become full-fledged, impersonal and organized modern industry to turn out neat, uniform human product out of the raw material of an uprooted anonymous mass population**. As a result, people start resembling each other culturally and share the same language in which they have all been taught. The language at school may initially be different from the language at home, but gradually, in about a generation's time, the language at school also becomes the language at home. The Hungarian peasant only initially speaks two languages - the local dialect at home and its refined and comprehensive version at school. Gradually, within a generation or so, the latter replaces the dialect at home also. This process helps in the creation of a seamless, culturally uniform, internally standardized society and thus fulfils a major precondition for nationalism. Two, the new system also demands that these trained men should be able to perform diverse tasks suited to the requirements of a constantly growing economy.

They should therefore be ready to shift occupationally. Only a generic educational training, imparted by a large centralized agency, can ensure that men are competent and qualified to undertake newer tasks. The paradox of the industrial age is that it is a system based on specialism but the specialism in the industrial age is very general. Every man is a specialist. Every man is *trained* to be a specialist. One half of this training is generic (based on language, cognition and a common conceptual currency); the other half is specific and must be different for different tasks (like doctors, managers, engineers, computer personnel etc.) Now anyone required to shift occupationally can be trained *specifically* for that task because he has already received the generic training. This enables people to move occupationally across generations and sometimes within the span of a single generation. This provides the industrial society a certain mobility, which also facilitates the nationalist project. Three, **an industrial society is one in which work is not manual but semantic**. It does not any longer (certainly in mature industrial societies) consist of ploughing, reaping, threshing, but rather of handling machines and pushing buttons. In the pre-modern world work consisted of the application of the human muscle over matter with the help of elementary technology based on wind and water. All this changes with the arrival of modern technology. A qualified worker in an industrial economy is one who must know which button to press, how to operate the machines, and if possible, to fix minor errors. In other words modern workers have to manipulate not things but meanings and messages. All these qualifications require literacy imparted in a standardized medium. The image of a worker, just uprooted from his village and pushed straight into industry is rapidly becoming archaic. A worker is not inherently suited to the tasks of the modern economy; he needs to be trained (which implies literacy) to perform his tasks suitably and satisfactorily. **Modern economy does not just need a worker; it needs a skilled worker.** A part of the skill is also the ability to perform different tasks, as and when the need arises. As stated earlier, imparting standardized context free education to such a vast number is a monumental task and cannot be performed by the agencies which had been doing it for centuries namely kin, local unit, county, guild. It can only be provided by a modern national education system, 'a pyramid at whose base are primarily schools, staffed by teachers trained at secondary schools, staffed by University trained teachers, led by the products of advanced graduate schools.' (Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism, p.34*). Only the state can maintain and look after such a huge structure or delegate it to one of its agencies. The implications of such a literate society are various; emergence of nationalism is only one of them. It creates internally standardized and homogeneous cultural communities. This is just what nationalism needs.

The third, fourth and fifth features of the industrial society are actually an extension of the first and the second (i.e. literate society, committed to perpetual growth). It is mobile society; it is an egalitarian society; and it is a society with a shared high-culture and not exclusive as it was in the agrarian world. Let us briefly look at all three.

The agrarian world was a stable order devoid of any great transformations. The conditions making for any kind of mobility simply did not exist. The industrial society by contrast, is essentially unstable and constantly changing. The changes include the strategic location of the social personnel within it. Positions are changing and people therefore cannot take their current social status for granted; they might lose it and make way for others across generation. The factors that restricted mobility (or fostered stability whichever way you look at it) are no longer operative in an industrial economy. The area and scope of a man's employability gets enlarged thanks to literacy imparted in a standardized medium. His cultural nests have been eroded and his status is threatened by the arrival of new social and economic roles. The industrial society acquires the features of systematic randomness (something like the children's game of snakes and ladders) in which men cannot take their present position for granted. The mobility

(physical, spatial, occupational, social) engendered by the industrial economy is exceptionally deep and sometimes unfathomable. A mobile society has to inevitably be an egalitarian society. Roles and positions are not fixed and are certainly not determined by social status. A peasant's son need not be a peasant; what occupational position he occupies will depend, not on his heredity or community's status, but on his own competence and training. The role of social status does not completely diminish in the industrial society, but it loses the eminence that it enjoyed in the agrarian world. The description of the industrial society as egalitarian does not match with the brutally inhuman and inegalitarian conditions that prevailed in the initial years of the industrial economy. But they were soon overcome, paving way for a more mobile and egalitarian order.

All the four features put together (a society based on perpetual growth, literate society, mobile society and also egalitarian) would ensure the fifth one also. The agrarian world was characterized by deep and stable barriers - both vertical and horizontal. The biggest barrier was that of status and high culture. The high culture(s) of the king, priest and the scholar was/were sustained by access to literacy and the privileged status. Both these features disappear in the industrial society. Everybody gains access to literacy and a growing, mobile society just does not allow any barriers to settle down for long. To quote Gellner again, 'Men can tolerate terrible inequalities, if they are stable and hallowed by custom. But in a hectically mobile society, custom has no time to hollow anything. A rolling stone gathers no aura, and a mobile population does not allow any aura to attach to its stratification.' (Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism, p.25*). The implication of all this is that the high culture loses its exclusiveness and becomes shared. All this has serious implications for the emergence of nationalism.

The result of the above-mentioned developments was that mankind was shaken out of its neatly nested cultural zones and liberated from the various identities which had claimed its loyalty for centuries. Man ceased to belong to his local ties; indeed they were getting increasingly difficult to recognize. He has now, either already or aspired to be, a member of the shared high-culture. The guidelines for the membership of this shared high-culture were provided to him by the uniform educational system. Man continued to be a loyal animal even in the industrial society, but the units demanding or claiming his loyalty had either disappeared or were in a process of disappearing. Who, or what, should claim his loyalty now? The prestige of the modern man depends not upon his membership of primordial ties but upon his membership of the new shared high-culture transmitted by a uniform education system provided by the state. He is now a product of the shared high-culture and has a vested interest in its preservation and protection. And he knows his culture can be protected only by the state, *its* own state. In other words **a marriage of culture and polity is the only precondition to his dignified survival in a world of dissolving identities**. His national identity is important to him and only a state representative of his nation can ensure the preservation of this identity. *This* is nationalism. And this is why modern man is nationalist.

The large culturally homogenous national units cannot be preserved and protected by the unit itself. They need a political roof of their own. This explains the nationalist man. But it does not explain why the state should be keen on protecting this national unit? Why can't it just be happy ruling over the territory, and bothering about little else, like the medieval state did? Why must the modern state insist on the unmediated membership and loyalty of its citizens? It has to because the modern state, under conditions of modern economy, cannot function without an active participation of its citizens. Didn't it train them to be literate and occupationally mobile? **Modern state needs not only trained men but also committed and loyal men. They must follow the instructions of the state in which they live, and of no other subdivision within the territory. Only nationalism can ensure this.**

To sum up the argument, modern industrial economy has transformed the world culturally and economically. It requires everybody to be literate. This literacy has to be imparted in a uniform standardized manner to facilitate the running of the economy. This process displaces people out of their secure cultural nests and destroys their loyalty inducing local identities. Gradually it rehabilitates them as a member of a new homogenous cultural unit, held together by literacy. The China-Wall breaks down allowing people entry into the high-culture (or rather the high-culture extending to people) which ceases to be exclusive. Rules of the new membership are easy (literacy) and conditions favourable. These new national units owe a great deal to the political unit that educated them. Modern economy had displaced them; the state rehabilitated them as members of a new national community. The two tasks were of course complementary. The new national community (nation, if you like) would be keenly desirous of preserving its identity, autonomy and unity (nationalism, if you like). It has nowhere to go, no past to look back to except romantically. It looks up to the state for its protection; or rather it wants a state of its own for guaranteed preservation and protection. To return to the definition; nationalism insists that nation and state be congruent. We now know why.

One question still remains. Since the bulldozer of the modern economy flattened out all the existing cultural-ethnic differences and also the traditional units of the society, how did it create new national units and loyalties? Bulldozers are not known to create solidarities. In other words, since all the medieval cultural nests were destroyed by modern economy, why didn't the world become one cultural unit requiring one single political roof? Why was the world divided among many nations requiring many nation-states? To put it simply, why did we have many nationalisms instead of one world nationalism called internationalism? Indeed it was predicted by 19th century Marxism and liberalism alike. It simply did not happen. Why?

Part of the answer to the question must reckon with the tidal wave nature of industrialization which did not hit the entire world at the same time and in the same manner. There were clearly at least three waves (possibly more) - the early wave to hit Western Europe and North America; a slightly later wave to hit the rest of Europe and Japan and a third wave that hit the remaining part of the globe that later came to be known as the third world. The recipients of the third wave did not achieve the economic and cultural transformation with which the early industrial wave had blessed Europe and North America. They only underwent political domination by the early industrial countries. The different timing of the waves may have been an accident or may have been because some parts of the medieval world were better prepared for a development of this kind than other parts. But a different timing of the arrival of the industrial wave effectively divided the globe into different zones. Secondly, modern economy did not just expect people to be literate; it expected them to be literate in a particular language (English, French, German). It couldn't be the classical language of the high-culture like Latin (it would be difficult to train simple peasants in the classical language) or the folk language of the people (the dialect may not be suitable for a large-scale transmission). The literacy would therefore have to be imparted in new modern languages resembling both the folk and the classical. People, after receiving generic training in a particular language, were obliged to look upon themselves as members of the shared high-culture fostered by *that* particular language. Moreover, the language (and the shared high-culture) also determined the boundary of man's mobility. If he travelled beyond the boundary line of that language and the shared high-culture he was trained in, he would not be useful in the new territory (unless he was smart enough to equip himself with the new cognitive set up). It is for this reason that modern man does not simply think; he thinks as French or German. To extend the argument, modern man does not simply

exist; he exists as French or German. And he can exist with dignity only under a French or German political roof.

The story so far resembles West European brand of nationalism. Would it be applicable to societies where nationalism took the form of protest? Can it, for instance, be applied to the Indian sub-continent? Indian people acquired a modern state in the form of British imperialist state for the entire territory, but refused to live under it. The essence of western European nationalism was that the Modern English or French man could live only under a state that was English or French, respectively. In other words, the essence of western European nationalism was loyalty to the state. Essence of Indian nationalism, on the other hand, was rebellion against the state. However in spite of basic differences, certain commonness can be found between the European and the Indian nationalism. The arrival of the modern economy, however tentative, indirect and incomplete, did create conditions for transformation, albeit incomplete, of herds of cultural communities into a national unit of Indian people. These people insisted on having *their* own political unit. This insistence (nationalism, if you like) gradually created and fostered an Indian nation. This Indian nation was different from its European counterpart in that it was not being sustained by a uniform educational system imparted in a single language (although English did help in uniting the intelligentsia). It was being created not by the uniform condition of economic development, but the uniform condition of economic exploitation by the alien state. This exploitation was modern in that it was systematic, orderly and efficient unlike medieval forms of loot and plunder. Indian nationalism was based on this cognition and on the desire that the national unit of Indian people should have its own political roof.

The bulldozer of industrialization was not operative in India. The pre-existing socio religious identities were therefore not flattened out: some were politically overcome by Indian nationalism; same made their peace with it; some others challenged it; and some actually became successful in obtaining their own political roof for their perceived national unit. The diversity and cultural plurality of Indian nation (The 19th century Indian nationalists rightly called it a nation-in-making) created the space for the possibility of rival or breakaway nationalisms. Thus came into being Pakistan in 1947 based on the notion of all Indian Muslims being a nation. But the territorial spread of Pakistan (with an east and a west wing on either side of India separated by well over 900 miles) created a further space of yet another breakaway nationalism on territorial grounds. Thus came into being Bangladesh as an independent nation-state in 1971.

One scholar, perhaps articulating the extent of scholarly incomprehension on nationalism, likened nationalism to a genie that had somehow been released from the bottle of history some two hundred years ago and since then had been stalking diverse lands and people without anyone being able to control it. Nationalism may not be as unexplainable as a genie but it has certainly pervaded the entire universe including its people and territories. And it shows no signs of disappearing. The neat and nearly complete division of the globe into roughly 200 more or less stable nation-states is no guaranty against a resurgence of nationalism. But nationalism cannot continue to perform old roles. For nearly 150 years between the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and the end of the Second World War in 1945, nationalism was the lone promoter of nation-states. Now that this task seems to be over nationalism must now turn into a destroyer of the existing nation-states through the resurgence of breakaway nationalisms seeking to create new nation-states. This means that societies with cultural, religious or linguistic plurality and an uncertain economic development may still go through all the violence, hatred and brutality that have come to be associated with a surcharged nationalism.

10.4 STAGES OF NATIONALISM: TYPES OF NATIONALISM

The above explanation for the emergence of nationalism must make allowance for two factors. One, nationalism could not have emerged in a day but that its emergence was spread over stages which need to be located at various points in the transformation of the world from the agrarian to the industrial. The section above constructed two ideal types of human societies, the agrarian that was largely nationalism resistant and the industrial that appeared destined to be nationalism prone. The two formations must certainly not have existed in their pure form in most cases. But most agrarian societies would have shown resemblance to the model constructed above. Likewise, the advanced industrial societies should possess the traits listed in our description of the industrial society. The timing, pace and trajectory of the transformation from one to the other would inevitably vary from territory to territory. The basic point is that the different stages in the arrival of nationalism are related to this transformation. Since the very nature of this transformation was different for different societies (and probably nowhere was it so neat and complete), the stages of nationalism also varied. It is, therefore, not possible to construct stages uniformly applicable to all parts of the world. It is still important to keep in mind that nationalism, like other global phenomena (capitalism and colonialism) arrived in this world through stages and not in one single transition.

Two, nationalism arrived in stages, but nowhere did it duplicate itself in shape and form. Although the entire world changed dramatically in the last 200 years from being nationalism free to being completely dominated by nationalism, the nature of nationalism differed dramatically from area to area. So profound is the change that some scholars have begun doubting the very existing of the generic category called nationalism. No two nationalisms are found to be similar, yet all nationalisms do share certain basic traits in common. This indeed is the great paradox of nationalism. To put it differently, **nationalism changes its form in different societies yet retains its essence in all of them**. Nationalism led to the transformation of nations into nation-states, but the process of this transformation varied. The various nation-states of the modern world were created through multiple routes, characterized by different *kinds* of nationalisms. A common myth has been to look at the arrival of nation-states through only two routes - the market and the protest, i.e., nationalism engendered by the market forces or by national movements. In fact the range of nationalist experience is much more varied than that. Two prominent scholars on nationalism, Ernest Gellner and Anthony Smith have created their own typologies of nationalism. Let us briefly look at both at them.

10.4.1 Gellner's Typology

Gellner, writing exclusively about Europe, divided Europe into four zones travelling from west to east and formulated four different types of nationalisms applicable to each zone. These can be seen on the map of Europe given here. Gellner understood nationalism in terms of a marriage between the states and a pervasive high-culture and saw four different patterns of this marriage in the four European zones. Zone 1, located on the western belt consisting of England, France, Portugal and Spain witnessed a rather smooth and easy marriage of the two, because both the ingredients (state and high-culture for the defined territory) were present prior to the arrival of nationalism. In Gellner's metaphor, the couple were already living together in a kind of customary marriage and the strong dynastic states more or less corresponded to cultural linguistic zones anyway, even before the decree of nationalism ordered them to do so. In other words, these

Pattern of Nationalism in Europe

societies fulfilled the nationalist principle before the arrival of nationalism. Only the minor cultural differences *within* these societies needed to be homogenized; peasants and workers had to be educated and transformed into Englishmen, Frenchmen etc. Needless to say this process was smooth and conflict-free and therefore did not require any violence for the fulfilment of the nationalist principle.
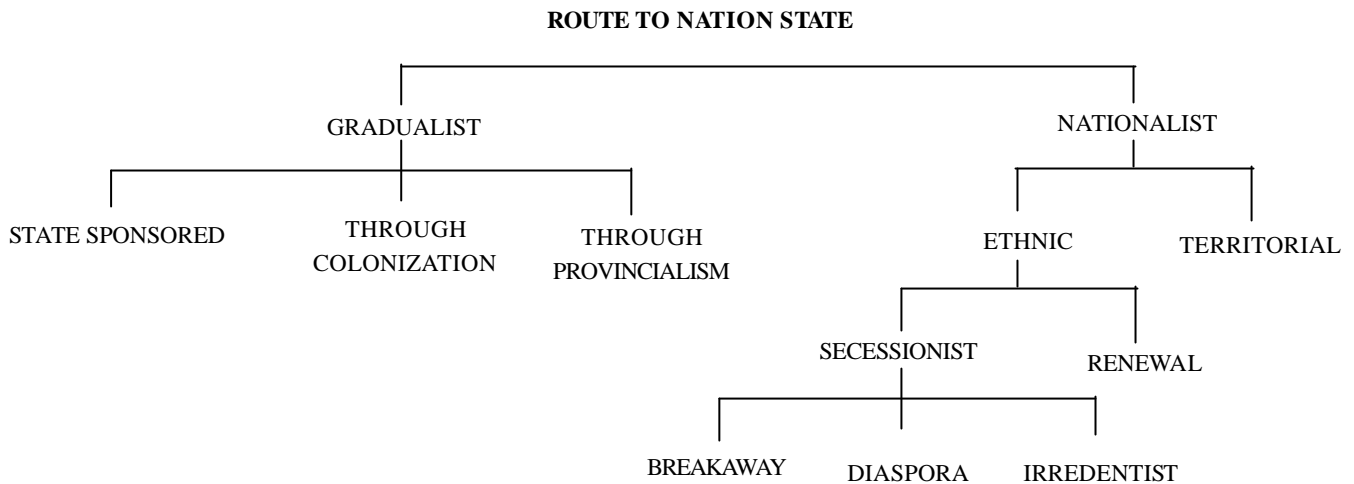
Zone II (present day Italy and Germany), situated on the territory of the erstwhile Holy Roman Empire, was different from zone 1 in the sense that, metaphorically speaking, the bride (high culture for the territory) was ready (among the Italians from the days of early Renaissance and among the Germans since the days of Luther) but there was no groom (state for the exclusive territory). Whereas strong dynastic states had crystallized in zone 1 along the Atlantic coast, this zone was marked by political fragmentation. The age of nationalism, which had found both the elements (state and high culture for the territory) present in zone 1, found only one (high culture) in zone II. So, although no 'cultural engineering' or ethnic cleansing was required here, a state-protector corresponding to the area had to be found or created. It was for this reason the nationalist project here had to be concerned with 'unification'. Here also, as in zone I, nationalism was benign, soft and conflict-free. There were no claims and counter-claims for the territory. Culturally homogeneous territories did not have to be carved out; they already existed. The high-culture also existed; it only needed to reach out to peasants and workers.

It is in zone III (territories east of Germany and west of Russian Empire, areas of present day Poland, Ukrain, Yugoslavia, Greece, Albania, Balkans etc.) that nationalism ceased to be benign and liberal and had to necessarily be nasty, violent and brutal. The horrors, generally associated with nationalism, were inevitable here as neither of the two preconditions (state and high-culture) existed in a neat congruent fashion. Both a national state and a national culture had to be carved out. This process required violence, ethnic cleansing, forced transfer of population in an area marked by a complex pathwork of linguistic and cultural differences. The cultures living at the margins of the two empires (Ottoman and Russian) did not correspond either with a territory or language or state. Here, in order to meet and fulfil the nationalist imperative (passion for nationalism was quite strong in 19th century Europe), plenty of brutal earth-shifting had to be done in order to carve out areas of homogeneous cultures requiring their state Culturally uniform nation-states could only be produced by violence and ethnic cleansing. To quote Gellner, 'In such areas, either people must be persuaded to forego the implementation of the nationalist ideal, or ethnic cleansing must take place. There is no third way.' (*Gellner, Nationalism,* p.56).

Zone IV is the area of Russian Empire on the farthest east in Europe. This zone was unique in some ways. The First World War relegated the empires of the world (Habsburg, Ottoman, Russian) to the dustbin of history. Yet the Russian Empire survived under a new dispensation and the socialist ideology. The marriage of state and culture did not take place here, or at any rate not for a very long time. The nationalist imperative was kept ruthlessly under check by the Tsarist Empire, and was, contained creatively by the supra-nationalist ideology of socialism, by the soviet Empire. In fact many of the national cultures flourished under the USSR; some were even nurtured by the state. There is no evidence that the collapse of the Soviet Russia in 1991 was brought by nationalism, but nationalism certainly benefited by the dismantling of the empire. In other words, the marriage of state and culture *followed* the disintegration without causing it in any way. A high culture in different cultural zones had been in a way nurtured by the socialist state, and the other element (the state) simply arrived upon the collapse of the Soviet Empire

10.4.2 Anthony Smith's Typology

So much for Europe. Is it possibly to create a similar typology for the entire world? Though a neat zonal division of the world (along European lines) is not possible and the pattern would be much more complex, Anthony Smith has attempted some kind of a division of a world into different types of routes that nationalism takes in its journey towards creation of nation-states. It can best be understood through the table given below.

ROUTE TO NATION STATE

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                    ROUTE TO NATION STATE
                    |                          |
               GRADUALIST                  NATIONALIST
          |        |         |              |          |
  STATE    THROUGH    THROUGH           ETHNIC    TERRITORIAL
SPONSORED COLONIZATION PROVINCIALISM    |      |
                                   SECESSIONIST  RENEWAL
                              |       |        |
                          BREAKAWAY DIASPORA IRREDENTIST
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His basic division is simple. The creation of nation-states has taken two routes - **gradualist** and **nationalist.** The gradualist route is generally conflict free and contest free and is one where the initiative was taken by the state to create conditions for the spread of nationalism. Nation-states were thus formed either by direct **state sponsored patriotism** (like zone I of Gellner) or were the result of **colonization** (Australia and Canada: they did not have to fight for independence) or **provincialism** where cultures/ states just ceded from the imperial power, were granted independence and were on their way towards becoming nation-states. One feature of the gradualist route is that it was marked by the absence of conflict, violence, contesting claims over nationhood or any national movement. The other, nationalist route is characterized by rupture, conflict, violence and earth-moving. Smith divides this rupture-ridden route into two sub-routes - those of **ethnic nationalism** and **territorial nationalism.** These terms are self-evident and their meanings clear. The ethnic sub-route is divided into two lanes - based on **renewal** and **secession.** Renewal is based on the renewal or the revival of a declining ethnic identity like Persia in the 1890s. The secessionist lane could be further divided into three by-lanes of **breakaway, diaspora** and **irredentist** nationalism. The breakaway group (either from empires or multi-national states) sought to sever a bond through cessation like Italians and Czecs from the Habsburg Empire; Arabs, Armenians and Serbs from the Ottoman Empire; and Poles and Ukrainians from the Tsarist Russian Empire. Bangladesh that broke away from Pakistan in 1991 could also come in the same category. The diaspora nationalism is best represented by the Jews. Completely devoid of a state, territory of their own, or even a high-culture till the mid-19th century, Jews lived for nearly two centuries like perpetual minorities on other people's lands. They were eventually constituted into a nation-state through struggle, other powers' diplomacy, ethnic cleansing (done to them by others), earth moving and also by statistical probability of being on the right side in the great world war. Had the war gone the other way, we can be sure that Israel would not have been formed into a nation-state in 1950. The irredentist nationalism normally followed a successful national movement. If the new state did not include all the members of the ethnic group (this mildly violates the nationalist principle) who lived on the adjacent land under a different polity, they would

have to be redeemed and the land on which they lived, annexed. This happened in Balkan nationalism among Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians and in Germany of Somalia today.

Territorial nationalism occurred when a heterogeneous population was coercively united by a colonial power. The boundary of the territory and the centralized administration of the colonial power formed the focus of the nation to be. On taking over power (invariably through a national movement) the nationalists try to integrate the culturally heterogeneous population (tribes, various other cultural groups and people living on the margin), who had neither shared history nor common origin except colonial subjugation. This happened for instance in Tanzania and Argentina. In certain instances (Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, Kenya, Nigeria) there were national movements that defined their aims in terms of wider territorial units, yet were clearly spearheaded by members of one dominant ethnic group. Later their domination was challenged by other smaller groups, creating space for a breakaway nationalism.

10.5 NATIONALISM IN SOUTH ASIA

The picture sketched above is a somewhat simplified version of the various routes, lanes and bye-lanes which nationalism took in order to change and rearrange the political boundaries inside the world. The range of nationalists' experience is vast. There might still be pockets that are left uncovered. What about India? Where does the sub-continent fit? It is often not realized that although the sub-continent experienced one major nationalism, it was not the only one. India experienced four different kinds of nationalisms, and it is just as well to briefly get acquainted with it. The major Indian nationalism was territorial, anti-colonial and led to the creation of a nation-state through a national movement. Its territorial boundaries were defined partly by the colonial conquest and administration and partly by the strong dynastic states that rules the territory from time to time (Maurya, Gupta and Mughal Empires). It acquired not only one but three distinct high-cultures during the colonial period. There was an Islamic high-culture inherited from the Mughal times and sustained by Urdu that flourished in the pockets of Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. There was of course a high Brahmanic culture that had thrived in the past sometimes with official protection and sometimes despite it. Along with these a new high-culture, engendered by English language and sustained by modern education, also developed initially in the three Presidencies (Madras, Bengal and Bombay), and later in the provinces of U.P. and Punjab. Although the dividing lines along these cultures were always fuzzy and never very sharp, the national movement that developed from the late 19th century onwards had a difficult time trying to reconcile them. It was partly for these constraints that Indian National movement remained, throughout its life, linguistically and culturally remarkably plural. Since cultural unity is the hallmark of all nationalist projects, Indian national movement evolved the unique slogan of 'unity in diversity' and remained committed to both. Paradoxically the plural and non-coercive elements of the Indian national movement became its greatest strength and weakness at the same time. The focus on cultural and linguistic plurality enabled the movement to maximize mobilization, but it also rendered Indian nationalism somewhat handicapped when confronted with a rival nationalism. So, Indian nationalism inherited an administrative unity from the alien rulers, strove to create a political unity and generally refrained from imposing a cultural and linguistic unity. When the new nation-state took over after the successful culmination of the national movement in 1947, it went about its task of creating cultural compositeness and economic integration.

The second major nationalism was a rival to Indian nationalism. This led to the creation of Pakistan. Pakistani nationalism was based on the famous two-nation theory, which implied that Indian Muslims were not a part of an Indian nation but were a nation in

themselves. The claim that Muslims in India were a nation was nothing short of an invented tradition. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the leader of this nationalism, declared that Indian Muslims *always* existed as a nation, but they did not realize this till the early decades of the 20th century! He launched a movement that led to the creation of an independent nation-state of Pakistan. This nationalism, compared to its Indian counterpart, suffered from two disadvantages and enjoyed two distinct advantages. The disadvantages were that there was no given territory and no state for that territory. A territory had to be carved out and a state had to be fought for. Some of the nastiness of this nationalism was thus inherent in this situation. The advantages that it enjoyed vis-à-vis its Indian counterpart were that it was based on a religious identity and that it did not have to fight the state. Religious unity proved easier to achieve and in a short span of time (the actual time taken between the demand for a state and creation of a state was seven years from 1940 to 1947!) The need for fighting the alien state through a national movement was dispensed with, given the fact that Indian nationalism was busy doing just that. All Pakistani nationalism had to do was to ask for its share when the battle for Indian independence intensified.

Pakistani nationalism was strangely based on religious unity and territorial disunity. The east and the west wing of the new nation-state were separated from each other by over 900 miles. The new state took religious unity for granted and imposed linguistic and cultural unity without being able to achieve economic parity. The result was the emergence of a breakaway nationalism inn 1971 that was territorial even though religion united rather than divided the two sides. The struggle for the creation of yet another nation-state was brief. The new state of Bangladesh fulfilled the nationalist principle but remained vulnerable to irredentist possibilities because of the neighbouring area (West Bengal, now a part of India and originally part of a full province along with the new nation-state of Bangladesh). The two areas, West Bengal and Bangladesh have shared history and other similarities. Though irredentism has not occurred here, there has been a transfer of population from Bangladesh to India at an alarmingly high rate.

The fourth category is that of aspirant nationalism - forces for Khalistan in Punjab, Azad Kashmir in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the Tamil demand for a separate state in Sri Lanka. These and probably more may be called potential nationalisms. If successful in some distant future, and that is yet to be seen, these would be called breakaway nationalisms. The experience of potential nationalisms (or nationalisms which are not likely to ever culminate in the formation of new nation-states) is not specific to India but is a world phenomenon. The world today is replete with potential nationalisms to such an extent that by one estimate, for every single actual nation, there are at least ten potential ones. These stories have generally not been told. It may be generally difficult to anticipate a potential nationalism. It would be interesting to narrate the story of failed or abortive or embryonic nationalisms; in other words the story of dogs that did not bark, to use the famous phrase of Sherlock Holmes.

10.6 SUMMARY

In this unit you have seen how nations and nationalisms have evolved through a complex historical process in modern times. While there has been a large consensus among historians about their recent origins (despite objections from the primordialists), there is considerable confusion over different stages and types of nationalism. In this sense the dominant models of European nationalism have met with a challenge from the likes of colonial nationalism as in the case of India. It is in this sense that we talk of not just one nationalism, but, many nationalisms. At the same time, it is a phenomenon which is part of an ongoing process and which will continue to define our day to day lives for years to come.

10.7   EXERCISES

1)   What is a nation? Discuss with an overview of different definitions.

2)   Is nationalism the ultimate product of modernization? Discuss with reference to Gellner and Smith debate.

3)   Discuss different models of nationalism.

SUGGESTED READINGS FOR THIS BLOCK

Gopal Balakrishnan, (ed.), *Mapping the Nation*, London, 1996.

Eric Hobsbawn, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780 : Programme, Myth, Reality,* Cambridge, 1990.

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Gordon Craig, Germany 1866-1945, *Clarendon Press,* Oxford 1978

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* London, 1983.

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UNIT 11   COMMERCIAL CAPITALISM

Structure

11.1   INTRODUCTION

In order to clearly understand the concept of commercial capitalism in all its aspects, it is imperative to first fully conceive what is meant by capitalism (you will read more about capitalism in Unit 12), the different stages that it passed through and the exact stage that is referred to as commercial capitalism. The International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences refers to capitalism as the economic and political system that in its industrial or full form first developed in England in the late 18th century. Thereafter, it spread over Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Together with its colonial manifestations, it came to dominate the world in the 19th century.

Dictionary of Social Sciences explained capitalism as denoting an economic system in which the greater proportion of economic life, particularly ownership of and investment in production goods, is carried on under private (i.e. non-governmental) auspices through the process of economic competition with an avowed incentive of profit. It has been pointed out that the wealth amassed by capitalism differs in quality as well as quantity from that accumulated in pre-capitalist societies. For example, many ancient kingdoms, such as Egypt, displayed remarkable qualities to gather a surplus of production above that needed for the maintenance of the existing level of material life, applying the surplus to the creation of massive religious or public monuments, military or luxury consumption. What is characteristic of these forms of wealth is that their desirable attributes lay in the specific use-values— war, worship, adornment—to which their physical embodiments directly gave rise. By way of decisive contrast, the wealth amassed under capitalism is valued not for its specific use-values but for its generalized exchange-value. Wealth under capitalism is typically accumulated as commodities or objects produced for sale rather than for direct use by its owners.

Historians such as Werner Sombart (1915), Max Weber (1922) and R.H. Tawney (1926), who were concerned to relate change in economic organizations to shifts in religious and ethical attitudes, found the essence of capitalism in the acquisitive spirit

of profit-making enterprise. The spirit of economic activity under capitalism is acquisition, and more specifically, acquisition in terms of money. Acquisition, which is quantitatively and qualitatively absolute, degenerates eventually into unscrupulousness and ruthlessness. It has been pointed out that rise of capitalism is associated with three main features: (1) the growth of the capitalist spirit i.e. the desire for profits, (2) the accumulation of capital, and (3) the development of capitalist techniques. Until the 12th and 13th centuries methods of business were extremely simple. Most trade was local, some of it was barter. During this era in which ideas were hostile to profit, in which techniques of trade were primitive, the chance of emergence of capitalism was slight. Until about 1200 the whole medieval economy can be called non-capitalistic. As late as 1500, capitalism was still in its nascent stage.

It is in this context that this unit tries to analyze the meaning and role of commercial capitalism in the late medieval period. The attempt will also be made to look into those historical processes which led to the coming of this phenomenon and, which, in turn subsequently led to the rise of industrial capitalism (see Unit 12). Since commercial capitalism too, like all other phases, had varying impact in different countries, a short discussion about its specific development in different European countries will be undertaken.

11.2 MEANING OF COMMERCIAL CAPITALISM

The question now is: what is then commercial capitalism and what is its period? Marxist historians have identified a series of stages in the evolution of capitalism— for example, merchant or commercial capitalism, agrarian capitalism, industrial capitalism and state capitalism— and much of the debate on origin and progress has hinged on differing views of the significance, timing and characteristics of each stage. The first stage, i.e. mercantile or commercial capitalism provided the initial thrust and impetus for capitalism in the sense that merchants started becoming entrepreneurs to cater to market demands by employing wage labourers as well as by exploiting the existing craft guilds. Commercial Capitalism metamorphosed into industrial capitalism, which again, according to Marxist economists, gave way to socialism. Because industrial capitalism was inseparably connected with problems of the working class, this invariably gave rise to different currents of socialist thoughts.

Side by side with commercial capitalism sprang what is called agrarian capitalism (capital accumulated out of agricultural surplus) that characterized Europe of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Commercial Capitalism and agrarian capitalism were, therefore, two forms of capitalism that overlapped with each other, the difference between them being that one emerged out of commercial surplus while the other out of agricultural surplus. Agrarian capitalism sometimes metamorphosed fully into commercial capitalism i.e. invested the entire surplus accumulated from agriculture into commerce and sometimes transformed directly into industrial capitalism by investing in industrial development alone. Sometimes capital was accumulated from both these sources, i.e. commerce and agriculture, and paved the path for the rise of industrial capitalism. Agrarian capitalism was emphasized by Immanuel Wallerstein who adopted a world-economy perspective, and considered its origin to be rooted in the agrarian capitalism. Only transcending the national horizon, by establishing a world trade and commercial network, could fulfil the requirements of capitalism, according to Wallerstein. In this world economy, there existed certain zones— like the periphery, the semi-periphery and the core— where international and local commerce were concentrated in the hands of a powerful bourgeoisie. The strong

states imposed unequal exchange upon the weak states. Therefore, the strong states or the core dominated the entire world economy in agrarian capitalism as well as industrial capitalism later. Tribe also emphasized agrarian capitalism which was the essence of a national economy where production is separated from consumption, and is made a source of profit after being utilized in profit-making enterprises. Agricultural revolution, therefore, played a very significant role in the growth of capitalism by feeding a growing population and by creating a surplus to meet the demand for industrial raw materials.

Reference is sometimes made to a fourth form—state capitalism—defined by Lenin as a system under which state takes over and exploits means of production in the interest of the class which controls the state; but the phrase, 'state capitalism', is also used to describe any system of state collectivization, without reference to its use for the benefit of any particular class.

Still there is a fifth form in which there is an increased element of state intervention either in terms of welfare programmes or lessening the impact of business cycle. This is welfare capitalism or protected capitalism.

In all these stages of capitalism, identified by the Marxist historians, therefore, the first stage was merchant capitalism or commercial capitalism. Now, what is it? Precisely, capital accumulation out of the profits of merchants to be invested in various economic activities, was what is called commercial capitalism. It took different forms in different stages. For example, it existed in some of its elements in ancient Egypt (as mentioned earlier) and in ancient Rome. In Babylonia, in the city-states of classical Greece, in Phoenicia, in Carthage, in the Hellenistic states of the Mediterranean littoral, and in the Roman Empire, also during different stages Commercial Capitalism developed. There was, however, little uniformity of economic and political institutions in these variant forms of commercial capitalism or merchant capitalism, which at this time was in a very nascent stage. Even where merchant capitalism existed in the ancient world, large applications of improved technology to goods production did not occur. In short, therefore, the ancient times were the age of capitalist accumulation, rather than capitalist production.

In the middle ages, however, the form assumed by commercial capitalism was entirely different. It was during this time that it developed in the true sense. In England, and even more emphatically in Holland, the birth of capitalism can be dated from the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Holland's supremacy in international trade, associated with its urgent need to import grain and timber (and hence to export manufactures) enabled Amsterdam to corner the Baltic trade and to displace Venice as the commercial and financial centre of Europe. The capital thus amassed was available to fund the famous chartered companies (Dutch East India Company 1602; West India Company 1621). It also provided the circulating capital for merchants engaged in the 'putting-out system' whereby they supplied raw materials to domestic handicrafts workers and marketed the product. This stage of capitalism based upon riches amassed from commerce is known as commercial capitalism. An important point to notice in connection with most of these early capitalisms, is the combination of commercial and financial activities, of trade and banking. The type of capitalism that was growing up in Europe in the Middle Ages and was well established by 1500 was predominantly of this sort. Here lay the distinction between commercial capitalism of the ancient and Middle Ages. For the most part, the production of goods was still carried on in a small way, on the basis of handicraft work. Under the 'putting out' system, or Verlagssystem, (as it was called in Holland), a wealthy merchant (capitalist) buys the raw material, pays a variety of labourers to work it up into a finished product at home or in shops, and sells the finished product. The

characteristics that distinguished it from the ordinary handicraft system were that it was done on a large scale by hired labour, that the worker did not own the materials on which he worked and frequently not even his tools, and that one man controlled the whole process from start to finish. It was the merchants who made the crucial decision about the style, markets and volume of production, and employed or turned out the craftsmen at will. The whole industry became merchant-dominated and craftsmen became mere wage earners. It was also known as the domestic system as the work was done in the homes of individual workers instead of in the shop of master craftsman.

However, as has been pointed out, much before Holland or England, the so-called domestic or putting-out system was in full swing in Florence and northern Italy by the 13th and 14th centuries. The Arte della Lana or cloth manufacturer's guild of Florence in the 14th century may serve as an example of the putting-out system. Its members bought wool abroad, brought it to Florence and had it made into finished cloth by carders, spinners, weavers, fullers and dyers who were paid wages. The product then was sent abroad for sale. Even in Florence or Bruges or Ghent, industrial capitalism was never developed in the modern sense. There was nothing truly comparable to the factory system of the 19th century. Predominantly, medieval capitalism was commercial and financial.

It can therefore be said that a limited form of 'early' or commercial capitalism, already known in the ancient world, had developed in Italy as early as the thirteenth century and later in the Low Countries. This commercial form developed in England in the 16th century and began to change into industrial capitalism while elements of feudalism and the guild system still existed. In short, therefore, the early stage of capitalism, primarily founded upon commerce is called commercial capitalism, which in course of time metamorphosed into industrial capitalism. Capitalism, therefore, did exist in ancient world in the form of commerce as well as guild system and merchant dominated putting-out system in the medieval world.

11.3   THE PERIOD OF COMMERCIAL CAPITALISM

What then can be said to be roughly the date for commercial capitalism? Marx placed the beginnings of the industrial era in the 16th century but admitted that 'the first attempts of capitalist production' (not merely capital accumulation, it should be noted) appeared precociously in the Italian city-states in the Middle Ages. Any emerging organism, even if it is still far from having developed all its final characteristics, bears within it the potential for such development before it can be assigned a name. The roots of capitalism were, therefore, embedded, with all potentials of modern industrial capitalism in the middle ages. The main reason behind this lay in the fact that although making of profit or heaping up of wealth was generally condemned, the development of certain circumstances left an indelible impact on the existing situation and transformed the entire process of economic activities. Between 1100 and 1300, new gold and silver mines were opened up in Bohemia, Transylvania and the Carpathians. Furthermore, as various rulers became stronger they were able to coin more and better money. Florence began to issue gold coins called florins, in 1252. Venice began the coinage of similar pieces, called ducats in 1284. In the same century France began to issue gold coins and improved silver ones. The increase in the number of coins permitted an increase in the volume of business transacted by money. The middle ages were gradually developing what is called a money economy.

According to scholars, while every economic system appears first within the framework of another, there are some periods during which economic processes reveal in a comparatively pure form the features of a single economic system. These are the periods of full development of the system; until they are reached, the system is going through its early period, which is also the late period of the disappearing or retreating economic system. Applying to capitalism this division into epochs, we may distinguish the periods of early capitalism, full capitalism (Hochkapitalismus) and late capitalism. In the period of early capitalism, which lasted from the 13th century to the middle of the 18th century, economic agents, i.e. the entrepreneurs and the workers operated within the old feudal framework and retained all the features of their handicraft origin and pre- capitalist mentality; the output of factories and manufactories was still not very significant. In the period of full capitalism, which closed with the outbreak of the World War, the scope of economic activity was expanded enormously, and scientific and technological application was also remarkably broadened. Intensified commercialization of economic life and debasement of all economic processes into purely commercial transactions were the typical characteristic features of this period. The period of late capitalism can be best characterized by describing the changes which capitalism has been undergoing since the World War I.

Maurice Dobb admits that systems are never in reality to be found in their pure form and in any period of history and elements characteristic both of preceding and of succeeding periods are to be found, sometimes mingled in extraordinary complexity. However, he refuses to look upon the transitional period prior to the 'putting out system', when the craftsmen had started losing their independence and were being subordinated to merchants, as early capitalism. As he says, '…we cannot date the dawn of capitalism from the first signs of the appearance of large-scale trading and of a merchant class, and we cannot speak of a special period of 'Merchant Capitalism, as many have done.' According to him, the opening phase of capitalism must be dated in England, not in 12th century as Henry Pirenne has done, nor in the 14th century with its urban trade and guild handicrafts as others have done, but in the latter half of 16th and early 17th century when capital began to flow into production on a considerable scale and such relationships as that between the capitalist and hired wage-earners or that between domestic handicraftsmen and merchant capitalist in the putting-out system emerged.

From 1100 on, real accumulation of wealth were made, frequently in the first instance in the form of coin, which might later be invested in land, buildings, or ships. In some instances these accumulations sprang from the existence of an agricultural surplus. The profits of a rising commerce and the new mines enabled some merchants to heap up wealth. Often a man gathered wealth from one or two of these sources at once. Indeed, few medieval accumulations of money had a single, simple origin. However, one thing is very noteworthy. 'Surplus value' or surplus above subsistence existed both in feudal society and in the Egypt of the Pharaohs, but in neither case was bourgeois class its recipient. But under Commercial Capitalism capital accumulation took place out of the profits of merchants, quite independent of the employment of workers for wages. This is the point which distinguished commercial capitalism from other forms of capitalism. The ancient period, therefore, was the age more of commercial accumulation rather than of commercial capitalism.

Roughly speaking, therefore, the entire period from 13th to 18th century, till the coming of industrial capitalism, can be designated to be the period of commercial capitalism, though, following Dobb, it can be said to have attained its climax from 16th century onwards.

11.4 SIGNIFICANT FEATURES OF COMMERCIAL CAPITALISM

From the discussion above, it can be concluded, that the intervening period between feudalism and industrial capitalism can be designated as Commercial Capitalism. As historians have argued, any historical period reveals the characteristics of both the preceding and succeeding periods. In a similar way, Commercial Capitalism also has certain features of feudalism along with capitalistic traits. In fact, according to Sombart, Commercial Capitalism or 'early capitalism' operated within the feudal framework. The feudal features are as follows:

1) Work was generally done in the homes of the producers and not under the factory shades of modern industries.

2) Not full-scale machines, but simple tools were used for manufacturing. And many a times these factors of production were owned by the workers themselves.

3) Since factors of production were limited, manufacturing was also on a much smaller scale as compared to goods produced in factories.

4) One man, i.e., the merchant entrepreneur, controlled the whole process from start to finish.

The capitalist features were as follows:

1) Incentive of profit was the main driving force behind the entire process.

2) With increasing desire for profit, the demand for labour was rising tremendously with the result that the merchant capitalists were hiring more and more workers.

3) Financial advances were provided to the producers by the capitalists. These could be equated to wages under industrial capitalism.

4) The final product as well as the entire profit was appropriated by the capitalist.

11.5 EVOLUTION OF COMMERCIAL CAPITALISM

Any stage of capitalism, commercial or industrial, cannot be understood without some appreciation of the historic changes that bring about its appearance. In this complicated narrative it is important to distinguish three major themes. The first concerns the transfer of organization and control of production from the imperial and aristocratic strata of pre-capitalist states into the hands of mercantile elements. This momentous change originates in the political rubble that followed the fall of the Roman Empire. There merchant traders established trading niches that gradually became centres of strategic influence, so that a merchantdom very much at the mercy of feudal lords in the 9th and 10th centuries became by the 12th and 13th centuries an estate with considerable measure of political and social status. The feudal continued to oversee production of the peasantry on his manorial estate, but the merchant, and his descendant the guild master, were organizer of production in the towns and of finance for the feudal aristocracy itself. The transformation of a merchant estate into a capitalist class capable of imagining itself as a political and not just as an economic force required centuries to complete and was not, in fact, legitimated until the English revolution of the 17th and the French revolution of 18th centuries. The elements making for this revolutionary transformation can only be

alluded to here in passing. Feudal social relationships were replaced by market relationships based upon exchange and this in turn steadily improved the wealth and social importance of the merchant against the aristocracy. The rise of market society, therefore, became the central theme in the overall transfer of power from the aristocracy to the bourgeoisie. Economic organization of production and distribution through purchase and sale dominated the entire scene. The economic revolution from which the factors of production emerged came as an end product of a political convulsion in which the predominance of one social order is replaced by a new one. This is the second theme in the historical evolution of capitalism. It resulted in the separation of a traditionally seamless web of rulership into two realms. One of them involved the exercise of the traditional political tasks of rulership, and the other realm was limited to the production and distribution of goods and services. A third theme calls attention to the cultural changes that accompanied the evolution of capitalism. The presence of an ideological framework based upon profit contrasts sharply with that of pre-capitalist formations.

For a proper understanding of commercial capitalism, it is necessary to take a quick glance at the current of events through which it evolved. It passed through different stages already mentioned before finally reaching the stage of modern capitalism. Feudal society had been established by the eleventh century when the organization of production and extortion of surplus labour were carried out for the benefit of the seigneur, an exalted landlord. Soon, however, the process of its decomposition began. The most remarkable economic feature in the period during 1000-1250 was a steady rise in the wages, rents and profits. However, as Carlo Cipolla has pointed out in his book 'Before the Industrial Revolution', during the thirteenth century, certain bottlenecks had begun to manifest themselves. As demographic pressure steadily increased, there eventually came into play the economic law according to which lands with diminishing marginal returns are taken into cultivation. The laws of supply and demand inevitably pushed rents up and real wages down.

Things changed substantially from the 14th century onwards due mainly to two factors – 1) dreadful plague epidemic of 1348-51 as a result of which 25 million people disappeared in little more than two years, out of 80 million people who lived in Europe before the plague. 2) Wars and revolutions like the Hundred Years War (1337-1453), the War of Roses (1455-85) etc. which further depleted significantly the population of Europe. Between 1347 and 1500, European population declined from 80 to 60 or 70 million. The result was a drastic cutting down of the effective labour force leading to a rise of real wages, and a simultaneous stagnation or reduction of rents and interests. Consequently, the peasant classes improved their economic and social position relative to the class of landed proprietors. The weakening of the power of the merchant guild and formation of numerous craft guilds suggests that craftsmen and workers in the towns were likewise improving their position relative to the groups of the merchant-entrepreneurs. Simultaneously, there was a renewal of commercial fairs, a renaissance of urban life and the formation of a commercial bourgeoisie. It is in this decomposition of the feudal order that the formation of mercantile capitalism or commercial capitalism took root.

Over a period of several centuries the 'long journey' toward capitalism continued in this direction: the extension of trade and domination on the world scale, the development of techniques of transportation and production, the introduction of new modes of production and the emergence of new attitude and ideas. From the year 1000, the European economy 'took off' and gradually gained ground. In the course of the 13th century, Venetian merchants proved to be more advanced as far as business techniques were concerned than those used by the Byzantine Empire.

The system of manufacture at this time was widely through guilds, that is, economic and social association of merchants or craftspeople in the same trade or craft to protect the interests of its members. Merchant guilds were often very powerful, controlling trade in a geographic area; the craft guilds (as of goldsmiths, weavers or shoemakers) regulated wages, quality of production, and working conditions for apprentices. The guild system declined from the 16th century because of changing trade and work conditions which led to the emergence of the putting-out system. The composition of international trade between East and West indicated that it was in the 13th and 14th centuries that Europe asserted its superiority. One of the main reasons for European success, at least in the paper and textile industry, was the mechanization of the productive process by the adoption of the water mill. The most spectacular consequences of the supremacy acquired by Europe in the technical field were the geographic explorations and the subsequent economic, political and military expansion of Europe. One of the remarkable results of the geographic explorations was the discovery of the American continent or the New World and the beginnings of migration therein. The lightning overseas expansion of Europe had far-reaching economic consequences. One of the major consequences was the discovery in Mexico and Peru of rich deposits of gold and especially silver. In 1503 precious metals arrived from the Antilles; in 1519 the pillage of the treasure of the Aztecs in Mexico began; in 1534 the pillage of the Incas in Peru started.

In the same period that precious metals became more abundant, prices rose because demand for goods had risen because the abundance of precious metals had made people richer. But due to fall in population, as explained earlier, production could not be expanded proportionately. As a result, the rise in demand resulted in a rise in price. Economic historians have labelled the period 1500 to 1620 as the 'Price Revolution'. It is generally held that between 1500 and 1620, the average level of prices in the various European countries increased by 300 to 400 percent. A confused debate ensued in which a number of causes have been held responsible for causing high prices: farmers, middlemen, exporters, foreigners, merchants, and usurers as well as 'monetary revaluations'. In this debate the analysis of J.Bodin, a jurist from Anjou, is particularly significant. Bodin wrote, 'the principal and virtually sole cause' of the rise in prices was 'the abundance of gold and silver which is greater today than it has been during the four previous centuries…. The principal cause of a rise in prices is always an abundance of that with which the price of goods is measured.' The net result was that the merchant and banking bourgeoisie gathered strength. After Venice and Florence, Antwerp, London, Lyon and Paris developed, with populations surpassing 50,000 even 100,000. Therefore, with banking and merchant bourgeoisies having acquired immense fortunes and national states having mastered the means of conquest and domination, the conditions were ready in the 16th century for the future development of capitalism. It is in this sense that one can date the capitalist era as beginning in the 16th century. However, historians and economists have referred to this early stage as mercantile or commercial capitalism. Significant progress in the field of trade and commerce took place. This unprecedented commercial growth naturally led to immense accumulation of capital and is referred to as the Commercial Revolution. It is undeniable that England, for instance, was able to do what she did in the first stages of the Industrial Revolution partly because this previous Commercial Revolution allowed a considerable accumulation of capital: the profits of overseas trade overflowed into agriculture, mining and manufacture. This situation is what is called Commercial Capitalism.

The Commercial Revolution was a very important economic event in the 16th and 17th centuries when the transformation of the European trade occurred as a result of the overseas expansion and the influx of bullion. In trade the most significant

changes were: growth in international trade, ending of regionalism, trans-oceanic trade, growth of markets, and new kinds of commercial organizations. The development in the international trade and the various means of banking and exchange between 1550 and 1700, especially in Holland and England, can be termed as the Commercial Revolution. It had certain outstanding characteristic features. One of them was immense capital accumulation and intensification of Commercial Capitalism as we have already noted. Another was the growth of banking. As we have discussed earlier, banking was very limited in the Middle Ages due to moral disapproval and was carried on mostly by the Jews. By the 15th century, however, the banking business had spread to southern Germany and France. The leading firm in the north was that of Fuggers of Augsburg. The first in order of importance was the Bank of Sweden (1657), but the most important one— the Bank of England — was founded in 1694. Another significant feature of Commercial Revolution was the replacement of craft guilds by the springing of industries like mining, smelting and woollen industry. The most typical form of industrial production in the period of the Commercial Revolution was the domestic system or the 'putting out system' which developed in the woollen industry. Although the scale of production was insignificant, the organization was basically capitalist. Formation of regulated companies, i.e. an association of merchants grouped together for a common venture, was another feature of the Commercial Revolution. Usually the purpose of the combination was to maintain a monopoly of trade in some part of the world. In the 17th century this was replaced by the joint-stock company. The remaining feature of the Commercial Revolution that needs to be considered was the growth of a more efficient money economy. A standard system of money was adopted by every important state to be used for all transactions within its borders. The creation of national currencies was therefore really an important achievement of the Commercial Revolution.

By the end of the 15th century, in Western Europe, the Mediterranean was the most developed area. But by the end of the 16th century, this area declined and the economic balance of Europe shifted to the Northwest area, on the Atlantic coast. There were changes in the type of commerce with the shift and growth of trade. In the 16th century, the flow of spices from the East and the bullion from the West were important. But gradually new overseas products became staples of consumption in Europe and grew in commercial importance—indigo from the East, porcelain from China, cocoa from America, tea and coffee from the Far East and the Near East, etc. A considerable portion of the bullion from America went to India and the East. The need for slaves transplanted black population to America. European goods were also exported to distant land, and this served as a boost to industries. Refining of sugar and preparation of tobacco were new industries. This acted as a great impulse to the growth of capitalism from overseas expansion. That is why till the end of the 17th century, capitalism can be called commercial capitalism, as it was capital dominated by commercial activity. Maritime dominance also passed from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic shipping. This was due to the development of cheaper forms of sea transport by the Dutch and the English.

The development, therefore, can be summed up briefly. In the centuries following the 12th, with the rise of commerce and business, there grew up a class of merchants, traders and financiers who sought profit and looked upon usury as a normal part of their business life. Though, of course usury was common among the Jews since the 11th century because they were the real moneylenders. The prohibitions against usury issued by the church could mean nothing to them since they were not Christians. As the merchant capitalists became more and more important and as the church became involved in the financial and business mechanism of the times, the ideas of the church and the public readjusted themselves towards the acceptance of the

capitalist spirit. The earlier method of manufacture on a large scale was through guilds in towns. The guilds were of significance in medieval economic development because of their deliberate policy of promoting sectional interests. A decisive change took place in Western Europe, when the intermediary, the merchant capitalist, as a result of the 'putting out' system, or Verlagssystem, separated the producer from the final consumer. All these developments since the 13th century constituted different stages of Commercial Capitalism or merchant capitalism. These capitalist tendencies remained confined, however, to commercial activities and within the feudal framework. The process was not complete by 1500, since more than a century later usury was still being denounced by churchmen, rulers and publicists.

11.6 ROLE OF MERCANTILISM

Mercantilism, a term coined by Adam Smith, played a very important role in the evolution of Commercial Capitalism. Maurice Dobb refers to it as 'a system of state regulated exploitation through trade—essentially the economic policy of an age of primitive accumulation.' In short, mercantilism can be said to be a state controlled economic policy which aimed at regulating the trade and commerce of the nation, as well as its factories and manufactures with the primary purpose of ultimately to concentrate and wield political power by building fleets, equipping army etc. Although mercantilism varied from country to country, it had certain common characteristic features like bullionism, paternalism, imperialism, economic nationalism etc. Bullionism, which meant that the prosperity of a nation was determined by the quantity of precious metals within its borders, became an essential element of mercantilism ever since precious metals had started flowing in from America to the old world.

Generally speaking, the period between 16th and 18th centuries is designated as the period of mercantilism, as great economic growth, an increase in the use of money, a sharp rise in the volume of distance trade, acquisition of more and more colonies etc. reached its zenith during this period. Mercantilism is closely interlinked with Commercial Capitalism as growth of the latter attracted the attention of the state and although the activities of the merchants were sometimes obstructed and hampered by the policy of mercantilism and therefore the merchants were forced to oppose mercantilist policies on those occasions, on the whole the merchants were positively benefited by the state policies like creating markets by acquiring colonies and thereby expanding exports by building fleets, by providing protection against foreign goods by raising the tariff, by maintaining banks, by giving subsidies etc. Jean Baptiste Colbert, the French chief minister under Louis XIV, for example, gave a tremendous boost to commercial capitalism by adopting a vigorous mercantile policy like prohibition of export of money, levying high tariff on foreign manufactures, and giving bounties to encourage French shipping. He also fostered imperialism hoping to increase a favourable balance of trade. On the other hand, as Christopher Hill argues, the mercantilism of the Tudor monarchs in England was positively pro-guild and restrictive towards the putting-out system, because with a weak army and bureaucracy it was easier for them to tax the urban guilds more effectively than the merchant-capitalists of the putting-out system located mostly far away in the countryside. A series of Acts, starting with the 1533 Statute, passed by the Tudors in an effort to restrict them demonstrates the fact. The Weavers' Act forbidding the clothiers to own more than one loom and two weavers and the Enclosure Commission set up in 1548 to look into the enclosures slowed down the growth of the putting-out system in England. The situation improved with coming of the Stuarts and Commercial Capitalism under the putting-out system flourished.

11.7   ROLE OF TRADE

As the name indicates, and as is clear from above discussions, Commercial Capitalism emerged primarily out of profits of trade and commerce. The question now is what was the nature of this trade? The noted French historian Fernand Braudel thinks it to be long- distance trade. In his view, long-distance trade undoubtedly played a leading role in the genesis of merchant capitalism and was for a long time its backbone. The views of modern historians, however, are hostile to it in many ways. Jacques Heers, for example, writing about the Mediterranean in the 15th century, insists that there were a large number of short-range trades, instead of long-distance trade, the greatest traffic being in grain, wood and salt. Peter Mathias has also established with statistics that England's foreign trade on the eve of the Industrial Revolution was considerably smaller than her domestic trade. It has been argued that inter-regional trade within Europe was a hundred times greater in the 16th century than the exchange between Europe and the New World. Braudel says that even though the volume of local trade might have been much greater and therefore the trade in the Mediterranean was in a position of minority, the value of minority in history should not be overlooked, though, he admits, today's historiography is concerned primarily with the experience of majority, of the millions forgotten by previous schools of history. In the first place, Braudel continues, long-distance trade, known to German historians as Ferhandel, created groups of Fernhandler – import-export merchants, who were always a category apart. They introduced themselves into the circuit between the artisan and his distant raw materials – wool, silk, cotton. They also interposed themselves between the finished product and its marketing in distant places. The products of far-off lands also found their way into the hands of the import-export merchant like silk from China and Persia, pepper from India, cinnamon from Ceylon etc. The risks of long-distance trade were great, but so were its profits. According to Braudel, the long list of long-distance trade shows that distance alone could create ordinary everyday conditions for profiteering.

11.8   TRANSITION FROM FEUDALISM TO CAPITALISM

The question now logically arises that what precisely was the role of commercial activities and capital accumulated thereby in the transition from feudal mode of production to industrial mode of production. Because by now we know that commercial capitalism existed within the framework of feudalism since the Middle Ages.

The significance of commercial capitalism and its role in the transition becomes all the more striking in the transition debate, which ensued among scholars and historians. Two stages of the debate can be identified. 1) The Dobb-Sweezy controversy (mentioned above), turned mainly on what would be the correct Marxist explanation of the transition from feudalism to capitalism in the light of European experience. 2) The second stage of the debate is less bound by such limitations. Robert Brenner's critiques of the 'demographic model', supported by Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie of the Annales School, Michael Postan and Habakuk of the Liberal School and Marxist Guy Bois, the 'commercialization model' of Pirenne, Sweezy, 'the falling rent rate' of Perry Anderson, Rodney Hilton and 'World System' model of Immanuel Wallerstein, are not only rich in fresh insights and developments of Marxist analysis, but also utilize a mass of new and meaningful evidence on agrarian history, industrial and commercial evolution and demographic changes. The debate was mainly about

two points – whether the exchange relations or external trade demolished the feudal mode of production; or whether inner contradictions like exploitation of the peasant by the nobility and unproductive use of economic surplus like expenditure on war and luxury were responsible for the break-down of feudalism.

There was a long time-gap between the decline of feudalism in Western Europe during the 14th century and the beginning of the capitalist period in the second half of the 16th century at the earliest. Sweezy does not agree with Dobb's characterization of the intervening period as feudal. Rather he considers it as a traditional form in which the predominant elements were neither feudal nor capitalist. According to Dobb, feudalism had its own dynamic phase (10th- 12th centuries) of expanding production based on the extension of cultivation, some technical improvements and extraction of surplus and its use in unproductive ways. Dobb indicated how the economic effects of trade and merchant capital were themselves shaped by feudal class relations and rather reinforced feudal obligations. Further, merchant or commercial capital is not directly involved in production and hence its source of profit lies in the ability to turn the terms and conditions of trade against petty producers in agriculture and industry.

Dobb made the following points regarding the emergence of capitalism: i) supersession of serfdom by contractual relations or rise of peasant property. This was the result of the inner contradictions in the feudal relations between the nobility and the peasantry. The very misery of the peasantry created the danger of depopulation of manors. The effects of the nobility's expenditure on unproductive activities like war were equally disastrous. Overexploitation of labour, unproductive use of economic surplus and exhaustion of power and opportunities to increase lord's revenue made the feudal mode increasingly untenable. ii) Dobb attached considerable importance to the growth of capitalist elements from the ranks of direct producers released from feudal constraints and engaged in the petty mode of production. iii) Dobb sees the English Revolution of 1640 as one in which artisans and yeomen seized political power from landlords and merchants.

Le Roy Ladurie stressed the importance of the demographic model implying that the long-term trends of the feudal economy conformed to the Malthusian sequence of population growth outstripping food supply and then demographic decline due to calamities like famine, starvation etc. A population upswing would then be associated with falling wages, rising food prices and rising rents. According to Le Roy Ladurie, there was a distinct upward surge of population during the 16th century, followed by a sharp decline in the 17th century. Abundance of labour in the 16th century due to population growth gave a boost to feudalism. Conversely, feudalism received a blow in the 17th century with a sharp fall in population. This was, in the view of Ladurie, the decisive role of the demographic factor in shaping the nature and sequence of transition.

Brenner criticizes both the demographic model as well as the trade-centred approach. The main thrust of Brenner's argument placed the development of class structure and state power and its effects at the centre of analysis. According to Brenner, the two fundamental problems regarding the transition related to : i) the decline versus persistence of serfdom and its effects, and ii) the emergence and predominance of secure small peasant property versus the rise of landlord-large tenant farmer relations on the land. The class-structure, according to Brenner, had three layers— the state or the monarchy at the top, the gentry and feudal landlords at the middle and the peasants and serfs at the lowest base. In the 14th and 15th centuries the perpetual class conflict between the second and third social groups resulted in the triumph of the peasantry and serfdom came to an end. In England, however, since the monarchy

was dependent on the gentry for taxes, it could not protect the peasantry against the oppression of the gentry and the feudal lords. As a result, the peasantry were ultimately again suppressed by feudalism, leading to their deprivation of land which were subsequently enclosed by the landlords. The successful enclosure movement in England laid the foundations of agrarian capitalism in the 16th century and this facilitated the process of her early industrialization. In France, however, the monarchy was directly dependent upon the peasants for taxes. So the landlords could not enclose the lands successfully as the peasants resisted the move vehemently and the monarchy could not afford to impose it upon them against their will. As a result, agrarian capitalism could not develop in France. It was all the more delayed in Eastern Europe where monarchy was extremely weak, feudal lords were powerful and consequently feudalism continued in its strongest form.

Perry Anderson, a Marxist, stressed like Dobb, Hilton and Brenner that changes in social relations must precede development of productive forces. The nobility was unable to maintain serfdom after the feudal crisis because the towns gave peasants a shelter when they fled from their masters. In this manner, the political contradictions were first heightened and then resolved by its disintegration. But unlike them, he rejected the view that class struggle plays a decisive role in the germination as well as in the resolution of social crisis. Like Sweezy and Wallerstein, on the other hand, Anderson stressed the importance of towns and international trade to the process of capitalist development. His theory is also known as 'eclectic Marxism.'

On the other hand, prominent scholars like Sweezy, Wallerstein, Perry Anderson recognized commerce and the capital accumulated thereby to be the most crucial link between the decline of feudalism and the rise of capitalism. Capitalist manufactories (i.e. large handicrafts employing wage labour) which competed with and ousted the old craft guilds, were the crucial link – the form in which the metamorphosis of merchant capital into industrial capital was achieved.

Paul Sweezy saw the Verlagssystem or the 'putting out system', in which large merchants of the town employed craftsmen scattered in domestic workshops in the villages or suburbs as the most significant point from which process of transition to the matured factory system of the Industrial Revolution started. Sweezy's view that merchant capital, which developed and blossomed within the construct of the feudal society, evolved directly into industrial capital, has, however, been considered by others as misconception in the sense that only if merchant capital was invested in industrial production, could it be responsible for the transition to capitalism.

A little elaboration of the point made above is essential. In other words, it is to be clarified what is the distinction between investment in commercial production and that in industrial production and why, therefore, the latter only could put an end to feudalism and simultaneously paved the path for the rise of industrial capitalism. These were: 1) Under commercial production the earlier method of manufacture through guilds in towns underwent crucial organizational changes as production of goods came to be dominated by the merchant capitalists under the putting-out system. The putting-out system was much more elaborately developed and manufactories were created when merchant capital was invested in industrial mode of production. 2) The change of investment from commercial to industrial production was accentuated by the shift in the economic centre from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic. While earlier commerce was confined to the Mediterranean and Baltic region, a geographical shift took place to the north-western region of the Atlantic during the late 15th and 16th centuries. The reasons were many, like, the soil conditions in the Mediterranean Europe were inferior to those of North- Western Europe. Discovery of precious metals in America was another reason. It brought with it enormous

international liquidity and marked the growth of international trade. Between 1500-1700 at least in Holland and England a commercial revolution took place. Moreover, piracy deterred the merchants in the Mediterranean. Discovery of new trade routes through geographical exploration further accelerated the process of shifting the economic centre. Technological breakthrough was another reason. 3) Under industrial production, a much wider range of choice of goods than before was made available for the purpose of international trade, including a larger number of non-luxury goods; 4) the volume of articles of common consumption for both international and domestic markets was substantially increased by industrial mode of production

It can be said, therefore, that capitalism prevalent till the end of the 17th century was commercial capitalism, that is, capitalism dominated by commercial activity. A large part of the goods in trade was obtained from the traditional sector—agriculture, domestic work and craftwork. This growing volume of trade accentuated the commercial aspect of the still expanding capitalism. However, the demand on the manufactures multiplied bringing about in the end a fundamental technological breakthrough—Industrial Revolution. A new economy was ushered in by the Industrial Revolution—famous in the history of Europe as industrial capitalism. The metamorphosis of commercial capital into industrial capital was completed basically by two primary factors—the deployment of commercial capital increasingly into industries, thereby transforming it into industrial capital and a significant increase in the number of factories or manufactories, a typical feature of the industrial age which in its turn completed the decline of the 'putting out' system.

11.9 COMMERCIAL CAPITALISM IN SPAIN, ITALY,FRANCE,ENGLAND AND HOLLAND

Commercial Capitalism, as mentioned earlier, took different forms in different countries. Here we will study briefly its features in different major countries of Europe at that time.

In Spain, the old colonial and commercial country of Europe, for example, the growth of commercial capitalism was not very successful for various reasons. Spain possessed all the economic stimuli necessary for industrial growth—gold and silver from the New World, rise in population and a class of affluent consumers. Still it failed as far as industry and commerce were concerned. The development of the Verlagssystem or putting-out system which symbolized the triumph of commercial capitalism did not grow adequately in Spain. It developed to some extent in the rural areas and struck a blow to the guilds, i.e. the Spanish *gremios* and benefited the merchants, but in the urban areas the guilds proliferated at the auspices of the government and set up rigid control over design and qualities of products, and thereby became a positive hindrance to innovations. Moreover, permission of entry of foreign goods and prohibition of the export of domestic products dealt a heavy blow to the domestic industries of Spain. The overall defective tax system of Spain was another impediment. Spain quickly became a country importing primary finished goods and exporting raw materials. Seville's (an important industrial centre and port on the Guadalquivir river) trade with the New World or America started declining and fell into the hands of foreign merchants.

The 16th century Europe obtained from America huge treasures in gold, silver and other precious stones, food etc. Initially it had a tremendous beneficial impact upon Spain and Seville became one of Europe's major ports. It quickly became an important centre of international trade, because rise in bullion led to a corresponding rise in prices and attracted traders to sell their products in the Spanish markets. The Spanish

people also indulged in buying these imported foreign goods for their own needs using bullion as a means of exchange, rather than setting up industries for manufacturing goods. Agricultural base in Spain was equally poor and made Spain a major grain importing country. In other words, 'Spain became a colonial dumping ground for foreign goods in Europe.' Commercial capitalism, therefore, could make no headway in Spain as there was no inflow of capital, rather, its drain. Neither could Spain capture a substantial foreign market for herself, nor was there a sufficiently large home market, because high food prices left little in the hands of the mass of the population to indulge in any other kind of purchase. All these factors along with technological backwardness retarded the process of industrialization. Enormous influx of capital, therefore, could not stimulate the growth of commercial capitalism and its subsequent transformation into industrial capitalism.

As we had seen briefly earlier, even before it developed in England and Holland, the 'putting-out system' flourished in Italy—Florence and Northern Italy in the 13th and 14th centuries. The major parts of Italy, however, remained tied to the traditional system of production and no further progress of Commercial Capitalism and its subsequent transformation into industrialism could take place. The main reason was that Italy went on producing only high quality, expensive woollen cloth which was produced through old-fashioned guilds, which maintained obsolete forms of economic organization and production and were unable to produce in large quantities. Therefore in Italy problems like high cost of production, expensive labour, heavy tax system, cumbersome internal tolls, imports of wool from Spain etc. retarded the growth of capitalism. As a result, she failed to compete with England and Holland, who produced new draperies that were lighter and brighter as well as cheaper.

In France and England, however, the situation was different. Trade developed in France in the 15th and 16th centuries, and Lyons became the most active financial centre of the west outside Italy. France's only major foreign supplier was Italy from whom she took fine silk, spices, drugs and dyestuffs. Later in 1536 the silk industry of Lyons was set up with a view to making France gradually self-sufficient. Rouen on the Channel Coast connected Paris and northern France with the trading metropolis of Antwerp. Ports of Normandy and Brittany had old established fisheries and after 1520 they turned to Newfoundland fishery. Bordeaux and Rochelle exported great quantities of wine to England and Netherlands. Salt was sent to Netherlands and the Baltic. Linen was sent to Spain from Morlaix, St. Malo and woollens, corn, wood, ironware, paper and other goods.

Merchants of France adopted the putting-out system as a result of which Commercial Capitalism flourished, while the independence of innumerable master craftsmen, journeymen, apprentices and casual labourers—particularly of textiles, construction, mining and metallurgy industries—was ruined. They were replaced by what was called in the 16th century France – arts and manufactures—which were not labour intensive , but were marked by capital concentration, since the numerous workers were only accessible to those who had capital and not to simple master craftsmen.

In the early 16th century, England was on the periphery of European trade with marginal use of technology in industry and agriculture. The putting-out system developed in the manufacturing units. 16th century capitalism in England was, therefore, essentially commercial in nature. Basically, the type of industries in England were two—industries like coal, mining or iron smelting where technical improvement was required, and, on the other hand, the small-scale industry of independent craftsmen who were gradually losing their independence at the hands of the merchant capitalists. Trade was in very limited items like raw materials primarily, the sole manufactured export being woollen cloth. All her basic needs she imported from

other countries. England traded primarily with Ireland, Normandy, Brittany, South-western France, Northern Spain etc. from where she obtained wine, oil, dyestuff, salt and iron. England's trade with America initially started in the mid-16th century through Spain and then with the establishment of English colonies, England found a flourishing market in the New World for her manufactures. With the shift of the focal point of trade from the Mediterranean to Western Europe, England was placed at the centre of world trade by the mid-17th century.

The Dutch commercial capitalism was dependent on Northern trade i.e. trade with the Baltic region and Norway. Special ships were developed for the purpose and soon the Dutch industry became the best one. Holland was also the primary producer of sugar. Amsterdam had sixty refineries in 1661. The putting-out system was developed in luxury and semi-luxury goods. In 1660's the United Provinces became the principal centre of production in the European world economy. As has been noted already textiles and ship-building were her chief sources of capital.

11.10　RESULTS OF COMMERCIAL CAPITALISM

What were then the results of Commercial Capitalism? Evidently, the most important was the growth of industrial capitalism. Another was the evolution of a Scientific Revolution. The opening of America and the East and the consequent influx of Spanish gold and silver created a tremendous demand for shipbuilding and navigation and for the making of the compass, maps and other instruments. The age of Galileo, Newton, Harvey, Descartes, Copernicus and Leibnitz saw the victory of the experimental method and of the application of Mathematics in the explanation of reality. It was in this cultural climate that the school of 'arith politicians'—Grant, Petty and Halley- rose and developed. It helped to create an institutional structure and a business ethic, which accentuated the development of industrial capitalism and thereby was the prime cause of the growth of large towns and industrial centres.

Another effect of commercial capitalism was a rise in demand for consumer and capital goods—textiles, wine, weapons, equipment of various kinds etc. and also for commercial and transport services for the transportation of finished goods as well as raw materials from one place to another. The slave trade resulted in transportation of black population to America. The rise in demand produced two different sets of consequences. One was that the rise in demand resulted in increased production, but due to certain bottlenecks in productive apparatus, production could not be proportionately increased leading to a rise in demand, which again resulted in rise in prices. The 'Price Revolution' was therefore an inevitable consequence of Commercial Capitalism. Scholars have also attributed a special maturity to the English pre-industrial economy. Accumulation of capital, big or moderate, for example, enabled business to develop more elaborate techniques of capitalism. The credit system was developed substantially because all these techniques were directly linked with the extension of credit. The simple form of Bill of Exchange, for example, gave way to a more complicated type called the draft, which was in use by the mid-14th century and common by the 15th.

Commercial Capitalism resulted in the growth of markets that again had a very important outcome—the rise of towns. From the nucleus of small trading centres, they slowly and gradually evolved into flourishing, prosperous towns with all characteristics of urban civilization. There is undoubtedly an eclectic explanation of the rise of medieval towns, but one fact is certain: without capital these towns could never have emerged as significant centres of exchange of goods and products. Therein lay the role of Commercial Capitalism though of course, it would be wrong to regard

them as microcosms of capitalism, because many towns in the early stages were themselves subordinated to feudal authority. Nevertheless, they nourished the 'first germs' of merchant and money-lending capital that was later to be employed on a larger scale.

The Price Revolution, on the other hand, led to the rise of the bourgeoisie class. Nobles, who could not cope, became heavily in debt. Merchants, businessmen, traders, lawyers, i.e. the bourgeoisie, made fortunes and thereby emerged as a powerful force in society. The beginnings of an organized trading interest in the towns, distinct from the handicraft, evolved into close corporations of richer merchants, who proceeded to monopolize wholesale trade and soon came to dominate the town government and to use their political power to further their own privileges and explicitly excluded from their ranks the handicraftsmen. The rule of the merchant capital was established to the detriment of the craftsmen and these merchant capitalists or merchant bourgeoisie who replaced the earlier burghers, rose to play an exclusively preponderant role in the society posing a serious challenge to the old feudal aristocracy.

All these consequences of Commercial Capitalism helped to accelerate the pace of the coming of Industrial Capitalism. By accumulation of capital, by stimulating expansion and diversification of demand and thereby creating new markets, by favouring the growth of the bourgeoisie, Commercial Capitalism brought about drastic changes in the entrepreneurial attitudes after discarding the conservative ways and methods and paved the path for the entry of the Industrial Revolution—a spectacular landmark in the history of human evolution.

11.11   SUMMARY

In this Unit we have seen the way money, trade and cash economy began to take precedence over feudal economy based on land rent from the 13th century onwards. It saw the beginnings of 'putting out system', large-scale financial and bank transactions, establishment of manufactories for production of goods on a greater scale, particularly textiles, leading to this phenomenon called Commercial Capitalism, the first major phase in the development of capitalism. We have also seen how it led to such a change through a survey of the debates over the internal problems emerging within the feudal system. Yet, as seen through different case studies, this phenomenon was not uniform and even happening at the same time across different countries. The increasing interlinkages between the production for commercial purposes and international and national trade prepared the ground for industrial capitalism, perhaps the most classic stage in the development of capitalism. You will read about this in the next Unit i.e. Unit 12.

11.12   EXERCISES

1)   Define the features of commercial capitalism.

2)   Under what historical circumstances commercial capitalism emerged? Discuss briefly.

3)   What are the different aspects to the debate over transition from Feudalism to Capitalism?

UNIT 12 CAPITALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION

Structure

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Even as you have read about the advent of capitalism in the form of commercial capitalism in Unit 11, it was in the phase of industrial capitalization that capitalism is said to have achieved its classical form. It is in this context that a brief discussion of the terms like capitalism, capital, capitalist industrialization and industrial revolution has been provided in this Unit. A brief survey of the theories of the emergence of capitalism has been made along with a detailed discussion of capitalist industrialization in different countries of Europe which also took different paths.

Definitions of capitalism are legion, contentious, and give rise to disparate and often incompatible explanations of economic history. This is because capitalism is a historical phenomenon. To say this is more than a truism. It implies that capitalism grew over a long period of time. Consequently, historians differ as to the point in time where the phenomenon may be reasonably said to exist. Some scholars take an expansive view, beginning their story in classical antiquity and encompassing all manifestations of profit-seeking trade, investment, and production. Others focus much more narrowly, whether by equating capitalism with a single quality – such as competition, markets, the predominance of money in exchange – or by identifying this form of economic structure with modern factory industrialization as originally exemplified by England during the Industrial Revolution.

A capitalist system implies, in the first place, that property is predominantly in private hands and the allocation of goods, services, and factors of production (land, labour and capital) is made mainly through market mechanisms, with capitalists responding to profit signals, workers to wage incentives, and consumers to prices. In the second

place, capitalist economies are highly capitalised. Their stocks of physical capital, education and knowledge are large relative to their income flow and huge when compared with pre-capitalist societies. This is because the most striking characteristic of capitalist performance has been a sustained (although not continuous) upward thrust in productivity and real income per head, which was achieved by a combination of innovation and accumulation. In this respect, capitalism is very different from earlier modes of production or social orders whose property and other social institutions were oriented to preserve equilibrium and were less able to afford the risks of change.

Historically, the rise of this new economic system was a complex and pervasive process, eventually involving nearly every facet of economic life throughout Europe. It was also protracted, stretching across the entire early modern period. The development of capitalism entailed a revolution in economic relations, institutions, and attitudes; on occasion it involved violence on the part of proponents and opponents alike; and it gave birth to new social classes. None of this occurred quickly or abruptly, however. The novel form of production grew up within the old, gradually supplanting rather than suddenly and dramatically overthrowing it. Hence its date of birth and critical moments of maturation are difficult to specify. Nor was the advance of capitalism steady or uniform. On the contrary, it was a decidedly uneven procedure, one that suffered disruptions, crises, even reversals. The process unfolded in disparate fashion across nations, regions and sectors of the economy; even within the same industry or farming district capitalist and non-capitalist methods might be found cheek by jowl.

Despite the many difficulties of periodization and causal explanation, there is agreement among historians of capitalism about certain features of this history. Among these agreed-upon features are the following: The expanding market economies of medieval Europe, with various institutional accompaniments (such as the development of cities, merchant houses, and guilds) were the foundation on which later capitalism developed. Somewhere in the late Middle Ages the economic centre of Europe shifted from the Mediterranean littoral to Northern Europe, a shift that became further stabilized in the early modern period, with its first focus in Holland and a second (decisive) focus in England. Modern capitalism first became stabilized between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. But a decisive leap forward came in the nineteenth century, first in England, with the merging of a capitalist economy with the immense technological power released by the Industrial Revolution. The modern capitalist world system became established by the end of the nineteenth century and consolidated itself in the twentieth century.

12.2 CAPITAL

Strictly speaking capitalism is a term denoting a mode of production in which capital in its various forms is the principal means of production. The term 'capital' (*capitale*, from the Latin word *caput* for 'head') first emerged in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, denoting stocks of merchandise, sums of money, and money carrying interest. Fernand Braudel quotes a sermon of St. Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444), who refers (in translation from the Latin) to 'that prolific cause of wealth we commonly call capital' (*capitale*). The term came to denote, more narrowly, the *money* wealth of a firm or a merchant. In the eighteenth century it gained common usage in this narrower sense, especially referring to *productive* capital. The noun 'capitalist' probably dates from the mid-seventeenth century, to refer to owners of 'capital'.

In everyday speech now, the word 'capital' is generally used to describe an asset owned by an individual as wealth. Capital might then denote a sum of money to be invested in order to secure a rate of return, or it might denote the investment itself: a financial instrument, or stocks and shares representing titles to means of production, or the physical means of production themselves. Depending on the nature of the capital, the rate of return to which the owner has a legal right is either an interest payment or a claim on profits. Capital is an asset which can generate an income flow for its owner.

Two corollaries of this understanding are, first, that it applies to every sort of society, in the past, in the present and in the future, and is specific to none; and second, that it posits the possibility that inanimate objects are productive in the sense of generating an income flow. This is the neo-classical conception of capital. It exemplifies what has become known as fetishism, or the process in which men project upon outside or inanimate objects, upon reified abstractions, these powers which are actually their own. As Paul Sweezy, a critic of such economic theories argued, 'Since profit is calculated as a return on total capital, the idea inevitably arises that capital as such is in some way productive'. So a 'quantity of capital' is postulated and this rather than human labour is attributed with the power of producing wealth.

The Marxist concept of capital is based on a denial of these two corollaries. First, capital is something which in its generality is quite specific to capitalism. While capital predates capitalism, in capitalist society the production of capital predominates, and dominates every other sort of production. Capital cannot be understood apart from capitalist relations of production. Indeed, capital is not a thing at all, but a social relation which appears in the form of a thing. Although capital is undoubtedly about making money, the assets which 'make' money embody a particular relation between those who have money and those who do not, such that not only is money 'made', but also the private property relations which engender such a process are themselves continually reproduced.

12.3   CAPITALISM

Capital is accordingly a complex category, not amenable to a simple definition, and the major part of Marx's writings was devoted to exploring its ramifications. Whatever the asset form of capital itself, however, it is the private ownership of capital in the hands of a class – the class of capitalists to the exclusion of the mass of the population – which is a central feature of capitalism as a mode of production. Only Marxists have consistently sought to integrate in a single theoretical construction the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of the capitalist phenomenon. Neither Max Weber nor Joseph Schumpeter, nor Friedrich von Hayek, all of whom attempted to construct non-Marxist frameworks to understand capitalism, succeeded in supplying a satisfactory framework. Weber's intellectual enterprise was essentially one of comparative history, designed to uncover the roots of the unique Western development of what he called 'modern rationality', which was intrinsic to the capitalist system. Schumpeter remained essentially an economist and his most durable contributions have remained in economics, for example, his theory of the economic role of entrepreneurship. Hayek made some highly astute observations about the relation of capitalism to various other phenomena in modern society, such as democracy and the rule of law, but he never set out to construct a comprehensive theory embracing all these relationships.

The term 'capitalism' is more recent than 'capitalist.' Adam Smith, commonly regarded as the classical theorist of capitalism, did not use the term at all; he described

what he regarded as the natural system of liberty. It became common only after the publication of Werner Sombart's magnum opus (*Der moderne Kapitalismus*, Munich, 1928 [1902]) and by then was generally seen as the opposite of socialism.

The word 'capitalism' is rarely used by non-Marxist schools of economics. Even in Marxist writings it is a late arrival. Marx, while he uses the adjective 'capitalistic,' does not use capitalism as a noun either in *The Communist Manifesto* or in *Capital* vol. 1. Only in 1877, in his correspondence with Russian followers, did he use it in a discussion of the problem of Russia's transition to capitalism. This reluctance to employ the word may have been due to its relative modernity in Marx's day. The *Oxford English Dictionary* cites its first use (by William Makepeace Thackeray) as late as 1854.

Controversies concerning the origins and periodization of capitalism arise from the tendency to emphasise one out of many features which can be said to characterize the capitalist mode of production. Capitalism can be said to be characterized by,

1) Production for sale rather than own use by numerous producers. This contrasts with simple commodity production.

2) A market where labour power too is a commodity and is bought and sold, the mode of exchange being money wages for a period of time (time rate) or for a specified task (piece rate). The existence of a market for labour contrasts with its absence in either slavery or serfdom.

3) The predominant if not universal mediation of exchange by the use of money. This aspect accentuates the importance of banks and other financial intermediary institutions. The actual incidence of barter is limited.

4) The capitalist or his managerial agent controls the production (labour) process. This implies control not only over hiring and firing workers but also over the choice of techniques, the output mix, the work environment, and the arrangements for selling the output. The contrast here is with the putting-out system or with alternative modern proto-socialist forms such as the co-operative, the worker-managed firm, worker-owned and/or state-owned firms.

5) Control by the capitalist or the manager of financial decisions. The universal use of money and credit facilitates the use of other people's resources to finance accumulation. Under capitalism, this implies the power of the capitalist entrepreneur to incur debts or float shares or mortgage capital assets to raise finance. The contrast here would be with central financial control by a planning authority.

6) There is competition between capitals. The control of individual capitalists over the labour process and over the financial structure is modified by its constant operation in an environment of competition with other capitals either producing the same commodity or a near-substitute, or just fighting for markets or loans. This increasing competition forces the capitalist to adopt new techniques and practices which will cut costs, and to accumulate to make possible the purchase of improved machinery. This competition strengthens the tendency towards concentration of capital in large firms. It is to neutralize competition that monopolies and cartels emerge.

12.4   CAPITALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION

Capitalism is the first stage in the history of the world to coincide with the phenomenon of industrialization in its full-blown form. Together, the new economic institutions and

the new technology (in Marxist terms, the relations and the means of production) transformed the world. Technical progress is the most essential characteristic of capitalist advance, but it is also one that is most difficult to quantify or explain. This is because its effects are diffused throughout the growth process in a myriad ways. It augments the quality of natural resources and labour power (human capital) and has an impact on trade. Investment is the major vehicle in which it is embodied, and their respective roles are closely interactive. There is no doubt of its importance in capitalist growth, or the contrast between its role in capitalist and pre-capitalist industry. A major driving force of capitalist industrialization is the strong propensity to risk capital on new techniques that hold promise of improved profits, in strong contrast to the defensive wariness of the pre-capitalist approach to technology.

Some scholars regard the application of science to industry as *the* distinguishing characteristic of modern industry. Despite its attractiveness, this view has its difficulties. In the eighteenth century dawn of modern industry the body of scientific knowledge was too slender and weak to be applied directly to industrial processes, whatever the intention of its advocates. In fact, it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century, with the flowering of chemical and electrical sciences, that scientific *theories* provided the foundations for new processes and new industries. It is indisputable, however, that as early as the seventeenth century the *methods* of science – in particular, observation and experiment – were being applied (not always successfully) for utilitarian purposes.

Nor were such efforts limited to men of scientific training. Indeed one of the most remarkable features of technical advance in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was the large proportion of major inventions made by ingenious tinkerers, self-taught mechanics and engineers (the word *engineer* acquired its modern meaning in the eighteenth century) and other autodidacts. In many instances the term *experimental method* may be too formal and exact to describe the process: *trial-and-error* may be more apposite. But a willingness to experiment and to innovate penetrated all strata of society, including even the agricultural population, traditionally the most conservative and suspicious of innovation.

The most significant improvements in technology involved the use of machinery and mechanical power to transform tasks that had been done far more slowly and laboriously by human or animal power, or that had not been done at all. To be sure, elementary machines like the wheel, the pulley, and the lever had been used from antiquity, and for centuries humankind had used a fraction of the inanimate powers of nature to propel sailing ships and actuate windmills and waterwheels for rudimentary industrial purposes.

During the eighteenth century, a notable increase in the use of waterpower occurred in industries such as grain milling, textiles, and metallurgy. The most important developments in the application of energy in the early stages of industrialization involved the substitution of coal for wood and charcoal as fuel, and the introduction of the steam engine for use in mining, manufacturing and transportation. Similarly, although metallic ores had been converted into metals for centuries, the use of coal and coke in the smelting process greatly reduced the cost of metals and multiplied their uses, whereas the application of chemical science created a host of new, 'artificial' or synthetic materials.

Though the *term* 'industrialization' is absent from the work of Marx and Engels, the *concept* is clearly present. Marx distinguishes 'Modern Industry' or 'The Factory System' or 'The Machinery System' from earlier forms of capitalist production, co-operation and 'Manufacture'. Modern industry is distinguished from manufacture

by the central role of machinery: 'As soon as tools had been converted from being manual implements of man into implements of a mechanical apparatus, of a machine, the motive mechanism also acquired an independent form, entirely emancipated from the restraints of human strength. Thereupon the individual machine sinks into a mere factor in production by machinery'. (*Capital*, 1, chapter 13, section 1)

In parallel with manufacture, Marx distinguishes two stages in the development of the machinery system. In the first stage, 'simple co-operation,' there is only a 'conglomeration in the factory of similar and simultaneously acting machines' using a single power source'. In the second stage, a 'complex system of machinery', the product goes through a connected series of detailed processes carried out by an interlinked chain of machines. When this complex system is perfected and can carry out the entire process of production with workers only as attendants, it becomes an 'automatic system of machinery'. (*Ibid*, chapter 13, Section 1)

The conversion of hand-operated tools into instruments of a machine reduces the worker to a 'mere' source of motive power, and as production expands, the limits of human strength necessitate the substitution of a mechanical motive power for human muscles. In the factory system, all the machines are driven by a single 'motive force', the steam engine.

In *The Unbound Prometheus*, David Landes placed technology at the centre of the Industrial Revolution. He introduces this book by listing three areas of material advance that comprised 'the heart of the Industrial Revolution'. They are

1) The substitution of mechanical devices for human skills;

2) Inanimate power – in particular steam – took the place of human and animal strength;

3) There was a marked improvement in the getting and working of raw materials, especially in what are now known as the metallurgical and chemical industries.

Theodore Hamerow has measured the course of this technological modernization in different European countries by citing the rising number of patents, the capacity of steam engines and their diffusion in production, the concentration of labour in factories and the increase in the efficiency of manufacture by way of rises in output per man-hour.

Maxine Berg has questioned some of the assumptions of these perspectives by pointing out that they reinforce the old 'technological determinism' of most accounts of the Industrial Revolution. Landes' approach, she argued, traced the history of the most 'progressive' industries without enquiring into the patterns by which they were adapted within different *regions* in Europe; Landes did not explore why mechanization occurred faster (and earlier in her industrial history) in the USA than in England; and he had no answer to the question of why French industry found it difficult to adapt to British power and coal-using techniques.

Industrialization has come to be used as a synonym for sustained economic growth. It is said to occur in a given country when output and real incomes per head begin to rise steadily and without apparent limit. Expansion of total output alone, however, is not a sufficient criterion of industrialization since, if population is rising more rapidly than output, it is compatible with declining real incomes per head. Nor can mere abundance of capital and land (which might give rise for a time to growing real incomes per head) produce a growth in the economy which can be described as industrialization if material technology remains unchanged. A country which retains a large, even predominant, agricultural sector may be described as industrialised if real incomes rise and technology changes.

Associated with industrialization are a number of economic and social changes which follow directly from its defining characteristics. For example, as real incomes rise, the structure of aggregate demand will change, since the income elasticities of demand for the various goods available differ considerably. Again, and partly for the same reason there will be a major, sustained shift of population from the countryside into the city. Whereas there is room for argument about the length and makeup of any list of the concomitants of industrialization, there is near unanimity upon the central identifying characteristic: the rise in real income per head.

12.5 INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Probably no term from the economic historian's lexicon has been more widely accepted than 'industrial revolution.' This is unfortunate because the term itself has no scientific standing and conveys a grossly misleading impression of the nature of economic change. Nevertheless, for more than a century it has been used to denote that period in British history that witnessed the application of mechanically powered machinery in the textile industries, the introduction of James Watt's steam engine, and the 'triumph' of the factory system of production. By analogy, the term has also been applied to the onset of industrialization in other countries, although without general agreement on dates.

The expression *revolution industrielle* was first used in the 1820s by French writers who, wishing to emphasize the importance of the mechanization of the French cotton industry then taking place in Normandy and the Nord, compared it with the great political revolution of 1789. In 1837, Jerome-Adolphe Blanqui referred to 'la revolution industrielle' in England. Contrary to widespread belief, Karl Marx did not use the term in its conventional sense. It acquired general currency only after the publication in 1884 of Arnold Toynbee's *Lectures on the Industrial Revolution in England: Popular Addresses, Notes and Other Fragments*. Toynbee dated the British Industrial Revolution from 1760. The dates implicit in Toynbee's *Lectures*, 1760-1820, were arbitrarily determined by the reign of George III, on which Toynbee had been invited to lecture. This view went unchallenged for about 50 years, until Professor J.U. Nef stressed the essential continuity of history and traced its beginnings to 1540-1660, with the new capitalistic industries of Elizabethan England.

Early descriptions of the phenomenon emphasized the 'great inventions' and the dramatic nature of the changes. As an 1896 textbook put it, 'The change...was sudden and violent. The great inventions were all made in a comparatively short space of time...' a description that A.P. Usher dryly characterized as exhibiting 'all the higher forms of historical inaccuracy.'

Early interpretations also emphasized what were assumed to be the deleterious consequences of the new mode of production. Although increases in productivity as a result of the use of mechanical power and machinery were acknowledged, most accounts stressed the use of child labour, the displacement of traditional skills by machinery, and the unwholesome conditions of the new factory towns. For most of its history, for most people, the term 'industrial revolution' has had a pejorative connotation.

12.6 THEORIES FOR THE EMERGENCE OF CAPITALISM

The origins of capitalism are traced variously to the growth of merchant capital and external trade or to the spread of monetary transactions within feudalism by the

commuting of feudal rent and services into money. This debate concerns the transition from Feudalism to Capitalism and pertains mainly to Western European experience where capitalism first emerged. Whatever the reasons for its origins, the period from about the fifteenth century to the eighteenth century is generally accepted as the merchant capital phase of capitalism. Overseas trade and colonization carried out by the state-chartered monopolies played a pivotal role in this phase of capitalism in Holland, Spain, Portugal, England and France. The industrial phase of capitalism opened with the upsurge in power-using machinery in the Industrial Revolution in England.

This section will briefly examine theories for the emergence of capitalism advanced by four major thinkers, namely Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Franklin Mendels and the theory of Proto-Industrialization and Immanuel Wallerstein.

12.6.1   Adam Smith

In the model put forward by Adam Smith (1723-90) in *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, Book 1, the development of a society's wealth –equated with the development of the productivity of labour – is a function of the degree of the division of labour. By this Smith simply means the specialization of productive tasks – classically achieved through the separation of agriculture and manufacturing, and their assignment to country and town respectively. The division of labour in industrial production made possible an unprecedented growth in output and productivity. If it was possible to sell this enhanced output over a wide market, then such division would prove profitable, and the profits could be ploughed back into further profitable activity.

For Smith, the degree of specialization is bound up with the degree of development of trade: the degree to which a potentially interdependent, specialized labour force can be – and is – linked up via commercial nexuses. Thus we get Smith's famous principle that the division of labour is limited by the extent of the market – literally, the size of the area and population linked up via trade relations. For Adam Smith the development of trade and the division of labor unfailingly brought about economic development.

Smith's argument that the separation of manufacture and agriculture and their allocation to town and country, consequently upon the development of trading connections, will lead to a process of economic growth, as a result of the increased productivity which 'naturally' follows from the producers' concentration on a single line of production rather than a multiplicity of different ones, has a certain plausibility. In locating the growth of wealth in the interaction between division of labour and growth of markets, Smith liberated economics from an agrarian bias such as the Physiocrats had imparted to it, or the narrow commercial bias that the Mercantilists had given it. Surplus did not originate in land alone, nor was the acquisition of treasure (precious metals) any longer the sole or desirable measure of economic prosperity. Thus wealth could take the form of (reproducible) vendible commodities. If the wealth holders then spent it productively in further investment wealth would grow.

The growth of commerce and the growth of liberty mutually determine each other for Smith. Smith and his fellow 'political economists' traced the advance of capitalism to the onset of conditions that liberated purportedly inherent human qualities and to the beneficent operation, in market transactions, of an 'invisible hand' that brought the common good out of the conflicting self-interest of all individuals. Commerce could be seen as a key to prosperity, but only its unhindered pursuit would secure the maximum prosperity. Commerce, by spreading world-wide and making the

accumulation of wealth possible in liquid (that is, transportable) form, renders merchants independent of political tyranny and hence increases the chances of the growth of liberty.

12.6.2 Karl Marx

The transition from Feudalism to Capitalism was never a major preoccupation for Marx (1818-83) and Engels. It was nonetheless a problem addressed periodically in discussion of more central themes such as the historical materialist method, the capitalistic mode of production, or class conflict in history.

To Marx, capitalism was powerful and dynamic, a superior form of production that promoted economic growth far above anything possible in feudalism. He attributed its appearance not to the release of natural, unchanging human predispositions but to specific economic, political, and legal measures.

In Marx's interpretation of the emergence of capitalism two broad perspectives are offered. He first emphasises the corrosive effect upon the feudal system of mercantile activity, the growth of a world market and new expanding cities. Mercantile capitalism, within an autonomous urban sphere, provides the initial dynamic towards capitalism: merchants entered production and employed wage labourers. The second variant, evident especially in *Capital*, centres on the 'producer' and the process whereby the producer (agricultural or in the crafts sector) becomes merchant and capitalist. Marx regards the latter as 'the really revolutionary path' to capitalism since this transforms the organisation and techniques of production. This is because mercantile activity (the first variant) may well turn products for use into commodities for exchange, but it does not explain how and why labour power should itself become a commodity. Also, although the merchant path separates the worker from ownership of the product, it retains inherited techniques and social organization of production. It is therefore ultimately conservative. Hence it cannot explain the transition to capitalism.

The primitive (or original) accumulation of capital is a concept developed in Marx's *Capital* and *Grundrisse* to designate that process which generates the preconditions of the ongoing accumulation of capital. In Marx's words, 'primitive accumulation is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production'. (*Capital*, 1: 873-5). Marx's focus is upon how one set of class relations becomes transformed into another. In particular, how it is that a property-less class of wage-labourers, the proletariat, becomes confronted by a class of capitalists who monopolize the means of production.

Many of Marx's contemporaries saw capital as the result of abstinence and saving, as the original source for accumulation. Marx's point is that primitive accumulation is not an accumulation in this sense at all. Abstinence can *only* lead to accumulation *if* capitalist relations of production, or the polarisation between a class of capitalists and a class of wage-labourers, are already in existence.

Marx argued that since pre-capitalist relations of production are predominantly agricultural, the peasantry having possession of the principal means of production, land, capitalism can only be created by dispossessing the peasantry of the land. Accordingly, the origins of capitalism are to be found in the transformation of relations of production on the land. The freeing of the peasantry from land is the source of wage labourers both for agricultural and industrial capitalism. For Marx the first and foremost effect of the 'agricultural revolution' in England was to expropriate the peasant from the soil and establish capitalist agriculture. A new money-oriented nobility and gentry forcibly enclosed demesne, common and waste land, consolidated

small farms into larger ones and at times converted to pasturage. Capitalist farmers grew from a differentiation of the peasantry. Enclosures converted property characterized by shared rights into private property.

The genesis of capitalist agriculture contrasts sharply with the birth of capitalist industry. While agriculture generated both its own capitalists and workers, the urban crafts played a distinctly secondary role in forming either pole of industry. Rather, the agricultural revolution supplied the labourers and merchants advanced much of the money to employ them and shaped markets in which their products were sold.

For Marx, merchants could foster primitive accumulation by usury, crushing artisanal guilds, expanding markets, providing employment or by investing profits. While Marx emphasizes domestic causes of proletarianization, he focuses primarily on international commerce in accounting for the genesis of the industrial capitalist. (*Capital*, 1, ch. 31) This interpretation stresses the forcefulness, often genocidal, and the unevenness of primitive accumulation. It was through servile labour in the colonies, the slave trade, and commercial wars that the English prospered and replaced the Dutch as the dominant mercantile power by 1700. Government laws, monopolies, taxes and debt assisted the process. Far from the state being a brake on or an enemy of capitalism, Marx held, it was one of its principal progenitors and servants.

12.6.3   The Theory of Proto-Industrialization

The theory of 'proto-industrialization' (henceforth PI) actually started with Franklin Mendels' 1969 dissertation at the University of Wisconsin, 'Industrialization and Population Pressure in Eighteenth-Century Flanders.' This was a study of the relatively rapid population growth experienced in an internal region of Flanders, where a peasant population combined agriculture with part-time linen manufacture. Much of the output was sold on overseas markets by entrepreneurs in Ghent and other market towns to distant markets, especially those of the Spanish Empire. The workers, family units of husband, wife and children, usually cultivated small plots of ground as well, although they also bought additional supplies in markets. The term has subsequently been refined and extended in both space and time to other, similar industries. In some instances – for example, the Lancashire cotton industry – it has been seen as the prelude to a fully developed factory system. In others, however, such as the Irish and even the Flemish linen industries, no such transition occurred.

PI had distinctive patterns of development. It generally originated in pastoral regions and declining or large-scale agricultural areas. Scholarship on PI emphasizes interconnections among widening markets, rising populations (especially rural) seeking wage-earning employment, and the search for cheap labour by entrepreneurs. Highlighting rural, household and regional changes, studies of *Industrialization before industrialization* by Peter Kriedte, Hans Medick and Jurgen Schlumbohm of the Max Planck Institut fur Geschichte in Gottingen in 1981 (but first published in German in 1977) attempted to situate PI within the 'transition from feudalism to capitalism.'

PI is credited with creating the key changes in the uses of land, labour, capital and entrepreneurship which made the Industrial Revolution possible in the following ways:

1)   The generation of supplementary handicraft incomes will lead to an expansion of population, breaking up the self-regulating or homeostatic equilibrium of pre-industrial populations – by this process, the natural rate of growth of population increases but also becomes adjusted to the augmented means of subsistence that are locally available. Accordingly, handicrafts generated the labour supply of the Industrial Revolution.

2) A region thus experiencing growing population and growing PI will soon begin to encounter diminishing returns as dispersed industry creates difficulties in the collection of output and the control of quality. This will conduce to the concentration of manpower in workshops and then to the use of labour-saving mechanical inventions. In this manner, PI created pressures leading to the factory system and to new technology.

3) As a result of PI development, capital for these workshops or the introduction of machines will accumulate locally in the hands of merchants, commercial farmers or landowners. In this manner, PI is supposed to have led to the accumulation of capital.

4) PI will lead to the accumulation of technical knowledge by merchants as a result of their experience with inter-regional and international trade. In this way it provides 'a training ground in which the early industrialists were recruited', and a new supply of entrepreneurs.

5) The simultaneous development of PI and a regional commercial agriculture will prepare the agricultural sector for the task of supplying food during the urbanization which accompanies the subsequent phase of industrialization, that is, PI leads to agricultural surpluses and reduces the price of food.

PI and the related terms refer primarily to consumer goods industries, especially textiles. Well before the advent of the factory system in the cotton industry, however, other large-scale, highly capitalized industries existed, producing capital or intermediate goods, and sometimes even consumer goods. The French *manufactures royales* were usually located in large factory-like structures where skilled artisans worked under the supervision of a foreman or entrepreneur, but without mechanical power. Similar 'proto-factories' were built by noble landowner-entrepreneurs in the Austrian Empire (Bohemia and Moravia) and elsewhere. Large landowners also acted as entrepreneurs in the coal industry, mining the deposits located on their estates. Iron-works, usually located in rural areas near timber (for charcoal) and iron ore, sometimes employed hundreds, even thousands of workers. Lead, copper, and glass-works also frequently had large-scale organizations, as did shipyards. The state-owned Arsenal of Venice, dating from the Middle Ages, was one of the earliest large-scale enterprises in history.

12.6.4 Immanuel Wallerstein

Capitalism was from the beginning, Wallerstein argues, a matter of the world-economy and not of nation states. Capitalism has never allowed its aspirations to be determined by national boundaries. For him, 'the only kind of social system is a world system, which we define quite simply as a unit with a single division of labour and multiple cultural systems.' There could be two varieties of such world systems, one with a common political system and one without. These he called, respectively, world-empires and world-economies.

The modern world system, which created a European world economy with an unprecedented structure originated in sixteenth century Europe, during what Braudel called the 'long sixteenth century' (1450-1660). The geographical limits of this world-economy, determined largely by the state of technology at the time, included North-West Europe, which became the 'core' of the system. Dividing the world into two more elements, Wallerstein placed Eastern Europe (but not Russia) and Spanish America at the 'periphery', while the Mediterranean littoral (Spain and the Northern Italian city-states) became a 'semi-periphery'.

How did the European world-economy operate? The core areas had mass market industries, international and local commerce in the hands of an indigenous bourgeoisie, and, relatively advanced and complex forms of agriculture. The peripheral areas were mono-cultural, with the cash crops produced on large estates by coerced labour. The semi-peripheral areas were in the process of de-industrializing, although they still retained some share in international banking and high-cost, quality industrial production. The form of agricultural labour control used there was mostly share-cropping, a form that was intermediate between the freedom of the lease system and the coercion of slavery and serfdom.

This world was comprised of a multitude of political entities. In the core states relatively strong state systems emerged with an absolute monarch and a patrimonial state bureaucracy. By contrast, the critical feature of the periphery was the absence of a strong state. The semi-periphery was, once again, in between in its polity. By the end of the sixteenth century the decline of state authority was clear in Spain and in the large city-states of north Italy.

The essential feature of a capitalist world economy is production for sale in a market in which the object is to realise the maximum profit. In such a system production is constantly expanded as long as further production is profitable, and men constantly innovate new ways of producing things that will expand the profit margin.

Wallerstein identified three stages in the development of the world-economy. The first was one of agricultural capitalism, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. In this stage wage labour is only one of the modes in which labour is recruited and paid; slavery, 'coerced cash-crop production' (his term for the so-called 'second feudalism'), share cropping and tenancy are all alternative modes. The second stage commenced with the world-wide recession of 1650-1730. In this stage England first ousted the Netherlands from her commercial primacy and then successfully resisted France's attempt to catch up. It was only in the third stage from the mid-eighteenth century, that capitalism became primarily industrial (rather than agricultural or mercantile). In this stage industrial production represents a constantly growing share of the world's total production. As importantly too, there is the geographical expansion of the European world-economy to include the entire globe.

Some of the other important theorists in this respect have been Robert Brenner, M.M. Postan and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladourie about whom you have already read in Unit 11.

12.7 DIFFERENT PATHS TO INDUSTRIALIZATION: BRITAIN, FRANCE AND GERMANY

There have been and are many paths to industrialization between countries. One would expect this from their historical and geographical diversity, with associated differences in the gestation period involved. It is these variations that militate against a non-country specific theory of capitalist industrialization.

Britain's transition to capitalist industrialization was not at all typical of the European experience. Thus Patrick O'Brien and Caglar Keyder, suggest that the British experience is 'initial' rather than 'normal practice', especially with regard to the relative size and productivity of agriculture, They state that 'Economic theory lends no support to assumptions….that there is one definable and optimal path to higher per capita incomes and still less to the implicit notion that this path can be identified with British industrialization as it proceeded from 1780 to 1914'.

Instead of being presented as the paradigmatic case, the first and most famous instance of economic growth, the British Industrial Revolution is now depicted in a more negative light, as a limited, restricted, piecemeal phenomenon, in which various things did *not* happen or where, if they did, they had far *less* effect than as previously supposed. Instead of stressing *how much* had happened by 1851 (whatever the qualifications), it is now commonplace to note *how little* had actually altered (whatever the qualifications). Recent research has stressed the gradualness of change when seen from a macroeconomic standpoint and has also been tending to argue that the 'industrial revolution' was not merely economic, but social, intellectual and political too. The change in emphasis in historiography has been from national aggregates and sectoral analysis to regional variations and uneven development, from the few large and successful businessmen to the many small and inept entrepreneurs.

Social history has shifted away from analyses of new class formations and consciousness, as characterized by E. P. Thompson and emphasized by J. Foster to identifying continuity between social protest and radicalism between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Then, an influential tendency in the socio-cultural historiography of the 1980s has argued that the British Industrial Revolution was very incomplete (if it existed at all) because the industrial bourgeoisie failed to gain political and economic ascendancy. Economic and political power remained in the hands of the landed aristocracy: 'Gentlemanly capitalism' prevailed. The major division in the social and political life of nineteenth century Britain is argued to have been that between the dominant gentlemanly capitalism of the aristocratic and rentier classes, and a subordinate industrial capitalism.

The historiography of the British Industrial Revolution has moved away from viewing the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (particularly 1780-1815) as a unique turning point in economic and social development. For example, A.E. Musson's survey, *The Growth of British Industry* criticizes what he regards as 'the general interpretation presented in most textbooks', namely that 'the industrial revolution had taken place by 1850, that the factory system had triumphed.' He stresses the extent to which consumer goods industries remained handicraft industries, located in small workshops; the degree to which, as shown in the 1851 Census, patterns of employment and occupational structure remained dominated by traditional craftsmen, labourers and domestic servants; and the very slow rate at which factories spread and steam power was diffused. He argues that 'There are good grounds for regarding the period 1850-1914 as that in which the Industrial Revolution really occurred, on a massive scale, transforming the whole economy and society much more deeply than the earlier changes had done.'

Some historians challenge the broad view of the Industrial Revolution expressed in T.S. Ashton's memorable phrase, 'A wave of gadgets swept over England.' Ashton's view was widespread during the 1950s and 1960s. His critics see the Industrial Revolution as a much narrower phenomenon, as the result of technical change in a few industries, most notably cotton and iron. Crafts wondered whether it was possible that there was virtually no industrial advance during 1760-1850.

Since the 1980s, studies of the Industrial Revolution have borne out its gradual pace of change. New statistics have been produced which illustrate the slow growth of industrial output and gross domestic product. Productivity grew slowly; fixed capital proportions, savings and investment patterns altered only gradually; workers' living standards and their personal consumption remained largely unaffected before 1830 and were certainly not squeezed.

Research by Williamson, Knick Harley and Feinstein has revealed the fact that Britain passed through a turning point around the 1820s. Growth in National Income was much lower before than after that date. There was a doubling in the growth rate of industrial production too. Feinstein's estimates of the rate of capital formation shows that it drifts upwards from then, as does the rate of capital accumulation and the growth rate of capital invested per worker employed in industry. The turning point was dramatic in the standard of living. The adult, male, working class real wage failed to increase between 1755 and 1819, but from 1819 to 1851, it rose at an annual rate of 1.85%, according to estimates in 1983 by Lindert and Williamson.

Among the early industrializers, France remains the most aberrant case. That fact gave rise to a large literature devoted to explanations of the supposed 'backwardness' or 'retardation' of the French economy. The dominant tendency in the Anglo-American literature on modern French economic growth was to treat it in this context. Indeed, in what might be regarded as the founding account of that development, Sir John Clapham went so far as to muse that 'it might be said that France never went through an industrial revolution.' What has impressed economic historians as they have looked at nineteenth century France is the failure of some dramatic breakthrough to appear, the absence of a marked acceleration in growth.

Recent new empirical research and theoretical insights have shown that the earlier debates were based on a false premise. In fact, although the *pattern* of industrialization differed from that of Britain and the early industrializers, the *outcome* was not less efficient and, in terms of social welfare, may have been more humane. Moreover, when one looks at the patterns of growth of successful late industrializers, it appears that the French pattern may have been more 'typical' than the British.

Two factors in the French situation account in large measure for its unjustified reputation for 'retardation', namely, the dramatic fall in marital fertility, which reduced the growth rate of the population to less than half that of other major nations; and, the scarcity and high cost of coal, which resulted in a lower output of the heavy industries (iron and steel, in particular) than in other large nations, such as Britain and Germany. Moreover, these two factors in combination help to account for several other features of the French pattern of industrialization, such as the low rate of urbanization, the scale and structure of enterprise, and the sources of industrial energy.

The well-known characteristic of French industrialization was a relatively slow expansion of large-scale capital-intensive forms of production. Investment in the advanced sector proceeded at a leisurely pace, there being no clear acceleration until the 1850s or 1860s and there was a correspondingly limited increase in new employment outlets. In 1851, at the first industrial census, what the French call *la grande industrie* occupied 1.3 million workers, or less than 25% of the industrial labour force. More in evidence were the 'proto-industrial' forms. The persistence of domestic workshops and hand tool methods until at least mid-century, if not beyond, was common to a whole variety of industries, with urban artisans tending to work full-time on the higher quality goods, leaving the less skilled tasks to the peasant-worker. Even in the more mechanized industries, large numbers of mines, iron works, spinning mills and weaving sheds were small by British or German standards, located in isolated rural areas and dependent on labour which continued to work part-time in agriculture.

Unlike Britain or France, capitalist industrialization in Germany had to wait the formation of a well-defined area, a unified Germany, before it could commence. Before the mid-nineteenth century political fragmentation, whether within the Holy Roman Empire or the German Federation, was reinforced by the economic conditions

of numerous customs barriers, poor communications network, primitive roads and the reduction of economic activity to isolated islands that were separately linked to regional markets. As Sheehan has pointed out, there was nothing particularly *German* about these economies.

R.C. Trebilcock has argued that the German pattern of development was very different from that of the British 'prototype'. Britain had faced an industrialization of low cost, a technology of low capital intensity, and had acquired both by recourse mainly to the savings – personal, familial, or local – amassed by entrepreneurs and their thrifty reinvestment of profits. Bank participation was usually employed, at most, in the provision of short-term working capital and rarely in connection with long-term capital formation or share ownership. Banks were, in contrast, more important for German industrialization. Indeed Germany was the principal case of 'moderate backwardness' for some scholars, that case in which banks supply crucial financial and entrepreneurial inputs. Unlike Trebilcock, others have found close affinities in the British and German paths of industrialization. Both were concentrated within a relatively brief and clearly marked period of years. Both were based on the classical sectors of coal, iron, engineering, and, to a lesser extent in the German case, textiles. The development of the railways triggered a greater range of 'backward' and 'forward' linkages in Germany (on the metallurgical and mining industries, the employment structures and the rate of capital formation) than the industry had done in England, at about the same periods of the nineteenth century.

German industrialization was also distinctive on account of the role performed by cartels. Cartels were groups of firm that combined to control prices and markets. They either lined firms making the same range of products or those that engaged in different stages of the production of the same products. They began to emerge from the late 1870s, and in close collaboration with the biggest banks, gave German industry a degree of concentration in the spheres of capital and labour that was unmatched anywhere else except in Imperial Russia. They promoted rapid technical progress, a high rate of capital formation and an unrivalled supremacy in the export of manufactured products.

12.8 AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIALIZATION: BRITAIN, FRANCE AND GERMANY

The contribution of the agricultural sector to British, French and German industrialization has varied in its chronology and content. Agriculture's contribution in this respect has been broadly assessed on four counts, namely whether it created a food surplus for the non-rural population; whether it helped to widen home and foreign markets; whether it generated capital for industrial investment; and, whether it supplied a labour force for industrial employment.

The features of the so-called 'agricultural revolution' in northern Europe tended to be similar: they included the introduction of new crops like artificial grasses or roots, which preserved the soil's fertility and so abolished the earlier necessity for fallow periods. The earlier three-field system, where each field followed a cycle of wheat or rye, barley or oats, was replaced by a cycle which both eliminated leaving some area fallow and included the cultivation of forage crops. More forage meant that a larger number of livestock could be maintained, which, in turn, produced more organic manure and ensured a higher yield for the crops.

English agriculture became the most productive in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, well before the advent of industrialization. Landlords, who

already by 1700 controlled three-quarters of England's farm land, contributed to rising output and yields by enclosing land and providing capital. But it is now increasingly recognized that it was not them but tenants and owner-occupiers who were in the forefront of the new land use patterns and technologies. Before about 1960, the standard view on British agricultural change assigned it to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, during the period of parliamentary enclosures, which were seen as its cause. A few works suggest that that the fastest growth in agricultural output occurred *before* 1760 and this growth was surpassed (or probably doubled) in 1800-30, as agriculture became more capital-intensive.

The ability of British agriculture to sustain industrialization on an expanded food basis has, however, been questioned. Addressing the phenomenon of 'A British food puzzle' in 1995, Huberman and Lindert pointed out that even as per capita income was growing from 1770 to 1850, food supplies per capita stagnated or even declined. This is the food puzzle. To match the demand from rising real incomes, domestic agriculture should have grown, they suggest, by 172%-228% in 1770-1850. But there was actually little gain in productivity in this period. This implies a decline in living standards since food consumption fell during the period of the British Industrial revolution despite apparently rising real incomes.

French agriculture increased markedly from 1815 to the early 1870s, the period during which rapid, sustained growth was seen to have occurred in both total and per capita agricultural production in all regions of France. It grew steadily and rapidly enough to feed a growing population, a decreasing proportion of which was engaged in agriculture, and to meet the demand for industrial raw materials (barring raw cotton, which was hardly surprising or unique to the case of France). Productivity per unit of capital employed in agriculture increased steadily throughout the nineteenth century.

Annie Moulin has elaborately argued a case for the consequences of the French Revolution having lain not in the creation of a capitalist economy but rather in the consolidation for a century and a half (up to about 1950) of a system of small-scale peasant agriculture based on subsistence and the intensive use of family labour. Over the nineteenth century (1815/24 to 1905/13), productivity per worker employed in French agriculture grew by 0.25% annually, against 1% in Britain. The main reason was apparently that the French economy retained a far higher share of its labour supply in the countryside rather than relocating it to industry. There was a pressure of population on the land and the cultivation of soils of declining fertility. Yields per hectare cultivated in France were around 75% of the British level for most of the nineteenth century.

It has been argued that rural France provided little impetus as a market for industrial goods. Overall, French cultivators saved to buy land rather than manufactured goods. There was, indeed, an enduring autarky in rural France. Until about 1870, notes Eugene Weber, 'many peasants bought only iron and salt, paid for all else in kind and were paid the same way, husbanded their money for taxes or hoarded it to acquire more land.' Through most of the nineteenth century, the internal terms of trade moved in favour of agriculture. The French countryside provided relatively few workers for industry; this reflects the fact that a majority of Frenchmen preferred to remain on farms. David Landes cites an estimate that as much as 55% of the labour force was in agriculture in 1789 and this was still true in 1886; by 1950, the proportion had fallen to one-third. Historians like Dunham and Kindleberger have, however, come to the conclusion that French industry had an adequate supply of labour in the nineteenth century.

The transformation of German agriculture had to await the emancipation of the peasantry. This process started with the legal reforms of 1807-21 and was largely accomplished by 1830 in the western provinces and by 1840 in the eastern provinces. The legislation effected the abolition of seigneurial duties concerning the legal protection of peasants, the removal of burdensome feudal obligations and improved efficiency of production by the use of wage labour. Agricultural production increased more than three-fold during the nineteenth century, while population increased by a factor of 2.3. The share of agricultural employment fell with industrialization. Germany was almost completely self-sufficient in foodstuffs till about 1850 and German farmers produced a surplus of grain, wool and timber for export. After that, Germany was increasingly unable to feed herself: Germany became a net importer of wheat, oats and barley. But agricultural productivity went on rising, although not as rapidly as in industry and the craft trades.

12.9 THE CAPITALIST ENTREPRENEUR

The pre-capitalist social system, that of the *ancien regime*, was one of 'estates.' An estate was a stratum in which all the three major benefits—privilege, power, and prestige—were largely determined at birth and, also, were fixed as *legal* inequalities. The aristocracy constituted the dominant estate, stratified within itself. The Church constituted a separate stratum, but not determined by birth. But even in the 'Third Estate', the stratum of urban tradesmen and artisans, the guild system carefully regulated the distribution of benefits. The modern bourgeoisie grew out of the Third Estate, as, for instance, the developments preceding the French Revolution make very clear. It is very significant that one of the first demands of this new class was legal equality of all – or at least of those above a certain minimal level of wealth. In other words, the relation of an individual to the order of privilege should no longer be determined by birth or by royal favour but rather by his role and success in the production process. Max Weber placed the contrast between estates and classes at the core of his theory of social stratification and Marx made this a key criterion in his analysis of what constituted a class. When Marx used the concept of class in political analysis, he held that a class must have a certain degree of cohesion and sense of common purpose, as well as a common relationship to the means of production. Feudal estates were too internally stratified to possess this attribute.

One very significant change with capitalist industrialization has been the enormous expansion of the middle strata. Capitalist accountancy called for a secular bureaucracy, an army of agents and clerks to keep accounts, to attend to correspondence, to furnish the news necessary in order to take advantage, if possible before anyone else, of changed market conditions. So perhaps the first visible entry of capitalism into the medieval town was made by the grammar school, where the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic were the main objects of study. The control of paper became the mark of the new commercial bureaucracy. The institution that marked the turning point in the development of the commercial town was the Bourse, or exchange, which began to serve as a centre for large-scale, impersonal commercial transactions in the thirteenth century.

The basic cause of this development was undoubtedly technological. An ever-smaller portion of the labour force was required for the actual tasks of material production, allowing the diversion of ever larger numbers of workers into administrative activities. There was also a vast expansion of the state bureaucracies. The rise of the capitalist firm as a new and immensely important form of economic organization has also encouraged the growth of a bureaucracy. It has meant a separation between the legal ownership of property and the function of economic control of the assets it

entails. It has been suggested that effective *control* over economic resources rather than legal *ownership* of them is the defining criterion for the top capitalist class. Thus Nicos Poulantzas, in *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* begins by defining the bourgeoisie not in terms of a legal category of property ownership but in terms of 'economic ownership' (that is, real economic control of the means of production and of the products) and 'possession' (that is, the capacity to put the means of production into operation). By this criterion, the managers belong to the capitalist bourgeoisie proper.

In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Max Weber makes it clear that a capitalist enterprise and the pursuit of gain are not at all the same thing. People have always wanted to be rich, but that has little to do with capitalism, which he identifies as 'a regular orientation to the achievement of profit through (nominally peaceful) economic exchange'. Pointing out that there were mercantile operations – very successful and of considerable size – in Babylon, Egypt, India, China, and medieval Europe, he says that it is only in Europe, since the Reformation, that capitalist activity has become associated with the *rational organisation of formally free labour*.

It called for a new type of economic agent, the capitalist entrepreneur. One of Weber's insights that has remained widely accepted is that the capitalist entrepreneur is a very distinctive type of human being. Weber was fascinated by what he thought to begin with was a puzzling paradox. In many cases, men—and a few women—evinced a drive toward the accumulation of wealth but at the same time showed a 'ferocious asceticism,' a singular absence of interest in the worldly pleasures that such wealth could buy. Many entrepreneurs actually pursued a lifestyle that was 'decidedly frugal'. Was this not odd? Weber thought he had found an answer in what he called the 'this-worldly asceticism' of Puritanism, a notion that he expanded by reference to the concept of 'the calling'. This idea dates from the Reformation, and behind it lies the idea that the highest form of moral obligation of the individual, the best way to fulfil his duty to God, is to help his fellow men, now, in this world. Weber backed these assertions by pointing out that the accumulation of wealth, in the early stages of Capitalism, and in Calvinist countries in particular, was morally sanctioned only if it was combined with 'a sober, industrious career'. For Weber, capitalism was originally sparked by religious fervour. Without that fervour the organization of labour that made capitalism so different from what had gone before would not have been possible.

Weber was familiar with the religions and economic practices of non-European areas of the world, such as India, China or the Middle East, and this imbued *The Protestant Ethic* with an authority it might otherwise not have had. He argued that in China, for example, widespread kinship units provided the predominant forms of economic co-operation, naturally limiting the influence both of the guilds and of individual entrepreneurs. In India, Hinduism was associated with great wealth in history, but its tenets about the afterlife prevented the same sort of energy that built up under Protestantism, and capitalism proper never developed. Europe also had the advantage of inheriting the tradition of Roman Law, which provided a more integrated juridical practice than elsewhere, easing the transfer of ideas and facilitating the understanding of contracts.

For Max Weber, 'rational restlessness' was the psychological make-up of Europe, the opposite of what he found in the main religions of Asia: rational acceptance of social order by Confucianism and its irrational antithesis in Taoism; mystical acceptance of social order by Hinduism; the worldly retreat in Buddhism. Weber located rational restlessness especially in Puritanism.

Such persons are 'enterprising' because they are liberated from strong communal ties, which enable them to seek new opportunities without the constraints of collective traditions, customs and taboos. This clearly involves a certain 'ego ideal', a strong discipline, traits that Weber called 'inner-worldly asceticism.' This type of individual is concerned with the affairs of this world, is pragmatic and geared to action, as against the more contemplative or sensitive values. He is also self-denying, prepared for 'delayed gratification', as against someone who immediately spends all he makes. Weber pointed out that it is this 'asceticism', rather than acquisitiveness, that distinguishes the capitalist entrepreneur.

Joseph Schumpeter stressed the central role of the capitalist entrepreneur, rather than the stock of capital, as the incarnation of technical progress. In *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1943), he sought to change thinking about economics no less than John Maynard Keynes had done. Schumpeter was firmly opposed to both Marx and Keynes. His main thesis was that the capitalist system is essentially static: for employers and employees as well as for customers, the system settles down with no profit in it, and there is no wealth for investment. Workers receive just enough for their labour, based on the cost of producing and selling goods. Profit, by implication, can only come from innovation, which for a limited time cuts the cost of production (until competitors catch up) and allows a surplus to be used for further investment.

Two things followed from this. First, capitalists themselves are not the motivating force of capitalism, but instead entrepreneurs who invent new techniques or machinery by means of which goods are produced more cheaply. Schumpeter did not think that entrepreneurship could be taught, or inherited. It was, he believed, an essentially 'bourgeois' activity. What he meant by this was that, in any urban environment, people would have ideas for innovation, but who had those ideas, when and where they had them, and what they did with them was unpredictable. Bourgeois people acted not out of any theory or philosophy but for pragmatic self-interest. This flatly contradicted Marx's analysis.

The second element of Schumpeter's outlook was that profit, as generated by entrepreneurs, was temporary. Whatever innovation was introduced would be followed up by others in that sector of industry or commerce, and a new stability would eventually be achieved. This meant that for Schumpeter capitalism was inevitably characterized by cycles of boom and stagnation.

12.10 BOURGEOIS CULTURE

From the viewpoint of the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie appeared above all as 'vulgar.' What did this mean? It meant, essentially, that these people insisted that economic success should count as much as noble birth, family virtue, personal honour, and proximity to the throne. The word 'vulgar' derives from the Latin *vulgus*, denoting common, ordinary people, as against the patricians. This 'vulgarity' was morally shocking as much as it was politically threatening.

Bourgeois culture, at least from the seventeenth century and into its triumphal nineteenth century, developed in sharp and conscious distinction from the culture of the aristocracy, the earlier ruling class against which the bourgeoisie had to establish its ascendancy. The ideal of the bourgeois gentleman was deliberately counterposed to the older, aristocratic, ideal of the gentleman. The bourgeois extolled 'rationality' against the aristocrat's reliance on 'healthy instinct' and spontaneity. The bourgeois knew that his life-style was a matter of self-cultivation; the aristocrat always believed

(falsely) that his was the result of genetic inheritance or, as he would say, of 'breeding.' The bourgeoisie was, virtually from the beginning, a literate class; the aristocracy contained many individuals who were proudly illiterate. The bourgeoisie believed in the virtue of work, as against the aristocratic idealisation of genteel leisure. The deliberate display of wealth was an aristocratic rather than a bourgeois trait. Bourgeois culture, most importantly for industrialization, was individuating at the core of its world-view.

This prompted R.H. Tawney in 1921 to argue that capitalism had created *The Acquisitive Society*. He thought that capitalism misjudged human nature, elevating production and the making of profit, which ought to be a means to certain ends, into ends in themselves. This had the effect, he argued, of encouraging the wrong instincts in people, by which he meant acquisitiveness. A very religious man (and a socialist intellectual), Tawney felt that acquisitiveness went against the grain – in particular, it sabotaged 'the instinct for service and solidarity' that is the basis for traditional civil society. He thought that in the long run capitalism was incompatible with culture. Under capitalism, he wrote, culture became more private, less was shared, and this trend went against the common life of men – individuality inevitably promoted inequality. The very concept of culture therefore changed, becoming less and less an inner state of mind and more a function of one's possessions. He also contended that capitalism was incompatible with democracy because the inequalities endemic in capitalism, made more visible than ever by the acquisitive accumulation of consumer goods, would ultimately threaten social cohesion.

12.11 SUMMARY

In this Unit you have seen the myriad ways in which capitalist industrialization took place in Europe. You have also seen the ways in which scholars have tried to understand this phenomenon which even today remains central to our lives. Terms like bourgeoisie, capitalist entrepreneur, bourgeois culture have become parts of our everyday vocabulary and despite a comprehensive criticism of this phenomenon which presumably led to large-scale underdevelopment in large parts of the globe (see Unit 14), especially by Marxist thinkers, it retains its hold over our existence. There have been attempts to provide alternative frameworks of shaping human lives, economic structures etc, one of them being the socialist industrialization (about which you would read in the next Unit), and yet it still is very much present before us, albeit in more complex forms.

12.12 EXERCISES

1) Define Capital and Capitalism.

2) Discuss the role of technology in the process of capitalist industrialization.

3) Who is a capitalist entrepreneur? Discuss in the light of the debates around the term.

4) How different was bourgeois culture from the aristocratic culture?

UNIT 13   SOCIALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION

Structure

13.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous Units of this Block you have read about the march of modern progress through the development in international economic formations. Starting from the late medieval age and commercial capitalism, this economic progress further led to the coming of industrial capitalism. All these phases were associated with the advent and establishment of the principles of capitalist economy. But in the early years of 19th century a parallel critique of this market driven capitalist economy had begun. There was attempt to think of alternate economic models. Foremost among such thinkers were Marx and Engels apart from others. But the real testing time for this

socialist model came with the October Revolution in Russia in 1917. It is in the backdrop of these developments that you would read about the background and later developments in the formulation and application of this model, mainly in Europe.

The Nineteenth Century Background

Inevitably, since the socialist critique of capitalism was so varied in Europe, socialism meant different forms of practice before the October Revolution in Russia (1917). It implied activity to strengthen Trades Unions, Friendly Societies and labour 'syndicates' with or without the assistance of political parties. It also implied the encouragement of utopian communities (such as Robert Owen's New Lanark) which would be a beacon of what was most fit and most wholesome. Socialism could also mean an interest in cooperative enterprise and various forms of community enterprise that would benefit the public as a whole rather than any one individual. The latter led to initiatives associated with 'municipal socialism' or 'municipal trading', i.e. the running of urban facilities for fuel, water and lighting. There was little here that envisaged how the economy as a whole could be reoriented in practice, even if there was some focus on wide-ranging measures to protect labour through schemes or insurance against unemployment and sickness, or the redistribution of land among peasant proprietors. Suggestions for government controls over the 'commanding heights' of the economy (that is the coal industry or the steel industry) were voiced. But it was not certain how this would be done. Most socialists had an abiding fear of the state and state control as a possible source of intensification of exploitation rather than a solution to it. Before the onset of the First World War, in fact, nationalization (i.e. the state take-over of industry) was looked upon as merely one way of constituting an area of activity where the proletariat had no say, rather than as a means of controlling capitalism.

13.2 THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'SOCIALIST' MODEL OF ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION IN THE SOVIET UNION

With the coming of the October Revolution, entirely new sets of economic principles and policies were sought to be employed with the purpose of achieving a socialist state. In this section, different phases of these programmes have been discussed and also the kind of impact it brought on the Soviet economy and society.

13.2.1 Significance

In such circumstances, where there was no model of a 'socialist' economy before 1914, practices in Soviet Russia after the October Revolution were the first major large-scale experiment with socialism in Europe and became a model of socialism. By 1939, the main features of this 'model' were fundamental restrictions on private property, major state regulation of production, finance and trade, and a system of Planning which schematized the economy and provided flexible targets and goals. Governments, as they evolved state control of the economy, used public welfare as their reference point. The economy was regularly mapped, in order to indicate where state investment was necessary: initially through 'control figures' and later through adjustable Plan figures. Hence, the economy, as it matured, was called a 'Planned Economy'. The system of 'Planning' was highly innovative. It was only feasible because relatively high control over different economic sectors made the mobilization

of resources possible on an unparalleled scale, ignoring market pressures of demand and supply. Such control over the economy was unknown in any economy before 1917, even in conditions of War.

The Bolshevik Party, which took power in October, was the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party, which was duly renamed the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik). Its members were committed socialists and encouraged the notion that the Soviet economy was a socialist economy, and was an exemplar for socialism. Each step of economic reform was justified as a contribution to socialism. The Komintern, and Communist Parties in Europe took up the refrain. Socialist parties in France, Britain, Germany and Italy did not adopt Soviet technique when in power. But since a long stint of socialist government was rare anywhere else, the Soviet economy became the reference for what socialism was. After 1945, the prototype was exported to Eastern Europe, whose experience added a new dimension to the model. Economists such as Maurice Dobb, encouraged such notions, as did CMEA economists such as Oskar Lange, W. Bruz etc.

The Soviet Planned Economy was considered the archetype of socialist experiment. The Bolsheviks set out to provide the benefits of industrial development to as many people, in as just a manner, in as short a time as possible.

Here, we shall deal with how the Soviet system came to take shape during 1917-1989, and how it evolved in the CMEA countries. The stages of development are important, since all of them, at various times, have been defined as 'socialist'. Also, two points must be noted in addition to the features mentioned above. First, the socialist initiative cannot speak for all initiative in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe at this time. Both in Russia and in Eastern Europe, sectors operated (however weak) which did not follow the priorities and logic of socialist experiment. Again, ideas from the Soviet model were taken up and used by 'socialist' governments in France, Britain and Italy after 1945. Their initiatives must also be added to the economic record of European socialism.

13.2.2 Debates

Some debates about Soviet industrialization deserve attention.

i)   Was socialist industrialization on the Soviet pattern more concerned with socialism and justice than with economic growth?

Socialist historians such as Maurice Dobb have argued that Soviet industrialization came about through policies that had an eye to economic and industrial growth as well as social justice. Ideas of socialism, defined by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, were important in everything that occurred; and steps taken for growth were a success. Some non-socialist historians such as Jasny have agreed that growth was achieved, while others, such as Alec Nove, have argued that, even if there was growth, the industrialization was inefficient and the weaknesses were the result of obsessions with socialist doctrines. E.H. Carr and R.W. Davies pioneered work that goes against this kind of perspective. They showed how the Soviet leadership was divided on the meaning of socialism and evolved policy while adapting to problems of growth. Davies, though, disagrees with Carr that this was *generally* true. He feels that concerns with doctrine and politics became crucial in the 1930s in Soviet policy. In recent writings in the Russian Federation, there is a division of opinion about how important doctrine was in socialist industrialization. The debate is important because it raises questions about whether Soviet socialism deserves attention as an experiment that took stock of what was convenient and useful for the country's population. Clearly one perspective runs that it was an experiment where policy

makers lost a sense of what could lead to prosperity because they became wrapped up in Soviet politics and in ideas about what was socialism.

ii) Was socialist industrialization on the Soviet pattern a product of Russian circumstances and inapplicable for other countries or regions?

A line of argument also runs that Soviet industrialization was not socialist since socialism could not be constructed in an underdeveloped country like Russia where industrial capitalism had been weak. V.I. Lenin, the leader of the October Revolution, himself did not consider it possible for Russia to build socialism without a revolution in the West. He was disturbed about the prospects of constructing socialism in a country which was mainly agricultural, where industrial and finance capitalism were features of the late 19th century. Following this position, socialism in Russia is regarded as a travesty: economic experiment on a bad foundation with socialist jargon thrown in.

There are some problems with this argument. It implies that socialist experiments cannot occur where there is no advanced capitalism: that socialist industrialization must post-date capitalist industrialization. Marx was not certain about this. In correspondence with Vera Zasulich, the Populist activist, in the 1870s, Marx conceded that Russia might be able to proceed to socialism, bypassing capitalism, since Russia possessed institutions which lacked capitalist orientation and which were deeply influential. They were discussing the prevalence in Russian agriculture of the repartitional commune, which prevented accumulation of land in peasant land tenure. Other questions can also be raised. What is adequate capitalism? Lenin wrote in 1891 that Russian agriculture was capitalist, and that the commune was in retreat. Did not this provide some ground for socialist construction, even it was not the foundation that Lenin wanted? Again, in countries which are backward even when capitalism has developed elsewhere, is full-blown capitalist development always possible? Or will socialism have to finish off the job that capitalism was meant to achieve? Leon Trotsky suggested that this might be necessary. In the Soviet Union and later in Eastern Europe, were we dealing with such situations? These remain important questions in economic history, and debates on 'development'.

iii) Was Soviet socialism an instrument of a new ruling class in Russia and a Russian instrument to rule non-Russian territories of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe?

This perspective has been raised by Leon Trotsky (*The Revolution Betrayed*), and the historian who has followed his ideas most closely, Isaac Deutscher (in his biographies of Trotsky and Stalin). Since it is somewhat a social question, it will be dealt with in the unit on social development under socialism. Certainly, as 13.3.8 and 13.3.9 of the next section indicate, Soviet economic development registered a good deal of inequality. Also, in Eastern Europe, in the early phase and in the late 1970s, the Soviet Union was harsh in his treatment of 'fraternal' socialist countries. It remains a moot point though whether these 'inequalities' were substantial. Surely they came to be considered substantial when growth itself was in a poor state (in the 1980s)?

iv) The Anders Aslund perspective

The anti-Soviet economist has recently advanced the notion that Soviet production was so incompetent that it does not deserve serious attention as growth. This has been his answer to contemporary criticism of the post Soviet economy of the Russian Federation, where growth rates have been negative (i.e. the economy has contracted). The argument runs that so much worthless production took place in the Soviet economy and that shortages were so great that we cannot seriously talk of growth.

Aslund's perspective *may* hold good for a limited period (the 1970s and 80s) -
although only with heavy qualifications. More significant, though, is an underlying
assumption of most of his work i.e. that the Soviet economic system was, in the long
term, incapable of wealth-generation.

13.3   THE SOVIET EXPERIENCE

The focus of these debates, that is the construction of a socialist economy in Soviet
Russia (the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic until 1924, the USSR
thereafter), occurred in five major stages: the period of workers' control (1917-
June 1918), War Communism (June 1918-March 1921), the New Economic Policy
(1921-1927); the Planned Economy in its early phase (1929-1939); the
reconstruction of the Soviet economy (1945-56); the development and crisis of a
globally oriented socialist economy (1956-1989). The existence of stages of
development indicates that there was no one sense of what a socialist economy
should be. Ideas changed, as the USSR moved to the state-controlled economy
that was the mark of socialism from 1939 to 1989.

13.3.1   Background and the Period of Workers' Control

The period before the construction of socialism in Russia after the 1917 October
Revolution was marked by the following features: small-scale cultivation in agriculture,
an artisanal sector weakened by wartime inflation and military conscription, large
concentrations of commercial agriculture in the Ukraine and South Russia, and large,
heavily cartellized privately-owned industrial complexes in the Donbass (Ukraine),
the Urals and the Central Industrial Region (the belt from Moscow to Petrograd).
Inflation was ubiquitous. Deterioration of infrastructure (railways, roads and canals)
was clear. Government controls over pricing and production were constituted under
the Tsarist war effort (before the 1917 February Revolution), operating through a
series of committees made up of management and officials. In the metals industry,
for instance, a committee set down production quotas and pricing restrictions. Such
committees continued to exist at the time of the October Revolution. The Provisional
Government (February 1917 – October 1917) instituted severe restrictions on grain
pricing and distribution. The Government also set up land committees to look into
the possibilities of redistribution of land in the localities. A lack of care over strict
budgeting led to spiralling inflation. Currency was printed with little respect to how
much specie or other securities the government possessed. The rouble depreciated
rapidly, resulting in a deterioration of the market. The latter was already in a sad
state since diversion of industry for manufacture for the war economy had led to a
decrease of goods available to everyday consumers. This in turn had discouraged
production for the market in the Russian countryside.

The Bolsheviks shaped policy to deal with all this in a territory which varied in size
during 1918-21. After the October coup, and limited violence, the Bolshevik
government (an alliance of Left Socialist Revolutionaries and Bolsheviks, legitimized
by sanction from the All-Russian Congress of Soviets), had reasonable control over
the territories of the Tsarist Empire that were free from German occupation. Following
the elections to the Constituent Assembly in December 1917 and the dismissal of
the Constituent Assembly in the following month, the situation changed. 'White'
(pro-Tsarist) forces gathered in the area north of the Black Sea, to oppose Bolshevik
authority. After the Treaty of Brest Litovsk (March 1918), Bolshevik Russia lost
large territories to Germany in the east, and also lost the Ukraine (which became a
German puppet state). The break with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries (March
1918) led to an enlargement of the opposition network in South Russia, where a

Committee of the Constituent Assembly was formed to represent the parliament that had been disbanded. Thereafter a Civil War broke out which was supported by Western interventionist forces: a war which continued until early 1920. During the period, Russia west of the Urals passed out of the hands of the Bolsheviks, as did almost all of the land of the Lower Volga and Central Asia. From 1920, the Bolsheviks established control in Siberia and Central Asia.

13.3.2 The Revolution, State Capitalism and Workers' Control

The main watchwords initially followed by Bolshevik policy makers to deal with the economy were 'state capitalism' and 'workers' control'. Here, state capitalism meant the operation of industry, trade and finance with the collaboration of the old entrepreneurial class, but with rigorous supervision by and participation from the state. This participation Lenin justified in his arguments in *State and Revolution* (discussed above). Workers control was an unspecific term: it did not indicate whether this meant the control of a factory by the factory workforce, or the control of a factory by a broader workforce which spanned an industry/many industries. The term did, however, clearly indicate some form of workers' control over management.

Following such watchwords, and wary of nationalization (which Bolsheviks did not think was necessarily socialist since it could be used as much by 'imperialists' as by socialists), the Bolsheviks first followed a policy of state take-over only in limited areas. Where nationalization took place, it was mainly the consequence of initiatives by factories or the soviets. The soviets which mattered in this case were the urban soviets, composed of 'workers' and 'soldiers': bodies constituted with little reference to electoral lists or proper procedure, but acknowledged to have greater popular authority than any other forms of local government. Nationalization and sequestration also took place in the countryside: but the scale was smaller, and restricted to handling large estates which had escaped redistribution.

The only case of outright state take-over was the banks. Following refusal to cooperate with the Bolshevik government by the banking establishment (the State Bank and 50 or so other major private and joint stock concerns), troops took over the State Bank premises (20th November 1917), and the main banks in Petrograd and Moscow (November 27th and 28th). This followed the declaration of the Central Executive Committee of the (VtsIK) of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets that banking was a state monopoly (27th November). Nationalized banks were merged into a National Bank later in 1918.

Elsewhere, in agriculture, land was redistributed according to principles of equality and labour (8th November 1917), except in the case of large estates which were devoted to 'industrial' crops, which would pass to state control under the Government's Land Committees. In industry, by a VTsIK decree of 27th November, manufacturing units were placed under workers' control, where workers' factory committees were to be responsible to an All Russian Council of Workers' Control and the local bodies on control that constituted it. Regulation of pricing of grain and other goods, however, was firmly continued through the Committees set up earlier.

Spontaneous nationalization of industry by workers, mismanagement under worker's control and the emigration of employers and management quickly took this situation to a new stage. Beyond the standard systems of control by special committees and the Komissariats (Narkomprod for supplies, Narkomfin for finance), a new regulating and supervisory agency was created on 18th December 1917 – the All Russian Council for the National Economy (Vesenka or VSNKh). Together with its local

agents (the Sovnarkhozy) in law it assumed authority over manufacturing. Vesenka took over committees which co-ordinated prices and industrial quotas, renaming them *glavki* (centres), which had greater administrative authority than their predecessors. Following the Treaty of Brest Litovsk (March 1918) and the onset of the Civil War, Vesenka ruled that the glavki control of individual enterprises be increased (3rd March), and each 'centre' was required to appoint a commissioner and two directors to firms under its control. From March, Larin, the leading light of Vesenka, called for 'planned nationalization' and suggested major public economic projects. The drift was reinforced by the essential rejection by senior Bolsheviks of Lenin's ideas of 'state capitalism' moreover – a rejection represented in the failure of negotiations with the steel magnate Meshcherskii and the entrepreneurs Stakheev and Gukovskii to set up powerful trusts which included capitalists and an official interest. The trend attained its fulfilment in the decree of 28th June 1918 (by VTsIK) where every branch of industry was nationalized. The overall running of industry was entrusted to Vesenka.

Throughout this workers' welfare was a major concern. After the October Revolution the VtsIK was quick to pass decrees on 11th November to establish the 8-hour day and the 48-hour week in industry, to specify limitations on the work of women and juveniles and forbid the employment of children under 14. Measures of unemployment and sickness insurance were anticipated in decrees of 24th December and 22nd December 1917. The All-Russian Congress of Trades Unions supported the measures and the Trades Unions (which embraced entire branches of industry rather than, as in Western and Central Europe, a particular trade), became agents for the enforcement of the measures. The conditions of war made it difficult to enforce the regulations, but they became a hallmark of the new order.

13.3.3   War Communism

The nationalization of industry (June 1918) marked the beginning of a regime of rigorous state control, which followed the period of 'workers' control'. The regime was termed 'War Communism' and developed as follows, covering industry in the core provinces of European Russia primarily, since other areas were in the hands of 'Whites' or 'Greens' until early 1920.

In agriculture, the period was characterized by attempts to encourage community cultivation over private cultivation. The Bolsheviks had broken with the Socialist Revolutionaries after the treaty of Brest Litovsk and the assassination of Mirbach (March 1918). The latter were the main supporters of private peasant cultivation in the government after October. After the break, the Bolsheviks tried to reshape agriculture by the formation of committees of poor peasants (kombedy) by a decree of June 1918. These committees were to assist the gathering of cereals by labour detachments from the towns: a crucial function since peasant grain marketing had plummeted following currency depreciation and decline in industrial production. The kombedy were also to spread propaganda in the countryside. The Bolsheviks also encouraged community cultivation through grants for agricultural associations, Soviet collective farms (sovkhozy), agricultural communes and other forms. By the end of 1918, when the poor response to the policy was evident, Party conferences ceased to talk about it.

Other aspects of economic policy were disastrous for agriculture. To provide food to the urban areas, brigades were sent to requisition grain at the prices established by the state. This took place often with no regard for the stock the peasant required during the subsequent season, and led to a steady worsening of the infrastructure for cultivation during 1919-20.

In industry, controls by Vesenka and Komissariats over enterprises increased during 1919-20. This was the result of attempts to remedy major problems of the Civil War and catastrophic inflation. Such problems were: the out-migration of population from urban areas owing to poor food supplies; the collapse of any system of credit and investment due to over issue of paper money; poor supplies of essential raw material to industry. Here, where the supplies crisis was met by forced requisitions, Narkomfin and Vesenka handled other problems by use of the glavki's powers to concentrate use of labour and ending payments between nationalized industries. By 1920 (when Soviet Russia's remaining bank, the National Bank, was abolished), Vesenka had all industrial payments referred to it or its agents. Where possible, such payments would be adjusted against each other; and the outstanding referred to the Komissariat of Finance which would note it for future adjustments. Rationing of food, clothes and fuel was standard.

Within such a system, trade was declared a state monopoly, except when it occurred through cooperatives or licensed traders operating a special area.

13.3.4 Variations in the Historian's Perspective on the Revolution and War Communism

Most European and US historians are agreed that the development of socialist industrialization to this point followed a meandering course, in which willingness to work with capitalists was clear and evident. They have also stressed the survival of Tsarist practices and institutions through the period. Russian historians, however, have disputed this, arguing that the Bolsheviks always meant to establish rigid state control over the economy. The new Russian scholars point to the doctrinaire obsessions of the period. Certainly, much of policy was justified by Lenin in terms of the proletarian and socialist character of the new regime: so there is good cause for thinking that Lenin was not working from expediency. Bolsheviks like N. Bukharin also justified aspects of what happened, such as the demonetization of the economy, as 'socialist'. It is unlikely, though, that in conditions of war, that inflexible doctrine was the lodestone of the new order, even if it was its reference point. Continuous adaptation was the order of the day, and the idea that ideology guided everything comes from its recurrence in what was said: the fact that some principle had to be followed as adaptation took place.

13.3.5 The New Economic Policy

Whatever such preoccupations, from 1921, perturbed by the low agricultural output in South Russia and the Ukraine, and the display of disenchantment among strong Bolsheviks during the Kronstadt uprising (March 1921), Bolshevik policy makers, it is agreed, introduced measures to make the economy more flexible and performance-oriented. The changes gave 'socialism' a new image: less centralized and less hostile to the practices of the capitalist economies.

The urgency of reforms was demonstrated by the famine that swept south and south-east Russia during the summer of 1921. The New Economic Policy, which was set in motion in February 1921, sought to revitalize the market, which had come to be associated with rationing, cooperative trading or black market operations. Dependence on requisitions for food supplies was abandoned. A tax in kind was levied on cultivators, enabling peasants to gauge state requirements precisely, and establish an impression of what could be kept in reserve and how much could be sold on the market. Later, this tax was transformed into a proper tax in cash, while government purchased grain on the market at specified rates.

Encouragement to peasants to market grain was provided by currency reform - whereby gold roubles and later chervonets (gold and securities-backed currency) was put into circulation (1921-22). Inflationary pressure on the new currency was reduced through a return to budgetary orientation (rather than an orientation to the needs of industry) and a proper system of revenue collection, based on customs dues, excise on a number of goods and taxation on certain professions. The creation of a new banking system (based on a State Bank which was established in October 1921) was intended to strengthen the new dispensation. Private trade was legalized to improve the distribution of agricultural produce and other goods.

A strong orientation towards everyday consumer demand was required of nationalized industry. Enterprises were to proceed to a system of khozrachet, i.e. to relate expenditure to income, rather than to rely on state subsidies. The authority of the glavkis was weakened, and enterprises were required to form trusts which would function independently. Measures were taken to encourage private enterprise, to make up for the weaknesses of state-run industry. A decree of 17th May 1921 revoked the decree nationalizing all small-scale industry; by a law of 7th July 1921, permission was given for the organization of enterprises provided he employed less than 20 workers; and by a decree of 5th July 1921, arrangements were made for the leasing of state enterprises.

The upshot of the new measures was initial uncertainty and long-term recovery. Socialism was given a new image: of a mixed economy, with limits on capitalism, and run by autonomous state corporations (trusts), under the supervision of the Vesenka. Teething trouble was evident and suggested greater problems. With the demand for industrial goods in 1922, a great increase in industrial prices took place, together with a fall in prices for agricultural goods. This threatened the precarious interest shown by peasants in the market and was known as 'the scissors crisis'. Official intervention dealt with the problem on this occasion, but the very existence of the crisis indicated the poor level of consumer goods production at this time, as well as the dangerous consequences for relations between industry and agriculture should such poor production persist. Again, In 1921-23, many industries were unable to adjust to khozrachet and had to curtail activities drastically. In the case of some crucial sectors, the government intervened, but by and large trusts had to stand on their own feet, even though their access to the network of private trade was weak in the first years after the legalization of private trade.

13.3.6 Move towards Collectivization and the Planned Economy

A number of Bolsheviks were dissatisfied with the 'retreat' of the NEP. An exception was the economist Nikolai Bukharin (initially a great supporter of War Communism!). He argued for dependence on peasant consumption, imports where necessary and slow industrial growth based on it. Again, A. Chayanov was uncertain that bourgeois forces were taking over in the countryside, and pointed out that such impressions came from poor understanding of the 'peasant economy', where united family activity gave an impression of great prosperity, although the property that was accumulated around it was quickly divided in the long term, as the family itself divided. L.N. Trotsky and E.I. Preobrazhenskii warned that the new dispensation would derail socialism, leading to dependence on rich peasants and the 'NEP bourgeoisie', i.e. the main traders and entrepreneurs of the time. Their 'left opposition' persistently argued this position (and demanded the encouragement of revolution elsewhere as a solution to Soviet Russia's problems). They were ignored by Bolsheviks who were satisfied with the terms of the NEP, and the industrial recovery it achieved. The 'left', hence, collapsed as a political force by 1927.

The sharp decline of grain supplies in 1928-29, at prices set by the state, however, changed the opinions of many Bolshevik leaders (except Bukharin and his supporters). The phenomenon disturbed them as, from 1927, they focused on the First Five Year Plan for economic growth, to go beyond industrial 'recovery'. This 'Plan', which later became an essential connotation of a socialist economy, was a general assessment of the economy, indicating potentials, and isolating possible targets for different sectors. How hard and fast the targets were depended on who handled the plan - with politicians regarding them as necessary and possible, while economists considered them as possible, desirable but adjustable.

The poor availability of food at government rates boded an ominous future for the growth of the industrial economy on the scale Soviet politicians wanted. In certain areas of the Urals and Siberia, the shortfall in grain procurements by the government led to requisitions on the War Communism model. But a more severe alternative was pursued in the following year. Faced with a repetition of the 1928 situation, if not worse, as grain prices soared on the private market, the CPSU Politburo decided to embark on strict regulation of agriculture through the Collectivization of agriculture. Here, peasant farmers were grouped into collective farms (kolkhozy), which covered the territory of several peasant settlements. The kolkhoz administration took over the land cultivated, as well as the inventory (machines, livestock, ploughs etc.), leaving the peasant a small plot, adjacent to his house, which he was permitted to cultivate for his own personal use. The cultivator was required to continue with his work, the difference being that his produce would be marketed by the kolkhoz administration and he/she would receive a remuneration linked to the work put in. In most cases, the head of the kolkhoz administration was a Bolshevik loyalist – frequently a 'worker' from the urban areas.

Collectivization was resisted with force in the Ukraine and Kazakhstan (where independent peasant farming was strong, and where community farming was weak). By 1932, however, the kolkhoz was the standard institution of peasant land organization and cultivation. Using the collective farm, the government increased grain procurements. It was also able to set rock-bottom prices for agriculture, charge 'turnover' taxes when grain left the kolkhoz, and charge high taxes elsewhere, when agricultural products were sold. Thereby it provided reasonably priced food for workers in the factories set up under the First Five Year Plan, and ensured adequate revenue for itself, which could be invested in industrial construction. The peasant was thus forced to invest in capital industry – a process which socialist theoreticians equated to the process of industrial capital accumulation that had taken place during the Industrial Revolution in the West, albeit through the means of the market. Sales of grain abroad also gave the government funds to buy machinery for industrialization under the First Plan, while the only gain to agriculture was the slow establishment of Machine Tractor Stations (MTS) which were designed to improve agricultural productivity. Inevitably, figures for industrial output for the First Plan were impressive (even if they fell short of Plan targets).

	1927-28	1932 (plan)	1932 (actual)
Coal (million tonnes)	35.0	75.0	64.0
Oil (million tonnes)	11.7	21.7	21.4
Iron ore (million tonnes)	6.7	20.2	12.1
Pig iron (million tonnes)	3.2	10.0	6.2

Source: A. Nove, *An Economic History of the USSR*

13.3.7 Further Developments during the Period of Recovery (1945-64)

Collectivization, the Planned Economy, nationalized banking and the prevalence of large trusts in industry and trade (often called 'kombinaty') were to be the hallmarks of Soviet socialism for the next fifty years. The institutions came to represent economic socialism. The Soviet government undertook large projects within the framework of the system (such as General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev's 'Virgin Lands' scheme to increase land under cultivation). A major feature of the economy for the whole period was the use of revenue for arms industries and expansion of the armed forces with only a marginal eye to improvement of consumer goods. The mechanism of the Planned Economy made this possible.

Innovations did take place. Some were undertaken with a fixed eye to collective enterprise; some were undertaken with an eye to a decrease of the burden on agriculture, and some bearing in mind the private sector that survived in agriculture. In the case of the burden on agriculture, for instance, procurement prices were increased after 1952 to set right the anomalous nature of prices paid to the kolkhoz - which were often insufficient to meet the cost of delivery of collective farm products. Taxes on private plots in agriculture were substantially reduced. Various experiments of the post 1952 period, however, with no attention to local circumstances, indicated often how the Planning system could be misused. After 1956, for instance, Nikita Khruschev, the Party General Secretary, disapproved of the cultivation of grasses (for fodder): and many fields were dug up just because of this disapproval. Attempts at decentralizing the Planning process through the creation of 'sovnarkhozy' - in principle admirable for the increase of popular involvement - merely led to 'localism' in industrial policy. This meant that the broad sense that planners had, as well as their knowledge, was wholly downplayed, and ridiculous instances of local favouritism crept into economic development.

13.3.8 On the 'Heroic' Phase of Socialist Industrialization

This last phase of socialist industrialization has attracted imaginative comment recently. Stephen Kotkin, for instance, in his *Magnetic Mountain*, (University of California Press, 1995), proceeds far beyond the position of Alec Nove and his sympathizers. Nove stresses the inefficiencies and bottlenecks of the planned economy, as well as the imaginative ideas that went into it, while Kotkin regards such unintegrated treatment, or a fixation with Bolshevik ideology, to be a limited perspective. Providing a picture which goes beyond these perspectives, Kotkin's focus is Magnitogorsk i.e. the steel production centre created during the First Five Year Plan in the high flatlands of the Urals, on the Ural River, by Magnetic Mountain. Kotkin treats the city as a microcosm of Soviet life. He shows how this putative showcase for Soviet socialist living came to be conceived; how the plans for its construction were pell mell executed and how 'the idiocy of urban life' was the consequence.

The 'heroic', 'breakneck' construction of the factory complex at Magnetic Mountain is reduced to a farce in Kotkin's history. He points out that the location itself was deemed questionable and, despite later legend, the complex got off the ground slowly. The reality was a shoddy plant where there were 550 stoppages of work in the first year alone and ultimate closure for complete reconstruction in November 1933.

Expansion at Magnitogorsk, in the years to come, followed a pattern common to the Planned Economy. Over invoicing, cooked books, exaggerated statistics of production and mismanagement for the sake of record and rhetoric: this litany, meticulously documented by Kotkin, lay behind the further construction of blast

furnaces, coke batteries, open-hearth ovens and blooming mills. Much of this held good for industrial expansion in established sites in the Ukraine and St. Petersburg. It also held good for new sites such as Kuznetsk.

There was often little choice of whether to go or not, and mobilization went along the lines described by one labourer: 'Comrades, you're going to Magnitka. Do you know what Magnitka is?'/'No, we haven't a clue'/'Unfortunately neither do we, but you're going to Magnitka all the same'.

Social and family life in the city's cold and isolation degenerated into cards, drinking, abuse and delinquency, despite the efforts of the Komsomol and Party stalwarts. The various 'clubs' for locals were characterized by lack of heating and other elementary facilities; poor urban communications, appalling distribution arrangements for essentials (all planned with a lack of appreciation for local requirements) left little time for recreation and culture. The only hot spots in this mess were the Magnit cinema hall, the circus and a small local theatre. Little wonder that many who came initially arrived on short contracts, and fled at the earliest. When passports were introduced to restrict movements, a trade in false documents quickly ensued.

In such conditions, the lexicon of Soviet achievement was spread; the bruiting of socialist attainments and the 'heroic' depiction of every venture compelled public wonder for what was often little better than a cloaca. Equally, the labour achievement awards for Stakhanovites, the 'proper' classification and description of workers, and the 'proper' recording of worker biographies, providing the necessary terms, gave the inhabitants of the socialist urban complex their social identity. As Kotkin points out, however, many failed to play their allotted role, just as solid proletariat refused to lay off rearing goats and cows, despite the exhortations of Party faithful.

13.3.9 The Private Sector

Imaginative though Kotkin's perspective is, it fails to detail the strength of private enterprise in the midst of this 'planned system' or 'command economy'. In agriculture, this was crucial, as indicated in the following statistics of kolkhoz market sales (i.e. returns from the sale of produce from private plots in the collective farm). At a time when kolkhoz incomes in total came to about 12.5 billion roubles, such sales provided (in billions of roubles):

1940	29.1
1950	49.2
1951	50.8
1952	53.7

Source: Alec Nove, *An Economic History of the USSR*

In industry also, however, there was a tendency for various deals to be made within the framework of the plan as many memoirs have recently pointed out. The dynamic role of management in the Soviet space is rarely discussed as yet, the assumption being that blind following of the plan was the order of the day. Soviet sources, who always congratulated themselves, give the impression that whatever the Party said was good enough. They rarely show (except in stray incidents) how planned production worked, despite many obstacles, and how it also created a space for aggrandizement which gave the enterprise under socialist industrialization a dynamic of its own.

13.4 SPREAD OF THE SOVIET MODEL IN EASTERN EUROPE

After the Second World War, Eastern European countries and the Baltic states adopted many aspects of the Soviet model, although they initially favoured very moderate versions of it since, unlike the case of Russia in 1917, the state had hitherto played a moderate role in the economy. In the Baltic states, the assimilation into Soviet practice was quick, since Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia became members of the USSR. Elsewhere in Eastern Europe, the move came after the statement of the Truman Doctrine, the initiation of the Marshall Plan and the formation of the Cominform (1947). After this the USSR encouraged countries under its political control to adopt its own perspectives on economic development. The Soviet model's crucial role in the region's economic development was the result of the USSR's post-war military presence in the region and its position as the main recipient of reparations from Hungary and Rumania, who had supported the Axis powers. In a departure from what occurred in the Soviet Union, though, almost in all cases, in the form of socialist industrialization that took place, small-scale cultivation played an important part in agriculture, although collectivization was encouraged in the years after 1949 for a brief period, and various measures were taken to hold such cultivation together in collective or cooperative enterprise. Hungary, (and to some extent Rumania) were slightly exceptional. Here large state farms also had a major role in agriculture. This was an outcome of the organization of agriculture in Hungary and Rumania before 1945, when large latifundia played a considerable part in agriculture. The share of such latifundia substantially passed on to the state.

A decade-long experience of extreme varieties of Soviet-style planning and state control in these countries came under the aegis of the Cominform and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, acting in tandem as sources of pressure, in the period after 1949. A good deal of industrial output was sold to the USSR at reduced rates (sometimes linked to reparations, as in the case of Hungary and East Germany, but sometimes not, as in the case of Poland). The 'Stalinist' experiment was subject to major attacks during the mid 1950s (during the disturbances in Hungary and Poland in 1956), but it was only modified in any meaningful manner after the approval to economic reform by the Soviet economist Liberman in the Soviet newspaper *Pravda* in September 1962. Here, the reform focused on: a reduction in planned targets; a greater stress on profitability; economic rewards for efficiency; greater variety in pricing; greater industrial concentration, accompanied by decentralization. Stiffer controls were reintroduced rapidly, though, after 1968 (and the move against economic reform in Czechoslovakia). The only country which was able to maintain its reforms was Hungary, where, despite the ups and downs of the reform system, imports of Western technology, relative freedom of movement abroad and encouragement of small-scale private industry became a permanent feature of the country by the late 1970s. In all countries, increase of Soviet oil prices in 1975 seriously destabilized the economies.

13.4.1 Hungary

With Soviet occupation, a Hungarian National Independence Front, comprising a number of radical and socialist parties formed a Provisional Government (December 1944) which quickly moved towards economic reform. At the time, large-scale private wealth dominated the economy. In agriculture, there existed a number of latifundia or great estates that were commercially oriented and that were owned by aristocratic families (Esterhazys, Szechenyis, Karolyis and others). Smallholdings

which belonged to peasant proprietors were divided: some were very small, others substantial and geared to the market. Industry was concentrated, with the Credit Bank and the Commercial Bank having major shares in over 60% of what there was, and a number of important players running the important manufactures (the Vida, Kornfeld, Weiss and Dreher-Haggenmacher families primarily).

The reforms came in the following stages:

i)   In January 1945, workers control was introduced in almost all industry through a decree which gave major powers to factory committees.

ii)   By a decree of 17th March, the great estates were taken over by the state, as were the holdings of the Catholic Church. Almost all peasant farms were exempt from the decree. About 60% of the land was distributed - a large portion going to agricultural labourers and small-scale proprietors.

iii)   Despite the success of the non-socialist parties in the elections of November 1945, pressures from Soviet forces, the Communist and Socialist parties and a section of the Smallholders' Party forced through the nationalization of four of the country's largest industrial enterprises.

iv)   A Three Year Plan was adopted in July 1947. In the wake of the political crisis of 1947 (after the elections of Auguest) in November 1947, nationalization of the major banks followed, as did the adoption of a Three Year Plan. On 25th March 1948, the nationalization of factories employing more than 100 workers took place.

The implementation of the reforms fell to the Hungarian Working People's Party, which was created from a fusion of the Social Democrat and Communist Parties in June 1948. This party was reconstituted in 1956 as the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, following the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Both before and after 1956, the party dominated the government and followed the model of the Soviet economy. In the period up to 1956, intensive industrialization was the order of the day, with a stress on capital goods industries. Hence, under the first Five Year Plan (1950-54), industrial production increased by 130%, and machine industry production by 350%. There was little development of consumer industry, and collectivization of agriculture was encouraged. After 1956, cooperativization among small-holders, rather than collectivization, became the goal of the socialist economy, and a greater diversification into consumer industry was noticeable.

Under the New Economic Mechanism (launched on 1st January 1968), steps to develop a programme of 'liberalization' were undertaken. These involved greater imports of Western technology and freer travel abroad and independence to major enterprises: measures devised by Rezso Nyers, the country's best known 'reformist'. Increases of oil prices by the USSR led to a restoration of controls on enterprises, and heavy subsidies to maintain low domestic prices (and Nyers' removal from the Politburo). A return to a reform programme began in 1977, with restrictions on private farmers relaxed in 1980 (they were permitted to acquire machinery), gradual division of large enterprises and license to small foreign firms to work in the country. Prices were permitted to rise in 1979 (to allow them to come to world levels) and in 1982, the country joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Attempts to return to a system of controls and subsidies in 1985 led to the consolidation of a dissident radical group in the country under Imre Pozsgay. The group's influence was felt when long-serving President Janos Kadar was forced to step down (22 May 1988), Pozsgay was admitted to the Politburo of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party in a prelude to Hungary's quiet revolution of 1989.

13.4.2 Rumania

Soviet troops were in occupation of Rumania from August 1945, although the Communists (the Rumanian Workers' Party) only formally established control over the government of the country after the abdication in 1947 of King Michael. Under occupation a number of steps were taken to adapt the economy to the Soviet model.

The main stages of the adaptation of the Rumanian economy to the Soviet model were:

i)   The dissolution of the main Rumanian banks in August 1948 and concentration of financial activities in the National Bank of Rumania (later the Bank of the Rumanian People's Republic).

ii)   The formation of a number of joint stock companies (Sovroms) based on Soviet and Rumanian government investments in various industries - iron and steel, where (the Resita organization was transformed into a Sovrom), petroleum, where the Sovrompetrol was formed, insurance and mining. Here the USSR took over the German and Hungarian shares in the industries concerned by a law of April 1946. During 1954-56, Soviet shares in industry were systematically transferred to the Rumanian state.

iii)   The creation of centres of control for the mining industry in 1948 at Bai Mare (northern Transylvania) and Brad (Bihor mountains, central Transylvania).

iv)   The promulgation of Land Reform Acts on March 22 1945 (mainly involving the expropriation of properties over 50 hectares) and March 2nd 1949 (which involved the confiscation of the land of property owners of more than 15,000 hectares). This intensified inter-war expropriation of large estates and redistribution of property. The main beneficiaries were peasants (who dominated the wool and subsistence agriculture oriented economy of the Carpathian uplands and Transylvania; but, as in Hungary, larger holdings were directly controlled by the state also the commercial grain economy of the Banat and the cash crop belt of the Carpathian lowlands (Moldavia and Wallachia), where vineyards and market gardens are common.

The considerable influence in Rumania of the National Peasants' Party during 1944-45, and thereafter of peasant proprietors in general ensured that peasant ownership continued to be a decisive feature of the Rumanian economy until recent times. Industry was dominated by state ownership, though, a small private sector (especially in trade) persisted even after large scale nationalization of the trading apparatus. Investments under the Rumanian Five Year Plans were directed to oil-based industry, commercial agriculture and timber felling and export.

13.4.3 Poland

The Polish Committee of National Liberation undertook the application of the Soviet model of socialist economic development to Poland. Formed in 1944, this was the core of the post 1945 government. The main features of the socialist transition (eventually supervised by the Polish United Workers' Party) were:

i)   The decree of 6 September 1944, which confiscated all landholdings above 50 hectares. This followed up legislation of the inter-war period which pushed through redistribution of great estates. Together with the confiscation of Church land ((1950), the 1944 measure increased the domination of agriculture by

peasant holdings, albeit to the advantage of richer peasants. Hence, while 65% of the land was held in allotments of under 10 hectares, over 33% was still held in allotments of between 10 and 50 hectares. Polish governments did not focus on collectivization after redistribution, except for a brief period during 1947-53, when they encouraged collective farms, which only covered 10% of arable land by 1954, and maintained state farms. Collectives were allowed to dwindle after 1956 (in 1959 they only covered 1% of arable land). Since state farms came to 15% of the arable land at their peak, the bulk of agriculture was based on peasant smallholdings until the most recent times. The government tried various measures to induce collective activity (for instance the formation of Agricultural Circles in 1956, where members could rent machinery at reduced costs). These had hardly any effect.

ii) The formation of a Central Planning Office which organized a Three Year Plan (1947-49), and later a Six Year Plan for the economy. Most industrial production and mining were transferred to state hands after 1945. By 1949-50, 92% of industry was nationalized.

Call for reform by Polish economists such as Lange and Brus in 1956 included demands for flexibility in approach to economic policy, encouragement of foreign investment and decentralization of industrial organization. Demonstrations in favour of this intensification of the 'New Course' (initiated in 1953 by First Secretary Bierut after Stalin's death) merely led to a change in leadership in Poland (the selection of the 'moderate' Gomulka as head of the Party). Reforms after 1962 (concentrated around 1968-70), led to price increases and a wager on increased investment in 'modern industries' (machine building, electricals and chemicals). This in turn led to and demonstrations against the effects of such measures (in December 1970) and to the ascendancy of Edward Gierek in the Polish Party.

13.4.4   Czechoslovakia

Soviet troops moved out of Czechoslovakia in November 1945. But a Works Council Movement began in 1945, which demanded nationalization of mines and industry, establishing workers' control. After initial reluctance by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to accept this nationalization plan, it gave way slowly, and measures in this vein were systematically undertaken, especially after 1947 and the statement of the Truman Doctrine and the formation of the Cominform.

The pattern of land redistribution and rapid state take over of industry was followed here as elsewhere:

i) In March 1948, all estates of over 50 hectares were confiscated, redistribution and cooperativization were initiated. Thereafter, all cooperatives were merged into collective farms by a law of 23rd February 1949, which was enforced with special severity after 1953.

ii) By 1949-50, 96% of industry was nationalized, after initial restraint in this area (in 1948, 20% of industry was still in private hands). Under planning, stress fell heavily on heavy industry and munitions production.

A programme of economic reform was attempted under the encouragement of Alexander Dubcek and the economists Sik and Selucky (all of the Slovak republic) in 1968. This would have involved a degree of freedom to workers to demand wage increases, a freeing of prices and due allowance for the formation of private enterprises. The invasion by the Warsaw Pact of Czechoslovakia, however, forestalled the implementation of the programme.

13.4.5 Bulgaria

Collectivization was more marked here in the earlier stages of economic reform, although peasant production never ceased to be important. Small plots occupied 13% of the arable land in 1975, and produced 25% of produce (dominating potato and fruit output). A commitment to large scale industrialization developed in the late 1960s, when there was a move away from traditional stress on food processing.

i)   During 1945-48, landholdings were limited to 20 hectares, and holdings above this level were redistributed. Thereafter, smallholdings were merged into collective farms, and 50% of arable land was in these by 1953. All privately owned machinery and farm equipment was compulsorily acquired by the state, and a kulak defined as one owning over 5 hectares. Proprietors owning over 10 hectares had to sell 75% of their grain crop to the state (1950), while collectives had their delivery quotas reduced (1953).

ii) By 1949/50, 95% of the limited industry that existed in the country was nationalized.

13.4.6 East Germany (German Democratic Republic)

Adaptation to the Soviet model began late here, since a myth was maintained that East Germany would be united with West Germany in the long term, and radical alteration in the production system was not a good idea considering this. Nationalization of industry and trade, however, began long before the formal decision to embark on socialist construction by the Socialist Unity Party in 1952 under the direction of Walter Ulbricht. Industry and trade in private hands (19% and 37% respectively) was taken over by the state thereafter, and collectivization of agriculture begun and intensified (especially after 1958).

The Liberman-sanctioned reforms took shape in the GDR in the form of the New Economic System that lasted from 1963 to 1970 (when controls through Planning were intensified). Industrial production grew by 5.8% between 1960 and 1964, and 6.4% between 1964 and 1970. Per capita growth rate and increase in standard of living was of the order of 4.9% between 1970 and 1975. Abandonment of the New Economic System was marked by the dismissal of Gunter Mittag from the Council of State in 1971, and adaptation to increased Soviet oil prices (after 1975) by increases in state subsidies of domestic prices.

13.4.7 Yugoslavia

An alternative variety of socialist industrialization, the case of the Yugoslav Federation was marked by a 'mixed economy', where, like the other East European cases, emulation of the Soviet model was clear, but where a large non-state sector grew up over time. The following stages are noticeable in the Yugoslav model:

i)   1946 - a nationalization law which made permanent government takeover of most German and Italian property in the country.

ii) Redistribution of land in German hands and of holdings over 45 hectares to peasant proprietors. Peasant holdings were restricted to 20-25 hectares.

iii) Initiation of the First Five Year Plan. The USSR agreed to set up a number of joint ventures in shipping and air transport. But these were quickly closed down after the Yugoslavs considered these excessively favourable to the Soviet Union. Grants from UNRRA were very important in this early phase.

iv) Slow move away from the Soviet model, after the political break with the Soviet Union in 1948. This took time. Initially, the state favoured collectivization through concentration of peasant households in Peasant-Worker Cooperatives, in order to control grain marketing. But poor performance here and in

nationalized industry under central direction led to the development of self-managed state enterprises (1950) and a decrease in interest in collective agriculture (although maximum holdings were reduced to a size of 10 hectares). The standard practice of using centralized investment was modified by the creation of communal banks that had their own sphere of investment. After the First Five Year Plan, the planning system was amended to involve less of the 'command style' and permit greater cooperation between state industry, independent of the central (and state) planning commissions. The trend was assisted by investment from the USA, although government stress on the development of heavy industry and armaments industry persisted.

v) Following Stalin's death, relations with the Soviet bloc varied. Initially, improvements led to a large increase in trade with the CMEA countries. But continuous inflow of soft loans from the United States and good relations with Western Europe led to the development of several ventures in close association with these countries: ventures which were not guided rigidly by the Planning system. The significance of the state remained significant. Despite the existence of self-management, communal banks etc., the Central Investment Fund controlled 70% of investment and industry bore marks of political control. Marks of central control included the focus of investment in heavy industry and the existence of 'political factories', i.e. factories which were set up with non-economic considerations in mind.

vi) Associate membership of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) in 1960 led to pressure on the 1961-65 Five Year Plan and intensification of the move away from central control in the Planned Economy. Investment came increasingly from communal banks, and devaluation took place to encourage foreign trade. Initially, to curb inflation and maintain aspects of the old system, a wage freeze was initiated. But this situation proved unworkable, led to a debate on the future of the economy, and intensification of the development of private enterprise and decentralization after 1965 (in the so-called 'market-oriented reforms').

vii) The new course (which involved the development of a commercial banking sector), received great impetus in the 1970s with the greater inflow of foreign loans, and, after 1979, the country moved into a debt crisis in which the political crisis of the late 1980s took shape, leading to the disintegration of the Federation.

13.5 THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SOCIALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION IN EASTERN EUROPE

The main achievement of the investments in agriculture and industry that occurred under socialist industrialization is indicated by the following statistics:

	Index of industrial production	Index of agricultural production
	1938=100	1938=100
	1964	1960-63 average
Bulgaria	625	111
Rumania	498	129
Poland	370	132
Hungary	314	98
Czechoslovakia	242	92
East Germany	208	80

Source: Walter Laquer, *Europe since Hitler*

As much of this system initially took shape, it was moulded by bilateral agreements with the USSR (for imports of primary products from the Soviet Union at exaggerated costs initially, and exports of primary and finished goods to the USSR at excessively reduced prices). Bilateral trade between the countries was worked out within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. But such trade was notoriously lacking in a real bilateral quality: i.e. little trade developed according to the initiative of any two CMEA states independent of the rest. Common investments in Soviet oil and natural gas industries paid trumps for most CMEA countries in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when all of them received output at rates below the world price at a time of increases in oil prices in the West. All the countries benefited from the USSR's special relations with Angola, Mozambique, Syria, Iraq, Vietnam and India. Moreover, from June 1971, under the terms of the 'Complex Programme for the Further Extension and Improvement of Cooperation and Development of Socialist Economic Integration' of the CMEA, coordination was given more importance, and its status raised in CMEA affairs. A number of international economic organizations were begun: the Interstate Commissions for the implementation of specific tasks; the International Bank for Economic Cooperation; the International Investment Bank; research and development coordinating centres and international laboratories. At various sessions of the Council during 1973-81, integration measures were introduced into the member countries' plans and harmonized into a coherent plan by the Committee for Cooperation and Planning.

Such measures did not come to much where it really mattered: in the development of technology which could compete with global standards after the information revolution. US blockade of sales of such technology to the 'east' was substantially responsible for this. Equally responsible, though, was inertia within state-run industry, which was willing to work with minor innovations, but unwilling to fundamentally change what existed. The resulting poor performance in trade relations with the West coincided with a major problem in the 1980s. The CMEA did not prevent member countries interacting with the West - either through trade or through application for loans. The decrease in oil prices globally in the 1980s, the refusal of the USSR to reduce its prices, and the high level of indebtedness of many CMEA countries (Poland and Yugoslavia especially) to the West led to a troubled situation. By 1989, the CMEA had ceased to be useful in almost any sense and had ceased to represent a common interest. Not only were some countries initiating experiments with 'market reforms', but the common cause that had marked the bloc in the 1950s, 60s and 70s was gone.

13.6 SOCIALIST INITIATIVES OUTSIDE THE SOVIET BLOC

Attempts to rein in capitalism were common in a number of countries where socialists were powerful during the inter-war and post-Second World War period. In France, for instance, under Leon Blum and the Popular Front (1936-38), attempts were made to control capital transfers out of the country, and important steps were taken to establish state control over the munitions' industry. Major reforms were introduced in the factories - where employers were compelled to give workers a minimum paid holiday each year, and where working hours were strictly limited. In Britain, after the Second World War, the Labour government nationalized the coal and steel industries and introduced the 'welfare state' (i.e. the National Health Scheme, which reduced health costs dramatically, as well as the introduction of unemployment benefit to the out-of-work). The Labour governments of Harold Wilson (1964-70), extended cheap housing for the population through the agency of local government, while

socialist governments on the Continent introduced their own version of the 'welfare state' through systems of insurance.

Much of this initiative was in imitation of the state-led model prevalent in the USSR (and Eastern Europe). But in developing their own focus on 'insurance' (where the state, the employer and the employee contributed to a common fund), countries such as France, Germany and Italy developed their own variety of 'welfare' which involved a smaller role for the state. This dimension to socialism outside the Soviet bloc is what made it unique. Accepting capitalist enterprise and a limited place for state initiative, it was strictly non-Leninist.

13.7 SUMMARY

In this Unit you have read about the way Soviet experiment in application of the socialist model underwent various phases in accordance with the demands of the time. You have also read how it was not a model which could completely shun the principles of market economy, but tried very often to overcome the restrictions put in its way. There were contradictions from within and outside which eventually led to its disintegration. At the same time, the same model was applied differently even in the countries under the Soviet influence, which gradually gave way to the dominant capitalist system. Yet, it would be immature to argue that this model was a complete failure as it was this model which forced the so called capitalist economies of the western Europe to integrate welfare economic principles and strengthen social distribution networks albeit with a limited role for the state. On the other hand, the criticisms of the capitalist economic system and visions of alternative models have continued to drive the thinkers and activists alike. It is in this respect that the theories of underdevelopment, especially in the context of the third world, have taken the centre-stage. About this you would read in the next Unit.

13.8 EXERCISES

1) In what ways socialist industrialization is different from capitalist industrialization?

2) Was socialist industrialization a uniform policy initiative in the case of Soviet Russia? Comment.

3) How different was the experience of other countries under the hegemony of Soviet Russia in terms of socialist industrialization?

UNIT 14   UNDERDEVELOPMENT

Structure

14.1   INTRODUCTION

Prior to the late eighteenth century, life was nothing other than 'nasty, brutish and short' for the vast majority of human beings. Technology changed slowly and sporadically, but it eased life only for a small ruling elite in the pre-industrial societies. In the late eighteenth century, Britain began to industrialize on the basis of technical progress in textile, coal-mining, iron-smelting and steam-power. Soon industrialization started to spill over to other regions. International flows of capital and commodities provided the stimulus for this development. However, this development was not uniform. Many tropical countries lagged behind as they were the victims of this developmental process due to the prevalence of colonialism. India, for example, quite advanced at the end of eighteenth century, could not protect its industries because of British control. The confident march of 'progress' was shattered in the 'age of crisis' marked by the two world wars and the Great Depression in Europe. The dominant powers met in a conference at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire and agreed to establish two international organizations designed to supervise the emergence of a liberal international economic order. The International Monetary Fund intended to deal with monetary questions and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development or the World Bank's purpose was promotion of long –term flow of funds for reconstruction. Many former colonies started gaining formal independence around the same time and fretted about being left behind in the process of development. These countries adopted policies in which economic development became a priority. The questions of growth, development and under development became the global norms.

In the light of the above context we will look at what underdevelopment means, various features of underdevelopment, how underdeveloped countries are distinguished from the developed ones and how scholars have attempted to understand it and counter it. To elucidate some of these aspects a short discussion of the experiences of some of the developing countries has been given.

14.2   MEANING OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT

We live in an agonizing, inextricably designed bipolar world marked by severe deprivation and social exclusion on the one hand and affluence and opulence on the other. Eight hundred and eighty million are malnourished and millions go without schooling. On the other extreme, three richest people in the world have assets that exceed the combined GDP of 48 least developed countries. Such deprived people are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society in which they live due to lack of options, entitlement to resources and lack of social-capital. These statements can be analyzed if we understand the meaning of development and underdevelopment.

Economic development may be defined as the process by which a traditional society employing primitive techniques and capable of sustaining only a low level of income is transformed into a modern, high technology, high-income economy. Such a developed economy uses capital, skilled labour and scientific knowledge to produce wide variety of products for the market. Capital goods and human capital and relevant scientific knowledge play a major role as factors of production in such a society. Broadly speaking, lack of development may be defined as underdevelopment. World Bank has set the following development goals:

- Reduction of poverty,

- Low mortality rates,

- Universal primary education,

- Access to reproductive health services,

- Gender equality,

- National strategies for sustainable development.

Many underdeveloped countries are not in a position to attain these high objectives because of grinding poverty, low income and lack of resources. It is hazardous to generalize about the underdeveloped world. Although they resemble in many negative term- they are less industrialized, mostly non-European in descent, located in tropical regions and many of them are former colonies yet they vary in cultural, economic and political conditions. They share wide-spread and chronic absolute poverty, high and rising burden of unemployment and underemployment, growing disparities in income distribution, low and stagnant agricultural productivity, sizeable gap between urban and rural levels of living, lack of adequate education, health and housing facilities, dependence on foreign and often inappropriate technologies and more or less stagnant occupational structure.

Despite these resemblances and common features, there are significant differences among the underdeveloped countries in the size of the country (in terms of geography, population and economy), their historical evolution, their natural and human resource endowments, the nature of their industrial structure and polity and other institutional structures.

Low income compared to the developed world economies is considered to be a major characteristic of underdeveloped regions. Ghana and India with per capita income below $785 are low-income countries; China between ($785-3125) is a lower middle-income country while Brazil in the per capita income of $3125-9655 range falls in the upper middle-income category. However, per capita income is only a measure of average income based on market valuations. It is not a complete indicator

of incidence of poverty. Some extra dimensions such as life expectancy, health facilities, conditions of employment, social-structure and distribution of income must be taken into account to make a proper assessment of a country's economy. Most underdeveloped countries are characterized by contrast between luxury and squalor, skewed distribution of income, low productivity, high level of unemployment and disguised rural/urban unemployment marked by surplus human labour who shares agricultural chores that are otherwise redundant.

14.3 SALIENT FEATURES OF THE UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Although it is risky to generalize about so many underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, they share certain common socio-economic features. We can classify these similarities for convenience into the following broad categories:

1) Low levels of living

2) Low levels of productivity

3) High rates of population growth and Dependency ratios in the population

4) Significant dependency on agricultural production and primary product exports

5) Dominance/dependence and vulnerability in International relations.

Low levels of living in the underdeveloped regions are manifested quantitatively in the form of low incomes, inadequate housing, poor health, limited education, high infant mortality, low life and work expectancy. The economists use the Gross National Product per head as index of relative well being of people in different countries. Not only their per capita income is low in absolute terms when compared to the prosperous nations but they also experience slower GNP growth rates with a few exceptions. Ghana and India are typical low-income countries. China has improved its position slightly. Another dimension of income is how it is distributed among the population. Despite relatively higher incomes, the Latin American countries also exhibit simultaneously chronic poverty. This poverty gets reflected in widespread malnutrition, lack of basic health services, high under-5 mortality rates and lower life expectancy. The under-5 mortality in India and Ghana in 1996 was 107 and 109 respectively compared to the single-digit rates for the advanced countries. The situation in Brazil and China was better with mortality rates of 44 and 47 per thousand respectively.

The levels of living are functionally correlated to the low levels of labour productivity in the underdeveloped countries. The lack of complimentarity among factors of production like physical capital and expertise restricts labour output. Institutional factors also hinder production. One such factor is the social-exclusion of people in key area of life especially with regard to rights, resources and relationships. Other institutional inputs affecting production are the land-tenurial system, taxation system, credit and banking structure, educational programmes, nature of administrative services, etc. The low levels of living and productivity are self-reinforcing. They are also the principal manifestations of underdevelopment.

The underdeveloped countries have high population pressures on their resources due to high birth rates and maternal fertility rates. While some countries like China and Brazil have largely succeeded in checking their population growth (their total fertility rates in 1996 were 1.9 and 2.4 respectively) many others are still caught in the phase of 'demographic trap'— a phase of declining mortality and persistence of high fertility. This has a major implication for the age-structure of the underdeveloped

regions, which are heavily burdened with children below 15 years. This results in fewer producers compared to consumers in these societies, a factor that also affects investment in productive capacities.

Underutilization of labour, a key phenomenon in the underdeveloped world is manifested in two forms. It occurs as underemployment, or people working less than they would like, daily, weekly or seasonally. Another form is disguised unemployment where people are nominally working full time but whose productivity is so low that their absence would have a negligible impact on total output. The underemployment in urban centres is reflected in preponderance of labour in informal sector i.e. people engaged in petty-trading, casual and irregular wage work, in domestic services of very small 'micro' (enterprises) in unregulated sectors. This is about 60-70% in Kumasi (Ghana), 40-50% in Calcutta (India) and about 43% in Sao Paulo (Brazil). The sprawling slums in such underdeveloped cities are related to this phenomenon.

The concentration of people on primary or agriculture production or stagnant occupational structure is another indicator of underdevelopment. This sector is characterized by primitive techniques, poor organization and limited physical and human-capital and hence, low productivity. In many parts of Latin America and Asia, it is also characterized by land-tenure systems under which peasants usually rent rather than own their lands. Although, many underdeveloped economies are not, strictly speaking, mono-crop economies or economies dependent on single crop exports for their foreign earnings; yet many such countries rely heavily on a small number of primary exports for the bulk of their foreign earnings. Ghana, for example, depends on selling of Cocoa, timber and minerals to the West. Brazil, despite recent diversification, relies on Coffee and minerals as major export items. The exports of primary products, in fact, account for 60-70% of the annual flows of total foreign earnings into the underdeveloped regions.

Another typical feature of underdevelopment is the dependence of these countries on rich, advanced nations in terms of technology, foreign aid and private capital transfers. Along with the capital flows, the values, attitudes and standard of behaviour of the advanced countries are also superimposed on them. The phenomenon of 'plunder by bureaucracy' to emulate western life style and 'brain-drain' are a result of such cultural invasion. In 1997, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development commitments amounted to $14.5 billion as loans to the poorest countries. The grants and loans provided by the OECD countries and private capital flows are bigger than this amount. Much of this foreign investment is located in mining or other extractive industries, which removes non-renewable resources at rates and prices that are not in the interest of sustainable development. On the other hand, many of the underdeveloped countries face foreign-debt crisis as a result of increasing outflows required for dividends and repayments exceeding the new net borrowings at one point or the other.

14.4 APPROACHES TO UNDERSTAND UNDERDEVELOPMENT

In this section we will discuss two major paradigms developed in order to understand the nature of underdevelopment. These ideologically motivated approaches are:

a)   **The Neo-Marxist Dependency Model:** This model is an outgrowth of Marxist thinking. It attributes the existence and maintenance of underdevelopment to the development of world capitalist system that divided the globe into the rich developed and poor underdeveloped countries. According to it, the world is dominated by an

unequal power and exchange relationship between the 'centre' or the developed region and the 'periphery' or the underdeveloped region. Certain groups in the underdeveloped countries such as landlords, merchants, industrialists and state officials who enjoy high incomes, social-status and political power constitute a small ruling elite. They act as agents in the perpetuation of international capitalist networks of inequality and exploitation. Surplus or the capitalist profits are transferred through various channels from the 'periphery' to the 'centre'. While some argue for the impossibility of an underdeveloped country's immanent development or the spontaneous, natural process of development from within due to this unequal relationship, others believe that intentional development through deliberate strategic decisions is possible even though it may be determined by the needs and requirements of the local elites.

The economic behaviour of local elites in the underdeveloped countries is marked by the conspicuous consumption, investment in real estates and extreme risk-aversion and the export of their savings to be deposited with foreign banks. These are rational responses from the standpoint of private advantage in the circumstances prevailing in these countries. Competition with the giant transnational corporations by the indigenous entrepreneurs is not easy. The states in such environment have attempted to become capitalists themselves in order to finance their industrialization with the help of state-owned enterprises. However, unable to compete with more powerful foreign competitors and because of their servility to local commercial, capitalist, bureaucratic and landed interests, the states only ended up in investing in infrastructure (mainly transport and communications) and tourism-industry. The neo-Marxist model also stresses how the export sector that serves the need of foreign investors is linked to the development of much of the tertiary sector such as banking, infrastructure and administration. To quote Andre Gunder Frank: 'With the export industry came its satellite moons, now transformed into white elephants, and the people who economically and socially, but thanks to cultural liberalism also culturally, learned to ride on them.'

b)   **The Liberal Stages Model:** This conceptual framework propounded by liberal and neo-liberal economists is based on the belief that what are now developed, modern societies were also in the earlier times traditional, backward and agriculture-based societies. Therefore, we should not lay the blame for all the ills of underdevelopment at the doorsteps of such developed nations. The American economic historian W.W. Rostow developed a 'stages of growth theory', according to which, every nation must pass through the following stages:(1) traditional and stagnant low per capita stage, (2) transitional stage when the pre-conditions for growth are laid down, (3) the 'take off' stage or the beginning of the growth process, (4) industrialized mass production and consumption stage. The last stage was supposed to be self-sustaining.

Most of the liberal and neo-liberal economists emphasize that the underdeveloped countries can also generate sufficient investment by mobilization of domestic and foreign savings to accelerate their economic growth. It is argued that the main obstacle to growth in the underdeveloped countries was relatively low level of capital formation. They might require an appropriate dose of foreign aid or private foreign investment in order to take off. Thus, capital investment was supposed to act like a development vending machine. In many Keynesian informed schemes, the economic development of the underdeveloped countries is linked to the proper utilization of capital. The Harrod-Domar model and Ragnar Nurkse's scheme are examples of this approach. The structural and institutional factors affecting the development are ignored in this model while the dynamic of development through capitalist entrepreneurs is stressed. Even the transnational companies through their private

investment, while reaping profits, will diffuse technology, improve productivity and harness domestic savings. In short, private greed will produce public good. Others like Gunnar Myrdal, Raul Prebisch and Oswald Sunkel have raised doubts that foreign investment will automatically lead to development. They believe that it will merely create 'enclaves' of development surrounded by the vast oceans of underdevelopment.

14.5 ATTACKING UNDERDEVELOPMENT : THE POLICY OPTIONS

a) **Balanced Growth:** When economists first began thinking how policy could deliberately stimulate development, a typical answer in the 1940s was that a simultaneous expansion of output over a wide range of industries was necessary. Economists Paul-Rosenstein-Rodan and Ragnar Nurkse were the leading exponents of this view. They argued that an isolated expansion of output by one or two industries was bound to fail because there would be no increase in the purchasing power elsewhere in the economy to buy the additional output. They emphasized a balanced expansion of a large number of sectors, each thus providing additional purchasing power to help raise the demand for the output of the other sectors. However, the solution did not work in small countries where it was difficult to obtain economies of scale or the minimum efficient size of firms. Secondly, even if an economy develops only a few key sectors, it could find markets for its products abroad.

b) **Export-Promotion Strategy:** This strategy demanded direct additional factor investments to be made in the sectors already engaged in export-production. Another way was to explore the possibility of developing entirely new export sectors. The country might presumably have a comparative advantage in these sectors. Attempts are made to tap foreign rather than domestic markets to provide the additional demand. The proceeds from the exports could then be used to purchase the other needed inputs from abroad.

c) **Import-Substitution for Achieving Industrialization:** New industries are established to replace imports under this policy. The market for these industrial products is domestic. The elimination of some imports releases foreign exchange for the purchase of needed inputs in the world market. This policy often requires imposition of protective tariffs and physical quotas to get the new industry started.

There has been a considerable amount of debate over the efficacy of policy options available. Raul Prebisch, the Argentinean economist, argued in favour of import-substitution on the ground that prices of commodities produced in the primary sector have deteriorated in relation to manufactured commodities and would continue to do so. Expansion of export of traditional goods could simply lead to further deterioration of terms of trade. Therefore, the underdeveloped countries in order to escape from their role as that of hewers of wood and drawers of water must try to develop their own capital goods and durable consumer-goods sector. It means that indigenous production should supply domestic markets with such import substitutes. Such a strategy requires direct intervention by the state in the form of price-controls and control of distributive channels. The state bureaucracy also acquires power to enhance or remove domestic monopoly positions of the manufacturing firms. The sheltered monopoly positions of the firms could also lead to inefficient production.

The export-promotion strategy, on the other hand, does not require severe import-restrictions like high tariffs, quotas, import prohibitions and maintenance of an arbitrary exchange rate. By simply providing incentives to export-oriented firms such as

adequate subsidies, these firms can easily obtain economies of scale. The underdeveloped countries may, however, face problems when all of them start competing for the benefits of trade by exporting their labour-intensive manufactures. Such economies are also more prone to shocks generated by the international markets. The choice between export-promotion and import-substitution is not absolute. Both may have a useful role to play in the drive to obtain industrial maturity. These policy options are still largely part of traditional thinking on development. The emphasis, in all the schemes, is on raising the productive capacities of their economies by intentional development alongside capitalism in order to ameliorate earlier lopsided development. In recent years, a notion of 'human-centred development' has gained ground, which sets the developmental goals in terms of quality of life. This is dependent not only on low level of material poverty and low levels of unemployment but also on ideals such as relative equality of incomes, accessibility to adequate education, health services and housing facilities, equal participation in democratic institutions, sustainability of development and lack of any form of open or disguised discrimination against any group.

14.6 EXAMINING SOME ECONOMIC STRUCTURES IN THE LIGHT OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT

In this section we analyze four economies from Asia, Africa and Latin America to concretely understand the nature of this phenomenon and attempts to overcome it.

14.6.1 The Indian Case

India represents a typical case of underdevelopment. Its GNP per capita was $72 in mid-1950s. It is still in the low-income range of below $785 by the international standards. In other dimensions of quality of life, such as life expectancy, health facilities and conditions of employment, it lags behinds some of the other developing countries. Its production and occupational structure remain stagnant. While China reduced its under-5 mortality rate from 209 in 1960 to 47 per thousand in 1997, India could reduce its infant mortality from 236 in 1960 to 108 in1997 per thousand only. Life expectancy in China is 70 years compared to 62 years in India. Similarly, maternal mortality rate or the numbers of women's death per one lakh live births was 437 in India in 1996 while in Chinese case it was 115 only. This is an indicator of deprivation women suffer in India and of the poor health facilities we offer to them.

Though India inherited all the structural distortions created by colonialism, it also had certain advantages over many other colonial societies. India had a relatively strong industrial base and its capitalists had captured about 75% of market for industrial produce at the time of independence. The indigenous entrepreneurial class had also acquired the control of financial sector. There was also a broad social consensus to attain rapid industrial transition. However, the growing capitalism failed to absorb India's growing surplus labour. Even at present, it only absorbs about 20% labour and this also includes the capitalist service sector.

India embarked on a strategy of import-substitution industrialization following Fledman-Mahalanobis model. It was proposed to produce a wide range of manufactures for the domestic market in order to reduce the need for imported manufactures. It necessitated large investment in heavy industry and diversion of more resources to the production of investment goods in general and machine tools in particular so as to reduce dependence on international sources of capital goods, intermediate and components. Exportable food and raw materials were taxed and

the revenues so generated were employed to subsidize domestic manufacturing. The plan also stressed a large expansion of employment opportunities. It was also meant to give a boost to the weak and nascent private sector. Resources were made available for capital goods sector through foreign aid and investment and also through state loans and credits. The result was that public sector's share in the production of reproducible capital increased from 15% in 1950-51 to 40% in 1976-77. The share of state enterprises in the net domestic product grew from 3% in1950-51 to 16% in 1984-85. It created infrastructure and basic industrial base as an incentive to the rapid growth of private enterprises. The system of import and investment licensing led to monopolistic controls often severing the critical link between profitability and economic performance. It led to a spectacular rise of big Indian business with a marriage of convenience with foreign collaborators. The big industrial houses enjoyed the benefits of an infrastructure developed through revenues generated from indirect taxes on public. They also got subsidized energy inputs, cheaper capital goods and long-term industrial finance from the public enterprises. As a result of these benefits, the assets of 20 big industrial houses grew from Rs.500 crores in 1951 to Rs.23, 200 crores in 1986.

However, there was no dynamic structural change in the Indian economy. Large numbers of people remain tied to underdeveloped agriculture despite 'green revolution'. In the urban centres, a sizeable number of people living in sprawling slums find employment in the informal sector and petty distributive activities associated with it. The land reforms did not touch agrarian relations and the basic inequality in rural assets persists. Therefore, there is only a restricted mass market catering to the need of urban and rural elites. In these circumstances, a shift out of Mahalanobis model became necessary, as the state could not find enough resources, within a mixed economy framework. The private enterprises found the production of 'non-essential' consumer goods more profitable. The state resorted to inflationary indirect taxation and deficit-financing in order to finance unprofitable public enterprises engaged in the production of investment goods. The private sector now clamoured for the dismantling of public sector on the ground that it was causing budget deficits, high inflation, high-wages and interest rates. The effects of earlier industrialization had led to high government deficits, inflation and interest rates regime. For example, the central government's budget deficit grew from 6.4% of GNP in 1980 to 8.9% of GNP in1990. The government's domestic debt rose to 56% of GDP in1991. India was close to 'technical default' on its foreign debts as reflected in the foreign exchange crisis of 1991. At this point, the pace of 'liberalization' was speeded up under the IMF structural adjustment programme. It meant easing of restrictions on imports and foreign investment, steps to make rupee convertible, a huge cut in sugar and fertilizer subsidies, deregulation of steel distribution and a curb on government's deficit by way of reduction in government's spending on subsidies and social-services. The main strategy of this phase is export-substitution with minimum public sector intervention and unrestricted entry of foreign capital. Despite all these grand designs, there is no basic structural change in the Indian economy. About 70% of our population continues to live at bare subsistence level. About 76.6 million agricultural labourers earn about 1/10th of what an organized sector worker earns. In the 1980s, the number of unemployed youths registered in government exchanges crossed 34 million or 10% of the total active population or the total number of productive people employed in the urban manufacturing sector.

14.6.2 The Chinese Experience

China was more unfavourably placed than India at the time of its 'liberation' in 1949. It lagged behind India in terms of infrastructure and industrial development.

India and China initially followed the same set of policy options especially centralized planning but in different institutional framework. China went for radical agrarian land reform programme, thus, creating a truly mass market for consumption goods produced by a more labour-intensive industrial set-up compared to more capital-intensive Indian industries. China abolished landlordism in 1950, primarily to secure the loyalty of poor peasants. Under its land reforms, 46 million hectares or 113 million acres of China's 107 million hectares or 264 million acres of arable land was redistributed among the peasants to give about 300 million peasants land of their own. To accelerate economic performance of agrarian economy, commune system similar to the Soviet collectives was adopted so as to squeeze more labour out of the peasants. Collectives were granted more credits and other facilities than the individual peasants. After 1956, more intensive collectivization measures were adopted. The Chinese collectives were bigger than Soviet ones and also contributed to industrial production. About 8% of male population was drafted to non-agricultural production, thereby, increasing the burden on women. The Great Leap Forward (1958) was intended to modernize Chinese agriculture by simultaneously developing industries with small-scale methods in villages. It only led to a series of bad harvests. The withdrawal of Soviet experts in 1960 led to further economic catastrophe. The 'Leap' was abandoned and more attention was paid to monetary incentives and market mechanisms as well as efficient, economical production rather than aiming to maximize output at all costs. The Cultural Revolution (1966-69) involved transfer of production-decisions from ministries and experts to a group of revolutionary guards. Millions of skilled workers and experts were sent to work on farms for ideological reasons. It led to another drastic decline in the industrial production, foreign trade and growth rate of GNP.

Initially, China also adopted Fledman-Mahalanobis type Keynesian economic strategy of development. The main industries developed under planning were fertilizers, machines, vehicle, oil and electric power, whereas textile, food-processing and steel production grew rather slowly. Large-scale irrigation projects in Hunan and Fujian, water conversancy and electric power-generation on the Grand Canal in Hubei province were also launched. Another aspect of China's economic development was massive transfer of about 15-19% of agricultural population from land to the industrial sector. The result was a high proportion employed in industry compared to the level of industrial development and co-existence of modern mechanized sector with partly rural, small-scale handicraft production. After the failure of the Great Leap Forward, China realized that an over-populated and extremely poor country could not afford high rates of savings and investment needed to keep the import-substitution strategy in place. In a pragmatic shift, local governments were given more roles in resource allocation and financial management of the economy. In order to ensure the interior supply of inputs and finished products for the bigger enterprises, simultaneous growth of small enterprises in small towns and villages was emphasized.

Another shift to a more market-friendly strategy that provided an incentive to the foreign capital came after 1978. The process of reform started with de-collectivization under which user rights with respect to land were transformed by allowing independent decisions on investment and land-allocation to peasants and by permitting sale of a large output in the open market. This resulted in a sharp increase in agricultural production but had an adverse impact on the employment and utilization of surplus labour. Another aspect of this market friendly approach has been to provide incentives to direct foreign investment especially in the special economic zones to maximize their utility. The ethnic Chinese capital, not multinationals, dominated these activities and China favoured launching of export drive without

liberalizing imports. Entry of foreign investors was favoured in new areas and not in the core industrial areas. As a result, the Chinese industrial growth increased from 11% per annum during 1970-80 to 16% per annum during 1990-97. The direct foreign investment in China rose from $11.16 billion in 1992 to above $40 billion in 1996. There was, however, only gradual erosion of state control rather than a quick retreat from planning. The Chinese state-owned enterprises were reformed. The 15th Congress of Chinese Communist Party decided to corporatize the state-owned enterprises. Many of them have been converted into share-holding companies. However, many of the basic components of a 'pure' market economy are still in their incipient stage in China. Government guided investment mechanisms, a state-controlled banking system and dominant state-owned enterprises still run in a framework moulded primarily on the previous planned economy. The Chinese economic reforms have raised incomes, created considerable private wealth and reduced the incidence of chronic poverty. However, declining profits, growing unemployment, idle capacity, unrepayable debts of state enterprises and environmental costs due to over-dependence on coal in China's fuel use are some of the accompanying benign effects. Though China has slightly improved its position from low-income (below $785 per capita income) to lower middle-income group ($786-3125 per capita income), it still suffers from the signs of underdevelopment. However, its record in achieving remarkable transition in health, nutrition and educational accessibility has been universally acclaimed. It has also considerably raised life expectancy and lowered infant-mortality besides taking effective public action to ensure access to nutrition, health facilities and social support. In comparison to India's elitist, urban-biased schooling, China's thrust has been towards universalization of primary education, though it also has its own privileged urban schools financed by the national government as well as private schools. However, the disparities in education and health services between regions, gender and across social groups and classes are less marked.

14.6.3   Ghana's Debacle

Ghana emerged as a nation-state in 1957 with an optimistic note by merger of British Gold Coast colony and British Togoland. Ghana inherited a large foreign reserve of $190 million, adequate infrastructure and an efficient colonial trained bureaucracy. With the richest and the best educated of black African territories, it set out to industrialize with the advice of some best development economists in the Western world under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah. Nkrumah planned a big push of 'unbalanced growth' in order to build a large industrial base to supply much of the Africa. The launching of big Volta River Project, a huge scheme of a large dam for irrigation and hydro-electric power generation, and connected with it Valeo Almunium Smelter; showed little real planning. American companies (Kaiser-90% and Reynauld-10%) financed the project. They gained huge concessions such as assured power supply at the lowest rate in the world for their almunium smelter, five years tax exemptions, thirty years exemptions on import-duty on its inputs, and the right to import their own alumina rather than develop Ghanaian bauxite industry. The state, which had to bear the debt-costs, could not generate enough revenues from the scheme though it sold power to Benin and Togo. The government tried to provide the required impetus to industrial growth. It provided 35% employment in its public sectors in 1965 and government spending was 26% of total GNP in 1961. However, the state bureaucracy itself was an artifact of colonialism and rarely development-oriented. The state officials lacked the necessary techno-managerial skills. Despite Africanization of bureaucracy, it retained old colonial privileges and prerequisites of offices, thus creating a new breed of privileged elite. The state officials occupied positions less to perform public service than to acquire personal wealth and status.

Ghana's economy was distorted towards the export of a few primary products especially Cocoa, timber and minerals to the west. The collapse of prices of Cocoa in 1960s led to Ghana's bankruptcy. Even in good years, the Ghanaian peasants gained little as they bartered their produce with the manufactured products on the international market of unequal exchange. Moreover, in a bid to diversify economy and to meet the needs of capital to finance its import-substitution, Cocoa crop was one of the major sources of government revenues. Profits were squeezed from agricultural sector to finance state-run industries, welfare programme and food-subsidies. State Marketing Boards were invested with monopoly rights to market Cocoa and they gave peasants less than the prices available in the international market.

Another problem in Ghana was that 95% of the raw materials for import-substituting industries such as tyre manufacturing, bus and truck-assembly, oil refining, textile, steel and batteries had to be imported. Ghana's main import oil itself consumed 18% of its foreign exchange earnings in 1984. Apart from it, increasingly more and more of foreign exchange earnings had to be used by foreign debt-servicing as Ghana's external debt in 1998 was $6202 million. Another aspect of Ghana's development was unequal sharing of costs and burden among its population of whatever 'symbolic modernity' was achieved in an ocean of poverty and traditional agricultural sector. The Railways and communication facilities are concentrated in cities of Southern Ghana like Accra and Kumasi. The principal avenue of social-mobility in Ghana's society or the higher education is accessible to the privileged sections only.

The growing economic uncertainties led to political instability. Nkrumah was ousted in 1966 and succeeded by a series of military regimes sandwiched between occasional civilian rules. Cedi, the currency of Ghana, was devalued several times between 1967 to early 1980s to overcome the financial crisis but it did not produce the desired effects. The provisional National Defence Council, which took over power in 1981, tried initially to insulate Ghana from external pressures and negotiated more favourable contracts with transnational corporations under threats of nationalization. It also tried to control inflation, which was very high during 1975-80, by control of domestic prices especially of Maize, cooking oil and Cocoa. However, unable to control smuggling and informal markets, it accepted the structural adjustment programme of IMF in 1983. Now it favoured a neo-liberal economic policy with a populist tinge. The prices paid to Cocoa farmers were increased by 67% and incentives were given to the farmers to plant new Cocoa trees, pesticides were made available and price-controls were removed. The state enterprises or *para statals* were privatized. By 1995, one hundred and ninety five state enterprises were sold to the private bidders, many of them to the transnational corporations. More and more multinationals were encouraged to invest. The key question, however, is whether this structural adjustment has actually improved Ghana's economic position. The economy has been stabilized; there has been an increase in cocoa-production by 65% between 1983 and 1990 and there has been improvement in timber, bauxite, and manganese and diamond production leading to a rise in export-earnings. The budget deficits have been reduced from 47% of GDP in 1982 to 0.3% of GDP in 1987. There have been several surpluses since than. However, there is still no 'take-off' into the stage of sustainable development. The country's economy is still dependent on the exports of Cocoa, timber and minerals. Ghana's foreign-debt is growing, though there is no influx of direct foreign investment into productive industries. The dismantling of state enterprises and welfare schemes has led to growing unemployment among professionals and industrial workers. The common man faces undue hardships due to removal of subsidies on food and other key items. The

accessibility to health and educational services is becoming more difficult due to 'user charges' or charges levied on citizens for these public services at the point of use. Ghana, with a per capita income of $379 in 1998, continues to be one of the low-income underdeveloped regions despite its attempt to overcome chronic poverty and underdevelopment. The growth-promoting effects of a few heterogeneous industrial projects on the other sectors of economy have been insignificant. Ghana is still part of a system of dependence that links external pressures of international financial institutions and transnational corporations with internal process of underdeveloped resources and primitive technology characterized by self-reinforcing accumulation of privilege on the one hand and the existence of marginal social groups on the other.

14.6.4 The Brazilian Economy

Among the four economies examined by us, Brazil had an advantage of higher incomes. Its income grew five times during 1928-55 and again doubled during 1955-73. Its economy specialized in tropical agriculture especially coffee and there was ample scope for the expansion of cultivation compared to India and China. Brazil doubled the numbers of its farms and increased its cultivated area by 124% between 1950-70. However, rural economic structure differed considerably from Asian agriculture. In India and China, it is fragmented and heavily congested dwarf holding of peasants, which predominates rural life. In Brazil, like many other Latin American countries, *latifundia* or large land holdings exist side by side with *minifundia* or small peasant holdings. There are many large *latifundia* of more than 400 hectares or 1000 acres especially in northeast Brazil. Contrary to what many economists would believe, production on these farms is less efficient due to poor utilization of land-resources. Such a concentrated distribution of land-ownership is accompanied by a feudal type social-organization in which the masses of small producers are dependent on the benevolence and goodwill of the large landowners. The ownership of *latifundia* besides economic benefits also confers social status and political power.

Brazil also attempted import-substitution industrialization similar to China and India in order to develop its economy. The state played a key role as a banker and the owner of public enterprises. About 70% of investment funds from government banks and one-third of the assets of the 50,000 largest firms in 1970s were owned by the state. The transnational companies also played a key role in its economy, as the Brazilian state turned away from state to state borrowings to private investors and International Bank Consortia. However, the outflows required for dividends and repayments soon exceeded the new net borrowings. As the prices of its major export commodity, Coffee, started to decline, Brazil was not able to meet its foreign debt-obligations, leading to foreign-debt crisis. Since government was not willing to curtail flows of funds into unviable public sector utilities and key industrial enterprises, the situation also led to huge public deficits. The large budget deficits led to hyperinflation, with inflation hovering between 100-200% per annum in 1980s. Inflation became one of the tools for the government to raise revenue. Deficits could be cut only by wage-cuts and removal of subsidies on basic foods, electricity and fares, etc. But these measures would result in higher prices and wage-increase demands, again fuelling inflation. If not cut, the deficits would still continue to fuel inflation.

Brazil appears to be on the verge of overcoming the stigma of underdevelopment as it falls into upper-middle income group of nations with per capita income of $ 3126-9655. Post-War industrialization led to a big urban expansion in cities like Sao Paulo, Meddelin and Monterrey. Investment in import-substituting industries and in infrastructure was concentrated in such large cities. Internal population growth and migration both contributed to the expansion of cities. The total urban population

increased from 19% in 1950 to about 66% in 1980. The agricultural labour force also declined by 29% during the same period. However, this was not due to any basic change in the occupational structure. Despite a tenfold growth in the industrial output during the 'golden period' (1945-80), Brazil was not able to develop an endogenous industrial core that might stimulate other sectors. Faced with the foreign-debt crisis, the industrial output in Brazil grew only 1.1% per annum during 1981-90 compared to higher industrial growth rates of 8.5 to over 9% per annum between 1950-73. Actually, the shift in the labour force was illusory as the informal sector was the major absorbent of rural migrants. Instead of leading to transformation of the productive structure, it resulted in urban unemployment, poverty and growth of slums putting undue stress on urban services. Another aspect of Brazilian society that needs examination during this transition is the nature of demographic trends. According to the demographic transition theory, there was a lag between decline in mortality and fertility even in Europe. The same set of socio-economic changes that led to reduction of mortality later led to reduction in fertility. However, public health measures in underdeveloped countries reduced mortality at a stage at which socio-economic development was lower than it had been in Europe. However, birth rates continued to be very high. This led to population explosion and a 'demographic trap' because the age-structure in these countries was such that age-dependency ratio is higher. A high dependency ratio is viewed as a major threat to economic growth because it drains resources away from productive investments and puts intense pressure on social services such as education and health. Neo-Malthusian economists linked high birth rates to the lack of potential for economic development. The structuralists stressed institutional obstacles to development such as unequal distribution of wealth particularly land and other productive resources, political power of elites, historical roots of colonialism and faulty industrialization policies of post-colonial phase. According to them, population growth will have no affect on aggregate saving and investment due to mass poverty. They believed that development was the best contraceptive.

Brazil had high birth rates till 1960, 42 per thousand but it declined to 30.6 per thousand during 1980-85. The age dependency ratio also declined from 86.8% in 1960 to 68.7% in 1985. There has been further decline from 1990s as the average annual population growth declined faster from 2.45 in 1980s to about 1.4 in 1990s. The under-5 mortality, which is another indicator of development also declined from 176 per thousand in 1950s to 110 in 1980-85 to 44 per thousand in 1996. However, these average indices conceal the fact that higher risk, lower-income and educational group in slums may have higher infant-mortality. It appears that population growth is not the primary or even a significant cause of low levels of living, gross inequalities of income or the limited freedom of choice. Moreover, the problem of population is not merely one of numbers but of the quality of human-life. However, we may safely conclude that rapid population growth does serve to intensify the problems associated with the underdevelopment especially those problems that arise due to massive population concentrations in a few urban conglomerates.

14.7   SUMMARY

In this Unit we have discussed the meaning of development and underdevelopment, the salient features of underdeveloped economies, a few key approaches to understand the phenomenon of underdevelopment and the policy options available to fight the ills of underdevelopment. In the light of these, we also discussed the nature of economic change attempted in four countries namely, India, China, Brazil and Ghana. Underdevelopment represents much more than economics and the simple

quantitative indices such as measurement of incomes, employment and inequality. We cannot understand underdevelopment through mere statistics reflecting low income, pre-mature mortality or underemployment. However, this cruel kind of hopeless hell can be overcome. But there is no dogmatic policy option that will secure development. Development must be conceived of as a multi-dimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes and institutions to achieve acceleration of economic growth, reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty. Apart from raising the productive capacities of societies, we must set our goals in terms of quality of life, which is dependent on low level of material poverty and unemployment, existence of relative equality, democratization of political life, equal status to women, sustainability of development without damaging environment and general human- security.

14.8   EXERCISES

1)   Write a short note on the nature of employment in an underdeveloped economy.

2)   Compare the export-promotion and import-substituting strategies for achieving industrial development.

3)   Compare the strategies of development adopted by India and China.

4)   Explain why Brazil is considered to be an underdeveloped country despite relatively higher per capita income.

GLOSSARY

Absolute poverty: A situation where a population or section of a population is able to meet only its bare subsistence needs.

Age-structure: The age-composition of a given population.

'Big-push' theory: A theory stating that all underdeveloped countries require a massive investment to promote industrialization.

Debt-service: Interest due on loans, over and above capital repayments.

Economies of scale: These are economies of growth resulting from expansion of the scale of productive capacity of a firm or industry leading to increases in its output and decreases in its cost of production per unit of output.

Exchange-control: A governmental policy designed to restrict the outflow of domestic currency that also controls the amount of foreign exchange obtainable by the citizens.

Gross national product or GNP: The sum total of all incomes that accrue to the factors of production in a particular country including net earnings by its citizens in foreign countries.

Income per capita: Total GNP of a country divided by its total population.

Indirect taxes: Taxes levied on goods purchased by the consumers and exported by the producers. Examples of indirect taxes are excise duties, sales taxes, export duties and custom duties. They are a major source of governmental revenues in the underdeveloped countries.

Intermediate production goal: Goods that are used as inputs into further levels of production (e.g. iron ore in steel production).

Terms of trade: The ratio of a country's average export price to its average import price.

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UNIT 15   CONQUEST AND APPROPRIATION

Structure

15.1   INTRODUCTION

Between 1500 and 1800, Western Europe acquired 35% of the globe's land surface. This is despite the fact that in 1800, Europe's population was only 190 out of 900 millions living on the planet earth. Great Britain was the architect of the biggest overseas empire, an empire over which ''the sun never set''. The population of Great Britain in 1838 was only 19 million but this country acquired large chunks of Asia and Africa with many millions of inhabitants. The scholars of European expansion agree on the superiority of European political organization and Western warfare over the various types of non-Western people. Gunpowder armies and modern state infrastructure of the West Europeans aided expansion in the extra-European world. However, technological edge and managerial superiority by themselves are inadequate to explain European superiority over the non-European world. In order to explain western supremacy the world over, we need to focus on the process in which initial technological edges were transformed into huge political advantages. This Unit, hence, is a brief exploration of European expansion into different parts of the globe.

15.2   THE AGE OF SAIL

Western naval supremacy over the oceans was the first step in the process of European expansion. The superiority of the Western navies especially as regards long-range bulk transport was one of the principal factors behind the successful establishment of maritime empires in the extra-European world. The unlimited oceanic range of the Western ships gave them what could be termed as global reach. Oceanic transportation at per tonne and per person was cheaper than any other comparable form of transportation. European superiority in scientific knowledge, naval technology and finally naval artillery enabled them to dominate the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans.

The Indian Ocean comprises one hundred and forty thousand square miles of water which lie between Asia and Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Malay Archipelago. It covers about 20% of the earth's hydro space. But for the occasional appearance of the Portuguese, Dutch and the French navies, the Indian Ocean between the seventeenth and the early twentieth centuries remained under British control. The Royal Navy with its ocean going battleships established what could be termed as 'sea control'. In 1786, a base was established at Penang at the northern entrance to the Straits of Malacca. With the capture of the Straits of Malacca in 1759 and Singapore in

1824, British control over the eastern approach of the Indian Ocean was complete. In 1622, the British captured Ormuz, dominating the entrance to the Persian Gulf. Thus the British secured control over the western approach to the Indian Ocean. Security of the western approaches of the Indian Ocean required control over Egypt. In 1801 an expedition was sent to Egypt against Napoleon's Army. The Middle East emerged as the soft underbelly of British control of the Indian Ocean region. By the early 1800s, the Russian Empire had expanded into the Caucasus and had occupied an extensive tract of north Persia. This raised the fear of an eventual Russian push to the Gulf. So, southern Persia came under the British sphere of influence. Aden fell in 1839 to a British naval expedition launched from Bombay.

Though some of the Afro-Asian regimes maintained navies, these were coastal craft. Hence, the Afro-Asian states could not challenge the maritime supremacy of the Western naval powers. The passing of control of the Indian Ocean from Asian to European hands was a matter of great political and economic importance. The Arabs lost control over the spice trade between South East Asia, India, Egypt and Arabia. The maritime powers also enabled the European trading companies to establish coastal enclaves in most of the territories whose shores lapped the Indian Ocean. These coastal enclaves became the bases from which the Europeans expanded. For instance, the Dutch Navy aided the VOC (Dutch East India Company) which was founded in 1602 to establish control over the Ambon islands and finally over Indonesia. And the Royal Navy allowed the East India Company to establish an empire in South Asia.

During the second half of the seventeenth century, the West European powers were constructing battleships (two deckers) displacing 1,100-1,600 tonnes and armed with 24- pounder (11 kg) guns. Firepower was enhanced by the replacement of the bronze cannons with iron cannons. Advances in cast iron production resulted in the manufacture of cheaper and more dependable guns. In contrast, the South Asian ships' planking was sewn together and not nailed as in case of the European ships. The Indian ships were sewn with coir. So, if the South Asian ships tried to fire heavy guns than they would have disintegrated. It was the same with the Chinese junks and the Arab *dhows*. The Afro-Asian navies were no match against the firepower generated by the European ships.

In 1839, two British frigates defeated 29 Chinese war junks near Hong Kong. Frigates were built for speed and hardiness. A frigate was a long and fairly low ship carrying its main battery of 18-pounders on a single deck with 13-14 ports on each side according to whether it was a 38 or 36 gun ship. After 1814, frigates with forty 20-pounder guns were launched. The frigates carried six months provision. This meant that they could sail anywhere in the world without requiring to touch any port. The frigates were built of oak, the main beams being at least a foot square in cross-section, and the planking four to five inches thick. The masts and spars were of pine from the Baltic. The European ships' crews were sustained by hard biscuits and beef. Occasionally they had pork pickled in wine. In addition, they also had cheese, onions, garlic and fish. The officers had access to dried fruits. However, due to lack of fresh vegetables and inadequate intake of vitamins, the crew suffered from scurvy. An anti-dote against scurvy was the introduction of limejuice.

Besides technology, in theory also the Afro-Asians were lagging behind the maritime European powers. Theorization and conceptualization of warfare is a vital factor which differentiated the West Europeans from the Asians. From the late fifteenth century, the advent of printing brought about an increase in the number of treatises on combat manuals and various other related technical subjects. Printing made possible transmission and adaptation of knowledge throughout a wide region. Apart from the manuals coming out from the German presses, the woodcuts also depicted in a pictographic manner the

various modes of combat. One of the characteristics of the theoretical works produced during Renaissance was the application of geometrical figures and symbols. Diagrams were used for elucidating theories as well as for analyzing the different stages of particular great battles. The eighteenth century European states established naval schools where mathematics along with Newton's *Principia* was taught. But non-European powers did not set up naval academies for educating and training the officers and sailors. Let us turn the focus on non-European navies.

15.2.1 The Non-European Navies

The Mughals had a riverine navy which conducted marine warfare against the zamindars of Bengal and the Magh pirates in the Chittagong region during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Aurangzeb realized that he needed a powerful navy for challenging the domination of the high sea by the 'hat wearers'. When Aurangzeb was thinking of setting up an ocean going navy, his *Wazir* Jafar Khan told him that there was enough money and timber available but adequate number of skilled men was not available for directing the naval enterprise. The Siddis who were allied with the Mughals had ships of 300 to 400 tonnes equipped with cannon. But these ships were no match against the European men of war. The firepower of the Mughal ships was inadequate even against the Asian ships. The Kingdom of Arakan made boats of strong timber with a hard core. And against them, balls thrown by the *zamburaks* and small cannons mounted in the Mughal ships proved ineffective.

The Marakkars were descendants of Arab merchants who came to India in the seventh century AD. Later they became admirals of the Zamorins of Calicut. In 1498, Vasco da Gama arrived at Calicut on the Malabar Coast. In the same year, eight ships sent by Zamorin encountered a single Portuguese caravel. A caravel had a triangular sail and weighed about 200 tonnes. The bronze cannons of the Portuguese ship made mincemeat of the Indian ships which tried to fight with arrows, swords and lances.

Shivaji set up the Maratha navy in 1659. The most famous Maratha admiral was Kanhoji Angre (1669-1729). Kavindra, the court poet of Shivaji, paid tribute to the European maritime superiority in his epic poem *Sivabharata* in the following words: 'And nearly invincible in faring on the high seas.' The shipwrights of Konkan constructed the Maratha ships. They were mostly illiterate. They could not put on paper the plan of the vessel to be constructed. For modernizing his fleet, Kanhoji hired Portuguese deserters. Kanhoji's naval establishment did include some colourful characters. John Plantain a pirate from Jamaica got tired of his trade and decided to settle in India. He took service with Kanhoji. Another Dutch man became a Commodore in Angria's service. In 1699, Kanhoji's fleet was composed of 10 grabs and 50 gallivats. Some of the grabs were of 400 tonnes each. The grabs had two to three masts. They were built to operate in shallow water. The grab was very broad in proportion to length, narrowing from the middle to the end where instead of bows, they had prows, projecting like those of a Mediterranean galley. Each grab had 16 guns and 150 armed men for boarding the enemy vessels. The gallivats were smaller ships. Each gallivat of 120 tonnes had 6 guns and 60 armed men. Some of the crews were armed with muskets. Each gallivat had about 50 oars and they could attain a speed of four miles an hour. These ships carried 6-pounder guns. The guns were lashed to the deck of the ships with ropes. So, when the guns fired, the vessel recoiled with it. The Maratha ships, instead of depending on firepower generated by the broadsides as was the case of the European men of war, fought somewhat like the Roman ships. The Maratha ships were incapable of line action on the high seas. Kanhoji's ships were fast and maneuverable in coastal water but helpless in the open sea and in the ocean. The Maratha naval tactics comprised of sending a number of gallivats with 200 to 300 men in each who were armed with swords. They boarded from all quarters simultaneously attempting to overpower the crew. However,

such techniques were of no use against the firepower of heavy sturdy European ships. In 1739, a single Portuguese frigate defeated Sambhaji Angria's squadron of 17 vessels. Gheria, the Maratha naval headquarters finally fell to the bombardment of British battleships.

15.2.2 Changes in British Naval Power

While the Royal Navy protected the British sea lines of communications, the Company's marine took care of coastal security. By 1934 it had been rechristened as the Royal Indian Navy.

The East India Company established its first trading post at Surat in 1607. In 1661, the island of Bombay formed part of the dowry brought by Catherine of Portugal on the occasion of her marriage to King Charles II of England. It was occupied by the British three years later. This island was leased to the Company for an annual rent of 10 pounds. By 1686, Bombay superseded Surat as the main depot of the East India Company. Bases were required for conducting long range maritime operations. Fort William functioned as an important base for both the Company's marine as well as the Royal Navy. Fort William stored medicines, gun carriages and guns for the ships. In 1805, the Court of Directors and the British government agreed that the possession of Ceylon would not only raise the security of Company's territories in southern India but would also strengthen British hold over the Bay of Bengal. As long as any European maritime power was denied bases in Ceylon, their warships could neither raid Bay of Bengal nor bombard the Coromondal coast. When Ceylon and Pondichery were lost, the French Navy found that Mauritius was too far away for operating around the subcontinent. The lack of a maritime base near India hampered French maritime operations. This in turn choked the supply of men and materials to the French Army under Count de Lally. After the defeat of Lally in the late eighteenth century, there was no European military competition to the East India Company's army in the Indian subcontinent.

The British naval supremacy in the coastal waters of India also shaped land warfare in favour of the Company. In 1765, the Mysore Navy possessed 30 war vessels and a large number of transport ships. In 1768, the desertion of the naval commander Stannet resulted in the destruction of most of the ships of Mysore. In 1779, six British vessels sailed for Bombay under Edward Hughes, a British Vice-Admiral. The same year also witnessed the arrival of six French vessels to Mauritius under Count D'Orves. D'Orves' escorts and the troopships carrying French soldiers who were supposed to cooperate with Haidar Ali sailed from Mauritius. The whole fleet was commanded by Commodore Suffren. While Suffren suffered from lack of a base in India, his rival Hughes had ample reserves of guns, ammunition, timber, spars, canvas, rope, provisions and water available at Madras. When Hughes' fleet anchored at Madras for refitting, the shore batteries guarded the British fleet. In February 1779, Suffren with ten warships escorting 20 troop transports entered the Bay of Bengal. Avoiding Hughes' nine ships, Suffren disembarked the troops who aided Haidar in capturing Cuddalore. During the Second Anglo-Mysore War, a British fleet under Hughes destroyed the fleet of Haidar in Mangalore and Calicut. Then the British fleet threatened Cuddalore. After the destruction of Baillie's force and retreat of Major Munro to Madras, the Madras Presidency requested for military aid to the Bengal Presidency. In response, the Bengal Presidency sent European infantry, European gunners, and guns with carriages, plus numerous barrels of gunpowder to Madras by sea. And these troops took part in the successful battle of Porto Novo against Haidar. In 1786, Tipu established a separate Board of Admiralty with headquarters at Seringapatnam. Tipu's attempt to get aid from France was unsuccessful. And, the Mysore Navy could achieve little against British sea power.

After the defeat of Tipu, there were no more naval challenges from the indigenous powers. In the 1790s, the duties of the Bombay Marine were as follows: protection of trade, suppression of piracy and convoy of transport. In 1791, each of the Company's ships averaged 750-800 tonnes with a crew of 101 men. In the 1830s, the core of the British Indian navy was composed of several iron steamers. One typical steamer was Indus which was 304 tonnes with a 60 horse power engine and manned by 52 crews. Of the crews about half were Europeans and the rest Indians. The armament consisted of a 3-pounder brass gun, and a 12-pounder 4.5 inch howitzer. In 1863 a marine survey department was started which aided naval communication along the hitherto uncharted waters of the Indian Ocean. In 1884, the duties of the Royal Indian Marine also involved transport of troops and survey of the coasts and harbours.

In 1848 when Mulraj the *Diwan* of Multan revolted, the Second Anglo-Sikh War broke out. And then the Company's navy practised what could be categorized as 'Littoral Warfare'. The Indus Flotilla transported men, guns and stores 800 miles up the Indus to within a mile and half of Multan. During the siege of Multan, the two steamers moved above the city and severed all water communication between the fort held by Mulraj's men and the rebel chieftains in west Punjab. The steamers protected the British bridge, pontoon boats and the commissariat boats carrying grain for the Company's troops. These steamers were also employed in evacuating the wounded British officers back to Karachi. Another steamer with its two 10-inch mortars provided firepower support. The Company's marine also provided a force of 100 ratings and seven officers who participated in the siege of Multan fort.

Naval power came to the aid of the British during the crisis of 1857 Mutiny. Towards the end of May 1857, steamers brought white troops from Madras to Calcutta. The Royal Navy also brought reinforcements from Britain and Crimea into India during 1857-58. Military operations in India were dependent on adequate supplies of mules and horses. Supremacy over the sea enabled the Raj to import war animals from abroad. Special mules were bought at Argentina and were brought into India. Horses were brought from England and Australia into South Asia.

Sea power enabled the British government in India to project power in various parts of Asia. The Company was able to put together a bureaucracy capable of launching distant amphibious operations. Thanks to the Royal Navy's supremacy in the Indian Ocean, the Raj's troopships faced no threat. During the Dutch War of 1795, it was decided to send troops from India to Malacca. Ships were chartered to carry Indian cavalry and infantry to China during the nineteenth century. The Company's sea going steamers proved their worth during the Burma Wars. A squadron consisting of four steam frigates and two sloops all armed with 8-inch guns as well as 32-pounders provided firepower and logistical support to the Company's army invading Burma in the early 1820s. The frigate's fire silenced the Burmese guns in Rangoon and allowed the Company's troops to land. The steamers of the Bengal Marine and ships of the Royal Navy transported about 6,000 men from Madras to Rangoon. One of the principal reasons for the annexation of the Arakan during the First Anglo-Burma War (1824-26) was the necessity to ensure control over the eastern portion of the Bay of Bengal. Burma teak was highly valued by the Royal Navy and the British merchantmen. And this was a contributory factor for the Second Anglo-Burma War during 1852-53. In 1891, the Royal Navy assumed responsibility for the Australian Station.

In the seventeenth century, the Portuguese in East Africa faced some opposition from the Omani naval power. Close cooperation between the gunboats and land columns aided French conquest of Senegal and Western Sudan. And naval control of upper Niger facilitated the conquest of Western Sudan in the 1890s. Especially the emergence of shallow draught steamboats equipped with guns enabled European penetration into

the interiors of Africa through the rivers. The British penetration into southern Nigeria through the Niger delta involved use of naval vessels to shell villages and ferry troops and supplies. The African canoes made of wood could traverse the lagoons. The light guns lashed with ropes on the canoes could not be aimed properly. Thus the African canoes had no chance against the steel guns and steel hulls of the European steamers.

15.3   EUROPEAN PENETRATION IN THE NEW WORLD

Warfare in North and South America before the coming of the Europeans was constrained by the low level of technology and religious and magical elements. Inter-tribal warfare was not that lethal. In the far north of North America from AD 1000 onwards, the Palaeo-Eskimos of the eastern Arctic retreated before the eastward migration of the sea faring Neo Eskimos. They used harpoons for hunting whales. In addition, they also used sinew backed bows, dog sleds and fortifications made of stone. In the later sixteenth century, they settled in the Labrador coast. In Ontario and in St. Lawrence Valley the American tribes were farming communities. The villages were fortified with palisades.

Bruce Lenman claims that in the early eighteenth century, the Dutch and the French by introducing gunpowder among the American tribes raised the level of organized violence. The original inhabitants of the New World did not use iron. Most of them employed Stone Age technologies. The Aztec warriors of Mexico armed with bronze tipped arrows and obsidian (a glass like substance formed by volcanic eruptions) rimmed wooden clubs were no match against the steel helmeted firearms equipped Conquistadores. Obsidian broke easily in contact with the iron swords of the Spaniards. Hence, Hernan Cortes with 500 Spaniards and 14 cannon was able to defeat the Aztec Empire repeatedly between 1519 and 1521. Similarly between 1531 and 1533, 168 Spaniards supported by four cannon defeated the Inca Empire in Peru. This was possible because the Incas used clubs with semi circular bronze ends that lacked a sharp edge. They broke easily in contact with the iron shields of the Spaniards. The Incas tried to stem the European tide of conquest unsuccessfully by throwing stones from slings and rolling down boulders from the slopes of the hills. At the siege of Cuzco in 1536, 200,000 Inca soldiers were defeated by 190 Spanish soldiers. The discovery of gold and diamond led to extensive Portuguese colonization of Brazil in the seventeenth century. The settlers pushed ahead with the aid of bayonet and volley firing techniques. Forts were constructed for resisting and harassing the raiding parties of the Indians.

In addition to the technological gap, the American tribes suffered further due to their culture of warfare. While European warfare aimed at killing the enemy, 'native' American warfare was aimed at capturing the enemy by wounding him. The objective of the victors in American warfare was not to annihilate the enemy but to use him for religious sacrifice or as captive labourers. For the Red Indians capturing scalps and the captives was evidence of victory. But, the European settlers came and appropriated the tribes' land and livestock. In North America the European approach to war was particularly brutal. For instance in 1687, the Governor of Quebec launched a campaign against the Westerly Iroquois people. Villages were burnt, corn destroyed, livestock slaughtered and graves were pilfered. Again the 'native' Americans had never seen horses. The war horses imported from Europe not only provided mobility to the European soldiers but also caused a grave psychological shock among the Indian tribes. Gradually the Indians were concentrated into smaller and smaller regions known as reserves or sanctuaries, as if they were animals. Lack of food and disease reduced their numbers considerably and continuous immigration from Europe changed the demographic balance in favour of the white settlers.

The French towards the end of the seventeenth century realized that without Indian allies it was impossible to conduct colonial warfare successfully in North America. In 1712, the French allied with the Ottawa and Potawatomie attacked the Fox tribe. The missionaries under French tutelage played an important role in playing off the various North American Indian tribes against each other. The linear close order tactical formations of the Western infantry though useful in the plains of Europe, was not very successful in the midst of the jungles of North America. The Indian tribes of North America, who were allied with the European powers during the seventeenth century, taught the Europeans several tactical lessons like marksmanship, scouting, looking for cover and concealment in the jungles.

Cooperation with the Indians was essential even in Central and South America. In 1520 Cortes had to retreat from the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan. In 1521, he retook the city with Spanish soldiers equipped with cannon and arquebuses who were supported by 25,000 Indian allies. Cortes' conquest of the Aztec Empire would not have been possible without the support of the Tlaxcalans who provided warriors and supplies. Again Diego de Almagro, the leader of the Spanish forces was able to defeat Emperor Manco Inca in the Andes only by co-opting Manco's brother Paullu and his followers.

15.4   THE COLLAPSE OF AFRO-ASIAN REGIMES AND WESTERN PENETRATION INTO AUSTRALIA

In India, unlike in America, Australia and Siberia, demography aided the defenders. After all, the South Asians were not swamped by numerically superior number of white settlers and European colonists. In 1700, Asia contained 70% of the world's population. India in 1700 had 180 million people which meant about 20% of the world's population. Besides human resources, Asia's economic power also remained impressive. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, Asia remained the world's centre of artisan production and accounted for a huge volume of world trade. However, economic potential and demographic resources did not necessarily generate great military power.

For explaining European military superiority over Afro-Asia in general and India in particular, most of the historians followed Edward Gibbon's emphasis on gunpowder weapons. Superior organization of the polity and military technology assisted expansion of British power in eighteenth century Asia. Geoffrey Parker asserts that the military balance changed in favour of the West because of the Military Revolution which unfolded between 1500 and 1750. The Military Revolution on land actually was an amalgamation of two revolutions. The first involved a Revolution in Siege Warfare due to the emergence of *trace Italienne* (star shaped scientific fortress architecture) and siege artillery. Then a Revolution in Field Warfare occurred due to the rise of firearms equipped infantry supported by field artillery. Another characteristic of the Military Revolution was sustained growth in the size of the European armies. The late sixteenth century witnessed Europe's new way of making warfare which involved bastioned fortifications, scientific gunnery and disciplined infantry tactics. All these resulted in a battlefield revolution. Jeremy Black writes that European military innovations like the bayonet, flintlock musket, grape and canister firing field artillery opened up a major gap in capability between firearms equipped European armies and their non-European opponents. One of the chief characteristics of the firearms equipped European infantry was that the men were drilled in the style of the Roman legions. Superior administrative and political capability generated effective tactical discipline on the part of the Western forces. Black continues that from the sixteenth century onwards, European forces acquired an edge in keeping cohesion

and control in battle much longer than their adversaries. And this permitted more sophisticated tactics in moving units on the battlefield and more effective fire discipline.

The gunpowder revolution in Europe established modern state structures that in turn were able to sustain costly firepower armies. The Western advantage in military techniques and infrastructure rested on foundations of European economic, social and institutional changes. From the mid-seventeenth century, the impersonal bureaucracy pushed the semi-independent military entrepreneurs (feudal knights and mercenaries) to the margin. John Keegan asserts that by the fifteenth century gunpowder allowed the French monarchy to cow down the refractory chieftains thus giving birth to a centralized state structure backed by a fiscal system. After 1550, armour penetrating firearms used by the infantry in the state's payroll drove the feudal cavalry from the field. And the artillery of the king destroyed the forts of the semi-independent knights. Artillery was so costly that only the monarchy could maintain it. The Europeans were well advanced in the field of international finance. The international credit network sustained the Western military activities across the globe.

Compared to the Western warfare, the backwardness of the Afro-Asians was evident in the theory and weapons of warfare as well as regarding the institutions supporting organized violence. The Afro-Asian armies lacked any regular cohesive organization. Soldiering was a part time occupation of the cultivators and pay was irregular. Professional standing armies were absent in pre-colonial Afro-Asia. Hence, the Afro-Asian soldiers were indisciplined. In battles, the Africans and the Asians fought as aggregates of individuals and not as cohesive bodies of soldiers. Raiding and counter-raiding before the monsoon constituted the principal method of fighting among the non-European rulers. For instance the Maratha force was mostly composed of light cavalry designed for levying tribute rather than for organized conquest. Asian warfare was characterized by the use of elephants and inadequate cohesion among the mounted arm during hand to hand combat. In the seventeenth century, the African and Asian method of warfare proved ineffective against the European warfare which was characterized by the use of bayonets, flintlocks, pre-fabricated paper cartridges, standardization of artillery's ball, ball weight and firing procedures.

However, a point of caution is necessary. To win in Africa and Asia, the British had to imitate non-Western techniques of conducting grand strategy. This meant carrying on negotiations and intrigues with partners within the enemy coalition simultaneously while conducting field operations. Then the Indians as horsemen and sepoys of the British led Sepoy Army and land revenue of the Bengal Presidency enabled Britain to conquer India. In the first half of the nineteenth century, about 220,000 sepoys and horsemen fought for the British both inside and outside India in regions as far as Africa and China.

Warfare in South-East Asia was also lagging behind the type of organized violence practised by the West. In pre-colonial Philippines, warfare was characterized by small scale seasonal raids rather than pitched battles involving sizeable number of soldiers. In the Indonesian Archipelago, pre-European warfare was characterized by headhunting. The combatants fought with sword and javelins. Prisoners were sold after the campaign. Occasionally destruction of plantations and villages also occurred. Bloody conflict resulting in total destruction of the enemy force and permanent conquest were trends introduced by the Europeans.

In 1788, the British established a base in Australia. In the early 1790s, they explored the coast of New Zealand. Initially, the British were interested in Australia as a base for the furtherance of the East Indies and China trade. The Admiralty was interested in the timber and flax of New Zealand and Norfolk Islands to furnish naval stores for the

Royal Navy's vessels operating in the East. Free settlement in Australia by the white settlers started from the 1820s. During the early period, the initial settlers were soldiers, marines and convicts. In Australia there were about 700 tribes. Initially they tried to fight the British by using magic and charms. But these techniques were obviously of no use against the invaders. Aboriginal warfare was merely an extension of the hunt. It emphasized ambush and skirmishing. They lacked knowledge about sophisticated tactical systems for conducting open warfare. The aborigines were wiped out by the British mounted musketeers. Further, the aborigines had no immunity against the diseases introduced by the British. Smallpox, measles, influenza and tuberculosis proved deadly to them. However, the Maori tribesmen of New Zealand opposed the British boldly. Between 1845 and 1872, the British had to mobilize 18,000 white soldiers against the Maoris.

Siberia was a vast region inhabited by small numbers of nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes. They were engaged in hunting and fishing. The Russian merchants were interested in fur produced by this region. In the first half of the seventeenth century, Russia conquered Siberia by a systematic construction of a chain of forts. As the Russians crossed the Ural Mountains, they entered the West Siberian Plain inhabited by the Tartars. Tobolsk on the bank of the river Ob was founded in 1587. In the Central Siberian Plain, Turukhansk on the bank of Yenisey came up in 1619 and Yakutsk on the bank of the river Lena was founded in 1632. The Manchu dynasty of China opposed Russian advance in the Far East. The Russians equipped with cannons defeated the Manchus in the Amur Valley. The farthest points were Nizhne Kolymsk and Okhotsk founded in 1644 and 1648, respectively. The Chukchi and Koryak tribes of Kamchatka were finally subdued in the eighteenth century. From the defeated tribes, the Russians demanded heavy *iasak* (tribute) in furs.

The nature of warfare in Africa was also limited and backward. During the second half of the eighteenth century, the West Africans used firearms for acquiring slaves rather than creating a strong empire. European drill and discipline were alien to the Africans. The indigenous military system lacked staff, logistical apparatus, regular subdivision and a command structure. There was no concept of regular payment and drill in the African armies. Hence, the African armies were incapable of maneuver in the field of fire. In 1847, the *Amir* of Algeria fielded 50,000 poorly armed and indisciplined irregular troops against 108,000 French troops. In the final analysis the Africans had no machine guns, rifles and steel barrelled field artillery of the European armies. European technical superiority seemed excessive both in set piece battles as well as in siege warfare. The frontal assault of *assegais* (spears) equipped Zulus was easily suppressed by the musket equipped British redcoats. The Africans missed the breechloader revolution. During 1873-4, the British armed with snider rifles easily dealt with the Ashantis equipped with muzzle loaders. In 1898 at the Battle of Omdurman, the Mahdis' *jihadi* supporters equipped with spears and swords were wiped out by Kitchener's riflemen. In 1891, the 95-mm French siege guns reduced the Tukolar fortresses to dust. Non-military technologies like semaphore and telegraph also aided command and control of the European armies.

While by the 1850s most of Asia was under the Europeans, even as late as 1876 less than 10% of Africa was under the Europeans. This was due to lack of surface communication in the jungle - filled continent and the prevalence of diseases which hampered operations of the European armies in the 'dark continent'. In West Africa, half of the white soldiers died within three months of their arrival. The death rate in the Gold Coast (in West Africa) in 1823-6 was 668 per 1000 each year. Malaria and yellow fever were the chief killers of the white men. The final seal on African independence was because, writes Bruce Vandervort, the failure of the various African tribes to

establish and sustain an anti-European coalition. And this allowed the European powers to recruit Africans for expanding and maintaining their empires. The British recruited African infantry from the Gold Coast. And the Portuguese in Angola used the Africans as light infantry. Finally, the French used Senegalese as sharpshooters.

15.5 SUMMARY

While the eighteenth century witnessed the conquest of Asia, European expansion in Africa really gathered speed during the late nineteenth century. Structural contradictions prevented the Mughals, Persians and the Chinese from modernizing their army. They also did not possess the sea faring culture of the Western maritime nations. All these factors resulted in the passing away of the big Asian land empires. Then the culture of warfare in America and Africa also aided European conquest. However, the point to be noted is that burning heat and high humidity in both Asia and Africa forced the imperial powers to utilize Asian and African auxiliaries who further expanded the frontiers of the imperial powers. State organization was virtually non-existent in most parts of the New World and in Africa. All the non-European polities were friable entities and characterized by divisible sovereignty. This made possible playing off various ethno-linguistic and religious groups against each other by the Europeans. This in turn facilitated not only conquest but also consolidation of imperial rule over the two American continents as well as in Afro-Asia. Thus it was a combination of social, technological, strategic and cultural factors that gradually brought about the entire world under European domination.

15.6 EXERCISES

1) How were the technological advancement and innovation in warfare strategies responsible for the European conquests overseas?

2) In what ways did the Europeans adopt different strategies for demographic changes across the globe?

Expansion of Europe

5

UNIT 16   MIGRATIONS AND SETTLEMENTS

Structure

16.1   INTRODUCTION

Cross-continental migrations of people started with the origin of humanity and continues till now. Migrations occur for economic reasons and occasionally also result due to coercion by the political regime. The latter type of migration could be categorized as forced migration. The migration of the Europeans in the early modern era was most systematic and well recorded. This migration was mostly sea borne and occurred in the east-west direction. Along with human beings, this migration also involved movement of animals, plants and diseases. Some of the migrations occurred long before speech and writing was invented. So, detailed accounts of these migrations are lost forever in the mist of time. In this Unit you will study different patterns of immigrations, socio-economic and political changes brought out by them and how they have affected world history, particularly during modern times

16.2   MIGRATION IN HISTORY

Probably human beings (*homo sapiens*) first surfaced in Central Africa. Many thousands of years ago, India and Africa were linked by a land bridge. So, from Central Africa, some marched into India. These migrants in history are known as Dravidians. They introduced agriculture and the art of constructing cities in the subcontinent. The landmass known as Gondwanaland moved up in the northerly direction due to changes in plate tectonics. This resulted in breaking up of the land connection with Africa and crushing of the Tethys Sea which became the Himalayas. About 50,000 years ago, the people from South East Asia settled in Australia. They reached Australia by island hopping in small canoes. Or probably a landmass connected Australia with South East Asia which in later times broke up and now constitutes the Indonesian archipelago. At that time, the sea levels were much lower than at present. The aborigines of Australia moved further east and inhabited New Zealand and Polynesia. Around 35,000 BC, the hunters from Siberia crossed the Bering Straits and moved into Alaska. They migrated down south into Chile. The descendants of these early migrants are the 'native Americans'

whom the Europeans of the post-Columbian era encountered. Around 3000 BC a group of people in Central Asia speaking what philologists call Indo-Aryan language moved into India, Persia (Iran) and in the region along eastern Mediterranean. In India they are known as Aryans. In Persia they are known as Indo-Iranians. And in the Balkans they are known as Dorians who founded the Greek Civilization. The Germans also trace their ancestry to the Indo-Aryan groups settled in Central Europe.

Long before Columbus, the Vikings in their longships discovered Greenland and also made a landfall in Newfoundland. However, large scale migration from Scandinavia to Iceland, Greenland and North America did not occur. Rather the Scandinavians and the Goths moved south into central and southern Europe. Demographic expansion pushed the Goths further south into the Roman Mediterranean. German (Teutons and the Goths) tribal invasions had occurred before 100 BC but became more systematic after 350 AD. The Germans attacked the Western Roman Empire due to rising demographic pressure and the riches that could be obtained by plundering the rich Roman provinces of Gaul (France), Spain and Italy. Why did these migrations take place? Scholars have pointed out a number of factors that motivated these migrations. Let us look at some of them.

16.2.1 Economy

The lure of fertile land, pillage and plunder as well as prospect of trade also encouraged migrations and settlements. Greece was full of mountains and ravines. Fertile agricultural land was scarce and quite constricted. The land hunger of the Greeks encouraged city states like Corinth to occupy Sicily and South Italy where Greek cities like Tarentum, Regusia, etc came up around 400-300 BC. The Greeks exported wine and olive oil and imported wheat especially from the Black Sea region. Because the staying power of the triremes was small, during the night every Greek ship had to make a landfall along the coast. The maritime trade route moved across the straits of the Dardanelles hugging the shoreline of Asia Minor. And the prospect of monopolizing maritime trade with Anatolia (Turkey) and the Danubian principalities encouraged Athens to set up colonies along the coast of Asia Minor. Before the Greeks, when the Achaemenid Emperors of Persia occupied Tyre, the chief city of the Phoenicians, mass migration of the latter occurred. The Phoenicians were the best mariners and most aggressive traders of the ancient world. They founded the city of Carthage in Tunisia in North Africa. The Phoenicians also founded colonies along the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts of Spain. Carthage colonized Sardinia and Corsica.

Afghanistan is full of ragged mountains. Some of the tribes survive even now by practising pastoral nomadism. The deficit economy of the Afghans forced them to migrate to India with their families in the medieval era. As military labourers the Afghans took service with the Delhi Sultans and the Mughal Emperors and settled in India especially in the fertile plains of Rohilkhand and Bihar.

16.2.2 Climate

Climatic changes also generated large scale migration for survival. The gradual desiccation of Central Asia pushed the steppe nomadic tribes into Southern Asia and Eastern Europe. Due to the drying up of the heartland of Eurasia and falling water table, the horse riding nomads attacked the sedentary civilization. The Chinese called them *hsung-nu* (horse people). One group of Central Asian nomads known as Huns migrated west along with their families. They attacked India, Persia and both the Eastern and Western Roman Empires. Some of the Huns settled in present day Rajasthan, Gujarat and Sindh. In India the descendants of the Huns were known as Scythians who after intermarriages came to be known as Rajputs. Long before the Huns, Persia encountered intrusion of

the Central Asian nomads in the form of Scythians and Parthians. Along with the Huns, Sarmatians and Avars (other branches of the Central Asian nomads) also attacked both the Eastern and Western Roman Empires. Some of the Central Asian tribes settled in Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary. The present day Magyars of Hungary were descendants of the Huns. Increasing cold in Scandinavia also encouraged Viking migration in the late medieval age. The Vikings settled in Denmark, England, Normandy province in France and also in south Italy. By sailing along the rivers of Russia, the Vikings also reached the Eastern Roman Empire or the Byzantine Empire. Some Vikings settled in the trans-Caucasus region.

16.2.3 Culture

Besides economy, climate, demography and technology, culture has also been an important determinant of migration and settlement. In 1400 China's maritime technology was equal to that of West Europe. During 1405-33, China had maritime relations with South East Asia. A Chinese fleet under Admiral Cheng Ho came upto East Africa by sailing along Sri Lanka. The Chinese junks also visited the shores of Australia and the Pacific coast of North America. But, Confucian China held itself to be culturally and politically superior to its neighbours. China looked down upon the surrounding nations as barbarians who were fit only to pay tribute to the Chinese Emperor. Cheng Ho's voyages were motivated by a quest for tribute and for luxuries and curiosities for the Chinese court and not by a desire to extend China's knowledge about the rest of the world or to establish permanent maritime trade relations and overseas settlements. Commerce and merchants occupied a low position within the Chinese Empire. In contrast, the merchants in early modern Europe were assertive and prosperous. Cheng Ho's voyages were not followed up by the Ming dynasty which retreated into its self- imposed isolation till the mid-seventeenth century. Thus Confucianism in a way discouraged discovery and settlement of the overseas regions. Again, the Romans believed that the world was in the shape of a square and if anybody were to sail beyond the straits of Gibraltar into Atlantic, he would fall into hell. This discouraged a Roman breakout from the constricted inland Mediterranean Sea into the western direction. Associated with culture is the factor of religion. Driven by poverty and the zeal of Islam, the Arabs in the seventh century burst out of the desert of Arabia and settled along the coast of North Africa, Asia Minor and *Ajam* (Iran and Iraq).

16.3 THE EUROPEAN EXPANSION: 1400 − 1800

The era of mass migration of the Europeans in the extra-European world was preceded by what could be categorized as the 'Age of Discovery'. The latter term refers to intensive maritime exploration of the oceans by the European mariners. For the first time, Ferdinand Magellan circumnavigated the globe during 1519-22. The sturdy European cogs could cross the Atlantic regularly. Relying on a new capacity for long distance voyaging the Europeans charted out the coastal features and principal outlines of the major landmasses of the globe thus creating a new sort of knowledge which previously did not exist. According to David Arnold, the age of discovery was sustained by the invention of printing press. William Caxton first printed books in 1470s. Printed pamphlets and books along with sophisticated techniques of map making disseminated knowledge about the new worlds. This occurred during the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. The mastery over the seas and the growth of European geographical knowledge enabled the Europeans to control the commerce of the non-European world. This also aided the expansion of European territorial control in the non-European world.

The principal motive behind Europe's expansionist drive was the search for trade. Europe saw itself as the poorer neighbour of Asia and Africa. This was because of the exaggerated travellers' tales and the nature of products which reached Europe. Africa and Asia exported gold, jewel, silk, carpets, spices and porcelains to Europe. All these created the notion among the Europeans about luxury, wealth, skilled artisans and thriving craft industries in Afro-Asia. The Indonesian archipelago was famous for spice. Cloves were grown in the Moluccas, nutmeg and mace in the Banda islands and pepper in Sumatra. Sri Lanka was famous for cinnamon and South West India (Malabar coast) produced pepper. Due to inadequate fodder, the animals in Europe had to be slaughtered before every winter. There were few fruits and vegetables available at that time. And the principal diet of the Europeans remained meat. Spice was used to add flavour to the stale and salted meat. Spices were also used in the cakes, drinks and confectionary. Very few European products were in demand in the East. Coarse woollen goods produced in Europe had no takers in the East. The Europeans needed gold in order to pay for goods brought from Asia and for coinage which was required to sustain Europe's internal trade. This 'gold famine' encouraged the Europeans to explore and trade overseas. The Europeans also searched for fish at ever increasing distances from Europe's shores. Dried salted cod formed a major item of Portugal's trade with the rest of Europe. In search of fish, the Portuguese moved west of North West Africa and in the North Atlantic where the discovery of Azores in the 1430s gave them a strategic base for further reconnaissance of the mid Atlantic. Before Cabral's discovery of Brazil, the Portuguese had conducted reconnaissance of the shores of South America. Spain, from its bases in the Caribbean islands, despatched repeated expeditions in search of a route to the East Indies for getting spices.

Instead of the Italian cities which were most interested in maritime trade, it was the West European powers which took the lead in oceanic voyages. This was partly because the Italian galleys were suited for calmer waters of Mediterranean than the rough seas of the Atlantic. Again the geographic position of Spain, Portugal and Britain is more suited than Venice and Genoa for undertaking exploration of the Atlantic. The Italian cities were more interested in continuing their traditional lucrative trade with Asia through Levant rather than to engage in the risky Atlantic ventures especially when economic returns from such explorations remained uncertain.

Initially the European enclaves in the newly discovered lands were forts and ports. In Asia the indigenous potentates were quite powerful. The Ottoman Empire, the Ming Empire and the Mughal Empire were formidable entities. In such a scenario, the Europeans found themselves in the role of supplicants and observers rather than as conquerors and settlers. Since indigenous resistance in the New World was weak, the European coastal enclaves quickly expanded into big territorial empires. Unlike the commercial empires of the Italian city states, Spain went for a territorial empire. The mobile sheep herders of southern Spain and the cattle herders of Andalusia joined the ranks of conquerors and functioned as soldier-settlers. Militant Christianity enabled them to believe that they were bound to win and bring the heathens into the fold of Christianity. The search for the mythical Christian King Prester John who would aid the Europeans in their struggle against the Muslims also encouraged the voyages of discovery. Finally the search for a route to India was part of the Spanish programme of *Reconquista* i.e. the crusade against Islam. This was because the Muslim Ottomans controlled the land routes to Asia.

16.3.1 Migrations to South America

Columbus found gold in Hispaniola which in turn attracted more European settlers. Returning to the West Indies in 1493, Columbus brought 1500 settlers with him including farmers and craftsmen to colonize Hispaniola. Another 2500 arrived in 1502. They

were expected to form a self-sufficient community. But, the Spanish conquerors, greedy for gold and contemptuous of manual labour, had no intention of tilling the land. The Crown of Castile granted them legal power to command the labour of the local populace. Many Indians died due to harsh treatment at the hands of the settlers. The search for labour resulted in the conquest of Puerto Rico in 1508, Jamaica in 1509, and Cuba in 1511. Cuba, settled by Diego de Valazquez, started yielding gold from 1511 onwards. The aggressive land hungry conquerors then moved on to the mainland of America. In 1519 an expedition of about 600 men with 16 horses, 14 cannons and 13 muskets arrived under Hernan Cortes on the Gulf coast of Mexico from Cuba.

In 1428 the Aztecs defeated the city state of Atzcapotzalco and established an empire that extended from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Coast. However, the Americans' stone edged swords and fire hardened arrows were no match against the steel swords and cannons of the Europeans. The Spanish were able to defeat Montezuma in 1521. Between 1522 and 1524 most of the Pacific coast as far north as Santiago River was conquered. The interior was full of dense rain forest, big rivers, riparian swamps and mountain ranges.

Pachauti Inca in 1438 defeated Chimu and controlled northern Peru. He established a dynamic centralized state. Topa Inca (1471-93) conquered northern Chile and northern Argentina. His successor Huyana Capac (1493-1525) conquered Ecuador. From the core area of Peru, the Incas extended their dominion upto Ecuador in the north and Maule River in Chile in the south. At heights between 9000 and 13000 feet the Incas established an empire which from north to south extended upto 2175 miles. The empire was held together by an impressive road system. Their cities were built of solid dressed stones. The capital was Cuzco. Huyana Capac founded a second capital at Quito. In 1531 Francisco Pizarro invaded Peru with 180 men and 27 horses. At that time, the Inca Empire was passing through a succession crisis. Atahualpa and his half brother Huescar were dominant in the northern and southern sections of the empire respectively. Atahualpa commanded 65000 men. Nevertheless hand held firearms and cannons gave victory to the small European forces. Almagro traversed Bolivia and penetrated into Chile before returning to Cuzco in 1537. Almagro's reconnaissance in force was followed by Pedro de Valdivia who in 1541 founded the city of Santiago and settled Spanish farming communities. Around 1572, the Inca resistance came to an end in Peru.

By 1600, Portugal was controlling Brazil, West Africa plus the seaboard of China. And the Spanish American Empire extended from Texas to Chile. The Araucanians in Central Chile and the Muras in Central Amazonia tried to check the aggression of the Europeans unsuccessfully. The Maya Civilization (also known as Itzas) extended along Guatemala and Yucatan. In 1523 Pedro de Alvarado attacked the Mayas at Guatemala. The Mayas lacked political unity. Fighting was going on between the Cakchiquel and Quiche. This internal division allowed Alvarado to subdue both. Nojpeten, the capital of the Maya people fell to Spanish attack in 1697.

16.3.2 Migrations to North America

From Mexico, the Spaniards expanded north into the southern portion of North America. In 1781 the Yuma rebellion thwarted Spanish expansion along the Colorado Valley into Arizona. Due to pressure on the Great Plains, the tribes like Comanche and Utes started moving south and exerted pressure along the northern section of the fledgling Spanish frontier. These tribes were mounted on horses and equipped with firearms supplied by the French. By 1790 the Spaniards expanded in California.

The North American tribes practised rudimentary hunting and fishing. The British in North America after settling down became fishermen, farmers, traders, etc. The early

English settlements in Americas were at Jamestown and Virginia. In 1760 fighting broke out between the British and the Cherokee whose hunting land in east Tennessee and west North Carolina were under pressure due to the advancing frontier of British-American control and settlement.

In 1608, the French settled in Quebec. In 1699 Pierre Le Moyne founded Fort Maurepas in Biloxi Bay, Mobile was set up in 1702 and New Orleans in 1718. The French also consolidated their position on St. Lawrence in 1701. French missions were already established at Cahokia in 1699 and in Kaskaskia in 1703 on the upper Mississippi. Fort St. Charles came up on the Lake of the Woods in 1732 followed by another fort at the southern end of Lake Winnipeg. In 1732 the French established a garrison post to check the Chickasaws. Fort La Reine in 1738 was established on the Assiniboine River. Fort Bourbon in 1739 expanded French presence to the northwest shore of Lake Winnipeg and Fort Dauphin established French presence on the western shore of Lake Winnipegosis. In 1748 Fort St. Jean was rebuilt to strengthen the French position near Lake Champlain. A new wagon road linked the fort to Montreal. In 1750 the French erected Fort Rouille (Toronto). And Fort La Corne in 1753 came up near the Forks of the Saskatchewan. In the south the French expanded from Louisiana. The Natchez tribe around New Orleans was crushed by the French.

In the sixteenth century, between 1000 and 2000 Iberians migrated to the Americas annually. During the 1630-40s, the Europeans were attracted towards West Indies due to availability of land in easy terms which was used for growing tobacco, indigo and cotton. In 1640 the population of Barbados was 30000 or 200 per square mile. St. Kitts' population in the same year was 20000. In the middle of the century, the shift was towards large scale sugar plantations. Between 30000 and 50000 white migrants arrived in Jamaica in the first half of the eighteenth century. And they took to cultivation. Many French immigrants went to West Indies especially Saint-Domingue. The Spanish Americans took to farming, ranching and mining of precious metals. The Americas exported hides, tallow and sugar. In the 1540s the Spanish discovered the silver mines at Potsoi (Bolivia) and Zacatecas (Mexico). There was a higher percentage of Spaniards in Central Mexico and Peru than in Columbia and Ecuador. The Cuiaba goldfields in the interior of Brazil was discovered in 1719. In the 1760s about 5000 Portuguese migrated to Brazil annually. They totalled about 400,000 by the end of the eighteenth century. In 1763-4 about 9000 French colonists were shipped to Cayenne in South America. Many of the European settlers were wage labourers, peasants and indentured servants. In Latin America the indigenous population was mostly rural and the Spaniards and the Portuguese were disproportionately present in the major towns. In North America also the size of the European towns went on increasing. Philadelphia was planned in 1680 and had a population of 2500 in 1685; 4000 in 1690; and 25000 in 1760.

16.3.3 The English and French Approaches to Migration

The rise of European population in British North America was greater than in New France because the British were willing to accept people of all religious backgrounds. By contrast, the French colonial policy was to establish Catholic colonies in North America. So, the Huguenots (French Protestants) went to British North America. An Act of Parliament in 1697 which allowed people to seek work outside their own parish if they carried a certificate made the poor mobile and encouraged their migration to America and West Indies as indentured labours. In the seventeenth century English migrants dominated emigration from the British Isles to the New World. But, in the eighteenth century there was extensive emigration from Scotland and Ireland. Lack of economic opportunities in Scotland and Ireland encouraged migration in North America. Between 1643 and 1700, the population of Massachusetts increased from 16000 to 60000 and that of Connecticut from 5500 to 20000, and that of Virginia from 15000 to

60000. By the end of the seventeenth century, the population of New York increased to 20000. The total population of the English mainland colonies at the end of the seventeenth century was above 200,000 which was greater than the French colonies.

By 1666 there were only 3200 French in New France. During the 1660s and the 1670s the French government provided money to the settlers. Especially the immigration of the orphans was subsidized. Fur dominated exports from Quebec, a principal French colony. The French minister Colbert wanted to develop the St. Lawrence Valley as a source of food and industry which would complement the fishing off Newfoundland. Grain, fish and timber were exported from New France and Newfoundland to the West Indies. By the end of the seventeenth century, while the number of French inhabitants was about 10000, there were about 210000 Europeans in British North America. In 1740 while New France had only 56000 inhabitants of French origin, British North America had about one million people of European background. Between 1608 and 1759, only 11370 French settled in New Canada. About 6-7 people per million left France annually for New France. New Amsterdam had become New York which was taken by the British in the second half of the seventeenth century in the aftermath of the Second Dutch War. Under the Plantation Act of 1745 it was possible for all except the Catholics to become eligible for naturalization after seven years in a British colony. After 1730 as readily cultivable land grew scarcer in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia, the colonists expanded along the Shenandoah Valley, James River and Roanoke Gap and then moved into the Carolinas. Between 1730 and 1775, the white population of North Carolina rose from 30000 to 255,000. The combined population of the blacks and the whites (but not the Red Indians) in Georgia was 23375 in 1770 and 33000 in 1773.

Among the early migrants there were more men than women. So, many Spaniards and Portuguese took Indian women as wives or concubines. Their offspring were known as *mestizos* and they settled mostly among the coastal regions. By the 1690s in certain areas such as the Chesapeake Bay, the percentage of American born inhabitants rose which meant a better balance of men and women. The product of European-indigenous American marriages helped the European settlers as translators and also played a major role in trade. Such intermarriages were very common in the frontier societies at Hudson Bay and in West Africa. In the eighteenth century tension broke out between the *peninsulares* (natives of Spain) and the *criollos* (creoles, American born descendants of Spanish settlers).

The Germans and the Dutch were minor players in the whole project of overseas expansion. After the Thirty Years War, many poor people from North Germany went to the New World. The Germans were concentrated in Pennsylvania. In North Carolina, Swiss and German immigrants established New Bern which became the capital of the colony in 1770. About 30% of the colony's population were of German descent. But, immigration from Germany fell because they were more interested to settle in Russia.

The Russians unlike the West European maritime powers expanded the frontiers of Europe in East Asia by overland migration. As the *Tsarist* empire expanded into that Crimea and Siberia, most of the Russians were concentrated in the urban areas. During the reign of Peter the Great, the Russians started exploiting the mines. The Russian population in Siberia rose from 100,000 in 1701 to 700,000 in 1721. Mining and metallurgy developed first in the Urals and then in the Altay region creating concentrations of people that had to be fed and protected. The Aleuts of Aleutian Islands clashed with the Russians in mid-eighteenth century who were searching for fur. In 1766, the Russians using cannons destroyed indigenous resistance in the Fox Islands.

16.4   A BIOLOGICAL INVASION

In the tropics most Europeans died or could not sustain self-replicating populations. But, in temperate America where few Europeans went they flourished demographically. A few Dutch agricultural settlers went to South Africa. Some Europeans also settled in the region around the Cape of Good Hope. But in general the Europeans failed to settle in Africa in considerable numbers. Tropical diseases like malaria and yellow fever checked the Portuguese migration in Africa. Yellow fever went with the European mariners from West Africa to West Indies. And in the eighteenth century, it caused devastating mortality among the European soldiers and settlers in these islands. In Jamaica, white death rates were higher than those of the slaves.

Disease brought by the Europeans devastated the indigenous population of the New World. In 1492 the population of the Americas was over 50 million. Even the Caribbean islands supported one million 'natives'. But, indigenous population declined drastically under the Spanish rule due to a combination of enslavement, disease and demoralization of the Indians. The indigenous population of the West Indian islands—the Arawaks and the Caribs—were more or less extinct by mid-seventeenth century. Before 1519 the population of Central Mexico was 20 million. In the course of the sixteenth century the population declined by 90%. Malaria introduced by the Europeans in the Americas was one of the chief killers of the 'native' population. In Peru the Indian population declined by 40%. After 1704, influenza and smallpox caused rapid decline of the Maya people. During 1743-9, half of the indigenous population of the Amazon Valley fell victim to measles and smallpox.

Due to smallpox, the Indians continued to die in large number in North America. Simultaneously increasing migration from Europe enabled the British to increasingly outnumber the 'natives' along the seaboard of Atlantic. Smallpox wiped out half of the Cherokee in North America in the late 1730s. However, in South Carolina the Cherokee continued to outnumber the Europeans even in 1730.

The Europeans transformed the ecology of the New World which in turn accelerated the decline of the Indian population. The Indians of Mexico and Peru depended on the cultivation of maize, potatoes, beans, etc. They had few domesticated animals. By the 1490s, the Europeans introduced pigs, sheep, goats, cattle and horses from Europe to the Americas. British cattle were introduced into Virginia. They multiplied rapidly and the agricultural lands of the Indians were changed into grazing and pastoral land. Horses spread throughout North America through trade and theft. Gradually North American tribes like the Apache and the Commanche adopted the horses. The European traders along the St. Lawrence Valley also introduced horses. So forest and agricultural land were replaced by big ranches.

Instead of allowing the Indians to grow their vegetable crops, the Spanish introduced sugar plantations, cotton, tobacco and vineyards. The Europeans introduced timber and dyewood in Brazil which were exported. Citrus fruits brought from Spain were introduced in the New World in the early sixteenth century. The Spaniards brought banana in 1516 to West Indies from the Canary Islands. Actually the Portuguese had introduced banana in the Canary Islands from tropical Africa. Even now banana remains a major export item of the West Indies. For feeding the slaves yam was grown. Guinea yams entered West Indies from Africa. In the seventeenth century a superior form of yam came to Africa from India. From West Africa it was introduced to West Indies. Wheat was introduced in the sixteenth century in favoured highland areas of the American tropics like the Puebla Valley in Mexico. In the seventeenth century the English and the French settlers introduced wheat in temperate North America. Thanks to the intrusion of the Spaniards, the edible dogs of Mexico became extinct.

The aboriginal society in Australia was not a surplus producing economy. The aborigines were highly fragmented. From the linguistic point of view, they were divided into 700 tribes. In Australia smallpox, measles, influenza and tuberculosis as well as common cold mostly wiped out the aborigines. In 1791, the aborigines around Richmond died due to smallpox. In 1789 and in 1829 a wave of smallpox killed 6% of the Wiradjuri people along the Murrumbidgee River. During 1847-8, the influenza epidemic finished them off.

Warfare also reduced the indigenous population. Between 1725 and the 1780s, the Portuguese wiped out the Paiagua tribe along River Paraguay. In 1780-1, due to rigorous collection of taxes, the last descendant of the Inca ruler Tupac Amaru led an uprising. The rebellion was crushed and about 100,000 people died. The European victory over the Tuscaroras in the 1710s resulted in the decline of the latter's numbers from 5000 to 2500. From 1715 onwards most of the Yamasee were killed and enslaved by the colonial militia. Between 1712 and 1738, the French repeatedly attacked the Fox tribe of Illinois-Mississippi region. The Fox numbering 10000 were reduced to a few hundred. John Sullivan's pacification campaign against the Iroquois in 1779 resulted in widespread destruction of villages and 160,000 bushels of corn. The Colonial Militia and the mounted police in Australia were in charge of suppressing the aborigines. To give an instance, in 1860 at Queensland about 4000 aborigines were killed.

16.5 FORCED MIGRATION AND SLAVERY

The expulsions of the Muslims from the Iberian peninsula due to *conquests* and the Africans Death left southern Portugal thinly populated. So, Portuguese overseas colonies required cheap labour. In the Canary Islands the indigenous people known as the Guanches were conquered and driven to extinction. Catastrophic mortality among the 'native' Americans following the arrival of the Europeans generated search for cheap labour for working in the estates, plantations and mines. The Europeans imitated the cultivation and consumption of sugar from the Arabs. Columbus introduced sugar in West Indies in 1493. Very soon sugar plantations became common in Brazil. Slaves were required for the collection of cacao and other forest products in Amazon. Virginia and Maryland required slaves for working in the tobacco cultivation.

The resulting slave trade altered the demography by initiating a major movement of the Africans from Africa to South America, West Indies and the southern states of North America. Between 1680 and 1860, the loss of population due to slavery from West Africa was a little over 10%. Slaves were acquired from Africa either by raiding or through contacts with the African rulers. Prisoners in inter-tribal wars within Africa were enslaved. At times the African rulers engaged in wars which could be categorized as slave hunts. The slaves were sold to the European traders in return for guns, gunpowder and European clothes. And the African potentates used the guns for acquiring more slaves for selling to the Europeans. Thus a vicious 'gun-slave' cycle developed. Trade and slavery at different moments of history had been common in other regions also. To bridge over the unfavourable trade balance, Charlemagne's Empire exported white women who became slaves in the households of the Muslims in the Arab Empire. And Akbar sold prisoners of war to Kabul for buying horses.

During the fifteenth century, African slaves were transported to Lisbon for sale. Founded in 1575, Luanda in Angola became the leading port through which slaves were shipped to Brazil. Congo was a vital source of slaves. Between 1450 and 1500 about 150,000 African slaves were taken to Europe and most of them went to Portugal. Then the slaves from Africa were transported to the islands of Madeira and Sao Tome. In 1515 African slaves for the first time were sent to the Americas. Spain sent the African slaves to Hispaniola in the Caribbean and started receiving slave grown American sugar. Direct

large scale trans-Atlantic traffic in slaves started from 1532. The British transported more slaves than the French. Between 1691 and 1779, British ships transported 2,300,000 slaves from the African ports. The slave ships used to sail from London, Bristol and Liverpool. The British slave ships supplied slaves to the British possessions in North America and in the Caribbean colonies. The British also supplied slaves to the colonies of the other powers.

In the sixteenth century about 367,000 African slaves were sent to the Americas. Between 1700 and 1763, the number of slaves in British North America rose from 20000 to 300,000. In the eighteenth century, the French colonies obtained 1,015,000 slaves and in 1788 the French West Indies contained 594,000 slaves. During the 1780s, the French West Indies colonies received 30000 slaves annually. By 1580, there were 60 sugar mills in Brazil. And the population amounted to 20000 Portuguese, 18000 Indians and 14000 slaves. By 1600, there were about 100,000 African slaves in Eastern Brazil. Angola supplied 2 million slaves in the eighteenth century mostly to Brazil. Most of the Africans transported as slaves in the eighteenth century went to Brazil and West Indies, and less than a fifth went to North America. The Portuguese moved slaves into the sugar plantations of Northeast Brazil and from 1710s into the gold and diamond fields of Mionas Gerais. In the late eighteenth century the slaves were used in the sugar and coffee plantations near Rio De Janeiro.

In most cases the number of black slaves exceeded the number of white colonists. Barbados had only a few hundred blacks in 1640. By 1645, there were over 6000 blacks and 40000 whites. In 1685, there were 46000 blacks and 20000 whites (bond or indentured servants and free). In 1687 Saint Domingue contained 4500 whites and 3500 blacks. Between 1766 and 1771 Saint Domingue received 14000 slaves annually. And during 1785-9, the number of slaves received rose to 28000 annually. In 1789 there were only 28000 whites, but 30000 free blacks and 406,000 slaves. On Montserrat in the West Indies, 40% of the 4500 inhabitants in 1678 was black. The percentage of the blacks grew to 80% of the 7200 people in 1729. By 1700, the French islands had only 18000 whites but 44000 black slaves. In 1730 the African slaves outnumbered both the Cherokee and the Europeans in South Carolina. Between 1730 and 1775, the number of blacks in North Carolina rose from 6000 to 10000. Gradually American born slaves dominated in the Chesapeake. In 1763 at Louisiana there were 5000 blacks and 4000 whites.

The extensive scope of slavery in the New World becomes clear when compared with the extent of slavery in the ancient world. Athens in 400 BC had 60000 slaves who constituted about 30% of the city-state's population. Roman Italy between 225 BC and 31 BC possessed between 600,000 to 2,000,000 slaves. And the total population of Roman Italy (including slaves) in that period was 10 million. About one million slaves worked in the *latifundias* (large estates of the senators) of Italy. In 1800, about 15% of the 800,000 population in Venezuela were slaves. Brazil between 1800 and 1850 had between 1,000,000 to 2,500,000 slaves. The slaves amounted to 33% of the population of the country. Slavery was rampant in the southern states of USA. Between 1820 and 1860 the number of slaves rose from 1,500,000 to 4,000,000 which represented about 33% of the populace. Finally Cuba between 1804 and 1861 possessed about 80000 to 400,000 slaves who amounted to about 28% to 30% of the total population.

Statistics does not give any glimpse of the picture at the micro level especially when emotions and sensibilities of the slaves were concerned. Individuals were taken away from their communities and families in Africa. Many died while being captured. In the port towns and in the ships while being transported across the Atlantic, they were crowded together in hazardous circumstances. About 10% of the slaves died while being transported across the Atlantic. Hacking down sugarcane was a backbreaking task. Slaves lived in deplorable conditions. They were less well fed, housed and clothed

than the white population. As a result, the slaves were more vulnerable to disease. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* remains the best description of a black's life in the New World. The slaves migrated to the towns where control over them was weaker. Some of the skilled slaves in the towns enjoyed a life style which was higher than the European peasants.

Some white settlers were also coerced by the state to migrate overseas. The British government was concerned due to the rising crime rate after the War of Spanish Succession (1702-13). This, writes Jeremy Black, resulted in the Transportation Act in 1718. This Act allowed for transportation not only as part of the pardoning process in cases of capital offences but as a penalty for a wide range of non-capital crimes including theft of property. Between 1720 and 1763, the Parliament passed another 16 Acts that established transportation as a penalty for crimes of perjury and poaching. Between 1718 and 1785, about 50000 convicts were sent from Britain to America and West Indies. Of these 50000 'undesirable' persons, 30000 from England, 13000 from Ireland and 700 from Scotland were sent to America. The shipboard mortality was 14%. It is to be noted that this rate was higher than the rate of mortality of the slaves during trans-Atlantic voyages. Most of the convicts settled in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. After considering transportation to Africa, Australia was founded as a penal colony in 1788. Besides the criminals Parisian vagrants were seized in 1749 and were sent to Cayenne. Many prostitutes were also sent away from France. In 1767 'reformed' prostitutes were sent from Britain to aid in populating Florida.

16.6 SUMMARY

History shows that maritime exploration was not an exclusive affair of the West Europeans. The European expansion was partly the result of militant Christianity, economic inducement and the rise of new military and naval technologies. The first wave of migrants from Europe consisted of people from Iberia. Due to mass migration of the Europeans in the Americas, population growth especially in the Iberian countries slowed down in the mid-eighteenth century. The second wave of migrants included people from North West Europe especially Britain. And finally the Africans as slaves constituted the third wave of migrants. To an extent, state sponsored migration of selected individuals was also a sort of social control. The aim was to sanitize home society by getting rid of the undesirable characters. It would be no exaggeration to argue that the Europeans intentionally engineered a holocaust in the New World. To sum up, the European expansion in the extra-European world was sustained due to the enslavement of the indigenous population. And when they died their place was taken over by the African slaves. Compared to the 'natives' of the western hemisphere, the indigenous population of the eastern hemisphere was demographically more numerous and possessed more stable state systems. So, they were able to offer stronger resistance to the Europeans. Moreover the hot climate of the tropics and extreme cold of Siberia did not suit large scale settlement of the West Europeans. Thus European settlement in the eastern hemisphere of the world was not as effective as migration and settlement of the white people in the New World.

16.7 EXERCISES

1) What were the social, economic, climatic and cultural factors behind migrations during different phases of history? Describe briefly.

2) History of migration in the modern period has been mainly a European story. Discuss.

3) In what ways have migrations to North and South America in modern period been different from each other? Discuss.

UNIT 17   IMPERIALISM

Structure

17.1   INTRODUCTION

This Unit attempts to explain imperialism both as a concept and historical phenomenon. Various scholars have attempted to explain imperialism from various perspectives but also differentiate it from terms like colonialism. The stress is also on the ways in which imperialism adopted different forms at different historical junctures. The Unit begins by looking at some of the definitions of imperialism. It will then go into the theories of imperialism and examine different explanations of imperialism that have been offered by scholars over the last century. The Unit will also focus on the stages of imperialism and see how these stages correspond with the rise and expansion of capitalism. It will finally take up Great Britain as a case study of the largest imperial power of the 19th and the 20th centuries.

17.2   DEFINITIONS OF IMPERIALISM

There is no one standard definition of imperialism. Let us look at some often used ones. Imperialism refers to the process of capitalist development which leads the capitalist countries to conquer and dominate pre-capitalist countries of the world.

OR

Imperialism is the system of political control exercised by the metropolis over the domestic and foreign policy and over the domestic politics of another polity, which we shall call the periphery (countries at the margins of the economic hierarchy).

OR

The term **imperialism** is used to designate the international practices and relations of the capitalist world during the distinct stage of mature capitalism that begins in the last quarter of the 19th century.

All these definitions, their differences notwithstanding, firmly establish imperialism as a modern phenomenon and distinctly different from pre-modern forms of conquests and political domination. In this context four important characteristic features of imperialism are:

- sharp increase in international flow of commodities, men and capital,

- interdependent set of relations between countries at different levels of industrial development,

- advanced and superior technology in imperialist countries, and

- competition between advanced capitalist countries

17.2.1 Empire Versus Imperialism

It is important to distinguish between **empires** and **imperialism.** There were many empires in history but **empire in the era of capitalism is imperialism.**

What was new about imperialism in the modern era? What made it different from earlier expansions of empire? In earlier eras the motive was exaction of tribute. Under capitalism the economies and societies of the conquered or dominated areas were transformed, adapted and manipulated to serve the imperatives of capital accumulation in the imperialist countries placed at the centre of the economic hierarchy.

17.2.2 Imperialism Versus Colonialism

The distinction between imperialism and colonialism is equally important. The history of imperialism is different from the history of particular colonies. **Imperialism is a specifically European phenomenon** whereas colonialism is the system prevalent in the colonies. It can also be argued that since European imperial history had a basic unity – therefore to study an empire in isolation would be pointless.

When we study imperialism we examine the **impact of empire on the metropolis,** whereas colonialism refers to the impact on the colony. The advantages of the empire to the mother country ranged from the colonial wealth which financed the industrial revolution to the evolution of superior military technology, mechanisms of control such as the army and bureaucracy and disciplines such as anthropology.

17.3 MODES OF IMPERIALISM

Imperialism can be both formal and informal. Formal imperialism involves annexation and direct rule while informal empire means indirect rule by local elites who are independent legally but politically dependent on the metropolis. Similarly, there are three broad types of empires which have either existed in a linear chronology, one succeeding the other, or also co-existed with each other at a particular historical juncture. These types are:

1) trading empires which took the initiative in early conquests but eventually lost out in the era of industrial capitalism, such as Portugal and Spain

2) industrial empires with full-fledged colonies, such as Britain and France

3) industrial empires without, or with few, formal colonies, such as Germany

At the same time, it is important to remember different historical stages through which capitalist expansion took place leading to the formation of empires. The changing nature

of imperialism was dependent upon the stages of capitalist development. Broadly speaking capitalism may be said to have gone through five stages, mentioned below:

1) end of 15th to mid 17th Century — rise of commercial capital and rapid growth of world commerce

2) mid 17th to latter 18th Century — commercial capital ripens into a dominant economic force

3) late 18th Century to 1870s — the era of industrial capital

4) 1880 to World War I — rise of monopoly capital, division of globe, etc.

5) Post World War I — socialism, decolonization, rise of multinational corporations

In this sense stages of imperialism coincide with stages of capitalism

	Stage of capitalism	**Imperial Powers**
1)	Merchant capitalism	Portugal and Spain
2)	Industrial capitalism	Britain, France and Netherlands
3)	Finance capitalism	Britain, USA and Germany

The history of the European colonial empires falls into two overlapping cycles. The first began in the 15th Century and ended soon after 1800, the second in the late 18th Century lasting into the twentieth. During the first cycle America was important as a colony—in the second Africa and Asia.

17.4   THEORIES OF IMPERIALISM

The theories of imperialism can be grouped into two broad types, **economic** (J.A. Hobson, Hilferding, Rosa Luxembourg and Lenin) and **political** (Schumpeter, Fieldhouse, Gallagher and Robinson). They can also be distinguished as **metrocentric** (Schumpeter, Lenin, Hobson) and **pericentric** (Gallagher and Robinson, Fieldhouse). Let us look at these separately.

17.4.1 The Economic Explanations

The **economic explanations** offered by Hobson, Hilferding, Rosa Luxembourg and Lenin had a common feature — a political agenda.

Hobson's purpose was to alert the British public to "the new plutocratic phenomenon that was hijacking British foreign policy" — to the expansionist agenda that was extracting a heavy price from the ordinary people merely to satisfy the financial capitalists who cared for nothing except maximizing returns on their investments. Hilferding was a German Social Democrat who was Finance Minister and paid with his life for being anti Nazi. Rosa Luxembourg, born in Poland, was a fiery revolutionary Social Democrat leader in Germany. Vladimir Lenin, the prominent Bolshevik leader and maker of the Revolution in Russia in 1917, wished to convince the Russian people that World War I was an imperialist war which they would do best to stay out of.

In *Imperialism* (1902) Hobson explains imperialism as an outcome of the capitalist system. The key concept used is **underconsumption**. Industry looked for foreign markets as it cannot find domestic markets for its goods, wages being low. With major industrial powers competing for foreign markets there was a race for colonies which would serve as captive markets. Underconsumption also leads to oversaving as domestic investment does not make sound economic sense when there is little purchasing power.

Here again colonies serve as channels for investment.

Thus Hobson concluded that "..the dominant directive motive" behind imperialism "was the demand for markets and for profitable investment by the exporting and financial classes within each imperialist regime." He dismissed other motives as secondary, be it power, pride and prestige or "trade follows the flag" or the mission of civilizing the natives.

Rudolf Hilferding, in his work, *Das Finanzkapital, (Finance Capital*) published in 1910, demonstrated how big banks and financial institutions in fact control industrial houses in this last stage of capitalism, better known as finance capitalism. Monopoly capitalists looked to imperialist expansion as a way of ensuring secure supplies of raw materials, markets for industrial goods and avenues for investment. As each big European power was a monopoly capitalist, economic competition soon became political rivalry, which in turn escalated into war.

Rosa Luxembourg's study titled *Accumulation of Capital* (1913) highlighted the unequal relationship between the imperial powers and the colonies. The European powers gained captive markets and secured profitable avenues for investment. In contrast, the colonies were merely suppliers of raw materials and foodstuffs.

In *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916) Lenin argued that advanced capitalist countries invest in backward countries because the limits of profitable domestic investment have been reached. To invest at home would require development of the economy and better standard of living for workers, neither of which was in the interest of the capitalists. Lenin's argument was that imperialist interests lay behind the rivalries between European powers that culminated in World War I. His intention was overtly political – to expose the capitalist designs and convince the people of Russia that they should not participate in the War.

17.4.2 Non-economic explanations

Schumpeter's *Imperialism and the Social Classes* (1931) broke away from the leftist paradigm which located imperialism and capitalism on the same grid. In his scheme, imperialism and capitalism were seen as clearly separate phenomena. Imperialism was atavistic, generated by pre-capitalist forces (pre-modern in essence). In contrast, capitalism was modern, innovative and productive and did not need control on a territory in order to prosper.

Whereas the writers on the left saw imperialism as an economic **system,** for Schumpeter, "Imperialism is the objectless **disposition** on the part of a state to unlimited forcible expansion." However, the problem with the usage of a conceptual attribute like 'disposition' is that it can not be empirically tested and can, therefore, never be proved or disproved. Gallagher and Robinson (*Africa and the Victorians*) questioned the common interpretations of modern imperialism on two counts. They understood the distinction between pre 1870 and post 1870 imperialism to be invalid. Also, imperialism of free trade or informal imperialism was seen to be as important as formal imperialism. Political expansion was a function of commercial expansion - "trade with informal control if possible; trade with rule when necessary."

Gallagher and Robinson's explanation of imperialism was *pericentric*. In their view imperialism was a process driven by pressures from the peripheries - Asia, Africa and Latin Africa. The scramble for colonies was a preemptive move by European powers to occupy whatever territory they could in Asia and Africa so as to keep out rival nations. This view questioned the traditional Eurocentric explanation of the scramble for colonies in terms of the great conflicts of European diplomacy or the great thrusts of expansionary financial capitalism.

Fieldhouse advanced a **political** explanation for imperialism. The new imperialism was the extension into the periphery of the political struggle in Europe. At the centre the balance was so nicely adjusted that no major change in the status or territory of any side was possible. Colonies became a means out of this impasse. For the British this "impulse" meant protecting the route to India through Egypt and the Suez Canal which necessitated control over the headwaters of the Nile and a predominant position in North Africa. For the French and Germans the impulse meant acquiring "places in the sun" to demonstrate national prestige. Fieldhouse concluded: "In short, the modern empires lacked rationality and purpose: they were the chance products of complex historical forces operating over several centuries and more particularly during the period after 1815."

Colonialism, according to AJP Taylor, became a "move" in the European game of balance of power. Doyle uses the term 'colonialization of the diplomatic system' to describe the developments between 1879 and 1890. Bismarck acquired colonies in the early 1880s in the hope that a colonial quarrel with England would establish German credibility in France. France had to be compensated with colonies and overseas adventures in lieu of her loss of Alsace Lorraine. Competition for colonies led to a rift between England and Italy and Italy went over to the side of Germany.

To sum up this section, a whole range of theories and explanations have been offered for imperialism and are now available with us. These can broadly be classified into economic and non-economic explanations. The economic explanation includes the factors pertaining to overproduction and underconsumption (Hobson), requirements of finance capitalism (Hilferding), unequal exchange between the imperial powers and the colonies (Rosa Luxembourg), and the highest stage of capitalism (Lenin). The non-economic explanations have looked at imperialism as a pre-modern atavistic force (Schumpeter); or have offered a pericentric view concentrating on the developments in the colonies rather than the metropolis (Gallaghar and Robinson); or have seen it merely as an expression of political struggles within Europe (Fieldhouse).

17.5 STAGES OF IMPERALISM

The previous section was a discussion of the different *ways* in which imperialism has been understood and defined by scholars. In this section let us examine its development through various stages.

17.5.1 Mercantilism and Early Trading Empires

What enobled Europe to become the world leader? If we looked at the world in 1500 Europe's dominant position could not be taken for granted. The Ottoman Empire, China under the Mings and India under the Mughals were at the same stage of development. They suffered from one major drawback, however, and that was their domination by a centralized authority which did not provide conditions conducive to intellectual growth. In contrast, the competition between different European powers encouraged the introduction of new military techniques. For example, the long range armed sailing ship helped the naval powers of the West to control the sea routes. **This increased military power combined with economic progress to push Europe forward and ahead of other continents.**

The growth of **trans - Atlantic trade** was spectacular. It increased <u>eightfold</u> between 1510 and 1550 and threefold between 1550 and 1610. Trade was followed by the establishment of the empires and churches and administrative systems. The Spanish

and Portuguese clearly intended their empires in America to be permanent. The goods obtained from America were gold, silver, precious metals and spices as well as ordinary goods like oil, sugar, indigo, tobacco, rice, furs, timber and new plants like potato and maize. Shipbuilding industry developed around the major ports of London and Bristol in Britain, Antwerp in Belgium and Amsterdam in the Netherlands. The Dutch, French and English soon became keen rivals of the Spanish and Portuguese. This competition encouraged the progress of the science of navigation. Improved cartography, navigational tables, the telescope and the barometer made travel by sea safer. This strengthened Europe's technological advantage further. The story of science and technology enabling European domination in trade with other areas has been told in the previous two Units of this Block.

The discovery of America and of the route to the Indies via the Cape of Good Hope had great consequences for Europe. It liberated Europe from a confined geographic and mental cell. The medieval horizon was widened to include influences from Eastern civilizations and Western peoples.

Discoveries, trade and conquests, which followed them, had practical consequences. Every colony or trading centre was a new economic stimulus. America was a market and American bullion increased the supply of money circulating in Europe and intensified existing economic and social developments. The volume of trade with America increased. For four centuries America satisfied the hunger for land among Europeans. Gold and silver stimulated exploration and conquest and attracted immigrants, who were followed close on their heels by missionaries. American colonies were set up by individuals; the state, patriotism and missionary impulse played little part.

Before 1815 Spain and Portugal were the pre-eminent imperial powers. Their primacy lay not only in the fact that they were the first discoverers but that they worked out four of the five models for effective colonization which were typical of the first colonial empires. Both made huge profits from their colonies.

Portugal had a huge empire in Asia and then in America and Brazil. Colonial revenues brought in the equivalent of 72,000 pound sterling in 1711. This was almost equal to metropolitan taxes. One special feature of the Portuguese empire was that she made no distinction between her colonies and the metropolis. No separate colonial department was set up till 1604.

France, like Spain and Portugal, carried out expansion in the Americas – in the regions of Canada and Latin America. This was undertaken by individual Frenchmen supported by the Crown with the aim of ensuring supplies of groceries and increasing naval power. The task of setting up the empire was carried out by the chartered companies. This worked to the advantage of the state as it was at a minimum cost. After 1660s the colonies became royal possessions and royal agents headed the government. French colonial government was as authoritarian as that of Spain. France was then an absolute monarchy and ruled colonies without giving them any constitutional rights. Local administration and law in the colonies were modeled on those prevailing in France. Her colonial empire suffered from too much state interference. France made no fiscal profits on her colonies, in sharp contrast to Portugal. This was despite the fact that more than two fifths French exports in 1788 were to colonial governments. By 1789 France lost most of her colonial possessions in America and India to Britain. The crucial weakness was her inferior naval power.

Some of the Western states developed their **colonies in the tropics**, in India, Africa, Latin America and Australia. The Europeans did not settle in Africa, they were content with slaves, gold dust and ivory. The colonies were crucial to the British economy, they supplied raw materials and were markets for metropolitan products. The French minister,

Choiseul, regretted that 'in the present state of Europe it is colonies, trade and in consequence sea power, which must determine the balance of power upon the continent."

Of the five big European powers, France, Britain, Austria, Russia and Prussia, Britain soon emerged as the leader. She had many advantages — the first was a developed banking and financial system. Her geographical location at the westward flank of Europe helped her to maintain a distance from the continent when she wished. The most important factor, which gave Britain an edge, was that it was the first country to undergo the Industrial Revolution. This enabled it to dominate Europe and to acquire colonies. In Bernard Porter's words, she was the first frogspawn egg to grow legs, the first tadpole to change into a frog, the first frog to hop out of the pond.

The first empires represented European **ambition, determination and ingenuity** in using limited resources rather than European predominance throughout the world. "Christendom is also the proper perspective from which to view the religious drive behind the Spanish justification for empire."(Doyle:110) Doyle further sums up Spanish and British empires: "Spain and Britain focused on trade in the east, on settlement and production in the west, and neither acquired colonies for immediate reasons of national security."

Decline

The old colonialism had its natural limits. Flow of precious metals declined. By the late 18th Century Spanish and Portuguese power declined and they lost their colonies. Dutch monopoly on shipping ended. Colonial rivalry between France and Britain ended in Britain's preeminence. Britain was now the world leader in empire, finance and trade. As Eric Hobsbawm put it, "Old colonialism did not grow over into new colonialism. It collapsed and was replaced by it."

Let us sum up the discussion so far. Europe's conquest of America, Africa and Asia from the sixteenth century was possible only because of her mastery of the seas. In this the countries on the Atlantic seaboard, Portugal, Spain, France, Britain and Holland, had an obvious advantage because of their geographical location. Europe's domination was disastrous for other peoples: the indigenous populations in the Americas were wiped out and twelve million Africans were made slaves between 1500 and 1860. Europe benefited vastly in this era when merchant capital controlled the world economy. Institutions such as the modern state and bureaucracy and the scientific revolution in knowledge laid the foundations of the modern world.

17.5.2   Industrial capitalism — Imperialism of Free Trade

Hobsbawm describes the Industrial Revolution in Britain as that unusual moment in world history when the world's economy was built around Britain; when she was the only world power, the only imperialist, the only importer, exporter and foreign investor. The description of Britain as the workshop of the world was literally true in the middle of the nineteenth century when she produced most of its coal, iron and steel. The Industrial Revolution was followed by the single liberal world economy (in the 1860s possibly because of the monopoly of Britain) and the final penetration of the undeveloped world by capitalism.

The early British industrial economy relied for its expansion on foreign trade. Overseas markets for products and overseas outlets for capital were crucial. The cotton industry exported eighty per cent of its output at the end of the nineteenth century. The iron and steel industry exported forty per cent of its output in the mid nineteenth century. In return Britain bought specialized local products such as cotton from the US, wool from Australia, wheat from Argentina, etc.

Britain's trade also increasingly became greater with the empire. In cotton Latin America accounted for thirty five percent of British exports in 1840. After 1873 the East absorbed over sixty per cent of British cotton exports. Thus there were sound economic reasons for Britain opposing these areas being opened up to others.

By 1815 Britain had already become the preeminent world power, combining **naval mastery, financial credit, commercial enterprise and alliance diplomacy**. The following decades of British economic hegemony were accompanied by large-scale improvements in transport and communications, by the increasingly rapid transfer of industrial technology from one region to another, and by an immense increase in manufacturing output, which in turn stimulated the opening of new areas of agricultural land and raw material sources. The age of mercantilism was over and with it tariff barriers stood dismantled. The new watchword was **free trade** and this brought international harmony rather than great power conflict.

Europe's **military superiority** continued. The improvements in the muzzle loading gun, the introduction of the breechloader, the Gatling guns, Maxims and light field artillery constituted a veritable firepower revolution, which the traditional societies could not withstand. The decisive new technology was the gun, the symbol of European superiority in the armament factory. As Hilaire Belloc said, "Whatever happens, we have got the Maxim gun, and they have not."

In the field of colonial empires, Britain brooked no rivals. The empire grew at an average annual rate of 100,000 square miles between 1815 and 1865. One group of colonies comprised those acquired for strategic and commercial reasons like Singapore, Aden, Falkland Islands, Hong Kong and Lagos. A second group was that of settler colonies, such as South Africa, Canada and Australia.

With the spread of industrial capitalism the need grew for colonies as markets for manufactured goods especially textiles and suppliers of raw materials such as cotton and foodgrains. The colony emerged as a subordinate trading partner whose economic surplus was appropriated through trade based on unequal exchange. This international division of labour condemned the colony to producing goods of low value using backward techniques.

Late industrializers and colonial powers

By the 1860s the other countries like Germany and United States, were catching up with Britain in industrialization. In 1870 the figures for share of world industrial production were 13 percent for Germany and 23 per cent for the United States. The extent of the declining domination of Britain among the super powers can be understood by the table given below.

Table

Per Capita Levels of Industrialization

Relative to Great Britain in 1900 = 100

		1880	1900	1913	1928	1938	Rank in 1938
1	Great Britain	87	100	115	122	157	2nd
2	United States	38	69	126	182	167	1st
3	France	28	39	59	82	73	4th
4	Germany	25	52	85	128	144	3rd
5	Italy	12	17	26	44	61	5th

In 1900 Britain was the unquestioned world leader. Her empire extended to twelve million square miles and a quarter of the world's population.

The race for colonies speeded up from the 1880s with the entry of Germany, Italy, US, Belgium and Japan into the race for colonies. These rivalries between the powers led to a race for new colonies as each power sought to make secure her markets, raw materials and investments. Backward regions were annexed in order to control their raw material supplies. Malaya gave rubber and tin and the Middle East gave oil. Empire was a cushion in a hard world.

These imperialist rivalries which carved up the world into colonies, semi colonies and spheres of influence also divided Europe into blocs armed to the teeth, the logical corollary of which was World War I .

World War I ended in the defeat of Germany and the Ottoman Empire and redivision of colonies among the imperial powers, who were henceforth called trustees. The Depression of 1929 brought a change in the attitude of imperial powers. Gone were the days of Free Trade; protectionism was the new catchword.

17.5.3 Finance Capitalism

Stages of capitalism and imperialism could overlap, as in the case of industrial capitalism and financial capitalism, where one did not replace the other, it was superimposed on it. The informal empire of trade and finance was added to the empire of industrial capital.

Many major changes took place in the world economy after 1860. Industrialization spread to several countries of Europe, the US and Japan with the result that Britain's industrial supremacy in the world came to an end. For Britain this was a setback. She exchanged the informal empire over most of the underdeveloped world for the formal empire of a quarter of it, plus the older satellite economies.

The application of scientific knowledge to industries led to an intensification of industrialization. Modern chemical industries, the use of petroleum as fuel for the internal combustion engine and the use of electricity for industrial purposes developed during this period. Moreover, there was further unification of the world market because of revolution in the means of international transport.

Capital accumulation on a large scale took place because of the development of trade and industry at home and extended exploitation of colonies and semicolonies. This capital was concentrated in a few hands. Trusts and cartels emerged and banking capital merged with industrial capital. Outlets had to be found for this capital abroad.

Significant export of capital had been there even before the stage of predominance of finance capital. By 1850 Britain's capital exports were 30 million pounds a year. In 1870-75 this was 75 million pounds. The income from this came to 50 million pounds, which was reinvested overseas. This financed the trade with the colonies, wherein huge quantities of raw materials were procured and equally vast quantities of industrial goods sent out. As Paul Kennedy puts it so evocatively, the world was the City of London's oyster.

The stranglehold of monopoly capital can be gauged from the statistic that by 1914 European nations controlled over 84.4 per cent of the world. Capital was concentrated in and channeled through first, the City of London and then New York, the centres of the international network of trade and finance.

The metropolitan country also used empire for political and ideological ends. Jingoistic nationalism and glorification of empire acted to reduce social divisions in the metropolis. Bipan Chandra notes that the slogan —'the sun never sets on the British empire' –

generated pride among British workers on whose hovels the sun seldom shone in real life. Each country justified its empire in different ways – for example, the "civilizing mission" of the French and the pan – Asianism of Japan.

Between 1870 and 1913 London was the financial and trading hub of the world. By 1913 Britain had 4000 million pounds worth abroad. Most international trade was routed through British ships at the turn of the twentieth century. After World War I Britain lost this position to the US. The US became the major dominant capitalist economy. She was now the world's largest manufacturer, foreign investor, trader and banker and the US $ became the standard international currency.

From the mid-twentieth century onwards, decolonization gathered pace, as did the rise of multinational companies, international donor agencies and the entire gamut of mechanisms of international economic influence. This process is generally known as neo-colonialism.

17.6 THE EMPIRE ON WHICH THE SUN NEVER SET

Let us take Britain and her empire, especially India, as a case study to assess the advantages accruing to the mother country from her imperial possessions.

Bipan Chandra draws our attention to the simultaneity of birth of the Industrial Revolution and the British Empire in India, which, interestingly, was not merely coincidental. The conquest of Bengal in 1757 enabled the systematic plunder of India and the Industrial Revolution took off around 1750. The **drain of wealth** or the unilateral transfer of capital from India after 1765 amounted to two to three per cent of the British national income at a time when only about five per cent of the British national income was being invested.

In the 19th Century India emerged as a major market for British manufactures and supplied foodgrains and raw materials. Opium from India was sold in China, enabling Britain's triangular trade with China. Railways were a major area of investment of capital. Britain's international balance of payments deficit was handled by the foreign exchange got from Indian exports. British shipping grew in leaps and bounds on the back of its control over India's coastal and international trade.

India played a crucial role in the development of British capitalism during this stage. British industries especially textiles were heavily dependent on exports. India absorbed 10 to 12 per cent of British exports and nearly 20 per cent of Britain's textile exports during 1860-1880. After 1850 India was also a major importer of engine coaches, rail lines and other railway stores. Moreover, the Indian army played an important role in extending British colonialism in Asia and Africa. Throughout this stage the drain of wealth and capital to Britain continued.

England was particularly keen on the Indian empire as it provided a market for cotton goods; it controlled the trade of the Far East with her export surplus (opium) with China. The Home Charges (India's payments for receiving "good" administration from Britain) and the interest payments on the Indian Public Debt were important in financing Britain's balance of payments deficit.

India strengthened Britain's position as an international financial centre. India's trade surplus with the rest of the world and her trade deficit with England allowed England to square her international settlements on current account. Also India's monetary reserves helped Britain. Hence in India even the free traders wanted formal control!

The projection of India as the brightest jewel in the British crown played an important role in the ideology of imperialism. The British ruling classes were able to keep their political power intact even when it was being riven with class conflict. Thus the pride and glory underlying the slogan of the sun never sets on the British empire were used to keep workers contented on whose slum dwellings the sun seldom shone in real life. India also played a crucial role in one other, often ignored, aspect. India bore the entire cost of its own conquest. India paid for the railways, education, a modern legal system, development of irrigation and detailed penetration of administration into the countryside.

Lastly once the struggle for the division of the world became intense after 1870 India was the **chief gendarme of British imperialism.** She provided both the material and the human resources for its expansion and maintenance. Afghanistan, Central Asia, Tibet, the Persian Gulf area, Eastern Africa, Egypt, Sudan, Burma, China and to some extent even South Africa were brought or kept within the British sphere of influence by virtue of Indian men and money. The British Indian army was the only large scale army contingent available to Britain. It is therefore not a surprise that the British empire in Asia and Africa collapsed once Britain lost control over the Indian army and finances.

17.7 SUMMARY

Hobsbawm has described the history of the world from the late fifteenth to the mid twentieth century as the rise and decline of its domination by European powers. Britain was the first unquestioned world power. Since 1870 this position was under challenge from other countries in Europe who were industrializing and gaining military and economic power. Even when this domination ended formally, the influence of Britain, and then the US, continued, be it in multinational banks and financial institutions, parliamentary democracy or association football. This Unit then is an exploration of the domination of these geo-political forces in different forms in modern times.

17.8 EXERCISES

1) What are different theoretical explanations for imperialism? Discuss briefly.

2) Describe different historical stages through which imperialism took different forms on a global scale.

3) Why was India crucial as a colony in the expansion of British imperialism?

UNIT 18   COLONIALISM

Structure

18.1   INTRODUCTION

> **If Imperialism is what happens in the metropolis, then colonialism is what happens in the colonies. The same system of capitalism that produced development in the Western world created underdevelopment in the colony. In this sense imperialism and colonialism are two sides of the same coin.**

In the previous Unit, you were familiarized with imperialism as a modern phenomenon directly related to capitalism. You also learnt how the process of conquest, expansion and domination brought wealth and prosperity to the economies of the European countries. This Unit is a discussion of what this process meant to the economy and society in the colonies. It will provide a definition of colonialism and prepare a typology of colonies (colonies of settlement and of exploitation, inland colonies and overseas colonies, colonies under direct rule and colonies controlled only indirectly). It will then go into a discussion of the stages of colonialism and see how these stages functioned in different colonies.

South Africa, Australia, Canada were colonies of white settlers whereas India and Indonesia were colonies exploited economically and politically over centuries. There was a process of colonization which took place through inland expansion (as in Russia) while there were many cases of overseas colonization as in the case of China. In this Unit we shall be studying colonies of exploitation.

Similarly colonization could happen both through direct and indirect rule. Direct rule meant a colonial state as in the case of India; indirect rule meant control over the politics, economy and society without taking on the onus for ruling the country as was the case in China. In this sense, colonialism could be both absolute and partial in terms of political control. Hence, **colonialism and semi-colonialism were different in basics.** In the case of a semi colony like China control was over the economy rather than over the polity. Also, no one imperial power had a monopoly of control as it was exploited by many powers unlike the case of India, where it was mainly Britain which retained absolute political control.

Again, **neo-colonialism** is the continuation of colonialism by non-formal means. Economic policies were dictated and military might was harnessed by the imperial power. The US was the foremost neo-colonial power in the later phase.

18.2   APPROACHES TO COLONIALISM

There are mainly two approaches to the understanding of colonialism. The successful liberation movements of the 1960s and the Cuban and Algerian revolutions led to a plethora of writings on colonialism. Andre Gunder Frank's major contribution was followed by those of C. Furtado, Theodore Dos Santosa, Paul Prebisch, Paul Baran, Samir Amin, Immanuel Wallerstein, Arghiri Emmanuel and F. Cardoso. According to the *dependency school* (Andre Gunder Frank, Samir Amin etc.) a colony would continue to be economically dependent even after achieving political freedom, as long as it remains a part of capitalism – as the capitalist class was incapable of undertaking the task of development. Wallerstein's *world systems* approach divided the capitalist world into the centre, periphery and semi-periphery, between which a relationship of *unequal exchange* prevailed. The *core economies* of the centre produced high value products and had strong states. The periphery was constrained by low technology and low wages, the state was weak as was the capitalist class and the economy was dominated by foreign capital. The countries on the semi-periphery, like India, were marked by greater control of the state in the national and international market. Economic nationalism was the hallmark of such states, which were able to negotiate a stronger position for themselves in the world system. Cultural aspects of colonialism were highlighted by Amilcar Cabral, Franz Fanon and Edward Said. Bipan Chandra analysed colonialism in terms of colonial structure, colonial modernization, stages of colonialism and the colonial state.

18.2.1 What is Colonialism?

Colonialism is as modern a historical phenomenon as industrial capitalism. It describes the distinct stage in the modern historical development of the colony that intervenes between the traditional economy and the modern capitalist economy. It is a well structured whole, a distinct **social formation** in which the basic control of the economy and society is in the hands of a foreign capitalist class. The form of the colonial structure varies with the changing conditions of the historical development of capitalism as a world wide system.

It is best to look upon Colonialism as a specific **structure**. What took place during colonialism was not merely the imposition of foreign political domination on a traditional economy, as argued by some scholars. Nor was it merely the outcome of a vast confidence trick that relied on the docility, cooperation or disunity of the colonized, buttressed by the racial arrogance of their better-armed white governors. The view that 'Empires were transnational organizations that were created to mobilize the resources of the world' (Hopkins, 1999) is also incomplete; it focuses on the metropolis, not on the colony. Neither was a colony a transitional economy which, given time, would have eventually developed into a full blown capitalist economy. It is also incorrect that the colony suffered from "arrested growth" because of its pre-capitalist remnants. Many apologists, for example, Morris D. Morris, portrayed colonialism as an effort at modernization, economic development and transplantation of capitalism which could not succeed because of the restricting role of tradition in the colonies.

Colonial economy was neither pre-capitalist nor capitalist, it was colonial, i.e., a hybrid creation. Colonialism was distorted capitalism. Integration with the world economy did not bring capitalism to the colony. The colony did not develop in the split image of the mother country –it was its other, its opposite, non-developmental side. Colonialism did not develop social and productive forces, rather, it **underdeveloped** them, leading to contradictions and a movement forward to the next stage.

18.2.2 Definition

Colonialism is the **internal disarticulation** and **external integration** of the rural economy and the realization of the extended reproduction of capital not in the colony but in the imperialist metropolis.

Colonialism is a **social formation** in which different modes of production coexist from feudalism to petty commodity production to agrarian, industrial and finance capitalism. Unlike capitalism, where the surplus is appropriated on the basis of the ownership of the means of production, under colonialism surplus is appropriated by virtue of control over state power. When one understands colonialism as a social formation rather than as a mode of production, we are able to see the primary contradiction as a societal one, rather than in class terms. Thus we have a national liberation struggle rather than a class struggle against the colonial power. The primary contradiction in society is the national one, not the class one; the struggle against the colonial power is political.

18.2.3 Basic Features of Colonialism

One basic feature of colonialism is that under it the colony is integrated into the world capitalist system in a subordinate position. Colonialism is characterized by **unequal exchange.** The exploitative international division of labour meant that the metropolis produced goods of high value with high technology and colonies produced goods of low value and productivity with low technology. The colony produced raw materials while the metropolis produced manufactured goods. The pattern of railway development in India in the second half of the 19th Century was in keeping with the interests of British industry. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the Indian nationalist leader, described this as decorating another's wife. The colony was articulated with the world market but **internally disarticulated**. Its agricultural sector did not serve its industry but the metropolitan economy and the world market. The **drain of wealth** took place through unrequited exports and state expenditure on armed forces and civil services. **Foreign political domination** is the fourth feature of Colonialism. Therefore, unequal exchange, external integration and internal disarticulation, drain of wealth, and a foreign political domination may be understood as the four main features of colonialism.

18.3   THE COLONIAL STATE

The colonial state is integral to the structuring and functioning of the colonial economy and society. **It is the mechanism by which the metropolitan capitalist class controls and exploits the colony.** The colonial state serves the long term interests of the capitalist class of the mother country as a whole, not of any of its parts.

Under colonialism all the indigenous classes of the colony suffer domination. No class is a junior partner of colonialism. Thus even the uppermost classes in the colony could begin to oppose colonialism as it went against their interests. It is useful to remember that big landlords led the anti-colonial movements of Poland and Egypt. This is a major difference between colonies and semi-colonies, where there are compradors, native classes that are part of the ruling class.

The role of the colonial state was greater than the capitalist one. The state itself was a major channel of surplus appropriation. The metropolitan ruling class used the colonial state to control colonial society.

The colonial state guaranteed law and order and its own security from internal and external dangers. It suppressed indigenous economic forces hostile to colonial interests. The colonial state actively fostered the identities of caste and community so as to prevent national unity. The state was actively involved in reproducing conditions for appropriation of capital, including producing goods and services. Another important task is the transformation of the social, economic, cultural, political and legal framework of the colony so as to make it reproductive on an extended scale.

There is an explicit and direct link between the colonial structure and the colonial state. Thus it is easy to politicize the struggle against colonialism. As the mechanism of colonial control lies on the surface, it is easy to expose the links with the industrial bourgeoisie of the home country. The state is visibly controlled from abroad and the isolation of the colonial people from policy and decision making is evident.

The colonial state relied on the whole on domination and coercion rather than leadership and consent. However, it functioned to some extent as a bourgeois state with rule of law, property relations, bureaucracy and constitutional space within which colonial discontent was to be contained. We shall discuss this in detail with reference to India.

18.4   STAGES OF COLONIALISM

There were three distinct stages of colonialism. Some countries went through one or two stages only. India went through only the first and second stages, Egypt only through the third stage, and Indonesia the first and third stage. These stages lasted over two hundred years. The forms of subordination changed over time as did colonial policy, state and its institutions, culture, ideas and ideologies. However, this did not mean that stages existed in a pure form. The older forms of subordination continued into the later stages.

The stages were the result of four factors:

- the historical development of capitalism as a world system;

- the change in the society, economy and polity of the metropolis;

- the change in its position in the world economy and lastly;

- the colony's own historical development.

18.4.1 First Stage: Monopoly Trade and Plunder

The first stage had two basic objectives. In order to make trade more profitable indigenously manufactured goods were to be bought cheap. For this competitors were to be kept out, whether local or European. Territorial conquest kept local traders out of the lucrative trade while rival European companies were defeated in war. Thus the characteristic of the first stage was monopoly of trade.

Secondly, the political conquest of the colony enabled plunder and seizure of surplus. For example, the drain of wealth from India to Britain during the first stage was considerable. It amounted to two to three per cent of the national income of Britain at that time. Colonialism was superimposed on the traditional systems of economy and polity. No basic changes were introduced in the first stage.

18.4.2 Second Stage: Era of Free Trade

The interest of the industrial bourgeoisie of the metropolis in the colony was in the markets available for manufactured goods. For this it was necessary to increase exports from the colony to pay for purchase of manufactured imports. The metropolitan bourgeoisie also wanted to develop the colony as a producer of raw materials to lessen dependence on non-empire sources. Increase of exports from the colony would also enable it to pay for the high salaries and profits of merchants. The industrial bourgeoisie opposed plunder as a form of appropriation of surplus on the ground that it would destroy the goose that laid the golden eggs.

Trade was the mechanism by which the social surplus was to be appropriated in this stage. In this stage changes in the economy, polity, administration, social, cultural and ideological structure were initiated to enable exploitation in the new way. The slogan was development and modernization. The colony was to be integrated with the world capitalist economy and the mother country. Capitalists were allowed to develop plantations, trade, transport, mining and industries. The system of transport and communications was developed to facilitate the movement of massive quantities of raw materials to the ports for export. Liberal imperialism was the new political ideology. The rhetoric of the rulers was to train the people in self-government.

18.4.3 Third Stage: Era of Finance Capital

The third stage saw intense struggle for markets and sources of raw materials and food grains. Large scale accumulation of capital in the metropolis necessitated search for avenues for investment abroad. These interests were best served where the imperial powers had colonies. This led to more intensive control over the colony in order to protect the interests of the imperial power.

In the sphere of ideology the mood was one of reaction. The need for intensive control increased. There was no more talk of self government; instead benevolent despotism was the new ideology according to which the colonial people were seen as children who would need guardians forever.

A major contradiction in this stage was that the colony was not able to absorb metropolitan capital or increase its exports of raw materials because of overexploitation in the earlier stages. A strategy of limited modernization was implemented to take care of this problem but the logic of colonialism could not be subverted. Underdevelopment became a constraint on further exploitation of the colony.

The third stage often did not take off. Colonialism had so wrecked the economies of some colonies that they could hardly absorb any capital investment. In many colonies the older forms of exploitation continued. In India, for example, the earlier two forms continued, even in the third stage.

18.5 COLONIALISM IN DIFFERENT TERRITORIES

So far you have seen the general pattern of colonial expansion spread over three stages. In the next two sections we will take up specific case studies of colonies.

18.5.1 Africa

The conquest of Africa took place in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Till as late as 1880 only 20 per cent of Africa had come under European rule. With the spread of the Industrial Revolution to other countries of Europe rivalries increased as did the search for colonies. The emerging industrial powers looked for a place in the sun. A continent of over 28 million square km was partitioned and occupied by European powers by a combination of two strategies, treaties and conquest.

> In Africa in 1939, 1200 colonial administrators ruled 43 million Africans – through local chiefs.

Three eras of conquest

The first phase, 1880-1919, was one of conquest and occupation. The colonial system was consolidated after 1910. The second phase, 1919-35, was that of the independence movements. The third stage was from 1935 onwards. Within forty five years the colonial system was uprooted from over 94 per cent of Africa. Colonial rule lasted for a hundred years on an average. British territories in Africa consisted of Nigeria, Gold Coast, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Tanganyika, Nyasaland, Uganda, North and South Rhodesia and South Africa. Algeria, Morocco, Cameroon, French-Congo, Tunisia, and Madagascar were some of the main French colonies.

Impact

The impact of colonialism in Africa was tremendous. The self sufficient African economies were destroyed, transformed and subordinated by colonial domination. Class differentiation in African society occurred as a result of the impact of colonial domination. The links of African countries with each other and with other parts of the world were disrupted. European powers reduced the economies of Africa to colonial dependencies through the power of finance capital. The loans for the Suez Canal enmeshed Egypt in debt.

There are **different interpretations** of the impact of colonial rule. The imperialist school of thought would have it that Africans welcomed colonial rule. Social Darwinism justifies colonialism by arguing that the domination over the weaker races was the inevitable result of the natural superiority of the European race. Both colonial rulers and latter day apologists have presented colonial rule as a blessing. It is said that modern infrastructure, health and education would not have reached the colony had it not been part of the colonial system. Other scholars, like D.K. Fieldhouse, have described the effects as "some good, some bad".

The primary motive behind colonialism was of course satisfying imperial interests. The positive effects of colonialism, if any, were byproducts; they were clearly not consciously intended. The negative impact was huge and in all spheres, with long lasting legacies. For example, ethnic conflicts which paralyze many parts of Africa today are rooted in the arbitrary superimposition of territorial boundaries on an essentially tribal society.

18.5.2 Egypt

Egypt was under the protection of both France and Britain. She became an agrarian and raw material appendage of the metropolitan countries. Two stages of colonialism were merged into one in Egypt.

Britain developed Egypt as a supplier of cotton for her textile industry. By 1914 cotton constituted 43 per cent of agricultural output. It accounted for 85 per cent of exports in 1913. Being a single crop economy was disastrous as Egypt became dependent on imports for her essential food supply. The control of foreigners over cotton was total, from owning or controlling the land it was grown on, the cotton processing and cotton cleaning industry and the steamships it was transported in. There was not a single mill in Egypt.

Egypt was also a valuable field of investment of banking capital. Five per cent capital went into industry and construction, 12.36 into trade and transport and 79 per cent into public debt, mortgage and banks. Egypt was enmeshed in indebtedness as a result of exploitation by foreign powers.

The First World War showed up the exploitation of Egypt fully. Her natural resources, manpower and economy were harnessed to the war effort. Crops were seized by the army. The British Treasury took over the gold reserves of the National Bank of Egypt. Egypt became a British protectorate in 1914.

18.5.3 South-East Asia

Colonialism in South-East Asia lasted five centuries, from the late fifteenth to the mid twentieth century. Even after the heyday of the spice trade, South-East Asia remained important as a supplier of basic raw materials like oil, rubber, metals, rice, coffee, tea and sugar. The impact of colonialism in this region was considerable, even on countries like Thailand, which did not formally become colonies. Traditional forms of government disappeared, trading patterns were disrupted and the rich cultural traditions of these regions were destroyed.

18.6 INDIA

India has generally been considered a classic colony. A study of colonialism in India can tell us a great deal about the functioning of colonialism in general. Let us see how the different stages of colonialism operated in India.

18.6.1 First Stage

In the first stage both the objectives – the monopoly of trade and appropriation of government revenues – were rapidly fulfilled with the conquest first of Bengal and parts of South India and then the rest of India. The East India Company now used its political power to acquire monopolistic control over Indian trade and handicrafts. Indian traders were ruined while weavers were forced to sell cheap. The company's monopoly ruined the weavers. In the next stage cheap manufactured goods finished them.

The drain of wealth was admitted to by British officials. In the words of the Deputy Chairman of the Court of Directors, "Our system acts very much like a sponge, drawing up all the good things from the banks of the Ganges and squeezing them down on the banks of the Thames."

The colony did not undergo any fundamental changes in this stage. Changes were made only in military organization and technology and at the top level of revenue administration. Land revenue could be extracted from the villages without disturbing the existing systems. In the sphere of ideology too there was respect for traditional systems in contrast to the denunciation of traditional values in the second stage. The respect with which Sanskrit was held by British Indologists like William Jones was in sharp contrast to Macaulay's later dismissal of traditional learning as not being enough to fill a bookshelf of a good Western library.

18.6.2 Second Stage

The era of free trade saw India emerge as a market for manufactured goods and a supplier of raw materials and food grains. Import of Manchester cloth increased in value from 96 lakh sterling in 1860 to 27 crore sterling in 1900. Traditional weavers were ruined by this competition. Rather than industrialization, decline of industry or deindustrialization took place. In the middle Gangetic region, according to historian A.K. Bagchi, the weight of industry in the livelihood pattern of the people was reduced by half from 1809-13 to the census year 1901.

Estimates by Sivasubramaniam indicate that in the last half century of British rule per capita income in India remained almost stagnant. Dadabhai Naoroji calculated per capita income at Rs.20 per annum.

Railway expansion was undertaken and a modern post and telegraph system was set up. Administration was made more detailed and comprehensive so that imports could penetrate the villages and raw materials could be taken out easily. Capitalist commercial relations were to be enforced. The legal system was to be improved so as to ensure upholding the sanctity of contract. Modern education was introduced to produce *babus* to man the new administration. Westernized habits were expected to increase the demand for British goods.

Transformation of the existing culture and social organization required that the existing culture be denounced. Orientalism, by depriving people of the power to study their own languages, was an appropriation of the processes by which people understand themselves. The new ideology was one of development. Underdevelopment was not the desired but the inevitable consequence of the inexorable working of colonialism of trade and of its inner contradictions.

18.6.3 Third Stage

The third stage is rightly known as the era of finance capital. A huge amount of capital was invested in railways, loans to the Government of India, trade and to a lesser extent in plantations, coal mining, jute mills, shipping and banking in India.

In this stage, Britain's position in the world was constantly challenged by the rivalry of new imperialist countries. The result was further consolidation of its control over India. Control had to be strengthened to contend with competition from rival imperialist powers.

Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, wrote:

> Other channels of investment, outside of India, are gradually being filled up, not merely by British capital, but by capital of all the wealth-producing countries of the world; and if this be so, then a time must soon come when the current of British capital, extruded from the banks between which it has long been content to meander, will want to pour over into fresh channels, and will, by the law of economic gravitation, find its way into India, to which it should be additionally attracted by the security of British institutions and British laws.

Reactionary imperialist policies characterized the viceroyalties of Lytton and Curzon. All talk of self government ended and the aim of British rule was declared to be permanent trusteeship over the child people of India.

Loosening of links

The major spurts in industrial investment took place precisely during those periods when India's economic links with the world capitalist economy were temporarily

weakened or disrupted. In India's case, foreign trade and the inflow of foreign capital were reduced or interrupted thrice during the 20th Century, i.e. during the First World War, the Great Depression (1929-34) and World War II. But as the links were not disrupted, merely loosened, what took place was only industrial growth, not industrial revolution.

18.7   BRITISH COLONIAL STATE

That the British wielded brute force to maintain their rule in India and to crush opposition is well known. Very often, the state did not actually repress; the very fact that it had the capacity to do so was enough to contain revolt. Hence, the British considered the maintenance of a large, disciplined, efficient and loyal army to be a prime necessity, for the armed forces remained, in the ultimate analysis, the final guarantor of British interests. But generally, for the continued existence of their rule and for the perpetuation of imperialist domination, they relied on a variety of ideological instruments. It is in this sense that the British colonial state in India was, in however limited a way, a hegemonic or semi-hegemonic state. Its semi-hegemonic foundations were buttressed by the ideology of pax Britannica, law and order, the British official as the *mai-bap* of the people, as well as by the institutions of the ideological, legal, judicial and administrative systems.

The impression of the unshakable foundations of British rule, the aura of stolidity and general prestige of the Raj contributed towards the maintenance of imperial hegemony. The prestige of the Raj, by showing the futility of attempts to overthrow it, played as crucial a role in the maintenance of British rule as the armed might behind it. The prestige of the Raj was very largely embodied in its much vaunted 'steel frame', the Indian Civil Service (ICS), and, more specifically, in the district officer, who represented authority in the countryside: "At the centre of the 'benevolent despotism' that British rule in the subcontinent adopted stood the steel frame of the Indian Civil Service... and in particular the figure of the district officer himself, the physical 'embodiment of Government' across the Indian countryside..."

Rudyard Kipling's 'A Song of the English' (1893) went thus –

Keep ye the law

Be swift in all obedience

Clear the land of evil

Drive the road and bridge the ford –

By the peace among Our peoples let men know we serve the Lord!

A state structure of this kind, based on "semi-hegemonic foundations", called for certain specific policies in the political sphere. A reliable social base for the state had to be secured on the one hand; on the other, strategies had to be devised to limit the social reach and effective clout of the anti-imperialist forces. Active cooperation of 'native allies' in running the country was gained by a variety of techniques, ranging from the handing out of jobs, favours and positions of some authority to concessions to the 'legitimate' political demands of the loyalist and liberal sections. As regards the snowballing of anti-British discontent, it was sought to be neutralized by confining it within the constitutional arenas created by the political reforms. Constitutional concessions were regularly made, though under pressure, to the demands raised by the anti-imperialist forces.

18.8   COLONIALISM OR COLONIALISMS?

If we look at British and French colonial rule it is clear that they are informed by different perspectives though often the reality on the ground amounted to the same. Some scholars point to this fact of the same reality on the ground to argue that all colonialisms were the same. For example, historian D.A. Low disagrees with the view that there were different patterns of colonialism on the ground that British and French colonies achieved independence at the same time. In this section the existence of different patterns of colonialism is discussed.

Wallerstein would have it that there was a basic paternalism which ran through the philosophies of all the colonial powers. But this basic paternalism expressed itself in very different forms, depending on the history and national character of the colonial powers.

From the beginning there was a sparseness and economy about British colonial policy. The British used trading companies to acquire colonies, insisted that colonies be self-sustaining and varied the political structure in each of the colonies to suit local needs. "This, then, is the classic contrast between Africa's two colonial powers, Britain and France: Britain – empirical, commercial, practising indirect rule, keeping Africans at a distance, verging on racism; France – Cartesian in its logic, seeking glory, practicing direct administration, acting as apostle of fraternity and anti-racism. Anyone who travels in both British and French Africa will see the grain of truth in these generalizations. The flavor of life *is* different; the two colonial governments *have* produced two different cultures. And yet, anyone who travels there well knows the severe limitations of these generalizations."

In practice the differences were not so clear. The French often supported chiefs where they were powerful rather than rule directly. As for 'empiricism' versus 'Cartesian logic', this comparison is more the stuff of polemics than of analysis.

To contrast motives of money and glory seems even more dubious. For the British were surely proud of their empire, and the French surely profited by theirs. As for 'racism' and 'fraternity', it may be that French paternalism was based on the exclusive virtue but universal accessibility of French civilization and British paternalism on the equal virtue of all traditions but the unique accessibility of British culture. Nevertheless, in practice, there were parallel degrees of political, social and economic discrimination in two settler territories like Kenya and Algeria, and there were parallel ideologies among the settlers. There was also parallel absence of legal discrimination in non settler British and French West Africa, though until 1957 the exclusive white clubs of both areas barred Africans as members or as guests. There were differences also regarding the role of the civil service. In Britain civil servants were nonpartisan whereas in France junior civilians were political. But after independence this made little difference.

No clear distinction can be made between French direct rule and English indirect rule which allowed traditional institutions to survive when we look closely at the actual working of administration. Fieldhouse has shown that after 1929 and especially after 1932 attitudes and practices came closer together.

18.9   SUMMARY

Colonialism is as modern a historical phenomenon as industrial capitalism. While the metropolis experiences growth under capitalism the colony undergoes underdevelopment. Colonialism is more than foreign political domination; it is a distinct

social formation in which control is in the hands of the metropolitan ruling class. In short, colonialism is what happened in the colony and imperialism is what happened in the metropolis.

18.10   EXERCISES

1)   Define basic features of colonialism. How is it different from imperialism?

2)   What are different approaches to the understanding of colonialism?

3)   What were the different historical stages of colonialism? How did it impact the Indian economy?

4)   Can one talk of different types of colonies rather than one single colonialsm?

UNIT 19   DECOLONIZATION

Structure

19.1   INTRODUCTION

This Unit discusses that important phase of the 20th Century when the erstwhile empires gave way to the emergence of new nation-states or led to the independence of former colonies. This era is often called decolonization. This Unit will discuss the broad scope of the term with respect to various theoretical approaches, its historical manifestations and two case studies of France and Britain, the two erstwhile imperial powers whose distinct approach to decolonization led to different historical trajectories. Lastly, the case of Indian decolonization is discussed.

Decolonization or struggle for independence? In the historiography of national liberation the terms represent two opposite poles of interpretation. The first one suggests a process of disentanglement by the imperial power, as it were, in the manner of a kite flyer pulling back the thread of the kite when the kite is mangled. The second interpretation highlights the proactive process wherein colonial power is whittled away, eroded by the action of mass nationalism. The term decolonization is used here in the second sense, as coterminous with the colonial peoples' struggle for achievement of independence.

The term decolonization is believed to have been coined in 1932 by an expatriate German scholar Moritz Julius Bonn for his section on Imperialism in the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences.

A recent study (Springhall, 2001) has defined decolonization as the surrender of external political sovereignty over colonized non European peoples plus the emergence of independent territories where once the West had ruled, or the process of transfer of power from empire to nation state.

19.2   TYPES OF DECOLONIZATION

There are broadly four types of decolonization:
1)   self government for white settler colonies as it happened in Canada and Australia
2)   formal end to empire followed by independent rule as in India
3)   formal empire replaced by informal empire or neo-colonialism as in Latin America
4)   mere change of imperial masters — in Indo-China when the French reluctantly left, the US moved in.

In this Unit we shall focus on the second type, which was the most significant and the representative pattern of decolonization.

19.3 APPROACHES

The explanations of decolonization have been classified as follows:

- The nationalist approach

- International context approach

- Domestic constraints approach

19.3.1 The Nationalist Approach

In the nationalist view indigenous resistance and anti imperialist struggle led to independence. According to D.A. Low, the primary factor behind the end of empire was anti-imperialist movements — the metropolitan response only influenced the nature of this confrontation, not the outcome.

According to the nationalist approach the resistance movements of the colonial peoples determined the pace of decolonization. Colonial rule became unviable once the groups which sustained it withdrew support, often under nationalist pressure or influence.

The British imperialists presented the unravelling of empire as an orderly and rational process but the messy reality was much less consistent and unavoidable, as John Darwin has pointed out. In short, far from a planned withdrawal from empire, there was the irreversible erosion of position as imperial powers struggled to retain power by one means or another, conciliation or repression.

For example, in India, from the 1930s onwards, there was a swing of the pendulum from repression to conciliation. This had demoralizing consequences for the officials who had to implement both poles of policy. The same set of colonial officials who put the nationalist leaders in jail during the civil disobedience movement in 1930-34 had to serve under them during the period of formation of provincial ministries of 1937-39. The same dilemma racked officialdom in 1942 and 1946 - officials were demoralized as they feared that the leaders they had given harsh punishment to in the War years, and particularly to contain the 1942 revolt, would soon be their political masters in the provinces in 1946.

Whatever some of the metropolitan-centred accounts may suggest, the growth and development of a vigorous nationalism was almost invariably the principal propellant of sustained progress towards the ending of colonial rule.

19.3.2 International Context Approach

According to the approach highlighting the international context of decolonization, empires could not survive in the new world order after the Second World War. As John Darwin put it, in the Cold War era "colonial empires appeared as quaint survivors of a prewar age, to be quickly dismantled lest they be knocked to pieces in the turbulent wake of the superpowers." The changed international climate was reflected in the Atlantic Charter issued by the Allies during the War which called for the independence of colonial peoples. The United Nations General Assembly went a step further in 1960 in its Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. It sharply condemned colonial rule as a denial of fundamental human rights in contravention of the UN Charter.

The myth of European invincibility was shattered by the Japanese takeover of South East Asia during World War II, especially the British desertion of Singapore in 1942. Yet decolonization was not the inevitable result of World War II – though its pace quickened.

This international approach attributes the end of empires to the opposition of the US and USSR to 'old style imperialism'. The US and USSR had nothing to gain from the older imperial powers, such as Britain and France, retaining their colonies. They had everything to gain from the end of empire as this enabled these two emerging superpowers to establish their influence over the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. For example, US neo colonialism replaced France in Indo-China, Japan in Korea and Britain in Pakistan, one of the two successor states of British India. The USSR treated Eastern Europe, Cuba and Mozambique, among others, as little more than 'colonies'. Western Cold Warriors were quick to dub this as 'socialist imperialism', much to the chagrin of self respecting socialists, for whom the very word imperialism was anathema.

19.3.3   Domestic Constraints Approach

The metropolitan or domestic constraints approach focuses on how the colony became too big a burden on the mother country. From being the proverbial goose which laid golden eggs a time came when it was not worth expending money and men on it. British colonialism, it is argued by Holland, 'became dysfunctional to the operational necessities of the metropole.'

In this explanation the end of empire is seen as a political choice made under pressure of domestic constraints and calculations of national interest. The mother country's will to rule slackened once empire became too much of a nuisance, financially, militarily and in international relations. Historians John Gallagher and other scholars in the imperialist tradition argued that British imperial interests in India were declining, that India no longer fulfilled its role in the maintenance of imperial interests in the fields of either defence or commerce or finance and that, in fact, over the years it had become a liability for the British. Gallagher and Anil Seal argued that during the Second World War Britain footed the bill for India's defence requirements.

Aditya Mukherjee has conclusively contradicted this view and demonstrated that British imperial control intensified considerably during the war and the economic exploitation of India increased manifold –"the colony, far from ceasing to pay, was subjected to a greater and most blatant appropriation of surplus through currency manipulations, forced loans, large military expenditures and numerous other unilateral transfers."

B.R. Tomlinson is critical of the this theory which sees decolonization only as a technique by which formal empire became informal in the interests of maximizing advantages to Britain. He concedes that there was an Indian angle to the end of empire, apart from changes in the metropolitan and world economies, but the Indian factor in his view was not nationalist pressure, but discontent with the ever-increasing financial burdens imposed by the colonial government on its subjects.

The end of the Second World War found Britain in a severe economic crisis and a war weary British populace wished to get rid of empire as quickly and painlessly as possible. This theme of getting rid of empire is suggested by the very title of R.J. Moore's book on Attlee and India – *Escape from Empire*.

Another factor was the post war expansion of the welfare state. Decolonization gathered pace once social reform became a priority and empire began to be perceived as a drain on resources. Politicians who were in favour of withdrawing from empire became the flavour of the day. It was no accident that the British public elected the Labour Party to

office in 1945 despite Churchill, a Conservative Party prime minister, having just won the war for them. The new understanding was that the Labour Party was suitable for national reconstruction, which was the need of the hour. Another domestic constraint was that suppressing colonial revolts, be it in Palestine, Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus or Aden, was no longer viable. This was the argument given by Prime Minister Attlee against reassertion of authority in India in 1946:

''In the event of a breakdown of the administration or a general alignment of the political parties against us are we prepared to go back on our policy and seek to reestablish British rule as against the political parties and maintain it for 18 years? The answer must clearly be no because

a) In view of our commitments all over the world we have not the military force to hold India against a widespread guerilla movement or to reconquer India.

b) If we had, pub. [public] opinion in our Party would not stand for it.

c) It is doubtful if we could keep the Indian troops loyal. It is doubtful if our own troops would be prepared to act.

d) We should have world opinion agst. [against] us and be placed in an impossible position at UNO.

e) We have not now the administrative machine to carry out such a policy either British or Indian.''

(Attlee's note, c. 13 November 1946, cited in Sucheta Mahajan, *Independence and Partition*, p.162)

The argument, that the costs of coercion became too high, clearly has no basis. One can show that very high costs were indeed tolerated. Thus there are many problems with the Domestic Constraints Approach. One major problem, of course, is that it looks for the causes of decolonization, not in the colony but in the metropolis. A direct example of this approach is the assertion made by historian David Potter:

> an explanation for the end of colonialism is unlikely to be found within the boundaries of the subject country. Historians have so far been unable to account satisfactorily for political events like the end of colonialism because, quite simply, they have not been looking in the right place.

This is overly eurocentric. This approach refuses to acknowledge the powerful political initiatives taken in the colonies and explains independence (in other words decolonization) merely as an internal political arrangement within the metropolitan countries.

19.4 THE ERA OF DECOLONIZATION

The twentieth century was the era of decolonization. At the end of the twentieth century the world was no longer eurocentric. The twentieth century had seen the decline and fall of Europe, which had been the centre of power, wealth and western civilization at the beginning of the century.

In the first decade of the twentieth century the nationalists posed a challenge in Asia and Africa. They were encouraged by the ability of Japan, a small Asian country, to inflict a crushing defeat on Russia, a European power, in 1905. Some of the well known leaders of the national movements were Sun Yat Sen in China, Arabi Pasha in Egypt and Bal Gangadhar Tilak in India. These movements were led, in this stage, by middle class

English educated elites whose demand for a say in the running of their countries was changing into a demand for independence.

The First World War further fuelled nationalist discontent. The War effort had meant increased exploitation of colonies for raw materials, manpower and taxes and nationalists naturally questioned why the colonies should bear this burden. In 1919 when a new international order was emerging in Europe the national movements in the colonies underwent a transformation in a mass direction. In India this change was wrought by Gandhi; China had the May 4th Movement; in Turkey Kemal Ataturk rose to power; and in Indonesia the national movement reached a membership of 2.5 million. This phase also saw the deepening and spread of movements in Philippines, Burma and Ceylon.

Differences emerged between the old imperial powers like Great Britain and the newer ones like the US and Japan, on whether the old order should continue at all, and if so in what form? This stance of the **newer world powers** encouraged nationalists greatly.

The old imperial powers were undergoing a decline in their position. Britain's position as the global power par excellence was challenged by other powers from the late nineteenth century onwards. By the beginning of the twentieth century Britain lost her commercial preeminence.

But decline in imperial power did not mean collapse of empire as the interest of imperial powers in their colonies did not wane. In fact empire had to be maintained at any cost, including severe repression, such as the brutal gunning down of innocent men, women and children in Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar in India in 1919.

In the years after the Russian Revolution the process of colonial emancipation and decolonization went much further. In the non western world countries either went through revolution or the prophylactic decolonization by empires doomed in an era of world revolution. Revolution, then, did change the world if not quite in the way Lenin expected.

Anti-imperialist activity was fuelled because of the **world wide Depression of 1929**. Sharpening of conflict as in Egypt and India and victory of Republican ultras under De Valera in the Irish elections of 1932 were belated anti-colonial reactions to the economic breakdown. In the economic sphere, the Depression furthered the trend to set up local production, which had begun after the First World War when imperial powers made their colonies industrially self-sufficient. Japan had encouraged limited industrialization in Korea and Manchuria and Britain in India. Bipan Chandra has described the impact of the Depression as the loosening of links between the colony and the metropolis, which encouraged independent capitalist growth in the colony.

World War II showed up Great Britain as a second fiddle to the US in the Anglo-American alliance. After 1945 the US and Russia became the two superpowers. Where earlier London held this position, now the world was no longer its oyster, to use Paul Kennedy's evocative phrase. As a US official put it, it is now our turn to bat in Asia. As the Russians were equally keen to have a global role, a bipolar world emerged. Britain had been one of the big three in the war. But for her, victory in the war did not bring with it consolidation of power. The war had overstrained the British economy vastly and it needed American help to keep going. The US propped up her economy with the Lend Lease offer. But it was some years before the British withdrew from India and later Palestine and even then this was presented as preserving more important areas of imperial interests elsewhere. Outwardly Britain remained a big power, second only to the US.

In the third world the Second World War had caused great upheavals, political and economic. Within years of the end of the War many colonies gained independence, but often after protracted disagreement, encouraged by the imperial power, on the contentious issue of distribution of power, leading to partition and civil war. Various areas of troublesome conflict in the 1970s and 80s, Middle East, Cyprus, South Africa, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, were legacies of British decolonization.

In India the imperial power delayed in handing over power on the specious ground that it must await agreement between the communities on how power was to be transferred. Specious in retrospect because when they left, they left any which way. Gandhi appealed to them to leave India, to anarchy if need be. He understood that agreement could not be brokered by a partisan broker. Once the colonial power left, he believed, the two communities would, like siblings dividing ancestral property, agree or agree to disagree. At worst, civil war would result but even that fire would be purifying. Given that the much celebrated agreed solution left at least 200,000 dead, perhaps Gandhi could have been tried out.

19.5 DECOLONIZATION OR DECOLONIZATIONS? FRANCE AND BRITAIN

Was there decolonization or were there as many decolonizations as there are colonial powers or even colonies? As we have seen, though there is a **wider pattern of decolonization** – it was generally a mid twentieth century phenomenon under the impact of the national liberation movements – there are also **significant differences** between, for example, French and British decolonization. For example, if the British maintained strategic, political and cultural interests in its erstwhile colonies through the Commonwealth, cultural integration was the mode of association preferred by the French. The French had no mechanism like the British Commonwealth to ease the transition of colonies to independence. Assimilation remained the imperial ideal. The French Union was federal only in name and the National Assembly continued to be sovereign.

If we look at British and French India, a difference that strikes one is the long and protracted negotiations for transfer of power in French India in contrast to the way the British quit India. Seven long years after the achievement of Indian independence from British colonial rule the de facto transfer of power in the French Indian enclaves took place in 1954. This was linked to the political developments in Indo-China, considered to be one of the more important areas under French imperial control. However, much water was to flow under the bridge and eight years lapsed before the French Indian enclaves achieved de jure independence from French colonial rule in 1962. This time around the association was with the political developments in Algeria, a colony crucial for France. The milestones of 1954 and 1962 were the culmination of a long and protracted struggle for independence waged by the nationalists in the French colonial enclaves in India.

A study of British and French colonialism in a comparative perspective in the specific context of decolonization is extremely revealing. Whereas the liberation of India from British colonial rule set off a chain reaction of independence in other British colonies, such as Burma and Ceylon, France continued to cling to its colonial possessions. It had the second largest colonial empire in the world and was keen to keep Indo-China and Algeria and Morocco even if others saw this as beyond their means. It did not even give up its five colonial enclaves in India with grace, perhaps because of their strategic link with Indo-China. In this, there was a parallel with His Majesty's Government's short-lived attempt to retain the Andaman and Nicobar Islands as a vital link on the Suez-Singapore route.

France refused to see the writing on the wall in Indo-China. Following an armed revolt in 1930 and peasant revolts led by communists in 1930-31, the French executed nearly 700 nationalist and communist leaders. They made it plain, by the use of repression, that Vietnamese ambitions of independence would not be tolerated. By 1945 there were popular revolts against the French in many parts of Vietnam, which then came under communist control, with the help of the quite remarkable Vietnamese guerrilla army. The French were conclusively defeated in the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954.

In contrast, the British were interested in preserving their empire in India but when a non violent mass agitation fashioned by Gandhi steadily eroded their power, they saw that they did not have the wherewithal to maintain rule and preferred a graceful withdrawal to a messy holding on.

Indian independence in 1947 was followed by independence in Burma in 1948 and Ceylon in the same year. Malaya gained independence nine years later. In Africa the British were willing to grant independence except where there were large numbers of white settlers as in South Africa and Kenya. Ghana gained independence under Kwame Nkrumah in 1957. Togo, Cameroons, Somalia and Nigeria became independent in 1960. In 1964 all seven British East and Central African colonies, Somaliland, Tanganyika, Uganda, Zanzibar, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia became independent. Botswana and Swaziland followed in 1966. Britain was not willing to hand over power in Kenya because of white settlers there and hence got embroiled in suppressing a protracted and violent revolt, such as the Mau Mau.

The French colonies of Morocco and Tunisia gained independence in 1956. In contrast, independence was completely ruled out for Algeria as it was seen as an integral part of France. This short sighted policy was to lead to a bloody war, as in Vietnam. In Africa local autonomy was granted in 1956 but the colonies were placed in a union, termed the French Community, strictly controlled by France. Eight colonies in French West Africa, four in French Equatorial Africa and Madagascar gained independence in 1960. Thus there were three different policies followed by the French in Africa.

In the words of Immanuel Wallerstein, "as a result of their special framework of thinking concerning the colonies, the British were the first to begin the process of decolonization." They accepted national independence as a legitimate objective. They were anxious to avoid a repetition of what happened in America in their other settler colonies, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. In Africa local people were given representation in legislative bodies. Once India became part of the Commonwealth, which was earlier White, the road was clear for Africa. "Thus, the pace of constitutional development in British non-settler Africa was rapid and marked by a minimum of violence and antagonism."

In contrast to the British acceptance of national independence as a legitimate objective, the French did not believe in the legitimacy of nationalism for colonial subjects "the French concept of constitutional advance was to draw colonies closer to France, not push them farther away." This policy was reconsidered only after the Second World War. French Africans were elected to legislative bodies in France. The British associated Africans with local bodies whereas the French associated Africans with French bodies. African political parties were extensions of metropolitan parties or attached themselves to French parties. At the end of World War II French colonies started on a radically different path of development from that of the British colonies. Yet fifteen years later they had arrived at the same point as the British – viz., national independence. What had happened to make the French pattern conform to the British pattern?

There were two factors that influenced a change in the French pattern of constitutional development. The first was the events in Ghana, the second was the developments in North Africa and Indo-China. Tunisia and Morocco became restive, as did Togo and the Cameroons. After their defeat in Indo-China in 1954 the French took decisive steps towards independence of Algeria, l'Afrique noire and Madagascar. The difference between the British and the French was that one long accepted the path to independence while the other did it late and with the greatest difficulty.

But these were not the only differences. The British sought to maintain influence in their colonies after the end of empire by encouraging their ex-colonies to follow the Westminster model of parliamentary government with its multi party system. The French did not care what form of government was adopted, their concern was with cultural rather than political influence.

The British and French differed in their approach to larger political federations. The French opposed federations in French West and Equatorial Africa as the nationalists were behind them whereas the British worked towards federations as they would be useful in the post-independence situation. However, as the overall trend was towards unitary structures within states, differences in British and French attitudes eventually made little difference.

There were differences between the British and French perceptions of the role of the civil service. In Britain civil servants were nonpartisan whereas in France junior civilians were political. However, this made little difference after independence.

Not all agree with the view of the particularity of the British style of transfer of power, that it was planned, phased and orderly. It is pointed out that in practice transfer of power in many British colonies was patchy, disorderly, reluctant and enforced. A middle view is that they were pushed along the path of self-government. In the words of Dennis Austin, "it was a peculiar and distinctive feature of British colonial rule to have always contemplated its end: the colonial governments went (we might romantically say) consentingly to their fate, but they had also to be pushed in that direction and they were pushed primarily by local events within the colonial territories which obliged the Colonial Office and local colonial governments alike to introduce reforms at a pace which, in the post-war years, began to quicken beyond all earlier calculations."

In sharp contrast, independence was dismissed as impossible at the French African Conference in Brazzaville in Algeria in 1944:

> The aims of the civilizing labours of France in the colonies exclude all possibilities of development outside of the French imperial system; the eventual formation even in the distant future of 'self-governments' in the colonies must be dismissed [and the empire was to be conducted] in the Roman not the Anglo-Saxon sense.

Yet, the outcome of these very different policies of the British and French was the same. Widespread economic and political discontent in Africa led to the uniform collapse of empire across British and French colonies. This seriously questions the view that French and British Africa were poles apart. Under pressure from a continent-wide 'wind of change', in the words of the British Prime Minister, Macmillan, colonial empires collapsed in Africa between 1957 and 1964 like "the proverbial row of dominoes", in the words of D.A. Low.

Also, it is very interesting that General de Gaulle's explanation of decolonization is a general systemic one which does not distinguish between British and French patterns:

The relative weakening of England and France, the defeat of Italy and the subordination of Holland and Belgium to the designs of the United States; the effect produced on the Asians and Africans by the battles fought on their soil for which the colonizers needed their support; the dissemination of doctrines which, whether liberal or socialist, equally demanded the emancipation of races and individuals; and the wave of envious longing aroused among these deprived masses by the spectacle of the modern economy – as a result of all these factors the world was faced with an upheaval as profound, though in the opposite direction, as that which has unleashed the discoveries and conquests of the power of old Europe. *(Memoirs of Hope)*

19.6 INDIAN INDEPENDENCE: A CASE STUDY OF DECOLONIZATION

India selects itself as a case study. It was the classic colony. Its mass movement was the greatest the world has seen. Indian independence had an amazing demonstration effect. The achievement of independence in India triggered off a wave of similar developments across Africa and Asia.

When did the realization dawn upon the imperial power that the end of the fabled empire, on which the sun never set, is near? At the end of the War, when the British authorities in India evaluated their position in the context of the post-1942 situation, it was clear to them that the hegemonic foundations of their rule were fast crumbling. Even erstwhile loyalists were deserting and the Indian Civil Service (ICS) was reaching a breaking point. The general consent of the people to British rule had diminished and the open, military repression of the 1942 movement had contributed greatly to this. Even liberal opinion in the country had shifted, slowly but steadily, away from the British and towards the nationalist forces.

The Civil Service was deemed to be at breaking point by the end of 1943. The problem of declining recruitment, which had plagued the ICS ever since the end of the First World War, had reached alarming proportions by the Second World War. By 1939, its British and Indian members had achieved parity. Overall recruitment was first cut in order to maintain this balance and then stopped in 1943. By August 1945, the number of British officials was down to 522 and Indian officials up to 524. Besides, the men coming in were no longer Oxbridge graduates from upper class families, many of whose fathers and uncles were 'old India hands' and who believed in the destiny of the British nation to govern the 'child people' of India. The new officials were increasingly grammar school and polytechnic boys for whom serving the Raj was a career, not a mission.

However, the main factor in the debilitation of the ICS was not manpower shortage but the slow, invidious decline of its prestige and authority. Here the erosion of authority had been taking place over the years, when the rising nationalist forces had been sought to be contained by a policy of conciliation mixed with repression. But the strategy of the national movement, of a multifaceted struggle combining nonviolent mass movements with working of constitutional reforms, proved to be more than a match for them. When non-violent movements were met with repression, the naked force behind the government stood exposed, offending the sensibility of the government's supporters; whereas if government did not clamp down on 'sedition', or effected a truce [as in 1931 when the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed] or conceded provincial autonomy under the Government of India Act, 1935, British government was seen to be too weak to wield control and its authority and prestige were undermined.

The impact of the nationalist movement on the bureaucracy was not only indirect, through weakening morale under pressure from mass movements and ministries. The permeation of nationalist sentiment among the Indian element of the services, especially the subordinate services and even the police, directly affected their loyalty and reliability. Even earlier, during the provincial ministries of 1937-39, the tendency of Indian officials to look up to the Congress was apparent, but, by 1945, the Indian services were assertively nationalist. For example, railway officials in east U.P. decorated their stations in honour of Nehru and Pant and in one instance detained a goods train for three hours to enable Nehru to make a speech and then travel by it. In the Central Provinces the clerical staff voted for the Congress at the elections and more interestingly, wanted this to be known. The British, of course, preferred to see their feelings as merely the tendency of the natives to worship the rising and not the setting sun.

By 1945, nationalist feeling had reached the army, which was otherwise, too, in a state of flux. Politicized elements had entered the army, especially the technical services, under the new recruitment policy, which was liberalized because the carefully selected men of the 'martial races' did not suffice. The soldiers who fought in Europe and South East Asia and liberated countries from fascist control, returned home with new ideas. When the issue of the Indian National Army (INA) prisoners came up, the army authorities discovered that army opinion was not clamouring for punishment, as initially expected, but predominantly in favour of leniency. The Commander-in-Chief's opinion had changed by February 1946, when he stated that "any Indian officer worth his salt is a nationalist".

It was increasingly clear to the British that the old basis of British rule would not continue for long, and a new structure would have to be devised, if rule was to continue. Later, in mid-1946, many officials, including the Viceroy, were to argue that in the face of such an eventuality the whole nature of British rule could be transformed to one of strong, autocratic authority, replenished by new officials, which could then maintain British rule for 15-20 years. Even then, their argument was turned down, but in early 1946 this option was not even proposed.

In late 1945, when the British saw the imminence of collapse, they sought to avert it by offering constitutional concessions. They could not take the risk of the concessions being rejected, for, if that happened, a mass movement would follow which they might not be able to contain. With the need being to avoid a contingency of negotiations breaking down, the concessions had to be of substance, which largely met the demand of the Congress. And so, faced with the Congress demand of Quit India and with the large majority of people affirming it, the Cabinet Mission went out from England in 1946 to negotiate the setting up of a national government and set into motion the machinery for transfer of power. It was not an empty gesture like the Cripps Mission in 1942; they intended to stay till they succeeded in securing some agreement. The reality was that they could not afford failure, for failure would lead to a humiliating surrender before a mass movement or would necessitate a basic change in the character of British rule from semi-hegemonic to repressive and autocratic. The first was obviously to be avoided at all costs; the second was also not likely to appeal either to the Labour Government that was in power, or to British and American public opinion, which was still conditioned by the pro-democratic and anti-Fascist euphoria of the War years. As a result the outcome was somewhat contradictory. Although the British expressed a political wish to transfer power to a United India, they actually ended up partitioning India into two countries. Though it was meant to be a smooth, peaceful transfer of power from British to Indian (and Pakistani) hands legitimized by an Act of British Parliament, a turned out to be a violent and brutal process leaving millions of people dead and homeless.

19.7   SUMMARY

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed the collapse of colonialism. Between 1945 and 1965 over fifty decolonizations took place in Asia and Africa and a handful more ten years later. The 1970s freed another clutch, notably Portuguese Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola. Zimbabwe was freed as late as the 1980s.

It is a paradox that the end of empire changed the world as much as the establishment of empire did. The end of Empire deprived Europe of status and grandeur. Europeans lost freedom of movement and economic activity given by empire. The foremost imperial power, Britain, became a second rate power. The third world comprising the countries which emerged from colonialism became a powerful force in world politics.

In the words of historian Eric Hobsbawm, "the huge colonial empires built up before and during the Age of Empire, were shaken and crumbled into dust. The entire history of modern imperialism, so firm and self confident when Queen Victoria of Great Britain died, had lasted no longer than a single lifetime."

19.8   EXERCISES

1)   What do we broadly understand by decolonization? What are the different theoretical models to understand it?

2)   Discuss the historical context within which decolonization of different countries took different paths? How would you categorize India in this context?

3)   What were the differences between France and England towards decolonization? How did it lead to different or similar historical results?

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UNIT 20   NATION-STATE SYSTEM

Structure

20.1   INTRODUCTION

Nationalism was perhaps the most significant outcome of the French domination in Europe during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in the early 19th century. The power of the nation state was to become overwhelmingly crucial in international relations throughout the 19th century. A strong sense of national pride would overwhelm other sentiments. French revolutionary ideas spread across the European continent during the Napoleonic Wars but equally significant was the emergence of a cultural revolution. This was rooted in a growing sense of one's civilization symbolized by historical memories, shared sense of pride in language, literature, folk traditions, food, dress and many other elements of daily lifestyle. Countries like Britain, France, Russia and Spain were already nations in the beginning of the 19th century. Germany and Italy apart from many other smaller entities were yet to emerge as nations. A sense of cultural identity could very easily flow into a strong sense of national pride. The political situation in the first decade of the 19th century in Europe is therefore of crucial importance to determine the various ramifications of European nationalism and the impact of the French ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity on those republics which were occupied by France.

20.2   THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Feudal systems of land tenure were done away within countries of West Europe occupied by France. So also were citizens granted equality before law. The stability of a government was now increasingly linked to a written constitution. The Code Napoleon seemed to have left a considerable impact and this could be linked to the idea of liberty. France had kept Europe engaged in almost continuous warfare for nearly 2 decades now, so one could hardly talk of fraternity existing between different political entities, but Europe was never going to remain the same after the French Revolution and the wars thereafter. The symbols of the revolution were to be the most enduring, ideological aspects in 19th century. Europe. Nationalism and concept of the nation state led to many significant changes in the map of Europe. Changes already made in the frontier by the Napoleonic wars and the imposition of peace terms on France by the victorious Allies opened up a tremendous diplomatic exercise. It was further complicated by Napoleon's second bid for power when he reclaimed his position from 20th March to 22nd June 1815 that is till his defeat at Waterloo.

Just a year before Napoleon's return, on 9 March 1814, Austria, Britain, Prussia and Russia decided to restore the Bourbons to the French throne. On 12 April 1814, Napoleon by signing the treaty of fontain bleau formalized his abdication and was given the island of Elba, his imperial title and an annual income of 2 million francs. Alongside, diplomatic decisions were taken to maintain the territorial integrity of several European countries. The allies i.e. England, Russia, Austria and Prussia decided to meet in Vienna on 10th Oct 1814, to look into further territorial problems like those of Poland. German states were united into a federation and France had to go back to her territorial possessions of 1792. The final treaty of Vienna was signed on 9th June 1815 (after dealing with Napoleon's final bid for power) a few days before the battle of Waterloo where Napoleon was finally defeated by the combined armies of Austria, Russia, Prussia and Britain. On 20th Nov 1815, a second treaty of Paris was signed and France had to go back to her frontiers of 1789 which meant returning territory to Piedmont and Switzerland. A war indemnity of 70 million francs was imposed and an allied army of occupation along her borders was stationed. The allies also signed the Quadruple Alliance to guarantee each other's sovereignty, to ensure "repose and prosperity" of nations for the peace of Europe.

Balance of power and peace of Europe had been rudely shaken by France in the first decade of the nineteenth century so the task of restoring this balance through diplomatic exercises fell on the big four - Austria under Metternich the Foreign Minister, Britain under Castlereagh, again the Foreign Minister, Tsar Alexander I of Russia and the Prussian foreign minister. Peace was no doubt the main aim of these powers but each country had its own specific ambitions. For example, Prussia had its eyes on Saxony, as Russia had on Poland, Austria wanted a continuing influence on Northern Italy and Britain wanted to firm up her many maritime and colonial rights in many areas. Conflicting ambitions were bound to complicate matters as would the principles of legitimacy be constantly under challenge. Napoleonic wars had significantly distributed the power equations in many states. For example, the Holy Roman Empire had been dissolved and many states had thus become independent of Austria. So had German states like Bavaria, Baden and Wurttenberg. A new German Confederation was thus established with 39 states - which although under the Austrian emperor, now had more important forms of independence like non-interference of the confederation in internal affairs. There was however to be no representative government as yet. Countries like Austria were compensated with Lombardy and Venetia, Tuscany and Modena. Naples of Sicily went to Spain. Geneva went to Switzerland and Britain added to her overseas possessions by taking Ceylon and Cape of Good Hope (from Holland) and Trinidad from Spain.

20.3 THE IDEOLOGICAL CONCERNS

The Congress of Vienna therefore restored territorial rights to major powers and thus put the clock back. Can we say that the peacemakers in Vienna were ignoring the principles of liberation and nationalism and reconfirming the reactionary hereditary states of the old rules in their retrospective countries? During the Napoleonic wars, states had fiercely defended their people, their frontiers, their identity and so national heroes and national symbols became an important part of the common man's existence. The 19th century citizen with important constitutional rights also developed strong nationalistic loyalties and the concept of the nation state thus struck deep roots in the body politic of nations. The French Declaration of Rights 1789 said - "The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation." Nation state loyalties were bound to the political rights of the people. Universal suffrage did not come to West Europe till 1870 and in East Europe till 1919. Thus it was mainly the educated, urbane middle class who pursued the ideologies of nationalism and liberalism and built movements around them. Many

19th century philosophers guided a highly teleological course towards nationhood by linking it with a common race, a common language or common folk traditions. This could become problematic when proclaimed nationalistic political boundaries intervened with ethnic nationhood giving rise to aggression and destruction.

In Europe, after the Congress of Vienna, such conflicts would take on alarming proportions in the Habsburg, Russian and Turkish empires. Many empires would thus have to have their boundaries reworked. Nationalism could thus act as a means of breaking up empires or of bringing together people who were increasingly identifying themselves by a common language, culture or religion.

Examples of both are provided below. Italy and Germany are two important examples of how language, folk culture and common historical memories lead to very strong nationalistic feelings helping to build the two people into sovereign, united and independent nation states by 1870. The Sultan of Turkey was the nominal head of the Balkan Peninsula which was inhabited by different ethnic groups like Bulgarians, Croats, Serbians, Montenegrins, Romanians and Greeks. All these groups would soon be clamoring for independence. Similarly, the Poles, Ukrainians and Finns would be demanding independence from the Russian empire. Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks would also gradually start demanding certain political rights. Thus ethnic nationalism would become an extremely significant political issue leading to many new movements in the future.

Nationalist movements in Europe were mainly confined to the educated groups. Language was very often besides religion, the most important means of identifying with each other. Hungarian, Romanian and Croatian languages for instance were recognized as languages to write in, rather than in the previously dominant languages.

Beginnings of nationalistic sentiments in universities and student circles in the urban areas, supported often by gentry groups were however confined to small numbers. A number of revolts took place in Italy, Spain, Greece and Belgium at this time. The agenda was mostly some sort of democratic rights or nationalistic independence.

20.4   REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN EUROPE

In the period between 1818 and 1825 several conferences were held in Europe where autocratic rulers of Russia, Prussia and Austria expressed fears about these revolts seen as threats to peace & tranquility. Britain preferred to maintain a position of neutrality & non-interference. Participating countries in the conferences also maintained ambiguous positions when it came to supporting or opposing the revolts. Examples below would clarify the point - when revolts in Italy took place they were put down by Austria. Yet revolutionary groups were allowed to thrive in some of the democratic countries. If the revolts happened to threaten monarchical rule, they were suppressed, Britain supported Belgium's full claim for independence from Holland - the new ruler was Leopold, uncle by marriage to Victoria. Similarly, although nationalities like Serbs, Romanians, Bulgarians, Albanians, Montenegrins, Bosnians and Greeks were struggling for independence from the Ottoman Sultan, countries like Austria, Russia, France and Britain had some interest at stake in the Ottoman Empire. Britain's naval domination in the Mediterranean could be threatened by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Russia, however, since the 1820s had been thrusting forward energetically in the Balkans, often intervening on the side of Greece, Serbia and Romania thus threatening the stability of the Ottoman Empire. French ambitions deepened the crisis, because French naval presence in the straits of Gibraltar led to disagreements with Russia which had taken it upon herself to protect the 12 million Orthodox Church members within the Ottoman Empire. This annoyed the Turks who were further enraged when Russian troops entered Moldavia and

Wallachia to support Rumanian claims. This led to almost a state of war, with France and Britain helping Turkey against Russia. Neither Austria nor Prussia came to Russia's aid. The Crimean War ended in September 1855 after 2 years with the fall of a Russian naval base on the Black sea called Sevastopol. Casualties in the Crimean War were close to 500,000 out of which 300,000 were Russians. The Treaty of Paris signed on March 30, 1856, guaranteed integrity of the Ottoman Empire, the Sultan in turn promised a policy of religious tolerance and the Black Sea was demilitarized. Nationalistic aspirations clashed with territorial ambitions of bigger powers and armed conflicts in these areas would continue through the nineteenth century.

Around this time the nationalist ideology was becoming the most important political creed among middle class liberals in Greece fighting monarchical rule or Italian nationalists led by Mazzinni, trying to inspire the people of Italy towards a united nation free from Austrian dominance. Republicanism, civil liberties, adult suffrage and other aspects of liberalism were becoming the most important subjects of political debate in many parts of Europe. In France the Bourbons had been restored, but the rulers from Louis XVIII to Charles X to Louis Philippe were under constant pressure to establish constitutional monarchies. Revolutionary, middle class political organizations continued to fight for political rights including the right to vote which they did not have. The 1830 and 1848 revolutions in France represented precisely these struggles for democratic rights.

In another monarchical state that is Austria, the Chancellor Metternich was the main upholder of the conservative system, which fell only during the 1848 revolution in that country. Metternich had been completely indifferent to the nationalistic sensibilities of different ethnic groups within the Austrian empire and he believed only in the hereditary principle of monarchical rule. He felt that middle class urban nationalism was disturbing the aristocratic tranquility in politics and society. The 1848 revolutions took on different forms in France, Italy, Prussia, Austria and Belgium. Reactionary politics and conservatism was not however simplistically replaced by republicanism. Louis Philippe was replaced by Louis Napoleon in France. Metternich was replaced by Schwarzenberg in Austria. However the middle class revolutionaries had at least fought against the status quo and against aristocratic rule as never before. Rulers would now be more conscious of liberal principles and new states like Greece, Belgium and Serbia came up as a result of the revolutions of 1830 and 1848. In Russia and many other East European countries however, absolutism continued to thrive.

After 1848, the Unification of Italy and that of Germany were significant political events and a total vindication of middle class nationalism. In Italy, Mazzinni, Cavour, Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel II were instrumental in forming the Italian State. The vision of a united, liberal republic based on democratic values and popular sovereignty led to the founding of young Italy, an organization which spread these ideas among the middle classes. The struggle for unity and republicanism would also involve outside powers like France, Britain and Russia who were supportive, critical of misgovernance or tolerant towards a united Italy. Piedmont was an important centre of struggle under Cavour the Prime Minister of the Piedmontese ruler Victor Emmanuel. Cavour turned to Napoleon III for help against Austria after 1849. Austrian troops were sent to protect her interests. In the ensuing armed conflict, Milan fell to the Piedmontese forces and this led to withdrawal of Austrian troops from Northern Italy. By 1860, other parts of Italy including Parma, Modena, Tuscany, Savoy, Nice, Lombardy and the eastern parts of the Papal states merged with Piedmont. Rome and Venetia were occupied in 1870 to complete the unification process. However the newly formed Italian state was not to be ruled by a popular republic as envisioned by Mazzinni but by an elite which was obviously from the privileged class.

German unification was as much a political as a cultural process. The formation of the German state was not easy. There were a number of non-German speaking people in South and West Prussia, Bohemia, Moravia, Slovenia; and Schleswig - Holstein was ruled by Denmark and Hanover by England. Thus many solutions were considered. Prussia nursed ambitions as the leader of a future united Germany. Bismarck, appointed Minister – President in 1862, was a conservative and would favour monarchical rule.

Under Bismarck, Prussia went to war with Austria and forced Austria to surrender Schleswig Holstein, Hesse-Cassel and he also made peace with South German states like Baden, Bavaria and Wurttemburg. Austria withdrew from any involvement with the German Confederation. Prussia also went to war with France in 1869 when France tried to secure Luxembourg and Belgium and opposed Prussia's support for a Hohenzollern candidate for the Spanish throne. This war led to a new nationalist wave sweeping through the South German states as well. This would obviously help in the process of unification. The war ended with the treaty of Frankfurt in February 1871 by which Alsace Lorraine was ceded perpetually to Germany and France also had to pay an indemnity of 5 billion francs.

In January 1871, the German empire was proclaimed at Versailles. The dominance of Prussia was obvious over the rest of Germany, just as Piedmont seemed to have dominated the process of Italian unification.

20.5   THE ROLE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In the period under review industry and empire can be considered as the most significant aspects of European political, economic and cultural life. Formation of nation - states like Germany and Italy in the 1870s was an important step towards redefining imperial spaces which were earlier occupied primarily by Britain, France and Spain.

The world economy of capitalism from mid 19th century. onwards was a conglomeration of national blocs or national economies which had emerged with the growing number of nation states. These states protected their industrializing economies against competition from other nations. Thus these nations also became rival economies. Domestic markets became the chief concern of national industries. Broadening profit margins was not easy. Depression in the 1890s had seen a fall in prices worldwide. Capitalist concentration was an important development in this period. Large enterprises went through significant transformations between 1880 and 1914.

This period inevitably saw the hunt for more profitable investment and more markets. This led to the clamor for colonies outside the areas traditionally dominated by Britain. There was a gradual decline of Britain and growing presence of the U.S and Germany. Populations increased by leaps and bounds. In Germany the increase was from 45 to 65 million and in the U.S.A. from 50 to 92 million. Britain being smaller was not the only reason for her being left behind in the aggressive stride towards industrialization.

The world economy was becoming increasingly global because on one hand developed nation states were growing fast and on the other hand, the un-developed countries supplied goods to the capitalist nations depending on what they produced most, like coffee, bananas or beef.

Britain continued to dominate the international capital market till the 1st World War. In 1914, France, Germany, U.S.A., Belgium and Netherlands, Switzerland and others had 56% of the world's overseas investments and Britain alone had 44%. Yet pluralism was a fast growing characteristic of the world economy. Two significant and parallel developments were taking place in this period. Governments were under increasing pressure to adopt social welfare policies and to defend economic interests of voters

who were facing challenges of economic concentration. At the same time, economic competition and economic rivalry between nation states led to imperialism of the 20th century and to the genesis of the 1st World War. The world had come closer together than ever before through more complex economic transactions, a growing network of transportation and with technological advancement came the growing need for raw materials like oil, rubber, copper and precious metals. All this meant that imperialism would grow in directions it had never done before. Remote undeveloped countries in Africa or Asia supplied a lot of the raw material. Sugar, tea, coffee, cocoa and tropical fruits were also in great demand now and big business grew around these products leading to the growth of gigantic companies in the west who now had vital business interests in the undeveloped world. Markets in these areas were another motive which drove the western nations to look for colonies. Political prestige was not far behind as an important motive especially for countries like Germany and Italy. Britain and France had already established themselves as old colonial powers. The ideological and political content of nationalism from the 1880s till the 1st World War acquired new, culturally aggressive dimensions. A larger number of entities would now start staking their claims as 'national'. Thus nationalism along with other ideologies like Marxism and socialism gave Europe new languages of political articulation and brought up concerns which had never disturbed the men and women of the 19th century.

20.6 IMPERIALISM AND NATION-STATE SYSTEM

Sticking to the nationalistic energies prevalent in Europe at this time taking new shape and flourishing as movements in many parts of the continent, we can identify a number of nationalities like the Finns, Slovaks, Estonians, Macedonians etc expressing themselves as unified groups. In the 1890s, the Gaelic League for the Irish nation, the Hebrew for the Jews and the Baltic languages by the turn of the century were gaining prominence too. Around such sensibilities including sense of space or territory, an 'imaginary' community of the nation grew. The state was an integral part of that nationhood reaching every level of the citizens' socio-economic, political and cultural existence. According to E.J. Hobsbawm the 'nation' was the new civic religion of the states.

The significant linkage between the state and nationhood also led to further divisions within already formulated nations because many groups within these entities felt alienated and struggled for their own identity. After 1870, imperialism was not only because of factors related to economies and capitalism but also political concerns which prompted nation states to protect their overseas territorial interests in an aggressive manner which included interventionist territorial claims, common patriotic pride in empire building and backing often given by big entrepreneurs and industrialists. From 1880s for instance, European powers divided up almost the whole of Africa amongst themselves in what historians have called 'Scramble for Africa'. Economies and politics were blurred which became blurred in these contexts.

Disraeli, the British Prime Minister was promoting and popularizing imperialism in a big way in Britain. Victoria was now Empress of India. It seemed like a psychological booster. Conservative ideologies were tying up patriotism to imperialistic triumphs. Bismarck the German Chancellor had also launched an imperialistic crusade for a 'place in the sun'. France was making colonial claims in Africa among other places. Her sense of prestige had to be nurtured vis a vis the powerful German empire.

At the Congress of Berlin 1878, there was general agreement among nations like France and Britain, to protect the Ottoman empire and the Austro Hungarian empire from Russian ambitions in the Balkans. Meanwhile, the issue of Alsace Lorraine remained a sore point between France and Germany and France was eagerly looking for allies.

Relations between Germany and Russia were also not good. In 1890, Bismarck was removed from Chancellorship and Germany had meanwhile moved closer to Austria - Hungary with the signing of the Dual Alliance in 1879. This made Russia feel isolated. Russia and France came together in an alliance concluded in 1894. Britain and France also struck deals as far as colonial claims were concerned with Britain acquiring Cyprus during the Congress of Berlin 1878 and also encouraging France to further its Moroccan interests. This was also meant to counter German pressure on Morocco. Thus the two traditional colonial rivals decided to embark on the Entente Cordiale in 1904. Italy supported the French in Morocco. Germany continued to challenge the French there. France however was eager to recover her lost prestige during her defeat in the Franco Prussian War 1870-71 and thus reached multiple agreements regarding colonial claims with Russia, Britain and Italy. Meanwhile, after Russia's humiliating defeat at the Russo-Japanese War 1904-05, Russia was eager to reach agreements with Britain in 1907.

Germany's territorial gains between 1890 and 1914 were actually quite meager although Bismarck's successors began a rather aggressive expansionist policy. Bismarck had been more conscious of maintaining good relations with Russia, Italy and Austria and had indeed isolated France. Now at the turn of the century the maze of alliances was going to provide the seed bed for future military alliances.

1890-1912 was the period when Germany found herself increasingly isolated because France was reaching agreements with Britain, Russia and Italy; getting her colonial policy sorted out and tilting the European balance of powers in her favour. Austria was also losing her pre-eminence after the unifications of both Germany and Italy. Austria had also lost to France in 1859-60 and to Prussia in 1866, so not much remained of the Habsburg Empire. Austria turned more towards the Balkan problem and thereby clashed with Russia and Serbs supported Slavic interests in the Balkans. This led to inevitable ups and downs between Russia and Austria between 1860 and 1914. After Russia had imposed Treaty of San Stefano on the Turks, Austria was additionally disturbed to see Russia supporting Bulgarian claims. Austria meanwhile laid its claims on Bosnia - Herzegovina. The Congress of Berlin had ratified Austria's claim - this had alienated Russia and in 1879 when Austria and Germany signed the Dual alliance, Russia felt all the more threatened.

In 1907, the Serbs publicly adopted a resolution demanding independence of Bosnia from Austrian domination. In 1908, matters got worse when Austria annexed Bosnia - Herzegovina. Germany supported Austria in this. Serbia recognized this annexation in1909 as if to maintain good relations with Austria but Serbia nationalist organizations were fast coming up in support of Serbia's expansion with Bosnia. Russia was supporting the Slavs in the Balkan region who were clamoring for independence from either Austria or the Turkish Empire. Russia's diplomatic isolation in the 1890s as a result of the Dual Alliance and subsequently her humiliating defeat in the Russo-Jap War made her more vulnerable. She had finalized a treaty with France in 1894. She also wanted to settle differences with Britain which in turn was getting disturbed by the growing naval power of Germany. All this led to the signing of the Triple Entente between Britain, France and Russia. Afghanistan was now conceded by Russia as a British sphere of influence as was a part of Persia. Although the entente was not a military alliance, nor was it targeted against Germany, yet it led to rival alliances being formed by Germany and Austria - Hungary. This gives us an idea about how the alliance system solidified on the eve of the World War. In 1899 at The Hague, peace conferences were held - war seemed a distinct possibility in early 1900s and a vast network of military alliances was in the process of being finalized.

From 1908-09, the Bosnian Crisis was exacerbated because Serbia, much to the annoyance of Austria, continued to push for Bosnian independence. Germany was

behind Austria and this aggravated the situation. Europe got divided into rival military camps and disputes tuned in to what Hobsbawm calls 'unmanageable confrontations' - beyond the control of respective national governments. In 1882, when Germany, Austria and Italy had signed the Triple Alliance, it was already a significant step towards solidification of rivalries, though Italy in 1915 went over to the anti-German camp. The Triple Entente firmed up the anti-German bloc.

The international power game in these years was marked by an extremely important development - namely, the widening of political interests outside one's own immediate regions. The world was now a stage where power games were played. For instance, naval power by the beginning of the 20th century was no longer the prerogative of Britain. By 1897, Germany had built a large fleet. Also, Britain was no longer the sole economic power around which the world economy revolved. A worldwide industrial capitalism had emerged and there was growing competition for control of the world market and control of different regions. Diplomatic rivalry led to the formation of blocs and when the Franco - German clash over Morocco erupted into the Agadir crisis (when Germany sent a gunboat to seize the south Moroccan port of Agadir) and Austria annexed Bosnia followed by Italy's occupation of Libya in 1911 and with Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece pushing Turkey out of the Balkans by 1912, these multiple crises culminated in the crisis of 1914.

On 28th June 1914, a Serbian student terrorist Gavrilo Princip assassinated the Austrian heir to the throne Archduke Franz Ferdinand who was visiting Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. Within five weeks, Europe was plunged into a World War. A freshly energized wave of patriotism swept over nations in Europe the moment the war began. Liberal, labour and socialist opposition to the War notwithstanding, the number of volunteers went up phenomenally by the next few weeks. Nationalism came to the forefront as the overwhelming ideology of this era driving men & women to sacrifice for their country.

Nations were at war with each other, putting behind them the tranquil years of the 19th century liberal utopia and the bourgeois sense of security. Now crisis would be followed by crisis, revolutions would dramatically change the social hierarchies never to be reversed again and the existing moralities would be severely challenged. Bourgeois liberalism would itself undergo drastic changes and the ideology of nation and nationalism, a product of 19th century Europe, would henceforth extend to multiple political groups. States after the First World War, given the status of nations, would no longer be confined to the old, 'developed' world.

20.7 NATION-STATE SYSTEM AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

After the defeat of Germany and her allies in 1918, President Woodrow Wilson of the United States succeeded in having a charter for a League of Nations incorporated in the Treaty of Versailles - the peace treaty with Germany. The covenant of the League of Nations which formed Part I of the Treaty of Versailles, was signed on June 28, 1919 and came into effect on January 10, 1920.

On 14th Feb 1919, President Wilson had already presented to the Paris Peace Conference, a plan for a League of Nations, declaring it as a guarantee of peace against aggression. The armistice had commenced on Nov 11, 1918 but the peace conference of the victors began in Jan 1919. England, France, the U.S, Italy and Japan constituted themselves into a Council and the League was incorporated into the Treaty. Wilson became Chairman of the League Commission. Members comprised the victorious powers and on vote of 2/3rd of the Assembly, any self-governing state, dominion or

colony, could be a member. Article X of the Covenant read 'The members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity of all members. In case of any such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation should be fulfilled.'

The articles' meaning was uncertain and its implementation might be slow. The Treaty including the League Covenant was however not ratified by the American Senate. Without the U.S., the League could not pursue collective security as originally conceived.

However, the 'general association of nations' that President Wilson had called for in the last of his Fourteen Points - meant that henceforth diplomacy would proceed more or less under the dictum laid down in the first of these Fourteen Points that is 'frankly and in public view'. In the League therefore, open diplomacy came into widespread use. Wilson had set certain utopian standards of cooperation and the pre-existence of common interests among nations. But this was not always practically possible. However, without expecting the League to have been instrumental in altering the fundamental behaviour of individual nations between 1919 & 1939, it is significant to remember that the League was more the creature of its members rather than a higher body imposing codes of behavior.

If the main function of the League was to prevent war, it failed to do so. The respect due to international law and to territorial status established by the allied powers could be open to confusion and the League ultimately proved a weak and ineffective organization. Ten years later, the Kellogg - Briand peace pact signed at the instigation of the U.S proclaimed the illegality of war as a political instrument. Bringing about imposing changes by peaceful methods was beyond any International organization in this period. When Japan encroached into Manchuria and was condemned by the League, she left the organization. Germany left the League when there were differences in matters of disarmament. The Italian invasion of Ethiopia was another instance when the League was unable to use effective sanctions. The more powerful member nations were generally unwilling to use force to settle acts of aggression by other states. International law seemed ineffectual in many situations. Emotions and desires were overwhelmingly forceful energies which made most efforts to maintain peace between nations unsuccessful in the long run.

20.8 SUMMARY

This unit is an exploration of the ways in which nation-state system came to the centre stage in international relations. From a stage where international relations meant courtly exchange and recurrent warfare between various ruling armies, nation-state system defined the modern world with a new definition of international relations. Coming of Germany and Italy as new kinds of nations in the eighteenth century, the subsequent treaties between various nations, a new economic configuration due to large scale industrialization and subsequent colonization of the world led to various diplomatic exchanges which set the scene for the twentieth centuries international politics.

20.9 EXERCISES

1) What was the role of nationalism in defining the modern international relations?

2) How did the German and Italian unification lead to new diplomatic maneuvers which re-defined the role of nation-states in international relations?

3) What was the ideological and economic impetus behind the emergence of modern international relations?

UNIT 21 INTERNATIONAL RIVALRIES OF
` TWENTIETH CENTURY

Structure

21.1   INTRODUCTION

You must be familiar with the main features of the modern world, including the formation of nation states, the expansion of Europe, technological changes, and the incorporation of the whole world into one international system. Technological change and economic integration were greatly accelerated during and after the global conflicts marking the 20th century, leading to 'globalization' and conditions for new challenges, opportunities, and rivalries in the 21st Century. In this Unit we discuss:

* causes and results of the first and second World Wars,

* the course of the Cold War and the global roles played by the 'super powers', the United States of America (US) and the Soviet Union (USSR),

* the Non Aligned Movement, and

* the chief characteristics of the twentieth century

The 20th century was termed the "age of extremes" by historian Eric Hobsbawm because it saw unprecedented death and destruction during two world wars and other conflicts, more than one genocide, bitter ideological and religious clashes, indiscriminate violence, destruction of the natural environment, and threats or uses of weapons of mass destruction. Yet, during the same century there was spectacular scientific advance, economic growth, and widening humanitarian concern. The 20th Century is also called the "short century" (1914-1991) to highlight the impact of the Great War, the Russian Revolution and the collapse of the Soviet Union on the whole world. Many also refer to the 20th Century as the "American Century" because the US soon became the most productive and largest single economy in the world, possessing unprecedented military power and technological ascendance, along with a moral conviction of the superiority of its own socio-economic-political-value system over those of others, and showing at times the willingness to play an active, at times hegemonic and unilateral role in the Western hemisphere and the rest of the world.

Rivalries between the traditional 'Great Powers' of Europe brought about the catastrophes of the first and second world wars, but the second half of the 20th Century was dominated by a multifaceted rivalry known as the Cold War between the Western or capitalist 'bloc' and the Eastern or communist 'bloc', in which enormous arsenals of nuclear weapons were amassed by both the US and the USSR as 'deterrence' against open military conflict between them. Other international rivalries in various regions of the world such as South Asia and West Asia, and international tensions within many newly independent, ethnically plural, and economically underdeveloped countries, sometimes dovetailed with the Cold War, but did not necessarily end with it, so that several unresolved conflicts continued into a new century.

The 20th century was marked in every part of the world, if to varying degree, by dramatic changes in demography, technology, means of production, political participation and social mores. For example, total population is estimated to have reached one billion in the 1850s, two billion in the 1920s, four billion in the 1970s, and crossed six billion in 1999, with consequent pressure on all resources. In 1901 several empires ruled Europe east of the Rhine river as well as most of Africa and Asia; and Asia; only about 40 states (mainly in Europe and the Americas) were recognized as sovereign. The empires vanished after the first and second world wars, and by 1999 there were 189 states (of greatly different size and power) around the world whose membership in the United Nations Organisation testified to their independent status. Moreover, while the process of building international institutions had begun in late 19th Century Europe, by the end of the 20th Century there were literally thousands of international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, functioning in cultural, economic, humanitarian, legal and political domains. States remained the basic unit of international relations, but their sovereign control over populations and resources was eroded by the forces of economic globalization, political internationalism, sub-state conflicts, and non-state actors such as transnational corporations as well as criminal and terrorist organizations. The first wireless message was sent in January 1903 and the first successful flight took place in December 1903; by 1999 transmission of words and pictures without wires choked the airwaves, approximately six million people were travelling by air per day, and space travel was no longer confined to science fiction. Advances in the technologies of biomedicine, communications, information sharing and weaponry have been revolutionary and defy brief comment. In 1901 relatively few people were permitted to vote anywhere, and women practically nowhere; by 1999 virtually every country had adult franchise, if not genuinely democratic government, and all aspired to, though few achieved, an equitable share in global wealth.

All of these changes influenced international rivalries either directly, for example by altering the calculus of national power from quantity to quality, or indirectly, for example by exacerbating the gulf between those who gained and those who lost from change. It is not easy, therefore, to generalize, and analysts adopt various theoretical approaches in order to discern pattern in international relations. The traditional historical approach providing a reasoned description of events on the basis of written records is therefore used in this Unit. But we must not ignore different scientific approaches stressing the importance of domestic and international environmental factors, perceptions, personalities, and policy-making processes in world polities. Nor can we focus entirely on international conflict and ignore the construction of an impressive body of literature, law and organization. Faced with a super-abundance of facts about change and contrast, some might see the 20th century as a time of transition between the eurocentric civilisation of the modern era to an as yet unpredictable post-modern.
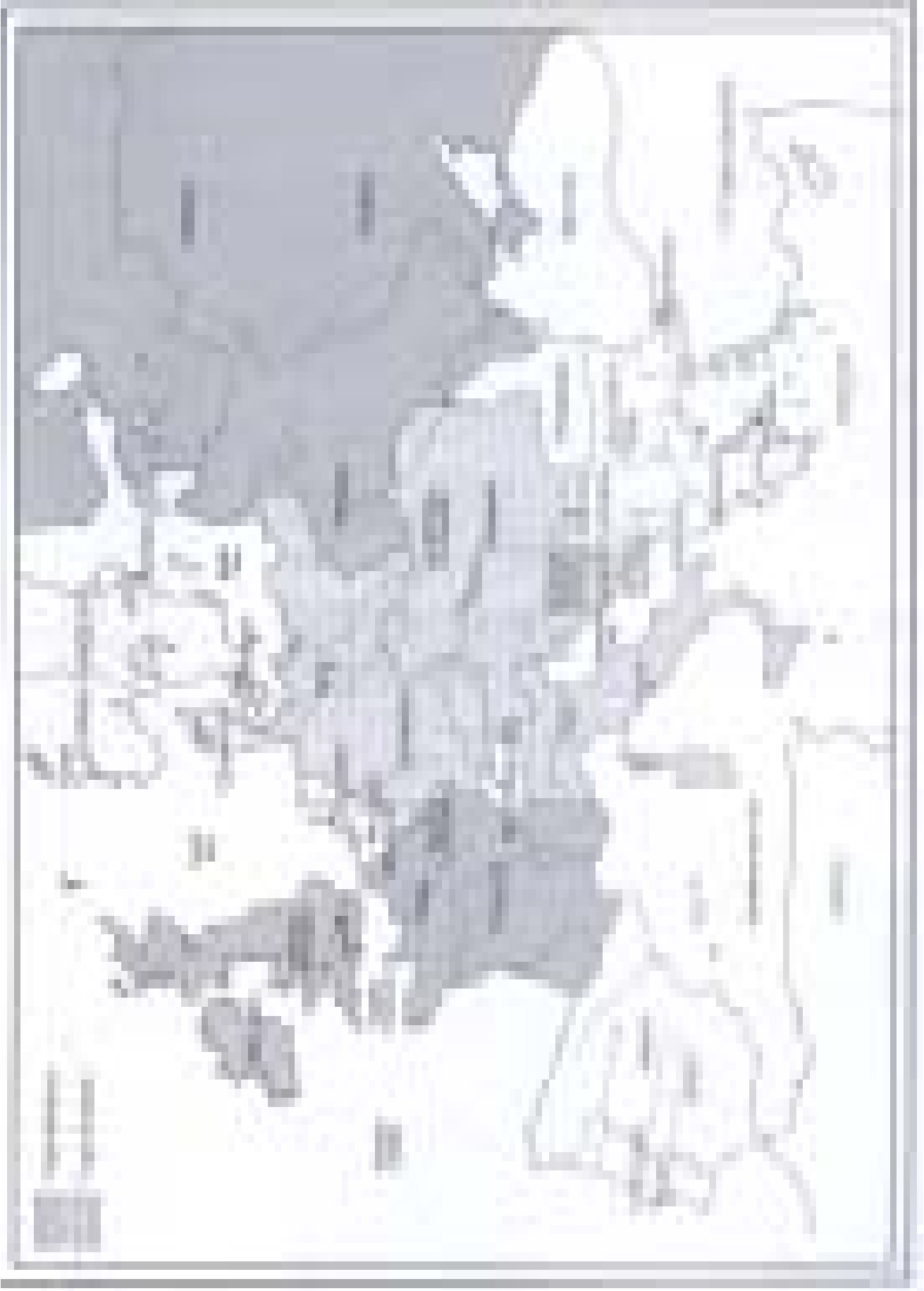
Europe on the Eve of First World War, 1914

21.2   THE GREAT WAR OF 1914-1918 AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE PEACE

The first decade of the 20th Century saw much talk of war between the 'great powers' of Europe and a recurrence of crises reflecting their insecurities and unsatisfied ambitions. That decade also showed that chief decision makers of the time lacked the skill and the will to sustain the subtle diplomatic practices that had supported peace in Europe for several decades previously despite conflictual colonial ventures. Most importantly, a 'balance of power' system of shifting affiliations, five roughly equal and regularly consulting powers on the continent with Great Britain enjoying maritime supremacy, avoiding commitment, and playing 'balancer', had given way to a bipolar configuration. On one side stood a united Germany, already the most powerful land power militarily and economically, allied with the large and outwardly confident empire of Austria-Hungary as also with Italy. On the other side stood France, bitter in enmity over its defeat and loss of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany in 1871, seeking security by allying with Russia in 1892 and forming an 'entente cordiale' with its traditional rival Great Britain in 1904. Both sides amassed armaments, which were becoming more lethal as advancing technologies of explosives, metal design, petroleum fuel, and shipbuilding were applied to them. Military chiefs (notably Alfred von Schlieffen of Germany) planned strategies that relied on swift mobilization, rapid offensive strike, and inevitable escalation, which compressed the time for political decision making and diplomatic control of crises. Newspapers stimulated feelings of danger, deprivation, and patriotism in public opinion, which came to think of war as possible, even desirable.

Crisis was inherent in the many disputes, rivalries and insecurities infesting Europe. Briefly, Austria-Hungary was fearful of Russia to its east, especially as restive Slav minorities in its provinces looked to Russia for support in carving out autonomy or even statehood for themselves. Austria was also irked by Serbia to the south, reading insolence into its leadership of Slav unification and drive toward an outlet to the Adriatic Sea. Germany had territorial ambitions beyond its eastern frontier in areas controlled by Russia. Also, Germany was jealous of British navel supremacy and colonial possessions and aspired to parity, supremacy, and equal status in world affairs. Germany feared encirclement by Russia and France and so clung to Austria-Hungary and suggested partnership to Great Britain. But suspicion rather than partnership characterized Anglo-German relations, even though their kings were cousins. Traditional British fears of Russian expansion, growing influence in the Ottoman Empire, and engineering skills manifested in widening the Kiel Canal connecting the Baltic and North Seas, building new battleships, and constructing the Berlin-Baghdad Railway. Russia too had ambitions that augured conflict with both the Ottoman and the Austria-Hungary Empires, and a huge, if cumbersome, military machine. Russia was disquieted by Japan's rising power to its east but aimed for gains in Europe, backing Serbia in the Balkans, even as Germany urged on Austria to chastize Serbia.

Military and naval expansion, mobilization plans, and a tightening of the hostile coalitions built a momentum for war over-riding arguments for peace emanating from trade, industry and good sense. International crises erupted over Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, Morocco in 1911, and the Balkans in 1912, but were defused by negotiation and restraint. These qualities were not conspicuous after the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand by a Serb terrorist in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914. Austria delivered an ultimatum of 15 far reaching demands to Serbia on July 23, demanding a response in 48 hours. Serbia sent a conciliatory reply but also mobilized, as did Russia, and then France. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28. The British government toyed with the idea of neutrality but when Germany sent its armies across Belgium to attack France, Great

Britain was obliged by its earlier guarantee of Belgian neutrality to summon its fleet to action and declare war on Germany on 4 August 1914.

Though some European states remained outside the initial circle of conflict, the guns of August ultimately sounded far and wide. Five empires were engaged and colonial troops were brought into the fray as one entire generation of European young men massacred each other to a stalemate. The jubilation with which troops and publics had greeted war declarations in expectations of early victory was soon buried in mud, disease, poison gas, rockets, submarine warfare, and battles over a few hundred yards that proved insanely costly in human lives. More than nine million men in the armed forces were killed along with five to six million civilians. The anti-war poetry and prose of that catastrophe still lives. The 'Great War', as it was known before the Second World War made this the First, carried on for more than four years, with neither side on any front willing to accept defeat or negotiate peace. The Russian Revolution of 1917 brought a cease-fire on the eastern front in December with Russia losing substantial territory and monies to Germany in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The US declared war on Germany only on April 6, 1917 but the entry of American troops, aero planes and fresh supplies in 1918 nullified German gains on both fronts. An armistice was declared on November 11, 1918 and a peace conference opened in Paris on 18 January 1919.

US President Woodrow Wilson was a dominating figure of the peace conference so that his moralistic 'fourteen points' were incorporated into the resulting treaties, which transformed the map of Europe on the principle of 'self-determination of nations', and established a League of Nations to uphold the peace on the principle of 'collective security'. The far reaching consequences of the peace, therefore, were territorial, economic, and political. A 200 page Treaty of Versailles signed with Germany contained a 'war guilt' clause ascribing full responsibility for the war to Germany. Germany was punished territorially and financially. Alsace-Lorraine was restored to France. The port of Danzig was made a free city and a Polish Corridor ran through the eastern provinces of Germany. Rearmament of any kind was forbidden, as was fortification of the Rhineland or union with Austria. Colonial possessions were detached and unspecified amounts demanded in reparations. The Habsburg Dynasty was dismissed and its Austria-Hungary Empire dismantled. Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland became independent. Austria ceded South Tyrol, Istria, the Dalmatian, coast and some Adriatic Islands to Italy, and its southern Slav provinces of Slovenia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina to Yugoslavia. Other territorial transfers took from Bulgaria and added to Romania. The Ottoman Empire too was abolished with the Treaty of Sevres, 1920; Turkey became a republic, its Arab provinces were placed under British or French mandate. British and French colonial possessions remained intact and were augmented by mandated territories, nationalist unrest grew therein, spurred in part by evaporation of the European myth of civilizational superiority.

Territorial changes failed to solve the basic problems of insecurity in Europe, dividing the continent into 'satisfied' but weakened powers such as Britain, and dissatisfied or revisionist states, including Germany and Russia, now the Soviet Union. Moreover, the principle of 'self-determination' was difficult to implement and sowed the seeds of continuous disputes over borders and treatment of minorities in eastern and central Europe. These small new states were equally fearful of Germany to their west and Russia to their east and relied on France, itself vengeful on Germany but too weak to act without Anglo-American support, which was not forthcoming. The League of Nations proved unequal to the task of maintaining peace, not least because the US repudiated Wilson in 1920, withdrew into isolation, and played no part in the League. Neither Germany nor the Soviet Union was initially a member. Resolutions, treaties, plebiscites, and declarations outlawing war – such as in the short lived Kellog-Briand Pact of 1928 – or embracing disarmament – as

attempted in Disarmament Conferences held in 1922, 1925, 1933 – did not amount to institutional strength since they lacked the backing of power and commitment. Moreover, the League's principle of collective security mistakenly assumed that all powers would have the same perceptions of aggression and be equally willing to bear the costs of opposing a great, or even a minor, power. Thus, the League could take no effective action against Japan in 1931, Italy in 1935, or Nazi Germany in successive violations of the Treaty.

The economic consequences of the peace compounded the high cost of the war to cause inflation and unemployment, undermine currencies, and disrupt trading patterns, leading to the Great Depression of the 1930s. At the core of a complex process lay the problem of reparations claimed by the victorious allies from Germany and the related problem of allied war debts to the US. Neither the amounts nor the distribution of reparations were fixed by treaty, and uncertainty fostered exaggerated expectations of Germany's capacity to pay, varying pressure on it to do so with discernible differences between Britain and France, and a growing resistance to pay on the part of Germany, which borrowed heavily from the US. Since payments could be made only in goods, services, or gold, transfers of the large amounts involved served ironically to strengthen Germany's productive capacity, to undercut employment and domestic prices – especially of agricultural produce – in creditor countries, to contract world markets, and to destabilize all currencies and exchange rates. A bubble of false prosperity burst in the US with the Wall Street crash of October 1929. Austrian banks collapsed in May 1931. Britain was forced to abandon the gold standard for the pound sterling in September. A World Economic Conference held in 1933 failed to stabilize the situation and acute hardship was experienced in China, Japan, and throughout Europe, inevitably weakening liberal political institutions everywhere. The revival of economic nationalism and the abandonment of blocs based on gold, sterling, the dollar, the mark and the yen followed.

By the 1930s it was evident that the main political expectations of the peace had been belied. A world-wide system envisaged in the League of Nations had *not* replaced the European power system in international relations. The dominance of the great powers had *not* given place to a democratic international system with greater participation by smaller states, which continued to feel insecure. Local or regional alliances had *not* been superseded by general and automatic cooperation in service of collective security. Notwithstanding declarations of intent, the world had *not* been made safe for democracy, war had *not* been outlawed, and several disarmament conferences had *not* achieved their objectives. The peace settlements ending the First World War ushered in what came to be called the 'twenty year crisis' leading to the Second World War.

21.3 THE RISE OF EXTREMISM AND CAUSES OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR (1939-1945)

Russia was the first great power to collapse under the strain of the Great War, which demoralized its peasant army and hastened the disintegration of the Tsarist regime. From the beginning of 1917 Russia experienced a tremendous domestic political and socio-economic upheaval with several factions struggling to gain exclusive power. In October-November 1917 the Bolsheviks led by Vladimir Lenin replaced a coalition of socialists in the Kremlin and immediately sued for peace with Germany. The Bolshevik Revolution affected every aspect of Russian life and also had profound effects on the rest of the world, most immediately in Europe and on international relations. The western allies pressured Russia to remain in the war and assisted 'White' Russians opposed to the Bolshevik in southern, northern and Siberian provinces while civil war raged until 1920, without success. On the other hand, Lenin's expectations of an early communist revolution in Germany were not fulfilled, though there was a rash of radical socialist uprisings in many parts of Central Europe in 1919.

Avowed Bolshevik aims of fostering world revolution aroused acute anxiety in all capitalist societies that lasted over the next seven decades. The ideology of revolution and its accompanying propaganda of workers rights across national borders became an instrument of the Communist Third International, which replaced the Second International in 1920, as well as that of the Soviet Union. At the same time, Lenin wanted Russia to

have normal relations – including credits and trade – with the western powers, which did not then recognize the Soviet Government, and to regain its place in world councils, from which it was presently excluded. Announcement of a New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1921 enabled a commercial agreement with Britain but *de jure* recognition was not forthcoming from Britain, France or Italy until 1924 and from the US only in 1933. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union and Germany found themselves similarly ostracized by the Peace Treaties, and burdened with reparations or debts; the two counties signed the Treaty of Rapallo in 1922 resuming diplomatic relations, cancelling financial claims on each other, and providing most favoured nation treatment for trade, but including no defence provisions. Soviet diplomacy in Europe, Asia and toward colonial dependencies was based on the self-interest of the Soviet state as well as the ideology of communist revolution and did not mesh with established Western practices of the time. Moreover, Stalin's assumption of power in 1928 and the means he adopted to ensure his supremacy and implement his policies of economic transformation in the 1930s – such as the forced collectivization of agriculture and purges of the Communist Party – were extreme by any definition, and made the Soviet synonymous with 'totalitarianism' in the western lexicon.

Totalitarianism was not confined to the Soviet Union and surfaced to varying degrees in the 1920s and 1930s in Italy, Japan, Spain, and most completely in Germany. Considerable scholarship has been devoted to exploring the roots of totalitarianism, which eradicates individual liberty in the name of the state, but for purposes of this Unit it is sufficient to mention the following five: modern instruments of mass communication and mobilization; populist nationalism; widespread unemployment and economic distress that is not ameliorated by liberal institutions; exaggerated fears of enemies, both external and internal, and 'encirclement'; the emergence of a hero figure or 'leader' demanding total power and commanding total obedience.

Benito Mussolini established a Fascist regime in Italy in October 1921 when dissatisfaction with parliamentary democracy was high, and the peace settlement was unpopular for having brought only limited gains. Italy's territorial ambitions in southeastern Europe were opposed by France, an uncompromising upholder of the Treaty settlement, and Italy's bit to augment its north African colonies by occupying Ethiopia in 1935 antagonized Britain as well as creating a crisis in the League of Nations, which was unwilling to enforce meaningful sanctions against Italy under Article 16. Mussolini had come to admire the more efficient Adolf Hitler and signed a pact with him to create a 'Berlin-Rome Axis' in 1936. Their first collaboration was to assist militarily General Francisco Franco in overthrowing a newly formed and fragile Republic in Spain governed by a left-oriented coalition called the Popular Front.

Japan's modernization drive since the late 19th century led it to graft what it considered the best of America, Britain, and Germany on to its own homogenous and disciplined society, to alliance with Britain in 1902, a victory against Russia in 1904, the annexation of Korea in 1910, and a self-image of being the leader of Asia. Though it received the Shantung province of China (formerly controlled by Germany) in 1919, Japan's other '21 demands' were not met at Versailles. Japanese officials felt that they did not receive equal treatment in the Naval Disarmament Conferences of 1922 and 1927, or in the Council of the League of Nations. Japan's assertiveness was externally expressed in expanding its commercial and industrial reach into Western markets, the Manchurian province of northern China, through Southeast Asia, and ito the western Pacific basin where it rivalled the US. Internally, Japan's civilian and parliamentary government came under increasing strain, especially as economic depression deepened, and soon passed under the control of a militaristic clique of army and naval officers. Though Japan's depredations in China aroused verbal protests from other powers, neither the US nor the Soviet Union were members of the League, which published a condemnatory report, and

Britain was unable to act alone. Japan announced its withdrawal from the League in 1933 and joined an Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany and Italy in November 1937.

Germany was penalized by the 1919 peace treaties but not destroyed; it remained potentially the strongest power in Europe. Germany harboured many grievances that some people in Britain and the US considered legitimate and was the leading proponent of 'revisionism' even while it strove in the 1920s toward acceptability in world councils and democracy at home under the Weimar Constitution. That constitution could not withstand the strain of coping with economic depression The Nazi Party had eliminated all opposition, especially of the Communists and the Socialists. We need not elaborate here the reasons and methods by which the Nazis established control over a people considered to be cultured and advanced, though many scholars have done so, but emphasize the fact that Hitler led a 'resurgence' of Germany on an explicit ideology of 'Aryan' racial purity, virtue and superiority, reunification by 'self-determination' of the German race, *lebensraum* or 'living space' for them, and cancellation of the 1919 peace treaties. Further, other countries, large and small, even while making paper pacts to safeguard their own security, were so frightened of Soviet Bolshevism that they long turned a blind eye to the internal brutalities of the Nazi regime, such as the genocide of Jews and Gypsies, and 'appeased' rather than opposed German transgressions of the peace settlement.

Germany abrogated the disarmament clauses of the Treaty in December 1933 and proceeded to build an army, air force and navy machine oriented to the future that virtually overran Europe in 1940-41. Germany recovered the Saar region by plebiscite in January 1935, overturned the free city status of Danzig between 1934 and 1936, and remilitarized the Rhineland in March 1936. Hitler's timing and estimate of feeble resistance in each case proved more accurate than that of his more cautious advisers. Hitler also brought about an *Anschluss* (Union) with Austria – where a Nazi party had gained strength since 1934 – in March 1938 and then make a bid for Czechoslovakia, first launching a propaganda barrage about ill-treatment of the German minority in the Sudeten province. France was committed by alliance to the security and integrity of Czechoslovakia but would not act without British support. The British Government of Neville Chamberlain did not feel justified in risking armed conflict with Germany on the issue of what he called a 'distant' province. Months of negotiation and increasing tension culminated in a four power conference of Britain, France, Germany and Italy in Munich on 29 September 1938 renouncing war and permitting German military occupation of most of Czechoslovakia. Less than one year later, having first protected his eastern front through a pact with the Soviet Union on 23 August 1939, Hitler ordered the invasion of Poland and declared war on Germany.

The Second World War was a 'total' war, unprecedented in its destruction of military and non-military assets and people, and truly world-wide in its scope. Its outbreak in Europe in September 1939 was preceded in August 1937 by the Sino-Japanese War and succeeded in December 1941 by the entry of the US against both Japan and Germany. The war in Europe ended with Germany's surrender on 10 May 1945 and in Asia with Japan's surrender on 15 August 1945. The causes of this war have been expounded and explored repeatedly by different people, and at different times, with varying and often disputed interpretations of specific events and the actual intentions of key players. Nevertheless, some generalizations can be drawn from the huge body of archival and documentary material available on the subject. Most importantly, the peace treaties of 1919, coupled with the Russian Revolution of 1917 and a fundamentally weak League of Nations, did not resolve the basic problems of security in Europe. Deep seated ambitions, fears, insecurities, and mistrust there were bound to clash politically and militarily in the absence of habits, institutions, and mechanisms to facilitate the peaceful resolution

of conflict. Nor did the then existing international system make provision for the rising power of Japan, which eventually brought the US into the war.

Beyond the underlying systemic weakness, specific causes are stressed differently by different people and include both design and blunder on the part of decision-makers. Main interpretations are as follows : Nazi Germany in general and Adolf Hitler in particular was primarily responsible for the war and deliberately prepared for it, whether or not he intended the exact timing of its outbreak or expected its ultimate scope. Britain and France were equally responsible for the war because their leaders had appeased Hitler's ambitious demands instead of checking them, had neglected to build an anti-fascist alliance, and had encouraged an eastward expansion of Germany so as to draw the Soviet Union into war. The US was at fault for not participating in the League, for being isolationist and ambivalent about Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, and then for encouraging Britain, France and Poland to resist without clearly warning Hitler. Poland was at fault for not forming a common front with the Soviet Union and then for not submitting 'peacefully' to German demands. Mussolini was blamed for support and encouragement of Hitler, before joining the Western allies in 1943. The Soviet Union was responsible for propagating the idea of an 'inevitable' conflict between communism and capitalism/fascism, but most of all for entering into a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany in August 1939 and so giving it a 'green light' for attack on Poland while simultaneously annexing several territories itself. This temporary alliance was reversed when Hitler ordered an invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 and his armies advanced toward Moscow and other cities before being halted at Stalingrad in the winter of 1942-43. In East Asia and the Pacific militarist Japan took on an aggressive role with all its neighbours to build an Economic Co-Prosperity Zone, antagonizing the US, another Pacific Ocean power that tried to deny Japan access to oil and other raw materials. When Japan destroyed part of the US fleet anchored at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii on 6 December 1941, and Hitler declared war on the US on 11 December 1941, the US entered a new global war against both Japan and Germany, which ended only with their 'unconditional surrender' in 1945.

21.4   THE COLD WAR

Within two years of the end of the Second World War the chief victors had fallen out with each other, the Soviet Union was ranged against Britain and the US in an armed truce, and the division of Europe into two antagonistic spheres became evident. That divisive rivalry soon extended over the rest of the world, despite efforts made by some newly independent countries, such as India, to remain unentangled in it and form 'nonaligned' movements of their own. The Cold War defined all international relations until its sudden end in 1989-91, brought about by the reunification of Germany and the collapse of the USSR. Considerable research into the origins and course of the Cold War continues to be conducted – facilitated by declassification and availability to scholars of relevant governmental archives in the protagonist countries – and some general approaches are common in the literature along with differences on details and attributions of blame.

The Cold War differed from the First and Second World Wars because ideological conflict between the US and USSR, between capitalism and communism, infused and sharpened all other sources or their rivalry, even when ideological motivations were missing from their policies or practices. From this point of view the origins of the Cold War lay in the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the image of communism as a militant faith determined to produce world revolution and liquidate non-believers through a combination of internal subversion and external pressure that was held by many American policy-makers from the 1920s onwards. US policies of 'containment' as well as President Reagan's depiction of the Soviet Union as an "evil empire" in the 1980s grew out of that mindset. For their part, Soviet and Chinese Communist leaders depicted 'bourgeois capitalism' in equally

extreme and condemnatory terms as oppressive, imperialist, bent on encircling and destroying 'progressive forces', but ultimately doomed to be buried under Socialism. Thus, two universalistic but contradictory blue prints on how to organize domestic and international order were in opposition throughout the Cold War, partially modified by Soviet and Chinese offers of 'peaceful coexistence' made in the mid-1950s, efforts toward détente made in the 1960s and 1970s, and the US-China rapprochement in the 1970s and 1980s.

The Cold War also originated in and reflected conflicts of tangible interest between the two major victors of the Second World War, the US and the USSR. Conferences between their leaders, and including British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, were held in Teheran (November 1943), Yalta (February 1945) and Potsdam (July 1945) to set out post-war territorial and international arrangements. The supreme power of the US in 1945 was evident in its economy that accounted for about 50 per cent of total world GNP, its superiority, and its technical prowess seen in the detonation of two atomic bombs over Japan to end war in the Pacific. The USSR had lost 20 million men in war casualties and approximately the same number in related events and suffered the devastation of industry and about one third of its territory, but its armies controlled eastern and central Europe into the centre of Germany as well as the Balkans and its prestige overall was very high. Stalin insisted that Soviet security demanded a zone of friendly, communist dominated, states along its perimeter, and seemed to have won US President F.D. Roosevelt's agreement to this at Yalta. But Allied understanding broke down between American insistence on applying the principles of 'free elections' and 'free markets' throughout post-war Europe and Soviet methods of achieving complete control successively in the Baltic states, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania.

Defeated Germany was divided into four occupation zones, as was its capital Berlin situated within the Soviet zone. The occupying powers differed on many subjects including de-Nazification, reparations, the German-Polish border, currency and economic policies, and transit rights. The American, British and French zones were soon fused and when the Soviet Union made an attempt to cut western road access to Berlin, the city was kept supplied by a year long Anglo-American air-lift in 1948-49. No written agreement resulted so that a similar crisis over Berlin continued during the existence of two German states until 1990 : the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in the west and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the east. The 'German problem' lay at the heart of the Cold War, with no unanimity of opinion anywhere on key questions of reunification, neutralization, rearmament; events provided their own answers over the years. Mutually reinforcing fear and suspicion could be seen on the one hand, in Soviet convictions that the US intended to renege on promises made at Yalta and use a rearmed Germany against the USSR, and on the other hand, in American convictions that the Soviet Union intended to control all of Germany and advance into as much of Europe and the rest of the world as possible. To forestall such an eventuality through a policy of 'containment' of communism became the prime foreign policy objective of the US.

The US took several far-reaching measures in pursuit of this objective. In March 1947 President Truman announced a 'doctrine' for opposing communism. All Latin American countries committed themselves to joint defense against internal and external communist subversion in the Rio treaty signed with the US in 1947. In June 1947 Secretary of State John Marshall launched a plan of massive economic grants ($17 billion between 1948 and 1952) to 16 non-communist European counties conditional on their removing barriers to economic integration. The formation of a six-member European Coal and Steel Community in 1952 led, through successive difficult steps, to one of the most remarkable achievements of the 20th century, namely, the creation of an European Union (EU) in 1992. This body adopted a common currency in 1999 and aspired to common foreign
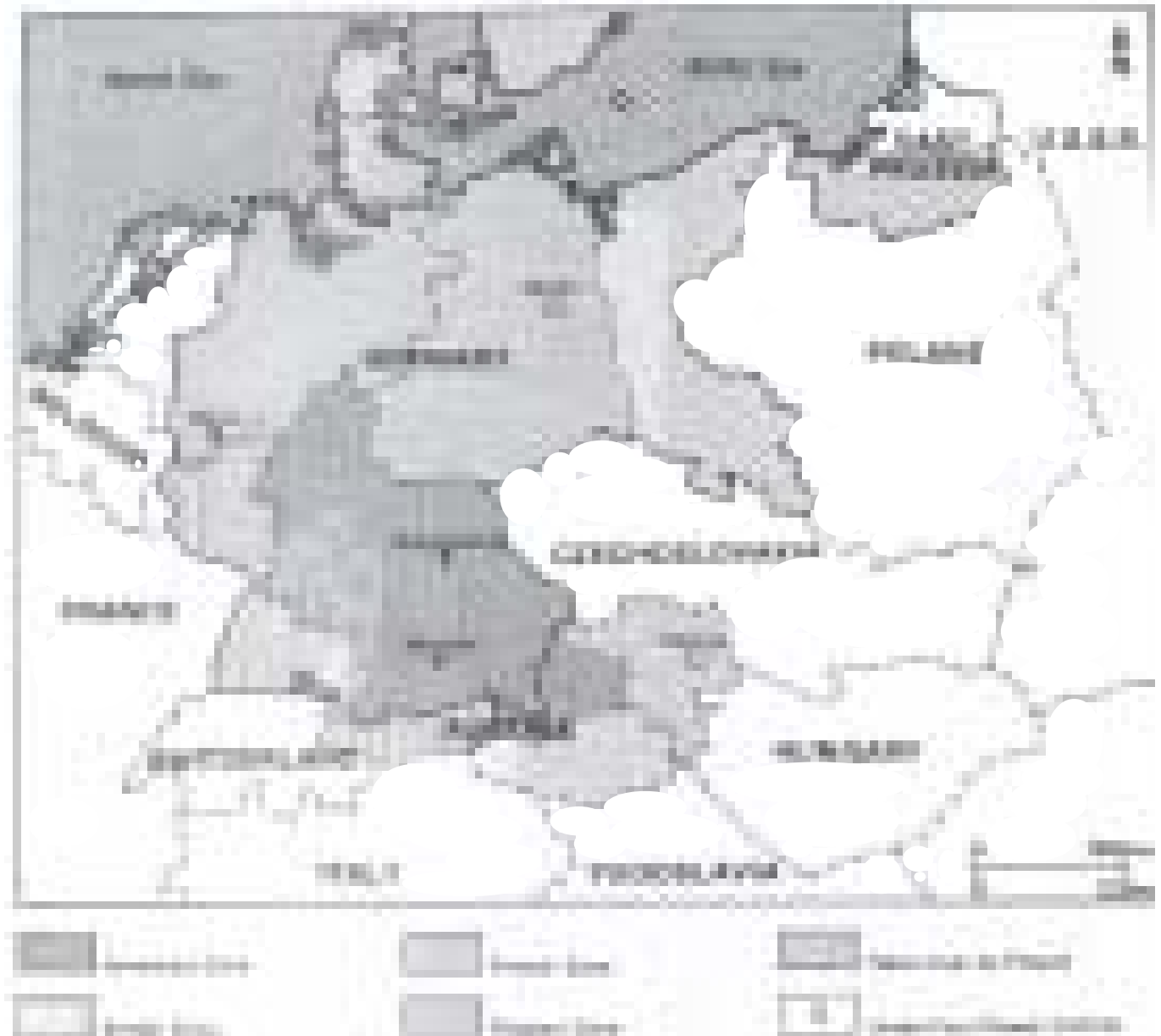
and security policy. Long before that, however, a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was formed in April 1949 under US leadership and including Canada to provide defence and security for the West. Turkey joined in 1952 and the FRG was included in 1955 at the same time as the central and eastern European countries were brought together in the Warsaw Pact time under leadership of the Soviet Union. Confrontation between these two military alliances armed with increasingly sophisticated conventional and nuclear weapons was the central feature of the Cold War. Though both sides probably overestimated the aggressive intentions of the other, fear of their capabilities spurred an arms race and sharpened the sense of danger of imminent nuclear conflict over several decades, especially at times of crisis such as over Berlin in 1948 and 1961, the Hungarian nationalist uprising of 1956, the Taiwan Straits in 1958, or the Cuban Missile crisis of 1962. Gradually, however, nuclear weapons came to be seen as non-usable and the territorial status quo in Europe was accepted by both sides, even when challenged by internal events such as the 'Prague Spring' of 1968. A European détente was initiated and in 1975 all the European states along with Canada, the US, and the USSR came together in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) affirming the status quo as well as the need to protect human rights.

The Cold War came to Asia first when the proclamation of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) in October 1949 was interpreted as a grievous 'loss' in the US, (sole occupying power in Japan and chief supporter of a Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan). The Chinese leader Mao Zedong saw the US as his chief adversary and decided to "lean to one side" in alliance with Stalin's USSR. In June 1950 the partitioned peninsular nation of Korea erupted in war and the US led United Nations forces against communist North Korea forces assisted by PRC 'volunteers'. The Korean War ended in a stalemate and an armed armistice in 1953 that created a demilitarized zone along the 38th parallel. Communist North Korea, in alliance with neighbouring PRC, seemed to freeze in time even as substantial US forces were stationed in South Korea and remain there to the present time. The Eisenhower Administration in the US deployed its Seventh Fleet to neutralize the Taiwan Straits and prevent open conflict between the PRC and ROC. The US also announced a doctrine of 'massive retaliation' – that is, possible use of nuclear weapons – to deter communist expansion, supported the French in Vietnam against nationalist forces led by communist leader Ho Chi Minh, and erected two multiparty alliances to confine the Sino-Soviet bloc within continental Eurasia. A defence pact setting up the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) was signed on 8 September 1954 by the US, Australia, Britain, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. The following year the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) was established by the US with Britain, Iran, Iraq (withdrew in 1958), Pakistan and Turkey to knit together countries on the vulnerable southern border of the USSR. The Soviet Union and PRC did not attempt to replicate the Warsaw Pact in Asia but each stepped across the Western line of containment by conducting an active diplomacy of political support, trade, economic assistance, and arms supplies with various neighbouring and/or nonaligned states such as Afghanistan, Burma, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, and North Vietnam. There was no simple dichotomy in Asia, however, and the picture was greatly complicated by regional rivalries as well as the rift between China and the Soviet Union that became public knowledge in the early 1960s and nearly erupted in war in 1969.

The most dangerous crisis of the Cold War took place in October 1962 over the issue of Soviet missiles placed in the Caribbean island of Cuba. There a popular revolution led by Fidel Castro had displaced the military regime of Fulgencio Batista in January 1959 and US backed attempts by Cuban emigres to overthrow Castro had failed. The Soviet post-Stalin leader Nikita Khrushchev decided to protect Cuba against American invasion by positioning nuclear missiles in Cuba. The US President John F. Kennedy reacted in anger to their discovery by a reconnaissance aircraft on 10 October 1962, demanding removal of the missile bases and ordering a naval blockade of Cuba on 18 October. No other episode of the Cold War has received such microscopic scrutiny from historians and re-enactments by prominent participants of the time, partly because every facet of American-Soviet competition intersected in it: conflicting ideologies, the nuclear arms race, relations with allies and newly independent states, domestic political linkages with foreign policy, public and private diplomacy exemplified in United Nations leaders, neither of whom could afford to publically step down. By mid-November the crisis was over. Soviet missiles were withdrawn from Cuba and some months later American Jupiter missiles were withdrawn from Turkey; Castro remained in power and threats of open invasion were ruled out; Kennedy won a victory with dignity and without war; the Soviet Union was not humiliated. Most importantly, both sides were shocked by realisation of their own vulnerability and moved towards avoiding direct confrontation in areas of peripheral interest and framing rules for conducting the nuclear arms race such as the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 and the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty of 1972.

If the two major antagonists in the Cold War avoided direct confrontation after 1962 they did not eschew participation in regional conflicts by providing materials, training and sometimes active military assistance to their respective favourites or 'clients'. For example,

American involvement in the Vietnam War began in support of an anti-Communist but weak South Vietnam facing insurgency backed by communist North Vietnam in the early 1960s. A central security premise of US policy in Asia at the time was the subsequently ridiculed 'domino theory' that the toppling of one non-communist government inevitably would lead to successive falls and expanding communism. A major US bombing campaign from the air in the mid and late 1960s was accompanied

by the introduction of larger and larger number of American combat troops on the ground, where they were bogged down in a quagmire of guerilla warfare, and an enlargement of the war zone into Cambodia and Laos. Vocal opposition to the Vietnam War within the US and its allies, as well as strategic considerations about détente with the Soviet Union, led US President Nixon to make a dramatic rapprochement with China in 1971-72 and extract American troops from Vietnam in 1973. Not surprisingly, a reunification of Vietnam by the communist North followed soon after in 1975. The US underwent considerable self-questioning and loss of confidence in the mid-1970s and earlier bipartisan consensus on national security policies was fractured.

By a coincidence of time, perhaps, the Soviet Union enjoyed a period of stability and self-confidence under the leadership of Leonid Brezhnev in the 1970s and appeared to expand its political and military influence in South and Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean, West Asia, Africa and even Latin America. Without direct Soviet participation too, events in what had come to be called the Third World, such as the assertiveness of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1973 and after, the growth of the Non Aligned Movement, conflict within the former Portuguese colonies in Africa, and the Islamic Revolution in Iran of 1979, militated against Western interests. The Soviet Union used the 'Brezhnev Doctrine' to justify military intervention to protect a communist (or leftist) government outside its own borders – as in Czechoslovakia in 1979. American reactions, and the election of Republican Ronald Reagan as president in 1980, ushered in a 'New Cold War' of proxy conflict fought by government forces and Islamicist Mujahedin in Afghanistan, in Nicaragua between Sandinista government forces and right-wing 'contras', and in El Salvador and other Central American countries between right-wing governments and left-wing guerilla fighters. None of these wars, or the many other conflicts erupting at the time throughout the Third World, fitted tidily into the rigid dichotomy of the 1950s, and the bipolar international system itself had been modified by a war less amenable to simple analysis than the original Cold War. The costs of continued conflict, however, were similarly high, especially as the nuclear arms race between the US and the USSR was renewed, and contributed directly to the economic undermining of the Soviet system and the end of the Cold War.

21.5 THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE AND EFFORTS TO CONTROL PROLIFERATION

Spectacular advances in scientific knowledge in the first half of the 20th century included theoretical and experimental discovery of how to split the atom, the smallest particle of a chemical element. It was no easy task, however, to learn how to release atomic (nuclear) energy though a controlled chain reaction of fission in the element uranium, and during the late 1930s leading scientists in America, Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, perhaps Japan, and Russia separately worked on the problem. In 1942, after the US had entered World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the Manhatten Project, a costly programme with several locations and many scientists and engineers, to build nuclear reactors and fabricate an atomic weapon as soon as possible and before Germany could do so. Project Y headed by Robert Oppenheimer at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, New Mexico, successfully tested one such device at Alamogordo on 16 July 1945 when he saw "a thousand suns". Truman conveyed this news to his allies Churchill and Stalin at Potsdam where they were conferring after the defeat of Germany, and also made the decision to use two remaining bombs on Japan which had not yet acknowledged defeat. Accordingly, an atom bomb equivalent to 15,000 tons of TNT named "Little Boy" was dropped on Hiroshima on 6 August and a larger one named "Fat Boy" on Nagasaki on 9 August. The resulting death and destruction through the effects of blast, fire, heat, and radiation far exceeded anything experienced before, even

during extensive 'carpet bombing' of cities during the war. Japan surrendered on 15 August 1945. Reports compiled soon after, as well as later reports on the effects of nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean and elsewhere, provide incontrovertible scientific evidence that the use of nuclear weapons in any conflict would be catastrophic for all life on earth, to say nothing of civilization as we know it.

Yet, an integral part of the Cold War was the nuclear arms race, primarily between the US and the USSR that tested its first atomic weapon on 26 August 1949. Neither superpower explicitly ruled out use of nuclear weapons – indeed their status as superpowers as well as their respective doctrines of national security rested heavily on their possession and threatened use of nuclear weapons – and the numbers of nuclear warheads of different kinds they produced multiplied exponentially to total over 60,000 at the height of the Cold War. Even after both had agreed to strategic arms limitations and reductions in the 1980s and 1990s, their arsenals remain formidable. According to reliable 2001 estimates the US possessed 7,206 strategic nuclear weapons, 1,670 non-strategic nuclear weapons and between 1,000 and 2,000 other nuclear weapons, while the figures for Russia in the same categories are given as 5,606; 3,800 and 10,000. The destructive power of a single such weapon, often measured in terms of megatons or one million tons of TNT, was enough to wipe out an entire city and exceed the total of all conventional bombs dropped in the Second World War. Adding to the many complexities of the super power arms race was the fact that despite strenuous efforts, the US did not long retain its nuclear monopoly, and after the Soviet Union, others too tested and produced their own nuclear weapons: Britain in 1952, France in 1959, China in 1964, Israel probably and in secret in 1968, India in 1973 though it did not weaponize until after 1998, and Pakistan in 1998 or possibly in 1987. Iraq, Iran and North Korea also have been widely suspected of having nuclear weapons ambitions and possible capability. None of these states amassed large arsenals of nuclear weapons, reliably estimated in 2001 as totaling 410 for China, 348 for France, 185 for Britain, about 200 for Israel, between 80-150 for India and between 30-50 for Pakistan. Nevertheless, the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction continues to be a serious problem in contemporary international politics.

Some of the profound questions raised in the atomic age are the following:

- Are scientists obliged to refrain from ethical judgments about the use to which their discoveries may be put by governments?

- What is the proper relationship between technical possibilities of creating weapons systems and political decision making on national security?

- Did nuclear weapons serve to maintain stability in Europe though balance of power during the Cold War, and would they produce stability or instability elsewhere?

- What were or are the economic and psychological costs of constructing national security policies on the basis of nuclear power with their implicit threat to all civilization and all life?

- Is it possible to control the proliferation of nuclear weapons to other states, and possibly to non-state groups, without nuclear disarmament by everybody?

As is evident, more than one answer has been offered, and will continue to be offered by thinking persons, to every one of the above questions. In this Unit we confine our interpretation of the historical record to separate three distinct strands: the role of nuclear weapons – and successive stages of their sophistication – in the security policies of the super powers during the Cold War fueling an arms race, perceptions of aggressive intention on either side, and heavy reliance on the military component of state power, created a spiral of competitive interaction expressed in electoral rhetoric in the US about a so-

called 'missile gap' and increased military spending and arms accumulation in both states that is called the 'arms race'. Scholars studying the American-Soviet arms race, as well as arms races that have occurred between other rival pairs of states, seek to explain causes and suggest ways of controlling such ultimately self-destructive behaviour. Bruce Russett writes that while international hostility and conflicts over spheres of influence suffice to begin and maintain high levels of military spending, domestic influences are equally important. In the context of the US as well as the USSR he stresses bureaucratic politics, organizational dynamics and inter-service rivalry in obtaining budget allocations, technological momentum in developing (or matching) new and superior weapons systems such as inter continental missiles (ICBMs) and multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles (MIRVs), and pressures generated by mutually reinforcing networks within society and the economy that came to be called the "military-industrial complex". He also notes that the arms race did not proceed in a regular spiral but with occasional upward spurts and few periods of significant reduction.

American and Soviet nuclear doctrines must be added to the above list of factors producing an arms race during the Cold War and these need more detailed analysis that can be attempted here. Very briefly and broadly speaking, in the first decade of the Cold War the US relied on its air and nuclear superiority to counter Soviet conventional and ground superiority in Europe and threatened 'massive retaliation' against any attempted change in the status quo; in the 1960s it relied on 'flexible response' and the creation of an invulnerable 'second strike' capacity based on a triad of air, land and sea based missiles aimed at a range of targets including cities to 'deter' any possible 'first strike' by the Soviet Union; in the 1970s the US aimed for stability in the status quo through arms control negotiations and détente; and then in the 1980s engaged in a military build-up that included deployment of intermediate range missiles in Europe to reassure Western Europe of American commitment to its defence, and a new Strategic Defence Initiative, what Reagan called 'Star Wars'. The theory of 'deterrence' – itself a term capable of flexible interpretation but based on the assumption of two roughly comparable hostile powers with common conceptions of what constituted 'rational action' – was central to American strategic doctrine throughout. In the absence of open debate it was more difficult to decipher Soviet military doctrines and objectives beyond security, equality, equality of status and stability or assess the role of deterrence theory in Moscow. It can be seen, however, that what kept the Cold War from becoming hot was Mutual Assured Destruction. Though the Soviet Union in its search for strategic parity and possible and strategic or tactical superiority more or less kept pace with US weapons innovations, and initiated breakthroughs in some areas such as orbiting satellites in space, Reagan's initiatives in the 1980s convinced the new reformist Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that his country could neither afford the arms race economically nor sustain it technologically.

Meanwhile, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 had brought the dangers of a nuclear exchange shockingly close to decision makers, and the US and USSR moved toward arms control measures beginning with the Partial Test Ban Treaty (banning atmospheric tests) signed on 5 August 1963. Arms control negotiations were extended exercises in bargaining and conflict management, not efforts to bring about disarmament or conflict resolution, so that perennial Cold War disputes over Berlin, Korea, Taiwan, remained unsettled and the multiplication of weapons systems continued. Moreover, some systems were kept on hair trigger alert so that accidental conflagration easily could have been flared as is well documented by Scott Sagan. Arms control measures were intended to reduce risks, to remove incentives for first strike by either side, and to stabilize the arms race around notions of strategic parity and balance. There were lengthy and often vituperative disagreements on what constituted balance or equivalence in force structures and weapons systems, as well as over the technology and credibility of verification. The

details of these debates, as also the agreements eventually reached, were extensively reported at the time so that it is not necessary to repeat then here. The major bilateral nuclear weapon treaties signed by the US and the USSR/Russia are as follows:

26 May 1972	Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty
	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I)
03 July 1974	Threshold Test Ban Treaty
18 June 1979	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II)
08 December 1987	Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty
31 July 1991	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I)
03 January 1993	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START II)

Notwithstanding significant reduction in nuclear arsenals promised in START I and II, and a plethora of writings, resolutions and conferences on the desirability of universal nuclear disarmament – developing nuclear weapons raised acute anxiety in world capitals. Measures were undertaken to prevent and check that type of 'horizontal' proliferation, notably the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) negotiated over three years and opened for signature by states on 1 July 1968 with an initial validity of 25 years. With 135 initial and 187 current signatories, the NPT is the largest multilateral treaty on record and was indefinitely extended in 1995. The NPT specifically defines a nuclear-weapon state (NWS) as one that had manufactured and exploded a nuclear device before 1 January 1967, thus recognizing two different categories of states, and makes different requirements of them. Article 1 stipulates fully that NWS undertake not to transfer any nuclear explosive device, or any encouragement to or means of manufacturing them, to any non-nuclear weapons state (NNWS). Article II of the NPT obliges non-nuclear explosive devices. This explicit bargain between NWS and NNWS was struck only when it was agreed that the treaty would establish the norm that no state should have nuclear weapons embodied in Article VI stating that the parties to the treaty undertake to pursue negotiations in good faith to "general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control." Also the treaty recongnized the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) created in 1954 to foster the exchange of scientific and technical information on the peaceful uses of atomic energy while ensuring that none of it was used to further any military purpose.

In addition to the NPT the US and others took further measures to discourage and prevent proliferation. Some industrialized and nuclear capable countries such as the FRG, Japan, and Sweden were in the NPT as NNWS. Other potential proliferators, such as Argentina and Brazil, were persuaded or pressurized into singing regional bans on nuclear weapons. Increasingly stringent limitations have been placed on trade and transfers of any materials or technologies that could be used for military purposes by suppliers, groups such as the Zangger Committee and the Nuclear Supplies Group founded in the 1970s, the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) of 1987 and the Warsaw Guidelines of 1992. Domestic legislation and vigorous surveillance in some countries since the 1970s, notably in the US, raise very high barriers to transfers of doubtful materials and technologies, and "counter proliferation" tactics devised to discourage potential proliferators. International public opinion rose against nuclear weapons after the end of the Cold War. Former republics in the Soviet Union, Kazakastan and Ukraine relinquished nuclear weapons. South Africa terminated its nuclear weapons programme at the time of making a transit to democracy. The US and Russia agreed to reduce their stockpiles of nuclear weapons. The International Court of Justice issued an advisory opinion on the Nuclear Weapons Case in July 1996 and held that the use of nuclear weapons would violate

humanitarian law. In September 1996 a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was opened for signature and negotiation for a multilateral treaty on a cutoff of production of fissile material for nuclear weapons was in process.

Not withstanding the above, the proliferation clock was ticking again by the end of the century. The CTBT required the 44 states, judged to be nuclear capable to sign and ratify it before coming into force; India objected to being numbered one of the 44 and did not sign, and though President Clinton signed in 1999 the US Senate did not ratify the treaty. India, and Pakistan, openly tested nuclear weapons in May 1998 and moved toward their deployment; US pressures on them to "roll back" their programmes failed. It also became evident that some state signatories of the NPT, and some private companies within signatory counties, had previously violated prohibitions on transfers of technology and materials to the then NNWS such as Pakistan; and North Korea not only threatened to withdraw from the NPT but boasted of having manufactured weapons. At the heart of the proliferation dilemma, however, is the issue of equity. The NPT created a hierarchy of states, privileging the NWS on condition that they sincerely move toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. Their failure to do so and their adoption of counter-proliferation measures (including development of new types of nuclear weapons) raised suspicions that they wanted a perpetual freeze of hierarchy. In the words of Richard Butler, former head of the UN Special commission to disarm Iraq, "it is simply beyond any concept of civilisation to maintain the security of any state or person on the basis of the threat of mass destruction of others. It is inevitable that as long as the threat exists, others will seek to defend against it by measures of a similar kind. The consequences of such action and reaction are an endless spiral of proliferation."

21.6   DECOLONIZATION AND NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

The Second World War brought about the dissolution of European empires in Asia and Africa, beginning with the independence of the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma in the mid-1940s, Ghana in 1956, and most of Francophone Africa in the early 1960s. The process of decolonization was neither easy not rapid and was only completed in the last decade of the century, when South Africa threw over its apartheid regime, and when Britain returned Hong Kong and Portugal returned Macao to China in 1997 and 1999 respectively. One immediate effect of decolonization was the multiplication of state members in the international system, mentioned at the beginning of this Unit as a characteristic of the 20th century. Another immediate effect was to widen the agenda of the international system, especially that of the United Nations General Assembly of which the newly independent states were members, to include subjects of interest to them such as decolonization, racial equality, and economic development. A third effect was to alter the functioning of the international system somewhat, away from the *realpolitik* of power play toward norms of equity, international law, universal participation and legitimization of collective action by the UN. Efforts of multiple parentages to so reform the international system were delayed, diffused, and incomplete no doubt, but none the less discernible in the latter half of the 20th Century when the Cold War was at its height. For example, a victory for the principles of decolonization and self-determination was seen in passage of UN General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV): Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, on 14 December 1960 and its virtual elevation to international law.

Decolonization came to be associated with the development of a Nonaligned Movement (NAM) because important countries such as India, Indonesia, Egypt, and Ghana gained their independence at a time when the world was riven in two blocs by the Cold War and they naturally wished to assert their diplomatic and ideological independence not only

from their former colonial masters, but from that particular conflict, which was not their own. As Jawaharlal Nehru announced in 1946, "We propose as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale." In much the same way a newly independent USA had declared its non-involvement in the Napoleonic conflict of early 19th Century Europe. And in similar fashion Yugoslavia's President Tito asserted the independence of a communist state from the Soviet bloc in 1948. Initially, therefore, nonalignment denoted the foreign policy orientation of a particular state disassociating itself from the major international conflict of the time, and easily was confused with neutrality or neutralism, negative terms often used to denigrate such assertions of independence. Nonalignment was always different from neutrality or neutralization, however, because nonalignment was a freely chosen position and not imposed by others as in the case of neutralization, because nonaligned states never claimed to be strictly equidistant from the two super powers and tolerated cynical allegations of manipulating Cold War rivalries for their own benefit, and because nonalignment, as Nehru often explained, demanded an active participation in the international arena and not the passive withdrawal of a neutral.

These positive aspects of a nonaligned position became evident in the course of the Korean War (1950-1953) and UN debates about its conduct and end. First, the Korean War raised anxiety about the prospects of international peace, seen as a prerequisite for the independence and self-development of new states, and so led to India's successful attempts to mediate differences between the opposing sides on the disposition of prisoners of war and condition for armistice, as well as many exhortations to peace and 'zones of peace'. Secondly, Asian and Arab members of the UN cooperated in drafting mediatory resolutions and found an affinity in mutual concerns for accelerating decolonization and emphasizing economic and social development in the functioning of the UN over the ideological and military conflict of the super powers that dominated the agenda.

The first Asian-African Conference was held at Bandung, Indonesia, in April 1955 among high representatives of 29 states to consider problems of common interest and discuss ways and means of reaching fuller cooperation. This conference is regarded as a precursor to NAM; its final communiqué heralded future final communiqués of NAM summit meetings in stressing the need for economic and cultural cooperation, human rights and self-determination, attention to the problems of dependent peoples, and promotion of world peace and nuclear disarmament. But there was no agreement at Bandung on what was one criterion of nonalignment, that is, abstaining from membership of (Western sponsored) military alliances, because some states, including the Philippines and Pakistan, hoped to gain security from such alliance. The following year President Nasser of Egypt, Prime Minister Nehru of India, and President Tito of Yugoslavia met at Brioni to review international developments and reaffirmed their commitment to the principles laid down at Bandung as well as the need to persevere in settling international problems and creating an atmosphere of peace. By the late 1950s the term 'nonalignment' was in usage, as also the French term *Tiers Monde* and its Anglicized form Third World, denoting a group of countries in contradistinction to the First World of capitalist liberal democracy and the Second World of command economic planning. Though not synonymous the terms 'newly independent', 'nonaligned', 'developing countries', and 'third world' came to be used more or less interchangeably.

The first Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries was held at Belgrade in September 1961 and issued a passionate appeal to the US and USSR to "suspend their recent war preparations" and "resume negotiation for a peaceful settlement" of outstanding differences between them. The final communiqué noted the weakening of imperialism and reaffirmed support to UNGA Resolution 1514. In addition,

the communique called for general and complete disarmament and urged participation of nonaligned states in all world conferences on disarmament, denounced the establishment of foreign military bases as a violation of sovereignty, advocated policies of peaceful coexistence, and called attention to specific problems, such as racial apartheid in South Africa and the rights of the Palestinian people, to be tackled in conformity with UN principles. The 25 leaders assembled at Belgrade denied "any wish to form a new bloc" but agreed to convene similar meetings every three years and tried to specify criteria (such as non-acceptance of foreign military bases) for invitees. NAM was launched and steadily gained members. 92 heads of state or government met at the Havana summit in 1979 and 114 at the Kuala Lumpur, 13th summit of 2003. Meanwhile, NAM criteria had been so enlarged that there was little similarity among members beyond their relative weakness in the international system both political and economic.

The goal of economic independence and self-reliance proved to be more elusive than that of legal independence. Third World members of the UN conferred and often voted together as a group (the G-77) in the General Assembly and new agencies such as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in the 1960s to try and redress adverse terms of trade and gain concessions for their exports in more developed and affluent markets. Ideas about revising the entire international system of economic relations were aired at the NAM Summit at Lusaka in 1970 and presented as a manifesto at the Algiers Summit three years later, before being adopted at a special session of the General Assembly in 1974 as a Programme for Action for the establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO). It was no coincidence that demands for an NIEO were launched concurrently with the first dramatic oil-price hike and demonstration of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OPEC) bargaining power with industrialized economies dependent on imports of cheap energy. For a time it appeared as if a fundamental shift of economic and therefore diplomatic power away from the industrial North toward the pre-industrial South were possible. The reforms demanded under NIEO fell under five main heads as follows:

- Reforms in the terms of trade and pricing for primary products and commodities, and better access to the markets of the advanced industrial countries through preferences.

- Reforms in the major international economic institutions, especially the International Monetary Fund, to benefit developing countries.

- Recognition of the growing problem of Third World debt and measures to alleviate it.

- Greater economic assistance and technology transfers to developing countries.

- Recognition of sovereign rights to direct national economic policy and control the activities of Multi-National Corporations.

The above charter of demands for socio-economic justice was addressed to the advanced industrial countries of the First World but had little tangible effect on their policies, though the rhetoric of various reports such as those of the Commissions on South-South cooperation echoed that of NIEO. The Second World Socialist countries claimed to be a "natural ally" of NAM but disclaimed responsibility for the injustices of the capitalist international economic system or the means to redress them. The victory of conservative leaders with hard ideology in the West, especially Margaret Thatcher in Britain and Ronald Reagan in the US, was certainly a setback to the cause of international social justice, and a blaze of militarism accompanied the New Cold War of the 1980s. Once again nonalignment was denigrated as 'immoral' and 'anti-American' and UN voting records of NAM members scrutinized and sometimes penalized. NIEO demands had not been

met by the end of the 20th Century and some problems, such as Third World debt, had become more acute, even as increasing globalization and the rules of the World Trade Organisation presented new challenges to all countires, including those belonging to NAM.

In advocating an NIEO, NAM also addressed its own members in exhorting them to increase cooperation and exchanges of information and technology among themselves and improve them abroad. These exhortations had only limited effect, mainly because the economies of the newly independent countries remained firmly linked to those of the metropolitan 'core' of advanced industrial countries, and the ruling elites of the former frequently were dependent on the explicit or tacit approval of the latter in order to remain in power. Their ability and willingness to implement the NIEO charter within their own countries was correspondingly weak. Linkages between 'periphery' and 'core' were evident in Latin America and inspired the neo-Marxist theory of *dependencia* to explain contemporary international relations; practical instruction on how to end the cycle of dependence without revolution, however, was largely confined to making declarations in international conferences. Lack of means was a ready explanation for the paucity of South-South cooperation. But even when financial means were available, as from petro-dollars generated by successive oil-price hikes, they were directed more toward arms purchases from and investments in the West than toward assisting broad-based economic development in oil-importing countries of the South.

Other weaknesses of NAM deserve attention. Most stemmed from the diversity of its members, drawn as they were from every continent and therefore lacking the common perspectives of a geographically contiguous region, and having leaders of varying ideological leanings and practical experience in governance. Many members were racked by internal divisions and conflicts as well as by authoritarian governments. India was for long a rare democracy in the Third World. Each member had its own definition of national self-interest, and of nonalignment, that did not coincide with another's defination strongly enough to produce an alliance or even a coalition capable of joint action, except at the level of declaration and, it must be added for some, in lending moral and material assistance to the anti-apartheid forces of democracy in South Africa during the 1980s. Even the problems of the Arab people of Palestine that featured in every NAM summit document inspired no substantive common action beyond granting membership to the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and drafting resolutions criticizing Israel and Zionism (predictably offensive to the US). Typically, NAM comments on important areas of conflict, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Central America in the 1980s, were drafted by members from that particular region and paragraphs put into a collage of the final statement to await the next summit meeting. Institutional underpinning was slight, derived from the diplomatic missions of members at UN headquarters in New York.

The weaknesses of NAM, in short, stemmed from the administrative, diplomatic, economic, financial, institutional, and political weaknesses of the individual members themselves. These were most evident in cases of civil conflict that racked most of Africa, and of conflict among member states, such as between Iran and Iraq for years of bitter war during1980-1988, and perennial disputes between Pakistan and India, that NAM could neither prevent nor seriously attempt to mediate. NAM still lacks the mechanisms and power to resolve conflicts; but then, so do other states and international organizations. The strengths of NAM arose from the courageous efforts of its founding leaders to approach questions of international peace and security from the point of view of the larger good of humanity, to provide representatives of distanced and newly independent states opportunities for free discussion of issues and interaction with each other that were not easily available elsewhere, and to articulate principles that might not have been matched by practice but pointed toward a more equitable and humane international code of conduct

produced by power politics. It is for this reason, perhaps, that NAM did not disappear with the end of the Cold War, as was expected by those who judged it relevant only to bipolar military-security configuration. Instead, NAM continues to grow and change its role with the demands of the day, while reaffirming the realities of diversity and pluralism in the contemporary world.

21.7   THE END OF THE 20TH CENTURY AND ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY

For those who see the Russian Revolution of 1917 as the most important event of the 20th Century, the unexpected dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked not only the equally unexpected termination of the Cold War but the end of century itself. Events of the 1990s illustrated dilemmas, issues, and problems that also dominate the first years of the 21st Century. These stemmed both from the end of a bipolar balance of power international system that had lent some predictability to world polities since the end of the Second World War, and from the collapse of a great multi-ethnic superpower with a command economy. The 1990s also saw the breakdown of civility and governmental authority in several states, such as Yugoslavia and more than one in Africa, that were not caused by changes in the international system as such and evoked muddled responses from it, but which stimulated debates inside and outside the UN about ethnic identity, displacement of peoples, and so on. It is difficult to generalize about international rivalries at the 20th Century's end than at its beginning and we confine ourselves to a brief overview.

When an ailing Brezhnev passed away in November 1982 the internal problems of the Soviet Union had been severe for a decade or more, though concealed by the aura of a superpower from the outside world, including US intelligence agencies. Brezhnev was succeeded by men of his own generation, first by Yuri Andropov, who died in February 1984, and then by Konstantin Chernenko, who died in March 1985. Neither had the time nor energy to attempt internal reform or external initiatives. The credit for doing so belonged to the next General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 54 year old Mikhail Gorbachev, who came to be described as "the man who changed the world" in five years. Gorbachev saw the imperative of revitalizing a stagnant Soviet economy and the near impossiblity of doing so without loosening state control that had corrupted administration, introducing open debate to stimulate initiative, and reducing defence expenditures then amounting to an estimated 25 per cent of GNP. But the latter was unfeasible while the Soviet Union was engaged in a debilitating war in Afghanistan and faced a vociferously hostile Reagan Administration that was raising the US defence budget above $400 billion a year, albeit less than five per cent of American GNP.

Gorbachev simultaneously launched three campaigns and conducted them personally. One was externally directed to establish good relations with world leaders, especially in the West beginning with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and to restructure relations with other Socialist states on the basis of independence rather than the Brezhnev Doctrine of intervention. Another campaign was to promote the idea of *perestroika* – meaning reform and an all-embracing modernization so as to improve economic performance and living conditions of the people – among Soviet officials and the public during his many tours around the country. And a third campaign was also internal, to introduce *glasnost* – meaning openness – in sharing information with the frequently alienated intelligentsia, and reaching economic and political decisions on the basis of facts rather than secretly fabricated statistics. *Perestroika* and *glasnost* amounted to a reversal of Soviet policy and practice of over 60 years and needed active support from Party and State *apparatchiks* (functionaries) at every level in order to succeed. Not surprisingly, well entrenched, highly placed *apparatchiks* collectively known as the *Nomnclatura*

offered the greatest resistance to *perestroika* and *glasnost*. Gorbachev's vocal attacks on the system and Party he had inherited, especially at the 27th Party Congress of February 1986, merely strengthened their opposition to modernization or democratization, while the habits of dependence and obedience to authority in the general population were not easily overcome. *Glasnost* too made the task of reform from above more, not less, difficult, partly because it delegitimized the use of coercion, and partly because it provided no adequate response to the catastrophic meltdown of a nuclear reactor at the Chernobyl power station on 26 April 1986, the worst nuclear accident in the world. Gorbachev wrote in his Memoirs (1995) that he laid the basis for *perestroika* in the years 1985-1988 and expected democratization to take place peacefully in the next phase. In fact, his reforms sparked a kind of uncontrolled revolution leading to economic chaos, political fragmentation, and self-assertion by larger and smaller 'national groups – including Russia itself – that unraveled the Soviet Union in 1991.

Before that happened, however, Gorbachev's diplomacy assisted by Foreign Minister Eduard Shevarnadze, brought an end to the Cold War. The Cold War was described earlier as being an ideological conflict between communism and capitalism, a territorial conflict over control of Central Europe epitomized in the division of Germany, and a power struggle between the US and USSR played out by proxy on all continents but most of all in the arms race. Gorbacehv's economic reforms moving the Soviet Union away from its state controlled 'command' model toward a mixed and even a market economy obviously diminished ideological conflict, as did his public advocacy of universal 'democratic' values reiterated on the occasion of his summit meeting with US President George Bush at Malta in December 1989.

Meanwhile, unrest in the Socialist states of Eastern Europe caused Gorbachev concern, but he did not go back on his principle of non-interference so that demands for change were no longer met by repression backed by Soviet arms. Instead, elections in Poland brought Solidarity to power in place of the Communist Party. Hungary embraced a multiparty system and opened its border with Austria in May 1989. The regimes in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and later Romania collapsed. Gorbachev wrote that when he visited Berlin for a meeting with GDR leaders in October 1989 he was reminded "of an overheated boiler with the lid tightly closed". On the night of 8 November the crises came to a head with huge crowds gathering at the Berlin Wall and tearing parts of it down with their hands; the checkpoints to West Berlin were opened to allow for an exodus. The future of Germany, in one or in two states, was a difficult question to resolve against the background of 20th Century wars, the growing weight of Germany and the crucial importance of German-Soviet relations to the stability of Europe. Gorbachev had met FRG Chancellor Helmut Kohl for the first time in October 1988 when they both agreed in Moscow to promote links between NATO and the Warsaw Pact and found they could do business with each other. But Kohl's ten point plan for the rapid unification of Germany put forward in November 1989 dismayed Gorbachev as well as British and French leaders. Intricate consultations among concerned parties worried about possible instability followed, and all questions were then refereed to a body consisting of the four occupying powers – Britain, France, the US and the USSR – plus the two German states. Soviet delegates were not able to achieve their objective of effectively neutralizing Germany through membership of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact, and no one anticipated the practical difficulties of reunification. But finally, skilful diplomacy resulted in all accepting a re-untied Germany within NATO, at the same time renouncing forever possession of WMDs and formally committed to "good neighbourliness, partnership and cooperation."

More than one account has been published detailing interchanges between Moscow and Washington between 1985 and 1991 that brought about an end to the Cold War and

produced significant agreements on arms control after tough negotiations. All these accounts show the importance of individual personalities and their interaction with each other in making initiatives possible, the cleavages that existed *within* each side between hard-liners who scorned any diminution of hostility and new thinkers hoping to bridge the chasm of mistrust through compromise, and the constant negative influence of domestic politics and media coverage in each country on the progress of bilateral negotiations. Without discussing these general propositions affecting all international relations, we outline the main events in US-USSR relations between 1985 and 1991.

The New Cold War of the 1980s intensified danger not only because of heightened conflict in Asia, Africa, and Central America, but because of the introduction of new and more lethal nuclear weapons into superpower arsenals and the deployment of some in Europe, as well as Reagan's proposed Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) that threatened stability of the 1972 ABM Treaty by taking the arms race into space. The principal Soviet and US interest was to reduce the threat posed by these weapons to their respective countries but the chasm of mistrust between them was immense. After intricate negotiations between foreign ministers, Gorbachev awaited the outcome of the first meeting between American and Soviet heads of state since 1979. Despite their ability to communicate with each other as human beings, the two men could reach no agreement beyond the desirability of meeting again. They did so next at Reykjavik, lceland, on 11-12 October 1986 and bargained seriously about eliminating offensive ballistic missiles from their arsenals within ten years, and all other nuclear weapons too. Their respective advisers were appalled by this unplanned leap their leaders had made, and relieved when negotiations failed because Reagan refused to relinquish SDI. (He also ignored the six-continent initiative launched by Argentina. India, Greece, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania on behalf of NAM, calling for a worldwide moratorium on the testing, production and development of nuclear weapons and delivery systems.) Nevertheless, Reykjavik was a turning point in new thinking; it made possible the INF Treaty of December 1987 eliminating some species of missiles from Europe and opening the way for reductions in all classes of nuclear weapons subsequently agreed to in START I and II in July 1991 and January 1993. Gorbachev's state visit to Washington D.C. in December 1987 was a public relations triumph for him and the beginning of a personal rapport with then Vice-President George Bush that was carried forward into the next few years. For example, the US and the IMF tried to assist marketization of the Soviet economy – though the actual impact of their efforts is controversial.

Gorbachev was acutely aware of internal economic problems as he introduced *perestroika* and reduced costly external commitments. Thus, on 9 February 1988 he announced specific steps for a political settlement in Afghanistan through the UN, including the withdrawal of Soviet troops over the following year. Multilateral settlement of the Cambodia problem and UN supervision of elections followed soon after, as also settlements in Angola and Namibia with active UN participation. Gorbachev quickened the pace of normalizing relations with China and received a warm welcome in Beijing in May 1989, an event overshadowed for the international media present to cover it by the unrelated pro-democracy student demonstrations taking place in Tiananmen Square at the same time and their subsequent repression by force. Also, the Soviet Union was diplomatically active during the crisis caused by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990; it could not persuade Saddaam Hussein to withdraw peacefully and joined the rest of the Security Council in sanctioning military action against him. A long-standing Soviet objective was advanced in October 1991 when it co-sponsored with the US an international conference on the Middle East convened at Madrid to set out a programme – or 'road map' as it was called – to resolve conflict between Israel and Palestine. But success abroad could not conceal failures and fissures at home, especially on the 'nationalities problem' constituting relations between Moscow at the centre and constituent

units or Republics of the federated USSR, as well as between different ethnic groups in each constituent Republic. There were many anomalies in the vast multi-ethnic expanse of the Soviet Union and Gorbachev had no new thinking to offer on those subjects; he showed a preference for centralized and ethnic-Russian authority. But once 'national' urges to recover language, religion and identity were stirred at the grassroots, a momentum grew. The Baltic Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania exploded in resentment against Russians and the CPSU, tacitly helped in their drive for independence by the US, which had always refused to recognize them as part of the USSR. Corruption in Uzbekistan led to an insurrection there in 1986, followed by troubles in Kazakhstan and throughout the Trans-Caucasian region including Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia, and later Chechnya. An attempted coup against Gorbachev in August 1990 failed, but his leadership was noticeably depleted. Meanwhile, the revival of Russian national feeling – in contrast and subsequent opposition to Soviet feeling – was also strong, and owed much to the ambitions of Boris Yeltsin, perhaps, who became President of the Russian Federation in 1990 and successor to Gorbachev in 1991. The Soviet Union was officially dissolved in December 1991, replaced in name by the Commonwealth of Independent States. Fourteen new states became members of the Untied Nations.

Yugoslavia, a conglomerate state created by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, had survived the death of its unifying leader Josip Broz Tito in May 1980 but faced intensifying tensions between the more and the less economically developed republics and shrinking resources fueled animosity among different ethnic and religious groups. Croatia and Slovenia declared independence in 1991 and Slobodan Milosevic became leader of a nationalistic Serbia determined to build a 'Greater Serbia' out of the remaining units of multi-ethnic Yugoslavia at the cost of minority groups, including the Muslims of Bosnia and the Albanians of Kosovo. Atrocities that came to be called 'ethnic cleansing' led to military conflict, expressions of international alarm, and an inadequate United Nations intervention in Bosnia in 1991-92 that was replaced by a NATO force in late 1995. Neither force could restore peace or prevent massacres and population transfers that resulted in an ethnically-partitioned Bosnia reflected in the final Dayton peace agreement. Further conflict flared in Kosovo and US led-NATO forces conducted 11 weeks of air strikes on Serbia and its capital on Serbia and its capital Belgrade in 1999 before stationing peace keeping troops in Kosovo. Milosevic was displaced and taken to face trial for 'crimes against humanity' at the International Tribunal in The Hague. The OSCE subsequently attempted to outline a regional strategy for dealing with crisis prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation in Europe.

The internationally publicized Yugoslavia episode illustrated several trends noticeable also in other parts of the world at the end of the 20th Century but not discussed here. Very briefly, five of these trends were as follows:

- Increasing economic integration, or globalization, while welcomed in many prospering quarters, also quickly transmitted economic problems across national frontiers and caused societal stress. Yugoslavia suffered from Western Europe's economic slow down and unemployment in the 1980s. In 1997 a financial crisis caused by rapid transfers of capital spread from South Korea through all of Southeast Asia, undercutting the dynamism hitherto displayed by the 'Asian Tigers' and affecting world trade negatively.

- The breakdown of central governmental authority in multi-ethnic states was accompanied often by inter-ethnic conflict and the commitment of atrocities that sometimes amounted to genocide. The Bosnian horrors viewed on international television were equalled or exceeded by 'humanitarian crises' in various parts of Africa, particularly in Rwanda in 1994 when the Hutu massacred the Tutsi people in their thousands, but also in Mozambique, Somalia, Sudan, and Zaire.

- Crises often hit international headlines too late to be prevented or managed by multilateral diplomacy. As an association of sovereign member states, the UN did not possess the institutions, the finance, or the mechanisms to meet the challenges posed by human disasters and failing states. Nor did regional organizations such as the EU or the OAU. The inability of concerned persons to put potential crises high on the international agenda sometimes was an unavoidable tragedy, as in Rwanda.

- The issue of protecting human rights received increasing international attention in the aftermath of the Cold War and the Tiananmen Square event in China, with non-governmental organizations playing important roles in the effort both domestically and internationally. No world-wide consensus was reached, however, on what constituted violation of human rights or how such violations were best remedied. There was even less agreement on the legitimacy or modality of 'humanitarian intervention' encroaching on traditional notions of state sovereignty.

- In the absence of effective UN or EU action the US took the lead in Bosnia and Kosovo. An image of the US a 'hyper power', the 'indispensable power', gained currency in the 1990s when it was the only remaining super-power, but also triggered expressions of preference by many world leaders for a multi-polar international system. Thus, evident strains developed between the US and its closest allies in Europe, Japan, as well with its more recent and problematic partners, Russia and China.

The last decade of the 20th Century seemed to justify it being called the 'American Century'. American military spending was more than the next 15 military budgets added together, US military power was overwhelmingly superior to that of every other country and truly global in its reach. The US economy showed more dynamism than those of Europe or Japan and American corporations were at the core of the international economy. The US attracted more immigrants per year from all over the world than any other country. American universities were global centres of study and research. American popular culture expressed the hard power of the US. American triumphalism in the collapse of socialism and easy victory in the Gulf War of early 1991 was evident in calls for a New World Order, and succinctly expressed in the title of Francis Fukuyama's celebrated book, *The End of History*, which argued that there were no viable alternatives to capitalistic democracy left in the world. American hegemony over the international system at the end of the 20th century appeared to be even greater than it had been 50 years earlier (when it accounted for approximately 50 per cent of World GDP in contrast to the current approximate 20 per cent) or that of Great Britain one hundred years earlier. One result was widespread resentment of the US, not merely among newly independent developing countries that experienced difficulty to having their voices heard in Washington DC, but also among well-established great powers, and other permanent members of the UN Security Council, several of which complained of American heavy handedness in diplomatic style. While no one state or group of states was able or willing to create a counter balance to the US, there was much talk in world capitals about 'multi polarity' providing a more widely acceptable basis than 'hegemonic stability' for world order. Since large swathes of the world were infected with transnational crime, drug trafficking, insurrection, terrorism, and destruction of the natural environment in the last decade of the 20th Century, no one could pretend that world order prevailed or that American power alone was sufficient to establish it. Within the US there were many references to the illusionary or transient nature of a unipolar world and speculation on how a rising power, such as China, could be accommodated or changes in the international system be brought about peacefully. At the same time, Samuel Huntington, an eminent political scientist, seemed to predict protracted conflict between the Judeo-Christian West and other major civilizations such as the Islamic or Sinic, in his widely read *Clash of Civilizations*.

21.8 SUMMARY

The 20th Century was indeed an age of extremes and provided ample empirical data to support or refute various social and political theories. Also, it was in the 20th Century that International Relations came to be recognized as an academic discipline separate from history or political science, and a respectable body of theoretical literature on relations among states was accumulated. The field of International Theory is too rich to be surveyed here, but some schools of thought as well as the major issues that attract attention can be mentioned. The two major schools of thought, once labeled 'Idealist' and Realist', have long since spawned many variations and refinements under the rubrics 'Neo-liberal' and 'Neo-realist' as well as explanations that bridge both schools. The crucial difference between them is of emphasis in explanation. Realists stress the pursuit of survival and national interests defined as power by states and the predominance of conflict among them. The Mid-century produced a methodological revolution in the social sciences known as 'behaviourism' that pushed international relations in a 'positivist' direction for many decades. Structuralism and neo-Marxism also influenced international theory. Some of the assumptions and conclusions underpinning these schools were challenged towards the end of the century by 'critical theory', by 'feminism', by 'constructivists' and by those social historians who saw the behaviour of states as an interplay of external and internal factors. Debates were sustained between and among different theories and greatly enlarged the field of research. Some questions of practical and theoretical interest recur in the literature, such as:

- What is the appropriate level of analysis for the study of international relations? Is it the global or transnational, the state-centric, or other? Stated differently, the question is, who are the actors in world politics?

- What is the meaning of state sovereignty in conditions of the late 20th Century?

- What kind of international system is most conductive to order and stability, human welfare, and legitimacy from among the known international systems of balance of power-whether multi-polar or bipolar in configuration – and hegemonic or imperial, also with variations?

- What are the causes of violent conflict?

- What constitutes 'just war'?

- What are the sources and sanctions of international law?

- What are the mainsprings of foreign policy in a given state?

- What, if any, are the ethical or normative dimensions of international relations?

The brief summary of international rivalries in the 20th Century given in this Unit hints at possible answers to these questions of continuing interest, which can be explored through further research and participation in the engrossing subject of world history.

21.9 GLOSSARY

Bloc	:	A group of states seen as generally standing together in international relations, though not necessarily in formal alliance.
Collective Security	:	A doctrine premised on the belief that all nations would perceive threats to international security in the same way and be equally prepared to assist each other in resisting them.
Deterrence	:	The strategy and doctrine of defence adoptede primarily by the United States in the nuclear age to convince the other side that it would face mortal retaliatory damage if it struck first.

Entente	:	An understanding between states conducive to cooperation, but short of formal alliance.
Genocide	:	The use of deliberate methods, including killing, calculated to destroy or exterminate a group of people definable by culture, language, politics, race or religion.
Hegemony	:	Preponderant influence or authority.
International System	:	A structure of states within which they regularly interact.
Rapprochement	:	The establishment of cordial relations between hostile states.
Realpolitik	:	A foreign policy based on calculations of power and national self-interest rather then abstract principles of morality.
Strategic Triangle	:	A term applied to relations between the United States, Soviet Union and China during the 1970s and 1980s.
WMD	:	Weapons of Mass Destruction: biological, chemical, and nuclear.

21.10 EXERCISES

1)   What do we mean by Cold War? How did it affect world politics?

2)   Discuss NAM, its strength and weaknesses in changing the World order.

3)   Where does world polity stand at the end of the 20th century?

Annexure: A Chronology of the Major International Events of the 20ᵗʰ Century

1901	Queen Victoria dies
1904-05	Russo-Japanese War Anglo-French Entente
1912-13	Balkan War
1914, 28 June to 4 August	Austrian Archduke Ferdinand assassinated by a Serb in Sarajevo. Ultimatums and successive mobilizations of armies
1914-1918	The Great War, or First World War
1917	Russian Revolution
1918, 11 Nov.	Armistice ends Great war
1919-20	Peace Treaties signed. Influenza epidemic kills many.
1920	League of Nations established with headquarters in Geneva
1925	Locarno Agreements stablizing Germany's western frontiers
1929	Wall Street crash precipitates world wide economic depression
1931	Japan occupies Manchuria
1933	Adolf Hitler leading. National Socialist Party takes power in Germany
1935	Italy occupies Abyssinia (Ethiopia)
1936	Arab revolt in British mandate of Palestine Berlin-Rome Axis established Germany and Japan sign Anti-Comintern Pact Germany remilitarizes the Rhineland
1937	Full scale war between China and Japan
1938 March September	Germany annexes Austria Munich Conference dismembers Czechoslovakia
1939, 23 August	Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Soviet Union and Germany
1 September	Germany invades Poland. Britain and France at war with Germany
1940	Germany over runs Belgium, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Norway. Air Battle of Britain
1941, 22 June 07 December	Germany invades Soviet Union Japan bombs US Fleet at Pearl Harbour US enters war against Japan and Germany
1943	German army surrenders at Stalingrad
1944	Anglo-American forces land in Normandy. Soviet forces advance toward Germany
1945, 10 May August September	Germany surrenders Atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki Japan surrenders United Nations Charter signed in San Francisco
1946	Differences between Western Allies and Soviet Union sharpen. Europe effectively divided by 'iron curtain'
1947	Cold War between Western and Eastern blocs hardens US announces new National Security Policy Marshall Plan of US economic grants to Western Europe Independence (and partition) of India
1948	Israel established as a state. First Arab-Israel war Berlin blockade and Angle American airlift to West Berlin
1949 1949	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) formed Peoples Republic of China established Indonesia independent
1950-1953 1953, April	The Korean War Death of Stalin

1955	Geneva Conference on Indo-China Warsaw Pact established between Soviet Union and East European states Bandung Conference of Asian and African states
1956	Suez Crisis. Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt Polish revolt and nationalist uprising in Hungary crushed by Soviet Union Ghana independent
1957	Treaty of Rome establishes the European Economic Community
1959	Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro takes power
1960	Sino-Soviet disputes surface Africa's year of independence
1961	Berlin crisis. Berlin Wall erected Belgrade Conference of Nonaligned
1962	Cuban Missile Crisis China-India War
1963	Partial Test Ban Treaty signed US President J.F. Kennedy assassinated Increasing US involvement in Vietnam War
1965	Indo-Pakistan War
1967	'Six Day' Arab-Israeli War
1968	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty drafted 'Prague Spring' First landing of man on the moon
1971	PRC becomes member of the UN and Security council India-Pakistan War
1972	US-China rapprochement, President Nixon visits China US-USSR sign Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty and Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty. Initiation of detente
1973	Oil Price crisis Arab-Israeli War
1975	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) proclaims Helsinki Accord on improving East-West relations Portugese colonies in Africa independent
1979	Iran revolution and proclamation of Iran as Islamic Republic
1979-1989	War in Afghanistan against Soviet occupation
1980	Josip Tito dies Iraq invades Iran Latin American debt crisis
1985	Mikhail Gorbachev becomes General Secretary of Communist Party of Soviet Union, initiates extensive reforms
1987	Presidents Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev agree to eliminate/reduce some strategic nuclear weapons
1989 3 October	Mass demonstrations in Eastern Europe Berlin Wall breached and dismantled by public
1991 December	Persian Gulf War Warsaw Pact dissolved Soviet Union dissolves into many republics
1992	Yugoslavia breaks up. 'Ethnic cleansing' and civil war in Bosnia
1994	Rwanda genocide Nelson Mandela elected President of South Africa
1997	Hong Kong reverts to China
1999	War in Kosovo

UNIT 22   UNIPOLAR WORLD AND COUNTER-CURRENTS

Structure

22.1   INTRODUCTION

The conclusion of the Second World War led to the emergence of a phase in international politics that was termed the 'Cold War.' The victors of the war had divided Europe into two antagonistic spheres, primarily based on the ideological differences between capitalism and communism. The Cold War in *realpolitik* reflected the conflicts of interest that had grown amongst the allies as the war came to a close. Mutual suspicion about the motives of the 'other' and the competing universalistic yet contradictory ideologies generated hostile posturing that on several occasions could have led to another catastrophic war with unforeseen consequences for humanity at large. For close to five decades the antagonism between the United States and the erstwhile Soviet Union determined the ebb and flows of international power politics with their proxy nations being witness to civil and military conflict, especially in Asia and Africa. The consequences of the Cold War, it can be premised, are still visible in the changing international order.

The Cold War resulted in the development of technologies that could exterminate mankind as also the stockpiling of immense weapons of mass destruction. Sheer quantities of weaponry apart, the Cold War phase tested the emergence of an international structure of conflict resolution and negotiations that primarily stemmed from the 'balance of terror' achieved by both the superpowers – the United States and the Soviet Union. The concept of 'balance of terror' arose from the realisation that the superpowers were evenly matched when it came to unleashing their weaponry on each other should a conflict arise, leading to the annihilation of each other. To strengthen international structures of cooperation and negotiation, organisations with a pan-European identity began to shape the international system since the 1950s. The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) formed in 1952 with six members is a prime example of such endeavours. The ECSC has evolved in the past five decades to become what is today known as the European Union (EU). Prior to the formation of a common economic identity was the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), that today has as its members nations of the former Warsaw Pact., the countries under the influence of Soviet Union.

With international politics almost always at the crisis mode, it was a turning point in 1989 when the Berlin wall was dismantled, and almost overnight communist states of East Europe abandoned an ideology that determined 'production relations' for a system where market forces were predominant. The implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991 was the final footnote in the history of the Cold War. The years after the collapse of the Soviet Union have yielded to the emergence of a system where one superpower dominates all spheres of influence, and this phase can be called the rise of the unipolar world with the United States as the main determinant of the international order.

The centrality of the United States to this order is a matter of discourse for international relations and political science theorists. Before explaining the various cross currents situated within the unipolar order, it is imperative to elaborate on the prevailing global "system" – within whose rubric the dynamics of a unipolar world operate.

22.2 WHAT IS A SYSTEM?

The structure and norms of the world polity are products of policies *chosen* by states and other actors that make the world system and its various subsystems. At the same time the structure and norms of the world political system influences the behaviour of the subsystems comprising it.

Theorising based on systems brings together two fundamental approaches to International Relations (IR) theory. The first is focused on actors and the interaction that takes place between them, whether they are individuals, groups of people such as nations, or bureaucratic units. This approach has been termed *reductionist* because its focus is the development of explanations or theory at the level of the individual participants or units. The second approach places emphasis on the structures that provide the framework within which such interactions take place. The structural approach attempts to explain how the structures within which the actors exist affect the interactions between the actors, and how and why changes in the structure take place. This structural approach has been termed *holistic* or *systemic* because it is based on the development of explanations at a more micro level of analysis.

In a systems framework, change or stability can be generated at any level (from micro to macro) in the world polity. Such change or stability-generating forces can also come from or be processed through factors not fully encompassed by the political system, namely, ethnic/cultural, religious groupings, economy, ecological environment and the physical universe. Developments in any of these "non-political" fields will affect, sometimes profoundly, the conditions of life, perceptions, and values of the same persons who construct, operate and transform the world's political system and subsystems.

22.3 FEATURES OF THE SYSTEMS THEORY

The world polity should first of all be viewed as the global configuration of governance – meaning the enforceable rules, and the rule-making and rule-implementing processes and institutions. It includes not only the prevailing configuration of governance but also efforts directed towards changing the prevailing configuration. As such the world polity is appropriately conceived of as a subsystem of the world's social system. Other subsystems, at this level of analysis, would be the world economic system, the humanity centred ecological system, the world's pattern of cultures, and so on.

The world polity, viewed as a system, itself comprises various political subsystems:

a)   The 'nation-state system' (often referred to as the "international system") of official government to government relations among countries including numerous regional and functional intergovernmental agencies.

b) The rapidly proliferating "transnational" organizations and political movements operating beyond the direct control of national governments (the transnational actors may be political sub-divisions of the nation states as well as non-governmental groups or persons)

c) The internal or domestic systems of politics and government of each nation-state, comprising their own subsystems: provincial and local governments, party systems, interest group organizations etc.

d) The individual as political actor.

An essential feature of the proposed theory is that the various systems and subsystems, although analytically discrete, are open to one another: causes and effects typically move laterally from subsystem to subsystem, but also vertically from one level to the next, even leaping over levels. Yet each system or subsystem has its own partially unique configuration; and some of them as a matter of policy, may try to restrict the extent to which they are open to influence from other systems. It may be theoretically valid, therefore and often analytically useful, to heuristically treat them as closed systems. But, with increasing mobility of persons, substances and information, the *interpenetrability* of the various systems that make up the world's political system would seem to be a more useful premise of a general theory of the world polity.

The premise of open systems is consistent with the analytic strategy advanced by James Rosenau for understanding the turbulence of the contemporary era. We need, he advises, to "analyse world politics in such a way as to use labels that do not automatically accord superior status to nation-states." We should operate from the assumption that "sub-national and supranational sovereignty-free actors may be as relevant as sovereignty bound actors,…conceiving of whole systems and sub-systems as the cast of characters at the macro level that, along with the individuals at the micro level act out global dramas." This conceptual frame, says Rosenau, "facilitates inquiry into the conflicts that divide collectivities and the efforts they must make to bridge the issues that separate them."

22.4 WHAT IS SYSTEMIC THEORY?

A systemic theory presumes that how power is distributed among states — or what is called the systemic structure — affects how states behave. The idea is that how states behave is a function of what the international arena looks like. A system with one dominant power (unipolarity) is likely to function differently from one in which there are two dominant powers (bipolarity) or more than two dominant powers (multipolarity). How the actors relate to each other and the relationship between the structure and the actors – agents – (the structure-agency relationship) forms a critically important part of the quest for an understanding of change at the systemic, holistic level.

22.4.1 What is a Domestic Political Explanation of Foreign Policy In Systemic Terms?

This depends on an implicit contrast to "systemic" or "structural" explanations. What we count as a domestic theory can vary depending on the way we conceive of systemic theories: (1) those that envision states as unitary and purposive actors that consider what other states will or might do, or (2) those that, in addition to this, do not consider characteristics of particular states as relevant to the explanation offered.

22.4.2 Is Systemic Theory, a Theory of Foreign Policy?

Yes: international political outcomes are the direct, even if sometimes unintended, result of individual states' foreign policy choices; if the theory explains tendencies, it must help

explain choices. For Kenneth Waltz, systemic theories are not theories of foreign policy "by definition." A domestic theory would be one in which (a) at least one state is represented as non-unitary, and pursues a suboptimal foreign policy due to the interaction of the actors within the state, or (b) either include this or explain differences in foreign policies by referring to regime types or particular foreign policy goals. If one adopts the broader understanding of systemic theory, the scope for domestic politics to matter is greatly reduced. It is limited to cases where a state pursues a foreign policy that is suboptimal.

Systemic analysis itself incorporates domestic factors. Domestic theories trace an individual foreign policy to facts about its political system rather than solely, or at all, to its international position. Elaborating further, James N. Rosenau terms the international system as having entered an era of "cascading interdependence" based on rapidly changing patterns of interaction among such phenomena as "resource scarcities, subgroupism, the effectiveness of governments, transnational issues, and the aptitudes of publics." Cascading interdependence distributes power in an erratic fashion among state entities and numerous sub-systems at many levels.

In the post-Cold War world, an overwhelming amount of scholarly attention has been directed at quantifying, evaluating and predicting the trajectory of American power. Terms like primacy, unipolarity, empire and hegemony have been used to capture the essence of the United States status in the international system. A definition of the term unipolar will be as follows: "the preponderant influence or authority over others, or, the social, cultural, ideological, or economic influence exerted by a dominant state/group." Not only does the United States possess an unprecedented amount of power relative to other states in the system, but it also exhibits a preponderant influence over other states across all realms of interaction, including the creation of international institutions.

22.5   DEFINING UNIPOLARITY

The concept of polarity in the international system is used to describe the distribution of power capabilities across states. Polarity is a descriptive term that illustrates the structure of the system through a portrayal of the concentration of hard power capabilities in the system. The three main variations in polarity are unipolarity, bipolarity and multipolarity. However it is important to recognise that even within each type of polarity there exists variation. For example, John Mearsheimer has distinguished between balanced multipolarity and unbalanced multipolarity, which depend on the degree to which power capabilities vary among multiple great powers. Polarity is a system-level concept that relates to the distribution of power, real or perceived, in the international system. Unilateralism and multilateralism are choices about the policies that states adopt within a given international system.

Charles Krauthammer and Robert Kagan are what might be called unipolar unilateralists. They see the distribution of power in the international system as essentially unipolar. They also embrace unilateral policies as the means by which the United States must protect its interests and act for the greater good of humanity. Krauthammer identified the "unipolar moment" in his seminal article of 1990 and later came to see unipolarity as an enduring feature of the international order. John Ikenberry and Joseph Nye are similar to Krauthammer and Kagan in that they perceive the international system as essentially unipolar. Ikenberry essentially updates hegemonic stability theory to post-Cold War conditions, arguing that through restraint and the judicious use of international institutions, the US can perpetuate its special status in the international system, forestalling the formation of hostile coalitions or the rise of a new hegemon. Nye acknowledges some elements of multipolarity in the international system – he argues that international relations has become a three level game involving military, economic and so-called soft power, with the US

enjoying unipolar dominance only on the first level – but he is concerned that a shift to across-the-board multipolarity would be destabilising. American foreign policy, according to Nye, can and should work to preserve US military dominance through the judicious use of soft power.

Traditional realists such as John Mearsheimer reject both the neoconservative and liberal views of the unipolar world order. They argue that the international system is inherently multipolar. Any unipolar imbalance can only be momentary, as competing power centres inevitably rise and seek to counterbalance the dominant power. Mearsheimer also argues that US policy must be unilateralist for the simple reason that all great powers pursue essentially unilateralist policies.

For William Wohlforth, unipolarity is, a structure in which one state's capabilities are too great to be counterbalanced. Unipolarity is an extremely useful term for capturing the current state of the international system, which is marked by an overwhelming and unprecedented concentration of power in both the military arsenal and the economic strength of one nation. In other words, the term unipolarity describes a heavily skewed distribution of power in favour of one state. Building on this understanding, unipolarity can take more than one form. According to the traditional understanding of unipolarity, it can be present when there is one great power in a system full of minor powers. Other alternative forms of unipolarity could be present in a system that contains one superpower with all great powers or one superpower with all minor powers. The key to understanding unipolarity is in the degree to which power capabilities are concentrated in the hands of a single dominant state.

Unipolarity implies neither the absence of all politics among great powers nor the absence of all power balancing among lesser powers nor certainly the resolution of all global problems. It does not mechanistically determine a specific strategy on the part of the major powers. It simply creates incentives for strategies that diminish if not eliminate two major problems that bedeviled international systems of the past: struggles for global primacy and competitive balancing among the major powers. The US follows a strategy of maintaining a preponderance of power globally and deep engagement in the security affairs of Europe, Asia and the Middle East. It has adapted rather than abandoned the central institutions and practices it fostered during the bipolar era, expanded the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to central Europe, strengthened its military alliance with Japan, and taken on a great many other less heralded new security commitments in areas formerly under the grasp of the Soviet Union.

While unipolarity captures the essence of the distribution of power in a system, it does not capture the amount of influence exerted on others in the system. Even in a unipolar system, the dominant state can choose to demonstrate little or no desire to control both the internal and external affairs of states around the globe. In other words, unipolarity is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the status of global hegemony.

22.6   THE DEBATE OVER UNIPOLARITY

For realists, the debate over the structure of international politics is primarily centred on two explanations of world order: balance of power theory and balance of threat theory. Both theories have different predictions and policy prescriptions for US behaviour in the post-Cold War world.

Within the realist debate about the emerging structure of international politics, several commentators have suggested new configurations of world power. Some commentators have cited the erosion of US primacy as evidence of a changing international system. For instance, Samuel Huntington has proposed that changes in post-Cold War international

politics reflects a uni-multipolar system with one superpower and several major powers. It has been argued that the waning of 'American hegemony' has given rise to the regional power centres of Europe and East Asia. However, despite the devolution of US power globally, the shift towards multipolarity is several decades from now. The extent to which post-Cold War international politics remains unipolar will depend on the cautious exercise of US preponderance and its ability to convince other states of its apparent 'benign intent.'

In a widely cited essay Christopher Layne argues that America's unipolar moment will be short-lived, as smaller states will inevitably balance against it, leading to a new multipolar era. Similarly, other commentators believe that at least the structure of the economic world is multipolar. For instance, the former US president, Bill Clinton had proclaimed at a summit in Tokyo in 1993 that "we now live in a tripolar world, driven by the Americas, Europe and Asia."

The durability of unipolarity has been particularly questioned by neo-realists. For neo-realists, unipolarity is the least stable of all structures because any great concentration of power threatens other states and causes them to take action to restore a balance. Other commentators suggest that a large concentration of power works for peace, and they doubt that US preponderance is fragile and easily negated by the actions of other states. Despite this, many analysts argue that unipolarity is an 'illusion', a 'movement' that will not last long, or is already giving way to multipolarity. Kenneth Waltz is instructive in his response to unipolarity. Waltz points out the inevitable recurrence of balancing against hegemonic powers:

> Balance-of-power theory leads one to expect that states, if they are free to do so, will flock to the weaker side. The stronger, not the weaker side, threatens them, if only by pressing its preferred politics on other states.

For Waltz, structural change affects the behaviour of states, compelling them to balance and thwart even a 'benign hegemon' such as the US. Despite Paul Kennedy's assertion that, "it simply has not been given to any one state to remain permanently ahead of all the others states," the real question is how long will international politics remain unipolar? For Waltz, polarity is the concentration of power among major states. "Poles" are those states with unusually large concentrations of all underlying elements of power. The US is the only state today- and indeed, the only state in modern international history- that excels markedly and measurably in all the relevant power capabilities: military, economic, technological and geopolitical. The power of the US is not unlimited, but it is unprecedented. The US accounts for 60 per cent of all defence spending among the world's major powers. It also accounts for 40 per cent of economic production, 40 per cent of technology production and 50 per cent of total research and development expenditures. No state in history could do this and leading states tended to be either great commercial and naval powers or great land powers – never both.

Those who see the world as multipolar and embrace genuinely multilateral policies include Michael Lind, who has called for an effort to revive a concert of great powers, as well as David Calleo and Charles Kupchan, both of whom also embrace a form of multipolar multilateralism, albeit one that is highly Eurocentric. Lind argues that the US should concentrate on working with the other major powers in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the G8, an approach that will spare the US the need to choose between a reflexive multilateralism that subordinates US interests to the rule of small and weak countries and an arrogant unilateralism that places the US at odds with the rest of the world. Calleo and Kupchan see the European Union (EU) as evolving into a great power counterpart of the US, one that is neither weak nor necessarily a threat to US interests. Calleo sees a stronger EU as the natural partner of a chastened and more

modest US in building a "cooperative multilateral system based on rules with an effective balance of power to sustain those rules," while Kupchan heralds the "return of a world of multiple power centres" in which Europe is America's only near-term major competitor.

Coral Bell and Michael Mastanduno argue that the durability of unipolarity rests on balance-of-threat theory. Balance-of-threat theory proposes that states will not balance a dominant power if its behaviour is perceived as benign and non-threatening. Following this, a dominant power is supported if it exercises its power to promote shared interests and institutions that subvert anarchy and competition. In contrast, states that exercise unfettered power and engage in predatory behaviour are likely to trigger balancing coalitions.

The grand strategy of preserving unipolarity was enunciated in the Defence Planning Guide (DPG) of 1992. The paper stated that the US "must maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role."

The conclusion of the DPG reflected official views about unipolarity. For instance, in 1991, the Pentagon's Director of Net Assessments defined a 'manageable' world as one in which there existed no threat to America's superpower role. Clearly, from the point of view of US officials, the post-Cold War system is unambiguously unipolar.

For Huntington, international primacy is "the ability of one actor to exercise more influence on the behaviour of more actors with respect to more issues than any other government." Kenneth Waltz argues that the ability of the US to exert international influence is determined by its different sources of power. For Waltz, size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence rank high as important sources of power.

The strategic direction of the 1992 DPG was driven by a desire to preserve US primacy. In addition to maintaining US primacy, the DPG envisioned the US seeking to prevent the rise of challenges by promoting international law, democracy and free-market economies.

22.7 THE FUTURE OF UNIPOLARITY: BALANCE OF THREAT VERSUS BALANCE OF POWER

To preserve its dominant position, the US, acts by reassuring and integrating potential challengers into security and economic institutions. Since the end of the Cold War, US security policy has tended to conform to the predictions of the balance-of-threat theory. US officials have sought to preserve US preponderance through efforts to convince countries like Japan and Germany to remain *partial* great powers, and to integrate potential great powers like Russia and China into an American led new world order. It must be mentioned here that neither balance-of-threat nor balance-of-power commentators suggest that unipolarity is indefinite, but rather have different views as to how long unipolarity will last.

Balance-of-threat theory, first advanced by Stephan Walt, points to the durability of the 'unipolar movement.' Walt suggests that the balancing behaviour of states may be overcome, provided that the foreign policy of the dominant state is moderate and is seen by other states as preferable to the rivalry of a multipolar world. Similarly, Mastanduno proposes that, "unipolarity will not be preserved forever, but balance-of-threat theory implies that it may be sustainable for a meaningfully longer period than balance-of-power theorists anticipate. Balance-of-threat theory accounts for the tendency in US security policy to preserve America's position at the top of the international hierarchy by engaging and reassuring other major powers.

In contrast to this, balance-of-power theory, developed most explicitly by Kenneth waltz, argues that unipolarity will be transformed into multipolarity by the early decades of the

twenty-first century. In Waltz' analysis he draws on the historical behaviour of states to moderate assymetrics of power among nations and to balance what he terms "American hegemony." Balance-of-power theory suggests that efforts to preserve unipolarity are bound to be futile and likely to be counterproductive. In the case of other major powers Layne suggests that:

> …a policy of attempting to smother Germany's and Japan's great power emergence would be unavailing because structural pressures will impel them to become great powers regardless of what the US does or does not do.

In the current unipolar world the rise of new powers to balance the US (like China) is not a foregone conclusion. US statecraft in the post-Cold War world has asserted a *limited* hegemony over political-military matters. Accordingly, US officials emphasise multilateral coalitions and decision-making processes over unilateralism, even in cases of military intervention. The logic of balance-of-threat theory is instructive here. States that engage in self-binding and exercise their power in a benign manner are unlikely to trigger balancing. The benign exercise of power gives rise to trust and shared interests and institutions that underwrite stability and negate competition between states.

22.8 CHALLENGES TO THE UNIPOLAR WORLD

The post-Cold war era has been dominated by the US and the international system is unipolar. The comprehensive power of the US has encouraged a commitment to multilateral decision-making, trade liberalisation and the stated global ideals of liberal norms. The structure of international politics reflects the preferences and interests of the US – the world's only superpower now evolving into a hyper-power. This unipolar system is in all likelihood the prime determinant for the foreseeable future.

The extent to which the international system remains unipolar depends on the exercise of US power. The US has sought to legitimise its primacy in political-military matters through a combination of 'benign hegemony' and 'multilateral rule-making' rather than forceful unilateralism. To maintain its primacy in international affairs, the US has followed the prescriptions of balance-of-threat theory in promoting limited American hegemony. However, the ability of the US to convince other states about its intentions is perhaps the most studied aspect of the international system today.

Contrary views to this 'unipolar moment' are reflected in the growing opposition to 'globalisation' and a formalised structure of free trade as exemplified by the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The WTO is an institution that is much loathed in developing countries and seen as a vehicle promoting the interests of the industrialised countries at the expense of the large majority of people who make do with little. The emergence of the WTO paradoxically highlights the emergence of a 'supra state' that through its policies can wreck the livelihoods of people through its policy prescriptions. The increased role and reach of non-government organisations and the growing awareness and empowerment of large populations spread across all the continents is finding its expression in the World Social Forum (WSF) umbrella organisation that champions the voices of the unheard. The WSF is increasingly vocal in its opposition to policies enunciated by the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the garb of 'structural adjustment' that denies developing countries the chance of arriving at a consensus of what development paradigm to adopt and instead forces an agenda that suits the industrialised nations of the West. This approach of undermining the sovereignty of a nation-state by adopting economic measures is facing growing resistance. The panacea of 'globalisation' benefiting the entire world with its aims of 'shared prosperity' are increasingly coming under close scrutiny as large parts of the world still remain impoverished and strife-stricken.

22.9 SUMMARY

This Unit has attempted to theoretically define what unipolar world means as a part of systemic theory. More importantly, the debate around the unipolar world has been largely in the context of the 20th century history of the world, where cold war gave way to the dominance of U.S.A. in large spheres of world polity. The Unit also attempted to chart out some future directions in this regard.

22.10 EXERCISES

1)   What is the theoretical debate around the idea of unipoarity?

2)   In what ways has the dominance of USA over world polity led to the establishment of the unipolar world?

3)   What are the possible future directions in the present scenario of a singular dominance of the world by U.S.A.?

UNIT 23 POLITICAL REVOLUTION: FRANCE

Structure

23.1 INTRODUCTION

At the undergraduate level you may have studied the course of events of the French Revolution and what this Revolution tried to achieve. In this Unit we shall examine what the modern world owes to this great event by analyzing its direct and indirect impact.

The French Revolution along with the American War of Independence, is given credit for movements such as liberalism, democracy and nationalism, although many of these ideas became greatly transformed in the second half of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth centuries. No other idea has had such a deep impact on the emerging nations as the ideas of equality, liberty and fraternity. These concepts found expression in many different ways because although they had different meanings for different sections of society, they nonetheless enjoyed a universal appeal. As movements, they were directly linked with political expression and social protests and the French Revolution became a source of inspiration for many of the subsequent movements. Before going into a detailed discussion of those aspects of the revolution that shaped the modern world, it would be useful to briefly study the direction the revolution took.

Like in many other parts of Europe, a conflict was emerging between the old regime and the new social forces in France. The state of France was in a deep financial crisis and the subject of taxation brought the issue of privilege to the forefront. The calling of the Estates General to tackle the taxation problem sparked off the crisis. Clergy and nobility constituted a very small minority of population but enjoyed most of the privileges and were represented in the first two estates while the rest of over 90 per cent of population remained burdened with taxation and many of them had to

pay many seigniorial dues but had a much lesser representation. This political system was questioned by the newly emerging classes. They were deeply imbued with the ideals of political reform, flowing from the ideas of the Enlightenment. The elections of the Estates General activated all sections of the society. While the mobility tried to capture its losing power and safeguard its privileges, the representatives of the middle class attempted to alter the power structure. In the words of Prof. Goodwin, the revolution began as 'a merciless war between aristocracy and democracy. But just a couple of years back, in 1787, aristocracy had made a strong onslaught on despotism.' The events of 1789 rapidly outran all expectations. These were simultaneous outbreaks of the urban poor, leading to the famous capture of Bastille on July 14, 1789.

The representatives of the third estate declared themselves as the National Assembly and began creating a new France through debates and experiments. The rural population on an unprecedented scale forced the National Assembly to end all forms of privileges including financial and legal. The new Constitution of 1791 and the confiscation of Church property radically transformed the stated structure of France and altered the basis of power and authority. The strong popular pressure of the lower classes pushed the revolution towards radical republicanism. The flood of revolutionary ideas and experiments could not be confined to the borders of France and the revolutionary government of France began exporting the new principles by propaganda and war. Thus, the revolutionary events rapidly outran all expectations and the break with the past became irrevocable. As a result during the nineteenth century, France became a laboratory of social and political theories. In this Unit, we shall try to explain:

- how the French Revolution was an attempt to break with the past;

- how a modern political culture emerged, based on the principle of liberty, equality and national sovereignty;

- in what ways the revolution contributed to the modern ideas of democracy based on the practice of representation, the ideas of plebiscite and the importance of public opinion;

- how the fear of revolution led to the theory of revolutionary conspiracy for the future generations; and

- how the ideas of modern nationalism and socialism had their roots in the revolution itself.

23.2 FRENCH REVOLUTION AND THE EMERGENCE OF NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

In recent years, scholars have broadened the period of the French Revolution to almost the last three decades of the eighteenth century when revolutionary politics had begun to take shape. The creation of new political rhetoric and the development of new symbolic forms of political practice transformed contemporary notions about politics, which became an instrument for reshaping society. People of France had a strong belief that they could establish a new national community based on reason and natural law according to the spirit of enlightenment, without reference to the customs of the past. Such high ambitions demanded new political practices for their realization. As François Furet suggests, France through revolution invented democratic culture and revealed to the world one of the basic forms of historical

consciousness of action. If the Revolution invented new structures and upset the old ones, it also set in motion new forces to transform the traditional mechanisms of politics. The Revolution took over an empty space and then proliferated within that. For Furet, the French Revolution was essentially a political phenomenon. It led to a profound transformation of political discourse involving new but powerful forms of political symbolism and experimented in radical forms of political action which was unprecedented and unanticipated.

In the political dialogue between societies and their states, the Revolution tipped scales in favour of society against the state. The ancient regime was dominated by the king; the Revolution turned it into people's achievement. **From the 'kingdom of subjects' France became a nation of citizens.** The old society was based on privilege; the Revolution established equality. The Revolution created an ideology of a radical break with the past. Everything — the economy, society and politics yielded to the force of new ideology. The revolution, according to Keith Michael Baker, marked the transformation of the discursive practice of the community, a moment in which social relations were reconstituted and the relationship between individual, community and state radically transformed. As the Revolution progressed, it coined new vocabulary of politics and culture. It accumulated its own symbols and religious overtones and provided new definitions of patriotism and war. For Robespierre, the famous Jacobin leader, the revolution became a war of liberty against its enemies. 'Its intensity, its reforming zeal and its war against privilege made it' as Mcmanicrs writes, 'a fort of forcing house where in the ideals of the future, and their perversions, were brought to early maturity'.

It should also be borne in mind that the Revolution in France was not pre-planned. The overthrow of the government was followed by intense confusion and opened the gates of political discourse and contestations. In this situation, certain kind of actions and arguments took on meanings that often went far beyond what the actors or leaders intended. The emergence of modern political culture destroyed the absolutist monarchy and brought about a political order under which the nation existed as a collective body. Various efforts were made to reconstitute the meaning of public right and redefine the nature of social order. According to K.M. Baker, the three strands of discourse in the late eighteenth century were – justice, will and reason. The emergence, elaboration and interpretation of these three discourses defined the political culture that emerged in France and provided the ideological framework to the subsequent changes. These discourses provided grounds for the abolition of feudal structure in France. Thus, the Revolution had begun a new era but its ideologies and institutional framework gradually developed as a consequence of debates and struggles within as well as outside France.

23.2.1 The Ideas of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity

No doubt, the ideas like liberty, equality, fraternity and so on had existed sometimes in a very confused or abstract form in many societies but in France, during the revolutionary era, these became the guiding principles for the law makers. The American Revolution of 1776 had also declared all men born 'free and equal'. The Congress of the representatives of the thirteen colonies had asserted that all men are born equal and have certain natural rights which are inalienable and cannot be taken away. But the American Constitution remained silent on the significant question of slavery and postponed the demand for extension of the franchise to them. The slavery issued had divided the American nation during the Civil War (1861 – 1865). In France, these ideas became the defining concepts that had impact not only upon the western civilization but also worked their way into the history of 19th and 20th century Europe, America and Asia.

By liberty, the revolutionaries meant the right to act within the world with responsibility to no one but oneself. It was an idea that remained dear to those who made the French Revolution and one which pervaded the reforms. The Revolution founded a potent new tradition of liberty. Protestants, Jews and Free Thinkers gained toleration both in France and in the French dominated regions. The first official document of the French Revolution – the Declaration of the Rights of Man - stated the ideas of liberty and equality and efforts were made to embody them in the new regime to form the chief theme of the French politics in the nineteenth century.

The Declaration of the Rights of Men

Robespierre had argued that the French Revolution was the first revolution to be based on the theory of the rights of humanity. The truth however was that the Frenchmen found considerable difficulty in reaching a consensus regarding the definition of those rights. Closely associated with the notion of liberty is the idea of equality. The Revolutionary and the Napoleonic regimes established the principle of equal liability to taxation. They provided greater degree of economic opportunity for the third estate by various means by removing monopolistic rights, abolition of social privileges, by breaking up large land-holdings of the nobles and clergy and opened up administrative posts to merit. The Revolutionary regime promoted fraternity in the legal sense as well, by making all Frenchmen equal before law.

A few lines from a contemporary poem bring out the spirit of the time—

Oh you who are discouraging by nothing?

True lovers of Liberty

Establish equality

On the debris of slavery

Republican Frenchmen, conquerors of your rights,

Strike down all these tyrants, profaners of the law.

These revolutionary slogans have become the torch-bearers for many of the countries in the age of decolonization.

The continuing chain of revolutions which spread from Spain (1820) to Naples and Sicily (1820), Piedmont (1821) and finally to France (1830) clearly shows the unending appeal of the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity.

23.2.2   The Concept of Republican State

The idea of a Republican state was not the product of the French Revolution as there existed many republican states in the ancient world — in Greece, Rome and in India. But the French Republic was based on a modern ideological platform. It was created with the support of a liberal constitution and popular base. The world 'republic' has become inseparable from the Revolution with two high points:

* The year 1789 when the sovereignty of the monarch was replaced by the sovereignty of the nation; and

* The 1792 when the monarch was deposed and the liberal republic was established.

Interestingly, in the French tradition, the word 'republic' has retained a powerful emotional importance even though its institutional structures remained weak. The principle of republic was subverted by persons of despotic traits on many occasions.

Modern politics can be said to have begun in the revolutionary decade, giving birth to terms like 'right' and 'left'. The French Revolution had divided the people between liberals and conservatives. The liberals generally moved towards republicanism with wide suffrage, individual rights, freedom of speech and expression, and election of the head of the State. The conservatives resisted change and laid stress on discipline, duties and social hierarchy. The unprecedented challenge of the Revolution crystallized the political thinking of the conservatives. Many of them opposed reforms based on the ideas of the Enlightenment. Both these ideologies played a determining role in popular movements creating a sharp and antipathic division in nineteenth century Europe. The French exported the idea of republicanism against the English preference for monarchy and conservatism. The Republic in France is now firmly established. The "Mareillaise" is no more a battle song but her national anthem and the Fourteenth of July is the national holiday, remembered as the Republic Day. So 'the currents of turbulence and ideological dissidence which flowed most strongly after 1789' according to C.A. Bayly, 'forced ruling groups to reconstitute the ideological foundations of the state and partially to modernize it'. They drew from a variety of sources, especially the Enlightenment. It was this shift in the basis and structure of traditional states that led to the popularity of new principles like republicanism and liberalism.

23.2.3 Modern Views on Representation

Robespierre believed that the sovereign people, once their institutions were established, would do for themselves all that they could do well and their delegates would carry out what the people could not do. The supporters of Rousseau, however, faced problems because the *social contract* stated that 'a people which gives itself representatives is no longer free'. Citing the English practice, Rousseau argued that the English people were free only at election time. In fact, the *social contract* of Rousseau offered an abstract antithesis of the political and social order of the ancient regime. The corporate society of orders and Estates was rejected in this work and was to be replaced by a society based on equality of individuals bound by the common status of citizenship. To achieve the freedom of the citizens, Rousseau transferred sovereignty from the monarch to the body of citizens as a whole. It is not the individual's will but the general will of the whole body of citizens that prevails. Rousseau's definition of social contract suggests that the sovereignty thus created through a collective will could neither be alienated nor represented. Sovereign authority of a monarch conferred by the people did not express the general will but only that of a particular person. Once this general will is lost in this way, it dissolves into a multiplicity of individuals who find themselves subject to the will of another. The social contract of Rousseau, therefore, offered a definite repudiation of representation as incompatible with the spirit of the general will.

The supporters of the Revolution felt that for a large state like France, Rousseau's principles had to be modified. Sieyes, one of the most important leaders of the liberal revolution, concluded that the people can neither speak nor act, except through their representatives. This view met objections from the Right, particularly from the nobles who subscribed to the distinction of Orders. Later on, in the period of Terror, Sieyes' view of representation met with opposition from the Left. The spread of Rousseau's ideas, the popular participation, and deteriorating economic circumstances created a demand for direct democracy, where deputies could be recalled from the Sectional Assembly of Paris and new representatives nominated, where people could intervene in state affairs by insurrections and the administration of popular justice could be introduced.

Keith Michael Baker traces the roots of the social theory of representation to the days of Louis XIV's reign when a group of reformers gathered around the Duc De Bourgogne demanding the restoration of traditional provincial estates. But it was the Physiocratic writings of Mirabeau and Quesney which transformed these ideas into a modern theory of representation of society and social interests. Mirabeau in his work *L'Ami des hommes* ' (The Friend of Men) established the rights of property as the fundamental law of every society. He suggested the decentralization of administration through the creation of provincial assemblies composed of property owners. Till this stage, the proponents of the social theory of representation proposed assemblies but this was not meant to give voice to political will of the nation. It was concerned with the rational representation of social interests.

The theory of representation was given a modern content through the political debates of 1788 and 1789. It was reworked and changed from some of its earlier meanings when the deputies revolted against the old order based on the traditional force of representation, and justified their action by an appeal to the principle of general will. Sieyes' *Qu'est-ce que be TierEtat?* (What is the Third Estate?) provided solutions to some of the thorny problems raised in political debates. He legitimized the Revolution of the deputies in the name of national sovereignty and this led to the effective transformation of the Estates-General into a National Assembly. There

was the fusion of the idea of the general will with the concept of representation, achieved in the course of constitutional debates that took place over formation of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.

The French Revolution brought about a fundamental transformation in the concept of representation, thereby contributing to a vibrant form of democracy. The traditional perception of representation had located unity and identity in the person of an absolute monarch. Rousseau had suggested that it could be found only in the body of the citizens taken as a whole. For Sieyes, a complex modern society could achieve unity only in the national assembly. But it was far from a complete solution. Instead, it introduced tensions into revolutionary discourse. Yet, it provided an ideological foundation to the modern concept of representative government – an ideal that influenced so many liberals of the nineteenth century.

Although, the French theorists had provided the idea of the 'sovereignty of the people' they could not transform it into reality for a number of reasons. The effective instrument needed to translate ideas into practice was a coherent party system. During the revolutionary era, there was hardly any political party. One does talk of the Girondins and the Montagnards as the parties of those days but in reality these were more like shifting groups based on friendship or personal loyalties without party organization. They hardly represented public opinion or contested on distinct ideology. Besides, the French democratic experiments were carried out in the most adverse conditions, when French had plunged into war in 1792. The Revolution drifted away from its original ideals into another stage – the period of Terror and it is commonly described as the beginning of 'totalitarian democracy' under Robespierre. Although he was fully aware that the revolutionary dictatorship would be a temporary experiment and not the end of the democracy, his interpretation of Rousseau and general will was conveniently used by dictators of the modern period to justify their actions.

23.2.4   The Theory of Revolutionary Conspiracy

The polarization of Europe's politics into Left and Right also encouraged new ideas of the revolution which led to radical upheavals and subversion of such basic social institutions as family and property. By 19th century, the Revolution had become a universal force – an ideological form of politics that first influenced Europe and then the world. This resulted in the construction of a conspiracy theory on the origins of the Revolution. The Revolution began to be seen by many (like Edmund Burke) as a conspiracy by an active minority who were fed by the teaching of philosophers and had all veneration for ancient institutions and demanded a new deal. This minority was poisoned by the new doctrines and in the name of democracy undermined authority and damaged social stability. Many (like Austrian Chancellor Metternich) feared the outbreak of revolution in other parts of Europe and this gave birth to the theory of conspiracy which haunted many governments and conservative leaders.

The general impression persisted throughout the nineteenth century that the French Revolution was the outcome of conspiracy for which contemporary groups like freemasonry and men of revolutionary ideology were held responsible for overthrowing 'legitimate' authorities. The conspiracy theories promoted and sustained the language of civil war in politics. Many political battles were fought against imaginary foes. Abbe Barruel and the famous novelist Alexandre Dumas were among those influential writers who created the popular impression that freemasons supported revolutions in order to harm monarchy throughout Europe. They were also held responsible for undermining the power of the Catholic Church. Several

versions of this myth persisted throughout the nineteenth century. No doubt, freemasonry in France was popular with the left-wing politicians but they were seldom centres of conspiracy. They only remained platforms for political discussion. Even till the beginning of the twentieth century, they attracted radicals and some socialists. Their critics saw them as the homes of threatening and subversive activities. This theory of conspiracy was revived with its old myth when the civil war erupted in Paris after the Franco-Prussian war in 1870-71. This impression was created because some Parisian freemasons had tried to mediate between the rebels and the government. Interestingly, Nicholas Deschamps in his book *Les Societe's et la Societe* (The Societies and the Society) saw freemasonry behind the German unification. The conspiracy theory was also applied throughout the nineteenth century to Protestants, Jesuits and Jews. The Jews were also accused of plotting the rise of Prussia under Bismarck, in association with Protestants and freemasons. The publication of Edouard Drumont's best seller *La France Juive* (The French Jew Woman) in 1886 saw the beginning of anti-Jewish propaganda in many parts of Europe. Anti-semitism became a major conservative theme in the late nineteenth century. An anti-semitic paranoia got a major twist in France through the Dreyfus affair (1894 – 99). Its aftermath could be seen even during the Second World War. The formation of International Socialism in London in 1864, consisting of labour representatives and socialist parties of some European nations, was seen by many in context of the theory of conspiracy. There were many who held it responsible for the Paris Commune of 1871. Interpreting political events in terms of conspiracies is a tendency whose origins can be easily treated to the days of French Revolution.

23.3 NATIONALISM AND SOVEREIGNTY

Among the forces that were to shape the developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, nationalism proved to be of tremendous importance. The French Revolution provided a new definition of nation. France became a nation when the association of free citizens declared their rights to constitute the sole source of sovereignty. Sieye's famous exposition *Qu'est-ce-que le Tiers Etat?* (What is the Third Estate?) provided a political definition of the nation 'as inalienable common will'. This conception of nation had many implications. It meant that a nation was a body of associates living under a common law, enjoying the status of citizens, having a relationship of equality by excluding all forms of privilege based on birth or social rank. The second implication inherent in the definition of the nation became problematic as it was not universally accepted. Sieye's conception of nation, possessing an inalienable and unitary common will, meant a rejection of the ancient laws and ideas that upheld claims for traditional organizations and institutions, including the theory of divine rights. He insisted on the link between a unitary representation and a unitary national will that he considered crucial in transforming the Estates General into a National Assembly. Thus, popular sovereignty lay at the heart of the Revolution and was closely linked to nationalism.

In contrast to the revolutionary notion of nationalism, the eighteenth century concept of nation was aptly defined by Diderot in his *Eneycropedie*. In this, he described it as a 'corrective word used to denote a considerable quantity of people who inhabit a certain extent of country defined with certain limits, and obeying the same government'. Giving primacy to the diplomatic needs and security concerns, states were handed over, without paying heed to popular will, to foreign rulers as compensations, peace bribes or rewards of victory. The leaders of the Concert of Europe adopted the same methods to safeguard themselves against the future threats

by redrawing the map of Europe. However, such arrangements could not last long and a strong wave of nationalism swept across Europe, beginning with the Greek and Belgium movements, reaching its heights in 1848.

The French nationalism was fostered and strengthened by various methods. The Fete de Law Federation of 14 July 1790 had proclaimed and enacted the unity of the nation. By means of revolution and war, a large section of the population was made aware of belonging to the nation. The involvement of the people in national life from 1789 to 1815, in 1830, 1848 and 1870-71 made France a unique nation - revolutionary model for others and a standard bearer of political progress. National identity of France was redefined in 1889 by the nationalists by providing legal and cultural definitions. However, this debate remained inconclusive. All through these years, the French governments had organized grand festivals to instill a sense of national unity and promote a national memory. This included celebrating fetes like 14 July with military bands, parades, fire works, exhibitions, playing national anthem and creating national symbols, and by unveiling statues of republican heroes right across the country. These festivities have now become a common practice in almost all the nations to forge the spirit of national unity.

The role of the French Revolution in giving rise to nationalist feelings in other countries of Europe, was usually not direct. The French notions of nationalism often led to inspiration, administration and on a number of occasions, resulted in fear and resistance. According to C.A. Bayly, the thing that did most to radicalize the Revolution was the invasion of France by the great powers. The presence of foreign armies on French soil released a wave of resistance in France, then across the borders of France under Napoleon and in Europe itself. It released extraordinary energy in the name of nationalism. Napolean's attempt to create a German federation after the annexation of German lands on the left bank of Rhine from 1801 to 1814, revolutionized the German political structure and swept away its medieval foundations. The French reorganized and secularized the ecclesiastical states and the German states, abolished free cities and the imperial nobility and attacked the feudal relics. The practical effect of all these measures was the reduction in the Catholic and the Habsburg character of Germany. The influence of the larger states, particularly Prussia increased manifold and the number of political units of Germany greatly reduced from about 300 states to only 38 by 1815. Thus the process of German unification was set in notion. The French had also annexed Belgium for opposing the French while the kingdom of Italy was kept in economic tutelage for financial gains. Some of the Italian principalities were given away to the French ruling houses as rewards. Napoleon's rule caused strong popular resentment in these places. The critics of Napoleon rightly point out that his regime was the 'negation of nationality'. There is no doubt that Napoleon's rule also led to the imposition of French model of administration with institutions like secular education, civil code and prefect systems. Napoleon's defeat led to the liberation of these lands but the imperial institutions of Napoleon had a lasting impact. Metternich tried to reverse all this through Vienna Congress, yet the old patterns could never be restored completely. Here too, the principle of national unity began to influence the political movements.

The process of national unification in recent times has been achieved through various means – railways, expanding bureaucracies, administrative centralization, expansion of markets and economic regulations, education, mass media, propaganda through modern means of communication and by promoting cultural identity. Quite apart from these, ideological factors too have promoted national feelings. The Franco-Prussian War of 1871 was the direct outcome of the passionate nationalism and

popular sentiments that not only changed the political boundaries of Europe but also upset the traditional power equation.

Modern forms of nationalism manifested themselves in various ways between the French Revolution and the world wars. They revealed idealist, selfish and aggressive characteristics. Nationalism sometimes assumed sinister forms and has often been used as a vehicle for invasion and domination. Under the Nazi rule, it became insane and demonic. Modern definitions of nationalism lay stress on common descent, language, territory, cultural and ethnic bonds. The experiences of nineteenth century have left a large space for illogical emotions and hatred that was fed by myths and distortions of history to stir popular feelings.

Wars greatly shaped national identity and the model for this was provided by France. The cult of Napoleon provided France with a great moment of national triumph. The wars of Louis Napoleon in 1854, 1859 and 1870 aroused strong national feelings and were made to satisfy national aspirations. The nineteenth and the twentieth centuries saw almost every Western state glorifying military ceremonies, national symbols and mass conscriptions, thereby making war an instrument of national consciousness. It was the force of nationalism that propelled European states towards the First World War. The rise of Japan in Asia was achieved through promoting nationalist spirit while its absence in China delayed her emergence as a nation-state. The French Revolution, thus acted as a catalyst in the development and later the domination of modern nationalism, first in Europe and subsequently in the rest of the world. French nationalism became as much of a model as a threat for the outsiders. The resolute nationalist spirit drew a great deal from the Enlightenment philosophies and had a global appeal and global consequences.

23.4 THE IDEA OF PLEBISCITE AND TOTALITARIAN REGIME

The use of plebiscite as a device to settle disputes or to provide legitimacy to a debatable action had its origin in the French Revolution. In 1790 the citizens of Avignon declared their desire to be united with the rest of France. They were French speaking and were bound with the French culture but Avignon was a papal territory. This action of the people of Avignon brought an issue to the forefront that later became one of the most important sources of conflict and change during the nineteenth century – that was the principle of self- determination or the right of the people to choose their own allegiance. It ran contrary to the generally accepted principle that suggested that a ruler's sovereignty was derived from divine sanction. This right of self-determination, like the democratic principle, was closely related to the French Revolution and this passion for self-determination redrew the map of Europe in the nineteenth century. Many of the Italian States under Austrian rule succeeded in joining the union. The Latin American States of Spain and Portugal achieved independence between 1808 and 1826. The French Revolution had left its mark on these actions.

The establishment of the Jacobin Republic in 1793 was another decisive event that had a long term impact. Robespierre's action of setting up a republican government with a powerful executive was basically a temporary experiment and was not meant to be an end of democracy. His reinterpretation of Rousseau to legitimize his rule gave many dictators a pretext to justify their actions. Hence, the modern totalitarian states, particularly of the twentieth century, are usually seen as the legacy of the

French Revolution. Strong war-time dictatorships had been established in the earlier period but the quasi-democratic device of plebiscite was the by product of the French Revolution. A number of arbitrary measures were adopted during the Revolution which were given legal sanction by way of plebiscite. Many fraudulent method became a common practice under the Bonapartist regime. A new Constitution was passed by an unusually large majority and in 1802, Bonaparte became Consulate for life with just 8000 votes polled against him. With another plebiscite he became the Emperor of France with over three and a half million votes in his favour against mere 2579. Similar plebiscites were held by Louis Napoleon. Under the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century, the dictatorships have gained approval with foul means and many scholars hold the French Revolution responsible for this misuse of democracy.

23.5   FRENCH REVOLUTION AND SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY

Although, the French Revolution was a liberal and not a socialist revolution, some currents of socialism could be found in various guises on the eve of the Revolution – a few aspects of it provided later socialists with inspiration and heroes. It is true that there was a gulf between the most radical social thinkers of the eighteenth century and the modern doctrines of socialism but some of the writings and speeches of the revolution era were the driving force in the form of protest against poverty, exploitation and inequality. Montesquieu, who himself came from an aristocratic family, said that the state owed all its citizens an assured subsistence and healthy life. Similar sentiments were expressed by other thinkers and officials in France. Although there was no real socialist doctrine in France in 1789 but the passion for equality existed at every stage, even though the opposition was more against social rather than economic privilege.

The French Revolution protected property rights vehemently but it was not for total concentration of property and wealth. The egalitarian thought is reflected in Robespierre's speech of 5 February 1794 when he said that 'Commerce is the source of public wealth and not just of the monstrous opulence of a few families'. When the Church lands were auctioned, one argument in the debate was the need of making property more widespread, so that a larger number of people would become the supporters of the new order. Towards the end of 1789, a society was formed called the *Cerle Social* (Social Circle), to educate the people. In this, Abbe Fauchet highlighted the egalitarian implications of the *social contract,* and asked for a gradual division of land. However, many of these proposals were suppressed.

When the Revolution turned into war, the economic repercussions like food shortages, steep inflation, black-marketing, etc. led to the reinforcement of egalitarian ideas, with popular demand for equality and state regulation of economy. There were several small groups who were demanding or planning action. Some of them enjoy a special place in the ancestry of modern socialism. Apart from *Cercle Social,* Marx and Engels mention the names of Keclerc and Roux as precursors of socialism. Together with some others like Varlet, they formed a group demanding radical reforms and came to be called *Enrages*. They were individual enthusiasts and not bound by single ideology except their fight for the poor against the rich. Jacques Roux, a priest of the constitutional church in Paris, claimed that the produce of the land belonged to all men. His followers declared that physical need is the only basis of property. Roux also denounced the monopolists, hoarders and speculators as the enemies of

society. Varlet too carried forward the egalitarian virtues and felt that so long as the majority of population remained subject to the tyranny of the rich, Rousseau's concept of direct democracy would remain an illusion. Leclerc, the revolutionary journalist compared the mercantile and bourgeois class to aristocracy and raised a slogan that 'all men have an equal right to eat.'

The Herbertists represented the voice of the urban poor. Herbert was a mythical personality and reflected the aspirations and fears of the *Sans Culottes*, a lower middle class category consisting of artisans and small shopkeepers who strongly supported the success of the Revolution. Herbert divided the Third Estate between bourgeoisie and the people. They all preached a war gainst the rich. In 1795 – 96, Noel Babenf led a rising called the conspiracy of Equals, that was almost communist. He reflected the collective spirit and his original solutions were utopian in character – an idea of total abolition of private property.

The French socialist ideology resurfaced during the period of Restoration (1815 – 1830) and in July Monarchy. Pierre Joseph Proudhon's views, according to Karl Marx, marked an important stage in popular thought. He was one of those who helped the working class to become conscious of itself. His writings against profit making had idealized artisans, criticized industrialization and excessive division of labour and called for absolute equality of incomes. The socialist impact led to the coming of class war in 1848 and then in 1871. During the Paris Commune, the Paris workers made determined attempt to govern themselves. Words like class war, proletariat and workers solidarity came from France in the socialist vocabulary. All through the twentieth century, France remained an important centre of socialism and socialist thought.

23.6 THE CULTURAL LEGACY

The French Revolution was like an explosion and a violent upheaval. Events like this often destroy many aspects of the past culture. The destructive experience of the revolution was not expected to give birth to durable creations but the Revolution of 1789 signifies an idea of fundamental change.

The French people had to confront the collapse of the whole social order. What is termed as the *ancien regime*, and from its rubbles and chaos they had to assemble a new order. This provided limitless possibilities of innovation to the revolutionaries. Like the people of other regions, the Frenchmen did not have much of a political vocabulary before 1789 as politics centred at Vessailles, the royal court. However, the elections to the Estates General brought the common man of the street into the national politics. The lower section of the populace began participating in street marches and political insurrections. It affected not only the nature of politics but contributed to the sudden formation of a revolutionary language based on new political vocabulary. New words or phrases were coined to express popular demands. Words like citizen rights, sovereignty, representation and patriotism received new meanings. Thousands of brochures, pamphlets, caricatures and cartoons, plays, newspaper articles came out explaining the new ideology. Stage plays were enacted on political and revolutionary themes, folk songs were sung with changed meanings, popular fetes were organized and a revolutionary calendar was introduced in France. All these developments were contributing to the creation of new revolutionary culture. Traditional centres of public sphere were adapting themselves according to the revolutionary atmosphere. New concepts of time and space came into being based on the principles of rationalism and naturalism.
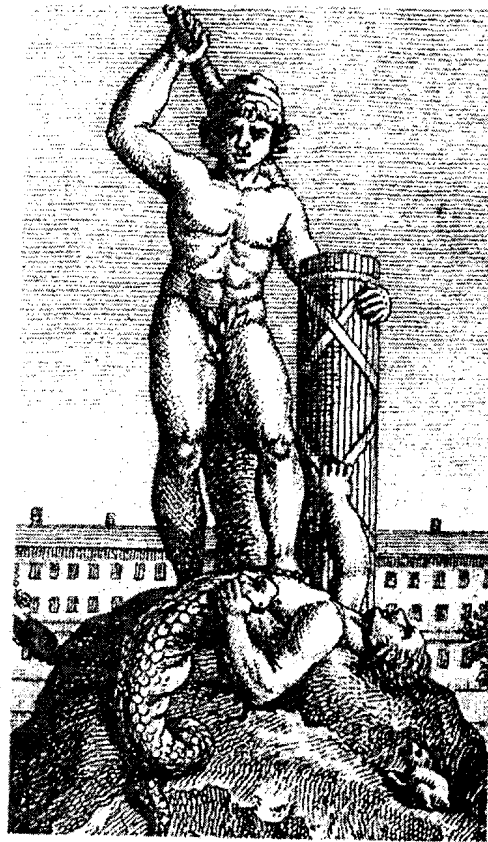
(Left) A contemporary seal shows Marianne, the image of the republic. (Right) A more aggressive engraving showing "The French people overwhelming the Hydra of Federation." (August 1793).

The Image of the Republic

The revolutionaries had provided a new division of time by preparing a revolutionary calendar in which a month was to consist of three weeks of ten days each, and a year divided into twelve months. The remaining five days were declared patriotic days to include civil qualities like virtue, genius, labour, reward and opinion. Each day of the week was given a new name, which was dedicated to some aspect of rural life. The names of the rulers and queens were swiftly removed from Paris streets and new names were given. Words like *Le Roy* or *Le Roi* (the king) were replaced by *la loi* (the liberty). Even the pictures of king, queen and jack were replaced with revolutionary symbols. The new expressions and political vocabulary had eroded the sacred position of the king. The ritual use of the language like swearing and oaths provided to the revolutionaries a means of reconstituting moral basis of the community. The formation of new political culture had its stamp on the French culture. Theatre, art and music came under strong revolutionary influence.

The coming of the Revolution influenced the journalistic press. The newspapers like *Mercure*, Brissot's *Patriote Francaise* (French Patriots) and Barere's *Point du Tour* (The Turning Point) provided direct message to the people and popularized the revolutionary ideology. These papers demonstrated the role of political journalism to the future revolutionaries including intellectuals like Karl Marx. There was a sudden growth of readership and a revolutionary change in the content of newspaper. This contributed to the formation of public opinion.

In the sphere of drama, every crisis in the revolution had its commentary on civic stage. Political themes were extensively borrowed. Stage plays became a source of political propaganda. Chenier's *Charles IX* is said to have baptized the stage in the name of nation, law and constitution. It was the most popular play reflecting the spirit of revolution. Art, too, was used in public festivals and in the visual pageantry of the large-scale spectacles. The decade of the Revolution produced

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thousands of printed images through allegorical compositions, political caricatures, portraits of leaders, letterheads, playing cards, children's games, civil manuals and many other forms. These images are called *ephemera* and these proved to be more effective means of drawing people into political debates. Art in this period acquired a strategic and explicitly political function. The revolutionaries had great faith in the power of images and art was used to perform the role of social and moral regenerator. The imagery of the French Revolution was created through all these means.

Illustration 3: Assignant (Paper Money) of 1792

However, it is very difficult to say as to how much of these changes survived the Revolution. Perhaps very little of it accept its imagery and memory. This was because the Revolution had completely rejected the old culture of ancient regime, while the new culture that was imposed from above was seen as a product of socio-political interests and charged up emotions of a few. Its survival became precarious. The French society had reached a stage of disorder and sharp divide with the collapse of the old moral foundations. The new ruling class was unable to provide an alternative. Yet those projects which were universal in scope, such as the metric system, secularism, legal code and democratic principles – they survived to a large extent. The other two expressions of the 18th century – Enlightenment and no-classicism struggled with romanticism in the 19th century but moulded some of the styles and ideas of modern day arts.

It can be said that the principal legacy of the French Revolution was the Revolution itself. Even after two hundred years, its memory persists. Many religions of humanity during the nineteenth century – religions which made humanity their objects of cult – were born out of this revolutionary faith. It marked the overthrow of the old regime and the establishment of a free, fraternal and egalitarian society. it forced a historical reconsideration of tradition. The revolutionary faith became a tradition that relieved itself in the events of 1830, 1848 and 1871 in France and inspired many others in Greece, Belgium, Italy and Germany. However, some people question the use of term 'revolutionary culture' for this memory, tradition and ritual enactments. Whichever way one looks at the Revolution, its most important legacy was democratic republicanism – an ideology embraced by a large section of the middle class all over the world. The ideology experienced stiff resistance from the European officials during the nineteenth century, as it was achieved either through war or terror. However, the radical republicanism in France had to adjust with more moderate forms of government, public education, secularism and the desire for individual liberty in order to find a permanent place in Europe and the outside world. The French Revolutionary culture had a deep influence over the reformulated post-colonial world that emerged after the Second World War.

23.7 REVOLUTION AND GENDER

One question which is often asked by the historians is whether the Revolution caused the disempowerment of women from politics. There is no doubt that women from different sections of French society participated in the Revolution and contributed in different ways. From the hostesses of salons representing the aristocratic and bourgeois background to women of modest means – washer women, fisher women, flower sellers to the labouring women, all had something to offer. Most of them demanded sufficient and regular supply of bread, some wanted better education but the radicals like those who were members of the society of Revolutionary Republic Women, asked for political representation, franchise rights and equality with men. There are, however, two views on this subject. One view suggests that the condition of French women worsened due to the Revolution and whatever was granted to them through the Constitution was taken away after 1793. Women ceased to be citizens and Napoleon's code adopted a cynical attitude towards them. The Revolution reflected bourgeois masculine power in which women were deprived of justice and the cause of women remained suspended for over one century. However, there is another view that holds that the Revolution improved the position of 'family' in which women given equal role. The new laws on inheritance of property reflected a distinct elevation in the status of women. Similarly, when the marriage was made a civil contract by the Constitution of 1791, divorce became a matter of mutual consent in which women had equal say. So while the French women were among the first in Europe to clamour for equal political rights and citizenship, their agitations died down after the Revolution and remained suspended till the second half of the century.

23.8 SUMMARY

After reading this Unit you must have realized that the French Revolution initiated several important issues which remain relevant in today's world but the solutions found to these questions varied with the passage of time. Prolonged debates followed once the revolutionary problems were raised. It is not easy to make a precise assessment of the Revolution's legacy. It definitely provided a sudden leap into a utopian future. Most of the revolutionaries throughout the world saw the Revolution as the torchbearer of modern politics and political experimentation but there are many others who shunned it for its violence and disorder. These are two opposite views on the Revolutionary politics. The 'Whig-Republican' interpretation sees the Revolution as the inventor of modern democratic culture. According to this view, the principles of liberty and equality reached a logical conclusion and a desired end by the end of the nineteenth century. The opposite view is presented by the 'Tory-Tocquevillian' analysis. It argues that the Revolution resulted in the strengthening of state power at the expense of autonomous institutions like the church, corporations and associations by weakening the civil society and making it dependent on the state. This view regards Bonapartism as the culmination of post-revolutionary political culture by creating a powerful state.

23.9 KEY WORDS

Ancien Regime (Ancient Regime): The political and administrative system in France in the 17th and 18th century under the Bourbon kings, before the French Revolution.

Concert of Europe (1815-23): Various Congresses held to settle the territorial and financial problems caused by Napoleonic expansions in Europe, followed by attempts to prevent further revolutions and to maintain the status quo.

July Monarchy: After the revolution of 1830, Lousie Philipp came to power and ruled till 1848. His rule is called the period of July Monarchy.

Freemasons: An international chain of political organizations in Europe which declared itself to be based on brotherly love, faith and charity. Freemasons were against the ancient regime and also the Roman Catholic Church.

Dreyfus Affair(1894-99): Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in French army, was accused and found guilty of selling military secrets to Germany. However, doubts soon arose over the fairness of the charges against him. It soon developed into a huge political controversy with many socialist and radical intellectuals supporting Dreyfus and many others, mainly army leaders and the Church, holding him guilty. Because Dreyfus was a Jew, the controversy also provided an impetus to anti-semitic feelings in France. It contributed to the politicization of the French rural society.

Vienna Congress (1814-15): An international assembly of European super powers, mainly Austria, Britain, Russia and Prussia, to settle the territorial boundaries within Europe, after the disruption of the old territorial boundaries caused by French Revolution and Napoleonic wars.

Paris Commune (1871): A temporary revolutionary government in Paris, formed after the overthrow of the second empire of Napolean III, representing an alliance between the middle and the working classes. The Commune lasted only for two months from March to May 1871, and after a bitter fight, surrendered to the Government.

Anti-Semitism: A feeling of hatred towards the Jews. A long history of racial prejudice against the Jews had existed in the European society. It was somewhat checked during the Enlightenment. In the 19th century, however, a systematic attempt was made to promote hatred against the Jews. This led to cultural isolation of the orthodox Jews and, together with rising nationalism, pseudo scientific theories of Aryan racial superiority and spurious charges of Jewish domination encouraged anti-semitism in many of European states. Anti-semitism reached its climax in Nazi Germany in the 1930s and 1940s when around six million Jews were killed by Hitler.

Whig-Republicans: A group that strongly supported the idea of representative institutions and popular participation in government.

Tory-Tocquevillians: A Tory group that supported the cause of strong centralized monarchy which derived its legitimacy not from popular support but from its own inherent power.

23.10 EXERCISES

1) Examine the main features of modern political culture which emerged in France during the revolutionary phase.

2) How would you explain the unique appeal of nationalism in modern times? How it is different from the view of the French revolutionaries?

3) Write a critical note on French cultural legacy.

4) Bring out the contribution of the French Revolution in the evolution of modern socialist thought.

5) What has caused the formulation of the conspiracy theory?

UNIT 24 POLITICAL REVOLUTION: RUSSIA

Structure

24.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous Unit looked at the French Revolution not just as French or a European phenomenon, but as a global one. The focus of the Unit was not on the details of the Revolution but on how it influenced the politics and society in the post-revolution period. This Unit on Russian Revolution will go into details of the Revolution and also on the 19th century social conditions of Russia that led to it. The Russian Revolution was an unprecedented event in the sense that it was the first revolution that was based on a concrete and explicit theory of revolution. The coming of the revolution, though not its details, had been both predicted and anticipated. Another crucial aspect of this Revolution was that it was not projected as a national or a Russian event. Russian Revolution was visualized as an important step in the coming of the world socialist revolution. It was for this reason that the Russian Revolution was called, not a national revolution but a world revolution, by many scholars. This Unit will examine a range of factors that prepared the Russian society for the revolution. It would then

focus on the major events surrounding the Revolution. Finally it will briefly talk about the legacy of the Revolution and what it meant to the rest of the world.

24.2 PRELUDE TO REVOLUTION: RUSSIAN SPECIFICITIES

An important paradox of the Russian Revolution is its self-image as a global phenomenon and the specificity of Russian conditions that brought it about in Russia. According to the Marxian theory of revolution, it was to take place first in advance industrial societies as a result of the maturing of the contradictions of capitalism. But the Socialist Revolution occurred in a backward industrial country like Russia. However, the coming of the revolution was nothing short of a storm that had a dramatic impact on the society and people of Russia. The following quote is an attempt to capture this impact:

> All Russia was learning to read, and *reading* – politics, economics, history – because the people wanted to *know*....In every city, in most towns, along the front, each political faction had its newspaper – sometimes several. Hundreds of thousands of pamphlets were distributed by thousands of organizations, and poured into the armies, the villages, the factories, the streets. The thirst for education, so long thwarted, burst with the Revolution into a frenzy of expression. From Smolny Institute alone, the first six months, went out every day tons, car-loads, train-loads of literature, saturating the land. Russia absorbed reading matter like hot sand drinks water, insatiable. And it was not fables, falsified history, diluted religion, and the cheap fiction that corrupts – but social and economic theories, philosophy, the works of Tolstoy, Gogol, and Gorky... (From John Reed, *Ten Days That Shook the World*, 1987 Edition, Moscow, p.37.)

That was Russia in 1917 as described by John Reed, an American journalist, who had come to Russia to cover the event and who was, in the words of Lenin's wife, Krupskaya, "not an indifferent observer, but a passionate revolutionary...." There were many others like him, who flocked to the city of St. Petersburg, or Petrograd as it was called from 1917 onwards, simply because that city symbolized all that they dared to believe in and hold dear. If the French Revolution symbolized Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, the Russian Revolution symbolized much more – organized struggle, clarity of perspective and courage to go against the tide even if it meant being isolated in the whole world wide.

How did all this happen? Why did Russia and not Germany stage the first socialist revolution, contrary to the expectations of everyone? How could the working class of this backward country, with its half-baked capitalism, have the courage to overthrow the Tsarist autocracy and move, with almost lightning speed from a semi-feudal political and social order, into a socialist system, bypassing the capitalist phase almost completely?

The answers lie in the many peculiarities of Russia. It had a weak bourgeoisie and the industrial development that had taken place in Russia from the 1880s was entirely at the initiative of the Tsar and financed by foreign capital. While the French companies invested in the mining and metallurgy sectors, oil was in the hands of the British concerns and the chemical and electrical engineering industries in the hands of the Germans. Within Russia, the capital for industrialization was raised largely by taxing the peasantry even as the agrarian sector continued to remain backward technologically, the best lands remaining with the nobility.

Industrialization in Russia was limited to certain pockets in the country like St.Petersburg and Moscow districts, the Donetz and the Dneiper basins. They were, in the words of Maurice Dobb, no more than industrial islands in a vast agricultural sea. Yet, these industries gave rise to a powerful working class movement. This was because the typical Russian factory was a huge industrial unit with a high level of concentration. All stages of production were housed under one roof. This meant that workers of all kinds – from the unskilled to the highly skilled – were thrown together and the task of mobilizing them was correspondingly easier.

24.2.1 The Russian Working Class

The Russian worker was part-peasant, part-worker, with strong roots in the villages. Given a situation of peasant discontentment owing to the problems mentioned above, this meant that the Russian working class reacted not only to the subhuman conditions under which they worked in the factories, but also against the crushing burden of land tax and redemption payments that weighed their families down in the villages. Thus, the fact that Russian industrialization was built, not upon a strong agricultural base as in the case of England, but on a backward rural sector where many problems had been left unresolved, contributed to the growth of an extremely volatile working class movement in this country. Of course, the leadership that was available to this working class also played a crucial role, but we shall come to that later.

The Russian working class was largely concentrated in the textile industries, but there were substantial numbers of workers in the metallurgical and railway sectors as well. In 1900, there were three million industrial workers in Russia. Of these, 5,50,000 were working in textile factories, 500,000 in metallurgical industries and 400,000 in the railways. Wages were paid irregularly and employers drove their men hard. Even in 1913, the average working day of the Russian worker was 10 hours. Studies of working class budgets indicated that a large proportion of the total expenditure went on food. Few could afford proper clothing. And yet, interestingly, the literacy levels among the working class were at a higher level than general literacy in Russia. According to the 1897 census, 57.8% of the male workers and 28.4% of the female workers of Russia were literate. By 1918, 79.2% of the male workers and 44.2% of the female workers were literate. Besides the schools run by the Zemstvos (locally elected councils to look after public health, education and road maintenance), schools financed by the state, some educational institutions were even maintained by the employers. They offered evening courses and set up public libraries, which were well attended. Thus the Russian working class, even while chafing against its abysmal working and living conditions and threatened with job insecurity, was able to absorb the flood of pamphlets and books which were being smuggled into the country, defying all attempts at censorship by the Tsarist authorities.

Hence Russia had a peculiar combination of backwardness and modernization. This was evident not just in the industrial sector.

24.2.2 The Tsarist Autocracy

The Tsarist autocracy was unimaginatively backward even while the intelligentsia was the most vibrant intelligentsia in the whole of Europe in the nineteenth century. The autocracy, which originated in the medieval period, was said to have been influenced by the Mongol tradition. For two hundred and fifty years, i.e., from 1240 to 1490, Russia had been under Mongol rule. According to Tibor Szamuely, the Mongol concept of society, based on the unqualified submission of all to the absolute power of the Great Khan, had its impact on the Russian political structure. Every member of society was allotted his specific position, to which he was bound for life

and which he could never desert, on pain of death. The Great Khan not only had unquestioned authority over the lives of his subjects, he was also the sole owner of all the land within his domains.

After the break-up of the Mongol empire, the power that emerged was that of Muscovy, a principality centred around Moscow. This region had several natural advantages, since it was situated at the heart of the principal waterways, with comparatively easy access to all parts of the country. In Muscovy, the position of the Tsar was one of unique strength – all authority in the country emanated from him. He shared power with no one. There was no opportunity, either within the government or outside it, for the development of rival centres of power capable of limiting, balancing or checking the authority of the ruler. What was more, these doctrines of authority enjoyed the full support of the Church.

The next great landmark in the history of the Tsarist autocracy was the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725). He was the great modernizer. Until his time, the function of government was primarily conceived as a negative one – to defend Muscovy against external enemies and safeguard domestic law and order. This picture changed radically when Peter gave a positive role to the government. He began with a rapid modernization of the military and naval establishments. This entailed the setting up of factories, mines and collieries, leading to a modernization of the economy and fiscal reforms. All this naturally enlarged the functions of the government and to take care of this, ten 'colleges' or rudimentary ministries, were set up. The task of supervising and co-coordinating the work of these 'colleges' was performed by Peter himself and the officials of these colleges were encouraged to keep an eye on each other. Thus emerged the tradition of mutual suspicion and vertical communication with the Tsar, which remained a characteristic feature of the Tsarist autocracy until the end. Ministers reported directly to the Tsar and even tried to undercut each other. In the late nineteenth century, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of the Interior were constantly at loggerheads with each other. The former's efforts at modernization would be stymied by the latter, fearful as he was of the political consequences of any attempts at bringing about change in the country.

Until the very end the Tsarist autocracy remained a top-heavy political structure, in which the individual competence of the Tsar was of vital importance. Of course, Tsars like Alexander 1 (1801-1825) drew upon the talent of officials like M.M. Speranksy, who has been described as the most brilliant Russian statesman of the nineteenth century. Yet Speransky himself suffered disgrace and exile when the Tsar, puffed up with his victory over Napoleon and Russia's primacy in the Concert of Europe, retracted on his reformist promises and became more and more reactionary. The reforms of Tsar Alexander II, remembered as the man who carried out the Emancipation of the Serfs and instituted the Zemstvos, were carried out in an authoritarian manner. He brushed aside all suggestions for popular participation in government even though he had encouraged such expectations.

24.2.3 The Decembrist Uprising

Gradually, a mood of discontent spread over all of educated Russia. The first expression of this spirit of revolt was the Decembrist uprising of 1825, known by this name because the revolt occurred in the month of December. The "Decembrists", as those who participated in the revolt came to be known, were patriotic, intelligent young men of the aristocracy who had served as officers in the Tsar's army. They had fought in the Napoleonic Wars and when they travelled abroad they were greatly influenced by the Western way of life and the ideas of the French Revolution. When they returned to Russia in 1816, they formed a secret society for constitutional and

judicial reform, for the abolition of serfdom that was still prevalent in Russia and for the curbing of foreign influence on the Tsarist state. When Tsar Alexander I died unexpectedly in 1825, there were some weeks of confusion before the next Tsar ascended the throne. The Decembrists used this opportunity to make their point. They tried to prevent several military regiments from taking the oath of allegiance to the new Tsar unless he committed himself to a constitutional form of government. However, they were unable to carry out their plan successfully. Some of the regiments deserted them and the new Tsar, Nicholas, had prior warning of the revolt. Hence he was able to put down the revolt very firmly by firing upon the insurgents. About a dozen men were killed, 289 others either condemned to death or sentenced to hard labour in Siberia.

Most of the Decembrists were serving officers under the age of thirty. There were also some senior officers of distinguished lineage. John Keep and Lionel Kochan have described the Decembrist uprising as "an attempted revolution on the people's behalf by a section of the educated elite."

24.2.4   The Russian Intelligentsia

The Decembrist uprising may have been crushed brutally and news of it blacked out completely in the press, but it remained in popular memory as a heroic struggle and inspired several generations thereafter. As the nineteenth century advanced, the numbers of educated Russians who turned against the Tsarist system grew by leaps and bounds. There emerged a clearly recognizable class known as the intelligentsia. In fact, the word "intelligentsia" had its origins in Russia and was first used in this country in the mid-nineteenth century. The word then spread to other countries and came to signify an elite of writers, academicians and cultural figures, who were often critical of the establishment. In Western societies, the intelligentsia was not sharply differentiated from the professional and middle classes as a whole. But in a more backward political order as prevailed in Russia, the intellectual elite did not grow with the society as a whole and did not share a common ethos with the other middle-class groups. The Russian intelligentsia represented a small crust of well-educated people with a European outlook, who had few links with Russian society.

It was the reforms of Tsar Alexander II, which marked the turning point for the intelligentsia. He was known as the reforming Tsar and when he announced his intentions of carrying out reforms, there were great expectations amongst the intelligentsia. There was hope that he would consult the progressive sections of his people. But soon there was disappointment. Alexander II chose to carry out the reforms by authoritarian methods and brushed aside all suggestions for popular participation in government. When he constituted the Zemstvos, it was only the propertied classes and the higher taxpayers who were given representation. All suggestions for a nationally representative body or parliament were firmly turned down. So great was the anger of the intelligentsia against the Tsar that he faced a series of assassination attempts. The last one, in 1881, took his life. His successor, Alexander III fiercely cracked down on the intelligentsia and many intellectuals had to flee the country. Many found refuge in Switzerland and Geneva became a centre of their activities.

The mid-nineteenth Russian intelligentsia was of two kinds. There were the Westernizers and the Slavophiles. While the former, i.e., the Westernizers, were ashamed of Russia's past and believed that the future for Russia lay in imitating the West, the Slavophiles maintained that Russia's salvation lay in a return to the true traditions of Russia. It is important to note that the Slavophiles were also in favour of change. But they felt that the Western values of rationalism and individualism were

disintegrating forces. The strength of Russia lay in the f: 'th of her people and the sense of community of which the *mir* (village community' was the essence. Russia, in fact, should show the way to the West.

This controversy between the Westernizers and the Slavophiles was but the first of a series of polarizations amongst Russian intellectuals. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century Russian socialism split into the Populists and the Marxists and still later, the Russian Marxists split into the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks.

In the post-Decembrist period the new intellectual tradition that unfolded was characterized by an indifference to political reforms. There was a general belief that it was more important to improve the material conditions of the people than to give Russia constitutional liberties. Chernyshevski, a leader of the radicals in the 1860s, for instance, distinguished clearly between liberalism and democracy. While liberalism, representing freedom of speech and constitutional liberties, was essentially for the educated class, democracy was concerned with the material welfare of the masses. Chernshevski went to the extent of stating that if the welfare of the people could be served by despotic methods, he would not hesitate to support these methods.

24.2.5 Populism

In the 1860s, almost every section of the Russian intelligentsia shared an extravagant idealization of 'the people'. There was an almost mystical belief in 'the people' as the repository of some profound truth of life. 'The people' would even cleanse the intelligentsia, who were corrupted by worldly education and material goods. Alongside with this, however, there was also a deep-rooted conviction that 'the people', left to themselves, were incapable of overthrowing oppression and achieving the just society.

An interesting aspect of the Russian intelligentsia was that many of its members were creative writers who produced excellent short stories, plays and even novels. Their works were reflective of the politics of the times in a way which has seldom been seen in other countries. Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons,* for instance, while being an important literary work, was the best account of two generations of Russian intellectuals – the men of the forties and the men of the sixties, as they were known.

The generation of the '40s had been brought up on German idealistic philosophy and romanticism. According to Riasanovsky, they had ∠ metaphysical, religious, aesthetic and historical approach to reality. The '60s generation, on the other hand, believed in utilitarianism, positivism, materialism and especially realism. They were obviously more radical. Socially too, they belonged to a mixed background below the gentry being the sons of priests, petty officials and others who had made their way up by education and effort.

Hugh Seton Watson makes the point that the children of the Russian nobility were quite as capable of extreme revolutionary thought as their social inferiors. But there is a certain venom and fanaticism in the language of non-noble radicals which is not found in their gentleman predecessors. This became and has remained an essential part of the Russian revolutionary tradition.

By the 1870s, an essentially individualist creed of nihilism had combined with populism. The spirit of the former, i.e., nihilism can be understood from Bakunin's famous phrase: "The passion for destruction is also a constructive passion." Between 1869 and 1872 there existed a group of young revolutionaries in St. Petersburg who called themselves the "Chaikovsky Circle". Their first aim was to politically educate

the university students. They sold books which had been banned, distributed pamphlets, organized discussion groups among workers and intellectuals.

By 1873 the students were ready for their first movement to the people. They went to the countryside and preached socialism amongst the peasantry. They were in for a rude shock, however. The peasants, far from welcoming them as their saviours, assaulted them and handed them over to the Tsarist police! Obviously there was a disconnect between their understanding of the people and the people's understanding of them.

This bitter experience made the Populists change their perspective. The new understanding was that social and economic issues must come before politics. Hence the second movement to the people in 1876 was on a different basis. Groups of young revolutionaries went to live among the people. They practised a normal trade or profession – some learnt manual trades, others went as medical orderlies or midwives, working with the Zemstvos. Young women played a prominent part in this movement. But even then the masses did not respond and by 1877 these groups had been discovered. Mass arrests followed, thereby ending this ambitious enterprise.

If the peasants would not act, then there was another way – that of terrorism and assassination. The "Land and Freedom" society, formed in 1876, launched an all-out terrorist offensive against the government. They believed that because of the highly centralized nature of the Russian State, a few assassinations could do tremendous damage to the regime. They succeeded in killing Tsar Alexander II, but did not manage to bring Tsarism to an end. What followed thereafter under Tsar Alexander III was such severe repression that for the next twenty five years, all Russian revolutionary activity had to be carried on outside the country. No free political discussions could take place within Russia.

24.2.6 Growth of Social Democracy

This period of emigrant revolutionary activity was, however, a very productive one. In the 1880s, even as industrialization was proceeding apace in Russia, the first Marxist groups began to be formed among Russian intellectuals. The major voice was that of Plekhanov who, in his pamphlets, 'Our Differences' and 'Socialism and the Political Struggle' made the following points:

1) Socialism cannot be based on the peasantry. It has to be based on the industrial working class.

2) Capitalism was going ahead in Russia and the growth of the working class was inevitable.

3) The village commune was an anachronism – a mere survival of a pre-capitalist order.

The fundamental break had been made. Populism continued to survive in Russia, reincarnated as the Socialist Revolutionary Party, but it was now marginal to Russian politics. It was now Marxism and Social Democracy which became the mainstream.

Meanwhile, within Russia, the first volume of Karl Marx's major critique of capitalism *Das Kapital* had been published in Russian in 1872. The Tsarist censorship regarded it as too academic and irrelevant to Russian conditions to be subversive.

Vladimir Ilyanovich Lenin, born in 1870, had been converted to Marxism in 1889. In 1893 he moved to St. Petersburg to work with the Marxist underground groups.

He also visited Plekhanov and other leaders of the Russian Social Democratic Party in Switzerland. In 1895 he, along with Martov, formed the St. Petersburg Union of Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class to disseminate Marxist ideas among the working classes and to prepare leaders for the future revolution. The Union also had branches in the cities of Moscow and Ekaternioslav. However, Lenin was soon arrested and he had to spend the next four and a half years in prison and in exile in Siberia. It was while he was thus incarcerated that he published his important work 'The Development of Capitalism in Russia', which proved conclusively that capitalism in Russia was an accomplished fact and contained all the conditions of economic viability. This work was published illegally in Russia in 1899.

Another group of legal Marxists had also come into being around this time. They were basically a liberal group, consisting largely of sociologists and economists. They made a powerful contribution to the debate against the Populists. Peter Struve, for instance, brought out his "Cultural Remarks on the Question of Economic Development in Russia" in 1894 in which he argued that the advent of capitalism in Russia should be welcomed since it would, along with its miseries, also bring the material and spiritual culture of Western Europe to Russia. This included political liberty. The Legal Marxists, however rejected the revolutionary aspects of Marxism.

The League of Combat for Liberation of the Working Class of Lenin and Martov took active part in the day-to-day struggles of workers. They supported the textile strikes of 1896 and '97. Gradually, the Russian Marxists were reaching out to a wider mass base. But involvement with industrial labour also meant that the movement had to concentrate on the more practical objectives, such as the achievement of better wages and working conditions. Some leaders began to argue that the movement should concentrate on such economic objectives because, given the peculiar conditions of Russia, any struggle for economic gains would naturally and inevitably lead to the demand for political objectives. Revolutionary slogans directed towards the overthrow of the autocracy would frighten and even repel the workers. However, Lenin, who was still in exile and other emigrant leaders like Plekhanov, did not agree with this. They argued for the primacy of political objectives and felt that a campaign which confined itself to practical objectives could not become a country-wide proletarian movement. Lenin pointed out that various groups of workers, immediately interested merely in securing their own, narrow, material gains may even try to secure these gains against the interests of other groups of workers. Or they may try to secure immediate advantages at the expense of long-term interests. "Consciousness" was more important than spontaneity.

As E.H. Carr has pointed out, by the turn of the century there was a general feeling among the Marxist groups that the time was ripe for passing from mere lecturing on Socialist principles to more systematic and political work among the masses. The time for making the transition from propaganda to agitation had arrived. In 1898, it was decided to hold a Congress of existing Marxist groups in order to form a Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party. The groups met at Minsk in Byelorussia and prepared a Manifesto which contained the following memorable passage·

> The further to the east one goes in Europe, the weaker, meaner and more cowardly in the political sense becomes the bourgeoisie and the greater are the cultural and political tasks which fall to the lot of the proletariat. On its strong shoulders the Russian working class must carry the work of liberty.

The Russian Social Democratic Party became a part of the Second International. It may be recalled that the First International Working Men's Association had been

founded by Marx in 1864 and had existed until 1871. It symbolized the coming together of working class parties across national boundaries in the belief that Marxian socialism was essentially international in character and that all members of the working class shared certain common interests. The Second International, founded in 1889, was dominated by the German Social Democratic Party and continued its existence until the First World War. After the Revolution of 1917, there would be a tussle over who was to lead such an International – Russia as the first country to carry out a working class revolution, or other forces in Europe.

24.3 THE 1905 REVOLUTION: A DRESS REHEARSAL FOR 1917

Russia's humiliating defeat at the hands of Japan in the Russo Japanese War made the Russian people seriously wonder about the strength of their mighty empire. The workers were in any case agitated about their conditions of work and poor wages. On 9 January 1905, a huge crowd of workers, led by a priest, Father Gapon, marched towards the Winter Palace to submit a petition to the Tsar, Nicholas II. This was intended to be a peaceful procession and the participants had full faith in the Tsar. They believed that he was surrounded by bad advisers, who kept the truth about the actual plight of the people, away from him. Despite the church icons and portraits of the Tsar that they carried, the Tsarist Guards received the petitioners with a hail of bullets. Over a hundred fell dead, many more were injured. This was the last straw. It was also the signal for the revolution. Strikes spread throughout the country. Revolutionaries assassinated the Grand Duke Sergei, one of the leaders of the court coterie. Soon, peasant revolts broke out in various parts of the country. Even the fringes of the Russian Empire were affected. There were armed risings in Poland and in the Black Sea port of Odessa, the crew of the battleship Potemkin joined in the revolt.

All this shook the self-confidence of the Tsar and he promised to convene a Duma, or Representative Assembly, in which, however, the working class would not be represented. All parties of the opposition, from the Liberals to the Bolsheviks, protested against this edict. In October 1905 a general strike spread from Moscow and St. Petersburg throughout the country. The strikers of St.Petersburg elected a Council of Workers' Deputies, the St.Petersburg Soviet, which virtually became the centre of the Revolution. The Soviet called on the country to stop paying taxes to the Tsar. Its members, along with the chairman, Leon Trotsky, were arrested. New strikes broke out and the pressure led the Tsar to issue his October Manifesto of 30 October, in which he promised to extend the franchise to those classes which had until now been excluded. There was also an assurance that no law would take effect without the approval of the Duma. The Manifesto split the ranks of the __ revolutionaries into those who wanted to withdraw the movement and work the proposals and others, like the Social Democrats, who wanted a Constituent Assembly. This split proved to be fatal for the Revolution and slowly the Tsarist forces recovered their strength. By 1907 the Tsar had regained his self-confidence and begun withdrawing the semi-liberal concessions which he had been compelled to make in October 1905.

Yet, 1905 was an important landmark in Russia's history and things were never the same thereafter. The revolutionaries could learn from their mistakes in this encounter and, when the next opportunity came in the First World War, they were able to plan their strategy with greater maturity. The Soviets, however brief their existence, were a model for the future.

24.4   RUSSIA IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

It has been said that the First World War was different from all previous wars in that it was not just a test of the military capabilities of the warring countries. It was their economies that were being put to the test and Russia was bound to perform badly. In an epoch when "coal was king" Russia produced only 1/16th of the amount of the coal that the US produced, 1/9th that of Great Britain and 1/6th that of Germany. Though Russia ranked sixth in the world production of iron, it manufactured only 6% of the steel produced in the world. As for railroad, when Germany had 11 kilometers per 100 square kilometers, France 8 or 9, Russia had only 400 meters excluding Siberia. When the war began, Russia's trade with the outside world came to a standstill and given its heavy reliance on foreign capital, this seriously dislocated the economy.

Moreover, large sections of Russia were horrified and disillusioned at the way Tsar Nicholas II conducted the war effort. There were some parties like the Cadets (Constitutional Democrats), which felt that if the conduct of the war was given over to them, they would do a better job of it. In fact, through the greater part of 1916, the country was being governed not by the Tsar or by his bureaucracy or by the court, but by private associations which had sprung up more or less simultaneously. Red Cross Committees which had started out modestly, little by little took over the administration of public health. The Zemstvos, locally elected councils which had come into existence in the time of Tsar Alexander II, i.e., the 1860s and 1870s, had, after 1914 come together to form a Pan-Russian Union of Zemstvos to help the sick and wounded soldiers who were pouring in from the war-front. There was a Committee of War Industries which comprised of representatives of commerce and industry. They became like a parallel government, trying to streamline war production. This was because the Tsarist authorities were increasingly proving themselves to be incapable of even looking after defence production of the country.

There was also a huge consumers co-operative movement which was spreading rapidly, trying to tackle the difficulties of everyday life such as price increases. A bag of potatoes, which would cost one rouble before the war had gone up to 7 roubles by 1917. A pood (equivalent to 36 pounds) of wheat flour, costing 6 roubles 50 kopecks before the war was now selling at 40 roubles. On most essential items there had been a seven-to-eight-fold increase, and, needless to say, wages had not kept up with this rise in prices. It was not just the industrial workers who were affected. Civil servants and white-collar workers were also badly hit and this was why, when the workers came out on the streets in demonstrations, they too joined the protests – something which had not happened in the 1905 Revolution.

The administration watched helplessly as it was slowly divested of its powers. Every working group was getting organized and without realizing it, the Russians were beginning to govern themselves. The Duma or the Russian Parliament, which had been constituted after the 1905 Revolution, though largely comprised of supporters of the Tsarist regime, and boycotted by the more radical groups, tried to open the Tsar's eyes to the growing abyss between the court and public opinion but had no effect. Such were the times that even this loyalist Duma became more and more critical of the government and finally on 25 February 1917, matters came to a head with the Tsar deciding to prorogue the Duma. He accused this body of having instigated the strikes in major industrial units like the Putilov arms works, the street demonstrations and the defiance by soldiers of their officers. But so complete was

the loss of the Tsar's authority that the Duma decided to meet in defiance of the Tsar's orders and with the support of the workers and soldiers, went on to form a Provisional Government. That was the February Revolution of 1917, termed so because the Russian calendar was different from the Gregorian calendar. This Revolution, in which the Tsar was forced to resign and hand over power to his sickly ten-year-old son Alexis with de facto power being wielded by the boy's uncle, the Grand Duke Michael and Michael refusing to ascend the throne until he had been invited to do so by a Constituent Assembly, ended Tsarism in Russia.

24.5 THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

But the February Revolution was only the beginning of a long and complicated process, which ended in the final Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917. This revolution occurred through a series of dramatic political events leading eventually to a capture of power by the Bolsheviks. This phase of the revolution was completely dominated by the Bolsheviks. Let us now turn to them.

24.5.1 Who were the Bolsheviks?

The name derives from the Russian term *bolshinstvo* which means majority. When the Russian Social Democratic Party held its second Congress in 1903, differences arose over the way in which the party was to be run and the kind of members that it should have. Lenin wanted to restrict the membership of the party to hardened professional revolutionaries, while Martov, another influential leader of the period, believed in a more broad-based and inclusive formula. The party split and Lenin's group managed to obtain a majority. Hence the name 'Bolshevik'. Martov's group became the Mensheviks (*men'shintvo* — minority) but they controlled the party newspaper the 'Iskra' This split weakened the Russian Social Democratic Party, as do all splits within parties. What made this parting of ways all the more unfortunate was the fact that Russia was then on the brink of its first revolution — i.e., the Revolution of 1905.

Over time, the Mensheviks became more and more like the German Social Democratic Party whereas the Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership made some significant departures from traditional Marxist formulations.

In July 1905 was published Lenin's pamphlet 'Two Tactics of Social Democracy'. In it he argued that Russia would strike a different path — even though Russia too would have a bourgeois revolution, going through all the stages of France after 1789, the leadership would come, not from the bourgeoisie but from working class, in alliance with the peasantry. This idea, of involving the peasantry in the revolutionary process, was a relatively new one. Traditionally the Marxists believed that the peasantry was incapable of creating or supporting a revolution. But Lenin maintained that, in Russia, the rich and middle peasants could be more dependable allies than the bourgeoisie. The latter was weak and cowardly and was capable of even betraying the revolution and compromising with the ruling class. The rich and middle peasants, on the other hand, would be interested in overthrowing the landed class and confiscating their large estates.

Lenin's pamphlet also outlined the scenario after the overthrow of Tsarism, as he visualized it. A "Provisional Government", which would be a "revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry", would be set up. However, the type of government that would emerge would be a bourgeois-democratic, not socialist in nature. For the achievement of socialism, it was necessary for a more advanced

proletariat of some other major industrial country of Europe to create a socialist revolution. Only then would it be possible for Russia to bypass its bourgeois-democratic stage and create a socialist revolution.

Thus, in many ways, Lenin was able to anticipate the turn of events in Russia. Where he, as well as many of his fellow revolutionary leaders, went wrong was in their expectation that the first socialist revolution would occur in Germany or any other highly industrialized country of Europe. That was not to happen and it fell to the lot of Russia to carry out this task.

Leon Trotsky, a charismatic leader who was to play a dynamic role in the St Petersburg Soviet, was a Menshevik for a long time even though his views were quite close to those of Lenin. Where he differed with Lenin was on the question of the peasantry's potential. He was skeptical of the peasants and firmly believed that they had a role to play in the crushing of the Revolution of 1905.

From February to October

After the February Revolution, the internal contradictions within Russia became evident and were accentuated over time. The Provisional Government, headed by Prince Lvov, and representing the moderate forces, was committed to carrying on the war effort. The more radical forces were concentrated in the Petrograd Soviet. They were in favour of introducing democratic reforms, confiscation of landed estates and promulgating an eight-hour day for workers. They also wanted to enter into negotiations with the proletariat of other countries in order to bring an end to the war.

Though the Provisional Government was the official regime in the eyes of the world, within Russia it was unable to take a single important decision unless it was endorsed by the deputies of the Soviet.

24.5.2 Soviets

What was the Soviet? First constituted in the course of the 1905 Revolution the St.Petersburg Soviet was a Council of Workers' Deputies, which, in the words of Isaac Deutscher, "soon became the most spectacular centre of the revolution." The orders and instructions of this Soviet commanded universal obedience. It was the people's parliament par excellence and in the absence of any parliamentary institutions, it was the broadest and most representative body that Russia possessed. In 1917, a few days after the Tsar's abdication the St. Petersburg Soviet was reconstituted. Its members were elected from factories, workshops and later in the barracks of regiments that were stationed in the capital. They were not elected for any fixed term – the electorate had the right to replace them by other men at any time. It was also the de facto executive power in Russia. The writ of the Soviet ran in factory, railway depot, post office and regiment alike. In fact the Provisional Government was virtually a prisoner in the hands of the Soviet.

In the months after the February Revolution, Soviets mushroomed all over Russia – in provincial towns and in villages. Because of the mode of their election, they did not represent the nobility and the middle classes. By August 1917, there were 600 Soviets in Russia. They had assumed all the responsibilities of government.

24.5.3 Lenin's April Thesis

In April 1917 Lenin arrived in Russia from Finland and issued his 'April Theses' in which he set forth the new slogan "All power to the Soviets". Capitalism had to be overthrown and the war brought to an end. The bourgeoisie and the Mensheviks

were deceiving the proletariat. The Revolution had entered the socialist phase. Land and banks should be nationalized, the police and the army abolished. Those who heard Lenin's ideas were stunned and thought that he had taken leave of his senses. It was like an avalanche and some of the proposals sounded completely like flights of fancy. But slowly, in the following weeks, the ideas seeped in and Lenin was able to win over many to his views.

24.5.4   Worsening Situation

Meanwhile the Provisional Government was alienating itself from the people continuously. They wanted peace but the Government had already declared that all the Tsarist Government's commitments to the war would be adhered to. In the face of mounting opposition, the members of the first Provisional Government had to resign and in May, a new government, still headed by Prince Lvov, but with six socialist Ministers drawn from the Soviets, was constituted. But this new government was even less able to tackle the problems of the day. These were internal differences: while the liberal group wanted to delay certain fundamental reforms until the convening of a Constituent Assembly, the socialists were anxious to respond to the popular demands for immediate reform.

The economic situation grew worse. When workers demanded more wages, the industrialists, unwilling to grant them any increase, began to close down factories. The Government provided no protection to the workers. To add to the problems a Russian military offensive in Galicia ended disastrously. The Provisional Government was unable to handle the wave of popular unrest which was triggered off by the offensive and Prince Lvov had to resign.

Thus, by July 1917, in little more than four months, a third Provisional Government had been constituted. Clearly these Governments were incapable of providing stability to Russia and tackling its pressing problems. Sensing their own incompetence, the Government became more and more defensive. They began directing their anger against the Bolsheviks, who were the only group among the socialists which had not joined the Provisional Government.

Orders were issued for the arrest of Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders like Zinoviev and Kamenev. Lenin and Zinoviev evaded arrest and escaped to Finland while Kamenev got arrested. It was at this time that Trotsky and several other members of the Menshevik party decided to join the Bolsheviks. They too were promptly arrested.

Throughout this period, there was growing unrest in the countryside. Thoroughly disillusioned with one Provisional Government after another, the peasants decided to carry out a veritable agrarian revolution on their own. They seized the estates of the landlords and began cultivating them with the help of local land committees. Peasant anger also found reflection in the army, as more and more soldiers began deserting the war front and returning to the villages.

24.5.5   The Kornilov Mutiny

Thereafter, events moved with lightening speed. In August 1917 there was an attempt at a military coup. General Kornilov, the head of the armed forces, had been invited by Kerensky to the capital in order to help him crush the Bolshevik forces. But Kornilov exceeded his brief. He thought he could seize this opportunity to wipe out not just the Bolsheviks but also the Soviets, the moderate Socialists and Kerensky himself!

The Kerensky government was panic-stricken. It realized that it could not defeat the forces of Kornilov without the help of the Bolsheviks, many of whom were behind bars. They were released. Trotsky's services were sought for obtaining the help of the Kronstadt sailors (Kronstadt was a naval base outside Petrograd), who were extremely radical and powerful. Trotsky used to address the Kronstadt sailors frequently. They faithfully followed him, even idolized him.

The Soviets formed a Committee for struggle against Counter-Revolution. Kornilov's troops deserted him. The railway workers stopped his trains, the telegraph operators refused to relay his messages.

This aborted military coup clearly showed where the actual power resided. The Kerensky Government had lost face and credibility. A fifth Provisional Government was formed on 21 September. It had ten Socialist ministers and six others. The Bolsheviks continued to steer clear of the government. However, they were steadily gaining more and more seats in the Soviets.

In October 1917, following a series of defeats in the war, the Provisional Government planned to shift the capital from Petrograd to Moscow. This was seen by the people as the final act of betrayal and the Bolsheviks, along with the Soviets, called for a defence of Petrograd as the capital of the revolution. They managed to get the support of all the parties and the Provisional Government thereby stood exposed.

Lenin, though still in hiding, had moved closer to the scene of action by this time. In a short article titled 'The Crisis is Ripe', he wrote: "we stand on the threshold of a worldwide proletarian revolution". It was important to seize the moment – the timing was crucial. Trotsky on the other hand was adamant that any armed insurrection must coincide with the convening of the All Russian Congress of Soviets. Lenin warned that if they were to "let slip the present moment, we shall ruin the revolution".

On 9 October Lenin came to Petrograd in disguise and on 10 October the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party met. By a majority vote of 10 to 2, the Committee voted in favour of armed insurrection. A 'political bureau' consisting of seven members was to be formed to carry out the task. In the meantime, the Petrograd Soviet had also formed a Military Revolution Committee (MRC) to make the military preparations for the coming resolution.

Thereafter the Bolsheviks and the Soviets began acting in unison in the countdown for the revolution. In any case the Soviet had already assumed the responsibility for the defence of the capital, thus lifting itself to a new prominence and authority which would enable it to undo the Provisional Government.

24.5.6   The Bolsheviks Take Power

25 October (7 November according to the English Calendar) was the date fixed for the revolution. The All Russian Congress of Soviets was to meet in the evening and the insurrection was to be carried out before that. The final touches were given on the eve of the revolution. The members of the Bolshevik Central Committee along with those of the MRC took charge of the different arms of the government – posts and telegraphs, railway communications, food supplies and even the Provisional Government itself!

Early on the morning of the 25th, the Bolshevik forces went into action. The key points in the city were occupied and members of the Provisional Government were

taken into custody. There was virtually no resistance to this takeover. The news agency, Renters, reported only two causalties whereas in February over 1000 people had been killed or wounded.

In the afternoon, Lenin announced to a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet, the triumph of the workers' and the peasants' revolution. In the evening, the Second All Russian Congress of Soviets proclaimed the transfer of all power to the Soviets throughout Russia. It may be mentioned here that when the first All Russian Congress of Soviets had been convened in June 1917, the Bolsheviks had been treated with disdain. One of the speakers had challenged the delegates to say whether there was a single party in Russia that was prepared to shoulder the responsibility for government. Lenin had got up and said that his party was willing to do so. His words were drowned in hilarious laughter.

Now Lenin had shown that he meant what he had said. In the confused, ever-changing scenario that had unfolded from February to October, it was the Bolsheviks alone, under the leadership of Lenin that had understood the needs of the people and assessed the true strengths and weaknesses of the various classes in the country. It had figured out that the capitalist class was a weak one, whereas the peasantry had revolutionary potential.

It was with this clarity of perspective that, on the day following the revolution, three Decrees were promulgated: The Decree on Peace, the Decree on Bread and the Decree on Land. These were the three issues that were uppermost in the minds of the Russian people: they wanted Russia to pull out of the war immediately; they wanted an amelioration of the conditions of acute food scarcity; and the redistribution of the large landed estates. Though the Land Decree proclaimed that henceforth there would be no private property in land and all land was to pass into the hands of the Soviets, it was realized that the small peasants would be unwilling to part with their lands yet. Hence the Land Decree was only partially implemented.

24.5.7 Early Legislation of the New Regime

The new regime was keen to show that it represented a radically new and different order. All institutions and customs associated with the autocracy were to be abolished. All ranks, titles and decorations were to be done away with. Army commanders as well as judges were to be elected. All agencies of local government were set aside and replaced by a hierarchy of Soviets. Women were given equal rights with men. All banks and joint stocks companies were nationalized. Payment of interests and dividends were prohibited. Safe deposit boxes were opened and all valuables confiscated, since they were now considered national property. In January 1918, it was announced that all state foreign and domestic loans would be annulled. This caused the new regime to become extremely unpopular, especially in the eyes of those countries which had loaned large sums for Russian's industrialization.

In the factories, an eight hour day was introduced. For the first time in the world, workers' control of industrial enterprises became legal. Universal labour service was introduced and only those with workers' books could receive rations. Lenin explained that his immediate purpose in introducing compulsory labour service was to fight the forces of counter-revolution.

Many of these policies were to be revised and even reversed later. But the commitment to ending Russia's involvement in the war was steadfast and so was that of redistributing the nobility's estates amongst the peasants. These were the reasons for the survival of the Bolsheviks and the spreading of their influence in the crucial months after the October Revolution.

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24.6   THE LEGACY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The new regime set up by the Bolsheviks survived, no doubt with many changes and even distortions, for some seventy-odd years, until the 1990s. Though regarded with apprehension, suspicion and at times with awe, Soviet Russia influenced the course of events in many parts of the world, sometimes in predictable but more often in unpredictable ways. Some historians regard the Russian Revolution as the most significant event of the twentieth century and see most of the major developments in the world during this period and even thereafter, as being related to this event in some way or the other. In the words of E.J.Hobsbawm in his *Age of Extremes*:

> ...with the significant exception of the years from 1933 to 1945, the international politics of the entire Short Twentieth Century since the October revolution can best be understood as a secular struggle by the forces of the old order against social revolution, believed to be embodied in, allied with, or dependent on the fortunes of the Soviet Union and international communism.

The old order was that of capitalism and imperialism. It felt threatened by the onset of socialism from the very outset. When Russia signed the Treaty of Brest Litovsk with Germany in March 1918 and pulled out of the First World War, the Allies felt betrayed. They regarded this action as strengthening the hands of Germany, their enemy, even though Soviet Russia had pulled out of the War as much because it could no longer sustain the war effort as because of the ideological commitment of the Bolsheviks to end all imperialist wars. The subsequent surge of confidence amongst all left-minded groups in Europe and in other parts of the world caused great alarm to entrenched political systems based on exploitation and maximization of profit. A revolutionary wave swept Europe in 1918 and 1919, with German revolutionary sailors carrying the banner of the Soviets through the country. Spanish revolutionaries experienced a new burst of energy, a short lived socialist republic was proclaimed in Bavaria in 1918 and another one in Hungary in March 1919. Other parts of the world were also in ferment. "Soviets" were formed by tobacco workers in Cuba, revolutionary student movements erupted in Argentina and in China. In Mexico, the revolutionary forces under Emiliano Zapata now drew inspiration from revolutionary Russia and in India too, M.N.Roy and later many others were greatly influenced by communism. Jawaharlal Nehru has explained, in his *Autobiography*, what Russia meant to people like him:

> Russia, following the great Lenin, looked into the future and thought only of what was to be, while other countries lay numbed under the dead hand of the past and spent their energy in preserving the useless relics of a bygone age.

Yet, there were certain negative aspects too. There was a strong authoritarian streak in Boshevism which carried over into Communist Russia as well. The spirit of democracy was often compromised with and individual Communist Parties which were set up in different countries were too closely tied to the apron strings of the Comintern (The Communist International, set up by Soviet Russia in 1919 to promote the world revolution) for them to grow in a healthy, organic fashion. Within Russia too, especially in the Stalinist years, terror and dictatorial methods became the order of the day and a bureaucratic machine replaced the Soviets which had caught the imagination of the world. Though Stalin's Russia heroically defended itself against the onslaught of Hitler and was responsible for beating back the forces of Fascism

to a significant extent, in the years that followed the regime turned inwards, drawing an iron curtain across Europe and cutting itself off from the outside world. Anti-cosmopolitanism and xenophobia came to replace the internationalism of the early years and that was the great irony. It negated the very spirit of the Russian Revolution, which had an ingrained internationalism, which had discarded old divisions of nationality as obsolete and whose vanguard, the Bolshevik, had once proudly regarded himself as a citizen of the world.

24.7   SUMMARY

This Unit was a discussion of the Russian Revolution, as an important political phenomenon of the 20th century, that had global implications. One major feature of the Russian Revolution was that although the revolution occurred in Russia, it was not conceived of as a national event but rather as a global event. It was hoped and anticipated that a series of socialist revolutions in various parts of the world would cumulatively create a world revolution. The leaders of the revolution actually provided a theory of the transformation of the world from a capitalist order into a socialist one. The revolution inspired similar activities in other parts of the world and also motivated a number of anti-imperialist liberation struggles taking place in Asia, Africa and Latin America against colonial domination.

The main purpose of this Block is to familiarize you with the range of revolutionary experiences that the modern world goes through. As case studies of political revolutions, you read about the French and the Russian Revolutions. The next two Units of this Block will examine two entirely different types of revolutions – Knowledge Revolution and Technological Revolution – that were not organized around political events. Neither were they consciously brought about by political actors or leaders. But these revolutions played an equally, if not more, important role in bringing about a transformation in human life.

24.8   EXERCISES

1)   Why did the Socialist Revolution take place in Russia?

2)   In what ways were the ideas of the Socialist Revolution different from the manner in which the revolution actually came about?

3)   Write a note on the legacy of the Russian Revolution.

UNIT 25 KNOWLEDGE REVOLUTION: PRINTING AND INFORMATICS

Structure

25.1 INTRODUCTION

The modern word has experienced broadly speaking, two kinds of revolutions. There are sudden convulsions that change the course of history irreversibly: political revolutions like the French and the Russian are instances of this. There are also slower, seismic shifts that underpin social change, which, when comprehended over the course of a century or two, present an undeniable picture of revolutionary transformation. The revolution in knowledge and social communication that this Unit will consider contains, at different junctures and with different intensities, both these forms of revolution.

We know much more about the world than our predecessors two or three centuries ago. This is undeniable. The question is, how did this change in the extent of general human knowledge come about? There are many possible answers to this. One could cite the list of major technological changes and scientific discoveries in the last few centuries. (The following Unit on technological revolutions will discuss some of these aspects). One could look at the growth of new fields of knowledge, the 'disciplines', as they're known, and notice nothing short of a revolution in fields like medicine, the physical and social sciences, and technical and technological knowledge. These would be relevant ways of approaching the knowledge revolution. This Unit, however, will approach the matter differently.

If we concede that much greater numbers of people are much better informed about the world around them than was the case a few centuries ago, then we are linking two developments together. The first is relatively straightforward: people have discovered new things about the world, and these discoveries have come faster and with more intensity since, say, the sixteenth century, and especially since the Industrial Revolution, than they did before. The second development is equally profound, but subtler: the *ways* in which people have come to know the world have been revolutionized. Today, how do we keep ourselves informed of what happens around us? We read newspapers, we read books, we listen to the radio, we watch television, we surf the Internet. All of this cannot, of course, be done in the same proportions

by everyone. Depending on educational level and access to technology, some may rely on newspapers solely, others may be able to access the Internet, and still others may have to hear of events by word of mouth. What all this should tell us is that it is important to understand the ways in which we come to know things. Books have a history; so does the Internet, and so – equally crucially – does education, the training that shapes the ways in which people see the world, and, through its inclusions and exclusions, decides who gets to know the world in what degree.

All of this will be considered in this Unit, which could be read, with some simplification, as a history of the media – in the broadest historical sense. The revolutions of modernity have had a constant thread running through them: the expanded awareness of the world on the part of more and more numbers of people, across the world, though usually – for complex historical reasons – earlier in the Western world than elsewhere. This, considered in the long term, constitutes a slow revolution of its own, though not all that slow if we consider the extent of the expansion of human knowledge. Within this extended long revolution, we can sense an underlying continuity and steady growth of awareness, but we can also sense certain moments when technological discoveries and intellectual breakthroughs rocked society – the invention of printing, for instance, or the rise of the Internet.

A handy term to describe the cluster of transformations considered in this Unit is 'social communication': the ways in which social change and expanded communication between human beings are locked together. This Unit will examine certain key processes that have revolutionized knowledge and expanded the possibilities of social communication.

- First, the protracted spread of systems of education and the achievement of literacy in various parts of the world, which constitutes a necessary basis for the absorption of knowledge.

- Second, the various ways in which the printed word has been revolutionized since the fifteenth century: the growth of modern printing, the book publishing industry, changes in ways people read, and the growth of newspapers producing regular information about the world.

- Third, the growth of audiovisual broadcasting in the twentieth century: radio and television.

- Fourth, and finally, the contemporary rise of the Internet, and its possibilities. Neither this Unit nor the list are comprehensive: they do, however, indicate the texture of the prolonged revolution in knowledge that has characterized modern times.

25.2 EDUCATION

One of the central transformations of the modern era has concerned the organization of the ways in which knowledge is transmitted, and also the ways in which people's capacities to receive this knowledge have been shaped. For this reason, a study of the development of modern systems of education is essential for an understanding of the 'knowledge revolution'.

25.2.1 Background: 17th - 18th Century Europe

As European Absolutism developed over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, the state in countries like Prussia, France, and Russia began to perceive the importance

of intervening actively in educational matters, often in competition with the Church and other religious bodies, which had hitherto dominated pedagogy. The spread of elementary education across society, and especially into the burgeoning middle classes, was often seen as an efficient way of breeding loyal and obedient citizen-subjects.

Certain major changes began to take place in educational practice and ideology in this period. First, Latin, which had been the medium for instruction, came to be rivalled and slowly displaced by teaching in the mother languages of different states. This heralded a move towards the identification of the kind of education one received with the cultural and political identity one bore. Second, spurred by the ideas of thinkers like Francis Bacon in England, there was a growing emphasis on training in the exact sciences, which slowly began to rival the Renaissance-inherited focus on logic and rhetoric as subjects fit for school curricula. This new emphasis can be seen as a way of trying to keep education abreast of the accretions of scientific knowledge that characterized European life from the 16th century onward.

The eighteenth-century Enlightenment produced different schools of thought around the question of education. The empiricist philosopher John Locke argued that human minds were formed by lived experience and not abstract reason: thus, children should be given thoroughgoing instruction in proper modes of conduct prior to 'studies'. On a different track, the Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico stressed the role of imagination in the creation of human personality. On the basis of this, he argued for the nourishment of the minds of children through the study of languages, poetry, history and oratory. Some German ideologies argued on the other hand for a severely regimented education for children, which would break their urge to disobey and sin by carefully disciplining both body and spirit. In different ways, then, some of the major thinkers and intellectual currents of the time tried to come to grips with the question of how knowledge was to be imparted through education, and what kinds of knowledge were most fit for transmission.

In the late eighteenth century, elementary education spread in absolute terms. The school system was by now a major concern of the state in all the major European countries, and the ideal – if not the reality – of universal compulsory schooling was established. Running hand in hand with the extension of state control over education was the process of *nationalization:* the systems of education that were now established were harnessed to the structures and needs of the nation-state as never before. In Prussia, Frederick II issued general school regulations across the country in 1763, establishing compulsory schooling for children between five and 13 or 14 years of age. In 1787, school administration was centralized under a national board of education. In Russia in the early eighteenth century, Peter the Great tried to organize an educational system squarely harnessed to the needs of the state: religious and classical learning were eschewed, and replaced by training in mathematics, navigation, artillery and engineering. Later, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Tsar Alexander I tried to extend these principles of utility: rural education involved instruction to the peasantry in elements of agriculture as well as basic literacy; urban schooling, on the other hand, was focused on education fit for civil servants – in law, political economy, technology, and commerce. The transmission of knowledge through education, in these cases, was organized not as an end in itself, but as a means by which properly educated and trained subjects could serve the State. The administrative structure of education, and the subjects considered relevant for the curriculum, were dictated in large part by the interests of the State.

25.2.2 Education in the 19th Century

Major structural changes in the economy and society underpinned the enormous expansion of education in the nineteenth century. European expansion overseas brought new wealth into the European economy, and sustained the rise of business groups and the middle class. The growth of industrialization, initially in Britain and later across the continent, involved the development of mass labour, concentrated in industrial cities. The spread of elementary education to the industrial proletariat became a concern of state and public, and was fuelled also by the demands of democratic and radical agitators and intellectuals, who raised questions about the welfare of the 'common man', attacked privileges, and emphasized the creation of citizens who could, through education, fulfil their entitlement to personal growth.

The first half of the nineteenth century saw significant growth in pedagogical thought. Three figures stand out in this respect. The Swiss reformer Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, at the beginning of this period, propounded the idea that the 'innate character' of the child, rather than the external structures of the arts and the sciences, should be the basis of a comprehensive intellectual, moral and physical educational programme. Working as he did with the children of the poor, he emphasized the importance of education within the home. Another major educational reformer was the German Froebel, who in 1837 began the kindergarten movement, which was characterized by an accent on the importance of play in child education. Games, according to Froebel, could tap the innate capacities of children. The kindergartens that spread across Europe in the second half of the twentieth century marked a new departure: earlier, institutions for small children (nursery and day-care centres) had merely been spaces where they could be kept while their parents were at work; with the new system, however, children could be, in Froebel's words, subjects for 'psychological training…by means of play and occupations.' Johann Friedrich Herbart, a contemporary of Froebel's who achieved immense posthumous fame, was among the founders of fully developed theoretical pedagogy, a system he developed by injecting metaphysics and psychology into the study of learning processes.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, national schooling systems came to be fully articulated in many countries. External processes were an impetus to this: the consolidation of national states wedded education to the building of 'national character' and enabled the administration of education by the State; the spread of modern technology fuelled the growth of new 'modern schools' that taught modern languages and exact sciences. There was an immense growth of vocational schools in this time, and the increasing pace of secularization in Europe was marked by the decline of the church (relative to the state) in educational matters. There was another factor: the growth of democratic movements across large parts of Europe, which demanded universal male adult franchise. For the state in England, France and Germany – the three European countries we shall consider at length, and also the three that witnessed major and sustained democratic agitations in the nineteenth century – education was a means of mobilizing populations, but also, equally, a concession to popular democratic demands.

Germany

Germany witnessed the fastest development of the structures of national education in this time. Compulsory school attendance was established by the second half of the eighteenth century, and in 1794 a law declaring state supremacy over education was passed. In 1807, following the traumatic defeat of the Prussian army at the hands of Napoleon at Jena (1806), there was a new emphasis on cultivating nationalism through strictly state-controlled education of the young, and the remnants

of ecclesiastical education were snuffed out. Wilhelm von Humboldt, at the head of a special section of the Ministry of the Interior that controlled education, established in 1810 the first comprehensive system for the state examination of teachers. The classical system of schooling (the nine-year *Gymnasium* with its accent on Latin and Greek training) persisted a long time, though, and it was not till well after German unification and the establishment of the German Empire (1871) that 'modern' schooling, with its emphasis on the sciences and the mother tongue, came to enjoy similar privileges.

The real supremacy of the German educational system was in the field of higher education, which was centred around the universities of Berlin, Breslau, Bonn and Munich, institutions that drew in students from all around the world. The major universities in nineteenth-century Germany, far in advance of their counterparts in higher education elsewhere, integrated education with the steady accumulation of scientific knowledge that was proceeding across Europe by introducing scientific training at an advanced level into the curriculum. Even more significantly, these were the first modern educational institutions to combine teaching and research, integrating two radical principles – the elective freedom of the student (to choose his own programme of study) and the freedom of the professor to engage in research and develop his subject.

France

In France, the universal right to education was proclaimed as a revolutionary principle in 1791, in the middle of the French Revolution. However, when educational structures – formerly dominated by the Jesuits and other teaching orders – came to be displaced by a new centralizing state apparatus under Napoleon in the early nineteenth century, the revolutionary egalitarianism of the 1789-1793 period had largely been eschewed, and Napoleon devised his elaborate system of educational training mainly for the children of the upper classes and rising professional bourgeoisie. A detailed system of degrees and certificates for various levels of study was established, and requisite grades of proficiency were earmarked for entry into law, medicine, teaching and other professions. In 1854, France was divided into sixteen administrative districts (*academies*) for educational purposes; these, however, had little autonomy and functioned as arms of the national state apparatus of education. It was in the 1880s that the major changes in the educational system came to be legally defined: universally free and compulsory education was established, and religious teaching was abolished in public schools.

England

England followed a slightly different trajectory. The ideological hegemony of the doctrine of *laissez-faire* limited, for a long time, the drive towards state control of, and responsibility for, education. At the turn of the nineteenth century, education was considered the preserve of private enterprise, and much unstructured and unsystematic philanthropy was involved in the development of elementary education. Voluntary schools were set up all over the country – among the earliest were the Sunday schools from the 1780s, which mainly dealt in Bible reading – and were accompanied by philanthropic educational organizations such as the Society for Bettering the Conditions of the Poor, which was set up in 1796. Organizations financed voluntarily, however, could not cope with the task of providing comprehensive elementary education. It was in 1870 that, partly spurred on by the reproaches of Matthew Arnold (who served as inspector of elementary schools between 1851 and 1866), Parliament passed an Elementary Education Act. In 1880,

elementary education, administered by local educational authorities or 'school boards', was made compulsory throughout England and Wales, and in 1891 fees were abolished in almost all elementary schools. Secondary education, however, continued to be left to voluntary and private enterprise, and the 'public school' system (which was highly expensive and anything but public, despite the name) continued to be thoroughly elitist in its nature and values.

Despite the slowness with which England and France achieved free primary education, mass literacy proceeded very quickly through the nineteenth century in both these countries, as indeed it did in Germany. The German Reich was 88 per cent literate in 1871, at the time of unification. France and England were less developed in this regard, but by the 1890s, 90 per cent literacy had been almost uniformly reached in Western Europe. There were, of course, persistent regional disparities within countries, and outside of the heartland of the mass literacy drives progress on this front was much more halting. In Russia, where sporadic drives towards a democratic system of education were regularly halted by reactionary rollbacks, in 1900 nearly 70 per cent of the male population and 90 per cent of the female population remained illiterate.

Outside Europe, too, tumultuous changes in educational systems were beginning to be articulated. In the United States, in the second quarter of the nineteenth century – again, significantly, index-linked to the growth of radical democratic sentiment and the celebration of the 'common man' – the common school was established, as an educational structure run on public funds, and open to every child. This was, given the federal structure of the United States, not established at one go, but gradually, in state after state, beginning with Massachusetts in 1837. Before long, some common schools, acceding to demands for advanced public education, introduced courses beyond the elementary level, and the 'high school' thus came to be established. In the course of the nineteenth century, higher education in the United States was also reshaped, as colleges surged in number, lost their formerly religious character and became graduate schools of research.

European contact with Asia, in the form of colonialism, also introduced some significant changes in existing educational structures. As an example of this – though not necessarily a representative one – we shall consider India, the focal point of the British Empire, which witnessed some significant shifts in educational systems and patterns under colonial control. However, colonial education in India did not mean a simple displacement of indigenous patterns of education by English education. Matters were much more complex. In general, colonial policy in the early nineteenth century uneasily avoided intervention in education. Educational initiatives were started by Christian missionaries, who, however, were never easily integrated into the mechanisms of colonial control. Missionaries, printing books in the Indian vernaculars, stimulated the development of Indian languages. From 1813, some limited public expenditure on education was established, but the East India Company's government spent this on the teaching of classical Sanskrit and Arabic, giving rise to what came to be known as an Orientalist' policy of education. The earliest demands for instruction in English – which was beginning to be recognized and experienced as a language of power in the colonial context – came from *Indian* reformers like Rammohan Roy in the early nineteenth century. It was not till the 1830s that an aggressive body of government officials, who came to be known as the 'Anglicists', demanded that Oriental learning be replaced by Western knowledge in the priorities of the State, and had their way. In 1857, universities were established in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, and resulted in an expansion of college education.

However, there were gaping loopholes in the educational structures established under the aegis of colonial rule. First, and most importantly, the near-complete neglect of primary education kept the vast majority of the country illiterate – a state of affairs that persisted into post-Independence times. Second, the unplanned growth of private colleges and universities led to a significant growth in numbers of people who, though educated, lacked access to suitable employment in a colonial administrative structure that was stacked against them – Indians, for instance, could not enter the higher rungs of the administrative service. This was one of the many factors that fuelled discontent with colonial rule, and from the late nineteenth century, one of the more interesting markers of nationalist discontent was the development of educational institutions along 'national' lines, such as the D.A.V. College in Lahore or the Central Hindu College in Varanasi.

25.2.3   Education in the 20th Century

Through the course of the twentieth century, education retained and intensified its role as a catalyst of social change, as a marker of inequalities and differentials, as a benchmark of state policy and accomplishments, and as a facilitator of the circulation of various kinds of knowledge. Structural processes and dramatic events in the twentieth century, as in its predecessors, shaped the trajectory of educational institutions and practices, and moulded the nature of their impact.

There was, first of all, the dislocation caused by the two world wars. To consider the relationship between war and education, however, one must probe slightly deeper. Through the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, European armies stood armed against one another, in a tense and unstable standoff, as rivalries – largely fuelled by competing colonial ambitions – escalated between different states. Policies of conscription were introduced, and there was a marked militarization of society. This was, ironically perhaps, one of the engines that drove the escalation and spread of education. In societies continually preparing for war, the state had to be ready to invest in military and technical training, and this invariably involved a certain degree of education.

The world wars also, in the long run, weakened the power of the large European powers. The major consequence of this, of course, was the staggering rise of the United States and the Soviet Union as superpowers. However, another consequence of this, as processes of decolonization escalated after 1945, was that education as a nationalist agenda took on a new meaning in the context of newly liberated countries, trying to establish enduring and stable political and economic structures. Education in the Third World came to be seen as an instrument of national regeneration.

Industrial and scientific development in the West called into being new kinds of training in new kinds of technical knowledge. Old skills rapidly became obsolete as scientific technology consistently revolutionized itself, and new systems of knowledge were created, which necessitated education. Researchers, skilled workers, and high-level professionals were – and continue to be – constantly produced by this kind of education.

The same is true of academic knowledge. It was in the twentieth century that the university emerged as a major centre of both knowledge production and consumption, in various parts of the world. Mass universities and open universities pioneered the concept of adult education, which is something that has expanded greatly in the postwar world. Economic prosperity of the kind large parts of North America and Europe enjoyed after the Second World War brought about a tremendous demand for secondary and higher education, and also produced the means to fulfil this demand.

Between 1950 and 1970 – a period often termed the 'Golden Age' of western capitalism – the number of universities in many countries doubled or trebled, and education, both mass and specialized, was enabled on a much larger scale. In the Third World, too, universities catered to larger and larger numbers of students. Structures of mass education were established at higher as well as primary levels.

If we look briefly at the experience of revolutionary Communist rule in the twentieth century, the scale of transformation in the field of education becomes a bit clearer. Western capitalist countries had more or less achieved mass literacy – and in many cases near-universal literacy – by the twentieth century. The same was not true of Russia, under Tsarist despotism, and China, which suffered from the combination of a decaying monarchy, Western imperialist designs, and immense political turbulence in the first half of the twentieth century. Both countries were stabilized, and brought into line with technological and educational developments in the rest of the world, under Communist rule which in both cases began by stirring genuine hopes for expanded popular sovereignty and social egalitarianism, and ended up as revolutionary despotisms. The Russian Empire experienced its revolution between 1917 and 1923, and China came under Communist rule in 1949. Both revolutionary governments launched massive programmes of social reconstruction, and education was at the heart of this. Manual labour and productive work were emphasized in the educational systems of both States, and there was tremendous emphasis on basic literacy skills and primary education. Enormous advances were made in both these fields in very short time. The logic of revolutionary dictatorship seemed to demand this. On the one hand, there was the need to keep citizens from questioning the regime that ruled them, and to this end education deployed sophisticated propaganda machines (as, it has to be said, did many educational systems in many democratic countries). On the other hand, there was a constant pressure to give citizens access to good – sometimes excellent – standards of basic education, which was considered vital to socialist construction.

In essence, Russia, China (and, interestingly, virtually all the left-wing dictatorships of the twentieth century) achieved in the course of a period of decades in the twentieth century what the West had achieved a few generations previously: a population with extremely widespread literacy and basic education, free and compulsory for all. The achievements in this regard were remarkable: to this day, primary education in most surviving socialist regimes is administered with care and efficiency.

Theories of education in the twentieth century have taken many forms, increasingly informed by a reliance on the findings and methods of other disciplines, such as the social sciences, and, more directly, psychology. The progressive education movement of the early twentieth century, pioneered by the educational reformer John Dewey, was based largely in experimental American schools, and tried to break down the traditional stiffness of school structures and allow the child to explore her latent possibilities. Imaginative writing and reading classes, community-linked projects, dramatics and informal activities, and self-assessment systems were some of the innovations of the progressive movement that have lasted. Another pedagogic movement of the early twentieth century was characterized by the child-centred approach, which argued that the school should be fitted to the needs of the child and not vice versa. Maria Montessori, one of the early twentieth-century exponents of this approach, viewed educational reform as a means of countering the suppression of children's personalities by adults.

25.3 REVOLUTION AND THE WORD: PRINTING, PUBLISHING, READING

To comprehend the nature of the transformation brought in the modern world by the linked practices of printing, publishing, and reading, we need to imagine a world without newspapers, books and bookstores, publishing houses and printing presses. We would be imagining a world, in other words, without the foundations of modern communications, which till the twentieth century were entirely dominated by the printed word. When studying the successive revolutions in the world of the 'print media' in modern times, it is necessary to consider not only the technical transformations in the field, which made the circulation of knowledge and entertainment of various kinds possible, but also the *reception* of such media, in the form of *reading*. Keeping this in mind, we can briefly survey the radical changes in the world of the printed word in the last few centuries.

The details of the purely technical aspects of the printing revolutions since the fifteenth century need not occupy us. It is generally held that Johannes Gutenburg invented the first modern printing press, sometime between 1440 and 1450. Block printing had already been practised in Europe since the beginning of the fifteenth century, but Gutenburg introduced an entirely new *craft* of printing, involving movable metal type, ink, paper and press. By the end of the century, this new innovation had been carried through large parts of Europe, largely by German printers. Texts could now circulate on a scale hitherto unimaginable: earlier, copying a manuscript had been the only way to reproduce a text. Printing reduced the cost per copy of a book drastically, and greatly shortened the time needed to produce a book. The logical corollary of this was the production of books in larger numbers. Each book could now reach greater numbers of readers than before.

There were significant improvements in printing technology in the following centuries. Notable among these are the construction of the first all-metal press in England in 1795, the application of steam power to the printing process in the early nineteenth century (which joined together the various operations of the process of printing in a single cycle), the development of mechanical typecasting and typesetting, greater sophistication in the reproduction of illustrations through the nineteenth century, and the perfection of colour printing in the twentieth century. These and other inventions constituted a cluster that we can characterize as the *industrialization* of printing.

Through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, after Gutenburg's invention, printing presses spread all across Europe, and printing was at the heart of some of the bitterest political struggles and most dramatic social transformations of the time. The church, the state, universities, and religious radicals all deployed printing technology as a means of social communication and propaganda during the religious ferment of the Reformation in Europe. There were several sustained attempts to regulate and censor the spread of printed material and the activity of presses on the part of church and state, and, on the other side, the use of cheaply printed literature to spread radical ideas. In the mid-seventeenth century, the heyday of cheap print, the English Revolution, which produced the only republican experiment in British history, witnessed the dissemination of radical tracts by religious and social reformers: printing, here, was in the eye of the storm of a revolutionary period. This was a pattern that was to replicate itself later as well: during both the French and the Russian Revolutions, for instance, the circulation of cheap printed condemnations of the royal family played a major part in the unseating of monarchic regimes. Print became, over the course of time, a potent political weapon.

Between the 15th and the 18th century, many of the characteristics of modern publishing practice and book circulation came to be established. Despite attempts at censorship, sometimes successful, by virtually all the European nation-states, the book trade flourished in these centuries. Advertisements for books in the form of handbills or broadsheets began to be printed from the 1460s. Publishers' lists and catalogues began almost at the same time. Books were distributed along trade routes, and at trade fairs such as that at Frankfurt in Germany. Frankfurt became the centre of much European publishing, and a kind of clearing-house for new publications: a state of affairs that lasted till 1759, when imperial interference caused the centre of the trade to shift to Leipzig. Over the course of these three centuries, the functions of publisher, bookseller, and printer gradually came to be separated from one another. By the nineteenth century, the publisher's dominance in the process of book production and distribution was established.

The industrialization of printing in the nineteenth century radically reduced publishing costs. Paper, which had formed more than 20 per cent of the cost of a book till 1740, dropped in value till it constituted only 7 per cent in 1910. Cloth cases began to replace leather bindings after 1820. Across Europe and America in this period, the book trade expanded in tandem with the rise in population and the growth of an educated public. The number of new books expanded enormously. In Britain, roughly 100 new titles were printed per year till 1750; this rose to 600 by 1825 and over 6000 by the turn of the twentieth century. As education expanded, popular series at low prices began to be published, an early forerunner being Bell's *The Poets of Great Britain*, which appeared in 1777-83. Cassell's National Library Series (209 volumes, 1886-1890) was the cheapest of these editions, costing three pence for a paper binding and six pence for a cloth binding.

In the 20th century, book publishing became a large industry, embracing a number of large concerns, some of which employed staffs of 1000 and more. Specialization became a marked feature of publishing houses, especially in the field of educational books, which commanded an enormous market with the increase in literacy rates and the rise of higher education. Companies like Macmillan in Britain and America, and Methuen in London, began with specifically educational needs in mind. Parts of the colonized world also slowly emerged as markets with a secure readership: India, for instance, witnessed not only the mass entry of titles published in England, but also the setting up of branches of British publishing houses, and the development of a diversified indigenous publishing world.

The experience of two world wars and the Depression of 1929 rocked the publishing industry in the West at several junctures, as book stocks were destroyed, purchasing power shrank, and the price of paper periodically rose. In such a situation, finding means of cheaper circulation to stay afloat seemed a logical step to take. The British publisher Allen Lane pioneered the paperback movement in response to this, and thereby a much wider readership than before was tapped. Literature of various kinds could spread much quicker within literate populations.

In the postwar period, publishing expanded rapidly again, and book circulation found new means of intensification, such as the rapid growth of translations. The paperback revolution continued, creating millions of new readers across the world, dominated by the Penguin Publishing House. Paperbacks were – and continue to be – sold in not only bookshops, but also newsstands, drugstores, and railway stations. Academic publications – editions of works of scholarship in various disciplines, for the benefit of the growing numbers of university students across the world – also began to be published, initially in the United States in the 1950s, and then in various other parts of the world with large student populations. This was publishing's response to the

growth of knowledge in various fields in the arts and the sciences through the twentieth century, and the emergence of the student and scholarly community as a fertile market for books to do with their subjects. University presses also grew in the postwar period, as a means of disseminating knowledge and research findings in various specialized fields without being too tied down to the more acute demands of profit expansion.

To understand the implications of the revolution in printing and publishing, one must consider the equally revolutionary ways in which readerships and reading practices were transformed from the eighteenth century onwards. Prior to the eighteenth century, the book in Europe had generally been seen as a form of social discipline, imposed by the Church. Now, as new kinds of printed matter – most dramatically perhaps the novel – penetrated the subjective lives of people, the book acquired an emancipatory function, and came to be seen as a vehicle for individual intellectual growth and social opportunity. The mechanically reproduced text could be read far more easily than any manuscript: the imagined life and world of the book, therefore, could draw in readers far more effectively. And most importantly, of course, the expanded number of books meant that readers could be drawn into the book in large numbers: individual works, then, could exercise a significant social impact. Lending libraries and reading societies grew: a new world of social intercourse thus developed around the practice of reading.

Through the eighteenth century, regular reading remained limited to a small section of the European population, mainly sections of the rising bourgeoisie. In the nineteenth century, however, as the reading public of the Western world achieved literacy on a mass scale, an enormous and inchoate world of new readers emerged. Women, children and industrial workers constituted the bulk of the reading population that emerged in this time, and books were written and circulated keeping their tastes – real or supposed – in mind. Cookery manuals, magazines, and a large number of cheap novels were published keeping women specifically in mind. Novels were considered suitable for women partly because, unlike the male world of the newspaper, they dealt with a world of the private sphere, inner life and personal relationships – a realm considered fit for the feminine character, with its supposed thralldom to imagination and fancy. Female readership came to constitute a distinct market by the late nineteenth century. The Bible, novels like *Robinson Crusoe*, and increasing numbers of fairy tales and fantasies were considered suitable reading matter for children. Middle-class reformers laid much stress on the literary education of working-class men, who were afforded greater opportunities for reading than before by the reduction of the working day. Classical and educational literature was considered suitable and edifying for the literate proletariat. However, the presence of radical and socialist literature on the shelves of workers' libraries suggests that there existed moves towards an independent working-class literary culture.

In the twentieth century, readership expanded further, with the advance of literacy in various parts of the world. Reading has come to be supplanted, however, by other kinds of leisure: cinema, rather than the book, is perhaps the definitive cultural form of the century. This does not mean a death to reading, but it does perhaps signal a slow decline. Potentially new forms of reading have developed with the growth of electronic texts in recent times, which are substantially different from the printed book. It is yet to be seen if this will herald another revolution in reading.

The Advent of Modern Newspapers

Few histories can give us as rich a sense of the texture of the 'knowledge revolution' as the history of the modern newspaper. Contemporary life in the literate world

without access to news is unthinkable. We are so accustomed to being, in lesser or greater degree, familiar with some manner of information from different parts of the world that we tend to forget that this is a relatively recent development, and is closely linked to changes in the nature of international, national and regional communication. Through the twentieth century, vast numbers of people have been accustomed to getting the news 'as it happens' through the media of radio, television and more recently the Internet. However, the initial transformation in the nature of information generation and the creation of 'news' happened through the newspaper.

The emergence of news, as a given quantity of information that large numbers of people have regular access to through determinate media, is perhaps the most important dimension of the knowledge revolution in modern times. And newspapers stood, for many generations, in the centre of this momentous change. Consider some of the aspects of a news-producing and consuming world. Such a world is, in an obvious sense, integrated as never before. This was a process that naturally took time, but the trajectory was consistent: from the time newspapers and news production became a major industry, increasing numbers of people had access to information about parts of the world they would never see in their lifetime, and many parts of the world they may not even have heard of. In our own time, we are used to frequently articulated worries about the future of the world, about nuclear holocaust and environmental degradation, about political rivalries that threaten human existence. Would these anxieties be conceivable in a world without widespread access to *news* from vastly different regions and contexts?

The spread of news, then, created conditions for expanded awareness about the world outside regional and national boundaries for vast numbers of people. At the same time, it also created conditions for extremely – sometimes explosively – sharpened awareness of 'national' questions and issues, as well as of national identity. The assumption that people need to know first of all what is happening inside their own nation is an assumption that helps in constructing that nation within popular imagination. The fact that we as Indian citizens are likelier to know about a minor corruption scandal in Indian political life than about a flood in Bangladesh or an African famine is not 'natural', it is part of a reality *constructed* for us by the priorities that our sources of information set for themselves. A national newspaper has determined coordinates: it is going to be distributed among people within a given geographical territory, and it is usually going to treat events that happen within the space of the nation-state with much greater care and attention than it will events outside it, even if sufficient information is available about the latter. The rise of national consciousness across the world has been historically paralleled by the rise of newspapers as vast profitable concerns.

Till the turn of the nineteenth century and the advent of the Industrial Revolution, news coverage was sporadic. The first rudimentary newsletters, passing information between traders, had emerged in the Middle Ages. The seventeenth century saw the growth of the first semi-independent newspapers in Britain, America, and on the European continent, though these were frequently subject to enormous censorship. This in itself demonstrates that, even at an early stage of growth, the power of 'news' to shape public opinion was recognized by the powers-that-be. In North America in the late eighteenth century, the press became a powerful social force, being the chief propagandist of the new republic of the United States after the Revolution of 1776. Clandestinely published newssheets were an agent in the creation of public opinion and political conflict across large parts of Europe and North America in this period.

By 1800, educated citizens in the United States and most of Europe could expect a certain degree of access to independent news coverage – a revolutionary breakthrough in itself, in the ways in which people related to the world around them. The era of the Industrial Revolution, however, produced conditions that supported an unimaginable expansion of the scope of news dissemination. Part of this had to do with the revolution in printing techniques and developments in transport and communications. Till well into the nineteenth century, news had to largely spread by road, or – in the case of international news – by sea, and the transmission of information was slow. One can speculate that 'news' across a sufficiently long distance in those days would not have, in many cases, been of any real significance as a guide to action. Imagine, for instance, news of a landslide or an earthquake in remote regions in the eighteenth century. By the time news of this reached people who were in a position to intervene, it would usually have been too late. In contrast, news in modern times is definitely a *shaping* force: it not only reports actions and events, but also propels them and determines their course. The speeding up of communication in the nineteenth century, through the invention of the telephone or the telegraph, made it possible for news to be gathered instantaneously. In 1815, an event in Brussels took four days to report in London. Within a few decades, things had changed so much that it could be reported immediately.

In 1851, one of the legendary accomplishments in the history of news occurred, when Paul Julius Reuter began using the telegraph to supply foreign news to national presses through telegrams, and thereby created the modern news agency. Newspaper correspondents also had transformed responsibilities and powers in the era of instant communication. Journalism – in the form of on-the-spot newsgathering – became a major, and increasingly valued, full-time occupation. The structures of modern journalism and the organization of the modern press were thus being set into shape.

All this enabled the efficient gathering of news, and its transmission from correspondent to news agency to editorial desk. But what of the next stage in the production of 'news' – the conversion of this information to readable matter, available to thousands of readers? In the late nineteenth century, this too was revolutionized. The invention of the Lino-type machine – which began to be used in 1886 – cut down radically on the time taken to produce the newspaper. This machine was at the centre of a cluster of technological innovations, which also involved the application of electricity to the printing industry, and the creation of machines that could print and also cut, fold and bind newspapers of any size together. As we can see, the late-nineteenth century newspaper partook of the most dramatic and exciting scientific and technological advances of the time, and deployed them in its service.

As railways, steamships and telegraphs slashed distances between and within nations in the late nineteenth century, mass-produced newspapers became available to all literate or even semi-literate sections of society: industrial workers, for instance, rapidly became the major consumers of the daily paper. By the end of the century, the circulation figures of some popular newspapers had touched the million mark, which indicates the intensity and scale of news consumption. Newspapers began to take diverse forms in the content they bore in this period. The London *Times*, which was an influential supporter of Parliamentary reform in Britain, proclaimed the ideal of journalistic objectivity, and the right to criticize governments, a task it took on at the time of the Crimean War, for instance. The *New York Tribune*'s sustained opposition to slavery was another instance of a newspaper assuming democratic political values as standards for its own practice. Other newspapers branched out in different directions, and reflected different preoccupations. For the *New York Sun*, for instance, 'human-interest stories' without any particular political consequence

were seen as a lucrative investment. Cheaply produced and extremely sensationalist newspapers – a prototype of which remains the *Sun* in London, the proverbial 'tabloid' – also acquired a mass readership.

Newspapers also witnessed significant growth in colonial contexts. Colonial governments naturally exercised particularly vigilant control over the press, especially its political publications. Demands for a freer press, however, became a live issue in colonized countries as it had in their metropolises. In India, *The Times of India* and *The Hindu* emerged as major English-language newspapers, with high standards of journalism. Many other newspapers – the *Dhyanodyaya* in Maharashtra, to take a random example – published pages in both the vernacular and in English. There was, through the late nineteenth century, a remarkable growth of vernacular newspapers. Educated Indians in the colonial government's service painstakingly translated these, so that reportage offensive or threatening to the government could be scrutinized and, if necessary, censored. An openly nationalist press emerged in the late nineteenth century, and, through complicated stages, moved to the heart of the struggle against colonialism in the twentieth century. The press retained its importance after Independence, and the number of newspapers and their circulation both expanded.

In the late nineteenth century, then, newspapers across the world had become an industry with a mass market. Their earlier identification with a narrowly literary world was now snapped, and they entered the realm, and – in multiple ways – the logic of big business. As the press came to require more and more sustained investment, advertising revenue became increasingly important in the composition of newspaper finances. By the 1890s, the 'press baron', a businessman (not infrequently a multi-millionaire) who owned chains of newspapers, had become a pivotal figure in the world of news. A short story will illustrate this.

William Randolph Hearst, who was the biggest New York press baron at the turn of the century, had initially been something of a campaigner against political corruption. His rise to power, however, was based largely on his decision to shelve his earlier ethics, and concentrate single-mindedly on *what made news*, and also *what made news sell*. Hearst was the figure who inspired Orson Welles' great film *Citizen Kane*, which explores the relentless logic of the corruption and power that result from such manipulation of news and popular sentiment. In 1898, Hearst's *Morning Journal* was publishing exaggerated and hysteric stories about the political tensions between the United States and Spain over Cuba. Hearst is reported to have cabled an illustrator for his paper in Cuba, asking for pictures of atrocities. The illustrator responded that there were no atrocities to illustrate. Hearst apparently replied 'You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war'.

This narrative illustrates two things. First, the decision of a substantial section of the newspaper business to eschew the press's traditional proclamations of commitment to truth and honesty in reportage. Second, and linked to this, the enormous power of news to shape the world that people inhabit. Hearst's statement, whether true or not, reflects an assumption that many subsequent press barons – as also many political regimes – have made: control over the news can shape the ways in which people think and behave, in a world dominated by the mass media. This is something that has often been exaggerated. Dictatorships, despite their control over the news and people's access to it, have frequently proved unable to convince their subjects of their legitimacy through media manipulation. People have, in large numbers and collective bodies, acted in ways contrary to the expectations of newspaper magnates and governments. But there remain serious grounds for anxiety, given the continually enhanced reach and scope of the media, especially when conjoined with governmental

projects of control. The popular Hollywood satire *Wag the Dog*, made in the late 1990s, narrates a story of an U.S. administration's bid to retain power by creating and circulating news of a phoney war. Such anxiety may often seem paranoic, but also points to something very real, because events like this, for all their fictive and fantastic quality, are actually well within the realm of possibility.

Press barons building newspaper chains – not all of whom were necessarily as unscrupulous as Hearst – dominated the landscape of American newspaper ownership in the early part of the twentieth century. The logic of mass news production that had fuelled the rise of newspapers as big business remained, but the ownership pattern itself gradually changed, in both America and Europe. The older press baron had combined the functions of editor and management executive. Over the course of the twentieth century, the latter came to predominate over the former. The world of the newspaper in the twentieth century has also been shaped by the fierce competition that defines the corporate world as a whole. The newspaper industry has been characterized by fierce struggles for greater circulation, one concern trying to top another's share in the news market. In this context, takeovers of smaller concerns by larger news enterprises have been frequent. A contemporary example of this is the vast international media empire built up by the Australian entrepreneur Richard Murdoch.

25.4   RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING

Newspapers have retained, by and large, their mass circulation and reach, their social force and relevance. However, over the course of the twentieth century they were gradually supplanted as the most advanced disseminators of knowledge and information by what we call the *audio-visual media*: radio and television. If economic forces, transport and communication welded the world together by creating new connections between different regions, radio and television played an equally revolutionary role. By making it possible to transmit events *as they happened* to various parts of the world, broadcasting dissolved distances of space and time, creating a *virtual* space – the radio set or the television screen – where events could be *simultaneously* reported in various corners of the globe. In a very real sense, the world shrank through the intervention of the mass media, both printed and audio-visual, but especially the latter.

The first known radio programme was broadcast in Massachusetts in the U.S.A on Christmas Eve, 1906. It was after the Second World War, however, that radio broadcasting really took off, as a form of news transmission and – perhaps even more vitally in the long run – as a source of popular entertainment, through the airing of music, drama, and so on. David Sarnoff, later of the Radio Corporation of America and the National Broadcasting Corporation, was the first to suggest the possibility of a radio receiver in every home, in 1916. This alerted experimenters in radio to the commercial possibilities of the form. The manufacture and sale of radio receiving equipment offered great possibilities for profitmaking, and radio – like the newspaper before it and television after – entered into a symbiotic relationship with advertising, which began to provide a substantial portion of its revenues, and in return used airtime on radio stations as an advertising medium. In the early 1920s, the business of constructing and selling radio receivers boomed, and concomitantly so did the business of radio broadcast, as more and more broadcasting stations were set up. Initially pioneered in England and the United States, radio spread extremely rapidly. By the end of 1923, there were radio stations established in Canada, France, the Soviet Union, Belgium, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Spain, Denmark and Australia. Shortly afterwards, Asian countries began to join the world of radio communication.

Organized radio broadcasting began in Japan in 1925, and the Indian Broadcasting Company had stations in Bombay and Calcutta in 1927.

Initially developed for its commercial possibilities, radio also offered immense scope for public educational and awareness programmes. National governments, alerted to this, encouraged the growth of what came to be known as public-service broadcasting. The prototype for this was – and remains – the British Broadcasting Corporation, set up as a public corporation in 1927. The BBC was made answerable to Parliament, but day-to-day control was left in the hands of the Board of Governors. This was a model that influenced many other countries.

Politicians soon realized the enormous potential of radio to shape public opinion and deployed this in qualitatively new kinds of political campaigns, where the radio played an increasingly important role. In the 1920s, the Republican Party in the United States spent over 20 per cent of its campaign funds on radio broadcasting. The 1932 presidential contest between Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt saw an unprecedented deployment of radio propaganda on both sides. In an even more concentrated form, Hitler's use of public radio was central to his success and popularity in Germany. During the Second World War, radio became a channel for political mobilization on an unprecedented scale. The wartime rhetoric of Hitler, Stalin, and Churchill is legendary; it had the social impact it did because of the expanded reach of radio. Citizens were made more aware of their relationship to their national government through radio broadcasting in both wartime and peace-time; simultaneously, radio was used – as print had been – to mould particular kinds of citizens, obedient and loyal to the State. The requisite degree of pliancy, however, was not easy to achieve, for the expansion of news networks – and the increasing access many radio listeners had to overseas networks as the century advanced – made it possible for radio to generate very different kinds of responses to government policy. One way or another, though, political consciousness and awareness was intensified in the era of broadcasting, as nation-states were knitted into coherent political units much more effectively than before.

Socially, broadcasting in the West responded to some major changes in the relationship between the private space of the family or individual home, and the world outside, changes implicit in the development of industrial capitalism that fructified in the early twentieth century. Relative improvement in wages and working conditions, changes in the length of the working day, and the limited expansion of leisure time, combined to produce an emphasis on the improvement of the small family home. At the same time, to maintain the self-sufficiency of the home, it was important to have access to regular and quick access to news from the 'outside' world – about employment, prices, weather, and wars, to take random examples. The development of popular aesthetic tastes and interests also led to a desire for entertainment that could be accessed at home. The development of sound broadcasting in the 1920s served exactly this purpose, making news and entertainment accessible within the home.

Television broadcasting, which became a technical feasibility from the early 1930s, drew upon the early experience of radio transmission, and also upon other techno-cultural innovations of the nineteenth and twentieth century. These included the use of electricity, the development of telegraphy, photography, and the early growth of cinema, with its invention of techniques of filming and projection that allowed images to be captured and transmitted in motion, rather than photographic stillness. Television created a unified virtual space, where people sitting in their homes could watch images collated and produced from all over the world. As television developed, and

on-the-spot news broadcasting and reportage grew, it became possible for the circulation of information to take on a radically new form. For the first time, news was tangible, if only in virtual terms: the TV screen relayed images of actual events, attaching faces and forms (as the radio had attached voices and sounds) to persons, events, and processes that people had really only been able to imagine earlier. The live telecasting of sport is a prime instance of this development, for it fuses together the history of information and entertainment. For most people, TV and radio – but especially TV – finally provided a substitute for the live sports events that most of them would never have a chance of watching in the flesh. An eerily comparable development is the telecasting of war: the Gulf War of the early 1990s was the first war where large-scale military action was telecast live over substantial periods of war. These two instances illustrate a common truth about television – it enables the deeper involvement, and (in sometimes troubling ways) the vicarious participation of viewers in the events they witness.

Early television broadcasting was pioneered in Britain, the United States being slower off the mark. The BBC in London began its television service in 1936, and the NBC in New York began telecasting in 1939. This pattern of established radio networks entering the field of television broadcasting, was taken up by many other companies, especially in the United States. In the 1950s, radio was rapidly overtaken by television in popular appeal.

Television was dominated by the Anglo-American world in its early decades of growth. Other countries did not develop comparable television networks till well after the Second World War, in the 1950s. Thereafter, the growth of television across enormous parts of the world has been exponential. The Third World was awakened to the possibilities of television in the postwar period, in part because of the boom in populations. In India, for instance, the expansion of television has been linked to the growth in the numbers of middle-class consumers, though TV actually taps audiences across diverse social strata. State control over telecasting was relaxed in the 1990s, with the advent of privatization and economic liberalization, one of the dimensions of which was the growth of cable TV networks, which are now almost universally available to middle-class homes.

Radio and television broadcasting, over the decades, have in many ways wrought revolutionary transformations in the circulation and consumption of both news and entertainment. The volume of information available to the viewer of TV or to the radio listener is immeasurably greater than earlier recipients of news. Potentially, TV and radio also democratize knowledge. The literacy required to access a newspaper is not needed to listen to the radio or to watch TV. In third world countries, in particular, high rates of illiteracy have meant a great reliance on broadcasting (especially radio, TV being a more expensive medium) for information.

Broadcasting has been, from the outset, intricately linked with big business, but many programmes on both TV and radio have also been noted for their aesthetic value. The performance of drama and comedy on radio and TV channels, the production of documentaries for both media, and the making of films for television, are instances of this. Some television comedies in particular – the late-1960s British series *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, for instance – have been important statements of twentieth century culture in their own right. The screening of films on TV, which has gone hand in hand with the international decline in cinema hall audiences, has linked cinema and television together closely, since the former is now often viewed through the medium of the latter, and the latter borrows many of its forms and much of its aesthetic from the former.

With all of this, the dimensions of personal leisure have changed dramatically, for people across the world. Very often, radio and television are referred to as belonging to the world of 'mass communication'. In purely quantitative terms, this is true – these are forms of communication that reach much larger numbers of people than any other. But the term is also misleading, for radio and television do not reach people *as* masses, but as atomized consumers, individuals and families. The image of a person sitting in front of a TV set for hours on end points to this cultural dimension of broadcasting – huge numbers of people are targeted by radio and television, but they receive programmes as private viewers. In this respect, television is the polar opposite of the cinema hall, which thrives on collectivity. Of course, there are frequently occasions when people crowd around a radio set or a TV placed in a public place and watch or listen as a congregation – during cricket matches broadcast live in India, for instance. Be that as it may, the most important social consequences of broadcasting are probably to be found in the ways in which it has influenced family and personal life, the ways in which watching a film, for instance, can be integrated with eating, or cooking, or washing clothes, or even fitted in between naps. Technological innovation in the field of broadcasting has been geared towards the privatization and personalization of reception. The rapid development of the pocket radio after World War II is an instance of this. Portable radios had been in vogue for a while before this, but this new innovation made it possible to listen to the radio entirely on one's own, to make it part of one's personal space, as it were.

25.5 THE INTERNET

The last of the major revolutions in the dissemination of knowledge and social communication up till the present day is the Internet. The full implications of Internet technology will probably take a while to realize. There are many imponderables in its growth. While Internet enthusiasts claim an immediately revolutionary status for this form of communication – and there are good reasons for this, since cyberspace has opened up previously unimaginable possibilities – there are also grounds for some skepticism. Operating the Internet involves both general and computer literacy, which means that the web-linked community remains numerically somewhat limited in comparison to, say, radio listeners in the middle of the century. One thing can be said with reasonable certainty, though: the full extent of the Internet's impact upon knowledge production and circulation will take a while to manifest itself. At present, we can only grasp some of its dimensions.

For a form of communication that has had such significance for radical left-wing movements in recent times, the origins of the Internet are strange and surprising. In the 1960s, the RAND Corporation, the most important strategic think-tank in America during the Cold War, trying to find a way of making communications among U.S. authorities secure, even in the eventuality of a nuclear war, hit upon an interesting idea. This built upon the growing importance of computers for purposes of information storage. One of RAND's engineers imagined a decentralized computer network, which could run because of a kind of internal anarchy: the absence of a central controlling mechanism meant that the relevant information could be simultaneously stored in several interlinked computers. Computer resources, then, could be shared. The idea that was to become today's Internet, then, arose within the parameters of U.S. defence thinking.

If the creation of the basic idea of the Internet was the consequence of the search for secure military command, its transformation into a 'free' community of users came

from a diametrically opposite impulse: an insurgent student politics that, closely connected to anti-war agitation, also demanded the free sharing and dissemination of knowledge. In 1979, some American university graduate students developed some programmes by which computers using a particular operating system (Unix) could call one another and exchange files. Communication between people through the computer became possible (e-mail) as well as postings of information on a network that could be viewed simultaneously on different computers This elaboration of the Internet principle proved genuinely revolutionary. Within a few years, this students' insurgent computer network connected thousands of 'websites' where information was posted. In 1988, there were over 11,000 sites, and over 1,800 articles of various kinds were being posted daily. The creation of the World Wide Web in 1990 signalled the further development of the world of networked computers and the dissemination of information.

Since the 1970s and 1980s, the Internet has undergone many changes. The left-leaning libertarianism of the late-70s movement, which demanded free and open access to the Net, has been partially overridden by the forces of commerce and big capital. Corporate enterprise has taken over, with Bill Gates' Microsoft Corporation now controlling – and making enormous revenue from – a large number of the personal computers through which people access the Internet.

Still, the Internet remains, in many ways, the touchstone of a major democratic revolution in knowledge-sharing and dissemination. It is virtually impossible to police or censor the Net, because of the incredible proliferation of websites where material and news of all kinds is posted. Communications have been unimaginably speeded up. This has enabled, among other things, the formation of what are known as 'Internet communities', networked users who communicate intensively, sometimes by the hour, exchanging messages and posting material on the Web. Many kinds of knowledge are disseminated on the Internet. Academic activity, for instance, has been greatly stimulated, since web searches can often produce hundreds or even thousands of references and articles on the Web when one is looking for information on particular themes. School and university students with access to the Internet find it an invaluable aid, as do scholars and researchers. Other kinds of information are also available: the Net is, among other things, the first place where fresh news breaks, much before it is printed in newspapers and usually before it can make it to the TV or radio. The quantity of news and information is so immense partly because the space for fresh inputs of knowledge into the Web is to all extents and purposes infinite, unlike the space in a newspaper or the limited time slots in broadcasting networks.

In some ways, with the Internet, we have come full circle in the history of the knowledge revolution. When print exploded upon the European scene in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, reactions must in some ways have been similar. Apparently uncontrollable new material – information, news, propaganda, entertainment – circulated with remarkable and unprecedented freedom, and proved immensely difficult to manage and regulate. The opportunities this provided for business and profit making were soon realized, and large capital soon entered the printing industry and turned it into big business. However, the unmanageable and even radical edge of the print media could never be fully diluted, as knowledge, opinions, and arguments poured out of the presses and hugely expanded the quantity of recorded thought in the world. It could be that similar processes are in store today, with the rise of a radically new medium of communication.

25.6   SUMMARY

This Unit and the one that follows has tried to demonstrate two important features of the modern world. One, the various technological inventions have brought about fundamental and irreversible changes in the world. As a result, in the last three centuries, the pace of change has accelerated to such an extent that the world today appears to be unrecognizably different from what it was, say in the 17th century. At the same time, the world has also become, and is increasingly becoming, more and more comprehensible to more and more people. This has happened with the expansion of education, the discovery of the print, the newspaper revolution, the radio and television networks, and finally the Internet. This Unit has examined these aspects in detail, their role in the making of the modern world and their significance for the world today. The next Unit will take up some of the major technological breakthroughs that contributed to the same process.

25.7   EXERCISES

1)   In what concrete ways is the growth of knowledge related to technological growth?

2)   Write a note on the development and expansion of education in Europe.

3)   The development of print technology and the beginning of newspapers truly constitute a revolution. Comment.

UNIT 26 TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION: COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDICAL

26.1 INTRODUCTION

The term 'Industrial Revolution' does not imply a singular transformation from a pre- to a post-industrial society. Industrial and technological changes had been proceeding for several centuries prior to the 18th. There was, however, a faster tempo in the rate of growth and a markedly global character to the Industrial Revolution, which, although it occurred first in Britain, spread to continental Europe and North America and radically altered the socio-economic life of the colonised world as well. Technological development during the European Middle Ages had been slow. In the succeeding period change was associated with profound social and institutional upheavals. The emergence of the nation-state, the Protestant Reformation, the Renaissance and its accompanying scientific revolution, and the expansion of European colonialism were all linked to developing technology. Thus, imperial expansion was made possible by advances in seafaring, navigational technology and new firepower. The new printing presses of the Reformation helped disseminate all points of view, its intellectual ferment stimulated scientific and technological innovation. Many of the inventors and scientists of the period were Protestants.

This Unit will examine some of the major technological innovations that happened during the course of the last three centuries. In particular it would focus on technological discoveries made in the fields of electricity, communications and medical sciences. Since the pace of changes accelerated tremendously in the 20th century, the changes in the last century will be discussed separately. Apart from discussing the technological changes, the Unit would also examine the factors that motivated and propelled these changes and their profound influences on human life.

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26.2 POWER TECHNOLOGY AND STEAM

An outstanding feature of the Industrial Revolution was the advance in power technology. At the beginning of this period, the major sources of power available were animate energy and the power of wind and water, the only exception being the atmospheric steam engines that had been installed for pumping purposes, mainly in coal mines. The use of steam power was exceptional and remained so for most industrial purposes until well into the 19th century. Steam did not simply replace other sources of power: it transformed them. The same sort of scientific enquiry that led to the development of the steam engine was also applied to the traditional sources of inanimate energy, with the result that both waterwheels and windmills were improved in design and efficiency. Numerous engineers contributed to the refinement of waterwheel construction, and by the middle of the 19th century new designs increased the speed of the waterwheel and prepared the way for the emergence of the water turbine.

The revolution in communications had a great deal to do with the development of steam-driven power and locomotion. Scientists, such as Robert Boyle of England (who worked on atmospheric pressure), Otto von Guericke (the vacuum), and Denis Papin (pressure vessels), developed the science of steam power. Technologists Thomas Savery and Thomas Newcomen were pioneers of steam engines. Savery's apparatus condensed steam in a vessel, to create a partial vacuum. The first commercially successful steam engine, was invented by Newcomen. Newcomen's engines were heavy fuel consumers, useful mainly in the British coalfields where they kept deep mines clear of water and fulfilled a pressing need of 18th century British industry. Water power and wind power would now gradually be replaced by a mechanism with tremendous potential. Its most important application, the steam railway engine, would (in tandem with modern metallurgy) transform the basis of transport and communications the world over.

Steam became the characteristic power source of the British Industrial Revolution. Little development took place in the Newcomen atmospheric engine until James Watt patented a separate condenser in 1769, but from that point onward the steam engine underwent continuous improvements. Watt's condenser separated the two actions of heating the cylinder with hot steam and cooling it to condense the steam for every stroke of the engine. By keeping the cylinder permanently hot and the condenser permanently cold, a great economy could be effected. The Birmingham industrialist Matthew Boulton, helped convert the idea into a commercial success. Between 1775 and 1800, the Boulton and Watt partnership produced some 500 engines, which despite their high cost were eagerly acquired by the tin-mining industrialists of Cornwall and other power users who needed a reliable source of energy. Boulton and Watt introduced many important refinements, by converting the engine from a single-acting into a double-acting machine that could be applied to rotary motion. The rotary action engine was adopted by British textile manufacturer Sir Richard Arkwright for use in a cotton mill, Many other industries followed in exploring the possibilities of steam power, and it soon became widely used.

The Cornish engineer Richard Trevithick introduced higher steam pressures in 1802, and the American engineer Oliver Evans built the first high-pressure steam engine in the United States at the same time. High-pressure steam engines became popular in America. Trevithick made the first successful steam locomotive for a tram in South Wales in 1804. (The age of the railways had to wait for the permanent way and locomotives). Another consequence of high-pressure steam was the practice of compounding, of using the steam twice or more at descending pressures before it

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was finally condensed or exhausted. The technique was first applied by Arthur Woolf, a Cornish mining engineer.

A demand for power to generate electricity stimulated new thinking about the steam engine in the 1880s. The problem was that of achieving a sufficiently high rotational speed for the dynamos. Full success in achieving a high-speed engine depended on the steam turbine, a major technological innovation invented by Sir Charles Parsons in 1884. By passing steam through the blades of a series of rotors of gradually increasing size (to allow for the expansion of the steam) the energy of the steam was converted to very rapid circular motion, which was ideal for generating electricity. This method still provides a major source of electric power. Even the most modern nuclear power plants use steam turbines because technology has not yet solved the problem of transforming nuclear energy directly into electricity. In marine propulsion, too, the steam turbine remains an important source of power despite competition from the internal-combustion engine.

26.3 COMMUNICATIONS: TRANSPORT

The sea was the greatest commercial highway, stimulating technological changes in sailing ships. These came in various forms, Elizabethan galleons with maneuverability and firepower, Dutch fishing vessels with spacious hulls and shallow draft, and the fast clippers of the East India companies. Reliable navigation demanded better instruments. The quadrant was improved upon by the octant, which then developed into the modern sextant. The construction of clocks that could keep accurate time helped sailors determine how far east or west of Greenwich the ship lay (longitude). The British Board of Longitude awarded a prize in 1763 to John Harrison for a chronometer that fulfilled all the requirements. Transport provides an example of a revolution within the Industrial Revolution, so complete were the changes in the period 1750-1900. The first improvements in Britain came in roads and canals in the second half of the 18th century. A network of hard-surfaced roads was built in France in the 17th and early 18th centuries and copied in Germany. Pierr. Tréésaguet of France improved road construction in the late 18th century by separating the hard-stone wearing surface from the rubble substrata and providing ample drainage. By the beginning of the 19th century, British engineers were innovating in road and canal-building techniques, with J.L. McAdam's inexpensive and long-wearing road surface of compacted stones and Thomas Telford's canals. The outstanding innovation in transport, however, was the application of steam power.

26.3.1 Steam Locomotives

First was the evolution of the railroad: the combination of the steam locomotive and a permanent travel way of metal rails. Experiments in the first quarter of the 19th century culminated in the Stockton & Darlington Railway, opened in 1825. The Liverpool and Manchester Railway opened in 1830, and was the first railway service with freight and passenger traffic relying entirely on the steam locomotive. It was designed by George Stephenson, and its locomotives the work of Stephenson and his son Robert. The first locomotive was called the Rocket. The opening of the Liverpool- Manchester line was the inauguration of the Railway Era, which continued until World War I. During this time railways were built across all countries and continents, opening up vast areas to the markets of industrial society. Locomotives increased rapidly in size and power, but the essential principles remained those established by the Stephensons : horizontal cylinders mounted beneath a multi-tubular boiler with a firebox at the rear and a tender carrying supplies of water and fuel. Meanwhile, the construction of the permanent way underwent an improvement

borrowd from preceding tramroads: wrought-iron, and eventually steel rails replaced the cast-iron rails. Very soon, a well-aligned track with easy gradients and substantial supporting civil-engineering works became a common place.

26.3.2 Steam Shipping

The other major application transformed marine transport. The initial attempts to use a steam engine to power a boat were made on the Seine River in France in 1775, and experimental steamships were built by William Symington in Britain at the turn of the 19th century. The first commercial success in steam propulsion for a ship, was that of the American Robert Fulton, whose paddle steamer the "North River Steamboat," commonly known as the Clermont after its first overnight port, plied between New York and Albany in 1807, equipped with a Boulton and Watt engine. A similar engine was installed in the Glasgow-built Comet, put in service on the Clyde in 1812 and which was the first successful steamship in Europe.

All early steamships were paddle-driven, and all were small vessels suitable only for ferry and packet duties because it was long thought that the large fuel requirements of a steamship would preclude long-distance cargo carrying. The further development of the steamship was thus delayed until the 1830s, when I.K. Brunel began work on the problems of steamship construction. His three great steamships each marked a leap forward in technique. The Great Western (launched 1837), was the first steamship built specifically for oceanic service in the North steam shipAtlantic, and demonstrated that the proportion of space required for fuel decreased as the total volume of the ship increased. The Great Britain (launched 1843) was the first large iron ship in the world and the first to be screw-propelled; and was in service until as late as 1970. The Great Eastern (launched 1858), with a displacement of 18,918 tons, was the largest ship built in the 19th century. By the end of the century, steamships were well on the way to displacing the sailing ship on all the main trade routes of the world.

26.4   ELECTRICITY

The pioneering work in the development of electricity as a source of power had been done by an international collection of scientists including Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Alessandro Volta of the University of Pavia, Italy, and Michael Faraday of Britain. The latter demonstrated the nature of the relationship between electricity and magnetism in 1831, and ius experiments provided the point of departure for the mechanical generation of electric current, previously available only from chemical reactions and the utilization of such current in electric motors. Both the mechanical generator and the motor depend on the rotation of a continuous coil of conducting wire between the poles of a strong magnet. Both generators and motors underwent substantial development in the middle decades of the 19th century. In particular, French, German, Belgian, and Swiss engineers evolved the most satisfactory forms of armature (the coil of wire) and produced the dynamo, which made the large-scale generation of electricity commercially feasible.

Continental Europe and North America rapidly developed markets for electricity. In the United States Thomas Edison invented the carbon-filament lamp for domestic illumination. The success of the carbon-filament lamp did not mean the supersession of gas lighting. Coal gas had been used for lighting in Cornwall, in 1792, and in Birmingham in 1798. Gas lighting was adopted by firms and towns all over Britain in the first half of the 19th century. Under competition from electric lighting the quality of gas lighting was improved, and remained popular until the middle of the 20th century. Lighting alone could not provide an economical market for electricity because

century. Lighting alone could not provide an economical market for electricity because its use was confined to the hours of darkness. The popularity of urban electric tramways and the adoption of electric traction on subway systems such as the London Underground coincided with the widespread construction of generating equipment in the late 1880s and 1890s. The subsequent spread of this form of energy is one of the most remarkable technological success stories of the 20th century, but most of the basic techniques of generation, distribution, and utilization had been mastered by the end of the 19th century.

26.5 COMMUNICATIONS: IDEAS, WORDS, IMAGES

Communications were equally transformed in the 19th century. The steam engine helped to mechanize and thus to speed up the processes of papermaking and printing. In the latter case the acceleration was achieved by the introduction of the high-speed rotary press and the Linotype machine for casting type and setting it in justified lines (i.e., with even right-hand margins). Printing had to undergo a technological revolution comparable to the 15th-century invention of movable type to be able to supply the greatly increasing market for the printed word. (On the increasing demand for the printed word, see 25.2 of the previous Unit). Another important process that was to make a vital contribution to modern printing was discovered in the 19th century: photography. The first photograph was taken in 1826 or 1827 by the French physicist J.N. Niepce, using a pewter plate coated with bitumen. Daguerre and Fox Talbot adopted silver compounds to give light sensitivity. By the 1890s George Eastman in the United States was manufacturing cameras and celluloid photographic film and the first experiments with the cinema were beginning to attract attention.

Telegraphs and Telephones

The great innovations in communications technology, however, derived from electricity, and were propelled rapidly into usage by a combination of business and military motivations. The first was the electric telegraph, invented or at least made into a practical proposition for use on the developing British railway system by two British inventors, Sir William Cooke and Sir Charles Wheatstone, who collaborated on the work and took out a joint patent in 1837. The same year, the American inventor Samuel F.B. Morse patented and devised the signalling code that bore his name and was subsequently adopted all over the world. The first public telegraph line opened from Baltimore to Washington in 1844. Within a decade, telegraph lines had sprung up in the USA and Europe, and in 1848, Julius Reuter partnered Bernhard Wolff to open the first news agency in Germany. By the 1860 is, the continents of the world were linked telegraphically by transoceanic cables, and the main political and commercial centres were brought into instantaneous communication. Rapid communication eroded parochial and national barriers, telegraph treaties and unions were formed, and the International Telegraph Union (formed in 1865) in Paris, soon grew into the International Bureau of Telegraph Communication - the world's first permanent international organisation, established in Vienna, in 1868.

To be truly effective internationally however, telegraph cables needed insulation in order to cross the seas and oceans. One of the most successful inventors of insulation was an English doctor in the East India Company's Bengal Army, and chemistry professor at the Calcutta Medical College. In 1838 he suspended 22 kilometres of wire on bamboo poles, with the last 3 kilometres under the surface of the Hoogly river. This was the first underwater circuit, but went unnoticed in Europe. However,

experimentation was taking place elsewhere, with the rapid spread of the telegraph. France and Britain were linked in 1850, and lines across the Mediterranean laid, with partial success through the next two decades. (France was particularly interested in establishing stable links with its Algerian colony in North Africa). The Crimean War, wherein France and Britain were pitted against Tsarist Russia, was the first one conducted with long-distance contact between armies and command headquarters. This could prove to be a mixed blessing for local commanders who could be subjected to long-distance meddling by political leaders as well. In India, the recently installed telegraph played a major role in colonial-imperial communications in the Revolt of 1857.

The telegraph system also played an important part in the opening up of the American West by providing rapid aid in the maintenance of law and order. The telegraph was followed by the telephone, invented by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876 and adopted quickly for short-range oral communication in American cities and at a slower pace in Europe. Meanwhile theoretical work on the electromagnetic properties of light and other radiation was beginning to produce experimental results, and the possibilities of wireless telegraphy began to be explored. By the end of the nineteenth century, Guglielmo Marconi had transmitted long-distance messages over many miles and was preparing the apparatus with which he made the first transatlantic radio communication on December 1901. The world was being drawn inexorably into a closer community.

26.6 DEVELOPMENTS IN MODERN MEDICINES

The development and use of the compound microscope (invented slightly earlier, in Holland) was the work of Galileo (1564-1642). He was the first to insist upon the value of measurement in science and in medicine, replacing guesswork with accuracy. **The view of the French philosopher Renéé Descartes (1596-1650) that the human body is a machine and that it functions mechanically had its repercussions in medical thought**. One group adopting this explanation viewed life as a series of chemical processes, and were called iatrochemists. Santorio Santorio, working at Padua, was an exponent of this view and a pioneer investigator of metabolism. Another Italian, who developed the idea was Giovanni Borelli, a mathematics professor at Pisa University, who gave his attention to the mechanics of the human body and the laws that govern its movements. The discovery of the circulation of the blood based on precise observation and scrupulous reasoning was a landmark of medical progress. In 1628 William Harvey, who studied at Cambridge University and then at Padua, published his classic book *Concerning the Motion of the Heart and Blood*. Following the method described by the philosopher Francis Bacon, he drew the truth from experience and not from authority. Meanwhile, in the 18th century, medical education grew, and prominent schools functioned at Leiden (Holland), Padua (Italy), and Edinburgh (Scotland). In 18th-century London, Scottish doctors were the leaders in surgery and obstetrics. William Smellie's *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Midwifery*, published in 1752-64, placed midwifery on a sound scientific footing and helped to establish obstetrics as a recognized medical discipline. It contained the first systematic discussion on the safe use of obstetrical forceps, which have saved countless lives. The science of modern pathology also had its beginnings in this century. Giovanni Morgagni, of Padua, in 1761 published his massive work *The Seats and Causes of Diseases Investigated by Anatomy*, based on 700 postmortem examinations.

A highly significant medical advance was vaccination. The often fatal disease smallpox, was widely prevalent. Inoculation, which had been practised in the East, was

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popularized in England in 1721-22 by Lady Mary Montagu, who had seen it practised in Turkey. In 1796 Edward Jenner, a country practitioner began inoculations with cowpox (the bovine form of the disease). This procedure - vaccination - has been responsible for eradicating the disease. Public health received more attention during the 18th century, with population statistics, health legislation and hospitals. In Paris, Philippe Pinel initiated reforms in the care of the mentally ill, discarding the notion that insanity was caused by demon possession. Conditions improved for sailors and soldiers. James Lind, a British naval surgeon from Edinburgh, recommended citrus juices to prevent scurvy. In 1752 the Scotsman John Pringle, published his *Observations on the Diseases of the Army.* His suggestion in 1743 that military hospitals be regarded as sanctuaries eventually led to the establishment of the Red Cross organization in 1864.

By the beginning of the 19th century, the structure of the human body was almost fully known, due to new methods of microscopy and of injections. The understanding of physiological processes was rapidly elucidated, especially in Germany, where physiology became established as a distinct science under the guidance of Johannes Müüller, a professor at the University of Berlin. France's brilliant physiologist Claude Bernard, made important discoveries based on carefully planned experiments. He clarified the role of the pancreas, revealed the presence of glycogen in the liver, and explained the functioning of the blood vessels. His work, *An Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine* (1865) is still studied.

The great medical advance of the 19th century was the demonstration that certain diseases and surgical infections were caused by minute living organisms. This discovery changed the face of pathology and the practice of surgery. A pioneer in the parasitic theory of infection was Agostino Bassi of Italy, who showed that a disease of silkworms was caused by a fungus that could be destroyed by chemical agents. The main credit for establishing bacteriology goes to the French chemist Louis Pasteur (1822-95), who proved that the fermentation of wine and the souring of milk are caused by living microorganisms. His work led to the pasteurization of milk and solved problems of animal and human diseases. He employed inoculations to prevent anthrax in sheep and cattle, chicken cholera in fowl, and finally rabies in humans and dogs. From Pasteur were derived concepts that led to the antiseptic principle in surgery. In 1865 Lister, a surgeon at Glasgow University, began using carbolic acid as a disinfectant. His pioneering work led to more refined techniques of sterilizing the surgical environment. An important development in tropical medicine (and of great consequence to colonial projects of conquest) was the extraction of quinine from the cinchona bark by the French chemists Pierre Peletier and Joseph Caventou in 1820. This made it possible to treat the malaria, one of the most dreaded of all diseases especially in the 'Orient'. It was only in 1897 that the anopheles mosquito was identified as the vector of malaria.

The most famous contribution by the United States to medical progress at this period was the introduction of general anesthesia, a procedure that not only liberated the patient from pain and enabled the surgeon to perform more extensive operations. There were many claimants for priority, some used nitrous oxide gas, and others ether. But it was William Morton who, on October 16, 1846, in Boston, first demonstrated the use of ether as a general anesthetic. General anesthesia soon became prevalent in surgery. In November 1847 chloroform was tried with complete success, and soon it was preferred to ether and became the anesthetic of choice.

Preventive medicine was considered as important as the cure of disease. The 20th century witnessed the evolution of national health services. (We may pay attention, in passing to Ivan Ilich's observation that the two most significant safeguards for

public health have been sanitation and clean water supply). Spectacular advances in diagnosis and treatment followed the discovery of X rays by Wilhelm Rööntgen, in 1895, and of radium by Pierre and Marie Curie in 1898. Before the turn of the century, too, the new field of psychiatry had been opened up by Sigmund Freud. The increase in scientific knowledge during the 19th century radically altered and expanded medical practice, and led to the establishment of public and professional bodies to govern the standards for medical training and practice.

26.7 TECHNOLOGY IN THE 20th CENTURY

Recent history of technology is notoriously difficult to write, because of the mass of material and the problem of distinguishing the significant from the insignificant among events that have virtually the power of contemporary experience. In respect to the recent history of technology, however, one fact stands out clearly: despite the immense achievements of technology by 1900, the following decades witnessed more advance over a wide range of activities than the whole of previously recorded history. The airplane, the rocket and interplanetary probes, electronics, atomic power, antibiotics, insecticides, and a host of new materials have all been invented and developed to create an unparalleled social situation, full of possibilities and dangers, which would have been virtually unimaginable before the present century.

In venturing to interpret the events of the 20th century it will be convenient to separate the years before 1945 from those that followed. The years 1900 to 1945 were dominated by the two world wars, while those since 1945 have been preoccupied by the need to avoid another major war. The dividing point is one of outstanding social and technological significance: the detonation of the first atomic bomb at Alamogordo, N.M., in July 1945.

There have been profound political changes in the 20th century related to technological capacity and leadership. It may be an exaggeration to regard the 20th century as "the American century," but the rise of the United States as a superstate has been sufficiently rapid and dramatic to excuse the hyperbole. It has been a rise based upon tremendous natural resources exploited to secure increased productivity through widespread industrialization, and the success of the United States in achieving this objective has been tested and demonstrated in the two world wars. Technological leadership passed from Britain and the European nations to the United States in the course of these wars. This is not to say that the springs of innovation went dry in Europe: many important inventions of the 20th century originated there. But it has been the United States that has had the capacity to assimilate innovations and to take full advantage from them at times when other nations have been deficient in one or other of the vital social resources without which a brilliant invention cannot be converted into a commercial success. **As with Britain in the Industrial Revolution, the technological vitality of the United States in the 20th century has been demonstrated less by any particular innovations than by its ability to adopt new ideas from whatever source they come.**

The two world wars were themselves the most important instruments of technological as well as political change in the 20th century. The rapid evolution of the airplane is a striking illustration of this process, while the appearance of the tank in the first conflict and of the atomic bomb in the second show the same signs of response to an urgent military stimulus. It has been said that World War I was a chemists' war, on the basis of the immense importance of high explosives and poison gas. In other respects the two wars hastened the development of technology by extending the institutional apparatus for the encouragement of innovation by both the state and

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private industry. This process went further in some countries than in others, but no major belligerent nation could resist entirely the need to support and coordinate its scientific-technological effort. **The wars were thus responsible for speeding the transformation from "little science," with research still largely restricted to small-scale efforts by a few isolated scientists, to "big science," with the emphasis on large research teams sponsored by governments and corporations, working collectively on the development and application of new techniques**. While the extent of this transformation must not be overstated, and recent research has tended to stress the continuing need for the independent inventor at least in the stimulation of innovation, there can be little doubt that the change in the scale of technological enterprises has had far-reaching consequences. It has been one of the most momentous transformations of the 20th century, for it has altered the quality of industrial and social organization. In the process it has assured technology, for the first time in its long history, a position of importance and even honour in social esteem.

26.7.1   Industry and Innovations

There have been technological innovations of great significance in many aspects of industrial production during the 20th century. It is worth observing, in the first place, that the basic matter of industrial organization has become one of self-conscious innovation, with organizations setting out to increase their productivity by improved techniques. Methods of work study, first systematically examined in the United States at the end of the 19th century, were widely applied in U.S. and European industrial organizations in the first half of the 20th century. These evolved rapidly into scientific management and the modern studies of industrial administration, organization and method, and particular managerial techniques. The object of these exercises has been to make industry more efficient and thus to increase productivity and profits, and there can be no doubt that they have been remarkably successful. Without this superior industrial organization it would not have been possible to convert the comparatively small workshops of the 19th century into the giant engineering establishments of the 20th with their mass-production and assembly-line techniques. The rationalization of production, so characteristic of industry in the 20th century, may thus be legitimately regarded as the result of the application of new techniques that form part of the history of technology since 1900.

26.7.2   Improvements in Iron and Steel

Another field of industrial innovation in the 20th century has been the production of new materials. As far as volume of consumption goes, man still lives in the Iron Age, with the utilization of iron exceeding that of any other material. But this dominance of iron has been modified in three ways:

- by the skill of metallurgists in alloying iron with other metals;

- by the spread of materials such as glass and concrete in building; and

- by the appearance and widespread use of entirely new materials, particularly plastics.

Alloys had already begun to become important in the iron and steel industry in the 19th century (apart from steel itself, which is an alloy of iron and carbon); self-hardening tungsten steel had been first produced in 1868, and manganese steel, possessing toughness rather than hardness, in 1887. Manganese steel is also nonmagnetic; this fact suggests great possibilities for this steel in the electric-power industry. In the 20th century steel alloys multiplied. Silicon steel was found to be useful because, in contrast to manganese steel, it is highly magnetic. In 1913 the first

stainless steels were made in England by alloying steel with chromium, and the Krupp works in Germany produced stainless steel in 1914. The importance of a nickel-chromium alloy in the development of the gas-turbine engine in the 1930s has already been noted. Many other alloys also came into widespread use for specialized purposes.

26.7.3 Modern Medicine and Pharmaceuticals

An even more dramatic result of the growth in chemical knowledge has been the expansion of the modern pharmaceutical industry. The science of pharmacy emerged slowly from the traditional empiricism of the herbalist, but by the end of the 19th century there had been some solid achievements in the analysis of existing drugs and in the preparation of new ones. The discovery in 1856 of the first aniline dye had been occasioned by a vain attempt to synthesize quinine from coal-tar derivatives. Greater success came in the following decades with the production of the first synthetic anti-fever drugs and pain-killing compounds, culminating in 1899 in the conversion of salicylic acid into acetylsalicylic acid (aspirin), which is still the most widely used drug. Progress was being made simultaneously with sulfonal hypnotics and barbiturate drugs, and early in the 20th century Paul Ehrlich of Germany successfully developed an organic compound containing arsenic which was effective against syphilis. This discovery, made in 1910, was the first to overwhelm an invading microorganism without offending the host. In 1935 the discovery that Prontosil, a red dye developed by the German synthetic-dyestuff industry, was an effective drug against streptococcal infections (leading to blood poisoning) introduced the important sulfa drugs. Alexander Fleming's discovery of penicillin in 1928 was not immediately followed up, because it proved very difficult to isolate the drug in a stable form. But World War II gave a fresh urgency to research in this field, and commercial production of penicillin, the first of the antibiotics, began in 1941. These drugs prevented the growth of pathogenic organisms. All these pharmaceutical advances demonstrate an intimate relationship with chemical technology.

In 1901, for the United Kingdom the expectation of life at birth was 48 years for males and 51.6 years for females. By the 1980s life expectancy had reached 71.4 years for males and 77.2 years for females. With the exception of diseases such as cancer and AIDS, attention has become focused on morbidity rather than mortality, and the emphasis has changed from keeping people alive to keeping them fit. The rapid progress of medicine was reinforced by improvements in communication between scientists. And although specialization increased, teamwork became the norm. In the first half of the century, the emphasis was on combating infection, but landmarks were also attained in endocrinology and nutrition. Following World War II, new discoveries in biochemistry and physiology led to more precise diagnostic tests and therapies; and spectacular advances in biomedical engineering enabled the physician and surgeon to probe into the structures and functions of the body by noninvasive imaging techniques like ultrasound (sonar), computerized axial tomography (CAT), and nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR). With each new scientific development, medical practices of just a few years earlier became obsolete.

26.7.4 The Human Genome Project

This scientific effort to analyze the DNA of human beings and of several lower types of organisms began in the United States in 1990 under the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Institutes of Health and was completed in 2003. Related programmes were begun in several other countries in coordination with the American programme. Every cell of an organism has a set of chromosomes containing the heritable genetic material that directs its development - i.e., its genome.

The genetic material of chromosomes is DNA. Project goals were to identify all the approximately 30,000 genes in human DNA, determine the sequences of the three billion chemical base pairs that make up human DNA, store this information in databases, improve tools for data analysis, transfer related technologies to the private sector, and address the ethical, legal, and social issues that may arise.

Human genome projects undertaken concurrently in Japan, the United Kingdom, Italy, France, and Russia are coordinated with the American effort through the Human Genome Organization, whose members include scientists from throughout the world. The potential utility of the Human Genome Project is immense. The information gathered will serve as the basic reference for research in human biology and medicine and will provide fundamental insights into the genetic basis of human disease. The new technologies developed in the course of the project will be applicable in numerous other fields of biomedical endeavour. Though the HGP is finished, analyses of the data will continue for many years.

26.7.5 Twentieth Century Communications

The spectacular transport revolution of the 20th century has been accompanied by a communications revolution quite as dramatic, although technologically springing from different roots. In part, well-established media of communication like printing have participated in this revolution, although most of the significant changes—such as the typewriter, the Linotype, and the high-speed power-driven rotary press— were achievements of the 19th century. Photography was also a proved and familiar technique by the end of the 19th century, but cinematography was new and did not become generally available until after World War I, when it became enormously popular.

The real novelties in communications in the 20th century came in electronics. The scientific examination of the relationship between light waves and electromagnetic waves had already revealed the possibility of transmitting electromagnetic signals between widely separated points, and on Dec. 12, 1901, Guglielmo Marconi succeeded in transmitting the first wireless message across the Atlantic. Early equipment was crude, but within a few years striking progress was made in improving the means of transmitting and receiving coded messages. This was essentially a development from the carbon-filament electric light bulb. In 1883 Edison had found that in these lamps a current flowed between the filament and a nearby test electrode, called the plate, if the electric potential of the plate was positive with respect to the filament. This current, called the Edison effect, was later identified as a stream of electrons radiated by the hot filament. In 1904, Sir John Ambrose Fleming of Britain discovered that by placing a metal cylinder around the filament in the bulb and by connecting the cylinder (the plate) to a third terminal, a current could be rectified so that it could be detected by a telephone receiver. Fleming's device was known as the diode, and two years later, in 1906, Lee De Forest of the United States made the significant improvement that became known as the triode by introducing a third electrode (the grid) between the filament and the plate. The outstanding feature of this refinement was its ability to amplify a signal. Its application made possible by the 1920s the widespread introduction of live-voice broadcasting in Europe and America, with a consequent boom in the production of radio receivers and other equipment.

This, however, was only one of the results derived from the application of the thermionic valve. The idea of harnessing the flow of electrons was applied in the electron microscope, radar (a detection device depending on the capacity of some

radio waves to be reflected by solid objects), the electronic computer, and in the cathode-ray tube of the television set. The first experiments in the transmission of pictures had been greeted with ridicule. Working on his own in Britain, John Logie Baird in the 1920s demonstrated a mechanical scanner able to convert an image into a series of electronic impulses that could then be reassembled on a viewing screen as a pattern of light and shade. Baird's system, however, was rejected in favour of electronic scanning, developed in the United States by Philo Farnsworth and Vladimir Zworykin with the powerful backing of the Radio Corporation of America. Their equipment operated much more rapidly and gave a more satisfactory image. By the outbreak of World War II, television services were being introduced in several nations, although the war suspended their extension for a decade. The emergence of television as a universal medium of mass communication is therefore a phenomenon of the postwar years. But already by 1945 the cinema and the radio had demonstrated their power in communicating news, propaganda, commercial advertisements, and entertainment.

The dominant lines of development continue to be those that were established before or during World War II. In particular, the rapid growth of television services, with their immense influence as media of mass communication, has been built on foundations laid in the 1920s and 1930s, while the universal adoption of radar on ships and airplanes has followed the invention of a device to give early warning of aerial attack. But the development of communications age has produced important innovations. The transistor, so significant for computers and control engineering, has also made a large contribution to communications technology. The establishment of space satellites, considered to be a remote theoretical possibility in the 1940s, had become part of the accepted technological scene in the 1960s, and have played a dramatic part in telephone and television communication as well as in relaying meteorological pictures and data. The development of magnetic tape as a means of recording sound and, more recently, vision, has provided a highly flexible and useful mode of communication. New printing techniques such as photo-typesetting and xerography, have increased the speed of publication. New optical devices such as zoom lenses have increased the power of cameras and prompted corresponding improvements in the quality of film available to the cinema and television. Physical techniques such as the laser (light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation) are making available an immensely powerful means of communication over long distances. The laser also has acquired significance as an important addition to surgical techniques and an instrument of space weaponry. The final communications innovation is the use of electromagnetic waves other than light to explore the structure of the universe by means of the radio telescope and its derivative, the X-ray telescope. This technique was pioneered after World War II and has since become a vital instrument of satellite control and space research. Radio telescopes have also been directed toward the Sun's closest neighbours in space in the hope of detecting electromagnetic signals from other intelligent species in the universe.

26.8 SUMMARY

The story of technological revolutions is, in many ways, a continuing story. New innovations feed on the old ones and make them obsolete. This Unit has traced the story of a whole range of technological breakthroughs—cumulatively called technological revolution—in the field of electricity, communications, and medical sciences. Although technological changes had occurred prior to 18th century, their pace accelerated dramatically after the industrial revolution and they also increasingly

acquired a global reach. In the 20th century, however, a few decades were able to achieve levels of technological developments unmatched in the preceding centuries. This technological advance has brought about enormous changes in the socio-economic life of mankind across the globe, and continues to govern and shape human life in a variety of ways.

26.9   EXERCISES

1)   Discuss the major breakthrough that occurred in the field of medical sciences both prior to and during the course of the 20th century.

2)   Mention some of the major technological developments in communications.

3)   How are transport, electricity and telegraph connected to one another?

4)   Examine some of the major technological innovations made in the 20th century.

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UNIT 27   MODERN WARFARE

Structure

27.1   INTRODUCTION

War is the father of all things.

Heraklitos

The clash between Napoleon's infantry armed with muskets and the Mamelukes on horses in the sandy plain of Egypt was a classic case of modernity confronting tradition. Mobile artillery of Napoleon blasted the sabre wielding Mamelukes in the backdrop of the Sphinx. Firepower, an adjunct of modernity resulted in victory over muscle power, the hallmark of traditional warfare. War has always been a catalyst of great change. Modern War not only initiated but also resulted from complex changes in metallurgy, chemistry, ballistics, politics and economics. Continuous encroachment of the military in the non-military sphere is termed as militarization. The emergence of Modern Warfare resulted in military spillover into political, economic, social and cultural spheres. This unit attempts to explain the origin, forms and legacies of Modern War.

27.2   CONCEPTUALIZING MODERN WAR

Karl Von Clausewitz (1780-1831) was an untypical Prussian military officer because he was a scholar in uniform. He proved to be a philosopher in his own right. Modern scholars have placed him on the same pedestal as Karl Marx, Adam Smith etc. Clausewitz fought against Napoleonic France and then distilled his experience in writing. His philosophical treatise titled *Vom Kriege* (*On War*) was published in 1832 by his widow Maria Von Clausewitz. Clausewitz's analysis of warfare turned out to be one of the best if not the best ever produced in history. For Clausewitz, war is organized violence unleashed by the state. He divided war into Limited War and Real or Absolute War. For him, eighteenth century European warfare as practised by Louis XIV and Frederick the Great represented Limited War. In contrast, Napoleon Bonaparte, whom he admiringly called the 'God of War', tried to break out of the paradigm of Limited Warfare. For Clausewitz, Napoleonic Warfare exhibited seeds of Absolute War that would reach fruition in near future. Clausewitz's prophecy proved true but he did not live to witness Absolute Wars of 1914-18 and 1939-45.

So, what we mean by Modern War is Clausewitz's early forms of Real or Absolute War. Thus, Modern War is the stage between Limited War of the eighteenth century

and Total War of the twentieth century. Limited War is also referred to as Dynastic War because the various monarchies fought against each other for making limited gains along the frontiers at the expense of other dynasties. Louis XIV fought for extending the French frontier on the left bank of Rhine. In contrast, Absolute War in Clausewitz's paradigm means war untrammeled by any obstruction. The objective is to unleash organized violence wholeheartedly for absolute destruction of the enemy. This in turn required mobilization of all available resources of the state for total defeat of the enemy. The aim in such conflict is to annihilate the enemy's *schwerpunkt* (centre of gravity). For Clausewitz, *schwerpunkt* referred to the enemy's army which could only be destroyed by *Kesselschlact* (big bloody battles).

The French Revolution ushered in the idea of destruction of the enemy's government. Hence, the beginning of French Revolution i.e. 1789 could be taken as the beginning of Modern War. This process reached its logical culmination under Adolf Hitler's *der totale krieg* (Total War) when the objective was complete destruction of enemy's society by wholesale mobilization of the *volk* (common people).

27.3 MOBILIZING MILITARY MANPOWER

From this moment until our enemies shall have been driven from the territory of the Republic, all Frenchmen are permanently requisitioned for the service of the armies. Young men shall go to battle; married men shall forge arms and transport provisions; women shall make tents and clothing and serve in hospitals.

Decree of the French National Convention authorizing *levee en masse*, 23 August 1793

God is on the side of heavier battalions.

Napoleon Bonaparte

Increasing size of the armies was a characteristic of Modern War. Between Napoleon Bonaparte and General Schlieffen, the size of the armies registered a linear growth. Under Louis XIV (1643-1715), the French Army numbered 200,000. The opposing British Army under Marlborough comprised about 100,000 personnel. In 1786, when Frederick died, the size of the Prussian Army was 160,000 men. Since the objectives of Dynastic Warfare were limited, small armies were adequate. Alternately, small size of the forces under their disposal also prevented the monarchs from conducting lengthy war for unlimited gains. Actually, the monarchs were afraid of arming the landless peasants and the urban proletariat. The monarchical courts feared that mass arming of the lower order might result in revolution against the *ancien regime* (the old French regime before the revolution in 1789). Hence, the core of the armies was composed of nobility who constituted the officer corps and their armed retainers functioning as soldiers. During emergencies extra men were hired as mercenaries. They were of various nationalities who preferred the trade of soldiering due to pecuniary motives. Most of these soldiers were unenthusiastic to die for the monarchs' ambitions. However, the French Revolution changed the 'face of war'.

The French Revolution with its cry of *la patrie en danger* and the consequent *levy en masse* in 1793 cleared the path for larger armies. The National Convention decided to conscript all single Frenchmen aged between 18 and 25. This also enabled the Napoleonic government to mobilize manpower on a hitherto unimaginable scale. In 1812, when Napoleon invaded Russia with 600,000 men, his *Grande Armee* numbered one million soldiers. However, for total mobilization of both the males

and the females, the West had to wait till the Third Reich's clash with USSR during 1941-45.

Modernization of organized violence resulted in the rise in scope, intensity and lethality of warfare. Dynastic conflicts occurred within a confined geographical space. But, under Napoleon, thanks to greater number of soldiers available, war acquired a continental character. The theatre of Napoleonic warfare embraced whole Europe: from Moscow in the east upto Lisbon in the west; and from Denmark in the north till Sicily in the south. Thus, in terms of geographical spread, Napoleonic Warfare was the prelude to Total War of 1939-45 which occurred on a truly global scale.

Increasing sizes of the armies and their deployment on a continental scale also resulted in the battles becoming more bloody and lengthier. Battles in the age of Limited War lasted for a maximum of about twelve hours. Combat in case of Dynastic War stopped during night and campaigning ceased during winter. But, under Napoleon, fighting continued throughout the year. In 1813, the Battle of Leipzig was fought between Napoleonic France versus Russia, Prussia and Austria-Hungary. The fighting lasted for three days. Battling continued even during the night. In this single battle, Napoleon deployed 190,000 soldiers while the anti-Napoleon block responded with 300,000 men. The point to be noted is that the strength of the army deployed for a single battle during the age of Modern War was bigger than the total size of the army maintained by a country during the age of Limited War. One consequence of the rising size of the armies was increasing casualties. In 1809, at the Battle of Wagram against Austria-Hungary, Napoleon concentrated 160,000 soldiers. Though victorious, Napoleon suffered 40,000 casualties. Due to Napoleon's policy of sacrificing 30,000 men every month, France between 1789 and 1815 lost 1.7 million men. During the American Civil War, the Confederates mobilized half a million warriors. About 622,000 soldiers died during the American Civil War. Since, the 'Butcher's Bill' continued to increase with the passage of time, the percentage of national population dying in war went up. In France during the eighteenth century, 27 people out of 1000 died due to warfare. The number for nineteenth century was 30.

Ironically, militarization of the society also accelerated democratization. Frederick the Great of Prussia even conscripted enemy prisoners for meeting manpower shortage in the army. In the pre-modern era, the armies were cosmopolitan organizations. Changing sides did not offend national identities. National identities, however, became rigid in the nineteenth century, during the course of the Modern Wars. The causative factor behind nationalization of war was conscription of the nation's males, as it was necessary for mass mobilization. Thus, national armies replaced mercenary militias. The notion of 'every citizen a soldier' was first introduced in the 1790s by the revolutionary dictatorship of France. In continuation of this policy, during 1883, the German military theorist Colmar Von der Goltz coined the term '*Das Volk in Waffen*' (nation in arms). While the French Revolution resorted to mobilization on a large scale for meeting the rising demand of Modern Warfare, this process also increased the political consciousness of the common mass. Thus the slogans of 'Liberty, Fraternity and Equality', not only generated the cannon fodder for mass warfare but also created '*homo politicus*'. When the states conscripted citizens, they were told to fight in order to maintain the sovereignty of their fatherland cum motherland. While citizens were under the obligation to give their lives for the state, the citizen soldiers in return also demanded political rights. For survival, Napoleonic France's opponents were forced to increase their armies by recruiting serfs who were given civic rights. Thus, the nineteenth century witnessed continuous expansion of adult franchise in West Europe. However, the West had to wait for the two World Wars for total franchise.

Mass mobilization also opened the gates to talents. Modern War witnessed the replacement of the landed gentry with the educated middle class in the officer cadre. Till 1798, entry into the officer corps was a birthright for the younger sons of the declining landed gentry. They used to purchase the officers' commissions from the monarchs. However, the French Revolution opened the officer cadre to merit. In Napoleon's Army, even common soldiers with exceptional talents were promoted to officer ranks. Many Marshals of Napoleon were of common origin. Marshal Ney and Murat were sons of barrel maker and innkeeper respectively. Hence, the cliché, that in Napoleon's Army every common soldier carried a Marshal's baton in his knapsack. The possibility of upward mobility motivated the French soldiers to fight better. In response, the opponents of Napoleon like the Prussians, Austrians and the Russians were forced to plebianize their officer cadre. By 1910, about 40 per cent of the officers below the rank of Colonel in the Russian Army were drawn from the peasantry and lower middle class. A contradiction developed between these non-noble modernizers who wanted a high tech army and the traditional aristocratic elements who emphasized the role of cavalry. However, history put its weight behind the modernizers. Waging Modern War required increasing technical knowledge. Engineering techniques, bridge construction and scientific knowledge for gun laying, etc forced the Western armies to enlist University educated sons of the urban bourgeoisie in place of the polo playing aristocratic scions in the officer corps. Militarism could be categorized as excessive veneration for the army among the middle class. Officers' commissions became the badges of most prestigious occupation in nineteenth century Europe.

27.4 THE MARRIAGE BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND WAR

One aspect of modernization of war was also industrialization of war. A dialectical relationship existed between the growth of modern war and industrialization of West Europe. Modern warfare in a way meant more killing in a shorter time. This in turn necessitated newer technology especially by the bourgeois officer corps. Continuous technological advancements made the acquisition of a lethal arsenal possible. This in turn facilitated Modern War. The history of Krupps (a German military firm) exhibited that innovation in technology was accelerated due to the soldiers' demands for more guns of better quality. And these big firms invested lot of human resources and capital for research and development. The complex credit network emerging in the West aided these firms. Besides Krupp, the Remington Gun Factory in New York also made possible production of weapons in mass for arming large armies. Remington developed assembly line techniques of production based on the principle of interchangeable parts introduced early in the century by Eli Whitney. This marked the beginning of the military-industrial complex.

The 19th century witnessed continuous improvement in weapons of mass murder. Matchlocks were fired with the aid of lighted matches. Hence, they could not be fired during rainfall. The use of flints removed this defect. However, flintlocks used to misfire at every seventh shot. The introduction of percussion caps reduced misfires to fewer than one in two hundred rounds. Again, the introduction of the cylindro-conoidal bullet made practicable the replacement of the inaccurate short-ranged smoothbore musket carried by Napoleonic infantry by the highly accurate longer-ranged rifle. This transition occurred between 1850 and 1860. The grooved barrel of the rifle imparted a spin to the bullet which enabled the latter to achieve accuracy, range and penetrative power greater than the ball fired from a smoothbore musket. The rifle first emerged among the huntsmen of Rhineland. From there it spread

among the huntsmen of North America. The rifle could hit target even at 1000 yards and it remained the basic infantry weapon till World War I. Then the smokeless powder of the 1860s allowed clear vision for repeated firing.

While cavalry was the decisive arm in pre-modern warfare, artillery became the definitive arm in Napoleonic warfare. Napoleon concentrated his guns in *grande batterie* in order to blast a hole among the line of his opponent. Explosive ammunition (shrapnel and high explosive shell) replaced solid iron balls, which made artillery more lethal. They accounted for 50 per cent of the casualties inflicted on the opponents. This trend continued in the post-Napoleonic Europe. During 1871, the Prussians used rifled steel ordnance like Big Bertha. Such monsters were able to reduce a city like Metz into rubble within a few hours.

Steel cannons became common with the advent of Bessemer process. After 1881, Siemens Martin Open Hearth process raised steel production. Between 1856 to 1870, the price of steel dropped by 50 per cent. In 1863, the first steel ship and locomotive came into existence. Mass production of steel weapons required a huge industrial infrastructure. Military prowess became dependent on economic muscle. This was reflected in the victory of the industrialized north over the agrarian south in the American Civil War. US steel output in 1900 was 10 million tonnes and that of Germany about 8 million. In the same year, British production of steel was only 4.9 million. This reflected British military power falling behind.

The state took up the responsibility of clothing, feeding and arming the citizens. This was the beginning of Hobbes' *Leviathan*. For supplying 750,000 soldiers, revolutionary France had introduced price and wage control as well as press censorship all over the country. Compared to the scope of this scheme, Sultan Alauddin Khalji's attempt in medieval India to regulate market price of Delhi for paying his 120,000 troopers was paltry indeed. *Generalfeldmarschal* Helmuth Von Moltke of Prussia, the winner of Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian Wars introduced the General Staff system. The General Staff became the nervous system for conducting conflicts. While the Minister of War presented the budget in the Parliament, planning and execution including operational control of war devolved on the General Staff. Instead of the monarch or the Prime Minister, the Chief of the General Staff assisted by staff officers controlled forces in the field. Introduction of electronic communications in the form of telegraph replaced horses as means of command and control. Such advances in long-range communications enabled the Chief of the General Staff in the capital to retain close contact with the distant field commanders. It was a step in the emergence of the centralizing polities.

Special institutions like *Ecole Normale* in France and *Kriegsakademie* in Berlin, were set up for training the staff officers. The officers were bound by a code of conduct. In case of any breach of this code, the military personnel unlike the civilians were judged by special military courts. In return the state offered the officers a structured career with requisite pay and privileges. Specialized theoretical knowledge was imparted to them in order to make the officer cadre professional. Officers devoted their lives for understanding and conducting warfare. They became 'specialists of violence'. The staff officers were specially trained in survey and cartography which in turn were necessary for building roads and railways. Railways were especially required for deployment of mass armies quickly and cheaply. In 1871 extensive railroads enabled Prussia to concentrate more soldiers than France at a quicker notice thus enabling her to defeat Napoleon III.

Modern War in the sea witnessed the replacement of the wooden ships with ironclads. Short recoil carriage and high explosive shell became the chief component of naval

artillery. The first clash between the ironclads occurred at Lissa in the Adriatic on 20 July 1866 between the Austrian and the Italian fleets. By 1840s the Western navies experimented with steam propulsion which gradually replaced sail driven wooden ships. Steam power enabled the ships to become heavier. Hence, for protection against enemy naval gunnery broadsides, it was possible to cover the body of the ships with armour plates. Britain the biggest colonial power first produced the iron hulled warship with watertight compartments and boilers. Then a Swedish engineer named John Erickson of the US Navy came up with revolving armoured turrets and air ventilation below the decks. This supremacy in ships enabled the Western powers to project power over long distance and to acquire colonies.

27.5   MODERN WAR IN THE COLONIES

> Whatever happens we have got the Maxim gun
> And they have not.

Hilaire Belloc

Some techniques of Modern Warfare were imported in the non-European World by the colonizing powers. The indigenous polities when faced with modern military techniques of the colonial powers were forced to transform their own states and societies. Thus an action-reaction dialectic set in resulting in spiralling cost and increasing scale of warfare. Britain possessed the largest colonial empire. The British used to remark arrogantly that the sun never set in their empire. And within it, India was the 'jewel in the crown'. For policing the subcontinent and to defend India from a probable Russian invasion, the British raised a 158,000 strong army from the Indians. Before the advent of the British no other power maintained such a huge standing army in the subcontinent. For instance, Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Punjab perceived threat from the British Indian Army. So, in the 1830s, he attempted to replace the cavalry raised by the *jagirdars* with a Western modelled infantry force with the help of French military officers. The Khalsa Army was composed of 35,000 permanent soldiers. And the permanent contingent of the Mughal Empire known as the *ahadis* numbered only 10, 000.

The British officered Indian Army also known as the Sepoy Army was not unique to colonial India. For Congo, the Belgian Government maintained *Force Publique* of 20,000 men. The Army of Netherlands' East Indies numbered 25,000 men. The functions of the colonial armies were internal security, guarding the frontiers of the colonies and also to acquire new colonies. All the colonial powers used indigenous military manpower because each 'native' soldier was four times cheaper than a white soldier. In the tropical climate, a European fell sick quickly due to heat and sun. During emergencies importing white soldiers from the metrople (mother country) to the colonies was not only costly but also time consuming. Also, the local soldiers were more adaptable to the terrain for deployment. The Dutch found out that the European soldiers were unable to adapt successfully for jungle warfare in the Indonesian archipelago. Finally, the policy of integrating some colonial manpower in the colonial military machines, argued the imperialist administrators, also prevented the locally ambitious elements from rebelling against the colonial administration.

Besides the maintenance of a permanent army, another characteristic of Modern Warfare was rising cost of warfare. The Khalsa Kingdom extracted 50 per cent of the gross produce from the agriculturists. And 80 per cent of the *durbar's* income was used for maintaining the Westernized Sikh Army. The principal expenditure of the British Government in India was maintenance of the army. About 42 per cent of

the government's income was spent on the army. Again, increasing interaction between warfare and society was a cardinal feature of Modern Warfare. The Sepoy Army was composed of long service Indian volunteers. Every year about 15000 Indian peasants were recruited in this force. Thus, the Sepoy Army constituted the biggest government employer in colonial India. In independent India, railways have overtaken the army as the biggest government employer.

Recruitment of the sepoys (infantry) and sowars (cavalry) had massive impact on the fabric of colonial society. From the Classical antiquity, European political and military thinkers like Vegetius, Niccolao Machiavelli believed that farmers were the best soldiering material. And in nineteenth century Europe, the modernizing regimes depended on the semi-literate peasants for filling the vacancies in the armies. This was because the farmers compared to the urban under employed and the unemployed were regarded as 'sterile' and 'docile'. This stream of thought also influenced the British in India. However, the British refused to recruit landless labourers, sharecroppers, etc. This was because being malnourished they possessed inferior physique. Moreover, the army officers assumed that it was better to collaborate with men of property who would have a stake in the continuation of the colonial regime unlike the property less persons. However, the rich farmers were not eager to join the army as they earned more from farming compared to the soldiers' pay. But, military service became very popular with the small farmers. Especially younger sons of farmers with about 60 acres of land and four bullocks preferred to join the army. Their military income supplemented the ancestral income from the land. Moreover during litigations, the families of the soldiers got extra protection from the *sarkar*. For popularizing military service further, the army introduced the system of *furlough* (paid leave). During harvest time, when extra hands were required in the family farms, the soldiers were granted *furlough* in order to help out their families. Similarly in Indonesia, those groups who were unable to engage in sugarcane and rice cultivation used to join the Dutch colonial forces.

In order to differentiate the colonial collaborators from the colonial society, the imperial powers granted those joining the colonial armies special favours. Both in Africa and in Asia, the soldiers before the advent of the colonial powers were paid either in kind (a share of the crops) or with land grants. The European maritime powers for the first time introduced the scheme of regular pay in cash, gratuity and pension facilities. All these attracted the 'natives' towards their white employers. The communities joining the colonial armies were given the status of 'martial race'. The Dutch colonial authorities marked the Ambonese, a group of Indonesia as a martial race because they were loyal to the House of Orange and had also accepted Christianity. They were granted extra pay, more pensions and better food. Gradually generation after generation, the Ambonese used to join the Dutch colonial army and developed a self-image of being a warrior community. In India, the British ascribed the status of martial race to the Gurkhas and the Sikhs. Over development of Punjab was the byproduct of British dependence on the Sikhs from 1880 onwards. In order to pamper the Sikh farmers of central Punjab, the Raj pumped money to construct canals and railways in Punjab. And these two boons of modern civilization not only enabled Punjab to become the breadbasket of India but also enabled the Sikh farmers to sell their grain to the world market. Grain was transported by rail cars from Punjab to Karachi and Bombay. From these two ports, the grain was taken to Europe in cargo ships. Both in the Sepoy Army and in the British officered Kings African Rifles, for ensuring loyalty of the martial races, their sons were also provided jobs of soldiers, drummers etc. Just like the French Revolution where the army was made a platform for upward mobility, service in the Sepoy Army also offered vertical mobility to selected Indian communities. Military service in colonial

India not only resulted in pecuniary advantages but also rise in ritual status. The Bhumihars of Bihar by serving in the Sepoy Army got the status of Brahmins. The Dalits of Maharashtra continuously petitioned the British Government in India to allow them to join the Sepoy Army.

In order to prevent any mutiny among the martial races, the imperial powers followed the policy of *divide et impera* (divide and rule). Segregation of the various martial groups was a cardinal aspect of divide and rule policy. In India, the British planned to use the Gurkha regiments in case of any uprising among the Sikhs and vice versa. In a similar vein the US Army recruited various groups in the Philippines and encouraged their distinctive language and customs to prevent any homogeneity among the military personnel. The most favoured martial races were generally illiterate peasants because of the imperial belief that literacy might encourage rebellious tendencies. Further, to prevent the 'natives' from gaining any know how about the higher management of Modern Warfare, the officer corps of all the colonial armies were reserved for white males.

Most of the medical innovations in the nineteenth century were activated by the need to ensure the health of the European soldiers in the extra-European theatre. Compared to the Russians, cholera caused eight times more casualties among the French soldiers during the Crimean War. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, more than 30 per cent of the European soldiers in India were hospitalized at any given moment due to sexually transmitted diseases like syphilis, gonorrhoea, etc. Besides venereal diseases, drunkenness was another vice of the European soldiery in the colonies. Intense boredom forced the white troops to take recourse to drink. The country spirits like arrack available in the Indian *bazars* were especially ruinous to the health of the white troops. In India, the army's medical corps carried out a campaign against cholera, the biggest killer of European soldiery. Invention of quinine gave victory to the white military manpower against the ravages caused by malaria.

During campaigns the African and Asian soldiers of the colonial armies moved with their wives and children. Women were tolerated because they provided essential logistical back ups in the colonial theatres. In the cantonments they looked after the plantations and the gardens which provided vegetables for the soldiers. Again such females also functioned as unpaid nurses. In India, the Madrassi and the Gurkha soldiers were allowed to keep wives because the soldiers' families were imperial hostages that guaranteed good behaviour on part of the soldiers. The British officers also encouraged the sepoys to bring their families within the lines because it enabled the military to ensure complete isolation of their personnel from disruptive influences of the society. The British officers commanding both African and Indian soldiers found out that soldiers behaved well in presence of their wives. Lashing was common for indiscipline. And the soldiers hated being lashed in front of their women. Again, presence of the families not only kept the soldiers sober but also reduced any risk of desertion. The Western maritime powers realized that if the soldiers' families were infected with diseases then sooner or later it would also adversely affect the military personnel. To retain their military manpower in good shape, the imperialists were forced to introduce modern medical measures in the colonies. So, the soldiers' families in the cantonments received free medical care especially against colds, chicken pox, etc. Both the African and Indian women residing within the lines were regularly treated for venereal diseases. Further, the soldiers and their family members were given instructions in personal hygiene.

From the 1880s, the colonial armies acquired firepower superiority in their struggles against the Afro-Asians. This was because the former were equipped with three

elements of Modern War: rifled steel artillery, breech loading rifles and machine guns. Repeating rifles certainly aided British expansion in Africa. During 1874, General Garnet Wolseley defeated the Ashanti tribe, thanks to the firepower generated by the Snider rifles and 7 pounder guns. However, the techniques of Modern War were not omnipotent against all colonial opponents.

27.6 WEAKNESSES OF MODERN WARFARE

Afghanistan was a classic case that proved the limitations of Modern War in the non-European world. Afghanistan was not a nation state with a capital but a decentralized tribal structure. Hence, the Clausewitzian notion of victory- capturing the enemy's capital after the destruction of the enemy's army in a pitched battle was inapplicable. In Afghan society due to the prevalence of the blood price for murder and the operation of the *Pukhtunwali* code, every male was armed and a potential soldier. In late nineteenth century, the Pathans could mobilize 400,000 males armed with 230,000 rifles along the northwest frontier of British India. Instead of offering a set-piece battle, the Afghans carried out a grulling guerrilla war. Due to the road less mountainous terrain, heavy artillery could not accompany the British Indian military columns. The Afghan sharpshooters with their *jezails* (long range home made rifles) perched on the *sangars* (stone fortifications) at the mountain tops and taking every advantage of the ground, inflicted horrible casualties on the imperial columns. Again, in terms of cross-country mobility, the Pathan *lashkars* (war bands) were more mobile than the Raj's soldiers. Similarly in 1904, the Nama people in Southwest Africa conducted guerrilla war against the Germans. Since the Namas were widely dispersed, the German commander Von Trotha was unable to carry out concentric operations and decision by battle. In a way, frontier commitments hampered the colonial armies because of their very modernization. Due to lack of forage for the horses and bullocks, horse artillery and field guns could not be used in Afghanistan and in the jungle clad swampy interiors of Africa. Then mortars did not have much lethal effect against the stone fortifications. Heavy howitzers (used for high angled fire in order to destroy the personnel inside the fortifications) could not be hauled over the ravines and mountain crevices. Rapid deployment of lightly armed mobile units was the only solution. This resulted in close quarter combat with small arms resulting in very heavy human casualties, a fact which the British Empire found costly.

Elimination of the distinction between the combatants and the non-combatants was a feature of Modern War. This was also evident in the pacification operations conducted by the colonizers against the colonized. Both in Africa and Asia, the imperial military formations deliberately destroyed the livestock, grain and villages in order to destroy the colonized's 'will to resist'. In East and Southwest Africa, the Germans deliberately starved rebel groups for pacifying them. Von Trotha's *Schutztruppe* (German colonial force) carried out scorched earth policy. It was the prelude to what the Nazis would do in Russia between 1943-45. For pacifying Philippines, the US Army not only relocated entire communities but also put them in concentration camps. It was an indication of genocide that in the near future became a crucial component of *der totale krieg*.

27.7 SUMMARY

Lazare Carnot's (Minister of Revolutionary France) *guerre a outrance* signalled the beginning of Modern War. While the French Revolution initiated Modern Warfare, the Industrial Revolution sustained it. And Modern War albeit in a limited way exhibited several characteristics of Total War like inclusion of the non-combatants as legitimate

targets of war, extermination of entire communities, etc. Increasing scope of Modern Wars and management of its rising complexities in turn generated a Managerial Revolution: the emergence of the General Staff System. All these resulted in bureaucratization of violence by the centralizing nation states. Some of the features of modern conflicts like centralizing polities and the General Staff continue in the post-modern age. Again the notion that posts should be filled with men of talent and merit instead of those with wealth and high birth, when first emerged in the last decade of the eighteenth century appeared revolutionary. Today, such idea has become common place. Then, the British construction of martial races with its emphasis on the social and cultural peculiarities of the various groups aided the emergence of sub nationalism among the various ethnic communities in South Asia. Even today the Indian Army like the Sepoy Army remained over dependent on the martial races like the Sikhs and the Gurkhas. Further, the army's care for the soldiers' families marked the beginning of a welfare state which probably reached its zenith in the post-Second World War era. Herein lies the legacy of Modern War.

27.8 EXERCISES

1) What do you understand from limited war, modern war and total war?

2) How did technology revolutionize the modern warfare?

3) Define the distinctive features of the modern armies in the colonies.

4) How did the introduction of modern warfare lead to larger social, political changes?

UNIT 28   TOTAL WAR

Structure

28.1   INTRODUCTION

The thirty-one years of conflict that began on 28 July 1914 and ended on 14 August 1945 is increasingly being seen by historians as the marker of a new phase in the history of conflict. The noted Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm calls this phase the age of total war, the period that saw 'the great edifice of nineteenth-century civilization crumpled', whose witnesses 'lived and thought in terms of world war, even when the guns were silent and the bombs were not exploding'. There were indeed, two distinct conflagrations, the first ending in November 1918 and known to Europeans of that generation as the Great War, the second starting in September 1939 and ending in 1945, known as the Second World War. The interregnum, however, was marked by tremendous domestic conflicts in the European nations, the Great Depression, the emergence of Fascism and Nazism, and regional wars. These latter included the Japanese invasion of Manchuria (1931), the Italian invasion of Ethiopia (1935), the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), and the German invasion of Austria and Czechoslovakia in 1938-39. The close linkages between domestic and international conflict during this 31-year period make it appear as one seamless global crisis, with characteristics deriving from the impact of competition between the great powers, capitalist industrialization and the thwarted growth of popular democratic aspirations. It is arguable that these elements have remained with us ever since, that humanity is still to emerge from the reverberations of total war.

It is in this perspective that we seek to define its concept, the critical difference made by the mobilization of resources and the role played by the great number of national populations in the execution of total wars.

28.2   THE CONCEPT OF TOTAL WAR AND ITS NOVELTY

What is total war? Warfare till the end of the 19th century was still conducted between professional armies, and was relatively brief. Apart from the Crimean war of 1854-56, there were no major wars between the great powers for a century (1815 till 1914). In contrast, the conflict that began in 1914 involved all the major powers, and crucially, the entire resources of society and economy. Although it was the French Revolution that created the first civilian army, it is only in the 20th century that the outcomes of war were decided not just by military strength but by the staying power of entire economies. War aims were not confined to militarily defeating rival armies, but encompassed the economic and political destruction of entire countries. On the

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one hand governments exhorted their citizens to participate in the war, and on the other, belligerent states enlarged target areas to include industrial centres and civilian populations, with the aim of destroying public morale. The most glaring example of this was the use of atomic bombs by the USA on Japan in 1945. But it was evident from the First World War, when German submarine (U-boat) warfare against commercial allied shipping was clearly meant to cripple the economy and starve the British population. The scheme nearly succeeded, for in April 1917 the British government had only 6 weeks supply of food-grain left in the country. Total war inaugurated civilian massacre as an instrument of military strategy. Nuclear weapons were a logical extension of an already prevalent characteristic in modern warfare, and their capacity for infinite destruction has added a new word to the vocabulary of conflict, viz., exterminism.

The nineteenth century era of imperialism resulted in the fusion of geo-political and economic goals. This period had made clear to statesmen and ruling elites that the pursuit of empire was simultaneously the basis for and the means of global dominance and the out-stripping of competitors. The tendency of capitalist imperialism to expand over national boundaries, the pre-eminent position of Great Britain, the belated unification of Germany and its emergence as a major industrial power in central Europe and as Britain's chief competitor, the colonial ambitions of Japanese industry in alliance with an entrenched military caste – these were the strategic trends that disturbed the reigning peace between the great powers while they engaged in colonial conquest and dominion in Africa and Asia. Total war exemplified the dangerous imperial drives of the dominant economies of the capitalist world, in an age when democracy was still anathema to most ruling elites.

The concept of war changed dramatically between the French Revolution and the world wars of the 20th century. The novelty lies in how modern wars are fought, to what end, and how resources are mobilized by the belligerents. The outcome of modern war is decided not just by the strength of the armed forces, but also by the staying power of the economy. In addition, total war is war without limit that can end only in the 'unconditional surrender' of the enemy. The aim is not just the defeat of the rival army but the economic and political destruction of the rival country. The targeting of civilians went side by side with citizen's participation in the war. This idea went back to the French Revolution when the first civilian army came into operation. The mobilization of mass national feelings, the 'strange democratization of war', gave birth to the new phenomenon of 'people's wars'.

28.3 THE MOBILIZATION OF RESOURCES

Once the process had been set in motion, it acquired a momentum of its own, driven by political, psycho-social as well as institutional processes that appeared unstoppable. Tsarist Russia's involvement ended in revolution, and left a deep impression. It was the trauma undergone by Russia in the First World War which motivated the entire Soviet polity to mobilize its material preparedness for the onslaught that was to come in the second. Students of Stalinist industrialization are aware of the severe human cost of this preparation. The Great War, in Hobsbawm's words, 'brutalized both warfare and politics, if one could be conducted without counting the human or any other costs, why not the other?' Although vast numbers of survivors became pacifists, there were also those whose experiences of violence and savagery drove them into the ranks of ultra-nationalist right-wing politics. The German Freikorps were one example of this, and the German Workers Party of Drexler, which was a precursor of Hitler's National Socialists, another.

The phenomenon of total war was accompanied by the politics of totalitarianism (and we may not forget that authoritarian politics found resonances in the countries of the liberal capitalist West as well). The Nazis forged an unchallenged control over national resources, and even adapted the Soviet concept of economic planning, with a Four Year Plan of their own. This was an ironic reversal of the situation in the months following the Russian Revolution, when the Bolsheviks borrowed heavily from the methods of the German war economy during the Great War. By 1938, German re-armament consumed 52 per cent of government expenditure and 17 per cent of GNP, more than the UK, France and the USA combined. Because of the severe strain this put upon the economy, 'there was a massive temptation on Hitler's part to resort to war in order to obviate such economic difficulties'. It is significant that Germany's conquest of Austria in 1938 resulted in the acquisition of $200 million in gold and foreign exchange reserves.

Total war meant that the entire nation was mobilized for war, not merely the active combatants. The outcome of the war reflected the capacity of the economy to produce for it. This was the case with the First World War, wherein different sectors were reorganized for the war effort, and belligerent governments took control of economic life on an unprecedented scale, in order to secure regular supplies of munitions, ordnance and manpower. To fulfil massive financial demands during the First World War, governments increased the public debt, and printed more paper money. Britain resorted to heavy borrowing on American markets, and high income taxes. Laissez faire economic doctrine and democratic rights were soon eclipsed as military commanders were given powers over civic administration, including food rationing. Walther Rathenau set up special state corporations dealing in certain strategic commodities, and under the so-called Hindenburg Programme, vital machinery was transferred from less to more important industries. Certain factories were shut down. Cartels emerged and the co-operation between state and big business in national economic management was solidified. This set a precedent for the future, and crystallized authoritarian trends in the polity. The French economy, which suffered from the loss of significant economic zones to the Germans, was obliged to recuperate its losses with heavy state inputs, leading to a massive development of heavy industry. Historian James Joll remarks that it was the First World War that 'really completed the industrial revolution in France'. The numbers of workers in French military arsenals grew from 50,000 to 1.6 million. Peasant constituted 41 per cent of conscripted soldiers - women and children were left with major agricultural tasks.

Whereas the Russian incapacity to produce for war in 1914-1918 led to rout, a quarter-century later, it was precisely the USSR's gigantic resource base that once mobilized, gave it the edge over Germany in the Second World War. Soviet five year plans after 1937 were designed to build defensive capacity, and in the period between September 1939 (when war broke out in Europe) and June 1941, (when Hitler attacked the USSR), Soviet authorities evacuated entire industries eastwards, to the Urals, Siberia, and Central Asia. 3500 new industrial units were built during the war. Between 1942 and 45, production levels of Soviet armaments factories had risen five or six times, and the USSR was producing (on annual average), 30,000 tanks and fighting vehicles, 40,000 aircraft, 120,000 artillery pieces, and 5 million rifles - levels unthinkable in the first war. In 1942, 52 per cent of Soviet national income was devoted to military spending.

International arms production statistics for the Second World War showed what total war meant in an industrial age. Nearly 70,000 tanks were produced in 1944 alone by the USA, Britain, Germany and the USSR. The Allies produced 167,654 aircraft that year. These figures demonstrate the scale of economic mobilization.

Thus the American economy showed an approximate 50 per cent increase in physical output as well as productive plant. Its annual growth rate was more than 15 per cent, higher than at any stage in its history before or since. Defence related production went from 2 per cent of total output in 1939 to 40 per cent in 1943.

Scientific resources were also mobilized by the belligerents in an unprecedented manner. Constant improvements were made in communications, aeronautical engineering, tank armour and design, rocketry, explosives and machine tools. The most stark symbol of this destructive imagination at work is the development of the atomic bomb, a weapon that was simultaneously being sought by the militaries of Germany as well as the USA, and whose use signified the advent of massacre and terror as instruments of military policy. Total war lent impetus to the search for military applications of atomic theory, and each side feared the possibility of prior achievements by the other. Britain, Canada and finally the USA put together an international team of scientists, supported by the maximum official backing, to develop an atomic weapon before Hitler could do so. The German effort fell short, not least because of the exodus of brilliant scientists in the 1930's fleeing from Nazi persecution. They did however succeed in developing the first pilot-less aircraft and rockets, which were used against Britain in 1944. After the war, some of the most talented German scientists such as Werner von Braun were employed by the American space and military programmes. The capacity to build weapons of mass destruction had overspilled the boundaries of the nation-states system.

28.4   POPULATIONS AT WAR

Working people's lives were deeply affected by phenomenon of total war and the preparation for it. Total War led to manpower mobilization, the drafting of women into the labour force, and as a by-product in Britain after the first war, women's suffrage and the full-scale development of mass politics. Britain introduced compulsory military service in 1916, and women were required in increasing numbers to work in offices and factories. The Nazi regime began to define the German economy as a 'war economy' by the late 1930's, with the aim of preparing for total war. The Nazis' militarist version of Keynesian state intervention drastically reduced unemployment figures, and increased national production by 102 per cent by 1937. In a secret Defence Law passed on May 21 1935, Hjalmar Schacht was appointed the economic Plenipotentiary for the War Economy, whose job included camouflaging violations of the Versailles Treaty. Business was subjected to heavy taxes, 'special contributions' and compulsory membership of the Reich Economic Chamber. Heavy industry, especially the armaments sector, made good profits. Wage bills declined and strikes ceased.

But the crucial role of the working population and of the economic infrastructure meant that non-combatants became targets of terror campaigns designed to demoralize the entire civilian population. This strategic goal, combined with the impersonality of technological warfare made genocide the brutal new fact of modern warfare. Civilians now became direct targets. The obvious examples come from World War II with the blitz, genocide, carpet bombing, the atom bomb, and mass population transfers; but they had begun in the Great War of 1914-18. The Turkish government's massacre of some 1.5 million Armenians in 1915 (which also created 320,000 Armenian refugees), is the first modern attempt to eliminate an entire population. The starvation blockade of the German nation by the Allies was another. Mass demographic changes were due to the exodus of refugees or by compulsory exchanges of populations. Thus during the First World War, 1.3 million Greeks moved from Turkey to Greece, and 400,000 Turks moved in the other direction.

Up to 2 million Russians fled the ravages of the Russian civil war of 1918-20. The Great War and its aftermath produced between 4 to 5 million refugees.

Without a doubt, the Second World War was the greatest catastrophe in human history. Estimates of human war losses vary between 40 to 55 million people, both soldiers and non-combatants. 35 million were wounded and 3 million missing. The USSR suffered the most in human terms - losing about 20 million lives. In February 1945, 50,000 German civilians were killed in the Anglo-American bombardment of Dresden in one night alone. A single air raid on Tokyo in March 1945 resulted in 80,000 deaths and a quarter of the city destroyed. In terms of displacement, it has been estimated that about 40 million people had been uprooted in Europe alone. Mass transfers took place in territories across Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Balkans. The discovery that the Nazis had created camps for the industrialization of murder that had killed up to 6 million European Jews, left a permanent shadow over the human conscience. It gave an impetus to the creation of Israel that attracted 1.2 million Jews fleeing from Europe and resulted in the forced displacement of 1.3 million Palestinians. The Korean War, a direct outcome of the Second World War, left 5 million refugees. The decolonization of India and Partition left up to 2 million dead and 15 million displaced. The Second World War was the epitome of total war.

28.5   SUMMARY

During the First World War, the trenches on the German-French military lines covered a combined distance of 25,000 miles, three times the earth's circumference. By 1916, soldiers had lost all hope of winning, and there were groups in the English trenches that called themselves the Never-endians, who believed that the war would never end. The Great War ended in 1918, but the rise of Fascism, the colonial wars of the 1930s, the Spanish civil war, the Second World War, the Korean war, the Vietnam war, wars over Palestine, wars in South Asia and Africa, the recent wars in the Balkans and the Gulf, not to mention the insurgencies rampaging throughout the globe, are evidence that the Never-endians were right. According to one estimate, the past century experienced (conservatively) 250 wars and 110 million deaths related to war and ethnic conflict. One estimate has placed the number of deaths due to ethnic conflict in the last decade of the 20th century at 30 million. An increasing proportion of these losses have taken place among civilians. During the course of modern history, war has changed from being a strategic, military principle - the fare of martial experts - to becoming part of the inmost fabric of civil society. It has vacated its position at the nation-state's outer periphery, where it supposedly protected the nation against external foes, and has migrated inward, culminating in perpetual civil war enacted to control, even eliminate the inner social enemy, or 'other'. This process could not have occurred without the advent of the age of total war in 1914.

28.6   EXERCISES

1)   What is the concept of total war? Trace its roots historically.

2)   How has the coming of total war led to large-scale changes in the making of our society? Discuss Briefly.

UNIT 29 VIOLENCE BY NON-STATE ACTORS

Structure

29.1 Introduction

29.2 Compulsions behind the Genesis of Terrorism

29.3 Irregular Warfare in the Wider World

29.4 Low Intensity Warfare in British India

29.5 Counter-Insurgency Programme of the Indian State

29.6 Summary

29.7 Exercises

29.1   INTRODUCTION

Viewed from the Marxist theory of state, the army is the chief component of the state…. The whole world can be remoulded only with the gun…. Politics is bloodless war while war is the politics of bloodshed…. Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.

Mao Tse Tung

The Chinese political theorist Mao's dictum that Guerrilla Warfare is necessary for capturing state power remains relevant even in the twenty-first century. Long before Mao, a political sage of ancient India named Kautilya also realized the role of non-state war in the survival of the polities in the power-politics dominated international system. Kautilya advised the rulers to launch subversive campaigns instead of regular operations against enemy kingdoms. Kautilya was for creating *bheda* (divisiveness) within the enemy society that would tie down the enemy's economic and military resources. This ought to be done, advocated Kautilya, by encouraging the minority groups to demand independence from the enemy's central government. The point to be noted is that the Kautilyan Strategy advocated in the Vedic Age has become common in the Nuclear Age. The post-Cold War era is witnessing a surge of separatist movements from the Danube to Sutlej by the non-state actors who have foreign sponsors.

The term Guerrilla War comes from Spanish language which means Little War. The term came into use in the first decade of the 19th century when Napoleon's *Grande Armee* which swept over Europe was challenged by the people's movement in Spain which turned out to be violent. While analyzing Napoleonic Warfare, the Prussian military officer cum philosopher Lieutenant General Karl Von Clausewitz in his magnum opus *Vom Kriege* (*On War*) conceptualized Little War as *Kleinkrieg*. In the Clausewitzian paradigm, Little War is to be conducted by armed men and women. Since they are not regular soldiers of any state, those conducting guerrilla warfare are termed as irregulars. The irregulars do not engage in any set-piece battles with the regular soldiers of the enemy state, but operate in small detachments to conduct hit and run expeditions against enemy bases and supply columns. This sort of war lacks any well defined frontlines. Hence, the war conducted by irregulars is also categorized as Irregular Warfare.

After Clausewitz, Mao Tse-Tung was the greatest advocate of Guerrilla Warfare. However, there exist elements of commonality as well as difference in the frameworks

of both Clausewitz and Mao. Both Clausewitz and Mao Tse Tung agreed that Guerrilla Warfare should be the preferred strategy of the weak people against superior numbers and advanced technology. Mao asserted: "Our inferiority in things like weapons is but secondary. With the common people of the whole country mobilized, we shall create a vast sea of humanity in which the enemy will be swallowed up, obtain relief for our shortage in arms and other things, and secure the prerequisites to overcome every difficulty in the war".

Unlike Clausewitz, Mao theorized Guerrilla War as part of the Marxist class war; a struggle by the exploited groups against the exploiters. While for Clausewitz, the Guerrilla War is to be conducted against a foreign enemy, for Mao guerrilla conflict can as well be launched by the economically marginal people against the class controlling the forces of production. Clausewitz depended on pugnacious nationalism to propel the mass for waging Little War. But, Mao like the religious leaders emphasized the role of indoctrination among the civilians while launching a guerrilla struggle. This is because both the *messiahs* and Mao focus on economic and social betterment of the common mass as the objective of waging guerrilla struggle. Again, Clausewitz relied on friendly regular soldiers for backup. But, Mao relied on mass mobilization as back up to the guerrillas under pressure. Mao has written:

> There are those who feel it is hardly conceivable for a guerrilla unit to exist for a long time behind the enemy lines. This is a viewpoint based on ignorance of the relations between the army and the people. The popular masses are like water, and the army is like a fish. How then can it be said that when there is water, a fish will have difficulty in preserving its existence? An army which fails to maintain good relations gets into opposition with the popular masses, and thus by its own actions dries up the water.

While Clausewitz views Guerrilla Warfare within the framework of regular campaigns, Mao provides autonomy to Irregular Warfare. For Clausewitz, *Kleinkrieg* should tie up as many troops of the enemy as possible in order to ease pressure on the regular soldiers of the state. While the guerrillas should conduct subsidiary struggle, the main blow is to be delivered by the regular soldiers of the army. Clausewitz is referring to the Cossacks who by conducting mobile guerrilla raids harassed Napoleon's line of communications that stretched from Vilna in Poland to Moscow. Hence, Napoleon was forced to detach large number of troops for guarding his supply lines. This in turn enabled the *Tsarist* Army to gain a numerical superiority over the *Grande Armee* before delivering knock out blow to the latter in a *Kesselschlacht* (decisive set piece battle conducted by the regulars equipped with heavy weapons). In contrast, Mao visualizes that with the passage of time, the guerrillas should gradually transform themselves into revolutionary regular soldiers. In Mao's theoretical paradigm, initially the guerrillas should conduct 'hit and snatch raids' against isolated posts of the enemy troops in order to capture weapons. Gradually as the stocks of weapons build up, the guerrillas should challenge the enemy regulars in a set-piece battle. Thus a transition will occur from lightly equipped guerrilla bands capable of mobile strikes to heavily equipped guerrillas capable of conducting positional warfare.

Occasionally, the guerrillas or the irregulars also wage war against their own government to redress their socio-economic grievances. The government in order to delegitimize the insurgents calls them brigands or bandits. And to hide the legitimate social and political grievances that drive the guerrillas, the government attempts to present their struggle as merely a 'law and order' problem. For acquiring funds, the irregulars often resort to kidnapping important civilians as well as looting banks.

Such operations are often carried out by the irregulars, in order to pressurize the government by heightening civilian tension on the issue of public safety. Thus, the dividing line between criminality and violent political process conducted by the stateless marginal groups is very thin indeed.

Guerrillas operate both in the countryside as well as in the cities. Marxist Guerrilla theory as propounded by Mao emphasizes that the guerrillas should focus on controlling the countryside. In contrast, urban guerrillas conduct two types of struggle: urban warfare and urban terrorism. At times the guerrillas are able to win the support of the lower classes of the urban populace and become daring enough to amass heavy weapons. This requires an army to lay siege on the city. Such struggles could be categorized as urban warfare. In 1944, the Polish underground was able to amass so much heavy weapons that they captured the city of Warsaw and the Germans had to send *panzer* (armoured) divisions from the Russian front to eliminate them. However, when the threshold of violence remains low, the urban guerrillas indulged in what could be termed as urban terrorism. Such activities include blowing up of public institutions, murdering public figures, etc. The primary objective of the terrorists has been considered to frighten the civilians. Hence, the term terrorism comes from the Latin Word *terrere* i.e. to frighten. The devastation at the World Trade Centre in New York in 2001 is a glaring example of urban terrorism.

The knee jerk reaction of a government faced with sporadic violence by the stateless groups has always been to deploy the army. But, ordinarily an army is prepared for conventional campaign against regular soldiers. Hence, an army is out of its depth when faced with elusive guerrillas who prefer not to engage in set-piece battles. Since the armed members of the marginal groups do not offer clear targets, military deployments very often fail to check insurgencies. In fact, in the 20th century, the introduction of sophisticated lethal hand held arms like AK 47s and AK 74s, grenade launchers, land mines and bazookas have increased the lethality of the guerrillas. Whether it is the mountainous terrain of Bosnia or the swampy jungle track of Assam, the scenario is more or less similar. The guerrillas being local inhabitants are able to take advantage of the terrain and frequently ambush the heavy army columns slogging along the roads.

Both guerrilla operation and terrorism occasionally result in breakdown of civil administration. Then the army is deployed under the jurisdiction of the civil magistrates. In such instances, the army uses minimum force and the objective is to retain the army till civil administration is able to cope up with the situation. Such sort of operations lie at the lower end of the spectrum of anti-guerrilla or counter-insurgency operations. Hence such operations are categorized as Aid to Civil Operations.

29.2 COMPULSIONS BEHIND THE GENESIS OF TERRORISM

Terrain is an important factor behind the continuation of insurgencies. For example in Northeast and Northwest India, the tribes from British Raj to Swaraj have been able to combat the government. This is because the physical geography aids the insurgents' 'hit and run' expeditions. The mountains are cut by deep valleys and narrow ravines. The higher slopes are covered with pine and oak trees. All these facilitate ambush by small parties of the guerrillas on the slow moving columns of the security forces. The Kukis of Northeast India are of nomadic habits. So, they constantly change their sites of habitation. As they have no permanent settlement, they have nothing to lose by moving out from one area to another area. This made the Kukis a mobile enemy. And the swampy jungle tracks deny mobility to the road

bound military convoys. Both the Kukis and the Nagas are famous for constructing stout stockades with timber, concealed breastworks and abattis. From these hidden strongpoints these tribes have been able to inflict considerable casualties among the security forces of the state. While in British times they were armed with bows and arrows, now they possess self loading rifles. And this factor has made the tribal guerrillas more lethal.

Guerrillas operate in the hilly ravines and swamps not only because of the advantages the terrain offers to them but also for the fact that deficit economic zones breed the guerrillas. From the beginning of history, the bleak Afghan plateau did not offer adequate economic incentives. Large scale profitable agriculture has never been possible in hilly landscape cut by steep ravines. So, it was necessary for the tribesmen to indulge in pillage and plunder of the rich agriculturists settled in the plains of Punjab. Lack of peaceful employment opportunities also encourages the people of Afghanistan to take up soldiering as a vocation. Since the army has never been able to accommodate all of them, the profession of being armed mercenaries is a necessity and not a luxury for them.

In addition to economy, culture has a role to play. Terrorism is often the product of failure of the nation state or a state with many nationalities like India and the ex-Soviet Union, to integrate the ethnic minorities inhabiting the peripheral region with the majority populace. Continuous subversion in Assam, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh is because of the clash between Hindi-Sanskritic culture of the core of India (north Indian heartland) and the tribal culture of the northeast. The culture gap heightens the communication gap between the people.

Religion often obstructs integration of the minorities with the majority populace. In Han China, pan-Islamic ties encourage the Uighurs who are Muslim, to yearn for a separate state with the Muslims inhabiting the post-Soviet Central Asian states. Insurgents sustain themselves when they receive foreign support. And foreign countries eagerly support the insurgencies because supporting terrorism against enemy states has become a low cost option. Without facing the horrendous manpower loss and financial drain that characterize the regular warfare, a state by supplying the insurgents with arms and money could keep the security forces of the enemy state thoroughly occupied. Kazakhstan is afraid of her big brother China. So, the former is encouraging Uighur Organization of Freedom. In the 1950s, the Nagas under the leadership of Phizo Angami, who had been an Axis client, demanded independence of Nagaland. He organized a 3,000 strong guerrilla force known as the Naga Home Guards. This organization received financial and military help from China.

Guerrillas have to be motivated to fight and die. While the military personnel are motivated through symbolic honours (medals, awards etc) and monetary rewards, the guerrilla leaders mostly take refuge to ideology. If not xenophobic nationalism then religion has been used for mobilizing the mass. The advent of a self proclaimed *messiah* and pan Islamic loyalty were the causative factors behind many Islamic guerrilla movements from the 19th century onwards. The 'messiah' portrays such struggle as a *Jehad* (Holy War). However, the Marxist guerrilla leaders instead of relying on the *religious leaders* depend on political indoctrination with the aid of grass root level cells. They lay down a framework of improvement of the peasant's social and economic conditions.

The Greek historian Thucydides points out the importance of money in waging war. While Thucydides is referring to conventional campaigns, his insight is also applicable in conducting guerrilla warfare. The guerrillas acquire money either from their foreign

sponsors as well as from the international mafia organizations. The *jehadis* of Afghanistan who fought the Soviets are now operating in Kashmir and are financed from the drug money acquired by selling poppy to the international underworld cartels.

29.3 IRREGULAR WARFARE IN THE WIDER WORLD

Guerrilla Warfare is as old as human civilization. The Old Testament records night ambushes by the irregulars. David led a guerrilla struggle against the monarch Saul. Interestingly, David's ranks were filled due to economic distress in Saul's Kingdom. So, long before the Marxist theorists linked economic exploitation with Guerrilla War, this causality was already an established practice in the ancient Near East.

Counter-insurgency operations of the ancient world have certain similarities with modern day anti-guerrilla operations. In 200 BC, the Syrian Seleucids conquered Israel. The Israeli guerrilla leaders were able to establish a bond with the villagers by caring for the old and disabled. Moreover, the guerrillas promised land to the tillers. Many centuries before Mao, the Israeli guerrillas realized that they needed the villagers (sea) for protection against the Seleucid *Phalanx* (regular infantry). For protection against the imperialists, the guerrillas armed the villagers. Thus the guerrillas were transformed from being a marauding band raiding villages from the nearby hills into a genuine armed people's movement. In 160 BC, the Seleucid monarch Antiochus IV sent Greek settlers to take over the land. This programme was somewhat similar to the 20th century Peking's approach of curbing insurgency in Tibet. The Tibetans are of a different ethnic stock from the Han Chinese. Peking's policy is to send Han Chinese settlers in Tibet in order to change the ethnic landscape of the 'roof of the world'.

Multiethnic empires have been essentially susceptible to insurgencies. Following Clausewitz's footsteps, the British Empire during the First World War used Irregular Warfare as a subsidiary struggle against the Turks. While General Allenby conducted a regular warfare against the Ottoman Empire, T.E. Lawrence encouraged and commanded the Arabs to overthrow the Turkish domination. Lawrence's sideshows in the desert of Palestine diverted Turkish military pressure from the main front thus aiding Allenby's advance.

During the Cold War era, two greatest Guerrilla Wars occurred in Vietnam between 1950-71 and in Afghanistan during the 1980s. The Afghan experience of Soviet Union could be termed as Moscow's Vietnam. The two superpowers were humiliated by the stateless armed groups. The American Army and the Red Army even after deploying 536,000 and 115,000 troops respectively failed to crush the guerrillas. In addition during 1979, Soviet Union deployed 50,000 elite troops to annihilate the Afghan insurgents. In the ensuing combat, the Americans suffered 46,000 battle deaths in Vietnam and the Soviets in Afghanistan lost 15,000. In Vietnam, Chinese and Soviet financial and military supplies kept Vo Nguyen Giap's North Vietnamese Army fighting the Americans. Similarly, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) provided stinger missiles and billions of dollars for sustaining the *mujahideens* against the crack troops of Moscow. For instance in 1988, US military aid to Afghanistan amounted to $ 600 million. The American aid to the Afghan guerrillas flowed through Pakistan.

History turned a full circle after the Soviet collapse when, the American pampered Afghan *mujahideens* turned against their erstwhile sponsors. The bombing at the

World Trade Center in 2001 was the culmination of Osama Bin Laden controlled *Al-Qaeda's* (literal meaning The Base) war with the American 'infidels'. Initially USA used a novel weapon in attempting to eliminate the terrorist bases deep inside Afghanistan. The US Navy following the doctrine of 'dominating the littoral in depth' tried to destroy the terrorist hideouts with cruise missiles fired hundreds of kilometers away from the land from ships operating in the Arabian Sea. The next phase involved a gigantic air-land operation known as Operation Enduring Freedom which started in November 2001. Nevertheless many guerrillas escaped into south Pakistan and then into Kashmir.

29.4 LOW INTENSITY WARFARE IN BRITISH-INDIA

The insurgency in Kashmir was a part of the tribal problem involving Pakistan and Afghanistan. The roots could be traced back to nineteenth century. The imperialists faced a multitude of irregular opponents from Sudan in the west and Northeast India in the east during this period. Charles Callwell, a British military theorist in the first decade of the 20th century, attempted to explain Irregular Warfare in the following words:

> Small War…. comprises the expeditions against savages and semi-civilized races by disciplined soldiers, it comprises campaigns undertaken to suppress rebellions and guerrilla warfare in all parts of the world where organized armies are struggling against opponents who will not meet them in open field, and it thus obviously covers operations varying in their scope and in their conditions.

Northwest India remained the sore spot of Britain's Indian Empire. Various types of Pathan tribes like the Afridis, Mohmands, Orakzais, etc were continuously engaged in insurgencies. Frontier tribesmen proved to be dangerous guerrilla warriors. Captain L.J. Shadwell, who fought against the Pathan tribes in Tirah during 1897 wrote:

> A frontier tribesman can live for days on the grain he carries with him and other savages on a few dates; consequently no necessity exists for them to cover a line of communications. So nimble of foot, too, are they in their grass shoes, and so conversant with every goat-track in their mountains, that they can retreat in any direction. This extraordinary mobility enables them to attack from any direction quite unexpectedly, and to disperse and disappear as rapidly as they came. For this reason the rear of a European force is as much exposed to attack as its fronts or flanks.

Unlike the guerrillas, the imperial soldiers of Britain were dependent on a host of supplies that had to be transported to the front from the rear. So, supply depots and base camps had to be established. This gave the guerrillas the opportunity to cut the imperial lines of communications. To guard the long lines of communications, the British were forced to establish guard posts all along which stretched back far to the rear. This in turn tied up lot of troops who could not be used in the front for 'Combing Operations' against the guerrillas. Troops or convoys moving in the dusk were vulnerable to ambushes.

In night fighting, the tribesmen had an edge over the British troops and the British led sepoys. This was because they were accustomed to see better in the moonlight. Since they knew the terrain, even in pitch dark they could approach through the ravines and passes to concentrate and subsequently launch attacks on the slogging

imperial columns. The most favourite tactics of the Pathans was to fire their *jezails* (long barrelled muskets) behind the *sangars* (fortifications made of stones). Imperial counter-fire was stopped by the stone fortifications. The tribesmen were able to pick up their victims easily because each Pathan male was an excellent marksman. For him, the rifle was the joy of his life. From his childhood, he learned to handle firearms. Moreover, continuous blood feuds due to the operation of the *Pukhtunwali* code forced the Pathans to become versatile in the use of their weapons for survival. Again many Pathans used to join the Sepoy Army for acquiring musketry instructions. After the completion of their training, the Pathans deserted from the Sepoy Army with their rifles. When the imperial column got demoralized, the Pathans armed with swords and spears rushed down from the slopes. And in close quarter combat, muskets of the sepoys were useless.

Northeast India which after 1947 became the six sister states of the Republic of India also proved troublesome for the Raj. Occasionally the Sepoy Army made forays into the territories of the tribesmen. When during the last decade of the 19th century, the Lushai tribe proved to be troublesome, their villages were burnt. One characteristic of such pacification measures was strict political control exercised by the Political Agents over the conduct of operations by the military commanders. This was necessary to prevent infliction of undue violence over the civilians. Control by the political agents was the prelude to present day District Magistrates controlling Aid to Civil Operations. During 1917-19, when the Kuki tribe of Manipur rebelled, 3,000 personnel of the Assam Rifles and the Burma Military Police were concentrated under the overall direction of the Political Agents. Besides military operations, the aim was to win over the Kuki chiefs.

29.5 COUNTER-INSURGENCY PROGRAMME OF THE INDIAN STATE

At present at least five crores of Indians live under army rule. This is partly due to the violent activities of the non-state actors. The post-colonial state inherited several colonial legacies. The chief among them is the insurgencies in the periphery. The fundamentalist clergy, arms running and foreign aid sustained the Guerilla War of the tribesmen of the Indus frontier. Under the Raj, the clandestine operators from the Persian Gulf region imported arms. To check the arms trade, the Royal Indian Marine (predecessor of Royal Indian Navy) used to conduct maritime patrolling of the Gulf region in order to deter and if possible capture the smugglers. After 1947, several arms producing factories emerged in the North-West Frontier Province (hereafter NWFP) of Pakistan. Arms smuggling through Iran and Central Asia aided by the Pakistan Army, also sustained the guerrillas. Just after independence, the Pakistan Army armed and directed the tribesmen of the NWFP to invade India. They were designated as *Azad* Kashmir forces. They were led by many Pakistan army officers who were supposed to be on leave. Once armed and trained, the tribesmen were encouraged by the religious zealots to fight for liberating the land of the Muslims. From the 1980s, General Zia-ul-Haq, the military ruler of Pakistan, encouraged the growth of *madrassas* in NWFP. The Peoples Liberation Army, a militant organization of Manipur receives training and equipment from the Chinese military bases in Lhasa. In the late 1960s, about six separatist movements sponsored by China and Pakistan tied down five Indian infantry divisions.

The government of India raised several paramilitary formations to combat terrorism.

One of them was the Assam Rifles which was initially raised by the British for guarding the northeast frontier of India from the 'wild tribes'. It had twenty-one battalions and most of them were deployed for maintaining 'law and order' in the six northeastern states. Compared to the police, the paramilitary forces were armed with not only heavy but also sophisticated weapons. For example, the Assam Rifles from the mid 1950s were equipped with sten guns, bren guns, and 2 inch mortars. While the police of West Bengal even now retain .303 Lee Enfield rifles, the Assam Rifle personnel had rejected such obsolete weapons in favour of Self Loading 7.62 mm rifles way back in 1968. However, unlike the army, the paramilitary forces lack artillery and armoured fighting vehicles which are necessary for conducting conventional warfare with the regular troops of the enemy states. The biggest paramilitary force of India remains the Border Security Force (henceforth BSF) which was raised by the Home Ministry in the mid 1960s.

Paramilitary forces are deployed when the police fail to curb the insurgents' activities. Naga insurgency is the oldest separatist movement in the northeast. The Naga leaders argued that they are not Indians but brought to India due to the British conquest. In 1946, the Naga National Council demanded an independent state. The Naga leaders told the departing British that India should remain as the 'guardian' power for ten years and then the Nagas should decide about their future course of action. The state of Nagaland was carved out from Assam in 1960. The Naga insurgents from the mid 1950s onwards used to attack the railway line and the railway staff. The BSF guarded the Indo-Burma border to prevent any insurgents escaping and also to check any infiltration back into India. In general the regular police manned the lines of communications. It fell upon the Assam Rifles to conduct 'Combing Operations'. In addition, the para military forces also send columns and organized flag marches in order to restore confidence of the people of the disturbed areas.

Both British-India and independent India have used air power to bring the insurgents under control. The Royal Air Force (henceforth RAF) regularly bombed the tribes along the Indus. On 28 August of 1960, the Indian Air Force (hereafter IAF) strafed the insurgents who laid siege to the Assam Rifles' post at Purr. Moreover the IAF also dropped supplies for the defenders. The Assam Rifles was used to guard the rail installations. In 1966, when the police fled against the violent activities of the Mizo National Front, both BSF and Assam Rifles units were deployed. Between 9 and 13 March, the IAF strafed the Mizo insurgents. The IAF was used in 1999 at Kargil for evicting the intruders supported by Pakistan's Northern Light Infantry. But the IAF like its predecessor RAF found out that amidst snow blizzards and rocky terrain, hitting the small bands of elusive guerrillas was next to impossible. The Kashmiri militants were strengthened with a leavening of Afghan *mujahideens*. The latter had downed several Russian helicopter gunships when the Red Air Force tried to bomb them in the bleak Afghan plateau in the 1980s. These *mujahideens* with the Pakistan supplied stinger missiles severely damaged several flying machines of the IAF. In a way, airpower has been impotent in checking insurgencies.

From the 1980s, the Inter Service Intelligence of Pakistan has become more active. Between 1985 and 1995, 20,000 guerrillas were trained and infiltrated into the Kashmir Valley. Before 1993, the ISI was spending Pakistani Rs 100 million (US $ 3.3 million) every month on the militancy in Kashmir. The ISI is maintaining bases in Bangladesh for aiding the rebellious groups of northeast militants. Again Bangladesh dislikes 'hegemonic' India's behaviour. So, Dacca turns a blind eye when insurgent groups like the Mizo National Front and the United Liberation Front of Assam (hereafter ULFA) establish bases on the Chittagong Hill Tracts in order to escape the 'Cordon and Search Operations' of India's security agencies. After the Soviet

withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Pakistan trained *mujahideens* were sent to Kashmir for launching a *Jehad* there. Being veterans of the Afghan War, they provided a lethal addition of combat effectiveness to the insurgents combating the Indian state in Kashmir. Again in pursuit of the policy of 'tit for tat', after 1993, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) started supporting the insurgents of Sind. The latter are encouraged to demand independence from the Punjabi dominated Pakistan.

In addition to such violent response, successive Indian governments have also attempted to restore normalcy in the disturbed areas by devolution of power through autonomous councils and *panchayats* and creation of jobs. This brings the rebel leaders within the democratic political process. Besides coercion, absorption of the terrorists in the main stream remains an important plank of India government's counter-insurgency policy. One of the causative factors behind the rise of terrorism among the young generation is lack of employment. So, the government always tries to create jobs wooing the militants back to the mainstream. From the 1960s, many ex-militant Nagas were absorbed in the Border Security Force. As part of the state's '*divide et impera*' (divide and rule), they were used with much success against their erstwhile brothers in arms. As part of the job creation programme, after 1960, a Naga Regiment was also raised by the Indian Army. Another aspect of the divide and rule policy on part of the government is to play the various insurgent groups against each other. The army and other state agencies train and equip the Kukis who are known as the members of the Kuki National Army. This organization attacked the Naga supporters of National Socialist Council of Nagaland in Manipur.

Ethnic affinities often draw India into the vortex of insurgencies occurring in the neighbouring countries. In Sri Lanka about one million Tamils are considered to be alienated from the thirteen million Sinhalese. The former in the 1980s organized a militant wing named as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil *Eelam* (hereafter LTTE) for conducting guerrilla struggle against the security forces of Lanka. Due to public pressure from the people of Tamil Nadu, Delhi could not turn a blind eye to the sufferings of the Tamil minority in Lanka. And when Sri Lanka threatened to turn to USA for support, Delhi was afraid that Colombo might become a client state of Washington. So, in 1987, India sent the Indian Peace Keeping Force for combating the LTTE. The LTTE eliminated the moderate *Eelam* People's Revolutionary Liberation Front and demands *Eelam* (a separate homeland) for the Tamils. The LTTE has been innovative in conducting maritime guerrilla warfare. The speedboats of the LTTE have been harassing the Sinhalese fishing boats.

29.6   SUMMARY

From the end of the 20th century one witnesses the transition in Irregular Warfare from class oriented guerrilla struggle in the rural theatre to urban terrorism based on religious ideologies inherited from the 19th century. However the originality of late 20th century insurgencies lies in the expansion of maritime insurgency. Along with the navies, the coast guards of the respective countries are playing an increasing role in checking the maritime insurgents. To sum up, terrorism is primarily directed against non-combatant civilians whereas the guerrillas mostly target soldiers. While guerrillas carry out political work for establishing a base among the civilians, the terrorists remain an elite underground cell without any mass base. Religious extremism, regional separatism and clash between ethno-religious identity with state generated monolithic nationalism generate separatist movements which often turn violent. The stateless marginal groups use violence for emancipation. And if that is not possible then the terrorists' agenda is to use violence or the very threat of it for bargaining greater

share of political power from the state's ruling class. The use of violence by the *Akalis* of Punjab in the 1980s is an example of the bargaining Guerrilla War. The army is not suited for counter-insurgency duty because the military personnel have no acquaintance with the local culture and terrain. Military deployments for blunt suppression even cause large amount of collateral damage to the neutrals. This can alienate them and push such persons into the terrorists' camp. Counter-insurgency requires political activities besides police actions. Terrorism has come to stay with us because at present a Conventional War could rapidly escalate into Nuclear War. So, in the twenty-first century, covert operations remain a favourite low cost strategy of the polities for weakening their potentially hostile neighbouring countries.

29.7 EXERCISES

1) Differentiate between Mao Tse Tung's theory of Guerrilla Warfare and Clausewitz's view regarding the role of the non-state actors in war.

2) Point out the similarities and dissimilarities of Irregular Warfare in the Ancient and Modern eras.

3) Explain the colonial legacy as regards low-intensity threats in the post-colonial state.

4) What are the steps taken by independent India in checking the secessionist activities of the marginal groups?

GLOSSARY

Divide et Impera   Divide and rule policy pursued by the colonizers over the colonized. First introduced by the Roman Empire, the British also followed this policy in India to prevent the emergence of a sense of nationalism among the inhabitants of the subcontinent.

Guerrilla War   Opposite of Conventional War. War conducted by the guerrillas is also termed as Asymmetrical Warfare. Instead of large decisive set piece battles, 'hit and run' expeditions characterize Guerrilla War. Hence, the latter is also known as Low-Intensity Warfare.

ISI   Inter-Service Intelligence of Pakistan. This organization manned by personnel from Pakistan Army is in charge of covert operations directed against India and other countries.

Jehad   Holy War by Islam to liberate the Pure (Muslims) from the heathens. In the Koran, it is enunciated that *Jehad* could take the form of both Conventional and Guerrilla Warfare and could be pursued even by non-violent means. But, from the late 20th century onwards *Jehad* has largely been in the shape of Guerrilla Warfare.

Jehadis   Warriors who conduct Holy War.

Madrassa   Islamic theological School where young boys are taught and trained in theological framework of Islam.

Messiahs   Spiritual leaders or holy men who promise to bring liberation to their people.

Mujahideen   Jehadis who fought in Afghanistan against the Soviets. They were initially trained, equipped and financed by the Central Intelligence Agency of USA. After the Soviet withdrawal, they turned against their erstwhile sponsors. After the collapse of the Taliban in the wake of Operation Enduring Freedom, the *mujahideens* had turned their attention to liberate Kashmir.

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UNIT 30 DEMOGRAPHY

Structure

30.1 INTRODUCTION

From the middle of the eighteenth century Western Europe witnessed a historically unprecedented decrease in mortality, followed by a period of rising fertility and then a secular decline in fertility. It was roughly while the western world was in the process of this momentous transformation that population became a subject of intense debate. Economists and statesmen have at different times in different places been extremely anxious about the consequences of contemporary demographic developments.

These anxieties were largely associated with the internal contradictions of the capitalist expansion. The dilemmas of development, then can for the purposes of this Unit be schematically classified into three broad groups: Overpopulation, immigration and the demographic deformations associated with the continuing hold of older attitudes towards marriage, health and son-preference in a context of modern capitalist growth. Finally, though less closely related to the dynamics of capitalist growth, we have imagined demographic imbalances being attributed to certain ethnic and religious groups for reasons of ideology and political power.

Population has frequently been invoked to explain a variety of social processes-population growth as a check on economic growth, as a stimulant of economic growth, as a cause for poverty, as an outcome of poverty and so on. There clearly seems to be a lack of certainty regarding whether population is the explanatory or dependent variable.

To clarify some of these issues relating to demographic change, it would be necessary to have some rudimentary understanding of the larger processes on which these are premised. First, it becomes necessary to understand the demographic determinants of population change. Next, these determinants or the most significant of these determinants need to be studied in association with the larger dynamics of economic and social change in region or country being studied. When discussing these changes at the global level, in the modern period, these could be reduced to three large processes that have characterised world history: the rise of capitalism beginning first in north-western Europe, the increasing economic disparities between the West and the poorer countries of the world with capitalist growth and imperialist expansion and finally the rapidity of economic change in the developing world without commensurate changes in social attitudes.

Population change can be explained in demographic terms by a simple equation, which demographers call the Balancing Equation:

$$P_t = P_0 + B - D + I - E$$

Where P_0 is the initial size of the population

P_t is the terminal size of the population

B, D, I and E denote the number of births, deaths and in-migrants (immigrants) and out-migrants (emigrants) between the two dates.

In other words, population change is the result of three variables- fertility, mortality and migration. At different times in history, in particular regions, one or the other of these variables assumed greater significance than the others. Fertility, mortality and migration in turn, are determined by pure demographic factors and a larger set of social and economic variables.
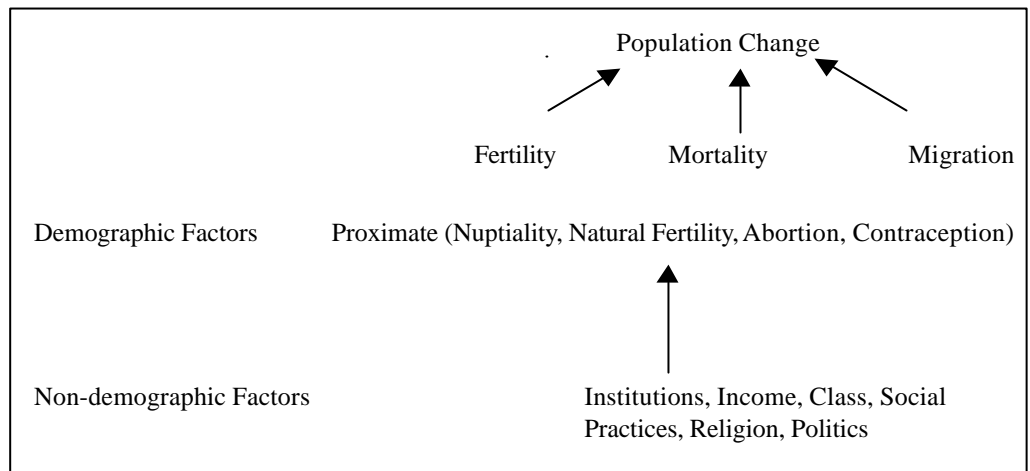
30.2 THEORIES OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

To understand and place in perspective the discussions on the demographic variable in modern history, we need to look at the two guiding theories of the discipline of demography- the corpus of Malthus' writings on demographic dynamics and the sustained hold of the "demographic transition theory" since the Second World War. The third view, though equally relevant but not part of mainstream demographic discussions, is that put forward by Karl Marx in response to Malthus' speculations.

30.2.1 Malthusian Theory of Demographic Change

The Reverend Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) is popularly considered to be the founding father of modern demography. His 1798 work, *An Essay on the Principle of Population,* which went through six editions, still provides the main theoretical frame for modern demographic research.

Malthus' main contribution was to enunciate a homeostatic, cyclical view of population movements. The high level of human fecundity made it possible for fertility to outstrip food production bringing about starvation and enhanced mortality in its wake. This crisis ensured the return of equilibrium and the beginning of a new cycle. This vicious cycle was usually prevented by the operation of preventive and positive checks. The "preventive" check in the form of postponed or averted marriages in the "civilized" European part of the world usually allowed these regions to escape crisis. The other route to equilibrium, usually found outside Christian Europe was the so-called "positive" check that took the form of war, disease, sterility from sexually transmitted diseases,

polygamy and vices including infanticide, abortion and contraception. Though this was the main demographic content of the original Malthusian model, it also contained a very significant element of ruling class anxiety about the debilitating influence that the rapidly proliferating poor would have on society. The general Malthusian model of homeostatic population-economy equilibrium through the operation of preventive and positive was to have universal applicability. But it was the class component of the model that made it politically significant. Malthus believed that mortality had been unchanging for centuries, but in class societies, the poor experienced higher mortality and were the first casualty of a subsistence crisis. This ignorant and wretched section of society did not respect preventive checks as they went ahead and had children despite minimal subsistence. Within the logic of this model the Elizabethan Poor Laws then by transferring part of the social surplus to this improvident class encouraged their reckless multiplication. This, in turn, increased the demand for food and raised the price of food for the middle class, thereby raising their mortality. Thus the Poor Laws instead of bettering the condition of the wretched merely increased their population and spread death to the more industrious and worthier sections of society. One direct policy outcome of this line of reasoning was the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 where outdoor relief was substituted by urban workhouses.

While Adam Smith's thesis of free trade appealed to the natural man, Malthus saw an unambiguously Divine design behind the forces responsible for equilibrium. For Malthus, contraception was vile and unchristian- a view shared by most Englishmen of the day. In the absence of contraception the only respectable way to control was the preventive check.

Despite being widely held as the progenitor of demography, Malthus was neither the first to postulate a potential strain between population growth and food resources nor was he responsible in any way for the development of the technical tools of demography. What then were the reasons for his popularity?

Though this question can never be answered in full, one major reason is that Malthus was the first to clearly and comprehensively enunciate the fears and anxieties of English intelligentsia of social revolution and assert a civilizational gap between the peoples of the metropolis and the colonies in clearly demographic terms. Further, in the middle of the nineteenth century it carefully saw contraception as vile and clearly accepted a divine design. Being written in the most general terms, Malthusian concepts could be used to understand demographic phenomena in widely different contexts- from Poor Laws in England, to population growth in the New World and to famines in India.

Malthus progressively became more concerned with the absence on the preventive check in the uncivilized world. However, anticipating latter day diffusionists he did hope that the "diffusion of education and knowledge" in the future would bring these people to delay marriage.

30.2.2 Demographic Transition Theory

This brings us to the second enduring shibboleth of demography- the so-called "demographic transition theory". In the post War period, eugenics and the earlier politics of status quo took a severe beating. The resurgence of the Left, the horrors of Nazi race politics and advances in scientific theory were responsible for the quick demise of pre-War eugenicist arguments. The new governments now emphasised welfare. After the War, demography was taken very seriously by government policy makers. In France the INED was created to collect data and analyse population trends. In Germany, however, after the terrible excesses of the Nazis, the state decided to remain neutral in matters of population and family.

Early American demographic anxieties concerned immigration and immigrants. According to Notestein this work was "mainly descriptive and of little long-run significance." Most of the academics associated with demography in the U.S. were part-time demographers drawn largely from the disciplines of sociology and statistics.

The so-called transition theory that has had such an enduring hold over generations of demographers was first presented in 1929 by Warren S.Thompson, one of America's leading demographers. However, this prototype failed to recruit many followers. Towards the end of the Second World War in 1944, the "demographic transition theory" was published separately by Frank W. Notestein and Kingsley Davis to become the guiding "theory" of demographic change.

Classical "transition theory" as it was first formulated rested on a tripartite division of human demographic experience. In the first phase both mortality and fertility were high resulting in little or no population growth. In the second phase mortality fell sharply while fertility continued to remain high, leading to a sharp increase in population. In the third and final phase, fertility falls sharply and population goes into secular decline as fertility falls faster than mortality.

This model of demographic change was clearly evolutionary and functionalist in nature. Fertility decline was seen to be necessarily consequent upon industrialization and modernization. Transition theory was invested with applicability independent of place and time. Unlike its subsequent reincarnation in the 1950s, the transition theory of 1944 vintage clearly saw demographic change as a dependent variable with social, economic and cultural developments as the main explanatory factors. Unlike the early theoreticians of demographic change, Notestein saw all nations in the world capable of development. Predatory colonialism was seen as the culprit for delayed transition in countries such as India. The context was clearly held to be significant. Demographic change was seen to be a cumulative result of social and cultural and institutional change. The dissemination of contraceptive techniques was recognised as important in controlling fertility. However, its effectiveness was always dependant on "the social setting; hence new patterns of behaviour are to be established principally by the alteration of that setting."

Within a space of just about half a decade, Notestein and subsequently Davis, the twin popular progenitors of the transition theory revised their recently pronounced model of demographic change very significantly. In a report in 1949 he wrote, ".. Fertility control is not a substitute for other ameliorative effort; instead, it is a means that will assist in making ameliorative effort successful- indeed it may turn out to be a necessary condition for such a success."

The "transition theory" in its original form saw falling fertility as a consequence of industrialization. The greater the level of fertility, the quicker was the required pace of industrialization. The Soviet model, based on "totalitarian methods" was thought to be better at attaining higher rates of capital formation and thus potentially more attractive to newly independent Third World countries. Slower industrialization held the risk of increased poverty leading to Communism. The immediate goal of American demographers was to convince Third World leadership that population control was both possible and necessary.

The subject area of American demography now shifted to the Third World and so did the emphasis from academic demography to population studies focussed on family planning. Fertility control in the Third World now became one of those rare fields with a multiplicity of willing and rich sponsors. This singular emphasis on fertility control as the panacea for the ills of the Third World was soon questioned in terms of its motives and politics. Development as a vital necessary condition for population control was stressed and by the 1970s "revisionists" started questioning the inverse relationship

between population growth and development. Today in the United States there is no one overwhelming issue comparable to the old enthusiasm over Third World fertility control. The questions asked are much more diverse in nature.

The transition theory based largely on Parsonian functional structuralism and its subsequent sociological paradigms of "Westernisation" and "modernization" has continued to be single most important theory for demographers. Sociologists and anthropologists have long stopped taking Westernization and modernization seriously. Historical demography has clearly contradicted the empirical basis of the transition schema. First we find that in nineteenth century France, fertility began on its course of secular decline much before industrialization or any major phase of economic development. This should have been evident to the formulators of the theory of demographic transition as this phenomenon was well documented. The large scale Princeton based European Fertility Project, designed specifically to test the theory, was unequivocal in their finding that economic growth showed no clear relationship with falling fertility. Despite being at variance with the historical record, classical transitional theory maintained that fertility would decline only as a consequence of the cumulative interaction of lowered mortality, growing individualism, socially mobile urban groups, the decline of family and fatalism. These preferred conditions could only result from wide-ranging industrialization and modernization. The demographic transition it was believed had universal applicability. Any historical period or geographical point could be placed and situated on this demographic-economic scale. Dudley Kirk, who was involved with the elaboration of the transition theory at Princeton commented, "In regard to demographic matters the different countries of the world may be considered as on single continuum of development…" This implied that historical specificities and contextual differences had no bearing on the working out of demographic transition.

Though ahistorical and confident in its universal applicability and relevance, the classical version of the transition theory did however privilege the social, cultural and economic over the demographic. Demographic change was clearly a dependent variable in this equation, with modernization as the sole explanation. Demography was seen as firmly embedded in society. This reminds one of Malthusian thinking on the subject as well as Marx's view that every mode of production had its special laws of population. In clear opposition to Malthus and Marx, the transition theory omitted class differences and regional specificities. To plot demographic transition or the later concept of fertility transition one has to have a base period and society to begin with and a different one at the end of that process. The moment one leaves the neat periodization and certain correlations of the demographic transition theory, and takes note of historical contingencies and complexities, it becomes clear that there is no one homogenous starting specimen that can be designated as "traditional" and its replacement by a "modern" society. Further, since the demographic transition theory is based on partial description and not any abstract analytical construct, any empirical observation that runs contrary to the stated trajectory becomes proof of significant weakness. Further, when the authors of the "theory" themselves mutate it out of recognition, any remaining confidence evaporates rapidly. Finally, in its mutated second birth the theory lacks causal direction. Other than the necessity to contracept, the demographic transition helps us very little in characterising demographic regimes, fixing determinants or predicting change.

Despite the theory not receiving a formal burial from demographers, it has been noted that the term demographic transition theory has increasingly been replaced by "fertility transition" which however is plagued by the same theoretical and methodological weaknesses as the original term.

Since these two guiding "theories"- Malthusianism and "demographic transition" have clearly been indicted for failing to correspond with known history and analytical rigour, alternative ways of conceptualising demographic change have became an urgent need.

30.2.3   Marx's Understanding of Demographic Change

Karl Marx's views on the subject of demography- economy linkages assumes significance here. With tremendous perspicacity, Karl Marx in his discussion of the development of capital, noted that "The law of capitalist production, that is at the bottom of the pretended "natural law of population," reduces itself simply to this: The correlation between accumulation of capital and rate of wages is nothing else than the correlation between the unpaid labour transformed into capital, and the additional paid labour necessary for the setting in motion of this additional capital. It is therefore in no way a relation between two magnitudes, on the one hand, the magnitude of the capital; on the other, the number of the labouring population; it is rather, at bottom, only the relation between the unpaid and the paid labour of the same labouring population. If the quantity of unpaid labour supplied by the working-class, and accumulated by the capitalist class, increases so rapidly that its conversion into capital requires an extraordinary addition of paid labour, then wages rise, and, all other circumstances remaining equal, the unpaid labour diminishes in proportion. But as soon as this diminution touches the point at which the surplus-labour that nourishes capital is no longer supplied in normal quantity, a reaction sets in: a smaller part of revenue is capitalised' accumulation lags, and the movement of rise in wages receives a check. The rise of wages therefore is confined within limits that not only leave intact the foundations of the capitalistic system, but also secure its reproduction on a progressive scale. The law of capitalistic accumulation, metamorphosed by economists into pretended law of Nature, in reality merely states that the very nature of accumulation excludes every diminution in the degree of exploitation of labour, and every rise in the   price of labour, which could seriously imperil the continual reproduction, on an ever-enlarging scale, of the capitalistic relation." (Marx, Capital Volume I, Chapter 25, Section I).

Marx then went on to note that, "The labouring population therefore produces, along with the accumulation of capital produced by it, the means by which it itself is made relatively superfluous, is turned into a relative surplus-population; and it does this to an always increasing extent. This is a law of population peculiar to the capitalist mode of production; and in fact every special historic mode of production has its own special laws of population, historically valid within its limits and only in so far as man has not interfered with them." (Marx, Capital Volume I, Chapter 25, Section 3)

Thus it is in *Capital* that we first find the argument that socially acceptable levels of population are not independent of the capitalist production process, but are in fact, a function of the latter. Marx, however, attached a rider to this formulation—that this dynamic or "law" of population was peculiar to the capitalist system and that other modes of production had their own laws of population.

30.3   DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE: DIFFERENT TRAJECTORIES

While certain common trends can be discerned in the very long term across national and regional population histories, these commonalities disappear when we begin to look demographic developments in the medium and short term. Consequently what we then have is not one single universal story of world population history but a variety of different trajectories with different determinants of demographic change. Western Europe, East Asia and the Indian subcontinent may be taken as representative of various different trends to understand demographic change in the modern world.

30.3.1   Europe

The historical demography of Europe is important to any discussion of the demographic variable in the world context, as it was here in the eighteenth century that population first showed rapid increase followed by a sustained decline.

The population of north-west Europe increased from between 60 to 64 million in 1750 to about 116 million in 1850 growing at an annual compound rate of around 0.6 per cent. Between the French Revolution and the First World War, mortality sharply declined with the availability of new resources and favourable epidemiological changes, creating conditions where population could possibly increase. The introduction of new crops such as potato and maize, greatly contributed to limiting subsistence crises and permitting population increase. Further, during the eighteenth century plague and associated epidemics such as typhus, smallpox, malaria, venereal diseases lost much of their lethal efficacy. Population increased sharply at first but was then limited by nuptiality checks. Next, it resulted in large overseas migration and a sustained decline in fertility. It led to the massive movement of Europeans overseas and also to the demographic transition. This demographic transformation is one of the most significant transformations that Europe witnessed in the last millennium.

In twentieth century western Europe devastating wars further exacerbated the effects of fertility decline, finally resulting in an ageing age structure and growth rates that will turn negative in the future.

30.3.2   China

Western observers, including Malthus, saw China as a country that was hopelessly caught in the trap of overpopulation and poverty. High population densities, low per capita consumption of food and energy and consequently low anthropometrical indices characterized China in the eighteenth century.

Describing the economic context of demographic change in China, Malthus wrote, "In some countries, population appears to have been forced; that is, the people have been habituated by degrees to live on the smallest possible quantity of food. There must have been periods in such countries when population increased permanently, without an increase in the means of substance. China seems to answer to this description. If the accounts we have of it are to be trusted, the lower classes of Chinese people are accustomed to living on the smallest possible quantity of food and are glad to consume putrid offals that European labourers would rather starve than eat."

Despite this low level of living standards, Malthusian positive checks did not prevent an increase in Chinese population. China's population grew virtually exponentially between 1700 and 1800 increasing from 175 million to 400 million in the same period. Between 1800 and 1950 the population increased more slowly to nearly 600 million. This was followed by a sharp acceleration to over 1.2 billion at present. Studies of Chinese historical demography using new sources such as imperial genealogies have now conclusively shown that mortality in the eighteenth century was similar to and even lower than Western Europe. Despite a sharp increase in population in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mortality levels decreased, in a rather unMalthusian fashion. Public health measures have been credited for this increase in life expectancy. This is not to say that there were sharp peaks marked by crisis mortality. These famines were few and not severe enough to arrest population growth in the long-term. Famine mortality, including the severe 1958-61 famine, was more the product of administrative and political mishandling than of population size.

From the middle of the twentieth century China's mortality started falling at a rate unknown in world history. Infant mortality registered a fall of 300 per cent between 1950 and the present. Male life expectancy similarly increased rapidly from 42.2 years in 1953-54 to 61.6 years in the period 1964-82. Once again increased state intervention, in the form of larger investments in public health, was responsible for this marked fall in mortality. Thus China with its low standard of living instead of proving the Malthusian positive check clearly shows that the Malthusian economy-mortality relationship did not have a universal applicability. It must also be noted here China has also exhibited very high levels of female infanticide and very high levels of sex-selective mortality both amongst the nobility and commoners.

This brings us to fertility. Once again, recent research into Chinese historical demography has shown that fertility in traditional China was quite moderate despite an absence of contraception. Nuptiality, one of the most important proximate determinants of fertility, was very different from marriage patterns elsewhere in Asia and in Europe. While there was early and universal female marriage in China, this was not the case with males. Males married much later and across a longer age span. Richer males married earlier than poorer men across social groups. This social differential in the pattern of marriage observed since the eighteenth century has persisted to the present day. The recent economic reforms and attendant increases in inequity have further raised the proportion of poor single men up to the age of thirty to 30 per cent from 25 per cent in the 1980s.

Other than this check on nuptiality, three mechanisms of fertility control – late beginning, birth spacing and early stopping –effectively controlled Chinese marital fertility.

30.3.3 India

The population of India grew slowly from 1871 to 1921 largely because of the mortality check despite high fertility. In the post 1921 years up to the 1980s fertility remained high but mortality declined leading to rapid population growth and resulting in a very young age population. Women fared badly in terms of mortality relative to men throughout our period. The sex ratio at birth usually falls between 1040 to 1070, internationally. In other words 104 to 107 male babies are born for every 100 female babies. On the other hand male mortality is also generally higher than female mortality in the older age groups. Despite this, India has exhibited a continuous decrease in the proportion of women. This is explained by lower life expectancy at birth for females. This all-India trend however does not hold good for many parts of India, as we shall see in our discussion of regional trends.

India's age distribution has remained remarkably stable with a large and virtually constant proportion of young people. In a closed population such as that of India's, the large proportion of children points to high levels of fertility. The age distribution also suggests a high dependency ratio. Further, the youthfulness of the population also ensured a continued population momentum that would last beyond the onset of fertility decline.

30.4 DEMOGRAPHY: SOCIETY LINKAGES

In this section we try to understand some of the relationships between demographic and social and economic change.

In the Malthusian scheme of things, unregulated demographic growth was certain to result in crisis and a return to equilibrium between food supply and demand. For Malthus this vicious cycle of rapid procreation and resulting death could only be prevented by the preventive check or the safety valve of migration.

This part of Malthus' formulation provided a basis to a large number of writers in the post-War period who feared an imminent population explosion resulting in widespread

scarcity. The United Nations in its publication entitled, *The Determinants and Consequences of Population Growth* (1953) observed, "Especially during the last decade a number of authors have recalled the Malthusian principle of population and expressed the fear that the present population of the earth is drawing near the maximum that its resources can support." Demographers, economists and statesmen took this warning seriously.

Coale and Hoover in their work on India saw rapid population growth as the cause for the country's poverty. Population increase resulted in a progressively larger share of the production being used for consumption, leading to a fall in savings and investment. The government of India appears to have taken the thesis of overpopulation as being an obstacle to development seriously. India was the first country to begin a comprehensive programme of family limitation in 1950s.

However, there were dissenting voices. Simon Kuznets' large-scale study found no association empirically between population growth and development. Around the same time, Boserup provided theoretical arguments and empirical proof to argue that critical level of population pressure was necessary for technological development to take place in agriculture. Others saw population pressure as forcing the development of new institutions that were essential for economic growth.

Recent research now clearly tells us that the Malthusian spectre of population outstripping resources is not true historically at the global level. According to Angus Maddison, between 1500 and 1820 while the world's population grew at an annual rate of 0.29 per cent, the gross domestic product increased by 0.33 per cent.

Malthus hypothesised the operation of the preventive check as the preferred route to equilibrium. However, history once again tells us that the Malthusian preventive check was in operation in a wide range of societies and not limited to "civilized" Western Europe. Again, we find that other mechanisms such as widowhood, infanticide, abortion and a number of measures were resorted to in regions where the nuptiality check was absent to regulate population. There is also no evidence to suggest that the preventive check was a conscious decision to limit fertility and population growth. Thus, what we do find is that a range of societies characterized by varying levels of economic development resorted to some form or the other of fertility regulation.

High mortality and especially infant mortality was clearly inversely correlated with fertility through "replacement" and "hoarding". In a demographic regime marked by high and volatile levels of mortality, parents or the society would tend to replace dead children and produce more than the desired family size given the high incidence of mortality. Unless mortality levels were so high as to depress fecundity, high mortality regimes were also characterized by high fertility, though not necessarily population increase.

While the interrelations between the proximate determinants of population growth are fairly well understood, the population-economy relationship continues to pose an enduring conundrum. Malthus saw the overpopulation resulting in poverty and famines. On the other hand according to the theory of demographic transition, modernization resulted in first lowered mortality and rapid population growth followed by sustained fertility decline and slowing down of population growth.

While development or modern economic growth resulting in mortality and then fertility decline over the long run appears logical, this has not always been borne out by available historical evidence. France experienced low fertility levels well before the beginnings of modern economic growth. The Princeton based European Fertility Survey that was designed to test this assertion of the "transition theory" once again failed to find any statistically significant relationship between economic development and fertility decline.

However, the failure to find such a relationship may be related to the choice of economic indices that were available to the Princeton researchers. At a more global scale, taking more sensitive indices of economic development such as the Human Development Index rather than aggregated measures such as per capita income or GDP, recent research finds that fertility transition occurred only in countries with a HDI of 0.6 or more.

Mortality decline is a necessary condition for sustained fertility decline. Thus it is not surprising that only when the population as a whole is freed from the threat of mortality hikes will it exercise the option of family limitation.

The uneven nature of fertility decline between the developed and developing countries has created another contradiction. With the West having experienced fertility decline for more than a century now, its population is rapidly ageing and the proportion of men and women in the working ages is getting smaller. What this implies in economic terms is that these countries now have to import labour. As North-South disparities have sharply increased in the recent past, employment and wages have decreased in the developing world. This has resulted in the West facing a virtual tide of job seeking immigrants trying to enter these richer countries. The cruel contradiction of globalisation has been that while the West wants all factor markets to be liberalised, it fights shy of opening up to labour.

A related dilemma of development that has a bearing on migration is the nature of economic development in the globalized world. The recessionary trends that have marked corporate globalization have greatly increased both unemployment as well as underemployment. Work is also rapidly shifting from the organised to the unorganised sector accompanied by the attendant evils of poor working conditions and low wages especially in Asia. All this further increases North –South disparities and sets up conditions encouraging a poor workforce to move in search of better employment opportunities, which then attracts severe restrictions.

Demographic changes are path-dependent. We find that regions and countries that underwent the mortality transition early also began on their course of sustained fertility decline much before traditionally high mortality regions. The path-dependence also extends to other features of demographic change. Patriarchal China and the northern Indian sub-continent have traditionally been characterized by pronounced son-preference. With the beginning of fertility decline and the reduction in the desired family size, we find new technologies, such as pre-natal diagnostic testing being employed to destroy female foetuses resulting in alarmingly skewed sex ratios.

Finally, in many of the countries of the developing world, in a context of increasing social disparities, demographic arguments are erroneously marshalled to hold certain communities responsible for the ills of society. Attempts have been made to biologically reduce their reproduction or more brutally by outright physical extermination- Nazi Germany being the most revolting, but by no means the only case in point.

30.5 SUMMARY

Demographic change is thus one of the most pressing problems facing the modern world today. The problems are different, specific to societies and countries and are closely related to wider economic and social changes. Attempt to understand demographic change without reference to time and region- specific context has failed.

The relationship between development and demographic problems is so closely intermeshed, that both in the past and in today's world, population being more visible and easily quantifiable than the underlying processes of global economic, political and social change, is held culpable for a range of problems.

30.6   EXERCISES

1) How is demographic change important to an understanding of world history?

2) Discuss Malthusian theory of demographic change. Can it be applied universally?

3) What are different historical contexts which have led to different demographic patterns in areas like Europe, India and Asia?

MHI-02
Modern World

Dilemmas of Development

9

UNIT 31   ECOLOGY

Structure

31.1   INTRODUCTION

The Industrial Revolution changed the lives of people in Europe in a most dramatic way. It brought them from the countryside to the city in search of jobs; it changed their life patterns, created new tastes and recreations. Most significantly, it saw the organization of production of goods on a scale never known before. Factories required fuel and raw material. As new industrial townships came up there was a huge demand for construction material like bricks, in the manufacture of which large quantities of wood were required. There was also a growing need for food grain to feed the growing urban population.

How did all this impact on nature? In a very big way because it was Mother Nature alone that could provide all the materials required for this major change. The most noticeable change was the conversion of wooded or forest lands to cultivable tracts. Millions of hectares of land were brought under cultivation. The well-known historian E.J. Hobsbawm, in his book *Age of Capital 1848-1875*, tells us that Sweden more than doubled its crop area between 1840 and 1880, Italy and Denmark expanded it by more than half, Germany and Hungary by about a third. In southern Italy and its islands, about 600,000 hectares of trees disappeared between 1860 and 1911. Forests and grasslands, which were teeming with biodiversity, were made to give way to the simplifications of commercial agriculture. This brought major ecological changes, which we will discuss later in this Unit.

New industrial cities brought unhealthy living and pollution in its wake. In England and later in Europe, writers, poets and painters recoiled at the ugliness of the new urban centres. Some writers like Charles Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell described the squalor in their novels. Here is an account of an English industrial town in Elizabeth Gaskell's novel, *North and South*:

For several miles before they reached Milton, they saw a deep lead-coloured cloud hanging over the horizon in the direction in which it lay…Nearer to the town, the air had a faint taste and smell of smoke; perhaps, after all, more a loss of the fragrance of grass and herbage than any positive taste or smell. Quick they were whirled over long, straight, helpless streets of regularly-built houses, all small and of brick. Here and there a great oblong many-windowed factory stood up, like a hen among her chickens, puffing out black 'unparliamentary' smoke, and sufficiently accounting for the cloud which Margaret had taken to foretell rain.

The Romantic poets and painters turned their faces away from the squalor and desperately sought to return to nature. They believed that outside the city survived a lost innocence, which they respected and venerated. Their passion moved the general public. From 1865 onwards numerous societies like the Commons Preservation Society, the Lake District Defence Society and others, which we will refer to later, emerged. But there was no setting the clock back. Capitalism had come to stay and it was like a hungry giant, whose appetite for raw material and markets was insatiable. This hunger could only be fed by exploiting the colonies of Asia, Africa and the Americas, which were very rapidly coming under European control.

This was one of the dilemmas of development. On the one hand there was progress. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries were the centuries of major developments in science and technology. While one branch of science concentrated on uncovering the laws of nature, another was committed to harnessing nature to the needs of capitalist development. The lives of men and women were being transformed as never before. There were new conveniences to be enjoyed but there were, at the same time, new health hazards and new natural disasters to contend with. The negative consequences of the new developments were recognized rather early in the day – in fact in the nineteenth century itself. The problem of nature was understood to be a serious one and policy makers had to strike a balance between maintaining the existing natural order and disturbing it. At the same time development could not be compromised, especially at a time when each nation was involved in the race to surpass the other.

What made the whole issue more complex was Imperialism. Since this was the era of imperialist expansion and colonial exploitation, the dilemmas of development would involve not just Europe but Asia, Africa, the Americas and Australia as well. Given the equation between the imperialist powers and their colonies, it was only to be expected that the ecological changes would be on a much larger scale in the colonies.

31.2 HOW EUROPE PERCEIVED THE NEW LANDS

In fact, these changes had begun even prior to the Industrial Revolution. Even as the Europeans moved out of their homelands, fired by a new spirit of adventure or because of a sudden population increase, as occurred around the 1750s, or because of religious persecution at home or in order to make profit through trade, they triggered off many ecological changes in the new lands they entered. Their attitudes towards the new regions they inhabited were varied. Some saw the lush green tropical areas as the lost Eden. The French navigator, Louise Antoine de Bougainville arrived in Tahiti in the South Pacific in 1768 and thought that he had been transported into the Garden of Eden. The natural abundance of the tropics seemed to contrast with the frugality of nature in Europe. Another type of reaction, at the other extreme, was of hostility towards the existing flora and fauna. The marshes and swamps were seen as breeding grounds

of disease and must be cleared. A third type of reaction was of interest in the exploitability of these natural resources and their commercial value. Here, nature was seen as inexhaustible and waiting to be put to "productive" use. If, in the process of tapping natural resources, much of the existing natural vegetation and animals were destroyed, that could not be helped. The superior forces of Europe were merely prevailing over the inferiorities of the rest of the world. It was an assertion of Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest.

31.3 THE IMPORTING OF NEW PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES

When the settlers came to the New World, (North and South America), Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and other lesser-known parts of the world, they brought with them the plants and animals they were familiar with. These plants and animals formed an important part of their diet. For instance, the Europeans brought in the pig to many colonies, because it was a rich and convenient source of food.

But soon the species multiplied so rapidly that it became a menace, competing with human beings for the land and its resources. The new animals also needed certain kinds of fodders and grasses for their sustenance. These grasses were often imported from the home countries and would spread like wild fire. Existing grasses and weeds were wiped out as a result. Alfred Crosby in his *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900,* explains how, along with other regular plants, a large variety of weeds also found their way across the seas into the new lands. In the case of Australia, the onslaught of European plants and weeds began in 1778 when the first expedition sailed from Britain to Botany Bay. Most of the northern parts of Australia as well as its interior were too hot and dry for European seeds and grasses. So it was in the southern coasts and Tasmania that Europe's flora took root. They wiped out other indigenous plants in this region.

Like the weeds and the pigs, rabbits could also be uncontrollable. In 1859 some rabbit species were released in southeast Australia. They multiplied in such alarming numbers that they began competing with the sheep for grasses and herbs. It was much the same story in New Zealand, which had been annexed by the British in 1840. Here, since there were no large native predators, all the Old World livestock that had been introduced – i.e. horses, goats, pigs and sheep – multiplied very rapidly and soon outstripped the human population. What made the New Zealand story even more distressing was the fact that the flora and fauna here was extremely unique, since they had evolved in isolation for some 80 million years.

Sir Cecil Rhodes, the British colonialist who made a fortune mining diamonds, introduced the Himalayan Tahr, a long-haired mountain goat to South Africa in the 1920s. It was considered an exotic specie and some three or four specimens were brought for a zoo at the base of the Table Mountains. The goats, however, escaped from the zoo and multiplied. Soon they had established a colony and began to run riot, threatening the natural habitat of the region. These goats are now considered such a menace that the South African National Parks authority has taken a decision to eliminate these animals. But that decision has triggered a controversy and a group of animal lovers in Cape Town have now formed a support group called Friends of the Tahr (FOTT) to rehabilitate this near-extinct species.

So there were two types of ecological changes: the intended and the unintended. Both had very far-reaching consequences and usually upset the ecological balance of the regions where they appeared. As we have seen above, even the intended changes ended up having unintentional repercussions. And these repercussions could affect not only plant and animal species but also entire races of humans, as will be seen below. And this in turn could have important political consequences.

31.4 THE WIPING OUT OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Just as the introduction of new animal and plant species sometimes resulted in the wiping out of the indigenous species, so too the coming of Europeans to the New World could mean the extermination of large sections of the existing population in that region. In Central and South America, for instance, the Aztecs and the Incas were suddenly exposed to the smallpox virus when the Spaniards arrived in the second decade of the sixteenth century. Since they had no immunity to this disease, it spread rapidly and caused huge loss of lives. This led to political collapse and demoralization, as a result of which it became possible for a few hundred Spanish adventurers led by Hernan Cortes, to defeat the 5-million strong empire of Montezuma in the Mexico region. As for the Incas of Peru, the reigning Inca as well as his son and heir fell victim to smallpox and since there was no clear successor, the Spanish conqueror Francisco Pizarro was able to exploit the ensuing disunity to conquer the area with ease.

31.5 WERE HUMAN BEINGS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE OR ONLY INDIRECTLY?

The larger question that is raised by writings like those of Alfred Crosby is the extent to which human beings can be held responsible for ecological disasters. The title of Crosby's book - *Ecological Imperialism – The Biological Expansion of Europe* is significant. It seems to suggest that the ecological impact of imperialism was not man-made but due to the biological changes that occurred when men and women moved into the new areas. Diseases like smallpox, measles, typhus and influenza were of common occurrence in Europe in any case and they only found a more congenial environment in the new areas that the Europeans travelled to. Critics of the Crosby type of explanation such as David Arnold in his book *The Problem of Nature,* say that it underplays the destructive aspect of human actions. Arnold argues that in the case of the Aztecs and the Incas, the other policies of the Spaniards i.e. of massacres, of forced labour in mines and plantations and the destruction of indigenous agriculture were also contributory to a significant population decline even before the arrival of smallpox in 1519.

The European conquerors also weakened the native population by appropriating their food reserves. Since most of these areas had a subsistence economy, i.e. the people produced just enough to meet their own immediate food requirements, their precarious nutritional balance broke down. They now became more susceptible to illnesses and subsequent death.

There is no doubt that major ecological changes were being triggered off in the areas occupied by the imperialists. Even if they were unintended, they suited imperial interests. The wiping out of indigenous plant and animal species and the killing off of native populations all fitted into a pattern and rendered easier the tasks of accommodating the surplus population of Europe and of creating a subsistence base for them.

31.6 THE IMPACT ON EXISTING ECOSYSTEMS

Since most of the colonies had been acquired to fulfil the needs of industrialization, especially the growing demand for raw materials, the ecosystems of these areas were bound to be affected. All parts of the earth have their own natural ecosystems. These could be very small, like a simple pond, or an entire rain forest or a desert – it could even be the whole earth. Ecosystems have been compared to machines that run on and on automatically, checking themselves when they get too hot, speeding up when they get too slow and so on. However, when outside forces disturb these ecosystems, the equilibrium is affected and the entire system could collapse.

Environmental historians like Donald Worster, in *The Ends of the Earth,* tell us that for a long time the most dramatic environmental alterations came from the massive conversion of natural ecosystems into croplands. As mentioned before, immense tracts of forests and grasslands were cleared and brought under cultivation. The bio-complexity of these regions was lost. Species of plants and animals began to disappear at an alarming rate. As Worster puts it: "First it was one species every year, then one every day, soon it will be one every hour, one every half hour, one every 15 minutes." There were plants on which man had depended for food, for medicines, for building materials and so much else for centuries. They now disappeared without a trace. Not only was the natural process of evolution suspended, it was even reversed.

Let us take up some examples of the effects of modern capitalist development on the colonies.

31.7 COAL MINING

During the period of the industrial revolution coal was the major source of energy. As the industrial revolution gathered momentum, the demand for coal went up dramatically. Where was this coal to be obtained from? There were parts of Europe, which were rich in coal like Poland and southern Russia, and mining was carried out here. But another major source of coal was the Appalachian mountains of the United States. Here, the method of strip mining was used to extract coal. Vegetation was obviously removed to enable the mining to take place and once that happened, there were major landslides. These landslides destroyed neighbouring farmlands and even roads. River systems were also affected as sedimentation increased and the flowing capacity of streams and rivers was reduced. Apart from all these was the pollution – sulphuric wastes were generated and these entered the water system. It is estimated that in the Appalachian region, the waste from the mines polluted some 16,000 kilometres of waterways.

These were the effects of coal mining on the regions from which it was extracted. What about the places where coal was being used as a source of fuel? The burning of coal releases carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which seriously affects the ozone layer. As is well known, it is the ozone layer that protects the earth from the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun. When the ozone layer gets depleted it can cause a variety of health problems.

31.8 CHANGING THE FACE OF NATURE: THE NEW ENGLAND EXAMPLE

New England was that part of North-Eastern America around present-day Massachusetts, which was colonized by Britain in the seventeenth century. The impetus for this colonization came from the Puritan movement for religious reform in England. In

the first quarter of the seventeenth century the Puritans faced discrimination from the local Anglican Church in England. Some of their leaders felt that the Puritan salvation lay in America, where they could set up a model church and state. Since 3,000 miles of ocean separated them from England, they would be free to govern this new land as they wished, with no interference from the home church. This was how the English settlement of New England came into being. By the early 1640s more than 20,000 Englishmen had made the pilgrimage to New England. The rates of population growth were also rather high.

This region had several kinds of furred animals, which were not known in Europe. There was the ocelot – a medium-sized cat with a striped deep yellow or orange coat; the coyote – a wolf-like wild dog and the bobcat – a small cat with a spotted reddish-brown coat. The skins of these animals began to become popular for fur coats in Europe and as they entered the European fur market, the large-scale destruction of these animals began. It is estimated that beaver skins comprised over half of England's total fur imports between 1700 and 1775. Soon, beavers vanished from New England, their original habitat. Beavers are also builders of natural dams, and when the beavers disappeared, other species such as otters and muskrats were either flooded or frozen out. Many varieties of ducks and other birds that used to breed in beaver ponds also became extinct. The ponds themselves shrank into marshes and finally became meadows. Even larger animals like the moose (a large-antlered deer found in North America) and other varieties of deer were affected by the disappearance of beaver ponds because they used to escape from flies by standing in the cool water. Tree stumps that were cut down by beavers for building ponds used to sprout tender stalks and leaves on which deer, rabbits and hare fed.

By 1800 most game animals had dwindled in the New England area and by the mid-nineteenth century they had vanished. These included the white-tailed deer and the buffalo. The moose and the caribou disappeared a little later – i.e. by the beginning of the twentieth century.

But the Puritan settlers welcomed all this and rejoiced when the shrieks of the wild panther were replaced by the sound of Sunday church hymns and the busy hums of machines.

31.9   TURNING FORESTS INTO CULTIVABLE LAND – THE CASE OF NORTHERN INDIA

Most colonial states derived a large amount of their revenue from agriculture. Hence it was in the State's interests to expand the area of cultivation. For this it was necessary to clear forestlands. In British India an 1894 document, which codified Governmental land use policy, clearly stated that there should be no hesitation in sacrificing forests where the demand for arable land could only be fulfilled in this way. Ironically, at the same time, Wilhelm Schlich, who was the Head of the Indian Forest Department, was waxing eloquent on how forests reduced the temperature of air and soil, regulated climate, increased rainfall, helped reduce violent floods and prevented occurrence of land slips, avalanches and siltation of rivers. He went on to add – all this in his *Manual of Forestry* — that forests also assisted in the production of oxygen and ozone and thus helped to improve the health of the country!

But to get back to our story of the Ganga Jamuna Doab. This region, in present day Uttar Pradesh, is the area lying between the Ganga and the Yamuna rivers. From the foothills of the Himalayas the two rivers flow parallel to each other for about 500 kms, separated by 80-120 kms of land. As they move eastwards the two rivers run closer to

each other until they finally merge at Allahabad. The Doab region was one of the most fertile regions of Northern India

The English East India Company acquired control over this region in 1801 and what followed thereafter was a series of blows to the sensitive ecological system of the Doab. There was a thick forest belt between Bulandshahr and Kanpur, incorporating the districts of Aligarh, Etah, Mainpuri and Kanpur, at the beginning of the 19th century. The predominant tree species of this region was the *dhak – butea monosperma,* — more popularly known as the Flame of the Forest. Since the soil here was rather saline, the only vegetation that could survive and thrive was the dhak tree. But the new conquerors decided to bring these areas under cash crop cultivation – indigo, cotton and sugarcane. Besides the revenue incentive for bringing the land under the plough, an additional argument advanced was that the clearing of the forests would help to control crime. In this part of northern India there were several bands of dacoits who were believed to be seeking refuge in these jungles. By the 1840s, a substantial portion of the *dhak* jungle had disappeared and by the 1880s there were hardly any trees left outside the properties of the large landlord.

What happened to this region when these forests were cut down? Climatic changes began to occur. By the 1840s there was a visible rise in temperature and the intensity of the loo or hot wind that blew in the summers increased. It loosened the surface of the now unprotected soil which was then washed away in the monsoon rains. The subsoil lost its water retaining capacity and ponds and lakes began to dry up. All this led to the severe drought of 1837-38, which came as the climax of a succession of dry years. The number of cases of malaria increased dramatically due to the stagnant water in dried out riverbeds and lakes.

With the disappearance of the *dhak* tree, the soil also became more saline and in due course of time, the fields became less and less productive. By the 1820s, this process had gone so far that entire villages had to be abandoned. Moreover, due to intensive cultivation, which left little time for fallow periods, the productive capacity of the soil was also greatly reduced.

The Doab story, thus, is one of causing ecological damage to fulfil the needs of development. But very soon, development was itself the victim of this assault on nature and agricultural productivity, which far from being increased, was actually reduced. As a result the whole policy for this region had to be reviewed.

31.10 THE COMING OF THE RAILWAYS

The modern world is generally associated with faster and more efficient means of transport like steam navigation and the railways. From the 1840s an ever-expanding network of railway lines began to criss-cross the European continent and shortly thereafter spread to those parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America, which were in the hands of the imperialist powers. In India it has been estimated that the total length of rail track increased from about 5,000 kilometers in 1870 to 20,000 kilometers in 1890 and thereafter, in every decade, about 10,000 kilometers of rail track were being laid. Railways were an extremely effective means of maintaining administrative control over far-flung and hitherto inaccessible areas. They also helped to transport raw materials and finished products from the rural hinterlands to the ports with greater ease.

The sight of a steam engine hurtling down the countryside was awe-inspiring and magnificent. It came to be associated with the might of empire and technological advancement. But what implications did the coming of the railways have for the natural environment? Railway tracks are usually laid on beams of wood, which are called

sleepers. In recent times metal sleepers have replaced wooden sleepers but throughout the nineteenth century, when the railway network was expanding rapidly, wooden sleepers were in use. It is estimated that each mile of newly laid track required 1760 sleepers. The *sal* and *deodar* trees of northern India and the teak of southern India were found to provide ideal wood for the sleepers since they were strong enough and resistant to termites and fungal decay. An average tree could provide between five to ten sleepers. This meant that thousands of trees would be cut down for railway construction and sometimes whole forests would be devastated. In some cases more trees would be cut than could be easily transported out of the forest by unscrupulous contractors. These would be left to rot in the forests and contribute to forest fires and further destruction.

In the early years of railway construction forests were ransacked indiscriminately. But very soon the colonial state realized that such methods would be disastrous in the long run and so it began enacting legislation which would enable them to manage forests in such a way that they were assured of long-term supplies of wood. Forests began to be reserved but this meant that even people who had been using the forests for centuries for firewood, fodder, honey, fruits, roots and numerous other produces, were now prohibited from entering these forests.

31.11 THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS

Man knew the disadvantages and hazards of overexploiting nature from early times. In Ancient Greece, where large areas of countryside were turned into a barren waste during the Peloponnesian War (431-421 BC), Theophrastus of Erasia, who was Aristotle's biographer and botanical gardener, developed a theory in which he linked deforestation with the decline of rainfall in Greece. Coming to more recent times, in Germany, there was a shortage of wood after the Seven Years War of 1756-63. The government of the time realized that the woodlands would have to be preserved and hence decided to exercise state control over the forests. But here there was a twist to the tale. The forest was now to serve the needs of the national economy – especially its industrial needs. The larger, national interest was projected as being more important than local, regional needs. In the process the idea developed that forests had to be preserved from man, i.e., there was an attempt to restrict the rights of traditional forest users. This caused resentment among the local people and there were many protests over access to forest resources. Thus, just as traditional artisans were protesting against the displacement caused by industrialization, so too the forest dwellers felt threatened by the new forest laws and state takeover of forests in the countries of Europe and later other parts of the world. This tussle continues even today.

State takeover of forests and the harnessing of forest resources for industrial development had its effect on the nature of the forest. Often, mixed forests had to give way to monoculture stands of species like pines, which were more suitable for construction and industrial needs. Not only were the requirements of the local inhabitants overlooked but the very health of the forest was compromised in the process. The natural biodiversity that existed until then was destroyed.

Thus we can say that though the importance of the forest was realized it was still regarded as an exploitable resource, to be modified and distorted to serve the interests of the "nation". Who constituted the "nation"? The powerful classes that were emerging and consolidating themselves at this time. The less powerful, traditional groups were being steadily marginalized by the industrial development of the period.

But these other groups did not remain silent, as Ramchandra Guha tells us in his book *Environmentalism: A Global History.* In the United Kingdom a large number of public associations emerged in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Scottish Rights of Way Society, formed in 1843, intended to protect walking areas around the city of Edinburgh. The Commons Preservation Society, begun in 1865, wanted to prevent the encroachment of cities on woodland and heath. For the protection of rare birds, beautiful plants and threatened landscapes, there was the Selbourne League, formed in 1885 and named after Gilbert White of Selbourne, a famous eighteenth century naturalist. There was also the Coal Smoke Abatement Society, started in 1898 as an independent pressure group to make the government enforce pollution control laws on erring factories. Largely because of all these efforts, Guha tells us, it has been possible to save "at least some parts of England from the contaminating effects of urban-industrial civilization." But the colonial state in India was not fettered by such pressure groups and attempts at conservation could only emerge from within the state apparatus itself.

This is not to say that Indians did not realize the ill effects of industrialization. Even though the Industrial Revolution had largely left India untouched in the colonial period, and there were nationalists who saw industrial development as the need of the hour, Mahatma Gandhi was opposed to such a path of development. In his *Hind Swaraj,* published in 1909, he saw industrialization as being destructive of nature. Some twenty years later he wrote:

> God forbid that India should ever take to industrialization after the manner of the West. The economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 million took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts.

Some of his followers like Mira Ben and Sarla Behn were very active in the environment protection campaign. Mira Ben's Pashulok Ashram, situated between Hardwar and Rishikesh, was witness to some of the most devastating floods from the upper reaches of the Ganga which not only swept away bushes and trees but also cattle and human beings along with their dwellings. She realized that this fury of nature had its origin in the wanton destruction of forests in the mountains. She also realized that the solution to the problem lay not in the planting of trees like the pine, but in more ecologically appropriate trees like the oak. The Himalayas had also become ecologically unstable because of the replacement of mixed forests by monoculture. As more and more women and men came to be influenced by her ideas as well as those of Sarla Behn, who had set up an ashram for educating hill women in Kausani, Almora district, the powerful Chipko movement took root.

31.12   SUMMARY

The dilemma of whether to preserve the environment or exploit it for development, which revealed itself in a strikingly sharp manner in the nineteenth century, continues to be an important issue for policy makers and the people even today. The Industrial Revolution and the growth of empire changed the face of nature irrevocably in almost all parts of the world and we are now left with its lasting impact. But with the growth of democratic institutions, public awareness and political accountability, it is no longer possible for governments to ignore the voices of protest that are emerging from various quarters. But often it is a bitter tussle. The controversial Sardar Sarovar Dam and the Narmada Bachao Andolan illustrates this clearly. Which is more important? The benefits that this ambitious project will bring to some parts of the country or the ecological damage and the displacement of large numbers of people living in the areas which will be submerged?

31.13   EXERCISES

1) What is the linkage between the process of industrialization and ecological damage? Discuss briefly.

2) Describe the process of European colonization of new lands and the environmental losses with respect to one particular area discussed in this Unit.

3) How has the progress of modernity led to the awareness towards ecological issues? Outline the issue with specific instances.

UNIT 32   CONSUMERISM

Structure

32.1   INTRODUCTION

In modern times, the term "consumerism" has been associated with a preoccupation with the acquisition of goods and commodities. Traditionally, it has been used with negative connotations – as a "problem" that indicates a lack of discretion among "buyers" and "consumers" regarding what goods to buy and why to buy them in an increasingly commercialized environment. Among Marxist thinkers especially, what happened has been linked to exploitation under industrial capitalism.

"Consumerism" has been associated with the growth of industrial capitalism in Europe from the 18ᵗʰ century and its global spread thereafter – a development that was accompanied by economies of scale and increases in production and productivity. As indicated in the Unit on Industrial Capitalism (Block 4), such increases were sustained by growth in demand, both in the immediate neighbourhood of centres of production and further a-field. Improvements in technology and extensive use of the division of labour enabled manufacturers to produce on a large scale for "wants", "needs" and "fashions".   Commercialization of leisure and the penetration by innovative manufacturers, of religious practices, public health, and education reinforced the habits of acquisition and increasing "consumption". In European society, in these circumstances, availability of goods ceased to be a substantial problem. Rather, more important were means to ensure that they were in demand and "consumed". If this was not achieved, "gluts" and economic depressions would take place, affecting employer and employee alike.

On the other hand, the regular use of commercial methods to make goods desirable, some argued, encouraged an obsession with purchase and consumption – often distorting habits of discretion and a sense of proportion. The consequence would be "consumerism" (i.e. defined as the near-compulsive concern with consumption) – which might be economically profitable, but would lead to distorted social perspectives. The manufacturer's concern with mass consumption, it was argued, led to a decline in interest in quality, ensuring that "consumerism" bred so-called "mass culture" (i.e. culture that catered to the lowest common denominator in society) as a common social reference point. "Consumerism" as defined above could also lead to poor management of household budgets and impoverishment.

Such a perspective encouraged a critical approach on the character of consumption under industrial capitalism – and the attempt to avoid indiscriminate consumption under socialist industrialization. The critical vision stirred a concern with the rights of the consumer. And this in turn made questions of consumption a matter for politics – as it was anyway at another level, given that in societies where needs and wants were continuously the object of discussion and representation, public figures were concerned about the symbolism that advertisers and manufacturers toyed with and what goods they projected. Consumption came, consequently, to be associated with citizenship, since it was connected with social status and politics.

Duly, the critique of consumerism has been met with perspectives that sharply differ with it – perspectives that argue the benefits of variety in the market for the consumer and the necessity of regular consumption for economic and social stability. The popularity of the critique has consequently varied considerably.

Most recently, writing on consumption, "material culture" (the attitude of consumers, producers and society in general to the world of manufactured "things") and "material politics" has firmly established that whatever the value of the critical appraisal of consumerism, manufacturers' practice and consumer experience cannot be easily straitjacketed. This is all the more true in regions of the world where consumer societies of a sort have existed in the past (India, China, Africa) and which came to industrial capitalism late and in unusual circumstances.

32.2 THE CHARACTER OF COMMERCIALIZATION AND "CONSUMPTION" UNDER INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM

This Unit deals with two major aspects of the problems presented by consumption and the various definitions of "consumerism" in modern Europe. Firstly, what were the major features of the context in which these problems came to be posed? Secondly, how have these problems been treated at different times?

32.2.1 Early Days

Production and consumption of a variety of goods of everyday use was well established in Europe and other consumer societies in Asia and Africa by the mid 18th century. In addition, in Europe, a variety of exotic goods – often brought from China (mainly porcelain) and India (spices, and cotton goods) - were luxury products in high demand among the aristocracy.

Various historians have indicated that during the 18th and 19th centuries, manufacturers, endowed with sophisticated industrial technology, used the great renown of luxury goods among classes outside the aristocracy, and rushed to meet local demand with large scale production of goods on the foreign pattern that were produced locally. Such devices, together with close attention to machine production of basic metal goods (buttons, cutlery etc.) appealed to middle classes and stimulated their inclination to buy.

The Units on Industrial Capitalism have indicated that the subsequent significance of these changes in consumption for the "revolution" in economic life in Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries varied substantially from country to country. If "home demand" was important in the way textiles, and iron and steel played the role of "leading sectors" in the Industrial Revolution in Britain, low levels of income and social differences made "demand" less important as a motor of change in France, Germany and Russia. Here, concentrations of capital (in investment banks) and the initiatives of the state played a major role in what transpired, with the state often acting as the prime consumer (as in

the case of Tsarist and Soviet Russia). However, once initial changes had occurred in the character of the regional economy, exploitation of "demand" and "consumption" in everyday life became essential to the further development of European societies.

The process came slowly, and in fits and starts. In Britain, from the mid 18th century, as indicated by the instances of Manchester textile manufacturers, in the enterprises of Matthew Boulton (associated with metal goods) and Josiah Wedgewood (associated with the pottery manufacture) sustained and careful surveys of markets were normal and production for them by small manufactories working on strict principles of the division of labour, was the rule. Hence, one description of the Boulton business would stress regular travel by its owners to establish the contours of the market. And it would also stress various initiatives taken to establish the reputation of the firm's products:

> Scarcely a day passed but Boulton received letters of introduction of merchants and gentlemen from every quarter and as their house was only emerging from obscurity, Boulton was desirous of promoting its reputation with all in his power and therefore paid a particular attention to all their customers both foreign or domestick and to all their connections whatsoever in so much that his house at Soho for many years seemed like an inn for the entertainment of strangers.

The description would present further details of how Boulton invited powerful members of the European courts to his manufactory (the Duke and Duchess of Villaformosa, Count Orlov, Catherine the Great's favourite, Prince Poniatowski of Poland etc.). Well aware that such notables would be emulated by the gentry and middle classes of their societies, the Boultons attempted to present their goods to various markets through this route to establish a taste for such products.

Elsewhere in Britain, in order to extend the range of such products, crafts were fitted into a putting out system that gave the trader or merchant preference – allowing them to understand patterns of demand and taking initiatives to use prevailing patterns of consumption to greatest effect.

Meanwhile, in almost all major states of modern Europe, the period upto1870s was dominated by small-scale producers who gradually moved away from a position as craftsmen dealing in quality goods. In France and Germany, following the economic expansion of the 1850s and 1860s, craftsmen targeted a large market. As Shulamit Volkov has pointed out, carpenters restricted their range of products, in order to produce more that had a regular demand. The same came to be true of shoemakers. Technology was applied to achieve economies of scale. Only in food processing was this transformation not to be noticed until the 1890s – when refrigeration gradually came to permit the same in this quarter.

The increased output (often according to a set pattern) was presented to the buyer through a range of routes. In Britain, potential consumers were targeted by manufacturers, but they were normally approached by the itinerant trader, who provided the less well endowed buyer with credit (payment was made on an "instalment plan"). These drapers worked together in societies and associations in order to protect their interests against defaulters:the Highland Society of London (formed 1778), and English Guardian societies such as the London Society of Guardians for the Protection of trade against Swindlers and Sharpers (formed in 1776).

Among labouring classes, minimum levels of consumption were ensured by associative action among certain trades to ensure that sickness and unemployment could be tided over. This was especially so among various unions and societies - the Boilermakers, the Amalgamated Engineers and the London Compositors for instance. Among these

and others, Friendly Collecting Societies existed, as did Industrial Assurance Companies. All of them were protected by law and took subscriptions to provide assistance to their members in times of distress. The big unions (e.g. Amalgamated Engineers) provided pensions to members by the beginning of the 20th century. Such institutions and initiatives clearly improved the spending capacity of the working class, while, elsewhere at this level, the usual run of Christmas Clubs, Goose Clubs etc. encouraged saving for the great extravagance on a special occasion. Building Societies and Freehold Societies enabled the household with the small income to plan the purchase of land or a home.

The mid 19th century in France and Germany also witnessed the "democratization" of demand on the British pattern. This followed from the high agricultural prices of the time and the overall increase in employment. In Germany, the trend persisted well after 1871, sponsored by the high levels of public and municipal activity paid for by French reparations after the war of 1870. Craft enterprises became focused and streamlined to take advantage of this phenomenon.

The change in employment and settlement patterns already indicated in the Units on demographic trends and industrial capitalism made the distribution of consumer goods easier. The concentration of populations in cities and small towns (in the Midlands and North of England, the Paris Basin in France, and the Rhine country in Germany) provided more ready and regular demand for manufactured goods than dispersed communities of the countryside.

32.2.2 The Late 19th Century and After

The late nineteenth century saw the persistence of many of these institutions and habits. In Britain, for instance, itinerant traders continued to be of importance well into the 20th century. Known numbers increased from 9459 in 1831 to 69, 347 in 1911. From the 1850s, however, three major changes are noticeable in this pattern. Firstly, consumption was not strictly the preserve of firms and individuals. Local government and the state also became regular consumers. This developed an old habit – purchase for the administrative and military establishment. Municipal construction, and the development of amenities (gas distribution, parks and gardens, bridges, institutions to provide medical treatment and education) became significantly marked.

Equally, though, capacities for individual consumption received a boost. Initiatives were taken to provide opportunities to subjects/citizens for savings, and important variations were noticeable in trading practice to tempt the consumer with small income. In Britain, savings schemes included the Post Office Trustee Savings Banks, with their "Home Safes", and a range of other Savings Banks. By the time of the inter-war period, mortgage banks (such as the Abbey Road) had also made their mark.

At another level, the urban environment became the target of a new system of trading and distribution – through the "department store". The best example of this was Fortnum and Mason's of London and the Bon Marche in Paris. These department stores, in some cases, began to form branches in various towns, and "chains" of stores emerged in the commercial network. The shops run by Jesse Boot that dealt in pharmaceutical products were an example in Britain. This "chain" began in the pre-1914 period and persists to the present day. Woolworth is another such chain which exists in the US and Britain. In post-1945 France, the Monoprix and Uniprix chains are the equivalent. The significance of these shops was that they displayed a large range of goods (while the standard store specialized in two or three major types of goods) – encouraging a general redefinition of needs and wants among those who passed through them. The store also paid attention to attractive presentation. This had already been achieved through advertisement and discussions in newspapers and through the small billboard. But the

large space given over to specific ranges of products in department stores increased the impact of the profile. Association of quality with the name of the store also drew in customers who were also otherwise bewildered by the variety of the market and the problem of shoddy produce.

The desire of the state to take advantage of the interest in consumer products for its own purposes also led to investments in specific goods in France under the Third Republic and Germany under National Socialism. From the 1920s, the radio and, from the 1950s, the television both added a new dimension to such activities and to the advertising of products.

32.3   REPRESENTATIONS OF "CONSUMPTION"

The availability of a vast number of goods and commodities in the market place was often celebrated. Manufacturers not only pointed to the merits of their products, but also to the remarkable system of production that went into those products – a system of production that not only made them fashionable but miracles of modern science. Boultons and Wedgewoods consistently laboured this aspect of their output.

Other views of consumption developed from perspectives associated with the idea – widespread among intellectuals at this time – that industrial capitalism broke down "communities", and created individuals who faced the world alone, or as members of "society". In such "society", individuals were more open to the suggestions of the market than was the case when they were members of "communities" where they followed "traditions" and "rituals", and where individuals were less self-conscious. Large or medium-sized towns saw the breakdown of communities and the creation of a world of individuals whom the market manipulated to think of needs and wants that they had hitherto never conceived. Advertisement by producers and traders were designed to tempt individuals into a preoccupation with buying and consumption.

Some of this may have been admitted by many who approved of the changes of the time, but they did not see it with foreboding or worry. In the early days of industrial capitalism, optimistic as ever, Adam Smith argued:

"Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to only so far as may be necessary for that of the consumer".

He also noted, though, as David Miller has pointed out, that 'the human propensity to consume was the consequence of a fascination for "baubles and trinkets", a passion for accumulating objects of "frivolous utility" and "a vehicle for deception with false promises that wealth will bring happiness". Smith called for caution and discretion:

"Money will at best "keep off the summer shower", "but not the winter storm", leaving humans more exposed than before to anxiety, fear and sorrow, disease, danger and death".

The new atmosphere of acquisition and consumption attracted disapproval and warnings elsewhere. In the 18th century itself, condemnation of exotic luxury items was often evident. Adam Anderson, in his *Historical and Chronological Deduction of the Origin of Commerce,* in the 1760s, decried goods that were not clearly "useful and excellent for the Ease, Conveniency or Elegance of Life". Luxury, consumption and acquisitiveness were condemned by Wesleyans, Quakers and other Non-Conformist Protestants in England, who considered such behaviour sinful. Critics associated with the Romantic Movement – including major figures such as William Ruskin – argued that the obsession with the market worked against what was "natural". The German poet

Schiller expressed similar sentiments when he called for the recognition by man of what was ideal in him rather than be diverted by the superficial demands and standards of society. Early socialists of the 19th century expressed similar sentiments: in France (Prudhon and Fourier) and in Britain figures such as William Morris, who stressed the virtues of individual creativity and expression, and made craft industry a fashion, repudiated the virtues of machine-made goods.

More fundamentally, Karl Marx, making the distinction between "use value" and "market value", argued that consumption merely refined the process of exploitation through which manufacturers extracted surplus from the working class. Looking closely at the world of acquisition and consumption in Europe and the United States, Thorstein Veblen, the American essayist, spoke of the appearance of a wealthy leisured class that indulged in conspicuous consumption, and also of an acquisitive society where consumption was not moulded by requirements but by somewhat witless emulation and imitation. Veblen disapprovingly argued that consumption was the product of the wish to impress and to improve social status.

Many came to argue at the end of the twentieth century that rampant consumption motivated by such inclinations rather than discretion, bred a respect for goods and occupations that smacked of a lack of serious thought and refinement. This was the hallmark of what was called "mass culture", which was considered (by figures as different in their opinions as Adorno, one of the principal philosophers of Frankfurt School and F.R. Leavis an important English literary critic) to have had a disastrous impact on society.

On the other hand, following Smith's more optimistic assessments of consumption and its character in the 19th century, followers of the "marginal utility" school of economic thought were worried that people would not consume enough to ensure economic and social stability. This was a notion that was echoed in the work of J.M. Keynes in the period between 1918 and 1939. Commentators such as Simmel argued that fashion was not, contrary to Veblen, merely the consequence of the desire to establish status as much as a means of establishing one's own identity in a world in which individuals did not wish to wholly set themselves apart from others. In his somewhat difficult language, he would term it as a phenomenon that:

"represents nothing more than one of the many forms of life by the aid of which we seek to combine in uniform spheres of activity the tendency towards social equalization with the desire for individual differentiation and change".

Most recently, French philosopher Jean Baudrillard has taken issue with the perspectives of Marxists and others who have stressed the distinctions between "use value" and the value created by the market – stating that "use" is seldom free of a market culture of sorts. They also have pointed to how consumers often deal independently and as groups with the products that are recommended to them – transforming them, and finding a value for them that is wholly outside the value that advertisement suggests. Baudrillard still warns though, of problems, given the way commerce has come to surround the consumer through media blitz and social manipulation. As David Miller has pointed out, he is better known today:

'for his argument that the massive spread of consumer goods as acts of symbolism has reached such a level that where goods once stood for persons and relationships, they now come to replace them. Such is the power of commerce to produce social maps based on distinctions between goods that actual consumers are now relegated to the role of merely fitting themselves into such maps by buying the appropriate signs of their 'lifestyles'.

32.4   MATERIAL CULTURE

Whatever the merits of these points of view, in recent comment and research, a number of writers concerned with "material culture", "material politics" and "consumption" have pointed out that the experience of consumer society in modern times has been varied and cannot easily be straitjacketed into the framework of the opinions covered by these debates. The approach of producers and buyers to manufactured items took on different shapes over time.

True, the subjection of crafts to the putting out system placed the focus of the production system squarely on the trader who had an interest in the product primarily from the point of view of salebility. Hence what was considered exotic or unusual (as in the case of Chinese/Indian imports) decisively influenced patterns of production. Meanwhile, inventive producers – St. Gobain the glass makers, Boultons, the metal workers, and Wedgewoods of the ceramics' industry – followed the market also, but they also tried to create a demand for specific products that they understood they could make.

The critics of the consumption that was bred under the circumstances point out that buyers were influenced by the utility of goods, but also by the status they conferred. In the 20th century, advertisement made the associations of a product still more important than before. And what transpired became a problem of some size and scale. Consumers came to be faced with a bewildering choice of goods not only when it came to everyday needs and requirements but also when they dealt with occasions such as birth, marriage and death (christening robes, bridal wear, coffins) and the way they took their leisure (sportsgear, theatre equipment etc.)

But the authority of the manufacturer/trader should not be overstressed. As the strength of itinerant trades in Britain and France indicate, persuasion that took into account personal taste still continued to be very important. Studies of 18th century France at the time of the Ancien Regime and the Revolution also indicate the impediments consumers encountered, as politics often sought to direct and regulate the presence of manufactured items.

32.5   THE RISE OF THE CONSUMER MOVEMENT AND MATERIAL POLITICS

In fact, those who were worried about the way manufacturers and the market could draw the consumer into a net that ensnared him in different ways – both making him buy goods he did not really "want" and also providing him with shoddy goods – quickly sought to set up bodies that would prevent this. In the 19th century itself, in France, shoddy goods led to recourse to law, and also to judgments that were hostile to manufacturers. In Britain, the period from the mid-19th century witnessed a rash of legislation to prevent deception of the buyer: the Sale of Food and Drugs Act (1875), the Sale of Goods Act (1893), a series of Weights and Measures Acts (1878-1936), and, dealing with purchase on the basis of part payment, the Hire and Purchase Act (1938).

Movements at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries to protect consumers have been identified with various personalities: Percy Redfern and Beatrice Webb in Britain, Charles Gide and Jean Prudhommeaux in France, Louis de Brouchere in Belgium. And Percy Redfern's sense of things is common to most of these activists in one way or another:

"We the mass of common men and women in all countries also compose the world's market. To sell to us is the ultimate aim of the world's business. Hence, it is ourselves as consumers who stand in central relation to all the economics of the world, like a king

in his kingdom. As producers, we go each unto a particular factory, farm or mine, but as consumers we are set by nature then to give leadership, aim and purpose to the whole economic world. That we are not kings but serfs in the mass is due to our failure to think and act together as consumers and realize our true position and power."

The work of these activists and their latter-day followers, coping with the aid of TV, has led to a fresh wave of consumer-protection legislation in Britain. This followed the formation of the Molony Committee on Consumer Protection in 1962, which led in 1963 to the formation of the Consumer Council. The legislation that followed intensified consumer protection in the market place: the Trades Description Act (1968), the Fair Trading Act (1973), the Restrictive Trades Practices Act (1977) and the Consumer Safety Act (1978). Similar activities and legislation has figured in France and Germany around groups that came together around the Council of Consumer Groups (Germany) and the National Consumption Institute (France).

32.6   SUMMARY

As Elizabeth Cohen has pointed out, the moves to strengthen the consumer's status, however far it has developed, still remains, though, a matter of shopping and controls on it in Modern Europe and the United States. The grand vision that inspired Redfern – that the consumer should be given a dignity in social awareness is in all likelihood still an ideal that few are concerned with. Given the differing approaches to consumption over time, and changes in the way the production system operates, it is probably also uncertain that anything can be done for the consumer on these lines. Contributing to this is the lack of self-awareness among consumers as consumers primarily.

As the spread of industrial capitalism in the world indicates, moreover, patterns of consumption vary widely from society to society. Before the onset of industrial capitalism, consumption in India and China, for instance, had followed specific patterns associated with gift and exchange unlike the patterns followed in Europe. Even if modern times create a uniform pattern of consumption at certain level the world over, the specific pattern is often moulded by the existing paths that have been followed. Habits of emulation and imitation also vary.

In the circumstances, the fears that were often expressed of the consequences of consumerism may be valid at some levels, but they are far from applicable as a rule. Not only in Modern Europe, but also in the Modern World, the story of consumption has been too different to justify a single perspective.

32.7   EXERCISES

1)   What are the ways in which the term consumerism is understood?

2)   Rise of industrial capitalism led to the coming of modernization of 'Consumerism'. Discuss briefly.

3)   Critiques of consumerism have also led to consumer rights movement. What are its different aspects?

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