

UNIT 6 IDEOLOGY, SOCIAL BASES AND PROGRAMMES OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

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6.0 OBJECTIVES

Every national movement has an ideology, programme and a clear social base. In this unit these three important components of national movements have been discussed. After going through this unit you should be able to :

- explain the meaning of national movements;
- trace the evolution of national movements;
- analyse the causes of national movements;
- describe the ideology of national movements;
- analyze the social basis of national movements; and
- describe the programme of national movements.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The term national movement has a very wide connotation and may be applied to any nation-wide struggle that the masses consider to be in the interest and for the welfare of their country. In this wider sense, national movement may be taken to mean any struggle intended to better the lot of the people by constructive work in different spheres of national life. But practically speaking, in the colonized countries, a national movement was understood only to be a struggle for achieving the freedom of the people from foreign domination, and therefore was essentially a political phenomenon. National movements, therefore, were mainly anti-imperialistic or anti-foreign and their main object was to secure self-government or full independence of the colonies.

Although the aim of national movements was self-rule and independence they did not take the same form in all the countries. The form in which such movements were carried out was determined by the status of, and circumstances existing in a particular country and also the foreign domination against which they had to fight. That is why the Indian national movement for freedom against the British differed in its ways and means from that of the movement for freedom of the Indonesians against the Dutch or of the Indo-Chinese against the French; and of China against the domination of Western powers.

It was in the decades between the First and Second World Wars, that the attack upon colonialism continually gathered momentum in the form of national movements. On the entire eastern frontier of the Western world, in the great sweep from Morocco through the Middle East and South Asia to South-east Asia, people were rising to rid themselves of imperial domination. That is why the end of World War I was regarded as the signal for the effective beginning of the great upsurge of nationalist movements that reached its fruition after the end of Second World War in 1945.

In Morocco Abd-el-Krim challenged the Spanish and the French; in Egypt Saad Zaghlul Pasha led the nationalists against the British; and in Syria there was rebellion to throw off the French Mandatory rule. Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan saw the rise of revolutionary leaders who attempted the forced-draft modernization of their countries in dictatorial guise. Of these, by far the most striking and successful was Mustafa Kemal, who discarding the anachronistic trappings of the Ottoman Empire, saved Turkey from an imposed treaty of peace and humiliation, consolidated it as a nation state, and started it on its modern path. At the furthest remove from Europe, the Chinese revolutionary movement gradually emerged from the tangled campaigns and alliance of the war lords, and the Kuomintang came to be the major embodiment of Chinese nationalism as Chiang Kai-shek beat back the ill-judged Communist bid for power. In the colonial sphere the principal focus of attention was inevitably India which was the greatest prize among the world's colonies. The demands of the Indian nationalists, coming increasingly under Gandhi's spell, went far beyond what the British were prepared to grant, and the Congress widened its base to become a mass movement capable of virtually paralyzing the government. In Asia, the Middle East, and Africa nationalist leaders and movements looked to Gandhi and the Congress for guidance and inspiration.

Of the major Asian dependencies, only the Philippines and Ceylon were granted constitutional reforms that roughly kept pace with nationalist demands - leaving aside Malaya where nationalist movement remained almost nonexistent prior to World War II. The most significant and unprecedented move was the creation of the Philippine Commonwealth in 1935 under a timetable that guaranteed full independence after a transitional decade of full domestic autonomy. In Burma, the Netherlands Indies, and Indo-China the tentative imperial moves toward larger instalments of self-government always lagged behind the mounting aspirations of the nationalists who were building their organizations and deepening their popular hold. Violent outbreaks occurred in all three colonies, sometimes under communist leadership, but in none was the colonial government seriously threatened until the Japanese invasion swept all the established regimes away.

Their resentment grew so strong that anti-imperialism became almost synonymous with nationalism. This was true in much of Asia and Africa, though in the case of China and Korea the resentment was directed against not only western but also Japanese imperialism. Nehru was not inaccurate in his autobiography, *Toward Freedom*, when he described nationalism as "essentially an anti-feeling" that fed and fattened "on hatred and anger against other national groups, and especially against the foreign rulers of a subject country".

6.2 CAUSES OF GROWTH OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

In the colonies westerners obtained a disproportionate share of the best and highest-paying positions in the civil service and in business, while even educated natives had to take the lower jobs and sometimes could not obtain employment at

all. European firms in much of the colonized countries handled the bulk of the lucrative large-scale enterprises, and in much of Africa, for example in Kenya, Asians - did retailing. Sometimes, large profits were sent out of the country and not used for local development. Further, westerners often took, or obtained for a pittance, the best lands, or had these farmed for them.

All this meant that the native levels of living, though they might be higher than they had been, were much lower than they could have been, that most of the Asians and Africans were poor, that many were hungry and destitute. This also meant that they were ill oftener and died at a younger age than the Europeans in their midst. The "natives" might not by themselves have realized their destitution - the "nasty, brutish, and short" nature of their lives - and therefore might not have rebelled. But they had European examples before their eyes, and increasing numbers did slowly come to perceive the contrast and began to dream that they too might expect and aspire to better and healthier lives.

6.2.1 Feeling of Inferiority

Westerners made Asians and Africans feel inferior in every way because of their race and their culture. This was particularly true of black Africans, many of whose ancestors had been captured and enslaved. Slavery left a deep stigma of inferiority. The brown and yellow peoples of Asia were likewise believed to be backward, lacking ability to improve or to govern themselves - good servants and manual workers, perhaps, but lacking in intelligence, character, and will.

Nowhere in the colonies did the peoples have a decisive voice in their government; usually they had no really effective voice at all. In some British colonies like India, the people were reluctantly and slowly given greater and greater representation in the local legislative councils, but even then they were always inferior because the imperial power, on vital matters like those of war and finance, kept the reins. Always a comparative handful of aliens - the imperial representatives, who held the chief offices and power, and the settlers, who possessed the legal rights - enjoyed the same privileges they would have had at home.

Most often the local peoples, as in South Africa, the Congo, and Southeast Asia, had no political rights, or, for that matter, any rights that could not be revoked at will. Generally, their speech was not free, their newspapers were censored, their movements about the country restricted - especially if there was a crisis - and in southern parts of Africa they had to carry passes. Their courts were usually separate, their "justice" different, and their punishments heavier than those for Europeans. Usually these people could be arbitrarily arrested and jailed, often without any "due process of law", and in political cases convicted and imprisoned even without a trial.

6.2.2 Role of Western Education

On the other hand, the colonial rulers, their officials and their missionaries, often professed their intention to prepare the "backward" peoples for good, moral lives and for self-government through education and religion. There can be no doubt that in their colonies they did, at times and with occasional success, make great efforts to put these intentions into practice. They did introduce western medicine and improve sanitation. They did provide elementary education for some of the native children and higher education for

A few "natives" did obtain advanced education at home or in France, Britain, and the United States, or, in the case of the Chinese, in Japan. It was these Asians and Africans who, after they had learned about western technology, ideas, and ideals, often became, the most ardent nationalist opponents of western rule. This was especially true of those who did not obtain positions for which they believed themselves qualified.

6.2.3 Role of Missionaries

With their spirit of "Christian soldiers marching as to war", missionaries made converts almost everywhere. But while they, and their fellow Christians who became officials and settlers, influenced many "natives" to be followers and submissive, they also brought hopes and practices that led to nationalism at the same time as they aroused hostility to western ways that pointed in the same direction. This hostility was sharpened when imperial governments favored the converts and discriminated against "natives" who, as in India and Morocco, maintained their own old and deep religious faiths and were determined to maintain them undefiled. In many cases, as among Hindus and Muslims, the traditional religions became fundamental bases of nationalist feeling, and resentment against the foreign religion a reason for nationalist action.

While the Christian teaching of the missionaries offered hope, it also threatened old religious beliefs and ways of life. In response to both the hope and the threat, Africans and Asians reacted in differing ways, all pointing toward nationalism. One reaction was the rise of messianic sects, as in the Congo, which, some scholars believe, were precursors of later nationalist groupings. A much more important reaction was the strengthening of traditional religions through vigorous, inspirational, religio-political reformist movements, such as the Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj in India in late nineteenth century, and the Salafiyya in twentieth century Morocco. These movements and groups aimed at nothing less than the political and cultural rejuvenation of their nations based on religious tradition. In Afghanistan a newspaper editor (from 1911 to 1918), Mahmud Tarzi, found the *raison d'être* of Afghanistan in the teachings of Islam and made an ingenious attempt to link its aspirations with the cause of Pan-Islamism, Pan-Asiatic solidarity, and modernism. In India one of the pioneers of nationalism, Swami Vivekananda, who was both saint and patriot, put nationalism on the high pedestal of spirituality and the past glory of the Hindus.

It was Christianity's identification with white domination, however, that most stimulated hostility and nationalist feeling. Christian egalitarian teaching itself revealed to black Africans the enormous contradiction between humanitarian ideal and imperial practice. Africans and Asians, with the evidence before their eyes, saw that so-called Christians, their masters, drained justice and liberty of political meaning, established two standards, one for themselves and one for those men of color they ruled.

Nationalism, slowly and then swiftly, became for increasing numbers of Asians and Africans their new religion, whether based on their old religion or not. On the other hand, those who were leaders and were called the elite, wanted to maintain their cherished traditions and to acquire westernized political institutions and western economic and scientific techniques. The Arabic peoples wavered between assimilation and rejection. On the one, hand, their nationalism was of the conventional European style and therefore modernizing. On the other hand, it was a movement aiming at the purification of Islam.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note:** i) Use the space given below for your answers.
ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

1) How was the feeling of inferiority reflected in the erstwhile colonies?

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2) What was the role of missionaries in the growth of national movements?

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6.3 IDEOLOGY OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

As the term 'National Movements' itself suggests, nationalism is always the basic ideology of these movements. Such nationalism is a radical ideology for the movements. It may become more radical by the incorporation of other ideologies like Marxism-Leninism.

Ideologies provide an important psychological and emotional base from which individuals can derive meaning and significance for their own participation in a changing society. Thus an ideology provides a framework within which the individual may orient himself to others in an emotionally satisfying manner. In sharing with others in the pursuit of common goals, individuals develop relationships and loyalties with each other that help to fill the voids created by the disruption of the traditional order. An ideology that is increasingly accepted performs the vital function of building common beliefs and attitudes among the political elite and masses, uniting the different groups within society in the pursuit of shared goals. That basic idea asserts that a better life is possible for individuals and groups than the one provided by the traditional order.

Of the several principal ideologies of national movements, therefore, that of nationalism is the most pervasive and important. The history of all national movements indicates that the idea behind nationalism is the liberation from alien political and economic domination. In other words nationalism is the idea of revolt against foreign political domination, economic exploitation, and the principle of racial discrimination or inequality.

The content of nationalism varies with the locale, with the people, and with time. Though the genus of nationalism is easily identifiable in the various national movements, there are several different species. To mention only some of the most obvious, not all Africans are black, but nationalists within the new African states and in Africa as a whole south of the Sahara have had a common bond in their blackness and in their opposition to white alien rule. In Asia, color as such, be it brown or yellow, did not seem to have played as large a role, though antagonism toward white rule and racial dominance has been no less vigorous. In eastern Asia, particularly in Korea, nationalism arose in part out of resentment against the

Japanese, who were of the same color as the peoples they attempted to dominate.

Nationalism in most of the colonized countries, therefore, developed from the sentiment of unity among cultural, religious and racial groups of the people. From this sentiment rose a strong desire for political and economic independence from foreign domination, and a demand for racial equality. The people were impelled to offer any amount of sacrifice for the fulfillment of these urges of their heart. This sentiment of nationalism grew in different proportions in different countries depending on the conditions there. In countries where there was direct rule of imperialism, nationalism flared up rapidly, while where there was an indirect rule of imperialism; nationalism, did not appear almost until World War II.

During the inter-war period, there developed a new force that vied with the force of nationalism in trying to wipe off imperialism and capitalism. This new force was communism based on Marxism-Leninism that spread after the Russian Revolution of 1917. Neither of these forces clashed against each other. They either traveled along parallel lines or even on divergent lines. Although communism tended towards internationalism and was not in favor of encouraging nationalism, for strategic reasons it sympathized with nationalism in colonized countries as it was fighting against imperialism.

Lenin had realized that the colonized people were in revolt against imperialism. He felt that it would be a great mistake to attempt to promote the Communist doctrine at a time when there was going on what he called "bourgeois-national" revolution fostered by the educated classes to drive out imperial control. He therefore urged cooperation by the Soviet regime with the forces of nationalism even though that was against the doctrine of communism. Because of this cooperation to the national regimes, the communists won great popularity in Iran, Afghanistan and China. Later in China there was a split between the Communists and the Nationalists. Although the Communists were initially defeated in 1928 by the Nationalists, ultimately their fight ended in the establishment of a Communist regime in China in 1949. The Soviet influence also steadily increased in many other countries through the organisation of the Communist Parties in these countries which played significant role in the National Movements.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note i) Use the space given below for your answers.
ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.
- 1) How does ideology create unity in national movements?

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- 2) Explain the meaning of nationalism?

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6.4 SOCIAL BASES OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

National movements often started as unorganized and sporadic protests of a small number of people, but slowly they became mass movements. Every strata of society has had some role in the progress of national movements.

It was the leaders and intellectuals who first spearheaded the movements. They organised the masses. They enlightened the masses about the need to become free. People followed them because they were expressing the need of the time. Slowly parties and groups emerged as instruments of national movements. Peasants, workers and women also organised their movements to lead to national liberation.

In diverse ways and at different times, increasing numbers of the various peoples became convinced that the dream of independence would be realized and that then all would be well. Hence they became more and more involved and participated in what became national struggles. In the process, they became ever more aware of their grievances. As they became aware, they became more vocal and their protests multiplied. And as they grieved, protested and participated in the struggles for freedom, they became nationally conscious and increasingly nationalist in outlook and approach.

Asians and Africans were taught by westerners - by Christian missionaries and optimistic intellectuals - to hope. Increasingly though still small numbers, were educated in the West and at home became expectant. From the 1920s especially, their own leaders, through the press and later the radio, through embryo political parties, mutual aid societies, and trade unions, taught them to believe that their future of freedom, justice, and abundance would be achieved through their nations. Asians and Africans, heard of the pronouncements of the United Nations and other international bodies, of "fundamental human rights", the "dignity and worth of the human person", and of "fundamental freedoms for all" regardless of race and religion. They believed these pronouncements, and saw no reason why these should not apply to themselves.

The motivations of the leaders of the nationalist movements were as varied as their peoples and their own individual personalities. They hoped and they feared and they were ambitious for themselves as well as for their peoples. Some of them (Sukarno of Indonesia) undoubtedly sought personal power and the emoluments that at times accompany high office - fine houses, big cars, beautiful women. Some of them (Nehru of India, Nyerere of Tanzania, and Senghor of Senegal), though not immune to private ambition, were high-minded idealists who put country above private gain. As they are for all men, motivations were mixed and changing. But it is also true that many of them had painful experiences that drove them further and further along their nationalist roads. When many of them began their political lives, they were mild reformers, willing, if only reforms were granted and evolution toward self-government seemed likely, to work within the colonial systems. But as they advocated and worked for reforms, they suffered threats against their livelihoods and their lives, they were forced into exile, they were imprisoned or sent to detention camps, and on occasion they were beaten and tortured beyond endurance. Some were executed, and they became martyrs, and, thus, powerful symbols for their nation. Those who lived, protested ever more, and the more they protested the more they suffered. They also became the prominent leaders of nationalist parties of their respective countries. Some also arose from peasant or workers movements, organised protests, strikes etc. and gave fillip to national movements. Their arrests created nationalist fervours among the masses, led to further strengthening of parties and groups as national

movements in themselves. To choose at random, Gandhi, Nehru, and Tilak were jailed in India, and Banda, Bourguiba, Kaunda, Kenyatta, Nelson Mandela, Sani Njumah and Sithole in various parts of Africa. All of them turned more nationalist after their imprisonment and they became heroes to increasing numbers of their countrymen. No amount of punishment, no imperial repression actually blunted national feeling; rather it exacerbated it.

Check Your Progress 3

Note:i) Use the space given below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) Explain the role of intellectuals in national movements?

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- 2) What were the motivations of leaders of national movements?

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6.5 PROGRAMME OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

In their initial stages the national movements were somewhat sporadic and disorganized. They were like local protests of a few individuals. Nevertheless, they were indicators of the universal resentment growing in most of the colonized countries. The first protests of colonized people became the symbol of nationalist protest. Most of these were suppressed in a violent and brutal manner by the imperial masters. This led to a rethinking on the part of nationalist leaders as to which means they should adopt to counter the colonizers.

When the initial resistance failed it led to a period of considerable acquiescence in foreign rule. This happened in India after the uprising of 1857 and the same is the case with foreign rule in other countries. Foreign domination was then accepted out of a mere sense of defeat and the superiority of the conqueror acknowledged in military, technical, and even cultural matters. This is how the doctrine of the white man's supremacy arose. With the spread of western education and the induction of a large number of local inhabitants into the administration and western business enterprises, the new generation of dependent peoples began to feel that they had also acquired the elements which were responsible for white supremacy, and that there was no reason why the white race should continue to control their destiny. Thus the politically and economically backward and subject communities came to have national consciousness.

This national consciousness is not the result of the instinct of resistance against the foreign rule, but it is a conscious assertion of unity and of a distinct and separate identity of the community in question. Foreign rule helped to create a bond of unity among the masses in India, Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon and other countries where people became united against foreign rule. This was quite a new phenomenon since earlier there were sectional and regional loyalties but not countywide feeling of patriotism.

The nascent spirit of nationalism was apparent in India in 1857 and later it was fostered by political associations, such as the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha (1870), and the Indian Association (1878), which encouraged the infiltration of western ideas and were the forerunners of the Indian National Congress and the national movement. In China because of anti-foreign feeling, revolutionary reform movements were started by men like Dr. Sun Yat-sen and Kang Yu-wei after 1895 with a view to adopt western devices to save China from total destruction. Similarly in other countries also, nationalistic societies had made their appearance at the beginning of the twentieth century. There were however certain regions like Borneo, New Guinea and Malaya where western ideas had not penetrated deeply and where the lives of a large number of people were hardly touched by western thought or the technological revolution. This would perhaps explain why in Malaya no national movement was found to exist until the thirties of the twentieth century.

The method, pace and strength of each national movement differed from the other according to local conditions and the system of government in that country. In countries like British India, Burma, Dutch East Indies, and Tonkin and Annam in Indo-China, national movements progressed rapidly as there was direct oppression of imperialism felt by the subject peoples. In India there was first a liberal and then a revolutionary movement against imperialism. But as the mighty arms of Britain ruthlessly suppressed the movement, it could not show appreciable results. But when Mahatma Gandhi became the leader of national movement in India, he ingeniously adopted the unique method of non-violent non-cooperation based on the principles of truth, love and non-violence to fight the British imperialism. His method of satyagraha had an astounding success.

On the other hand, in the Dutch East Indies and French Indo-China, the people adopted violent means and resorted to bloody fights in the prosecution of their national movements as the conditions in those countries were changed after the occupation by the Japanese who had injected the minds of the peoples with the hatred of imperialism. The national movement in Ceylon was within the constitutional frame work. So was the movement of the Filipinos for the independence of the Philippines. There was no need to adopt any violent means as the American colonial policy had already committed itself to the grant of complete independence to the Philippines. In the independent countries like Afghanistan, Iran, China and Thailand the national movements were directed by the rulers towards the achievement of full freedom from the foreign domination or intervention in their internal or external affairs, and the method adopted was diplomacy and sometimes the threat of arms or actual war. In independent Japan the national movement was of an exceptional nature. It was a movement, in the later stage, for expansion, and the means adopted were therefore military and aggressive. There the so called national movement turned into policy of imperialism.

The First World War gave a great spur to the national movements. It was fought, in part at least, to vindicate the principle of nationality. President Wilson of the U.S. had declared in connection with the war aims that national aspirations were to be respected, and that self-determination was to be an imperative principle of action. On the basis of this declaration people asserted their right of self-determination which then became the pivot of a new and forcible nationalism.

In fact World War I is taken by some as a starting point of modern Asian nationalism. This nationalism began to move fast on two wheels towards the destination of independence. One of these wheels was a protest against the foreign rule and movement to end the alien domination, and the other was a protest against alien economic hegemony and attempt for national industrialization.

This nationalism was the strongest in China and India where the ‘nationalist capitalist class’ supported the national movements and tried to oust the foreign capitalists from their privileged economic position in the country. These two countries then almost became the leaders in the revolt of Asia against western imperialism. Arab nationalism flared up and several Arab states emerged from the ruins of Asia against Western imperialism. Arab nationalism flared up and several Arab states emerged from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire. Similarly, nationalism in Turkey that defied western powers looking at her with covetous eyes rose high and established Turkey as a republic, soon after the First World War.

World War II marked a climax of the progress in the national movements. It is beyond doubt that nationalism became stronger during the war period than at any time before. Just as in World War I, President Wilson had declared the principle of self-determination, during World War II, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill issued a declaration of principles known as the Atlantic Charter in 1941. One of the principles in the Charter had declared people’s right of self-government thus: “they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them”. After the war the peoples of colonized countries who were struggling for self-determination desired that the western powers should leave their countries in the spirit of the Charter, and let the peoples form their own governments. The western powers were naturally unwilling to do so. But at the same time they had become very weak after their exhausting fight with the enemy, and they could no longer oppose the formidable current of national movements.

Therefore, by persistent protest (everywhere), by “passive resistance” (India), by revolution (Algeria), through civil war (China) and colonial war (Vietnam), over fifty African and Asian peoples, led in most cases by charismatic individuals, did win their independence after 1945.

Check Your Progress 4

Note:i) Use the space given below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) What was the role of western education in national movements?

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- 2) What were the methods adopted by people in national movements?

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6.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have read about various aspects of national movements like their ideology, social basis and programme.

Ideology of national movements has been predominantly revolutionary. Although here we have to be clear that in such a revolution non-violent means have also been adopted. Even otherwise revolutions do not necessarily mean a violent protest. Violence on the part of the colonized people was mostly counter-violence, a response to the violence perpetrated by the colonizers, a response to the violent suppression of movements, a response against exploitation. Thus for many the unity of means and ends is not a virtual necessity. Some leaders like Mahatma Gandhi advocated the unity of means and ends i.e. only non-violent means will lead to non-violent societies or noble ends.

All the national movements had broad mass followings. But they were spearheaded by a few leaders and revolutionaries, whose sacrifices led to large followings not only in the same country but also outside. Thus all the national movements against colonizers were united in some form or the other. They took inspiration from the successful protests.

There was no prefabricated programme of these movements, although leaders, intellectuals, and parties did provide some form of unified programme which was consent based and was approved by the larger masses. The basic objective of course was clear that the exploitation by imperialist powers must end and must end immediately.

6.7 KEY WORDS

National Movement : A movement which is based on the nationalist sentiment of liberation of a colonized country by its natives.

Natives : The local inhabitants of the colonized country.

Colonizers : The foreign rulers and exploiters of the Colonizing country.

Ideology : A theoretical programme for action.

Non-violence : The use of peaceful means or pacific settlement.

6.8 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

Chavan, R. S., *Nationalism in Asia*

Smith, Anthony D., *Theories of Nationalism*

Emerson, Rupert, *From Empire to Nation*

Godement, Francois, *The New Asian Renaissance*

Kehschull, Harvey G., *Politics in Transitional Societies*

Shafer, Boyd C., *Faces of Nationalism*

Watson, Hugh Seton, *Nations and States*

6.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The natives were made to feel inferior; slavery left the stigma of inferiority amongst the coloured Africans. Both in Asia and Africa people in colonies had no decisive voice in their governance; they were denied the political rights and even several of the civil rights. (For details please see back Sub-section 6.2.1)

- 2) Missionaries converted many natives to Christianity, yet the natives were made to be their followers and submissive. Old religious beliefs and ways of life were threatened. The response of these activities was emergence of strong nationalism. (Please see Sub-section 6.2.3)

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Ideologies provide the base from which significance of participation in a changing society is felt. In sharing with others in the pursuit of common goals, people develop relationships and loyalties with each other. (For details please see Section 6.3).
- 2) Nationalism is the idea of revolt against foreign political domination, economic exploitation and the principle of racial discrimination or inequality. (For details please see Section 6.3)

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) The intellectuals and leaders first spearheaded the movements. They organised the masses and enlightened them about the need to become free from foreign rule. (For details please refer to Section 6.4).
- 2) Motivation varied from . For example, Sukarno of Indonesia sought personal power including huge emoluments, fine houses, big cars etc. But, Nehru in India and Nyerere of Tanzania were ambitious. (Please see Section 6.4).

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) The spread of western education and the resultant induction of colonized people into administration led to the realization that they could also control their destiny. This led to the rise of national consciousness. (For details please refer to Section 6.5).
- 2) Methods adopted by each national movement differed from country to country. In India the method adopted was largely that of non-violent protest. In Dutch East Indies and French Indo-China, the people adopted violent means. (For details please refer to Section 6.5).

UNIT 7 PATTERNS OF ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLES

Structure

- 7.0 Objectives
 - 7.1 Introduction
 - 7.2 Anti-Colonialism Explained
 - 7.2.1 Colonialism
 - 7.2.2 Colonies' Desire for Liberation
 - 7.3 Patterns of Anti-Colonial Struggles
 - 7.3.1 National Independence Movements
 - 7.3.2 National Liberation Movements
 - 7.4 Methods of Anti-Colonial Struggles
 - 7.4.1 Peaceful Non-Violent Struggles
 - 7.4.2 Armed Struggles
 - 7.5 Three Stages of Anti-Colonial Struggles
 - 7.5.1 Proto-Nationalism
 - 7.5.2 The Rise of New Leadership
 - 7.5.3 Mass Movement
 - 7.6 Success of Anti-Colonial Struggles
 - 7.7 Let Us Sum Up
 - 7.8 Key Words
 - 7.9 Some Useful Books
 - 7.10 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises
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7.0 OBJECTIVES

Decolonisation is the most significant development of post-Second World War period. It took place as a result of end of colonial rule in large number of erstwhile colonies, preceded by anti-colonial struggles in these colonies. This unit deals with various patterns of these struggles. After going through this unit you will be able to:

- recall the urge of the oppressed peoples for freedom;
 - identify the patterns of anti-colonial struggles;
 - explain the means adopted in different colonies in their struggles; and
 - trace the three stages in the process of anti-colonial struggles.
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7.1 INTRODUCTION

When the United Nations was set up in 1945, it had only 51 (original) members. Of these, India was not then a sovereign state. It was under British rule. Besides, two members viz. Ukraine and Bylo-Russia were Union Republics of the erstwhile Soviet Union. Today, at the dawn of 21st century there are 189 sovereign countries who are members of the United Nations. Most (not all) of them were colonies of one Imperial Power or the other in 1945. The process of termination of foreign colonial rule began with the independence of the Philippines from the United States in 1946. But, it got real boost with the independence of India and creation of the dominions of India and Pakistan by Britain in August 1947. This was followed, in quick succession, by the independence of a large number of colonies in Asia and Africa earlier ruled by Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and Portugal. Most of the Colonial Powers were forced to grant independence to their colonies by the anti-colonial struggles carried out in the colonies.

All the colonies did not follow any uniform pattern in their struggle against their rulers. While some of the erstwhile colonies had to wage prolonged struggles for their independence, there were some where such struggles were waged for a short period. In some of the colonies hardly any struggle was waged, and independence came in the wake of then ongoing decolonisation. There were two main patterns of anti-colonial struggles. In some of the colonies, the struggle was limited against their colonial masters, and not against the then existing socio-economic systems. Where struggles were merely against the rulers, and not against the system, the desire was to secure transfer of political power from the colonial masters to the peoples of the colonies. These struggles were described as "independence movements", which merely sought transfer of political power to the peoples of the countries concerned. However, where there was a fight not only against the foreign rule, but also against the existing socio-economic system which was unjust, undemocratic and supportive of exploitation, these struggles were termed as "liberation movements" or "liberation struggles."

Another important aspect of freedom struggles was the methods that were employed in different countries. While in some of the countries, like India, non-violence was insisted upon as the tool of struggle, in others violent means had to be adopted to achieve the desired goal of decolonisation. The struggles were, therefore, either non-violent and peaceful, or agitational in nature and using force and violence as means of the struggle.

In this unit, you will read about these patterns and methods of anti-colonial struggles that eventually ended colonialism and freed large number of colonies in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

7.2 ANTI-COLONIALISM EXPLAINED

A large number of present members of the United Nations were subjected to foreign rule and exploitation, for a long time, before they attained sovereignty and full statehood after the Second World War. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a number of European Powers set out to establish their economic domination and political control over vast territories of Asia and Africa. Practically the entire continent of Africa and large parts of Asia had become colonies either of Britain or France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium or the Netherlands. The peoples of colonies had to carry out struggles for their freedom from foreign rulers. These struggles are known as anti-colonial struggles, and were carried out in different ways in different colonies. The process of victory of anti-colonial struggles and achievement of freedom by the colonies came to be known as decolonisation.

7.2.1 Colonialism

The term colonialism is used to indicate a situation in which economically prosperous and developed countries of Europe established their control over the backward, poor and underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The basic feature of colonialism is exploitation of underdeveloped countries by the rich European nations. Imperialism is a term that indicates political control of one country over the other. The imperial powers acquired political control over large number of countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Thus, if colonialism was economic exploitation, imperialism was political control. The two went hand-in-gloves. In most cases imperialism followed economic domination and exploitation. Colonies were used to acquire cheap raw material and labour, and for dumping in their markets the finished goods produced by the colonial powers. Both colonialism and imperialism were exploitative and undemocratic. One naturally followed the other.

The colonialists had their arguments to support this system of exploitation. The defenders of colonialism and imperialism pleaded their case in terms of white man's burden. They argued that it was the obligation of advanced nations to help the people of "backward" countries - to "civilise" and "Christianise" them, and "to teach them the dignity of labour, and to impress upon them the beauties of their own concepts of law and order." According to Palmer and Perkins, "They argued that colonialism was a necessary prelude to the emergence of most of the free and independent states of the world and to the twentieth century awakening of Asia and Africa." These arguments of supporters of colonialism were rightly rebutted by its critics who used such terms as brutality, exploitation, misery, hatred and degradation for colonialism and its practices. The critics insisted that the struggle for empires led only to the urge to create greater and still greater empires and that the appetite of empire builders knew no limits. Colonialism was the foundation of imperialism.

Portugal and Spain were the first to establish their colonies. They were soon joined by Britain, France, the Netherlands and Germany. The first to lose its colonies were Germany and Turkey who were deprived of all their colonies after their defeat in the First World War. Even Japan and the US had joined the race. After the First World War only four African countries were fully or partially independent. The rest of the Continent was under one colonial power or the other. The British Empire was so vast that the sun never set in it. The 13 British colonies in North America were the first to liberate themselves in 1770s and 1780s, and they established the sovereign United States of America. The Portuguese and Spanish colonies of Latin America were next to acquire independence. Asia and Africa had to wage struggles for independence, in which they succeeded only after the Second World War.

7.2.2 Colonies' Desire for Liberation

Peoples living in colonies had long suffered exploitation at the hands of their European masters. They were denied basic rights and freedom. They had practically no share in governance. The colonies were raw-material suppliers who were denied not only industrialisation and development, but were also denied the right to self-government. Supporters of colonialism, such as J.A. Hobson explained colonialism as "... a natural outflow of nationality; its test is the power of colonists to transplant the civilization they represent to the new natural, and social environment in which they find themselves." This so called civilising of the peoples of colonies was a garb under which the colonialists exploited the colonies. As people from colonies such as India got limited opportunity to visit the western countries and study there, they learnt how they were being exploited, and that what was the value of freedom that the European people enjoyed. This prompted educated people in colonies to awaken their fellow countrymen to the realities of imperialism and to work for liberation and self-governance.

At the Bandung Conference of Afro-Asian countries held in 1955, President Sukarno of Indonesia said, "Colonialism has... its modern dress in the form of economic control, intellectual control, and actual physical control by a small but alien community..." It was, therefore, argued at the Conference that, "Colonialism in all its manifestations is an evil which should speedily be brought to an end." By the time of Bandung Conference the Afro-Asian peoples had come to the conclusion that both colonialism and imperialism referred to a "superior-inferior relationship." Thus, hundreds of millions of people in Asia and Africa resolved to abandon their position as "inferiors" and to assert their equality with the peoples of former colonial powers.

Thus, though the process of anti-colonial struggles and decolonisation had begun soon after the Second World War, the urge for liberation and self-governance and to defeat exploitation made for accelerated anti-colonial struggles from 1950s onwards.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use space provided below each question to write your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) What was colonialism and what were its manifestations?

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- 2) What was the reaction of subject peoples to the concept of white man's burden?

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7.3 PATTERNS OF ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLES

Most of the colonies of various European Powers had to wage struggle for their independence. However, there was no uniform pattern of these struggles, nor a common method of the struggle, nor even the duration of struggles was, generally speaking, the same. Their nature often differed sharply and the time taken by a movement to be successful depended on many factors such as determination of local leadership, support of the people and attitude of the colonial power concerned. In many countries, protest against colonial rule had existed right from the time of arrival of colonial rulers. In other countries like Ghana (Gold Coast), Nigeria, the Congo, Angola, etc. such movements began much after many of the Asian countries had already become free. It is not possible in this unit to go into all the details of struggles of all the colonies. What is proposed to be done is to examine the broad patterns and methods of freedom struggles. In the present section two broad patterns of anti-colonial struggles are dealt with. In the next section (7.4) an attempt will be made to briefly deal with the methods used by different colonies. The two main patterns were generally highlighted by the leftist scholars.

7.3.1 National Independence Movements

A large number of countries, including India, followed the pattern of anti-colonial struggles known as independence movements. These movements were aimed at removal of the foreign rulers, and securing political independence. It was believed that the principal concern of the leadership of freedom movements was transfer of power from the imperial masters to the local people. The aim was to replace the foreign governments by national governments and to build strong state after independence. The critics pointed out that it simply meant change of rulers. For example, in case of India, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya, etc. the objective was to throw the British out, and secure transfer of power to the local

elite. The national independence movements were not immediately concerned with the restructuring of colonial societies. Leftist scholars describe these movements as bourgeois, professional and bureaucratic movements for political change.

The point that the critics tried to make was that transfer of power made no difference to the common man and woman who remained under the existing exploitative socio-economic system.

National independence movements did not seek to change the social system or the economic order. In India and Pakistan, for example, caste continued to dominate the social system which perpetuated social injustice. In economic sphere capitalists and landlords continued to enjoy full power over their workers and peasants. Industrial management remained exploitative. The workers were given no share in management. Not only that, conditions of living and work were neither hygienic nor conducive to good life. The peasants in the rural areas remained at the mercy of landlords and big peasants. To sum up, political power changed hands, while socio-economic system remained as before. Exploitation remained; exploiters changed.

This was the result of freedom movements carried out by parties and leaders who were essentially concerned with transfer of political power. Most of the leaders had been educated in Great Britain, or in other European countries. In many countries these "westernised" leaders failed to be mass leaders. This, according to critics, was a pattern that helped leadership to acquire power, but did not help the common man overcome his difficulties.

7.3.2 National Liberation Movements

These movements began rather late. In very few colonies movements that were launched and carried out for independence had twin purpose. These anti-colonial struggles were aimed at liberation of the masses from exploitation and injustice. At the same time they wanted to defeat the foreign rulers and seek power for the people, not for the elite. This, however, is doubtful if the gains actually reached the masses. Power, when transferred, went into the hands of leadership. Vietnam can be cited as an example of the liberation movement. The Communist Party, under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh had to wage a long struggle first against the French who wanted to regain their hold, after Japanese defeat and retain it as long as they could. Later, when US intervened on the side of South Vietnam, where a right wing government had come to power, the Ho Chi Minh regime had to fight against the Americans and South Vietnamese. At the same time, this struggle was aimed at removal of poverty, illiteracy and exploitation.

The objective of the national liberation movements (or liberation struggles), as in case of Vietnam or Congo or Angola was ending of alien rule and radical restructuring of socio-economic systems. The aim was to bring about socio-economic justice and ensure power to the people. Though the western critics dubbed it as mere communist domination, the leaders of the movement described it as people's struggle for their rights, and freedom, and struggle against foreign domination and internal injustice perpetuated by the landlords and handful of owners of wealth.

To conclude, the two main patterns of anti-colonial struggles were common in one respect. Both types of struggles were to defeat the colonialism and imperialism by throwing the foreign rulers out - British in case of India, Burma, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana etc.; French in case of Algeria, Ivory Coast and Indo-China Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam; Belgians in case of Congo; the Dutch in case of Indonesia, and Portuguese in case of Angola and Mozambique. While,

this one objective was common, the difference between the independence movements and liberation struggles was that whereas former sought only the political freedom from foreign rule or Swaraj the latter also wanted social and economic justice and defeat of exploitation in all its manifestations. Guided by Marxist-Leninist ideas, their aim was social revolution along with political independence.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use space provided below each question to write your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) Distinguish between national independence movements and national liberation movements.

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- 2) What was the objective of national liberation movements?

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7.4 METHODS OF ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLES

Colonialism was a major curse. It was defeated as a result of vigorous efforts made by the Afro-Asian countries. The outcome of anti-colonial struggles was described as a revolution. Palmer and Perkins wrote that, "The 'revolt of Asia' may prove to be the most significant development of the twentieth century." Earlier Arnold Toynbee had predicted that even the challenge of communism "may come to seem a small affair when the probably far more potent civilisation of India and China respond... to our western challenge..." Thus, the revolutionary changes in Asia and Africa were considered very significant developments. The British Prime Minister Mr. Harold Macmillan had said in 1959 in a speech in Moscow that, "Imperialism is an epoch in history, not a present reality." But, the so-called 'epoch' ruined the economics of Afro-Asian countries. As Nehru said (1954) the crisis of time of Asia was 'Colonialism versus anti-colonialism'. The anti-colonial struggles were carried out either peacefully or through violent means. There was indeed lot of role of colonial powers themselves. They were forced by developments both at national and international levels to give up their empires.

7.4.1 Peaceful Non-Violent Struggles

An important method of anti-colonial struggle was non-violence. This was adopted under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Later, several other colonies also followed the path shown by India. Indian National Congress established in 1885 as a forum for expression of aspirations of educated Indians was, at that time, generally welcomed by the British. But, it soon became an anti-British platform. Initially, the Congress leadership (including Surendra Nath Banerjee, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and others) merely sought reforms that would give some participation to Indians in the Legislative Councils; but within two decades, its main concern

turned out to be anti-British. Indian National Congress considered defeat of the British raj as its main objective. Like most nationalist movements, the freedom movement in India came to be divided into less militant and more militant factions. The first was represented by Gokhale, and subsequently by Mahatma Gandhi; and the second was led by Tilak, Lajpat Rai and B.C. Pal. For the first faction, reforms was the main objective; for the second it was defeat of the British rule. By and large, Congress remained committed to non-violent methods, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

Non-violence was Gandhi's main weapon. He initiated the non-cooperation movement after Jalianwala Bagh Massacre (1919) on the conditions that it would remain non-violent and Indians were to boycott British courts, goods and educational institutions. The movement was doing very well when suddenly in 1922 an angry mob in Chauri Chaura (Uttar Pradesh) put a police station on fire, killing nearly two dozen policemen. Brushing aside criticism, Gandhiji withdrew the movement as (at one place) it had turned violent. His peaceful Dandi March, to break the infamous salt law of the British rulers, began the civil disobedience movement which again was to remain peaceful, as people would disobey the laws that were unjust. The Quit India Movement of 1942 was again to remain peaceful, but even before it could be formally launched, the British Government arrested all prominent leaders, leaving the people leaderless. There was, therefore, some element of violence provoked by the British themselves. Though some young revolutionaries like Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Ashfaq Ullah Khan and Ram Prasad Bismil did not follow Gandhiji's diktat of non-violence, yet their enthusiasm and sacrifice contributed to India's freedom struggle in a big way. Large number of Indian leaders (including Gandhi, Nehru and Patel) were sent to jail several times.

Many other countries also adopted non-violent and peaceful method for fighting against the foreign rule and to gain independence. There was little freedom movement in Sri Lanka. It gained its independence from Britain in 1948, as a consequence of British departure from India.

Burma (Myanmar) was a part of British India till the enforcement of Government of India Act of 1935 (in 1937). As such it was associated with India's non-violent struggle. When the Second World War began, the Burmese nationalists were generally pro-Japanese, but later became anti-Japanese. With the armaments supplied by the British, the Burmese nationalists got together in Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL). The Labour Government which came to power in the UK in 1945 recognised the AFPFL as the organisation to deal with. The British Governor of Burma wanted to arrest the most important nationalist leader Aung San. The Government recalled the Governor and dealt with Aung San's party for transfer of power. Although Aung San and other leaders were assassinated in July 1947, their surviving colleagues achieved the goal of independence in January 1948. There was no fighting. Calvocoressi concluded that, "The British, strongly influenced by their own pledge to leave India and also by the belief that it was not possible to use the Indian troops ... against the Burmese..." decided to transfer power. Although, there was internal strife after independence, the freedom movement was generally non-violent.

Many of the African countries also used non-violence as weapon of their freedom struggle. The Europeans had taken possession of Africa at the height of industrial revolution. The disparity between Europeans and Africans was enormous. African countries did not have prolonged movements for freedom. African leaders drew inspiration from both India and America. They formed National Congresses in different countries. Many of them were attracted by Gandhian ideas of non-violence. From the American Continent, particularly the Caribbean, Africans

gained confidence and dignity and a habit of meeting together. A number of Pan African Conferences were held. The Sixth such Conferences held after the Second World War at Manchester was attended by several prominent African leaders including Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Akinola and Julius Nyerere. It demanded independence, which would have appeared very unreal five years earlier. A mere ten years later West African colonies attained independence leading the way to the end of colonialism in rest of Africa also. East African colonies followed suit.

7.4.2 Armed Struggles

Peaceful and non-violent means did not, or could not, work in all the anti-colonial struggles. In several cases nationalists were forced to take to gun and adopt revolutionary means. In India, the movement generally remained peaceful, yet some patriotic youth did not have the patience to wait for the success of Gandhiji's weapon. Young men like Ashfaq Ullah Khan, Ram Prasad Bismil and their friends looted government treasury from a train at Kakori in Uttar Pradesh. They were arrested, tried and hanged to death. They gladly made the supreme sacrifice for the country's independence. Later, Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and their friends gladly went to the gallows for having thrown a bomb in the central legislature. Many more revolutionaries made sacrifices after using armed struggle as a tool. Even Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, broke the jail managed to flee the country during the Second World War, reached Germany and then Japan, set up the Indian National Army to fight for India's freedom. Though all these patriots died before independence, their role cannot be ignored.

Much earlier, in Latin America, independence was achieved from the Spanish and Portuguese colonies through revolutionary movements started first in Spanish colony of Mexico and later in Venezuela, Argentina etc. By 1825, Spain had lost most of its vast empire.

Kenya was a British colony, in East Africa, till it attained freedom late in 1963. Soon after the Second World War a number of non-official members of the Legislative Council were given ministerial positions. But all of them were white. The blacks were denied this privilege. In 1952, the white rulers were faced with a 'savage outbreak' in the Kikuyu tribe (in the neighbourhood of capital Nairobi). They had for long nourished grievances against the white settlers. The movement was led by Jomo Kenyatta, a former student of London University, and now President of the Kenya African Union. In addition, the Kikuyu had formed a secret society called Mau Mau. Its activities were the militant expression of a deep-seated nationalist movement. Mau Mau administered oaths to its members and performed secret rites. They fought for independence. Calvecoressi described its activities as "anti-Christian", and wrote that, "With time the society became extreme in its ambitious and barbarous in its practices. It took to murder... and finally developed a campaign of violence and guerrilla warfare." Britain tried to crush the movement with bigger force. Even Jomo Kenyatta was sentenced in 1954 to seven years imprisonment "for organising Mau Mau". The activities of Mau Mau became violent and it killed around 8000 African opponents (who supported the British), while 68 European were also done to death. Having realised the futility of suppression, the British Government took to negotiation in 1960, which finally led to Kenya's independence in December 1963. Meanwhile, Kenyatta had taken over as the Prime Minister in June. His Kenya African National Union (KANU) succeeded in May elections, and on its insistence the British proposal for a federal Kenya was dropped.

Belgian Congo was an entirely different story. Its independence was proclaimed on June 30, 1960 and official celebrations lasted for four days. Just 48 hours later

there occurred a mutiny in the Force Publique, which sparked off a train of terrible disaster. Congo's independence produced not only internal chaos and civil war, but also one of the major international crises of the post-war period.

Indonesia in the South East Asia was ruled by the Netherlands as 'The Netherlands East Indies.' A strong nationalist movement had developed there in the first decade of the twentieth century. The first Indonesian party called Boedi Oetomo was founded in 1908. Its nature was described by Robert Payne thus: "The movement possessed no political credo. Essentially scholastic, it looked towards India, deriving strength not from nascent Moslem nationalism but from Rabindra Nath Tagore's vision of a self-governing Asia at peace..." This movement never became strong. It was soon eclipsed by a more militant party, Sarekat Islam. It advocated political and social reforms and adopted a pro-muslim platform. It demanded complete independence, and during the First World War it adopted socialist programme.

The Indonesian nationalist movement became more vigorous with the formation of National Indonesian Party under the leadership of Dr. Sukarno (Soekarno). The Dutch used force, but could not suppress the movement. The Dutch relied largely on the policy of stern repression. Accordingly, in late 1920s and early 1930s prominent leaders including Sukarno and Hatta were sent into exile. After the fall of the Netherlands in 1940 (during the Second World War), Indonesians cooperated with the conquerors of the country viz. the Japanese. After Japanese defeat in August 1945, the British troops landed in the Dutch East Indies, and with their support an Indonesian Republic, with Sukarno as President, was proclaimed. Though the Dutch Government granted de facto recognition to the Republic in March 1947, it tried all means to incorporate it in some kind of union with the Dutch Crown. For two years Dutch resorted to dual policy of now repression, now peace. They used armed might and carried out hostilities in the name of 'police action.' India, and several other Afro-Asian countries gave full support to Indonesian nationalists. Thus, Indonesia's struggle on its part was largely peaceful, yet violence was used to suppress it. The Indonesian nationalists had to fight a long struggle for four years against the Dutch. It was virtually an open war between the Colonial Power and the nationalist forces.

The same story, but with far more bloodshed, was repeated in Vietnam. The French colony of Indo-China was occupied by the Japanese during the Second World War. A reference was made to Vietnam in Section 7.3.2 dealing with liberation movements. French Indo-China included Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Vietnam itself was a Union of the Protectorates of Annam and Tongking and the colony of Cochin-China (Together known as three Kys, and were Annanite by race and Chinese by culture); the protected Kingdoms of Luang Prabang or Laos, and Cambodia were Thai by race and Indian by culture. During the Japanese occupation, three Kys became the autonomous state of Vietnam, and upon the Japanese withdrawal Ho Chi Minh, the leader of Communist dominated nationalist coalition proclaimed the independent republic of Viet. As in case of Korea, the three Kys got divided as the British took control of the territory south of 16 parallel and the Chinese in the north. The north became communist and south became pro-US and anti-communist. From then, till early 1970s, the territory faced violence, conflict and war. It was French endeavour to regain control of Indo-China, but the Geneva Conference of 1954 finally terminated French control and independent states of North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were recognized. But, after the French withdrawal, America entered the scene and there was a prolonged struggle between pro-Soviet North and pro-US South Vietnam, till the entire Vietnam became a communist controlled state. Thus, the Indo-Chinese struggle virtually became a civil war.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Use space provided below each question to write your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) What was the utility of non-violent peaceful struggle to defeat colonialism?

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- 2) How did the armed struggles ensure success of anti-colonial struggles?

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7.5 THREE STAGES OF ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLES

Patterns and methods of anti-colonial struggles were largely influenced by changes in international environment and changes within the colonial powers. The Second World War, emergence of two Super Powers, Cold War and weakened position of once powerful Britain, France and other European Powers certainly ensured success of anti-colonial struggles. In this section, you will read about three stages of freedom struggles. These three stages are explained below as general patterns, not necessarily followed in all the colonies and all the anti-colonial struggles. Geoffrey Barraclough analysed the struggles for freedom by dividing them into three stages. Here no distinction is made between independence movements and liberation movements. The three stages discussed by Barraclough were: proto-nationalism; the rise of new leadership; and the struggle assuming the nature of mass movements.

7.5.1 Proto-Nationalism

The first stage, called proto-nationalism refers to the earliest period of anti-colonial struggles. During this early phase people in the colonies had not yet become aware of their rights and the need for independence. By and large, colonial rule was accepted by the local people. Nevertheless, social groups and political movements demanded reforms within the system of colonial rule. In India, the Indian National Congress was established in 1885, but not to oust the British rulers. For the next 20 years, the Congress remained a forum of quality debates. Its sessions were annual gatherings of western - educated well-dressed English-speaking elite. The then leadership believed in the superiority of British civilisation and Englishmen's sense of justice and fair play. The early demands of the Congress were limited to local reforms, limited share in the Councils and job opportunities for educated Indians. There was no confrontation with the colonial masters. It was the stage of submitting petitions and seeking reforms. In Indonesia, the first stage began only in 1910-11 with the beginning of religious - nationalist movement called Sarekat Islam. Similar movements began in African colonies like Algeria, Nigeria etc. only around 1920.

7.5.2 The Rise of New Leadership

The second stage is described as the rise of new leadership. As nationalism became mature and struggle against colonial powers became the goal, a number of new, patriotic, dedicated leaders emerged in the colonies who took over the control of movement. Nationalism began to gain ground among the middle classes. During this stage demands made on colonial powers were substantially expanded, and independence was considered as a future goal. In India, this stage lasted till after the First World War. The social base of the Congress Party had expanded, yet the struggle had not fully become a mass movement. Complete independence, or purna swaraj, was demanded only in 1930. Till then the goal was dominion status. During this period leadership passed from the hands of Gokhale to Mahatma Gandhi, and soon leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and Maulana Azad came in the forefront. In Indonesia, Sarakat Islam committed itself to independence in 1917 under the leadership of Sukarno. In Tunisia and Nigeria such turning points were reached in 1934 and 1944 respectively. There was no chronological similarity in different stages in different countries, but several prominent leaders emerged in different colonies. These included Jomo Kenyatta in Kenya, Kwame Nkrumah in Gold Coast (Ghana) and Aung San in Burma (Myanmar).

7.5.3 Mass Movement

The third and final stage leading to success of anti-colonial struggles was known as mass movement. National movements became so strong by this time that, in many cases, colonial rulers had to use force (often brutal force) to maintain themselves in power. In India, under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, the movement reached the common man even in the remote villages. This process began with the civil disobedience movement. The movement for purna swaraj was a mass struggle for independence. The British used force, arrested large number of people and often sent prominent leaders to jail. The British rulers had become panicky even with the mere announcement of Quit India Movement in August 1942. In Indonesia, a comparable movement could be launched by Sukarno only during the Second World War. In Nigeria, the third stage was reached only in 1951.

The three stages were not equally distinct everywhere. The process extended to longest period of time in the British colonies. In many of the French colonies it took just 10 to 20 years. In the Belgian Congo, there were hardly any demands for independence till 1955. Many local leaders then visualised a period of 60 years or longer for independence. Still, the turn of events was so fast that the Congo was free in 1960.

Check Your Progress 4

- Note: i) Use space provided below each question to write your answer.
ii) Check your answer with the answers given at the end of the unit.
- 1) Explain briefly the proto-nationalism stage of anti-colonial struggle.

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7.6 SUCCESS OF ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLES

The process of termination of colonial rule is described as decolonisation. The anti-colonial struggles achieved success and colonial system was liquidated in phases and stages. It took nearly 45 years for the entire process to be completed. Anti-colonial struggles achieved their first success in Asia, and then in Africa. In 1946 the Philippines achieved independence, and in 1947 India became free from British colonial rule. Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Burma (Myanmar) achieved freedom in 1948, and next year independence and sovereignty of Indonesia was formally recognized by the Netherlands. Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam (former Indo-china) were recognized as sovereign states in 1949, but they remained within the French Union until France finally lost control in 1954.

The second phase commenced in mid-1950s when Morocco and Tunisia left the French Union. Britain pulled out of Egyptian Sudan and Malaya became independent in 1957. But all these states had enjoyed some degree of autonomy even when they were parts of French or British colonial system. The freedom struggle of Gold Coast (Ghana) under the leadership of Nkrumah successfully ended in 1957. This struggle was a short affair, but its victory proved that the will of the colonial powers to rule was cracking. "French Community" established in 1958 to "assimilate" all the French colonies in it broke up just after two years as Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Upper Volta, Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Togo and Cameron all became independent. Also in 1960, Britain withdrew from Nigeria, an independent Somalia was created with the fusion of British and Italian Somaliland, and the Belgian Congo became independent. In 1961 British rule ended in Cyprus, Sierra Leone, Tanganyika and Kuwait. Next year Jamaica, Trinidad, Tobago and Uganda achieved freedom from Britain. In 1962, France ended her long war in Algeria and gave her full freedom. In 1963, anti-colonial struggle succeeded in Kenya, and Zanzibar also became free. While most of Asia and Africa became independent by mid 1960s, the struggle of the colonies of Portugal and Spain did not succeed till 1970s. With the fall of Portuguese ruler Salazar, Guinea - Bissau achieved its independence in 1974. Angola and Mozambique followed suit in 1975.

It is only in the last phase that Namibia succeeded in its long anti-colonial struggle in 1990 when South Africa was forced to grant independence to its neighbour. Although the United States always declared itself to be against colonial system it still continued to rule over Guam and Puerto Rico.

7.7 LET US SUM UP

A number of European powers had established themselves as rulers of large parts of Asia and Africa. The European Powers had converted the Afro-Asian countries into their colonies for economic exploitation. The colonies became only the raw material suppliers and markets for the finished goods dumped by the rulers. Politically, they were governed by the colonial powers. Thus, they were victims of colonialism and imperialism at the hands of European Powers such as Great Britain, France, Portugal, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands. The Germans were deprived of their colonies after the First World War. Peoples of colonies realised that until they fought for their rights, their socio-economic-political exploitation would continue.

The anti-colonial struggles were carried out by the peoples of colonies for their liberation. No uniform pattern was followed by all the colonies in their anti-colonial struggles, nor did they adopt any one common method. Generally speaking, two broad patterns were found. These were (i) national independence movements; and (ii) national liberation movements. Countries like India, Kenya,

Ghana, Burma etc. carried out independence movements. These movements were aimed at defeat of colonial powers, and transfer of political power from the European rulers to the local people. The Leftist scholars described these movements as bourgeois, professional and bureaucratic movements as they did not seek socio-economic reconstruction. Their objective was merely the transfer of power. The national liberation movements, on the other hand, had dual objectives - to achieve political independence and bring about complete socio-economic changes. These movements believed in socio-economic transformation of colonial societies.

Two different methods were used to achieve success of anti-colonial struggles. These were: (a) peaceful non-violent method as preached and practiced by Mahatma Gandhi, using methods such as satyagraha, boycott, non-cooperation with the rulers and finally peaceful disobedience of anti-people laws; and (b) armed struggles with the use of force to compel the foreign rulers to give up power, end exploitation and to withdraw themselves from the colonies. Although no two countries went through exactly same process, normally anti-colonial struggles passed through three stages. These were (i) proto-nationalism - when nationalism began to evolve, accepting the superiority of Europeans, yet seeking reforms concessions and limited participation in the councils; (ii) the rise of new leadership - when national sentiments had matured, new leaders emerged who were mostly educated in western countries, who were inspired by ideas of liberty and self-rule, and who prepared their countrymen to fight for their right and remove the colonial rulers; and (iii) the period of mass movements - when the movements reached the grassroot levels and common men and women came forward eventually forcing the colonialists to withdraw.

The anti-colonial struggles succeeded in different colonies in phases and stages spreading over a period of nearly 45 years from 1945 to 1990. But, most of the colonies had achieved their freedom in the first twenty years after the Second World War.

7.8 KEY WORDS

Colonialism : System of economic exploitation by the rich and industrialised countries of Europe. The victims of exploitation mostly were countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Imperialism : System of political control of one country over another. A bigger power establishes its rule over another country through the route of colonialism or through conquest.

Cold War : The term used for tension between two Power Blocs that had emerged in the world after the Second World War. The blocs led by the US and former USSR carried out the Cold War without the use of armaments or armed forces. It was diplomatic warfare.

Mau Mau Movement : A secret movement launched in Kenya that adopted militant methods. The aim of the agitation was to regain the land that had been occupied by the Britishers, to end colonialism and work for freedom.

Proto-Nationalism : The term is derived from 'proto-type' which means first model. It was nationalism in its initial form, or in infancy, which was yet to mature into mass movement.

7.9 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

- Guir Lundestad (1986). *East West North South*, Norwegian University Press Oslo.
- Peter Calvocoressi, (1985), *World Politics Since 1945*, Longman, London.
- Henri Grimal, (1919-1963), *Decolonisation, the British, French, Dutch and Belgian Empires*, London
- Palmer and Perkins, (1997- Indian ed.) *International Relations*, A.I.T.B.S. Publishers, Delhi.
- Jashwa S. Goldstein (1999), *International Relations*, Longman, New York.
- Richard C. Bone (1962). *Contemporary South-East Asia*, Random House, New York.
- J.S. Furnivall (1948), *Colonial Policy and Practice*, Cambridge.
- Richard Brack (1964). *Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey.
- K.A. Busia (1962) *The Challenge of Africa*, Frederick Praeger, New York.

7.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) A system of economic exploitation of weaker, underdeveloped countries of Asia and Africa by the industrialised nations of Europe. (For details please see Sub-section 7.2.1)
- 2) After initial phase of awe of the white rulers, the subject peoples refused to accept that they were a burden. In fact, the white rulers were destroying local economies and social and political systems. They desired liberation and self-governance. (For details please see Sub-section 7.2.2)

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Whereas the national independence movements sought removal of foreign rulers and transfer of power to the local people, the liberation movements sought the transformation of socio-economic structure also. (For details please see Section 7.3)
- 2) The aim of national liberation movements was not merely to achieve political independence, but also to end social discrimination and economic injustice by transformation of entire socio-economic system after political independence. (For details please see Sub-section 7.3.2)

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) The non-violent methods introduced by Mahatma Gandhi were useful in awakening the people, to make the freedom struggle a mass movement, to persuade the rulers to leave and achieve independence without bloodshed on either side. (For details please see Sub-section 7.4.1)

- 2) The armed struggles involved large masses, used force, violence and even guerrilla tactics so that the foreign rulers could be defeated through their own weapon i.e. the use of force. (For details please see Sub-section 7.4.2)

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) During this stage nationalism had just begun to emerge. It was in its infancy, seeking reforms through prayers and petitions. The approach was not agitational. (For details please see Sub-section 7.5.1).

UNIT 8 DYNAMICS OF STATE FORMATION IN COLONIAL ERA

Structure

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Establishment of the Colonial State
 - 8.2.1 Onset of the Industrial Revolution
 - 8.2.2 Colonial State in Asia
 - 8.2.3 Colonialism in and Scramble for Africa
 - 8.2.4 Colonial State in Latin America
- 8.3 Features and Functions of the Colonial State
 - 8.3.1 Retardation of Development
 - 8.3.2 Decline of Colonialism
- 8.4 Models of Colonialism
 - 8.4.1 British Colonial Policy
 - 8.4.2 French Colonialism
 - 8.4.3 Portuguese Colonialism
 - 8.4.4 The Belgian Case
- 8.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 8.6 Key Words
- 8.7 Some Useful Books
- 8.8 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

8.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this unit is to familiarise you with the reasons underlying the establishment of the Colonial State in countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, its various forms, nature and functions.

After going through this unit you should be able to:

- trace when and how the colonial state was established;
- explain the nature and functions of the colonial state; and
- recall different colonial models.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The colonial state was the structure of governance established by Europeans who conquered large parts of the non-European world between the fifteenth and nineteenth century. It was meant to uphold the economic and political interests of the colonial power and subordinate those of the natives if necessary with the use of force. Different European Powers followed different ways in the formation of their colonies. The methods adopted by the British, French, Portuguese and the Belgians were not the same. They followed different approaches and set up different colonial models. The colonial states had specific features, and performed functions that were detrimental to peoples of the colonies. In this unit you will read about different models of colonial state.

8.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COLONIAL STATE

Modern colonialism has been through a number of phases beginning with the 15th century onwards. The establishment of formal colonies and of the colonial state took place much later in the 19th century and is the product of historical

development of a world capitalist system. In the fifteenth century long oceanic voyages became possible due to invention of better ships. This prompted leading European countries such as Portugal and Spain and later Britain and France to conquer new lands in Asia, Africa and America. This was an early period of conquest, plunder, looting and piracy to amass wealth and led to redistribution of surplus wealth to the advantage of the Europeans, but was not a period in which formal colonies were formed. This surplus in the long run gained from the silver mines of Latin America, spice trade in the Far East, and the slave trade in Africa, was to play a role in financing the industrial revolution. This stage was followed by a second in which trade and mercantile interests, rather than simple conquest and rivalry between European countries to protect their interests in different parts of the world became important. A good example is the rivalry between the French and the British on the Indian subcontinent in which the British eventually ousted the French and established their own colonial state in India.

8.2.1 Onset of the Industrial Revolution

It was the onset of the Industrial Revolution in mid eighteenth century in Britain and a little later on the European continent, which changed the relationship between Europe and the rest of the world and made the establishment of a colonial state a necessity to look after the interests of the industrialised European states. The rapidly industrialising countries of Europe required large quantities of raw materials such as cotton, rubber, palm oil, etc. to produce machine-made goods. These were available or could be grown in large plantations in the colonies most of which fell in the tropical areas of the world. This led to rivalry among the Europeans for control over the colonial areas. By the early nineteenth century the rising industrial bourgeoisie also felt the need for external markets as well, where these goods could be sold. Their home markets had already been covered and it was essential to find an outlet if the rate of profit from machine manufacture was to be maintained. Hence it was now necessary to have "captive markets" i.e. markets under their tight control of the European Powers, where they could sell their goods without facing competition from similar goods produced by other European powers. A third factor was the need to invest the surplus capital that was being generated in the capitalist system of production. It was felt that investment in captive colonies would lead to high profit as monopoly methods could be employed. Although the major impulses were definitely economic, an important supporting political factor was the rise of nationalism and a spirit of competition in Europe following the unification of both Germany and Italy and especially after Germany's defeat of France in 1871. This led to the various European powers carving out clear-cut geographical areas of control between themselves in Asia and Africa and establishing direct control through formal structures of political domination, namely the colonial state. These colonial states then became part of the empires built by the European nations, as for example, India was made a part of British Empire.

8.2.2 Colonial State in Asia

The actual establishment of the colonial state is different in the various parts of the globe, and it is necessary to take a look at how this happened. In Asia large areas were already under the control of various private trading companies such as the East India Company in India, and the Dutch of the Netherlands in South-East Asia which had a charter from their respective Sovereigns and enjoyed a monopoly in trade. Hence in areas such as India the shift from rule by the East India Company to that of the British Crown in 1858, i.e. establishment of formal empire did not entail much change. The actual demarcation of the area of geographical control under the British on the Indian sub-continent had already

been settled during the wars with the French and with the native Indian states who accepted the suzerainty of the Company during the eighteen and early nineteen centuries. The wars in the Carnatic and the battle of Plassey provide good examples. In Ceylon (now called Sri Lanka) the British had managed to replace the Dutch in 1795 itself and the same is true of areas such as Malaya, where the British had managed to displace the Portuguese. In these areas the establishment of the colonial state, began much earlier than in Africa.

8.2.3 Colonialism in and Scramble for Africa

The story is very different in Africa. Colonialism came late to this continent and was more oppressive. Within the short period between 1880 and 1900 all of Africa, except Liberia and Ethiopia, was divided between and occupied by the European imperial powers namely, Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Spain and Italy. It has been described as the “partition” of Africa or “scramble” by the European powers to occupy their areas of influence and trade. By 1910, in place of numerous independent states a completely new and numerically smaller set of some forty artificially created colonies had emerged, and the colonial system had been firmly imposed upon Africa. In 1879 the French sent missions to push French imperial interests inland into Upper Senegal, and the Belgians attempted to intrude into the Congo Basin. The Germans also planted their flag in Togo and the Cameroon in 1884. This alarmed the British who also began preparations to move into the interior of Africa. It was with a view to avoid any armed confrontation among the imperial powers that an international conference was held in Berlin under the chairmanship of Bismarck, the Chancellor of Germany. This Berlin conference was attended by every west European nation except Switzerland, but not by even a single African state, and it lasted from 15th November 1884 to 31st January 1885. Four main rules were agreed upon by all the powers. First, before any power claimed an area, it should inform the other signatory powers so that any that deemed it necessary could make a counterclaim. Second, that all such claims should be followed by annexation and effective occupation before they could be accepted as valid. Third, that treaties signed with African rulers were to be considered as legitimate titles to sovereignty. Fourth, that each power could extend its coastal possessions inland to some extent and claim spheres of influence. These rules were embodied in the Berlin Act ratified on 26 February 1885. It must be clarified that the Berlin conference did not start but merely accelerated race for empire building that was already in progress.

The scramble was carried out in three stages. The first stage was the conclusion of a treaty between an African ruler and a European power under which the former was usually accorded protection and undertook not to enter into any treaty relation with any other European power, while the latter was granted certain exclusive trading and other rights. Thus between 1880 and 1895 the British concluded treaties with many rulers for example northern Ghana, Yorubaland, Benin and offered protection to the King of Asante, and the French with the king of Dahomey, and rulers of the Congo basin. The second stage was a series of treaties between the imperial powers themselves recognising and delimiting their spheres of interests and boundaries. Thus the Anglo-German treaty recognised British claims to Zanzibar, Kenya, Uganda, Northern Rhodesia, Bechuanaland, and eastern Nigeria; the Anglo-French treaty of the same year recognised French claims to Madagascar and the western boundary of Nigeria; the Franco-Portuguese treaty of 1886 and the German-Portuguese treaty of 1891 accepted Portugal's supremacy in Angola and Mozambique and delimited Britain's sphere in central Africa. These treaties, it should be emphasised, were concluded without any consultation with any African state. The third stage was that of conquest and occupation. Though termed by the Europeans as “pacification” it was the most

brutal of all from the Afrocentric viewpoint. Thus from 1885 the French began their invasions and occupation in western Sudan, the British occupied Asante in 1896, Ijebu in 1892, Benin in 1897 and Sudan between 1896 and 1899 and the Germans occupied East Africa between 1888 and 1907. The African rulers welcomed the treaties, which the European powers signed with them but resisted the actual occupation, which they had not anticipated. They used three methods: submission, alliance and confrontation. The third was not rare and all African states did resort to it when the other alternatives failed. No African State was economically or militarily powerful enough to resist the Europeans, the exception being Ethiopia who defeated Italy late in nineteenth century. But, even their defeat was merely a matter of time. It was only after this that the colonial state was established in Africa.

8.2.4 Colonial State in Latin America

The Latin American experience is totally different to that of Asia and Africa and needs separate mention. The colonial period on this continent lasted from about the early sixteenth to the early nineteenth century, though Spain and Portugal the two major powers began to take active interest and established a formal colonial state only in the seventeenth century. The Spanish and Portuguese adventurer-conquerors took this region by force, killing a large number of the local inhabitants or reducing them to slaves on plantations and mines. A large number of slaves were also transported here from Africa.

In contrast to Asia and Africa, large number of people from Spain and Portugal and also Italy settled permanently in these countries as a result of which they have a large European and a mixed population. Some like Argentina, due to immigration is almost ninety nine per cent white. While the Portuguese occupied Brazil, the rest of the continent came under Spain. Since this took place long before the Industrial Revolution, establishment of agricultural estates (called latifundia in Latin America) and opening of mines was the major activity and these areas supplied the home countries with raw materials. As a result export-led growth based upon primary goods became firmly established in the colonial period.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.
ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) Identify the factors that led to the establishment of colonial state.

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- 2) How did Asian countries come under the European rule?

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- 3) Trace briefly the scramble for Africa.

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- 4) Mention four decisions of Berlin Act of 1885.

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8.3 THE FEATURES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COLONIAL STATE

The colonial state had certain features that distinguish it from the state in Europe and the post-colonial state in the developing countries. Firstly, it was an instrument of control and oppression over the local inhabitants. To this end it established strong bureaucracies, police and military forces to maintain order. Hence unlike Europe it was an authoritarian and not a liberal democratic state. Highly centralised and modern systems of administration were established. Secondly, it was expected to uphold the economic and political interests of the European colonial rulers and their home country and not that of the local inhabitants. Thirdly, the colonial rulers also believed that they had a "civilising mission" to perform and attempted to transplant their culture and values in the colonies. They hence saw colonialism as a "white man's burden".

The role played by the colonial state can be best understood if divided into two major phases that are common for all colonies due to changes taking place in the world economy. These are: (1) An early phase of consolidation from mid nineteenth century to 1920 (1880s in the case of Africa); and 2) A second phase from the end of the First World War to de-colonisation after the Second World War, which saw the gradual decline of colonialism. The first phase saw the establishment of a strong colonial state and policies supportive of the interests of the rulers. It has been described as the "golden period of colonialism" because the demand as well as the price of raw materials remained high throughout, as many countries in Europe one after the other began to industrialise. As the colonies produced these required materials, in many there was a "sharing of gains" i.e., the natives also profited though this was limited to a small class which owned land or was involved in production or marketing of these goods. For example farmers producing cotton and sugarcane in India, cocoa in Ghana, groundnuts in the Ivory Coast or coffee in the neo-colony of Brazil, or rice in Indonesia etc., which were cash crops grown mainly for export and fetched high prices in the international economy.

To obtain these profits the colonial state erected new legal and land systems to maintain order and obtain revenue, the Zamindari and Ryotwari land systems established in India are a good example. The colonial state invested in railways, ports, roads, harbours etc., to open up the colonies in order to gain greater profits. There was monetisation of the economy and an attempt was made to create a labour class that would work in the plantations and mines. This was done by means of policies such as the "hut tax" imposed upon every person in parts of Africa, and the requirement to pay land revenue in cash in India, which forced

the natives to work for cash wages. These changes were needed to integrate the colonial system into the international economy and the capitalist structure of the colonial rulers.

8.3.1 Retardation of Development

Scholars such as A.G.Frank and Amiya Kumar Bagchi have argued that the economic policies followed by the colonial state, created underdevelopment and retardation of the colonial economies. The former means that the colonies were reduced to being merely exporters of primary raw materials feeding the rapidly expanding industries of Europe; the latter viewpoint argues, that the normal pattern of growth of these colonies was disrupted and progress prevented by the intrusion of the colonial state which implemented policies favouring the home country. For example, the infrastructure introduced was both inadequate and very unevenly distributed in the colonies. The railways and roads were meant to facilitate transport of raw material for export to the coast and not to link up and promote development of all parts of the economy. Similarly there was a shift from subsistence to commercial agriculture to produce items needed for export. As a result monoculture i.e., cultivation of a single crop for export and economic dependency on it arose which continued into the post-colonial period, for example cocoa in Ghana, cotton in Uganda etc. Thus a model of export-led growth which catered to the needs of the international and not the national economy became the pattern and there was little attempt to introduce diversification of the economy. The outcome has everywhere been uneven regional economic growth, which has been a major stumbling block to nation building in the post-colonial era.

The colonial system also led to delay of industrial and technological developments as the colonial rulers did not want any form of competition with finished goods produced by the home country. This led in some colonies to "de-industrialisation" i.e. local industry was killed due to the lower prices of machine produced goods from Europe. Protection was also given to home industry by not granting permission for setting up local industry. However the impact of colonialism was a mixed one and a number of benefits must be mentioned. The European powers introduced western education in their colonies, though this was initially meant to produce an educated class to assist in the governance of the colony. Urbanisation, transport and communications, irrigation works, modern technology, employment opportunities, social reforms, the gradual introduction of self-government in many colonies and development of a small middle class are some of the other benefits. Some of these measures, like promotion of technology, were taken in a very limited way.

8.3.2 Decline of Colonialism

Colonialism reached its highest point before World War I and then began to decline due to changes in the international economy, rejection of colonialism in Europe and emergence of national movements in the colonies demanding independence. After the First World War the demand and price of raw materials fell and colonialism was no longer a profitable venture and there was little further investment in the colonies. The economic depression of the 1930s and the Second World War, further weakened the imperial powers. During this second phase there was merely an attempt by the colonial state to maintain the system as it worked and finally to find a way to transfer power into native hands.

¹Although all the Latin American states attained independence in the early nineteenth century, they share many of the experiences. This is because at independence, many of them became neo-colonies of Britain upto at least the First World War, and the policies adopted by the newly established post-colonial

states were beneficial to it. An authoritarian state was established, export-led growth continued and industrialisation was delayed until almost the early 1900s by their ruling classes, which did not introduce any substantial changes in the economy and polity. It is for this reason that Latin America is today included among the developing countries and shares their characteristics.

Check Your Progress 2

Note:i) Use the space given below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) What were the main features and functions of the colonial state?

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- 2) Mention briefly the benefits of colonialism in Asia and Africa?

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8.4 MODELS OF COLONIALISM

As there are wide variations in colonial policy, four major contrasting models of colonialism can be briefly described: British, French, Belgian and Portuguese.

8.4.1 British Colonial Policy

British colonial policy by regarding the colonies not as integral parts of the home country but as countries with their own civilisation and values, allowed and facilitated in some ways the greatest amount of autonomous development. There was far greater "sharing of the gains of colonialism" between the colonial masters and the native peoples. The latter were, gradually over a period of time, accorded an increasing share in the system of governance and their views were taken into consideration in important matters affecting them. For example, this was done through various Acts passed by British Parliament, such as Indian Council Acts of 1892 and 1909 etc. As a result there was less disruption and greater accommodation of traditional values and ways of life. The British invested a great deal in some colonies such as India, Ceylon and Malaya. By the 1940s there was a feeling that colonial rule imposed responsibility for the wellbeing of the dependent peoples and greater acceptance of the need to end colonialism speedily.

8.4.2 French Colonialism

French colonialism adopted in contrast a policy of economic, political and cultural assimilation i.e. the colonies specially in the case of Africa, were seen as part of the mother country. For example, political leaders from the colonies could stand for election to the French National Assembly, the lower House of Parliament, the best example being Humphrey Boigny from the Ivory Coast who became a member of the French Communist Party. There was greater disruption in the

traditional culture. The French continued to invest in the colonies even after the Second World War and found it very difficult to adjust to the idea of decolonisation until the revolution in Algeria in 1958. Even then they decided on retaining close ties and aid to their former colonies leading to many of them being described by their neighbours in Africa as "neo-colonial satellites" of France. Yet French colonialism is similar to British in so far as it did not rely on use of force to govern, compared to our two other models.

8.4.3 Portuguese Colonialism

Portuguese colonialism provides in some ways the greatest contrast. It is based much more on use of force and even as some have pointed out, racial prejudice. Oldest among the colonial powers, it hung on to some of its colonies till 1975, long after the other colonial powers had departed from their colonies. It created a small "civilised" class among the large number of "uncivilised natives" and depended on them to help control and govern their colonies. The overwhelming majority of the colonial inhabitants remained illiterate and untouched by modernity, they were largely trained to work as labourers on land, industry, or in the mines. There was also competition, and in fact violence between the local Africans and Portuguese labourers who emigrated in the hope of gaining good jobs. It was only after uprisings such as the one in Angola in 1961, that reforms were announced and attempts made to provide some elements of self-governance.

Although investment took place in the colonies, it was rarely for the benefit of the colonial peoples. The underlying reason was that Portugal remained technologically a backward power in Europe and had to use direct and often oppressive methods of governance to control its colonies and prevent them from falling into British or French hands. It had a dictatorial form of government at home and was unable to overcome its own problems of poverty and illiteracy. Many scholars feel Portugal and Spain transplanted authoritarianism into Latin America which is evident even today in the lack of democracy on that continent, and frequent military take over in some of the Latin American countries.

8.4.4 The Belgian Case

The Belgian case falls somewhere in between. The Belgians established a strong, paternal and centralised administration, which they controlled directly from the home country. However the colonial government was assisted in the Belgian Congo by large private Belgian companies that were allowed to exploit the natural resources, and the Church, which had a strong presence. Unlike the British they did not associate the local inhabitants in self-governance, or attempt cultural assimilation like the French. While the Congo was rapidly modernised and there was much investment in infrastructure and mining, very little was spent on education or improvement in the life conditions of the people who remained backward and poor and no small westernised educated middle class emerged as in the British or French African colonies. As a result when Belgian rule ended abruptly in the Congo there were no trained officials who could take over the country creating massive problems.

Check Your Progress 3

- Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.
- ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.
- 1) Explain the French model of assimilation.

- 2) What were the features of Portuguese colonialism?

8.5 LET US SUM UP

The colonial state was the product of historical development of an expanding world capitalist system that created industrial capitalism in Europe and colonialism in the non-European world. Until the industrial revolution, trade was the basis of colonialism but the advent of machine-made goods led to formal colonial structures.

It was different from the state in Europe in having strong, centralised and authoritarian features, in providing very little participation to the local inhabitants and upholding the interests of the colonial rulers.

The actual establishment of the colonial state took place in different ways in different colonies but everywhere it was the result of conquest and subjugation of the local inhabitants. In Asia private charter companies were involved, in Africa the European powers carved out geographical areas amongst themselves and used force to establish their claims. In Latin America it was born out of conquest by the Spanish and Portuguese adventurers in the name of the Crown.

The policies of the colonial state created underdevelopment and retardation in the economic sphere. There was also oppression and suppression of the interests and demands of the local inhabitants. There were some benefits of colonialism such as education, employment, urbanisation, infrastructure, transport and communication, new technology etc. However the impact everywhere was different.

Four models of colonialism can be identified: British, French, Portuguese and Belgian. While the former two were not openly oppressive and provided some measure of development and self-government the latter two were based upon use of force to extract profit with little consideration of its impact upon the natives.

8.6 KEY WORDS

Neo-colonialism: The continued and indirect influence, or in few cases control, by the ex-colonial powers over their former colonies through unequal trade, interference in governance, MNCs etc. It is also used interchangeably with imperialism to suggest that even after the end of formal colonialism, the European countries still have many informal channels of control over the non-European world.

Piracy: This term is generally used for robbery committed on high seas. Before the advent of civil aviation (travel by air) most people travelled by sea, from one country to another, and goods were also sent by sea. When robbers managed to board a ship and looted the travellers or stole the cargo, they were known as pirates and the practice was called piracy.

8.7 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

Michael Barrat Brown, *After Imperialism*

Bipin Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism in India*

A. Adu Boahen, *African Perspectives on Colonialism*

B. Sutcliffe & R. Owen, *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (Longman, London, 1972).

L.H. Gann & Peter Duignan, *Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960 vol 2. The History and Politics of Colonialism 1914-1960* (CUP, 1970).

Frank G., *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America Historical Studies of Brazil and Chile* (New York 1969).

8.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Colonialism and the colonial state is the product of the historical development of a world capitalist system since the fifteenth century. Initially this process began with trade and conquest by the Europeans in parts of Latin America, Asia and Africa. However the industrial revolution by creating first a need for raw materials and later markets for finished goods, led to competition and conflict between the great powers over control over these regions. The latter therefore felt the need to create formal colonies under their direct control over clearly demarcated geographical areas from which they could gain economic benefits. Thus the colonial state is a product of the historical logic of capitalist development and of competition among the European powers. (For details please see Section 8.2).

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) The colonial state was constructed to uphold the interests of the colonial power and not that of the natives. Its purpose was to open up the colony for exploiting its material resources and providing goods for export that would benefit the colonial rulers. Hence it was a centralised, authoritarian state based upon use of force and which suppressed the demands and desires of the local inhabitants. While it provided a modern bureaucratic structure, the policies of the colonial state led to de-industrialisation, retardation of its economic growth and political backwardness of the people, which created problems in nation building in the post-colonial period. (For details please see Section 8.3).
- 2) Some of the benefits included introduction of western education, urbanisation, development of means of transport and communication, irrigation works and modern technology. (For details please see Section 8.3).

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Colonies were seen as part of France politically, culturally and economically. Political leaders in the colonies could seek election to the French Parliament (For details please see Sub-section 8.4.2).
- 2) The Portuguese often used force mainly in Latin America and tried to "civilize" the natives; most of the natives in Portuguese colonies remained illiterate and untouched by modernity. Portugal itself remained technologically backward under dictatorial regime. (For details please see Sub-section 8.4.3).

UNIT 9 SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND STRATIFICATION

Structure

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Meaning
- 9.3 Perspectives on Social Structures
 - 9.3.1 Structuralism
 - 9.3.2 Functionalism
 - 9.3.3 Marxian
 - 9.3.4 Weberian
 - 9.3.5 Weberian and Marxian-Integration-Habermas
- 9.4 Social Stratification
 - 9.4.1 The Marxist Approach
 - 9.4.2 The Weberian Approach
 - 9.4.3 The Functionalist Approach
- 9.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 9.6 Some Useful Books
- 9.7 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

9.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit is intended to acquaint you with the social structures on which political institutions base their actions. However given the fact that there are different ways of looking at social structures the orientation of political action depends on the understanding of social structures. After going through this unit, we hope, you would:

- Understand the relation between social structures and social practices;
- Highlight the different approaches to the understanding of social structures;
- Relate the political institutions to social structures; and
- Outline the different perspectives on social stratification.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In common language we often ascribe the successes or failures of political action to certain social realities such as class, nation, caste, religion, gender and so on. For instance, we might say that the continued prevalence of untouchability in India has effectively limited the benefits of affirmative action reaching out to dalits; or women's political participation has been thwarted by gender exploitation. We, often, say that such and such a political decision or outcome has been due to the presence or absence of certain social structures. Most of us are aware that the course of public decision-making is not merely based on rule of law or franchise in a formal sense. Such a course also depends on the operation of social forces.

Social structures are not constant. They change and reconstitute themselves. They undergo transformation with the activity of their members. They are subject to changes through scores of ways but more specifically through political action. In India, scholars have pointed out how the electoral process has led to the reformulation and reassertion of caste identities. Social agents or actors (members of a society) may understand their position and role in social structures differently.

Resources and powers, honours and rankings of social agents widely vary in any society. Members composing any society are assigned to roles with demarcated functions. A large number of roles that social actors are called upon to play are not of their choosing but are assigned to them. "I did not decide the caste, religion and linguistic community that I was born into."

Although the stratifications they beget undergo change, such a change is gradual and these stratifications tend to persist over time.

Social structures and stratification are primary concepts in the writings of several major thinkers such as Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber and Levi Strauss. Talcott Parsons made concepts of social structure and stratification central to his functional analysis. In India democratic politics functions within the context of these structures. We cannot understand the political ideas and actions of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, B.R. Ambedkar and Rammanohar Lohia and scores of other modern Indian thinkers and political leaders without understanding their perspectives on social structures in general and regarding structures in India in particular. The orientation and working of political institutions greatly depend upon the way they work within these structures.

9.2 MEANING

'Social Structure' and 'Stratification' are core concepts in social theories. But social theories and their approaches widely differ and so do these concepts. There are major differences regarding the scope and determination of these concepts. Besides there are two major streams employing structural analysis and explanations: the Structuralists or the Structural-functionalists, or simply, Functionalists. Their use of terms, 'structure' and 'stratification' markedly vary. There is a second major stream of Marxists. Max Weber and Karl Marx, belonging to these two different streams use their concepts in their own ways. Further, there are the terminological problems: Terms such as 'social structure', 'social system' and 'social classes' overlap in several respects and so do 'social stratification' and 'social formation'. Besides the origins of terms such as 'structure' and 'stratification' lie with the biological and geological formulations of 19th century. Our approach to social reality today may not be in tune with such formulations.

- i) Tentatively, we can say that social structures are ordered relations of parts of a whole forming an arrangement in which elements of social life are linked together. There is continuity in such relations or patterns of interaction over time. Therefore, social structures have the following two fold connotations:
 - a) They are patterns of interactions between social actors or groups.
 - b) They imply relative persistence, endurance and durability over time.
- ii) As in the case of social structures, so with respect to social stratification, there are wide differences between social theorists.

From the **structural-functional perspective**, Talcott Parsons says that social stratification is, "The differential ranking of human individuals who compose a given social system and their treatment as superior and inferior relative to one another in certain socially significant respects."

Even if one adopts this definition, the ranking of social agents might vary widely as there may not be agreement on the criteria of ranking. If one employs a class perspective the meaning of social stratification is markedly in opposition to the

functional one. Here the emphasis would not be ‘ranking’ but on conflict. The conflict is on account of exploitation centered around the relations of production. Marx makes this clear in one of his formulations of class:

“In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of other classes and put them in hostile opposition to the latter they form a class”.

Stratification leads social action in certain direction within a social system. (It's the grid through which differential communication and deferences are routed). It upholds a system of order in terms of which life's opportunities are conferred on actors. Marxism suggests that under revolutionary conditions, the revolutionary masses make social stratification their primary target of attack and attempt to overhaul the relations embedded in it. But short of revolutionary conditions, systems of stratification may enable different levels and degrees of mobility to social agents. One of the important concepts coined by the late M.N. Srinivas, an eminent Indian sociologist to denote such social mobility in India is ‘Sanskritisation’ i.e., upward mobility of lower castes in the caste system by adopting the beliefs, practices and rituals of the upper castes.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

- ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Give the meaning of social structures.

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- 2) Read the following and mark the correct answer. Differential ranking is termed as:

- a) Social Stratification b) Social Structure
c) Social System d) Social Class

9.3 PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL STRUCTURES

The term ‘structure’ has been employed by many thinkers to understand the social world. We can identify certain distinct trends among them:

9.3.1 Structuralism

Structuralists emphasise sustaining structures - One of the major intellectual tendencies where structures conceived in a variety of ways was given absolute primacy and efficacy and the subject as an agency came to be disregarded was the tendency called structuralism. In this conception structures were removed from the objective worlds and were transposed to the domain of culture, beliefs and thought. It discounted the possibility of any direct encounter with the social reality as functionalism suggested. The operation of the structures resulted in social action and transformation or provided explanations for them.

One of the earliest manifestations of this tendency was in the study of language. Hitherto, it was understood that words and language are expressions of concepts and representations of objects. Linguistic structuralism made understanding internal to language. A linguistic sign is made of sound image and a concept. The sound image relates to the sounds and syllables of the sign; the concept is a mental construct. The sound image is the signifier and the concept is the signified.

Linguistic structuralism pointed out that the relation between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary, a matter of convention. There is nothing in common between a tree and the word "tree". The crucial relation is not between the sign and the real world of objects. It is between the sign and the overall system of language. Meaning is arrived at by the relation of differences within sound images working together to produce a positive meaning. It is the product of structure and form and not of substance, made of concepts or the signified. Language creates meaning rather than conveys it.

In the work of Levi Strauss, the social anthropologist, structure denoted something entirely different from the empirical structures of Functionalism. The structure that persists is characteristic of human social organisation as such and not the structure of a particular society associated with a scientific culture. Scientific knowledge is not induced from sensory observations; those observations should be made intelligible. He saw widely varied social practices as expressions of a theoretically constituted structure. Existing practices do not sustain a structure but a variety of social practices can be explained with reference to a single structure. Through the concept of structure he attempted to provide universal explanations. For him structures were models.

Structuralism of this kind had a deep impact on Marxism and it was developed by the French Philosopher Louis Althusser. He asserted the total separation between ideology and science and read it in the works of Marx calling it as epistemological break. Structuralism also left a deep impact in psychoanalysis particularly in the work of Jacques Lacan.

The present times have been characterised by a major revolt against structuralism in all these forms. Philosophers have called into question the assumptions and strivings of structuralists to constitute a social science in the natural science model. Post-structuralists have highlighted the historical and framework-relative character of the categories employed in social sciences and their inability to be universalised. Hermeneutics argues how communication is primarily bound to cultural ambiances and deconstructionists expose the assumptions underlying a position and ask the possible outcomes if those assumptions are reversed. There is a great return of the subject as the seat of consciousness and deliberate pursuit. Structures to the extent they are acknowledged at all are primarily seen as the sites of the constitution of the self rather than makers of the self.

9.3.2 Functionalism

Functionalists, sometimes called as structural-functionalists, underplay individual human initiatives and prefer social structures. The most important representatives of this trend are Emile Durkheim, A.R. Radcliffe Brown and Talcott Parsons. They see social structures as external to individual actors. These structures vary from one society to the other and largely explain the similarity and differences between one society and another. The behaviour of individuals in social life is to be explained with them in view. They emphasize careful scrutiny of social facts and identifying the patterns of interaction holding them together. They see in society a normative order that assigns duties and responsibilities, prevents deviant behaviour and ensures value consensus.

This trend definitely underplays the role that actors play in the functioning of the social structures and advancing alternatives. It marginalises or ignores the role that social agents play in understanding the relations they are involved in and engages with them in markedly different ways.

This trend does not adequately distinguish the working of the social structures and natural processes. Although it proclaims value-neutrality, it has strong bias towards maintenance of the existing social order and seeing social change as reorganisation existing social structures.

9.3.3 Marxian

Marxian : Importance to class-structure and economic relations as basic.

Marxists have emphasised class-structure as the key to understanding societies. Classes are formed on the basis of the relation of social agents to the means of production and to social produce as a whole and the resultant solidarity or bonds that they produce. In Marxist understanding of class-structure there is an overt emphasis on economic relations. It is expressed in the metaphor of 'base' and 'superstructures'. While the economy constitutes the base, the political, cultural, ideological and legal spheres form the superstructure.

The class structure of a society primarily rests on the relation between two basic classes and the role that other classes play is marked by these basic classes. In a capitalist society, for instance, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are the basic classes. There might be other classes such as the peasantry, craftsmen, professionals, landlords etc. but the role that these classes can play is demarcated by the basic classes.

Marxists understand Classes as those that are formed through class struggle. It is in and through political struggles that classes realise their allies and demarcate their enemies.

Marxism does admit the autonomy of political, cultural and ideological structures in relation to the economic process. But they are not clear about the nature and scope of this autonomy. Marxists do admit the existence of autonomous social strata and factions but they are encapsulated within classes. They find it difficult to explain cross-class and trans-class phenomena such as identity and gender issues. While Marxists do recognise the autonomy of human agency, its relation to class-structure is highly debatable. Besides, Marxists have not adequately conceptualised the relation between class-structure, the moral domain and the persistence of social stability. In India the relation between class structure and caste structure has been a very complex one to be explained.

9.3.4 Weberian

Max Weber: Multi-dimensional and integrated approach

Max Weber, emphasised a multi-dimensional approach to understand social structures. He attempted to integrate structure and agency, material and normative dimensions. He highlighted the role of the knowing subject and did not see him/her as passive receptacles of the operation of the social structures. He argued that meaning is not intrinsic to the social world waiting to be discovered through rational inquiry. Human actors interpret and construct the meaning of the social world around them. Different viewpoints embodying different values and interests, may, therefore, mean different readings of the social structures. Weber argued that 'unintended consequences of action' beget social structures such as markets, money and language. The rise of capitalism, he suggested, was the outcome of the Protestant Ethic which developed among its

adherents self-discipline and moral accountability for their actions to God in view of personal salvation.

Max Weber distinguished between Power and Authority. Authority is legitimate power. Legitimate authority involves an element of voluntary compliance. He identified three sources of authority: traditional, legal-rational and charismatic. Traditional authority is ascriptive and inherited; legal-rational authority is based on calculability, intellectualisation and impersonal logic of goal-directed action; and charismatic authority is extraordinary personal power identified in and with a particular individual. Weber preferred the State, and particularly the bureaucracy as the fountain of power. Power represents action likely to succeed even against opposition and resistance of those to whom it is applied. Bureaucracy embodies legal-rational authority which he saw as undermining other forms of authority such as traditional and charismatic. He thought that the process of rationalisation, understood as calculability, intellectualisation and impersonal and goal-directed action, are increasingly overtaking human activity. This affects all institutions. He uses the metaphor of iron-cage to denote a situation where concern for means and instruments drives out the concern for human ends.

Although Weber's conception of structure attempts to relate agency and subjectivity with external reality, it suggests little inter-subjective bond between social actors. In its absence rational-legal domain of the state alone becomes the normal social bond, suggesting the metaphor of 'iron-cage'. Weber accords little consideration for democracy and active citizenship to sustain social relations. His understanding of the social structure under the modern conditions conception constantly calls for charismatic spells of one kind or another to sustain people's engagement with the social order. But charisma cannot be anticipated, calculated and predictable. It's a double-edged sword. Therefore, rational-legal authority will always attempt to keep it at bay. Weber does not adequately engage with the inequality of wealth, power and status. There is little to suggest that he thought that it was the responsibility of the state to promote an equalitarian order. A shared moral domain cannot arise in a Weberian framework.

9.3.5 Weberian and Marxian - Integration-Habermas

One of the important thinkers of our times who has carried the Weberian conception further, while maintaining an interface with Marxism, is Jurgen Habermas. He recognises the role of social structures and the calculative and predictive orientation they suggest but he also takes into account the dimension of power and domination built into them. At the same time he takes seriously the potentiality of arriving at meaning built into language communication.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Outline the functionalist understanding of social structures.

2) Highlight three characteristics of social class as understood by Marxists.

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3) Choose the correct answer

For Levi Strauss, structure is:

- a) empirical
- b) model
- c) rational
- d) particular

4) What is the difference between Structuralism and Structural-Functionalism?

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9.4 SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

In the earlier section, we dealt with the issue of social structures and how thinkers of different streams like Structuralists, Functionalists, Weberians and Marxists interpreted them. We also noted differences among them. In this Section we will read about stratification or layers in a society.

Stratification has a great deal to do with the prospects of any specific political system. Aristotle suggested that the viability of constitutional government rests on a particular kind of stratification. Lenin argued for the prospect of socialist transformation of Tsarist Russia based on an understanding of its changing social stratification.

9.4.1 The Marxist Approach

Marx employs ownership and control over the means of production and relationship of social agents to the process of production as the criteria for social stratification. Marx also uses the concepts of strata and factions to indicate the clashing interests found in a class.

Classes

In a country like India, Marxists would identify the following classes: a) The **bourgeoisie** (to indicate mainly the industrial bourgeoisie) who **own** and **control** the means of production and appropriate surplus; b) the **landlords** who own or enjoy title over land, play little role in the production process but obtain a share of the produce for themselves; c) the **workers** (to indicate generally the industrial proletariat) who do not own or control the means of production but depend on their labouring capacity for their livelihood; d) the **peasantry**, distinguishable into diverse strata and possessing different extent of land and other means of production but who at the same time directly participate in the process of production. (The rich peasant is a problematic class/strata in this class/category).

In some respects he is akin to the industrial bourgeoisie but in other respects to the peasant). This stratum is also inclusive of the rural proletariat made of landless workers and marginal peasantry who generally live off by working for others; and the e) **petit bourgeoisie** made of professionals, the traders and the craftsmen who are not directly involved in the production process but play a variegated set of roles in terms of extending services and imparting skills.

Class consciousness : In fact even if a group held a number of objective characteristics akin to a class but which does not possess consciousness, to that extent it could not be considered as a class. Marx distinguished different members of a class. First, members of a class who are least conscious of being members and whose practices, other than the economic, have little to do with their class position. Secondly, there is a **class-in-itself**. Here, a class collectively pursues measures to better its lot in existing class structure by promoting its particular demands such as workers fighting for better wages. Thirdly, there is the **class-for-itself**. A class pursues its class interests without being intimidated by the prevailing class-structure.

One of the most important contributions in the understanding of social stratification from the Marxist perspective has been the work of **Antonio Gramsci**, the Italian Marxist theoretician. He asked the question how dominant classes continue to dominate over societies based primarily on class stratification. One of the concepts that he used to explain it was '**hegemony**'. It denotes not merely domination but leadership wherein the consent of the dominated is elicited through several ways.

9.4.2 The Weberian Approach

While Marx based social stratification on class, Weber introduced a model of stratification based on CLASS, STATUS AND POWER. He understood class very differently. For him a class is composed of people who have life chances in common as determined by their power to dispose of goods and skills for the sake of income. The crucial aspect of class is its situation in the market. Class consciousness is not a requirement for the making of a class.

Status refers to the social ranking, honour and esteem that a group is held in. These are attributes attached to particular styles of life and groups are ranked as high or low accordingly. Ranking, styles and avocations in terms of status vary from one society to the other. Therefore, while class is universalistic, status tends to be more particularistic. For example in India the caste system is a specific mode of expression of status. Ritual ranking attached to caste becomes one of the major factors of stratification.

Weber saw power as chance of a man or group to realise their will even against opposition of others. He thereby dispersed power across individual agents. This was very much unlike Marx who saw power primarily as a class-relation. At the same time Weber attributed the monopoly of coercive power to the state. In this conception there was little place for intermediary institutions between the state and individual social agents.

For Weber all the three forms of stratification, Class, Status and Power may converge in terms of some social agents or they need not. Further, sometimes anyone of them could affect the other two or could be translated into the other. They however, cannot be reduced to a single form. Weber also saw stratification in terms of two models: ascriptive and achievement. Ascriptive stratification, be it class, status or power is based on inherited characteristics. Achievement is the successful attainment of the concerned individual or group.

9.4.3 The Functionalist Approach

The functionalist approach to stratification is associated with such thinkers as Emile Durkheim, Kingsley Davis, Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton.

Functionalists look at modern society as a complex of highly differentiated system of roles. Different men and women have to be persuaded to assume these roles. Stratification is based on role allocation. Roles set different goals for individuals and groups.

Functionalists see stratification as the mechanism through which society encourages men and women to seek to achieve the diverse positions necessary in a complex system. The positions require different skills and are endowed with different rewards. Through stratification motivation is provided to social agents to perform their roles. The status corresponding to the roles imparts recognition. Talcott Parsons has pointed out three sets of characteristics which are used as the basis of ranking:

- a) Possessions: i.e. those attributes that people own
- b) Qualities belonging to individuals including race, lineage or sex
- c) Performances: i.e. evaluation of the way roles are fulfilled

Different societies emphasise different characteristics: Feudal society stressed on ascribed qualities; a capitalist society values possessions and a communist society on performance.

Functionalists feel that industrial society with its division of labour encourage only one set of values those involving individual success. It results in anomie or alienation. A stable society they feel is a prerequisite for integrated personality. Further as stratification based on role allocation involves inequality it calls for ideological justification that explains, justifies and propagates the system of inequality. Therefore functionalists accord a great deal of importance on patterns of social solidarity embodying moral consensus and normative regulation. They see a major role for religion in this task.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.
ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Read the following carefully and mark the correct answer.

For Weber class is based on

- a) Ownership and control of means of production
- b) Esteem and status
- c) Shared life-chances
- d) Social role

- 2) Why do functionalists stress on social solidarity based on moral consensus and norms?

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9.5 LET US SUM UP

The unit we read explained first the meaning of social structures and how different thinkers conceived the idea. Social structures which form the basis for explaining social behaviour and policies, is simply a relation of constituting parts to the constituent whole. Elements of social life are linked together in a broad encompassing pattern. Social structure links individuals and lends a definite behaviour. Structuralists, like Levi Strauss held out structures as universal models while Functionalists explained the behaviour of individual members referring to the social structures in which they are present. Both discouraged individual initiatives, however giving primacy to the maintenance of structural whole, whereas Max Weber preferred a multi dimensional approach, distinguished between Power, Authority and legitimacy and gave importance to individuals to operate social structures. Karl Marx saw structure in terms of class layers which stresses economic considerations as the base over which are built legal, political and cultural systems.

After we understood social structures through divergent approaches, we discussed how structures are divided. This is called stratification. The need for study of stratification is because it makes constitution of democratic government viable, according to Aristotle, and establishment of Socialism possible, as Lenin thought.

For Marx, social stratification provided the means to study relationship of the owners of the means of production and the entire processes of such a production.

Marx divided the society according to different classes based on their economic activities and found out possibilities of a class consciousness or common belongingness to a certain class existing. Following in the footsteps of Marx, Antonio Gramsci analysed the behaviour of dominant classes in society calling the relationship as 'hegemony'. Max Weber viewed stratification in terms of Class, Status and Power and denied the necessity of class consciousness to constitute a class. He distinguished between class (generalistic).

Status (particularistic) and Power (as a will or capacity of men to realise a goal even amidst opposition) but maintained that there is a possibility of convergence between the three social categories. Thinkers, such as Emile Durkheim, Davis, Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton who come under the group, Functionalists, saw great hopes in social stratification as it offered members opportunities to achieve positions, roles and goals necessary for advancement in a modern complex society. Roles depend on the individual's possessions, qualities due to birth, and performances of services. They call for integrated personality and social solidarity. Agents that bring about such a stability are moral consensus, religion, and rules and regulations.

9.6 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

Beteille A., 1969: *Caste, Class and Power: Changing Patterns of Classification in Tanjore Village*. Bombay, Oxford University Press.

Giddens A., 1979: *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis*. London, Macmillan.

Sharma K.L., 1997: *Social Stratification in India, Issues and Themes*, New Delhi, Sage.

Turner J., 1984: *Societal Stratification: A Theoretical Analysis*, New York, Columbia University Press.

9.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Social structure is an arrangement where elements of social life are linked together. They are durable and consistent.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) In the views of Functionalists or structural-Functionalists, Social structures are more important than the role individual citizens/members play. They also emphasise normative behaviour and rules of a social structure and are concerned about how a societal structure is held together. Social facts, according to them, should be scrutinised. Individuals' duties and responsibilities are given great stress. Thus, maintaining the existing order is their concern.
- 2) For Marxists understanding social classes is based on: relationship of social agents to the means of production and to social produce (Economic relations are emphasised): Political, Cultural, legal and ideological areas form a superstructure on the economic base; class struggle or political struggle as determinant of class formation.
- 3) Structuralism understood structures not as empirical structures as conceived by Functionalists but as characteristics of general human social organisation. To the structuralist, structure does not relate to a particular Society and Culture. Social practices can be understood referring to the structure. Structures are models of universal Functionalists which explain behaviour of individuals in social life with reference to structures. For them a society assigns duties and responsibilities, prevents deviant behaviour of individual members and promotes value consensus. But both these approaches downplay individual initiatives.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Industrial society, laying stress on a single set of values and division of labour tends to alienate individuals. For the development of an integrated personality, a stable society is needed. Such a society is possible only if there is moral consensus and norms are followed and vice-versa.

Structure

- 10.0 Objectives
 - 10.1 Introduction
 - 10.2 History of Class Formation
 - 10.2.1 Agrarian Class Formation
 - 10.2.2 Industrial Class Formation
 - 10.3 Theories of Class Formation
 - 10.3.1 Marxian Theories
 - 10.3.2 Weberian Theories
 - 10.4 New Developments
 - 10.5 Let Us Sum Up
 - 10.6 Key Words
 - 10.7 Some Useful Books
 - 10.8 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises
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10.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit theories and processes of class formation are discussed. After going through this Unit we hope you would be able to:

- explain the meaning of the term class;
 - trace the process of class formation;
 - define and explain various theories of class formation;
 - identify new developments; and
 - compare class formation in various societies.
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10.1 INTRODUCTION

In common speech, the term class is used in varying senses. One speaks of upper, middle and lower, of propertied and non-propertied, of productive and unproductive, of educated and uneducated, classes. In this context, however, the term class is practically meaningless; it only says that groups of people have certain characteristics in common. To give this conception a definite outline and scientific utility, the term class must denote a group where the characteristics held in common are perfectly definite and already determined.

The writers on the question of what is essential in the concept of classes fall broadly into two groups — those selecting the objective factors as the basis of class and those selecting the subjective ones. Among the former, some regard the basis as ownership or non-ownership of the instruments of production — a concept essentially Marxian; others lay stress upon the general standard of living, holding that in modern society the elements around which a class is built are generally the same within a particular standard of living. Other objective factors have been selected as well; thus Max Weber builds the concept of class upon (1) the possession of economic means, (2) external standard of living, (3) cultural and recreational possibilities.

According to the subjectivists, classes are groups whose sources of income are similar and whose economic interests coincide. In this conception the subjective factor lies in a community of interest and outlook, rooted in the economic structure of any given period. In such a view, common interests, common ideology, common consciousness of cohesion comes to the fore. Other theorists

regard as essential the degree of esteem in which a group is held, thus making classes essentially a gradation or ranks based on prestige.

10.2 HISTORY OF CLASS FORMATION

In primitive societies certain individuals were often set apart from the rest of the community because of acquisition of wealth or display of unusual craftsmanship; hereditary aristocracy and priesthoods which were also common grounds for status identities. The transition from this society of status to one of class occurred during the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. in Greece and in Rome.

The first class conflict in Greece arose from opposition to the landed aristocracy. The peasantry, heavily in debt to the aristocracy under a system where debt led to slavery, brought about the Solonian legislation and its extension to a wider circle of citizenry of political rights and admission to public office. These reforms divested the landed aristocracy of their legal sanctions and thereby transformed a differentiation by status into a differentiation of class. With the industrial and commercial development that followed the Persian wars, personal property became increasingly important and the conflict of classes was accordingly transformed.

An essentially similar development occurred in Rome. Social differentiation took place on the basis of status. Political power was concentrated among the landed families. To their opposite, stood a group of plebeians. Although they were free, they had no political rights. **This order was gradually broken down and the way opened for differentiation into classes.** When the transition had been completed the development of Roman social organization continued in the direction of sharpening the outlines of the class structure. Largely because of the wars and the competition of grain from other countries the peasant class began to disintegrate. Deprived of land and livelihood, the peasants thronged the metropolis. There they constituted an enormous proletariat leading a meager existence on public donations and offerings. Thus definite property classes emerged, with the sharpest contrasts showing up in the distribution of wealth.

In the Middle Ages, the feudal system represented a social organization based on status. With the increasing importance of production for the market and trade, and with the coming of the money economy, gradations arose among the free and the less free. Neither ranks nor classes remained permanent or unchanged but disintegrated into subgroups. Thus, gradations began to arise among the unfree as well.

With the growth of cities and trade a new occupational class took its place with the aristocracy and the peasants - the burghers. Office and vocation began gradually to determine social position. Members of the most diverse ranks by birth - even the unfree and the free men - found it possible to move to higher social strata. These new elements did not immediately displace the old; the two functioned side by side for several centuries. And while the new classes were occupational they remained at the outset quite rigid. But wealth and vocation kept continually displacing the facts of birth and descent.

While this evolution was essentially similar in all European States, the manner and time in which it took place differed. Particularly in the Italian city-states, England and France, the class organization evolved earlier than in other countries. In England the wealthy merchant class had by the end of the seventeenth century attained an influential place in Parliament. In France at this time numerous burghers had been elevated to the nobility and after 1715 they could acquire the estates of the nobility.

10.2.1 Agrarian Class Formation

Historically, rural areas in many countries have been characterized by extreme inequalities in economic and political power. Many countries with large rural populations and economies based on the production of primary products have continued to demonstrate such inequalities.

There are several general categories of agrarian class systems. **Slavery**, as it existed in the United States in the pre-Civil War era, is the most extreme system, because it fully limits access to land to a dominant class and provides for total control of the labour of a subordinate class. A second category, found in medieval Europe and colonial Latin America, is **feudal systems**. In such systems landlords seek to accumulate land primarily to enhance their status and power. They ensure a stable and dependent labour force through a monopoly over land. The landowners use indebtedness, overt coercion, and traditional social obligations and deference to maintain control over land and labour.

Agrarian capitalism, as developed in colonial areas of Southeast Asia in the late nineteenth century, is a third category. It is characterized by plantation production and relies on a monopoly over land and on slave, debt-bound, or wage labour to maintain domination over subordinate classes. Where large-scale capitalist farming has developed, as in parts of Mexico and Brazil, productive land has been monopolized by large landowners, and wage labour has replaced tenancy. Where small-scale capitalist farms have emerged, land and labour markets have been more open and less subject to coercion.

In countries with large agricultural sectors capitalism has become the dominant mode of production in agriculture in most regions. Capitalist producers have accumulated larger holdings of productive land, replaced labour through mechanization and other technological advancements. They now hire only for peak work periods, rather than maintaining a settled work force. This process has had several consequences. Productive land has become scarcer for small landholders, landlessness among the rural poor has increased, and wage labour has become more mobile and insecure. It was also expected that due to this process small land holders and peasant communities would eventually disappear, forced off the land and absorbed into a rural or urban labour force.

However small landholders and peasant communities have shown great capacity to survive the expansion of capitalism. At the level of the household, small landholders have diversified their sources of income. By joining together for production or marketing, some have been able to compete with capitalist producers. In some cases, rural producers have formed cooperatives or associations that allow them to compete with large landowners for markets. Another development that has affected agrarian class formation is the expansion of the State in the decades since World War II. The state is present in rural areas in the form of the local agricultural research institution, the marketing agency, the rural credit bank, the fair-price store, the school, the health dispensary, the public works office, and other institutions. Much state intervention in rural areas comes in the form of goods and services that can be provided selectively to individuals, groups, or communities. In cases of open and democratic party competition, national politicians have at times competed for the support of rural groups by promising or promoting policies of agrarian reform and rural development. Consequently, rural class formation is now seen to be determined by more than patterns of land ownership and labour use. It also depends on power relationships between rural landowners and the developmental state and on the ways in which subordinate classes have been incorporated into national political systems.

10.2.2 Industrial Class Formation

Class Formation



In the previous sub-section, we have read about changes taking place in the rural areas. In this sub-section, we will be studying developments in urban, social and economic formations. At the beginning of the nineteenth century changes in the distribution of wealth had already begun to determine class formation. With the growth of capitalism and large-scale industry the economic element — chiefly the possession of property — played a greater role than ever in the determination of class membership. Social factors were based almost entirely on the economic ones.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the most intense class conflicts took place in authoritarian societies, such as Russia, Finland, and Germany, where elites attempted to consolidate their hold on power by suppressing opposition.

By contrast, class conflict was less violent in countries with established liberal freedoms and effective representative institutions, such as England and Switzerland. In these countries, the extension of the vote to workers gave them a greater sense of social and political inclusion. Freedom of political association and expression gave workers the chance to press their group demands through legitimate channels.

As a result of improved working conditions and political integration in the post World War II era most western societies saw a significant reduction of industrial conflict. Reforms based on Keynesian 'demand management', new and expanded welfare programs, and consensual policies designed to contain wage demands and inflation had definite impact on class formation.

Countries varied widely, however, in the extent to which the postwar developments took place. Class compromise was strongest in northern and central Europe and weakest in southern Europe and the Anglo-American democracies. Until the late 1970s in northern and central Europe, and particularly in Sweden, Norway, Austria (also in Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands), the working class was strongly organized in the labour market. In these countries, socialist parties were also able to participate in governments on a regular basis. This participation opened a political channel for trade unions to exchange moderation of their labour-market demands for favourable state action, including legal protection of unions, economic policies for full employment, and welfare and egalitarian social policies.

Check Your Progress 1

Note : i) Use the space given below for your answers.
ii) Check your answer with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) Explain the objective bases of class.

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- 2) What are the three categories of agrarian class system?

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- 3) Compare class conflict in the industrial societies.

10.3 THEORIES OF CLASS FORMATION

So far we have discussed the historical aspects of class formation like how classes were formed and how they developed in different contexts. Now, we will look into the theories of classes and class conflicts, to expand our understanding of class formation. In the realm of theory deep disagreements divide both Marxists and non-Marxists. Some think 'class has to do with property', others say class is related to power. Still others consider class and surplus property and values as related. Yet others equate class with class consciousness.

The Marxist tradition remains useful for its insistence on the need to study the evolving capitalist class and its relationship with working people, especially when globalization of capitalist production occurs. Marxists, however, pay insufficient attention to social groupings other than classes. The insights of the Weberian tradition, with its stress on social mobility and social fragmentation within broad class groupings fill up some gaps in theory. Post-industrial theories highlight the existence of non-employed groups. They make moves to identify such non-employed groups as a separate class, with their own unique economic situation. These theories identify the non-employed groups less as a segment within the working class.

10.3.1 Marxian Theories

A class, according to Marx, becomes a class only when it gets united and organized in the defense of its class interests. Without common struggle it is not more than a mass of people sharing the same position in the economic system. The bourgeoisie developed its class-consciousness, because it was aware of common interests of their members while they struggled against feudalism. And the ruling class in bourgeois society understands the common need to defend the prevailing system though there are many internal, factional conflicts dividing the class.

For the proletariat it is a long process of struggle to acquire the consciousness of being a class. From its very birth the proletariat struggles with the bourgeoisie, as the Communist Manifesto points out. But in the beginning these are only individual, local struggles against the direct exploiters, as also against the local capitalists. With the development of industry the proletariat increases in number and becomes concentrated in greater masses. Slowly the collisions of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie take the form of the collisions between two classes. The workers begin to organize themselves; they form combinations and permanent associations. The local struggles get centralized into one national struggle between classes. From the point of view of capital the mass of workers are already a class before that. But "for itself", the proletariat becomes a class only in the course of struggle. And the struggle of class against class is a political struggle.

In the struggle the proletariat develops and expresses its class-consciousness. For Marx this means basically that the proletariat comes to understand that its own emancipation and the liberation of society as a whole require the overthrow of capitalism, and that it forms the will to overthrow it. Thus proletarian class-consciousness is revolutionary consciousness. The proletariat has a conviction that society needs to be transformed in a revolutionary way and has the commitment to fight for that. Class-consciousness for Marx and Engels means the awareness of this general revolutionary perspective.

It does not at all mean that the workers know by heart a set of Marxist doctrines. In the Manifesto, Marx and Engels say that the communists are not a new sect, but that they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole. They are most advanced in their understanding of the direction in which the proletarian movement goes. But they share the same immediate aim with all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class and the overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy.

But it is a constant refrain of Marx that: 'The emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself'. Marx expected the proletariat itself to develop the necessary revolutionary consciousness and to emancipate itself. The revolutionary struggle of the working class, therefore, needs organisation. Trade unions and the party are the foremost forms of organisation of the working class.

But in history what occurred? The major difficulty arose from the evident failure of industrial workers to make any notable advance along the line of anticipated progression. The gap between predictions generated by class theory and the actual tendency of historical development was glaringly brought out in the wake of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917: Consider this paradox. A revolution claiming to fulfil the Marxist promise of socialist transformation occurred in a society little advanced in its capitalist development, while all the attempts at socialist revolution in truly capitalist countries with a large industrial working population failed. What, from the theoretical perspective, appeared as a bewildering incongruity or paradox of history, generated more interest among the Marxist thinkers. Their concern was why such an anticipation did not materialize.

In the following paragraph, we will study who were such theorists and what work they carried out.

The first person among the theorists was Lukacs. His 'false consciousness' theory distinguished 'consciousness of class' from 'class consciousness': the first relates to the ideas and motives of the class members arising from the inexperience within their daily business of life. The latter could be evolved at only through and after a rational study of the totality of the information related to the social system where the members are. In Lukacs's view, there was no automatic passage from the first to the second: the information necessary to construct the ideal 'class consciousness' was not available within the individual experience as it was constrained by the tasks of daily survival.

Only a scientific analysis created by the political organisation of the class members can provide class consciousness. This is a matter where ideology comes into active play.

Another related debate that has engaged Marxists for many years concerns the composition of working class. Nico(la)s Poulantzas built an elaborate framework to explain class and concluded that the working class consisted exclusively of productive, subordinated manual wage-earners. While productive labour produces

surplus value, unproductive labour, for example, state employees, service workers or administrators - is paid from this source.

10.3.2 Weberian Theories

In this sub-section we will not only deal with the views of Max Weber but also with those who followed his tradition such as Anthony Giddens.

Max Weber not only theorized about class but also introduced two other concepts, namely status group and party. For him a class is a group of people who stand objectively in the same situation in terms of market position or market power, that is to say a group of people who share the same life-chances. This is determined by the power to utilize resources which they control in order to acquire income in the market. The term 'life-chances' is used by Weber to refer not just to material benefits but to anything which is desirable namely, leisure, travel, culture, and so on. Weber acknowledges that one of the fundamental and common bases for class formation is the way property is distributed. But ownership of property or lack of it, is, for Weber, only one of the criteria defining the existence of a class situation. Classes may be further subdivided in terms of the kind of property owned or the kind of skill or service that is offered.

Class and status groups are closely associated and interlinked. Weber says, property, as well as defining class position, is also frequently used as a criterion for membership in a status group. Status is usually expressed in terms of a distinctive life-style and restrictions upon social interaction with non-members. Speech, dress, manners, residence, habits, leisure activities, marriage patterns - all may become expressions of differential status. A status group, for Weber, is a group with certain rights, privileges and opportunities for acquiring what is desirable which are determined not by position in the market but by the possession of certain characteristics evaluated in terms of worth, prestige, admissibility, and so on.

Weber states that both classes and status groups are also essentially founded upon power. He defines party in a very broad sense to mean any group whose purpose it is to exercise power in society or which is concerned with the competition for power. This is a wider conception than political parties in the usual sense and would include any alliance or organisation with this as its aim. A party may be associated with a particular class or status group but need not necessarily be so. Any social division could form the basis for a party, including ethnicity, race, religion or region. Although class, status and power may cut across one another, one of them generally predominates in a given type of society. Anthony Giddens bases his conception essentially upon a Weberian foundation. Giddens wishes to retain the link between class and the economic sphere along with both Marx and Weber. In general terms classes can be characterized as large-scale, societal wide groupings which are, at least in principle, 'open'. That is to say, birth, hereditary status, etc do not determine membership. Giddens seeks to define what he calls a 'social class' rather than merely pure economically defined categories, since there may be an indefinite multiplicity of crosscutting interests created by different market capacities while there are only a limited number of social classes.

For him, there are essentially three basic classes in a contemporary society, namely upper, middle and lower or working class.

The most important aspect of the division of labour in modern capitalism, from the point of view of class formation, is that between administrative and manual tasks. White-collar and blue-collar groups perform very different kinds of task and each has appropriate skills.

Secondly, the pattern of authority relationships in the enterprise tends to reinforce this pattern of division of labour. White-collar work frequently involves the exercise of some authority whereas blue-collar work generally does not and is mostly only subject to authority. Thirdly, different patterns of consumption and different life-styles, to which varying degrees of prestige are attached, tend to promote class distinctions. These different patterns of consumption and life-style, in so far as they are typical of particular groups, are referred to by Giddens distributive groupings. While the different patterns of consumption that form the basis of distributive groupings enjoy different degrees of prestige, it is the actual pattern of consumption itself that is the central criterion here. To the extent that the three types of proximate structuration of class relationships coincide with one another, and to the extent that they run alongside the mediate structuration of class relationships, then the formation of distinct classes is promoted.

Finally, in order to become a social reality a class must come to adopt common patterns of behaviour and attitudes and to do this it must become aware of itself as a class.

Other Weberians see the divide between manual and non-manual work as being still significant, while conceding the heterogeneity of white-collar occupations.

John Goldthorpe theorizes an eleven-class model. He suggests, however, that the eleven classes can be aggregated into three: the service class, the intermediate groupings and the working class.

The service class includes managers, administrators and professionals (the wage-earning elite) and also 'large proprietors'. Below the service class is the less coherent group of intermediate workers, in which Goldthorpe includes small owners, farmers, foremen, routine nonmanual workers or service workers. Many of these groups are seen by Marxists as proletarianized. While Goldthorpe and other neo-Weberians maintain that the intermediate groupings have distinct work and market positions, they acknowledge the amorphous nature of this group and the fact that individuals frequently are moving in and out of these occupational sectors. Evidence from the USA and Canada shows that lower-grade service jobs are characteristically filled by young people and students at the start of their careers who may eventually end up in the service class, while in some European societies it is older workers who take these jobs.

Check Your Progress 2

Note : i) Use the space given below for your answers.
 ii) Check your answer with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

1) What is meant by the class-consciousness of proletariat?

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2) What is 'status group' in Weberian theory?

.....

3) What is a class according to Giddens?



4) What are the three classes according to Goldthorpe?

10.4 NEW DEVELOPMENTS

From the end of the 1970s, inequalities in many developed societies have widened considerably. Technological innovation has meant that fewer people are required in order to achieve a rising level of manufacturing output. In Britain, for example, the low level service jobs which have been a major source of occupational expansion over the last two decades are on the whole low paid, part time and often temporary. In the United States the opportunity for a worker to rise higher in his own class and even out of it into another is greater than in Europe, and his social position carries more respect.

With the traditional working class rapidly fading in revolutionary potential, many Marxists also turned elsewhere to find a revolutionary subject. The 'embourgeoisement' of traditional working class led some towards the technicians/engineers/computer specialists of late capitalism. Others saw revolutionary virtue in the student activists of 1968 and its aftermath. But the most far-reaching turn was towards the oppressed peoples of the Third World. If the Western working class had become soft and corrupt, the lean and hungry peasants of the Third World would encircle the cities and lead the way to the promised land. Some, however, saw even Third World workers as a 'labour aristocracy', bought off and reformist, and saw the untutored revolutionary zeal of the 'marginals' in the shanty towns as the possible saviours of the 'revolutionary' project. The flourishing of post-working-class subjects prompted some on the left to call a halt to 'the retreat from class'. The postmarxist theorists, such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, stressed the plurality of contemporary social struggles and the contingent nature of politics.

These new developments indicate the diversity of capitalism and the plurality of social struggles today. Race, gender, sexuality, religion, disability and region are all on this terrain, along-side and integrated with class. It seems that there is now no one locus or site of social transformation. Oppressions are multiple, and the sites of resistance are present everywhere. The capacity for transformation is not held in the hands of a mythical proletariat - or any other single subject - but is dispersed throughout society.

These are themes that the 'new' social movements of the 1980s - the peace, ecology and women's movements above all - began to articulate. The transition from industrial to postindustrial society had apparently thrown up a new societal type. The old conflicts over distribution were being replaced by new concerns with identity and the qualitative transformation of society. An economic emphasis was replaced by a cultural emphasis, to put it one way. The 'new' social

movements were seen as a response to new forms of antagonism that had emerged under late capitalism.

In countries such as Brazil and South Africa, and even in the United States, there has been a flourishing of 'new unionism' practices and strategies. Concerns about inner-union democratic procedures, gender equality and qualitative rather than quantitative strategies are now much more common. The old prevalent state-centric strategies are now much more commonly matched by an orientation towards civil society. Trade unionists are more prone to accept that the working class has two sexes and that race cannot be brushed aside with simplistic formulae.

In more recent years, it has been the theme of globalization which has impacted the most critical study of the working classes. Economic relations have progressed from an inter-national level to a truly global one. It is a process of integration that is having far-reaching effects on the world of work. Capital has, as Marx foresaw, brushed aside any national boundaries that stood in its way. Capitalism has penetrated into all spheres of economic, cultural and social life across the globe. In the new 'global factories' workers have become mere commodities once again.

Hand in hand with globalization, capital has been leaping into a new technological era dominated by information and knowledge. Advanced information technology and the ensuing reorganization of work are decentralising the workplace in even more complex ways, as where we work is becoming a more diffuse site compared to the office block or the manufacturing plant which prevailed until the 1980s. The new decentred work place also has its internal effects within the enterprise as network begins to prevail over hierarchy.

Daniel Bell, John Goldthorpe, and Alain Touraine have described the growth of the 'knowledge and professional' sector, which includes educators, scientists, professionals, administrators, and managers. The rapid growth of this sector has created the conditions for the new 'service' or 'knowledge' class. Conceptions of how this class will define, organize, and express its political interests vary. Touraine has argued that this new class may forge an alliance with the old working class, while Goldthorpe emphasizes that the interests of individuals in this new class are oriented around their autonomy in the productive process and therefore are opposed to the interests of blue-collar workers. The evidence of the 1980s and 1990s indicates that postindustrialism is actually creating diverse new groups with diverse interests, loosening class ties generally, and undermining the industrial class cleavage without replacing it with a new dominant cleavage.

Check Your Progress 3

- Note : i) Use the space given below for your answers.
 ii) Check your answer with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) What are the 'new' social movements?

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- 2) What are the effects of globalization on working classes?

.....

10.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have dealt first with the history of class formation and later saw certain thinkers analysis about what constitutes class. Various theories of class formation such as Weberian, Marxian and Post-Industrial have also been discussed. New developments affecting new class formations were also highlighted. Whereas sharp differences remain among various theories to class formation the issue of class seems to be still relevant so far as all the societies reflect high levels of inequality even in the Post-industrial societies. Agrarian and industrial class formations indicate the ongoing relevance of classes, although various other new developments pinpoint the increasing role of other factors like status and culture.

10.6 KEY WORDS

Class: Group determined by its economic relationship to the means of production.

Class Consciousness : Awareness of belonging to a definite class and a conscious knowledge of the political interests of that class.

Class Struggle: Historical conflict between the oppressors and the oppressed

Bourgeoisie: Also known as the capitalist class, owns the means of production, employs wage labour, and has profit as its source of income.

Proletariat : The working class, which produces commodities and derives its income from wages.

Life chances : Idea that an individual's prospects of attaining material rewards and high status in society are influenced by class position.

Status: Social standing or prestige of an individual in a society.

10.7 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

Bell, D. (1974). *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting*. New York: Basic Books.

Esping-Anderson, G. (1993). *Changing Classes*. London: Sage.

Giddens, A. (1973). *The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies*. London: Hutchinson.

Goldthorpe, J.H. (1982). *Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Hamilton, M. and Hirschowitz (1993). *Class and Inequality. Comparative Perspectives*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Poulantzas, N. (1978). *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*. London: Verso.

Wright, E.O. (1985). *Classes*. London: Verso.

10.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The objective bases of class include - ownership and nonownership of instruments of production, standard of living, cultural and recreational possibilities.

- 2) Agrarian class system has been based, for example, on slavery in pre-Civil War United States; feudal systems in Medieval Europe and Colonial Latin America; agrarian capitalism in colonial areas of Southeast Asia.
- 3) In Russia, Finland and Germany intense class conflict took place where elites held on power by suppressing opposition whereas in democracies like England and Switzerland, class conflict was less violent as various rights and freedoms of workers gave them the chance to press for their demands through legitimate channels.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) For Marx it is only in the course of struggle that the proletariat develops and expresses its class-consciousness. The conviction that society needs to be transformed through combined effort gives the proletariat a revolutionary perspective.
- 2) A status group is a group of people with certain rights, privileges and opportunities for acquiring what is desirable by possession of worth and prestige in society.
- 3) Classes are aggregate of individual in a similar market position. Birth, hereditary status etc. do not determine membership of a class.
- 4) The service class which includes managers, administrators and professionals; secondly, the group of intermediate workers consisting of small owners, farmers, foremen, routine nonmanual workers or service workers, and lastly the manual working class.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) The new social movements are a response to new forms of antagonism that had emerged under late capitalism. The various themes of these new social movements are - peace, ecology and women's movements.
- 2) Economic relations have progressed from an inter-national dimension to a truly global one. In the new 'global factories' workers have become mere commodities once again as in the previous era.