

Block 3

IDEOLOGIES

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THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

This block discusses the ideologies that have a major role in the social and political philosophy. It addresses various debates and issues that shape our society. The four units of this block deal with individualism, communism, secularism, and nationalism.

Unit 9 “Individualism” tries to present history and philosophy of individualism with the help of divergent views of several philosophers, from Greeks to contemporary times. The metaphysics of individualism also finds its place in this discussion.

Unit 10 “Communism” deals with the Marxist idea of communism, with the help of discussions surrounding the concepts of dialectic materialism, class, alienation, exploitation, etc. It also presents a critical analysis of the communist philosophy of Marx.

Unit 11 titled “Secularism” deals with the definitional understanding of the term secularism, the historical background against which the concept emerges, along with discussing some of the issues, complexities, and nuances of the concept in terms of its deployment in modern political societies.

Unit 12 titled “Nationalism” discusses the complexities surrounding the idea of Nationalism, the inter-relation of the idea of Nationalism with associated concepts like Nation, Nationality, State, and Patriotism. This unit elaborates upon and analyses theorizations concerning the origins of Nationalism and its types, while simultaneously presenting a critical assessment of the concept of Nationalism.

UNIT 9

INDIVIDUALISM¹⁵

Structure

9.0 Objectives

9.1 Introduction

9.2 Individualism and Philosophy

9.3 Renaissance

9.4 Reformation

9.5 The Metaphysical Self

9.6 Subject in Social and Political Philosophy

9.7 Contemporary Theories

9.8 Phenomenology and Existentialism

9.9 Let Us Sum Up

9.10 Key Words

9.11 Further Readings and References

9.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

9.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this units are,

- Examining key philosophical/ metaphysical discussions encompassing and developing the idea of Individualism.
- Construing Individualism as a social and political philosophy.
- Critically assessing the concept of Individualism.

¹⁵ Dr. Rekha Basu, former faculty, Department of Philosophy, Hindu College, University of Delhi.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Individualism is perceived as an incremental phenomenon, in evidence largely in modern Western countries, and by implication, in those societies that have been impacted by the civilization of the West. The connotations of “individualism” can be commendatory/ derogatory, depending on our cultural perceptions. Many social scientists have observed the increasing individualism among the Millennials’ preoccupation with their own lives in its diverse aspects, and a corresponding decline of interest in matters political and collective. We need to disentangle individualism from a blatant egoism. Here it is pertinent to quote a French aristocrat called Alexis de Tocqueville, who was one of the most prominent thinkers to engage with individualism. He observes that while selfishness “originates in blind instinct”, individualism is more of “a mature and calm feeling.”¹⁶ Individualists have often been associated with hedonism, consumerism and in obsessive pursuit of the entrepreneurial spirit.

This Unit will be aimed at extricating individualism from these overtly negative meanings that have gripped popular imagination. The Unit will show that individualism has been a normative theory, and, moreover, one to be examined in a cultural context. Construed positively, individualism aims to maximize autonomy, thereby endorsing libertarian values, and self-development, in the sense of enlarging one’s potential. The unit shall examine the philosophical/ metaphysical traditions in which individualism finds articulation. A discussion of individualism as a social and political philosophy will form one key section, as also a critical assessment of the same.

9.2 INDIVIDUALISM AND PHILOSOPHY

9.2.1 The Greeks

One may begin a discussion on Individualism by asking— Did we have any concept that vaguely resembled “individualism” in the post- Socratic traditions? In response we may observe that while the conversation regarding “autonomy” was not unfamiliar to the Greeks, this term applied to the city states rather than individuals. Additionally, given the inseparable relationship between the

¹⁶ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Wordsworth Editions, 1998, p. 208.

city-state and its residents, the concept of citizen was important. For example, we all know about the death-sentence which was given to Socrates in 399 BC in Athens, Greece. The charges were: refusing to recognize gods recognized by the state, introducing new gods, and corrupting the morals of the youth. These were entirely specious allegations; friends of Socrates were passionately engaged in persuading Socrates to challenge them. In at least two Dialogues that Plato, Socrates' disciple, wrote on this matter because it touched him so deeply, namely, *Apology* and *Crito*, the reader finds Socrates declining to question his undeserved death-sentence. He observes very clearly that the State is the guardian of its people, and any orders it passes against any of its citizens, should not be contested by the affected party despite a certain knowledge about their unfairness. In other words, the laws of the land must be uncritically followed by its citizens. Now, obviously, the term "citizen" evokes notions of responsibility and obligation, rather than "freedom" that is integral to individualism.

In general, despite a dual-worldview, and a definitive privileging of the "ideal" as contrasted to the "real," Platonic writings are largely preoccupied with human issues, such as education, justice and art. However, despite the evidence of this humanism at a fairly early period of philosophy, there is an undeniable metaphysical preoccupation with a teleological vision of nature. A telos as a concept precludes the notions of choice and individuality. A corollary to this teleological conception of the universe was the perception of values as "objective." Both Plato and Aristotle affirmed this thesis of the objectivity of values. For Plato, the Forms, as contrasted to the sensible objects, the idealities, as opposed to the perennially changing, ephemeral reality, were ultimately real. Thus, for example, "Humanity" as a Form is indestructible, though particular human beings who embody this form are mortal. Aristotle, though critical of the Platonic theory of Forms, reappropriated the "form" as one of the dual terms in the analysis of any object; the other was "matter." Matter and form are to be found at the structure of each and every object, "form" being read as purpose, or the overall plan of the object, how it is designed in order to discharge a specific function. In these theories a pre-determined goal or telos precludes human agency, it is, rather, presented as a plan to which our social and political arrangements must submit.

9.2.2 The Medievalists

Medieval philosophy, on the whole, could be characterized as being consumed by the desire to corroborate the existence of a benevolent God, whose largesse is evidenced in creation. Like the

Greeks, the medievalists continue to subscribe to a teleological view of the world. The universe, in turn was perceived as “created” by a supremely good God, and interpreted as an ecclesiastical system that prodded us to go beyond it towards “salvation,” which is the ultimate goal of our life. Acclaimed theologians, such as Saints Augustine, Anselm and Aquinas, proposed arguments for the existence of a morally righteous, charitable being, with unrestricted powers. The perception of the world as “creation” foregrounds the Creator, here, God. The individual, by implication, is transformed into a “believer.”

Check your progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Was there an awareness of Individualism for ancient Greeks?

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2. What was the status of the individuals during medieval times in Europe?

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9.3 RENAISSANCE

Jones, a celebrated scholar of history of Western philosophy, observes, “...if it can be said that classical philosophy was overthrown by Christianity’s discovery of God, then it can be said that

medieval philosophy was overthrown by the scientist's discovery of nature."¹⁷ Beginning in the Renaissance, the "God" discourse got somewhat decentred. A revitalized humanism became manifest that lay a this-worldly emphasis on the individual in his/her social and physical milieu, rather than in a primordial relationship with God. Most crucially, the Copernican revolution in physics demystified the "skies," hitherto perceived as an abode of Gods, but now increasingly seen as an adventurous space, potentially open to the telescope. A significant upshot of this new physics was a repudiation of the teleological view of "creation," common to both the classical and the medieval mind, though obviously in very different senses. The medieval image of man as fundamentally finite, and as being in a state of sin, was unacceptable to the Renaissance man, who had newly discovered his individuality, and was predisposed increasingly towards this world, rather than allured by the promise of salvation. Petrarch (1304-74), an Italian who had moved to Avignon, was the first thinker who was credited with having fashioned the movement called Humanism. He embodied the new spirit as he decided to climb Mont Ventoux, the highest mountain in his neighbourhood, not just functionally, but in order to view the surrounding landscape from a high altitude. The medieval attitude to nature, that believed nature to be symptomatic of God's indulgence, was surmounted in this gesture. This frame of mind was a sign of the scientific temper that would be evidenced soon, a turn to naturalism being only a prelude.

Besides, the various voyages and discoveries of new lands, motivated initially by the religious urge to spread Christianity and to enlarge the Kingdom of God, brought in unprecedented wealth both to the capitalist who financed these voyages, and the adventurers who actually undertook them. For reasons religious and political, many Europeans left their homelands, and settled down in the newly-discovered Continent called America. Pragmatism, initiative, and hard work were required to deal with the challenges of this new residence, rather than a religious state that encouraged its subjects to transcend the "passions" of this world. Over time, beginning with France and England, that had assertive monarchs, the clerical power was severely undermined, and the nation- states began to emerge. Colonization witnessed the physical expansion of the European Continent. In this radically altered political and social milieu, the individual person, hungry for

¹⁷ W.T. Jones, *Hobbes to Hume: A History of Western Philosophy*, Harcourt Brace & World, New York, 1969, p.vii.

adventure and possessed of a terrific energy, and submerged neither by the Alter or the Throne, was birthed.

9.4 REFORMATION

Simultaneous with this major change in the outlook of the world was the Protestant Reformation. This was a religious movement that swept through Europe in the 1500s. Its rise was influenced by currents of nationalism, anticlericalism, and opposition to vested property interests in the hands of the church that had begun in the late fourteenth century. It resulted in the creation of a branch of Christianity called Protestantism, a name used collectively to refer to the many religious groups that separated from the Roman Catholic Church due to differences in doctrine. Now, according to Protestants, religion is related to personal assent to religious beliefs, a religiously individualistic outlook. They rejected the Pope and Catholic priests as being holier or more sacred than ordinary people.

The combined impact of Renaissance and Reformation is, each in a different way, to forefront the individual, as against the institutions to which he/she was affiliated. Established institutions, such as feudalism and the Guild diminished in importance during the Renaissance, while the Church was deprecated during the Reformation. A decline of these institutions resulted in the relative independence of the individual.

Check your progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Discuss the role that Renaissance and Reformation played in generating an awareness of Individualism in the West.

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9.5 THE METAPHYSICAL SELF

The dawn of modern philosophy in the West is epitomised in Descartes' thought in his *Meditations* of 1641. No longer content with the self as *anima*, Descartes foregrounds "man" as the pivot that is foundational in the otherwise shifting plethora of reality. This is a humanist premise, Descartes expresses this newly-awakened optimism in the phrase *cogito, ergo sum*, I think, therefore I am. Denouncing truth to be an ecclesiastic privilege, Descartes affirms it to be a human prerogative, accessible to disciplined, rational thought. This thinking is a clear precursor of individualism in the modern West. Further, Descartes goes on to draw a distinction between mind and body, and held thinking to be pivotal to the subject. According to Jonathan Ree, a Cartesian scholar, this dualism is a secularized version of the Judeo-Christian teaching of the separateness of body and soul.¹⁸ Implicit in much of the medieval thinking was the assumption that the "essence" of existence would have to be non-somatic. This is reflected in Descartes' formulation in the *Discourse on the Method*, *Cogito, ergo sum*, I think, therefore I am. He writes, "I knew I was a substance whose whole essence or nature is simply to think, and which does not require any place, or depend on any material thing, in order to exist. Accordingly, this 'I' - that is, the soul by which I am what I am- is entirely distinct from the body."¹⁹

The Cartesian legacy may be summarised thus:

Descartes was a forerunner of the dissociation of philosophy from theology which became evident in much of Europe in the centuries to come. The Protestants, following this lead, would affirm the supremacy of the individual conscience.

The *cogito* does not have a purely cognitive connotation in Descartes' thought, it also is a soul, this is borne out by the Sixth Meditation, that is devoted to proving the immortality of the soul. This shows the Janus-faced philosopher, working under the dual influence of Scholasticism and rationalism.

¹⁸ Rene, Descartes, *Descartes*, Allan Lane, London, 1924, p.100.

¹⁹ Descartes, Rene, *Discourse on the Method*, Discourse IV, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, trans, John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff and Dugald Murdock, Cambridge University Press, London, 1985.

Much later, the transparent consciousness that Descartes had talked about was challenged when Freud highlighted the phenomena of repression and the unconscious.

Ego- based philosophies in the West, inspired by Descartes, did not resort to a foundational principle of divinity. Consciousness, in these traditions, such as phenomenology, was sufficiently armed to tackle objectivity on its own without invoking a metaphysical guarantee.

The next milestone in this tale of the evolution of the individual is seen in the Humean scepticism pertaining to the substantialist view of the self. Hume's affirmation about each of us being "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement"²⁰ created a powerful impact. For Hume, the inference from these atomic perceptions to a self is illegitimate. Mention must be made that Hume was important because of his undertaking of a complete secularization of philosophy.

Immanuel Kant, awakened from his "dogmatic slumbers" by Hume, endeavoured to recover the self from this threatened extinction. The self in Kant was conceived as an epistemological subject, as well as an object of knowledge, or the empirical self. Finally, it was the moral individual, or the noumenal self. Kant resolved the problematic duality that had plagued Descartes' thought, and, far from debunking the physical world, made it amenable to human subjectivity. In *Critique of Pure Reason*,²¹ Space and Time, and the Categories, together constitute the formal ingredients of experience that structure our perceptions and give us knowledge. And, most crucially, the objects of our knowledge being always a unity, Kant asserted that this unity could not have been derived from experience. Hence is birthed the famous transcendental self, described also as the principle of "transcendental apperception."

It is crucial to halt here and take stock of the developments in the notion of the self since the latter provides the conceptual underpinnings for the individual. Descartes certainly liberated the mind from a theological structure, though, as pointed out earlier, the "soul" is intertwined with this cognitive consciousness. However, this consciousness is disembodied, and effectively without any socio-cultural base. The Kantian self fares no better, being only a logical postulate—the

²⁰ Hume, David, *A Treatise of Human Nature: Being an Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning*, Ed., L.A. Silby-Bigge, Oxford, 1960, p. 252.

²¹ Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans., Norman Kemp Smith, The McMillan Press, London, 1973.

vicissitudes of a sensory world bypassing it completely. Later, Hegel would attempt to overcome the dualisms in the philosophers' world, but his Spirit will lend to the world a teleological movement that would perceive the world as a collective, rather than peopled by particular beings.

Robert Solomon, a scholar of Continental thought, and a reputed figure, has coined a phrase that he calls "the transcendental pretence." This, according to Solomon, is the thesis that beneath diverse humans is an underlying unity. To put this in Solomon's own memorable words, "This was a thesis that was coming of age just as world-wide exploration and colonization was having its full effect, and as transportation, travel, communications, and what was then called 'the conquest of nature' were about to achieve global efficiency...the transcendental pretence is no innocent philosophical thesis, but a political weapon of enormous power... it also justified unrestricted tolerance for paternalism and self-righteousness—'the white philosopher's burden'. Philosophers who never left their home towns declared themselves experts on 'human nature', and weighed the morals of civilizations and 'savages' thousands of miles beyond their ken. Kant never left the provincial town of Königsberg, insisting that in its busy port he had the opportunity to observe all of humanity."²² In other words, the transcendental pretence makes the unjustified assumption that there is universality in the fundamental modes of human experience. This leads to Eurocentrism as a hegemonic worldview. From this perspective, both Kant and Hegel would appear to be guilty of this.

9.6 SUBJECT IN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

9.6.1 Thomas Hobbes: (1588-1679)

Let us begin our discussion of Hobbes by employing a set of adjectives that locate him in the philosophical traditions of the West. Hobbes was a mechanist and a materialist, who looked upon 'man' as necessarily embodied, and, further, governed by motion. He looked upon the traditional subject-matter of metaphysics, comprising a perfect, eternal and immutable reality as avoidable claptrap. Significantly, for our purposes, Hobbes delivered a conceptual framework that enables us to conceive of individuation, as he believed that each body is non-duplicable and unique. However, he does engage in a certain generalization pertaining to human behaviour, the principal

²² Solomon, Robert C., *Continental Philosophy since 1750: The Rise and Fall of the Self*, Oxford University Press, 1988, p.6-7

one being that self-preservation is a fundamental human drive. He said, "...in the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory. The first, maketh men invade for gain; the second, for safety; and the third, for reputation...it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war, as is of every man, against every man."²³

Hobbes contended that, while men display blatant selfishness, they also desire peace, and are amenable to any rule that offers them security. Left on their own devices, people will not spontaneously cooperate to bring about peace. Thus, a sovereign is elected by the voluntary actions of the governed, so that they may be protected.

Hobbes can be seen as having anticipated the fundamentals of a democracy in his requirements of a consent, and his explicit disavowal of the divine-right doctrine.

9.6.2 John Locke: (1632-1704)

Locke was a liberal who believed that faith must arise from individual convictions, rather than being imposed from above. He was an empiricist who opposed the teleological world-view from the Middle Ages, as also the belief that the soul is equipped with essential knowledge at birth. Locke, importantly gave to posterity the notion of "natural rights," the rights to life, liberty, health and possessions. He affirmed our equality and independence in the natural state, the only reason that a civil society is chosen is to ensure an effective governance that protects these rights. A chosen sovereign automatically loses his political authority if he fails in this mission.

Locke's contribution to political discourse is that he has given to us a "will" theory of political authority. "Liberty" in Locke's theory stands for political equality. This does not preclude states of subordination through circumstances of birth, or natural talents. Rather, the employment of force is justified, but, and this is significant, only when force derives from consent does it acquire a moral legitimacy. For Locke, it is the people who are sovereign, and, further, this classification of "the people" is not monolithic, but applies to autonomous individuals. Locke believed in the concept of a majority, but only as it is an outcome of a consent. Locke's emphasis on consent

²³ *Leviathan, in Works*, edited by Molesworth, Part I, Chs. 11 and 13.

marks him out as a thinker who projected an incremental sense of individuality that was characteristic of his era, and thus, laid down the foundation for democracy.

9.6.3 Jean-Jacques Rousseau: (1712-1778)

In order to understand this important thinker, we need to discuss, briefly, two crucial movements on the Continent, namely, Enlightenment and Romanticism, these form the historical context of Rousseau. Enlightenment began in England in the mid-seventeenth century, and spread thence to France and Germany in the eighteenth century. The hallmark of this movement was its unalloyed celebration of scientific rationality, and a passionate support for change and progress. Humanism was another major outcome of Enlightenment. This meant that the focus shifted from God, the Creator of the world, to Humans, into whose safekeeping the world had been assigned. Philosophers began talking about an essential human nature, attributing rationality to the latter. Reason, being a universal human trait, began to be employed by thinkers to cross-examine all matters, secular and religious. The belief in the universality of human nature led, by a logical route, to confidence in individual autonomy,²⁴ each and every individual may arrive unilaterally at truth, obviously on the assumption that he/she had received the right education.

Romanticism, as an intellectual current, first arose in Germany as a critical reaction to the kind of universalism about human dispositions that had originated with Enlightenment. Physically, Germany was fragmented into hundreds of principalities and small kingdoms. Germans were reluctant to accept a cosmic humanism that came with Enlightenment, and was alien to their own experience. Solomon has averred that Romanticism is a part rejection of the political imperialism of nations such as England and France, which were hosts to Enlightenment; and a defence of traditional religion against a fanatic rationalism.²⁵ David Hume (1711-1776), Rousseau's friend, famously observed, "Reason is and ought to be the slave of passions."²⁶

To sum up, while Enlightenment is a fervent support of science and rationality, Romanticism is suspicious of science, and relies on intuitions and feelings. However, both these contrary currents converge on the importance that they place on the significance of the individual. This is the formative context of our next thinker Rousseau. While committed to rational reform for humanity

²⁴ Solomon, *Ibid.* p.11

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.13

²⁶ Hume, David, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, originally published in 1739, Silby-Bigge edition

at large (Enlightenment), Rousseau argued passionately for a life of sentiment, and gave to posterity an organic conception of the individual which was a highpoint of Romanticism.

As against the Cartesian cogito, self-sufficient and introspective, Rousseau introduces a self that is expressive, oriented to the world, and aspiring to a future. This self is social, political, as well as moral. He believes that autonomy characterizes each and every individual, thus enabling us to enter into a 'social contract' which creates society. General Will defines the transition from the individual to a community. As Solomon has succinctly observed, "In England and America the demand for freedom emerged in the concept of the individual, working, acquisitive self, but in Europe the concept of self that emerged in the name of freedom was a supra-human, non-individual self, like Rousseau's General Will."²⁷

9.7 CONTEMPORARY THINKERS: MILL AND BERLIN

Berlin perceived a lot of promise in the Copernican Revolution that Kant had affected in philosophy. That the human intellect is not a passive recipient of knowledge/opinions that are thrust on it by religious or political forces, but an active interjector in its value- perceptions, was a watershed insight that was to impact on significant movements on the Continent, such as phenomenology and existentialism. Berlin, in the footsteps of his forbear John Stuart Mill, saw liberalism as facilitating individual freedom. Berlin repudiated moral monism, and emphasized a pluralism of values, without an objective moral hierarchy. Different kinds of goals are being sought, such as increasing one's material possessions, promoting a religious cult, popularizing a green movement, or leading a nomadic existence, are, each of them, perfectly legitimate, but none of these values can be elevated to a position of moral centrality in any society. They are value-perceptions because they have been endorsed by someone, this is the position of liberalism. Mill believed that "individuality," the license to live one's own life volitionally, is a fundamental value. For Berlin, individual freedom gets deepened in a world where there is a profusion of heterogenous perceptions of the good, without an objective moral hierarchy.

9.8 PHENOMENOLOGY AND EXISTENTIALISM

²⁷ Ibid., p.20

One philosopher who was deeply distrustful of Hegel was Kierkegaard (1813-1855). He believed that the Spirit displayed Hegel's contempt for the individual. Kierkegaard repudiated an entire philosophical tradition that had endeavoured to lay down absolute moral rules, objective truths, or the categorical imperatives. In place of reason, he substituted 'subjective truths', feelings and personal needs. He, more than any philosopher preceding him, awarded a lot of importance to the individual human being, looking at "the Public" rather contemptuously.

This trend continues in the post-war existentialists such as Heidegger and Sartre. Unlike phenomenology, that was charged with a solipsism, "the Other" for the existentialist is a primordial given. In the historical context of the Second World War, the Other, whether as a political state, or a socially and culturally established structure, is viewed with suspicion. The Other is responsible for the Dasein's (the self) deterioration into inauthenticity. Somewhat similarly, conflict is an irreducible dimension of a Sartrean universe, he puts it rather dramatically when he observes that the other causes him to "bleed."

In some sense the phenomenologist and the existentialists could be perceived as seeking to create private areas for the self which will preserve its authenticity and uniqueness. Husserl's project was guided mainly by epistemic considerations, the existentialists by their quest for an existence that was not borrowed, but volitional. Suffice is to observe how these two traditions also contributed a theoretical/intellectual framework for what was later to be seen as an individual.

Check your progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Examine the salient features of Individualism.

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9.9 LET US SUM UP

We can summarize our discussion with the help of the following points,

- Individualism has been incremental over time, evidenced largely in modern Western countries, and, in those societies that have been impacted by the civilization of the West.
- The connotations of individualism can be positive or negative.
- A need to put across individualism as a normative theory.
- The first Section is on Individualism and Philosophy. The early Greece city-states had “citizens” rather than individuals.
- The medievalists had a teleological orientation on the world, humans were perceived as fundamentally finite and flawed. The individual was looked upon as a believer. A religious subject.
- Renaissance in Europe witnessed a dwindling of teleology, and a revival of interest in human life and human institutions. Many voyages undertaken in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, leading to the discovery of new lands.
- The Protestant Reformation resulted in currents of thought such as nationalism, anticlericalism and the emphasis on religion as a matter of personal consent, leading to the heightening of individual outlook.
- Descartes, although he inaugurated the era of the subject, delivered a disembodied subject. Kant’s self was a logical, epistemic postulate.
- The Section on the Social and Political subject undertakes a discussion of the Social Contract theorists, Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. These philosophers laid the foundations of liberalism in the West, as also, initiated a discourse on rights of the individuals. The notions of “consent” and “majority” is also owed to them.
- These philosophers drew from the Enlightenment and Romanticism. While Enlightenment supported scientific rationality, Romanticism promoted intuitions and feelings. However, both these movements saw the foregrounding of the individual.

- The contemporary liberal tradition exemplified by Mill and Berlin has furthered and facilitated individual freedom. A repudiation of moral monism, and a thesis about a basic plurality of values, follow from their theories.
- Phenomenology and existentialism have, in their own ways, contributed substantially to individualism, although the context of their discussions was very different.

9.10 KEY WORDS

Enlightenment: A European intellectual movement of the late 17th and 18th centuries emphasizing reason and individualism rather than tradition. It was heavily influenced by 17th- century philosophers such as Descartes, Locke, and Newton, and its prominent figures included Kant, Goethe, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Adam Smith.

Individualism: a social theory favouring freedom of action for individuals over collective or state control. Individualism encompasses a value system, a theory of human nature, and a belief in certain political, economic, social, and religious arrangements.

Reformation: The Reformation was the start of Protestantism and the split of the Western Church into Protestantism and the Roman Catholic Church. It shaped major features of Western culture, including freedom of religion, freedom of conscience, the dignity of the individual, and political democracy.

Renaissance: Renaissance is a French word meaning “rebirth.” It refers to a period in European civilization that was marked by a revival of Classical learning and wisdom. It is a period in European history, marking the transition from the Middle Ages to modernity and covering the 15th and the 16th centuries.

Romanticism: It was an artistic, literary, musical, and intellectual movement that originated in Europe towards the end of the 18th century. It emphasized the individual, the subjective, the irrational, the imaginative, the personal, the spontaneous, the emotional, the visionary, and the transcendental.

9.11 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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9.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check your progress I

1.

1. In ancient times Greece had many city-states, each a self-enclosed unit. Norms, social, political and ethical, were formulated and enforced in order to maintain internal unity within each city-state.

2. Hence, the individuals were perceived as "citizens," with obligation and loyalty towards the city-state.

3. A certain amount of authoritarianism was an inevitable outcome of this situation.

4. No Individualism, in the modern sense of the term, was present in Greece during ancient times.

2.

1. The theologians during the Middle Ages, such as Saint Anselm and Thomas Aquinas, were deeply committed to making Christianity into a rational belief.
2. A teleological orientation was characteristic of medieval thinking.
3. The individual was perceived more as a “believer” than as a person in his/her own right.
4. There was a latent contempt for this world, and its “sinning” subjects.
5. Hence, no real awareness of the individual as a secular subject.

Check Your Progress II

1.

1. Renaissance, meaning “rebirth,” witnessed major changes in the perceptions of the people in the West.
2. A gradual shift from looking at the world as “creation” to a this-worldly pursuits.
3. A teleological view on the world begins to give away, an interest in the socio-political milieu of the subject is witnessed.
4. Various voyages undertaken that lead to the discovery of new lands. Migrations undertaken on a large scale to these newly- found countries.
5. Pragmatism and industry, rather than divine determinism become predominant.
6. New- found wealth through trading encourages individual enterprise.
7. Reformation resulted in a sustained critique of the clergy and the corruption within the Church.
8. Protestantism born as a break-away sect from the Roman Catholic Church. This sect stressed on individual consent in religious matters.
9. The combined impact of the Renaissance and Reformation resulted in enhanced significance of the individual.

Check Your Progress III

1.

1. In the history of philosophy, Individualism has had both commendatory and derogatory connotations.
2. It has been perceived as a blatant form of egoism, or, on the opposite end, as “a mature and calm feeling” (Alexis de Tocqueville).
3. This Unit has tried to present Individualism as a normative theory. An historical survey has been undertaken, ranging from early Greek philosophers, to phenomenologists and existentialists, in an effort to determine the antecedents of Individualism in the West.
4. Individualism as a normative criterion advocates maximum autonomy for the self, liberal values and development of one’s latent talents to the greatest extent possible.
5. Renaissance and Reformation in Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries launched an attack on the clergy, and the oppressive hold that they had on the people. Teleology, an inheritance from the Middle Ages, was challenged as it looked upon redemption in a transcendental world. Various voyages resulted in the discovery of new lands, opening up new trade routes, and thus, getting more wealth for those who went on these ventures. The allure of this world became compelling, resulting in a lot of private enterprise.
6. The individual acquired a significant position.
7. Locke talked about natural rights, equality and independence in the state of nature.
8. The Social Contract theorists focussed on individual consent as foundational to the election of any political authority.
9. Thinkers such as Kant, through the Copernican Revolution highlighted the Understanding as dynamic in awarding sense to the world.
10. Descartes’ cogito was a secular insight, anyone could access the truth, unmediated by any ecclesiastic authority, thus, democratizing knowledge.
11. Isaiah Berlin was a major proponent of Individualism; he advocated a fundamental pluralism of values.
12. Phenomenology and existentialism, though not self-consciously in a political context, put a lot of emphasis on the subject’s interjection in constituting its social and political reality.

UNIT 10 COMMUNISM²⁸

Structure

10.0 Objectives

10.1 Introduction

10.2 Life

10.3 Marx and Philosophy

10.4 Dialectic Materialism

10.5 Ideology

10.6 Class

10.7 Alienation

10.8 Exploitation

10.9 Communism and the *Communist Manifesto*

10.10 Rethinking Communism

10.11 Let Us Sum Up

10.12 Key Words

10.13 Further Readings and References

10.14 Answers to Check Your Progress

10.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this unit are,

- To discuss communism and Marxism.
- To elaborate upon various concepts used in Marxism

²⁸ Dr. Rekha Basu, Former Faculty, Department of Philosophy, Hindu College, University of Delhi.

- To give a critical assessment of Communism, in general and Marxism, in particular.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Communism is an amorphous term that encompasses a vast range of imagined utopias. The word itself originated with an eighteenth-century French aristocrat called Victor d' Hupay, who envisioned living in “communes” as an ideal form of social life. In its current usage “communism” refers to a political and economic ideology that is opposed to liberal democracy and capitalism because of an individualism that is integral to both. It offers to us a version of society that has been brought into existence through the struggles of the working class. The two thinkers who conceptualized the theoretical underpinnings of communism, the way it would unfold, and the historical conditions that would be required to bring it to fruition, were Karl Heinrich Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895). In 1847, as members of the Communist League, an organization of German émigré workers, both Marx and Engels were commissioned to write a Communist Manifesto, which they did. The *Communist Manifesto*, a bible on communism, was published in 1848.

The unit begins by discussing briefly, the lives of Marx and Engels and their lifelong intellectual partnership. This would be followed by how Marx perceived philosophy, what were his “debts” or “borrowings” from thought on the Continent, and how did he critique the mainstream philosophical movements. The focus would then shift to the substantial part of this Unit, viz. the principal tenets of communism. The final section of the Unit would engage critically with the communist ideology.

10.2 LIFE

Marx was born to Jewish parents in Triar, Germany, into a family that was comfortable in its material endowments. He studied Law at the University of Bonn where he was, temporarily, mesmerized by romanticism. The following year saw him at the University of Berlin, debunking romanticism for Hegelianism. Not able to take up a career in the University because of a ban on the same by the Prussian government, Marx moved into journalism and, in 1842, assumed the editorship of *Rheinische Zeitung*. His writings centered on a vigorous critique of Christianity and Prussian autocracy. Such was the provocative nature of his writings, the government closed the

paper, and Marx moved to France, a fertile ground for many sects of socialism. It was here that Marx became a doctrinally convinced communist, he put down his views in a series of writings known as the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*. Inspired by Feuerbach, he discerned the alienated nature of labor in a capitalist society as against a communist society that facilitates a non-hierarchical interaction among human beings in cooperative production. In general, Marx studied the various modes of production, found capitalism the most reprehensible among these, and predicted the eventual triumph of communism. At this juncture Engels came into Marx's life, the two were to remain collaborators over their joint resolve to fight capitalism and bring about communism. Expelled from Paris in 1844, Marx moved to Brussels with Engels. Here he undertook an intensive study of history and elaborated his unique thesis about a materialist conception of history in a manuscript which was published posthumously as *German Ideology*. In 1849, hounded by the political authorities on account of his political writings, Marx sought refuge in London, it proved to be the final terminus for him. He incurred considerable hardship because he had six children, his writings as a foreign correspondent for a newspaper did not suffice. Finally, in 1869, Engels settled a substantial income on his companion, and Marx's situation eased. For the rest of his life, he devoted his energies to writing on political economy, capital, landed property, wage-labor, the State and the world market. He passed away in 1883.

Engels was born to a textile manufacturer in Westphalia in 1820. Though trained for a merchant's profession in Bremen, Engels developed literary ambitions, and like Marx, fell captive to Hegelianism. He moved to England in 1842 to work in his father's firm in Manchester. A couple of years of residing in the textile district sensitized him to the working class, he shed off his Hegelian idealism, and began believing that the potential for a revolutionary transformation lay in the labor class. Thus was born his alliance with Marx. For a time, he left his business to devote himself full time to political work with Marx in Brussels, Paris and Cologne. In 1850 he rejoined the family business and extended continuous financial assistance to the Marx family that was going through straitened circumstances.

As Marx's health declined Engels got more actively involved in the political work that he had been doing with Marx. The credit for expounding and disseminating the Marxist position to the general public goes to Engels. He also authored *Origin of the Family* and *Ludwig Feuerbach*; these publications cemented his reputation as a philosopher in his own right. After Marx's death Engels

devoted himself to the onerous task of editing and publishing the second and third volumes of *Capital*. He died of cancer in 1895.

10.3 MARX AND PHILOSOPHY

The title of Marx's doctoral thesis was "Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature." While he perceived Democritean atomistics as being no more than a physical theory, the Epicurean model excited him. An important aspect of Epicurus's atomic theory was the idea of the atom's random declination. This connoted for Epicurus the atom's negation of all motion and relation by which it is defined as a specific being by another being, thus ensuring its singularity. Marx, though attracted more to Epicurus than to Democritus, found in this view a concept of freedom that was abstract and acquired non dialectically. True freedom, for communism, is procured in an interpersonal context through *praxis*, and not by relinquishing the social. The communist will celebrate an equitable and just society, not *freedom from the world* which is implicit in Epicurean atomistics. Nonetheless, Epicurus had stimulated Marx to think in a certain fashion.

From Aristotle Marx inherited his conviction that the economic aspect of our life has a strong relationship to the political, and, by implication, the ethical. Enlightenment movement in Europe in the eighteenth century, with its attendant privileging of science, and the resultant materialism as a worldview, impacted Marx and Engels too. However, one must remember that there was no straight-forward, uncritical borrowing from philosophical traditions by communism, rather, each of the strands from other philosophical traditions, when it appears in communism, has been reappropriated in a materialist context.

In his young age Marx was attracted to an amorphous group called the Young Hegelians. It comprised some of the celebrated intellectuals in Germany, such as Bruno Bauer, Heinrich Heine and Ludwig Feuerbach. The Young Hegelians drew on Hegel's veneration of Reason and Freedom as the guiding forces of history. These young men believed that change was inevitable, hence they began arguing for political and social reforms. Feuerbach was the unchallenged leader of this group. Later, Marx and Engels left the group because they felt that there was an idealist trend in the thinking of the Young Hegelians. Marx himself perceived philosophy as an endeavor to offer rationalist accounts of the world, and the human experience of it. This remained a primordial

philosophical project from the pre-Socratic Greeks to the key thinker of Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant. Kant gave a pivotal place to autonomy in his writings, perceiving it as *the* central philosophical concern. However, there were some serious flaws that a close reading of *The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* disclosed. Hegel took over this incomplete task. He affirmed what came to be a famous remark, that the Real is structurally Rational. For Hegel, this structure is dialectical, which means that it evolves by a series of negations. The real, at any given time, can be called a *thesis*. Gradually, because the real is always dynamic, there comes into being an *antithesis* of the thesis. The antithesis can be called a contradiction of the thesis. In this interplay of oppositions, we witness a third movement, called *synthesis*, in which both the thesis and the antithesis are incorporated into a higher unity.

From the vantage point of Marx, the Hegelian dialectics, though certainly a significant concept, however, remains confined to *ideas* at best. If freedom has to be won in the real world then we have to transition to real experience as *materialists*. What the Young Hegelians failed to accomplish is undertaken by Marx, who propounded an explicitly materialist conception of history, and the dialectical movement that characterizes all historical events. In the *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845), Marx himself observed that he developed a theory of action, a goal-directed material activity in which the subject and object of knowledge mutually constitute one another.

In the famous eleventh *Thesis on Feuerbach*, Marx observed, “the philosophers have so far only interpreted the world; the point, however, is to change it.” Feuerbach looked upon religion as offering to humanity an idea of God that is completely immaterial. “God” indicates the myriad ways in which humans have perceived the world. He believed that this meaning can be unraveled only by undertaking a criticism of religion. While criticism does not effect a change in the world, it does help in reorienting one’s perspective to the subject being criticized. Feuerbach’s attempts to construct a philosophical anthropology inspired Marx, who turned from religion to the real world and human suffering. Suffering that, as observed by Marx, makes religion, the “opium of the people,” necessary.

Check Your Progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Who are the philosophers that influenced Marx, either positively, or negatively?

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10.4 DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

A paramount precept of Marxist philosophy is Dialectical Materialism. It is a synthesis of a scientific materialism and Hegelian dialectics. The net result of this endeavor is a theory according to which reality comprises a unity of two contraries, mind and matter, and in which matter is foremost. The interaction between any contradictories generates a constant movement, and this is lent to history. In other words, history unravels as perpetual movement, it is never stagnant. Unlike Hegel’s dialectic that charted the movement only among ideas, Marx employs dialectic in a materialist context.

At any given time, a society should be seen in terms of its economic organization, the other aspects of its structure are derivative from this highest-ranking factor. To put it simply, the legal and political system of a social body, its culture, prohibitions and injunctions, in other words, its dominant moral perceptions, can be best explicated through its economic organization. This view is called Historical Materialism.

According to Marx, a society is structured by three inter-related elements. These are as follows:

The productive forces of a society, which refer to the productively used material resources available at any given time, including natural resources, the labor that is employed to work on those resources, and the level of technological development that is going to impact on production. The productive forces get enlarged over time due to new discoveries of natural resources and improved technologies.

The relations of production, meaning thereby, the ownership of these resources as formally awarded by the law of the land. Put more simply, the property rights which are legally recognized over these productive forces.

“The Superstructure”—or, the other features of the political, moral, cultural and religious constituents of a society that serve to validate existing social relations. An example will help here. We know that feudalism in Europe produced a markedly hierarchized society in which the landed gentry repressed the serfs. Over a period of time, the serfs began small, individual enterprises of sorts as attempts to overcome their penury. These ventures were forerunners of capitalism. Additionally, the discovery of the “new world,” the sighting of recently developed trade routes to Africa and Asia and the increase in human personnel as potential labor, helped generate a capitalist economy. However, because of the capitalist mentality to manipulate the labor and exploit material resources, there was a perceived need for change, and socialism, followed by communism, transpired. The point is that no economic organization was permanent, variations within it, small or major, resulted in changes all along in the superstructure.

10.5 IDEOLOGY

Ideology can be described as a set of beliefs that hold currency in a society because they buttress the ruling class. These beliefs may be philosophical, religious, moral or cultural in nature, the point is that they are held by the ruling class, for example, the capitalists here who possess the economic power. The capitalists begin believing that their wealth is a legitimate acquisition, and harbor the hallucination that their proposed self-enrichment and progress is actually beneficial to the class from which its wealth has been taken, namely, the labor. As Marx observes,

Morality, religion, metaphysics and all the rest of ideology as well as the forms of consciousness corresponding to these, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter along with their actual world, also their thinking and the product of their thinking.²⁹

Here, it must be stressed that there is no straight-forward, mechanical correspondence between base and superstructure. In a letter to Joseph Bloch in 1890, Engels makes this clear:

According to the materialist conception of history, the determining element in history is ultimately the production and reproduction in real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. If therefore somebody twists this into a statement that the economic element is the only determining one, he

²⁹ Marx, Karl, *The German Ideology*, in David McLellan, *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, Oxford University Press, 1977.

transforms it into a meaningless, abstract and absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure—political forms of the class struggle and its consequences...political, legal, and philosophical theories, religious ideas and their further development into systems of dogma—also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form.

10.6 CLASS

The concept of class has a centrality in communist theory though it did not receive a systematic exposition at the hands of either Marx or Engels. At the same time, both of these thinkers were fully aware of the class-character of capitalism, and, by implication, about the class struggles in a capitalist society. An oft-quoted remark in the *Communist Manifesto* is, ‘the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.’ Two primary classes in the capitalist society are the bourgeoisie, or the owners of the capital, and the proletariat, or the workers who are employed in the industry without any capital in their name, they sell their labor power. It is clear that the interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are opposed to each other. Thus is generated the famous class-struggle. The strength of the capitalists is their wealth, their control of political power, and their general dominion over key institutions of society, such as the media, schools, churches. Through the latter they propagate their power and engage in indoctrination of the masses. The power of the workers lies in their numerical strength, and a tacit fraternity with their fellow-workers which is the unintended consequence of working in the factories together, and identifying the commonalities in each other’s working conditions.

10.7 ALIENATION

Workers in a capitalist society do not own the means of production, which means, the raw materials, the machines, and the factories, and yet, the workers are engaged with each of these. These are the possessions of the capitalists, who “lend” them to such workers who sell their labor power in return for a wage. This inherent asymmetry between the two classes leads to alienation among the laboring class. The worker is alienated from his/her productive capacities since these are, in a sense, “pledged” to the capitalist. The conditions for the exercise of these capacities are formulated by the capitalist. Further, the worker is alienated from the product of his labor, he/she is not a part of decision-making regarding *what* is to be produced, or how it is to be distributed

once it has been “produced.” Moreover, alienation is evidenced in the workers in a social sense as a cooperative society of a pre-capitalist era gives way to a competitive one under capitalism. Mutual suspicion replaces trust as workers endeavor to survive to the best of their abilities. Production under a capitalist economy has an overall dehumanizing effect on the workers as their creative potential gets compromised in an organization where “mass manufacture” is the need of the hour.

10.8 EXPLOITATION

It broadly means that we extract more from an interactive situation than is warranted, simply put, exploitation implies taking advantage. For instance, the capitalist seeks a large profit margin, and profit is income that remains after all costs of production, including the costs of the materials and wages disbursed to the workers, have been settled. According to Marx, labor is the principal source of all value, this value exceeding the investment that the capitalist had made in any venture. Evidently, the profit-motive that drives the capitalist determines to a large extent the subsistent wages that are given to the workers, given the vast “army of the unemployed.” Exploitation is the outcome because of the vast difference in the income between the workers and the capitalists, the latter getting from production a disproportionately larger income than the workers. The singular intention of the capitalist class is to multiply its profits, and this is done by modernizing machines and increasing production, the requirements of the workers for safety at work, higher wages and job security for them, are patently overlooked.

Check Your Progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Examine Marx’s views on religion, alienation and exploitation.

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10.9 COMMUNISM AND THE *COMMUNIST MANIFESTO*

Marx employed the term “communism” to connote a working-class movement in a capitalist society, as also the instantiation of a society as an outcome of this movement. Together with Engels he asserted in the *Communist Manifesto* that the Communists are not antagonistic to the working-class, but represent the interests of the proletariat as a whole. Socialism and communism appeared on the intellectual scene as synonyms in the second half of the nineteenth century. Marx and Engels tacitly consented to their movement being described as ‘Social Democratic’ at one point. However, Engels did observe that the latter term was inappropriate to apply to a party that explicitly advocated the absence of the entire state, including the state as democratic. To put it in clear perspective, let us say that while communism was a form of prescribed revolutionary action, which aimed at a violent overthrow of capitalism, socialism was, by contrast, a peaceful and constitutional movement of gradual reforms.

It was significant that Marx was cynical of the achievements of the French Revolution. He believed that political emancipation was incomplete without a complete overhaul of the material conditions of humanity at large. According to Marx, comprehensive freedom can be attained only by focusing on the sphere of production, distribution and exchange. He was averse to an understanding of human as a mere being, he opposed Aristotelian understanding of Man as Rational. Marx stressed the potential that was latent in *praxis*, the essential human trait for him lay in productive activity, rather than in mere contemplation. A world where labor was alienated was a world in which autonomy was undermined. The workers were enslaved by capitalism, an arrangement conceived by humans, but that has been transformed into a Frankenstein. Capitalism has become the sovereign that is the primary cause of alienation among the workers. Once the workers become conscious of the causative factors that have impoverished them, they resolve to overthrow this system. This is what is celebrated by communism, this revolutionary *praxis* by the proletariat that will actualize a world from which capitalism has been ejected.

In *Critique of the Gotha Program*, Marx writes, “Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship

of the proletariat.”³⁰ The “dictatorship” that Marx talked about does not refer to the non-judicious/violent rule of either one monarch, or a small group of people. It is, rather, about the empowered working class, and their democratic rule. This power is provisional, one that is invoked to oversee the transition in a society from capitalism to communism. Unlike the bourgeoisie, the proletariat forms a numerical majority, and once they gain political power, they have to employ it to eliminate capitalism in its material and human aspects. The dictatorship of the proletariat lasts only till such time that we arrive at a communist society, one in which the state is rendered superfluous.

In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx has listed ten measures that the proletariat, upon its victory over the bourgeoisie, will immediately put into effect. They are as follows:

- 1) Abolition of property in land and application of all rents on land to public purposes: Marx believed that landless peasants must be collectivized on the estates of their former landlords. In other words, the communist society would transition from private property in land to property that is communally owned.
- 2) A heavy progressive or graduated income tax: In an industrialized society there are bound to be inequalities of income because of the unequal skills that prevail in the labor class, and some specialization that exists among those skills. The resultant inequality of incomes is sought to be equalized by this measure.
- 3) Abolition of rights of inheritance: This principle aims to achieve wealth equality after those living have passed away. A level playing field in terms of material advantages and equality of opportunity was the guiding idea for Marx.
- 4) Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels: The victory of the proletariat will often be challenged by some sections of the bourgeoisie, this measure is intended as a punishment for them.
- 5) Centralization of credit in the hands of the state, by means of a national bank with state capital and an exclusive monopoly: Through the control of credit, the state can take an informed decision about which parts of the economy should be strengthened, and which ones wound up because of non-performance.

³⁰ Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program, Selected Writings II*, Moscow, 1951, p21.

6) Centralization of communication and transport in the hands of the state: Free transport for the poor is an immediate implication of this principle.

7) Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the state, the bringing in cultivation of waste lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.

8) Equal liability of all to labor: Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture. The inability to work on account of age or disability apart, the privilege not to work has been abolished by this principle.

9) Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country. Marx observes that, “The abolition of the antagonism between town and country is one of the first conditions of communal life.”³¹

10) Free education for all children in public schools: Abolition of children’s factory labor in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc. Marx was clear that the educational system manifested in schools should be unpenetrated by either the government or the church, people themselves should formulate the guidelines about the running of the schools.

10.10 RETHINKING COMMUNISM

The key idea here is that social ownership of productive goods must replace privately owned property. Now, this solution that has been offered to combat the exploitation of the workers, has been criticized on the grounds that collectively owned assets will incapacitate the system because of its inefficiency. Moreover, there is no guarantee that a socially-owned capital will remove inequality since the majority in the aforementioned society may monopolize the greater share of resources for itself, leading to a deprivation of the minority. In a situation of a “level- playing field,” which is the claim of the Communist, disparate levels of wealth will come into existence as people do not exercise their choice in the same manner, and perceptions of risk and consumption-patterns differ among people. The view that the abolition of capitalism will annihilate all competition seems too far-fetched to command conviction.

³¹ Marx and Engels, *German Ideology*, trans. Pascal, London, 1942, p.44.

In 1899, there appeared a criticism of Marx's theory within Marxism, by Eduard Bernstein. His principal contention was that the predicted polarization of the classes was not taking place. This was due to elevated levels of living and the expansion of the middle class. This observation was subscribed to by many Marxists. Crucially, this perception also generated the study of non-class social movements, such as racism and feminism in relation to class conflict. A mention must be made of the post-modern critique of grand foundationalist theories that were an outcome of the Enlightenment, and that assume that our employment of reason enables us to discover universal truths about the world. Jean-Francois Lyotard was one such prominent thinker who cast a suspicion on all "metanarratives," such as Kantianism, Hegelianism and Marxism. These philosophers have been teleological, and post-modernism is suspicious of any endeavor to apply overarching and normative propositions that ostensibly apply to persons regardless of their specificities, such as race, gender or caste.

Last, but most significant, is the post-modernist's dismantling of the traditional, Cartesian subject— rational, coherent and fully transparent. Such a subject is a presupposition of communism. Supported by psychoanalysis, there has been a progressive whittling away of a fully self-conscious subject, and a recognition of the Unconscious that is integral to a self, and that renders it therefore, as opaque. The class-subject of the communist theory, aiming at its self-transformation, becomes a chimera.

PONDER BOX-I

Are economic forces the only factors driving historical and social change?

What about racial and gender inequalities? Do the latter receive a satisfactory treatment at the hands of Marx and Engels

Check Your Progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. Discuss the salient features of communism.

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10.11 LET US SUM UP

We can summarize our discussion with the help of the following points,

- Communism refers to a political and economic ideology that is opposed to liberal democracy and capitalism because of an *individualism* that is integral to both these theories.
- Communism offers us a version of society that has been brought into existence through the struggles of the working class.
- Karl Heinrich Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) published the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, it was a programmatic statement on Communism. These two thinkers had a lifelong intellectual partnership.
- Early Greek philosophers, Kant, and Hegel were closely studied by Marx and Engels. Marx believed that philosophy had got mired in idealism, and, over the millennia had only interpreted the world. The point was, emphasized Marx, to *change* it.
- Communism inherits from Hegel the concept of the *dialectical method*, however, unlike Hegel, applies it to understand the progress in human history. A materialist outlook is fundamental to communism.
- According to communism, society is constituted by three inter-related elements: material and natural resources, worked upon by the laboring class, the ownership over the resources and the machines, and the factories, and, finally, those features of the political, moral, cultural and religious constituents of a society that serve to validate existing social relations.
- The moral, religious and metaphysical beliefs that hold currency in a society are not independent but a direct outcome of the material behavior of humans.
- The principal history of a society has to be understood through *class*. There are two major classes, the bourgeoisie, or the propertied class, and the proletariat, or the wage laborers who offer their services to the bourgeoisie or the capitalists.

- Rampant alienation among the workers, and their blatant exploitation by the owners of the capital are intrinsic to capitalism. The wages given to the labor class are subsistent wages, the major share of the profits being monopolized by the bourgeoisie.
- In a major departure from liberal egalitarianism (with its focus on the *individual*) Marx perceives exploitation and inequality as pertaining to the *group* of workers, being perpetrated by the capitalists as a group.
- The communist solution to these ills is to socialize the means of production. A working-class movement is required in order to abolish private property, bring in a provisional ‘dictatorship of the proletariat,’ and centralize credit in the hands of the state. As the situation all around improves after the demise of capitalism, a time will come when the state will erode. Communism has no need for a state.
- Communism has been perceived as offering too parochial a perspective to look at social ills, namely, through the economic lens. There are many major issues that afflict a society at any given time, such as race, gender, and caste. These require an independent analysis, to view them only through the economic criterion is to do them injustice.

10.12 KEY WORDS

Bourgeoisie: Engels described the bourgeoisie as ‘the class of the great capitalists who, in all developed countries, are now almost exclusively in possession of all the means of consumption, and of the raw materials and instruments necessary for their production.’

Capitalism: A term denoting a mode of production in which capital in its various forms is the principal means of production. Capital can take the form of money or credit for the purchase of labor power and materials of production. Whatever the form, it is the private ownership of capital in the hands of a class.

Communism: an actual political movement of the working class in capitalist society, and as a form of society which the working class, through its struggle, would bring into existence.

Proletariat: Or, the working class. For Marx and Engels, the working class, engaged in a struggle with the bourgeoisie, was the political force which would accomplish the destruction of capitalism and a transition to socialism—‘the class to which the future belongs.’

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10.14 ANSWERS TO KNOW YOUR PROGRESS

Some Questions and Their Answers in an Outline

Check Your Progress I

1.

1. Marx wrote his doctoral thesis on Democritus and Epicurus. He perceived in Epicurus an anticipation of a political theory that celebrated freewill. However, Marx believed that the freedom being talked about was abstract. Freedom, for Marx, presupposes an interpersonal context, freedom can never connote an extrication from human society. It must be realized in this world itself. For some time, Marx was under the sway of Aristotle who, unlike the utilitarians, had stressed on functioning rather than on well-being. This impressed Marx who had a decided preference for *doing* rather than *being*.

2. Marx and Engels believed that philosophers have engaged in varying degrees of idealisms, so they are ineffective in bringing about an actual change in the world. We need *praxis* if we are to alter our oppressive social and political environments. Kant is a case in point.

3. Both Marx and Engels became members of a philosophical group called Young Hegelians who perceived themselves as heirs of the materialist tradition of Hegel, and, therefore, committed to

carrying forward his project of human emancipation. Marx and Engels left this group because they believed that it was leaning towards idealism.

4. Hegel, whom Marx went on to criticize in several of his writings had a substantial influence on Marx. The notion of the dialectical method, which was applied to understand historical movement by Marx, was a direct inheritance from Hegel. Dialectical materialism, a key concept in communism, is a synthesis of scientific materialism and the dialectical method of Hegel. While Hegel employs this method to understand ideas, Marx deploys it to see how history moves forward.

Check Your Progress II

1.

1. Marx was immensely influenced by Feuerbach concerning his views on religion. According to Feuerbach, God is insubstantial and immaterial, it is a human projection of all that is not to be found in the humans. Simply put, God is an alienated image of a perfected human, in which the perfections are not to be found in the human beings themselves. Marx found in Feuerbach's critique of religion the beginnings of a philosophical anthropology.

2. Marx looked upon religion as an opiate of the masses, but he did not discount it. He observed, on the contrary, that "religion is the sigh of the oppressed creatures."

3. Marx remarked about the alienation of the worker from his labor since his employers alone the conditions under which he must work. He is alienated from his fellow-workers since the capitalist creates a competitive environment in which suspicion replaces affection. Capitalism focuses on growth, and growth is generated only through profits. Even though labor is the chief source of all value, it is the most unremunerated section of society. The profits are monopolized by the capitalist, the worker remains underpaid. Alienation and exploitation are intrinsic to capitalism.

Check Your Progress III

1.

1. First envisioned by Marx and Engels. In 1848, they published the *Communist Manifesto*, which is a programmatic statement on what communism is, and how it could to be realized in our society.

2. A communist society emerges from the ruins of a capitalist society.

3. Capitalism is an economic arrangement in a society that produces inequality in wealth and class. The two main classes which are evidenced in a capitalist economy are the bourgeoisie, or the owners of the capital, and the proletariat, comprising the workers who are employed by the capitalists in their factories in exchange for a wage.

4. Capitalism can be described as a political regime in which the political power rests in the hands of the capitalist, the mass of the workers is precluded from participating in the governance. The productive process present in the factories is inhuman, there is complete absence of any pro-worker legislation. Long hours of work, absence of safeguards at work and really low wages for the service rendered, are some of the problems that are present in an industry that is privately owned. Blatant exploitation of the labor class is in evidence.

5. The worker grows alienated from the product of his labor because of the specialization of labor.

6. A consciousness arises in the worker about his abysmal conditions of work and subsistent wages.

7. The task of changing this radically unequal world falls to the proletariat who has “nothing to lose but their chains.” A social revolution will overthrow the capitalist organization of society, and bring in the “dictatorship of the proletariat.”

8. Under communism, there is a social ownership of the means of production. There is an amelioration of the working conditions inside the factories along with a shortening of the working-day. A high degree of cooperation and concern for everyone is a feature of communist society.

UNIT 11

SECULARISM³²

Structure

11.0 Objectives

11.1 Introduction

11.2 The Concept and its Etymology

11.3 Historical Background and the Rise of Secularism

11.4 Public Sphere, Religion, Secularism: The Problematic

11.5 Different Types of Secularism

11.6 Criticism and the Future of Secularism

11.7 Let Us Sum Up

11.8 Key Words

11.9 Further Readings and Reference

11.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

11.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will enable the learners to get:

- A definitional understanding of the term secularism.
- To understand the historical background against which the concept emerges.
- To understand some of the issues, complexities, and nuances of the concept in terms of its deployment in modern political societies.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of secularism is one of the most significant issues in modern social and political philosophy. It focusses on the nature of the relation between the state and religion/s in the context

³² Dr. Shridha Shah, Former faculty, Department of Philosophy, Hindu College, University of Delhi.

of modern political thought. As a society we witness the critical role religion plays in society. It can be divisive and polarizing, and yet it can also provide a moral-cultural framework to societies and people. Like state and the political organization of society, religion is one of the most universally found, and long-standing institutions that has characterised human civilisations. In the course of development and progress, we have questioned the efficacy and relevance of religion to modern societies, however, religion has proven itself resilient against any such questioning. At best, we would like to do away with its dogmatic and divisive tendencies, and allow only for its redeeming qualities, at least for those who would like to believe in a religious framework. And yet there are issues and questions that remain: how do we accommodate different religious beliefs, their practices, their adherents, and non-believers, within an increasingly globalizing political world, with all its complexities? The concept of secularism gives us one kind of an answer, which has been fairly dominant in modern political societies. It is enshrined as part of our constitutional makeup, and yet as a theoretical concept, it is riddled with complexities, and finds different interpretations in different nations and societies.

This unit will introduce the learners to this concept, and the manner in which it emerges as part of the contemporary political discourse. It will further discuss the nature of some of these complexities that will enable the learners to better understand the nature of the concept and its criticisms.

11.2 THE CONCEPT AND ITS ETYMOLOGY

The term secularism emerged in the middle of the 19th century, and was first conceptualised by George Holyoake (1871) to denote an ethical framework of thought, which did not depend for its parameters solely on religion, and could also be distanced from the worldview of the atheists, as atheism at that time carried a negative connotation. From then to now, the conceptual bearings of the term have changed immensely, and implies a range of other meanings, and issues that accompany this concept, some of which will be taken up for discussion in this unit.

PONDER BOX-I

Is there an afterlife? Does it make any difference to how we conduct our life in the present?

Etymologically, secularism comes from the late Latin word *saecularis*, which means worldly, belonging to this age, etcetera³³, indicating a concern with the temporal, as opposed to the atemporal or eternal. Temporality indicates a separation from the church/ religious institutions, and their ‘other worldly’ concerns and eternity. Instead of dealing with concerns of the afterlife, the temporal deals with issues of the current age, in the now. This concern with the issues of the age, brings us to a definitional understanding of the term secularism, which denotes the separation of religion from the institutions of the state, along with a growth of its accompanying secular values to govern the public sphere.

Despite the surface simplicity of this kind of definition, there are several assumptions that underlie it, and they need to be unpacked in order to realise the complex nature of this concept. To begin with, the term religion itself is something which presents a philosophical issue – our understanding of what is religion, is not only informed by cultural and historical contexts, for instance dietary norms, marriage rituals, etcetera; but more fundamentally, raises the philosophical issue of what is the essential meaning of the irrespective of culture and context, perhaps even raise the that is there a need or even possibility for such meaning. Is belief in God, or a central scriptural text essential to the understanding of a religion? No, we have significant instances to argue otherwise.

PONDER BOX-II

What are the different religions you know of (including tribal, and other specific groups)? Think about differences in their beliefs and practices.

term,
issue

In any case, a discussion of such conceptual issues is a part of the philosophical exercise to develop a better understanding, and it is only based on such conceptual clarification that we can further articulate what it would mean to separate religion from the state, and its institutions, and thereby understand secularism.

11.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

³³ <https://www.etymonline.com/word/secular>

A very important aspect of understanding the concept of secularism is in terms of its development in the context of the rise of Christianity, and modern Europe. There are claims by scholars that secularism cannot be limited to the European context, and other societies too had a conceptualization of the secular. We will take up some of these claims and issues later in the unit. In the case of Europe, the historical conflict between the church and the state that eventually leads to the articulation of the concept of secularism and secular values, develops as a conflict between the values of this world and that of the world of God. God as the creator of the world, stood outside of it, i.e., was not subject to the contingencies and laws of the world created by it. At least this was a significant way of understanding God's relationship with the world, which eventually leads to the development of the secular worldview. Values and virtues of this world that lead to success were seen to be in conflict with values that would lead to the kingdom of God. There are several instances of such conflicts where the sacred is seen in conflict with the secular, particularly in terms of the place of scriptural reason and authority vis-à-vis human reason and rationality. Is scriptural authority to be accepted over independent human reason and rationality or vice versa? This sort of question came to be the mark of the development of modern thought, and along with the rise of Protestantism, the Scientific Revolution, that ushered in the Age of Enlightenment, together formed the larger historical background of the rise of secularism. Immanuel Kant's dictum of "Sapere Aude" (dare to think), in the context of the Enlightenment, is a perfect motto for what leads to the articulation of the secular worldview.

The important thing to note in this context is the swiftness and the nature of change that characterises European society. Since the time of adoption of the Nicene Creed (around the 4th century CE) Christianity had been the dominant religion in all of Europe. In fact, going to a meta level, religion was a fundamental way of life. It is very difficult to imagine and articulate a meaningful life outside of the purview of religion in medieval Europe. It is not as if Christianity was not questioned, and there are several historical instances of that, but to altogether conceive of no religion or God, was a far deeper issue. From being a society dominated by a single religion, to multiple sects forming within that religion, eventually leading to one of the bloodiest periods of internecine fighting (Thirty Years' War, which ended with the Peace of Westphalia -1648), and the foundations of the rise of modern secularism, these were very sweeping and radical changes for the European continent. The rise of Protestantism and Reformation, which bring along with them a change in the understanding of the nature of human reason vis-à-vis the scripture, further

lead to the emergence of a new world order, where religion did not hold the same place of importance. From being the most dominant institution that covered every aspect of life, to becoming something that could only be a part of the private life of an individual, there was a fundamental shift in the understanding of religion, and its relation to the public sphere. Religious toleration that came in with the secular worldview, brought with it several other conceptual changes to the status of religion, which will be discussed in detail, in the next section.

Check your progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. What is the meaning of secularism?

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11.4 PUBLIC SPHERE, RELIGION, SECULARISM: THE PROBLEMATIC

As noted in the previous section, there was a significant shift in the status and conception of religion with the rise of the secular worldview. Cultural and political shifts, religious wars and bloodshed, combined with ideational ferment among thinkers, led to the rise of a world view that argued for toleration of religious differences, but along with such toleration came the changed status of looking at religion as part of the private sphere of human life and activity.

Philosophers such as John Locke (1632-1704), theoretically argued that the state and the church belong to separate realms of human activity. One was concerned with the civil society and its members in the here and now, and the other was concerned with promises made for the afterlife, and therefore, the church had no business meddling with the business of the state, and that the state need not meddle with the religious beliefs of an individual. This sort of distinction argued for

religious toleration on the part of the state, but was predicated on religion being a concern of an individual's private life. The increasing power and autonomy of the state, issues like education, social welfare, social order etc. all coming within the purview of the state, as opposed to religion, forwarded the idea of this separation.

Following philosophers like Baruch Spinoza and John Locke, who argued for the role of the state against religious oppression and tyranny, later thinkers like Montesquieu, Voltaire, David Hume, Adam Smith, all further carried this argument for the separation of state and religion, and state neutrality in the face of religious differences, to different degrees. It is important to keep in mind that such distinctions that now seem obvious to us, were actually novel for the time when they were being proposed. The existence of the private sphere as a separate realm, predicated upon the sanctity of individual freedom, was itself a product of the historical age. It had not existed prior to that time.

PONDER BOX-III
Consider the differences between the public and the private domains. What are the issues/domains that are exclusively private?

Religious belief and practice are not only a matter of individual faith and commitment, but are also part of the larger social fabric of any society. Most people are born into religions, and don't necessarily exercise any choice in the matter. There are shared beliefs and practices, along with individual faith and commitment that characterise religion for most people. Therefore, for religion to be relegated to the private life of an individual, in concept, brought about very complicated scenarios, which are still unfolding for us. There are several instances where such conflicts confront us. Differences in personal laws with regards to marriage, divorce, care of religious buildings, etc., is accepted in India within the purview of it being a secular state; however, states like France advocate a complete separation between public norms and beliefs and practices of a religion. For instance, there is a complete ban on display of religious symbols, and attire in the public space. This often raises issues of freedom of expression, and free practice of religion, which are also avowed values of a modern liberal society. In general, as well, criticism of religions versus the freedom of speech, guaranteed as one of the basic political rights, is often seen to clash in modern societies. Another instance is where public institutions take account of dietary norms of followers of particular religions. Should such concessions be entertained? If yes, to what extent?

Or for that matter public holidays for specific religions – how should they be accounted for? What these instances indicate to us is this that the separation of religion from the public sphere is not a neat and uncontroversial process, especially with the rise of multicultural societies. Most states in the current world order have people from different ethnicities, cultures and religions coexist. At the level of multiplicity of religions, what should the role of the state be in mediating differences and keeping a neutral stance?

Check your progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. What is the basis for the separation between religion and state according to John Locke?

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11.5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF SECULARISM

The manner in which we have so far discussed secularism can be characterized as political secularism, which emphasizes the separation of the state and the church. This separation is meant to promote secular values in the functioning of the public sphere. These secular values in general can be said to focus on a certain kind of neutrality of treatment among religions, and to prevent any kind of discrimination among people, and institutions based on religious grounds. However, as we have partially discussed earlier that in practice different states interpret these secular ends differently.

Analytically speaking, a secular state can be characterized as having a dissociation with religion at the level of (i) ends, (ii) institutions, and (iii) laws and policies. How a state practices separation from religion at these levels allows for different characterizations of any state. Ideally, a secular state must be neutral on religion on all the above-mentioned levels. A secular state can be

distinguished from (i) a theocratic state, eg. Iran, (ii) a state with one established religion, eg. Great Britain, and (iii) a state with multiple established religions, Ashokan empire or Akbar's policy towards religions may come closest to this characteristic. Neutrality among all established religions may seem close to secularism, however, at the most abstract and fundamental level secular states must allow for their own secular ends, and not those established by religion. They must also cater to those who do not believe, or choose to believe in another religion than the one they are born into. The state's ends and ideas of welfare should not distinguish among citizens based on re religion.

A very significant issue that emerges here is the case study of India as a secular state. Scholars have argued that India presents a different understanding of the term secularism, than that followed in the West. Others have claimed that it is only a derivative of the western notion. That debate aside, there are certain features of Indian secularism that make it distinctive in its approach to secularism, and are worthy of consideration. One of the foremost features in this regard is the acceptance of group/ community-based rights of religious groups, which is not accepted in western models. As argued earlier, in the European framework, religion is considered an individual centric, private activity, which cannot be entertained in the public sphere. India's approach to secularism is characterized as principled distance, as opposed to one-sided exclusion, mutual exclusion or strict neutrality. What this entails is that the state's engagement with religion, as a publicly significant activity, is underwritten by principles of secular values, and religion is not just removed from the public sphere. Religion may intervene in the public sphere, or likewise the state may intervene in religious matters, if they are guided by secular values of equality, liberty, justice etc. There is a demonstrable historical lineage and definite merits to this approach, in principle; however, this is not an uncontroversial position. In practice, it has been witnessed that it is not always easy to decide what values should be promoted as part of the public domain. For instance, individual liberty versus equality amongst religions may very well be at stake, and not allow for a clear resolution. At a deeper level, this takes us back to the crisis of secularism, where the separation between religion and state is not easy to execute.

11.6 CRITICISMS AND THE FUTURE OF SECULARISM

As was pointed out earlier, mainstream secularism is not without its controversies and criticisms. One of the criticisms already pointed out is that the division between public and private is not a

very clear one, and is in itself a product of developments in modern Europe. The classification of religion as part of the private sphere, rests on the assumption that it is an individual centric activity, and its community centered aspect is undermined. The neutrality that secularism seeks to uphold is therefore, actually a myth, which fundamentally, rests on assumptions that arose as part of the European historical development.

Another significant criticism that secularism comes in for is that very often secularism in its development is seen as anti-religion, and in its best version it is seen as respect for all religions, which can be seen as part of the Indian model. Even in the case of respect for all religions, it comes from an outsider's perspective and not from the point of view of the believer, and therefore, the decision making on what is acceptable and not acceptable comes from an outsider's perspective, which also goes back to the idea that neutrality is a myth within the secular discourse.

In the contemporary globalizing, multicultural world, where at one level apparently, there is an increasing homogenization of cultures, yet at the other level there is a resurgence of religious and ethnic identities. In such a scenario the claims of secularism cannot help us as they've been given. A serious engagement with religious worldviews and identities must be undertaken, particularly in terms of ideas of reason and rationality. Liberal arguments have very often rested with saying that secularism is the best possible alternative in our modern world for negotiating the relationship between religion and politics, and this basis is sourced within the ambit of modern rationality, but perhaps this claim with its assumptions must also be examined in order to seek genuine alternatives. The conception of reason that mainstream secularism is based on is essentially set in a disenchanted world, where religious thought is undermined, and considered superstitious. This leads to an irreconcilable gap between the believers and those who do not believe. It is reason and rationality that form the ultimate basis for what is acceptable and what is not, and that decision has already largely been made against the believer. If we seek a move ahead, perhaps the very nature of this rationality needs to be reconsidered.

Check your progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of the unit.

1. What are the two major criticisms against (mainstream) Secularism?

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11.7 LET US SUM UP

Secularism as a doctrine arose with the rise of Modern Europe, however, since then it has undergone multiple changes. In a nutshell, it means the separation of church and state, accompanied by a growth in secular ends and values, which seek a neutral, non-discriminatory stance among religions as part of the public sphere. European secularism has largely seen religion as part of the private sphere, which has brought about various conceptual and practical difficulties. It has been argued by some scholars that the Indian model of secularism that takes on a principled distance among religions, as opposed to an outright exclusion or neutrality presents a better model; however, this framework is also not without its difficulties. With the resurgence of religious identities, and a critique of modern notions of rationality, it has been argued that perhaps a reconsideration of the secular worldview, and its assumptions about religious rationality would not be amiss, as a move ahead.

11.8 KEY WORDS

Age of Enlightenment: an intellectual and historical period, emerging in late 17th century in Europe, that was marked by an insistence on independent and universal human reason, which led to radical socio-political changes.

Nicene Creed: is a statement of belief in mainstream Christianity.

Peace of Westphalia: treaties negotiated at the end of the Thirty Years' War, which lay the foundations for modern conceptions of sovereignty and secularism, in Europe.

Protestantism: arose from the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, as a break from the Catholic Church. Among other doctrines, they reject the supremacy of the Pope in Rome, and insist on individual faith in Christ, and the Bible, as a method of salvation.

Scientific Revolution: a series of radical changes in scientific knowledge, in Europe, by way of method and discoveries, around the 16th and 17th centuries.

Thirty Years' War: a series of wars starting in 1618 and ending in 1648, in Europe. There were several individual reasons for these wars but most of them had freedom of religion as the key factor.

11.9 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCE

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11.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

1. Secularism emerged in the middle of the 19th century, and was first conceptualised by George Holyoake (1871) to denote an ethical framework of thought, which did not depend for its parameters solely on religion. Etymologically, it comes from the late Latin word *saecularis*, which means worldly, belonging to this age, etcetera, indicating a concern with the temporal, as opposed to the atemporal or eternal. The term secularism, therefore denotes the separation of religion from the institutions of the state, along with a growth of its accompanying secular values such as equality, liberty, fraternity, justice, etcetera to govern the public sphere, as opposed to religious morality.

Check Your Progress II

1. According to John Locke the basis for the separation between state and church is that they both belong to separate realms of human activity, where state was concerned with the civil society and its members in this life, while religion was concerned with promises made for the afterlife.

Check Your Progress III

1. The two major criticisms against the (mainstream) secularism are,

a) The distinction between public and private is not a very clear one, and is in itself a product of developments in modern Europe. The classification of religion as part of the private sphere, rests on the assumption that it is an individual centric activity, and its community centered aspect is undermined. The neutrality that secularism seeks to uphold is therefore, actually a myth.

b) The best version of Secularism is seen as respect for all religions. Even in the case of respect for all religions, it comes from an outsider's perspective and not from the point of view of the believer, and therefore, the decision making on what is acceptable and not acceptable comes from an outsider's perspective, which also goes back to the idea that neutrality is a myth within the secular discourse.

UNIT 12

NATIONALISM³⁴

Structure

12.0 Objectives

12.1 Introduction

12.2 Nationalism: Some Underlining Conceptions

12.3 Theories of Nationalism

12.4 Types of Nationalism

12.5 Critique of Nationalism

12.6 Let Us Sum Up

12.7 Key Words

12.8 Further Readings and References

12.9 Answers to Know Your Progress

12.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this unit are,

- to acquaint learners with the complexities surrounding the idea of Nationalism.
- to discuss the inter-relation of the idea of Nationalism with associated concepts like Nation, Nationality, State, and Patriotism.
- to discuss some theorizations concerning the origins of Nationalism, as well as its types.
- to present a critical assessment of the concept of Nationalism.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

³⁴ Dr. Ashutosh Vyas, Assistant Professor, Azim Premji University, Bhopal.

The term 'Nationalism' has a long and varied history, for it was used to signify different (though seemingly associated) ideas at different points in time by theorists as well as by the masses. Nationalism attained different connotations in the hands of different scholars, who tried to define this idea through their own vantage points. These descriptions tend to vary alongside variations in conceiving the relation between individuals and other humans, kinship patterns, nature of self and other, socio-political identity, geo-political earmarking, etc.

Each individual harbours unique and even uncommon interests, attitudes, perspectives, experiences, etc. and these unique aspects play a critical role in determining our individual identities. Yet despite the differences, there is another deeper aspect of our identities, which rather than focussing on our diversity helps in highlighting the commonality and sameness. The feeling or the belief that "I and my other fellow-beings have some shared and common culture, tradition, history, ancestry, etc." can be described as the feeling of "Fellow-Hood". This feeling of commonness and shareability helps us identify our selves through and with others, whom we believe to be like us in significant ways.

Broadly speaking, Nationalism may be described as "a feeling of 'fellow-hood' which is founded in the consciousness of some commonly shared culture, belief, tradition, history, etc. which may be felt as granting self-determination". This description provides us with a starting template for analysing and understanding the variations and complexities surrounding the idea and the phenomenon of Nationalism.

12.2 NATIONALISM: SOME UNDERLINING CONCEPTIONS

The words Nation, Nationality, State, and Patriotism appear in close association with Nationalism in our common everyday parlance. A discussion of what these terms have been taken to connote, seems crucial in understanding the idea of Nationalism as such.

If we look around us, we would find that the origin of each nation tends to tell a uniquely different story. While some Nations comprise of a diversity of citizens, languages, geographical terrains, religions, social patterns, kinship systems, etc.; there are still other Nations which are based in an underlying uniformity. In addition, some of the Nations that have their basis in uniformity, tend to have historical traces reflecting diversity with regard to the elements and characteristics which appear uniform now.

Some scholars (See, Sunalini Kumar, 259-60) believe that in terms of historicity, Nation is a relatively recent phenomenon as its emergence may be traced to the decline of the Roman empire and the unfolding of the French Revolution. As the king had to share his power with the religious centres (Church) and the economic centres (Landlord), he hardly ever enjoyed or exercised absolute integrated authority over the populace. However, with the coming in of industrialization, new means of production led to the growth of businesses, simultaneously giving rise to a class of people who had direct control over the monetary system; and along with this, religious revolutions started challenging the authority of the Church too. The de-stabilization of the religious and economic centres of power proved to be a ripe opportunity for the King to exercise his power in an integrated and absolute manner. Kings began earmarking geographical boundaries and identifying as population those who resided within the demarcated boundary. This geo-political demarcation became the birth-ground for the idea of Nation. In addition to this, the Modern State is believed to have emerged due to the rise of a new economic class (comprising of business and industrialist capitalists), which challenged the absolute authority enjoyed by the king by organizing the populace on the grounds of the uniformity endowed to them. Nation, which came to be identified in terms of a population having cultural, linguistic and racial uniformity, became co-extensive with the State.

In modern discourse, a sovereign state is considered to be the main representative of political autonomy and political self-determination. Hans Kohn believes that Nationalism necessarily demands the presence of a Nation-State (See, Sunalini Kumar, 260). Max Weber too argues that Nationalism can be seen as a movement propelled by the desire either to establish a unique Nation-State or to further strengthen its power. He opines that Nation is a community of feelings that express itself properly in its own State (See, Sunalini Kumar, 260). This tendency of necessarily correlating Nation with the State is classified as the 'Modern Nation State' or simply 'Nation-State' (Sunalini Kumar, 260). While for some thinkers Nation (whether Ethnic or Civic) and State come to be associated in an inseparable relation, there are still others like Gandhi for whom State is not a necessary requirement for a Nation at all, rather he seems to regard it as a hinderance to national unity and individual cooperation.

Some scholars (See, Sunalini Kumar, 264-65) had emphasized that in colonized countries the emergence of Nations is not original. This is because, due to colonization, the people of these

countries came into contact with the European culture, values, concepts, and vocabularies; and they subsequently ended up using those concepts in their own freedom movements too. However, thinkers like Tilak, Gandhi, Savarkar etc. argued that in the Indian context especially, such a claim cannot be maintained for according to them, India was already a nation before its colonization by the British. Interestingly, even though these thinkers presented this common view, yet their principles, reasons, and philosophical grounds for making these suggestions differed. For instance, while Gandhi was in search of a spiritual/cultural unity, Savarkar found this unity in one's race/religion, which according to him was further based upon his classification of 'the land' understood not only as one's fatherland (pitribhu), but also as a holyland (puṇyabhū). (Savarkar, Hindutva, 68-69).

Etymologically, the term 'nation' is believed to have originated from the Latin 'natio' and 'nasci' which means 'to be born from' (See, Grosby, 44). Owing to this, one of the chief constitutive elements of a Nation is regarded as being 'common and shared nativity' which appears in the form of "kinship" or "ethnicity." Some scholars describe a nation as 'motherland/ fatherland' or as 'homeland'. Motherland and fatherland suggest that Nation is to be identified as the birthplace of one's parent, whereas "homeland" implies that Nation is the place one "inhabits" (Grosby, 48).

Ernst Renan pointed out that often "race is confused with nation and a sovereignty analogous to that of really existing people is attributed to ethnographic or, rather linguistic groups" (Renan, 37). For Renan, commonly shared kinship, race, language, geographical boundary (space), etc. do not form a nation, but rather it is the will to live together (See, Renan, 52-54) which lies at its core. Renan and J.S. Mill, both, hold that communities which subsequently came to be recognized as Nations were in fact organized through forming associations and recollections of the critical incidents in the past, and reliving and participating in them with collective pride and humiliation, pleasure and regret, etc. For Mill, sympathies, which are commonly held by some, provide the ground for co-operation among those having the will to form a government/political framework, under which this co-operation manifests and evolves. (See, Mill, 3; Renan, 52). Both the Civic and the Ethnic Theories of Nation and Nationalism (to be discussed in section 10.4) consider this participation with the past as a crucial element for the identity of Nation.

Steven Grosby defines nation as "...a territorial relation of collective self-consciousness of actual and imagined duration" (Grosby, 11-12). "Collective self-consciousness" can also be viewed as a

relation grounded in commonality and shareability. However, this common sharedness, does not merely mean belonging to the same race, or having identical sensibilities or biological instincts; rather, it “refers to a social relation of each of a number of individuals as a consequence of those individuals participating in the same evolving tradition” (Grosby, 11-12). Further, for Grosby, the current territorial relations which find their presence in an actual and/or imagined duration, imply two things, one, an understanding of the present through the past (whether historically accurate or not, which gets conveyed through myths, stories, folklore, etc.) (Grosby, 8-9); and second, a belief in the existence of “a territorially formed ‘people’ that is believed to have existed over time” (Grosby, 11).

J.H. Hoyes believes that “...a nationality is any group of persons who speak a common language, who cherish common historical traditions, and who constitute, or think they constitute, a distinct cultural society in which, among other factors, religion and politics may have played important though not necessarily continuous roles” (Hoyes, 21). For Hoyes a group of people having common and shared social-cultural relations can be denoted as a Nation.

Our interactions with our environment (natural and social) can be seen as the basis for a set of habits, attitudes, customs, etc. which are common within a group of people, thus denoting a kind of nationality. This way of understanding ‘nationality’ presents it as an organic and natural phenomenon which does not presuppose (a necessary) division between “us” and “they”; between “self” and “other”. The reference point for demarcating our nationality is our nationality (understood through organic interactions) itself, and not the nationality of others. Furthermore, such an understanding of Nationality identifies the feelings of love, attachment, respect, pride, etc. for one’s nation as also being natural and not imposed. These feelings are what constitute Patriotism. Hoyes writes “everybody who is born and reared where his ancestors have lived from time immemorial is almost certain to feel a sentimental attachment to that locality” (Hoyes, 24). This very attachment for our native surroundings is what extends onto one’s political country. This extension may also be accompanied by the desire of self-determination or political autonomy. Nationality admixed with this kind of Patriotism is what Nationalism amounts to.

Generally speaking, then, Nationalism may be taken to imply the belief that if a group of people bind on the basis of some common characteristics (such as, race, history, tradition, language, culture), then they should unite themselves in terms of a sovereign political framework. Existence

of a nation/nationality or belief in the existence of a nation/nationality along with this associated feeling of political autonomy can be viewed as the constituent elements of nationalism. Yet the succeeding sections would show how perspectives about nationalism vary based on how someone defines a Nation, Nationality and its relation with the individuals living therein.

Check Your Progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answer with that provided at the end of the unit.

1. Write a note on the historical background of the emergence of a nation in European context.

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2. Highlight the significance of common shared consciousness in making of a nation.

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12.3 THEORIES OF NATIONALISM

The previous section helped us develop an understanding about the significance of critical concepts such as nation, nationality, state, and patriotism. The current section will engage the learner with some theoretical proposals which explicate the concept of nationalism, explaining its origin, its nature, and its rise in contemporary times. Though there are several theoretical frameworks for

understanding Nationalism, but the current discussion would be limited to three popular theories, viz. Primordialism, Ethno-symbolism, and Modernism.

12.3.1 Primordialism (or Perennialism)

Primordialists believe that since Nation is an already existing and continuous entity, therefore the feeling of nationalism too must be seen on similar terms. Individuals find themselves already united and tied together as and through a race, a language, a culture, certain rituals, a religion, etc. This underlying sameness is experienced as something that is and can be shared with an-other harbouring this sameness. It is this commonality and feeling of shareability that binds individuals as a nation. These feelings are not entirely imposed from outside, but rather they are much deeply ingrained, so much so that they become part and parcel of our personalities and self-identities. The feelings of shareability, commonness and sameness manifest in a sense of togetherness, fellowship, and Nationalism.

Primordialism comes in broadly two versions. The first version states that while it may be possible that Nationalism does not exist, but still, what is undeniable is that Nations exist. In extension this version implies that while it is possible that individuals sharing sameness are not united by a sense of togetherness, yet it suggests that they should be so united, for this sameness finds its full expression via the authority granted by 'self-determination'. The Second version of Primordialism states that both Nation and Nationalism exist already. The feeling of being a member (togetherness) of the Nation, may sometimes fade and blur, but it never completely diminishes or vanishes. Whenever favourable conditions and contexts become apparent, the feeling of togetherness and Nationalism becomes conscious. This latter version of Primordialism, presupposes and grants natural origins of nation and nationalism, such that Nation and nationalism are not regarded as being mere concepts that have been constructed or fabricated at some point in history; rather sameness in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, etc. is taken to be something which is a naturally given.

In contrast however, it may be also be pointed out when we are born in a structure where our elders and ancestors have already lived, which they have imbibed to the extent of feeling that this structure is an essential aspect of their existence and identity, then those identity determining

contents are implicitly taught and transferred to the next generation. That is to say, to some extent at least, we learn and adopt our identities from what we see and what we are taught.

12.3.2 Ethno-symbolism

John A. Armstrong, Anthony D. Smith and John Hutchinson are the main proponents of this theory. This theory states that Nationalism is a product of symbols (such as; flag, song, deity, etc.), myths, and tradition. While the idea of Nation may either be constructed or natural, but it is to be understood as a synthesis of symbolization; shared myths, customs, habits, and rituals concerning ideals, values, patronage, sacrifice, etc. that have been transferred across generations. For the Ethno-symbolists, Nation is not a recently constructed phenomenon, rather it is something that originated in the distant past. The theory establishes that an Ethnic Consciousness had existed in our forefathers for long. Without considering this pre-existent ethnic consciousness, Nation and Nationalism cannot be understood fully. According to this view, therefore, a unique history, culture, and socio- geographical pattern, etc. are essential for the emergence of nationalism.

12.3.3 Modernisms

According to the Modernists Nation is to be understood as a socially and/or politically constructed community of people; and Nationalism comes into existence due to and in the course of modernization and its accompaniments, especially industrialization, urbanization, mass-modern education, etc. The modernists argue that it was these phenomena that paved the way of community feeling, cultural commonness and shareability of identity, where the sameness may either be of an “imagined community”, or an “invented tradition”, or that of an “imagined geo-political location”.

Benedict Anderson developed the idea of an “imagined community” for explicating the nature of Nationalism. He explained that while members of a nation can never practically know most of the other members, yet most of them feel as if they stand united with all the others and that they have something in common with them, something which is deeply rooted in who they all are. However, for Anderson, this feeling of a commonly shared essential character is merely ‘imagined’, and the media and print culture plays a significant role in its emergence, articulation, and precipitation.

The idea of “invented tradition” states that some of the seemingly traditional cultural practices/customs, are in fact a much recent phenomena, which might have been intentionally or

consciously invented, yet comes to be seen as being traditional (See, Eric Hobsbawm, Introduction of *The Invention of Tradition*, 1-14). This is how Nationalism too needs to be viewed, i.e., even though Nationalism and its associated practices and institutions are a modern invention, still they are perceived as if they have existed always or have emerged in a remotely distant past.

The idea of an “imagined geography” was proposed by Edward Said. This idea may be taken to suggest that person may perceive themselves and some others as belonging to and being part of a particular spatial location, which was earmarked through imagery, (theoretical and/or literary) texts, social/political discourse, myths, etc. (See, *Orientalism*, 38-51).

12.4 TYPES OF NATIONALISM

Theoretical discussions surrounding Nationalism have identified some of its important types which tend to depend upon and vary with the perspective that the concerned theoretical framework maintains with regard to the concept of Nation, the concept of State, the relation between Nation and State, the relation between Individual and Society, etc. The following discussion would begin by explaining Ethnic and Civic Nationalism. It is important to note here that certain other types of nationalism can be understood as either being an assimilation of both ethnic and civic nationalism, or different versions (variations) of any one of these. Interestingly, we need to also note that that some types of nationalism appear to challenge certain constitutive elements inherent in the ideas of Nation and Nationalism, such as Pan-nationalism which presents a challenge to the idea of geographical boundary or defined (or imagined) space.

12.4.1 Two Main Types; Ethnic and Civic

12.4.1.1 Ethnic Nationalism

Ethnic nationalism presupposes the presence of ethnic commonality (or commonalities) amongst the people. The formation of a Nation, according to this view, is therefore to be identified in terms of certain ethnic commonality determining factor(s). This ethnic commonality may be grounded in a common language, a common religion, common religious practices, or a common (ethnic) ancestry or lineage, etc. Ethnic nationalism advocates that if a group of people share some kind of ethnic commonality, then this group has (and/or should have) a tendency towards realizing political distinct-ness and autonomy or “self-determination”. The full flourishing of this “self-

determination” is further conditioned on the group forming its own state/political institution(s). More so, this theory emphasizes the ideas of nativity and a native land. This emphasis comes in broadly two versions, hard and soft. In the hard version, the nation-state believes in the idea of ethnic nationalism rigidly and asserts that nationality or citizenship is to be determined on the basis of one’s ethnicity (which may be identified through a single or multiple factors). This assertion implies that those who do not belong to or identify through the ethnicity determining factor(s) being considered by the nation-state, will not be regarded as citizens of the nation state (or would rather be identified as second grade citizens) even if they are found to have been residing in the territory of that nation. Soft version of ethnic nationalism, on the other hand, defines nationality or citizenship in terms of blood-based lineage or descentance from a citizen of that nation-state.

12.4.1.2 Civic Nationalism

Civic nationalism states that ethnicity and nativity cannot be the only building blocks of any nation-state. The defenders of this view argue that firstly, a common kinship is extremely difficult to locate in any nation-state due to the un-availability of a “pure” race; and secondly that no (modern) nation state can be established on the basis of a singular commonality. Civic nationalism, instead, advocates the need of some “universal values” for forming a nation. These include freedom, equality, liberty, fraternity etc. which are often identified as “Liberal Values”, and this is the reason why Civic Nationalism is also called Liberal Nationalism.

References to Civic/Liberal Nationalism can be found in the “Social Contract” Theory. The Social contract theory attempts at giving a plausible explanation of how the State emerges. It argues that the need and the urge for saving one’s own life, for ensuring well-being and welfare for oneself and others are what gave birth to the need of a contract among individuals and groups. This contract is what underpins and constitutes a sovereign state. Ernst Renan, one of the foremost scholars to describe civic nationalism, proposed that this contract is rooted in what may be identified as the “will to unite” or the “will to live together”. Renan’s ideas further suggest that without this “will” no group of people can form a nation (nation-state), despite having common ethnicity and nativity. Renan presents several examples to show not only that common ethnicity or nativity are insufficient for the formation of a nation-state, but also that there are nation states which are entirely founded upon (liberal) universal values rather than on any common and shared ethnic

character . Nation-states based on the idea of civic nationalism, determine citizenship on the basis of the law of the soil (where you are born) and/or on constitutional values of that nation-state.

In contrast, Ethnic nationalists would argue that the “will to live together” cannot arise without the feeling/presence of some common and shared ethnicity, and that in the absence of this feeling, the “will to live together” is merely an apparent imposition from which no nation-state can come into existence in its true sense.

12.4.2 Other Types of Nationalism

Anti-colonial nationalism is a product of anti-colonial movements that started in retaliation to colonization by The British Empire. The consciousness of wanting to be free from the British Rule, which came in the backdrop of the uniformity of being members of a colonized country, gave room to the claim of inciting and manifesting a national-spirit across all individuals of that colonized country. The claim was that the colonized Nation was already a Nation prior to colonization. And the need then was to reclaim and re-affirm a national sovereignty in-dependent of the British Rule. Mahatma Gandhi, in Hind Swaraj, argued that the presence of the four piṭhas (Spiritual places/seats) in the four directions of India is proof enough of its Nationhood prior to the British Rule. Nativist nationalism grants citizenship by virtue of being born within the territory of a nation. Racial nationalism, Religious nationalism, and Language nationalism are based on the commonality of race, religion, and language respectively. While Territorial nationalism is based on (actual or imaginary) geographical boundary, Pan-nationalism defies any territorial boundary and focuses only on the idea of common ethnicity. Economic nationalism advocates that economic activities within the territory of a nation should be controlled by state. Socialist nationalism advocates that nation should be based on socialist values.

Check Your Progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answer with that provided at the end of the unit.

1. Describe civic nationalism.

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12.5 CRITIQUE OF NATIONALISM

Our discussion thus far has highlighted how the essential characteristics of nationalism consist in the presence and recognition of a common and shared identity (ethnic or civic, or both); a deep sense of attachment with this identity; feeling of self-determination (which finds its fructification in and through a State or some other political framework); and the presence and recognition of a boundary (imaginary or real) which segregates the nation from other territories and Nationals from Non-Nationals. In the light of these features, the current section would highlight some key criticisms raised against such an idea of Nationalism.

The Pacifists try to draw our attention to the militarization aspect of nationalism. Militarization presupposes that there is a constant threat to life from others, and that safety and security of life is to be ensured through the procurement of arms and weapons. One of the results of revering militarization is Jingoism or Chauvinism. Further, the inclination towards militarization makes one forget that the aim of human life is peace, thereby leading us into a kind of self-deception. This deception and delusion makes us vulnerable to propaganda, half-truths, false advertisement, twisted historical facts, etc. promoting power-hunger, deceitfulness, and a general sense of repulsion from and fear of the (ethnic, national, religious, cultural) other.

Nationalism emphasized the idea of identity and the identification of the individual with their own nation. It has been argued that this identification with one's own nation presupposes human divisiveness, which is further based on the division between "us/self" and "they/other", but not on recognition of the diversity of the cultural expression by the various group of people. When patriotism comes to be attached with this identification (with nation/ nationality/nation's identity), then the "other" is not seen as just "an-equal-other," but as being hierarchically disparate (whether superior or inferior) to "us/self/our nation". This is how the other is identified from the vantage point of nationalism and national politics. This tendency of a common and shared national identity,

and its presupposition of divisiveness however goes against the idea of multiculturalism which recognizes the multiplicity of numerous cultural expressions within the world/a society/an individual with equal (political) relevance. The disregard of multicultural values appears to be one of the leading causes of disputes between nations.

In contrast to the modern conception of Nation whereby a Nation cannot be seen without the state, Gandhi advocated the idea of “stateless nation” or “stateless society”. He believed that though in spiritual terms, we are and were a Nation, but from the political and economic point of view our focus should be on “local rule” or “Grāma-swarājya” rather than on attaining State-hood. Gandhi’s idea of village-self-rule suggests that for him, the State signified an artificial entity which hinders human flourishing. He believed that no human can survive in an artificial relation, since the creative force of humans demands “real” and “organic” relations where all dimensions of life interact with each-other; flourishing and adapting in accordance with the other dimensions.

Rabindranath Tagore, in his lectures on Nationalism, opines that nationalism treats each individual as an object, imposing certain identity defining characteristics onto them, and/or at the same time drawing exclusive focus on those attributes of their character which are conducive to the furtherance of its nationalist ideals. He suggests that while Society, which happens to be a voluntary self-expression of being a Social Being, is an end in itself; Nation is an abstract and artificially imposed ideal, in which individuals organize themselves to fulfil predetermined mechanical (un-organic) roles. For Tagore, nation and nationalism focus on “utility” and “survival of the fittest” and that is why it promotes only those aspects of one’s identity which fulfil its utilitarian aim, simultaneously treating the other aspects as hindrances. It lacks any sense of care or concern for others.

In contrast “co-operation” is an organic consequence of human life and creativity. Though Nation gives the assurance of security, but at the same time it demands the people to behave in a pre-fixed fashion exhibiting the sanctioned identity defining characteristics. Tagore sees this assurance of security as a threat to freedom. He writes, “the living ideals must not lose their touch with the growing and changing life. Their real freedom is not within the boundaries of security, but in the highroad of adventures, full of the risk of new experiences” (Tagore, Nationalism, 9).

Check Your Progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answer with that provided at the end of the unit.

1. Highlight the main criticisms given by Tagore against the idea of Nationalism.

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12.6 LET US SUM UP

The discussions in the preceding sections highlight that there is no one unanimous way of defining or describing ‘Nationalism’. Each theory tends to adopt a divergent perspective which varies in terms of presuppositions regarding the ideas of nation, nation-individual relation, identity, etc. The discussion becomes even more complex since Nationalism is not merely an abstract theoretical concept but a feeling and a phenomenon which is rooted in history and in real life experiences. By discussing the various types of nationalism (civic and ethnic, and their various sub-types), the unit has presented a synoptic view of some of the popular perspectives adopted with regard to this idea; subsequently giving an overview of the key criticisms of the idea of nationalism.

12.7 KEY WORDS

Civic Nationalism: Nationalism based on some accepted values/principles.

Ethnic Nationalism: Nationalism based on ethnic identity.

Modern Nation/Nation-State: Nation congruent with state.

State: A political framework/institution.

12.8 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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Web-links

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/nationalism/>

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/sovereignty/>

12.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

(Learner should develop their answers with the help of the hints given below.)

Check Your Progress I

1.

- Decline of the Roman Empire and the unfolding of the French Revolution.
- King had to share his power with the religious centres (Church) and the economic centres (Landlord).
- With the coming in of industrialization, a new economic class had emerged.
- Religious revolutions started challenging the authority of the Church.
- Kings began earmarking geographical boundaries and identifying as population those who resided within the demarcated boundary.
- Modern State is believed to have emerged due to the rise of a new economic class (comprising of business and industrialist capitalists).

2.

- “Collective self-consciousness” can also be viewed as a relation grounded in commonality and shareability.
- Common sharedness refers to a social relation of each of a number of individuals.

Check Your Progress II

1.

- Civic nationalism states that ethnicity and nativity cannot be the only building blocks of any nation-state.
- A common kinship is extremely difficult to locate in any nation-state due to the unavailability of a “pure” race.
- No (modern) nation state can be established on the basis of a singular commonality.

- Civic nationalism advocates the need of some “universal values” for forming a nation.

Check Your Progress III

1.

- Nationalism treats each individual as an object.
- Society is a voluntary self-expression of being a Social Being, and it is an end in itself.
- Nation is an abstract and artificially imposed ideal.
- Nation and nationalism have a utilitarian aim.
- Co-operation is an organic consequence of human life and creativity.



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