



Block 5

State, Society and Religion

Pimpri Chinchwad Education Trust
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BLOCK 5 INTRODUCTION

The fifth and final Block, **State, Society and Religion** highlights two related but different issues or concerns of society in India. First, is Communalism and second is Secularism. Here the historical, social and critical issues linked with both these terms have been described, discussed and analysed.



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UNIT 11 COMMUNALISM*

Structure

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Introduction
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11.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the meaning of the terms communal and communalism
- discuss the social and historical background in which communalism emerged as a social phenomenon in India; and
- explain the different view points on communalism

11.1 INTRODUCTION

This is the fifth and the last block of your course on **Sociology of India**. This block titled **State, Society and Religion** deals with two major issues faced by Indian society and its unity and integrity. These issues are (a) communalism and (b) secularism. In this unit we will focus on the issue of communalism in India. To begin with, the term communalism has its roots in the term commune or community which means a group of people who swear allegiance to one's own community, religion or ethnic group than the society at large. Further, to elaborate, in sociological lexicon the concept of communalism can be seen as a form of collective outburst of one community against the other. To understand the social phenomenon of communalism, it is pertinent to understand the very nature of society. Society plays a very important role in genesis of communalism. It is important to note that Indian society was never homogenous throughout history. It was highly diverse- culturally, religiously, caste-wise and linguistically, as you learnt in the first unit of this course-Unity and Diversity in India. But there was hardly any tension between these groups. However, most of the scholars agree that communalism is a modern phenomenon and not a medieval phenomenon as it all began with the establishment of British Rule in India. The reasons that can

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be taken into consideration for this disharmony are: The British divisive policies, competitive nature of colonial rule, political and social structure and backwardness of colonial society with stunted economic growth. We will explain some of these aspects in this unit.

11.2 COMMUNALISM: MEANING AND DEFINITION

The term community and commune stand for two different concepts and should not be used in common parlance as the same. Yerankar (1999:26) argues that community and communal are two different concepts. The former is used to express the fellowship of relations or feelings, common character, agreement and sharing a common culture and space. The latter means an expression of heightened sense of community feelings. Since it is associated with a religious community, it implies exclusive loyalty to one's religion and all its related dimensions. According to Seth (2000:17), it signifies inter communal rivalries and social tension, economic, political or cultural differences of the rulers and the ruled. It is an ideology which determines the gradual evolution of relationships between two communities both within and without their respective folds. Dixit (1974:1) argues that communalism is a political doctrine which makes use of religio-cultural differences to achieve political ends. When, on the basis of religio-cultural differences, a community initiates political demands deliberately, then communal awareness turns into communalism. Sabrewal (1996:130) argues that communalism as a concept emerged due to the fact that members of a multi-religious society had to witness and confront the behavioral pattern practiced by specific community per se. It clearly shows that the term multi religiosity may sound unique as a Sociological proposition, however the differences need to be understood. For instance, social unease and tension is generated in the communities by sheer differences in clothing patterns, life style, facial marks, one's language and manners. These differences are equally governed by religious sanction of each specific community that creates a specific identity for the groups in the community. Awareness of socio-religious identities gradually get established and are mutually acknowledged. The awareness of socio religious identities help one constitute useful social maps in one's mind demarcating the social territory into sacred, friendly or neutral and hostile. Generally, this may be due to the propaganda and other factors such as prejudices, hostilities and negative feelings against each other. It is therefore argued that all depends upon the nature and type of interactive patterns between people of different religions and cultures. In case they do not hurt the religious sentiments and challenge religious identities, then there is no problem. But if they do, by chance or choice develop hostility against the other this is what leads to outbreak of communal outbursts and communal conflicts. Kamath (2003) tries to explain the meaning of communalism through the concept of communal harmony in the context of a multi-religious and multi-ethnic society. When various communities live together within a territory with understanding and cooperation, there is communal harmony. On the other hand, whenever such groups, either ethnic or religious, fight for their exclusiveness, group identity or group interest even at the cost of national interest or try to impose their way of life on other group, there is communal disharmony and this is termed as communalism. This explanation signifies that lack of understanding and cooperation between religious communities is the basic reason of communalism.

11.3 FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GROWTH OF COMMUNALISM IN INDIA

There may be several factors that may be attributed to the cause and growth of Communalism in India. Some scholars attribute this cause due to stagnant economy during the British Rule. The stagnation of economy may have affected the aspirations and economic prosperity for certain sections within society. Scholars opine that this section of society usually termed as 'Middle Class' used communalism as a weapon for their own survival at the cost of other classes in society. Subsequently, other leaders from the community and political parties joined to fuel the tension of Communalism in India. This may be well illustrated with the emergence of modern politics with its roots in **partition of Bengal in 1905** and feature of separate electorate under **Government of India Act, 1909**. Later, British government also appeased various communities through **Communal award in 1932**, which witnessed strong resistance from Gandhiji and others. All these acts were done by the British government to appease Muslims and other communities, for their own political needs. This feeling of communalism has deepened since then, fragmenting the Indian society and being a cause of unrest. Let us now discuss the core factors in detail.

Box 11.0: Divide and Rule Policy of British

On the other hand, in the case of religion, the British took advantage of the existing religious pluralism. Especially, in the aftermath of the revolt of 1857 by the *sepoys* of British army, the colonial rulers realised that if they wished to continue their rule over India, then they had to break the country from within on religious lines. They adopted the policy based on Roman maxim, '*Divide et Impera*' (Divide and Rule). Even though the revolt was a result of several political, social, religious and economic factors, the unity that Hindu and Muslim *sepoys* showcased in what is considered the immediate military cause of the revolt was alarming for the British. In what was an eye opener for the colonial rulers, both Hindu and Muslim *sepoys* refused to use the cartridges of the new Enfield rifle, which were greased with cow and pig fats.

To break this unity became their primary concern. Soon after in 1905, they divided Bengal, which was then the epicentre of freedom struggle in India, on religious lines. While East Bengal became a Muslim majority state, West Bengal had majority Hindus. Then in 1909, they introduced separate electorate for Muslims through Morley Minto Act, which was a step towards breaking the religious unity and taking the advantage of religious pluralism in India. At another level, the British started giving preference to Sikhs over Hindus and Muslims for their army jobs, giving rise to the notions of Sikhs as the martial race of India. This partiality towards the Sikh was because of the support they had given to the British in the 1857 uprising. They also created the myth of martial races creating the Gorkha identity out of the hill men who were loyal to them. The British sowed the seeds of discord between the major religious communities, especially the Hindus and Muslims as it was the only way they could get control over the various Indian principalities by playing them against each other.

British Policy of Divide and Rule

In the pre-independence period the British used the policy of Divide and Rule to weaken the nationalist aspirations by creating a cleavage between the Hindus and Muslims, favoring one community against the other in terms of services and opportunities. It resulted in communal tensions between the two groups and therefore, it is considered that the Hindu-Muslim disunity took shape during the continuation of British Rule in India.

In this regard, clear demarcation was made by many historians between the ancient period of Indian history and the medieval. Prominent among them was British historian James Mill of the early nineteenth century. They endorsed that since ancient India was ruled by Hindu rulers, it was a period of much growth and prosperity against the continuous decay of the medieval period under the Muslim rulers. This readily suggests that the basic character of polity in India is defined by religion which relied on the beliefs that Indian society and culture had reached ideal heights in the ancient period. On the contrary, Muslim communalism harped upon the glory of the Muslim rulers. Such distorted texts of Indian history significantly contributed to the rise of communalism.

During the national movement, a strong Hindu religious element was introduced in nationalist thought. The orientalist writings which glorified the Hindu religion and period in history became the basis for the propagation of nationalist ideas and pride for the motherland. In the process the Muslim were seen as alien.

Other factors which are believed to fan the flames of communalism include rumors and distorted news publicized by media which disseminates false information to the public. Also, political parties resorted to the politics of appeasement whereby sanctions were used to appease different ethnic, religious, cultural groups for votes. This vote bank politics greatly followed tactics of appeasement by provisioning services and opportunities to a few sections of the population against the other sections.

Check Your Progress 1

i) What do you understand by communalism?

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ii) Tick the true (T) or false (F) statement

- a) The British policy of divide and rule during pre-Independence period was to facilitate their rule in India. ()
- b) The diversities found in Indian society did not allow the British to rule over India ()
- c) British historians like James Mill during early 18th century associated ancient India when it was ruled by Hindu rulers to be an age of prosperity. ()

- d) One of the factors that gave rise to communalism was rumours and distorted news publicized by media. ()

11.4 COMMUNAL RIOTS

Having discussed the concept of communalism, the other concept which needs discussion is “Communal Riot”, which is a collective manifestation of religious feelings and sentiments against the others. A communal riot, in general refers to a collective violent manifestation of one’s identity, ideas and beliefs, etc. in relation to other religious community for the realization of certain interests. These differences are sometimes openly manifested and sometimes hidden but presented in a subtle way. It is, most often, a consequence of the spread of communal ideology. Many examples of communal riot could be cited in the Indian context. Infamous among them are the following-

- **Partition of India, 1947**
- **Anti-Sikh riots, 1984**
- **Ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Hindu Pundits in 1989**
- **Babri masjid demolition in Ayodhya, 1992**
- **Assam Communal violence, 2012**
- **Muzzaffarnagar violence, 2013**

Activity 1

Read the newspaper/journals/books on any one of the above mentioned communal riot and write a report of one page on its cause, leadership and ultimate consequence. Discuss your report with other students at your Study Center.

11.5 UNDERSTANDING COMMUNALISM

This section tries to understand the various view points offered to explain communalism in Indian contexts.

11.5.1 Colonialist Viewpoint

The British seemed to see ‘Hindu-Muslim antagonism’ much earlier than the term ‘communalism’ emerged. Colonial thinkers like Hugh McPherson in his work ‘Origin and Growth of Communal Antagonism’ rejects the idea that ‘communalism’ is “a modern invention, the product of recent political developments”, which refers specifically to the politics of separate electorates. In order to prove his point McPherson cites the Benares riots of 1809 and the testimony of a “landholder of Bengal” to the age-old animosity between Hindus and Muslims which dates back to the Muslim invasion of India. McPherson emphasizes that “the religious basis of communal dissension” began to be “reinforced by political factors” with Tilak’s establishment of the ‘Anti-Cow-Killing Society’ in 1893, which he suggests was designed to “stimulate the militant spirit of Hinduism and establish its domination of the Indian political world”

11.5.2 Nationalist Viewpoint

For the colonialist, ‘communalism’ is a pre-colonial problem which is irremediable. For the nationalist, ‘communalism’ is a colonial problem with its

remedy being nationalism. Under this rubric, communalism in India develops as a concomitant to Indian nationalism and is nothing but nationalism driven into religious channels. For the nationalist, while both nationalism and 'communalism' were responses to colonialism, the former was the 'right' response and the latter, the wrong one. The nationalist project a unitary and symbiotic culture of historic co-operation between Hindus and Muslims which was thwarted with the colonial rule especially with the policy of Divide and Rule, of the British rulers in India which gave rise to communalism.

11.5.3 Some Scholarly Responses

The most notable theorist on 'communalism', Bipan Chandra, who wrote *Communalism in Modern India* in 1984 worked very clearly within nationalist frames. Chandra and other nationalist historians emphasised that the phenomenon of 'communalism' is a 'modern' one and could not have existed before colonialism. Clearly, since any form of 'popular' politics could not have existed before the British advent, Chandra attributed 'communal politics' to colonial origins.

As Chandra writes "Communalism was not a partial or sectional view of the social reality; it was its wrong or unscientific view. Communalism was not narrow or false because it represented only one community but because it did not do either. The communalist not only failed to represent national interests, he did not represent even the interests of the 'community' it claimed to represent" (Chandra 1984: 17).

Thus, nationalism represented the struggle for national liberation from the colonial state and for the formation of an independent state. It was historically valid at the moment as it provided a real solution to a real problem – national liberation as against colonial domination (Chandra 1984: 22). Colonial and nationalist explanations of 'communalism' seemingly do not enjoy much credit today. Most contemporary work on 'communalism' would be dubbed constructivist. The foremost in this section is Bernard Cohn. However, Cohn's brand of constructivism has seen several tributary developments and branches. While Cohn's basic argument was that the colonizer's structure of administration generated sociological categories (such as, the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes etc.) that often became the source of conflict in India. His supporters and followers have found a variety of reasons besides colonial administration to prove that the colonisers succeeded in implementing not only sociological categories through administrative techniques but identities, consciousness and nationalism also emerged through the prism of the colonial knowledge system. Gyanendra Pandey's (1992) writings reflect these views. Pandey treats 'communalism' as a product of nationalism. However, he seeks to distinguish his stand from those who have considered communalism as 'deviant' or 'under-developed' nationalism.

Anti-Modernist

The last section is essentially devoted to the work of only one scholar who speaks not of 'communalism' so much as an analysis of 'secularism'. It is perhaps ironic that one can see the problem in greater clarity in his work. In his *The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance* (Nandy, 1998), Nandy begins by explaining why one needs to examine the "category" of secularism. His proposition is that "post-colonial structures of knowledge in the

third world” are often characterised by a “peculiar form of imperialism of categories” which hegemonize a “conceptual domain” so effectively that the original domain vanishes from our awareness and is replaced by a concept that is produced and honed in the West (Nandy 1998: 321). His project then is to recover the domain of ‘religious tolerance’ which is the question relevant to South Asia, from the hegemonic discourse of ‘secularism. He goes on to suggest that traditional India had answers to questions of religious tolerance.

Nandy’s arguments get caught up in a binary mode of tradition/modernity and faith/ideology. He acutely points out how colonialism has subjected certain knowledge domains to an imperialism of categories such that all traces of the original problem disappear. Given this proposition, his investigation of the concept of secularism is well founded. However, he does not answer why he sets out to rescue ‘religious tolerance’ from the domain of secularism. Was secularism an answer to religious intolerance in India? Nandy traces a trajectory of the concept of ‘secularism’ in Indian politics but ignores the fact that the word gained legitimacy in colonial India.

Thus, Nandy’s problem itself seems a little skewed. He presumes that there was peace within traditional society and that this peace was connected to religious tolerance and it is this traditional religious tolerance that he wants to recover. Instead one could ask whether tolerance had anything to do with religion at all.

11.6 COMMUNALISM IN INDIA: THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

The projection of the idea of India being a Hindu majoritarian state found its expression among the writings and discussions for an assertive Hindu ideology in the colonial era as mentioned above. This deliberate engagement with history became an important component in the political self-making in the 1800’s. Even within the colonial models of historiography, history was interpreted which exemplified Hindu artistic achievement which declined and was then defeated by the Muslim invaders, who then is replaced by the colonial rulers. It is important to understand that this construction of nationalist historiography is the very ground on which the current Hindu nationalist models of India’s past is based. Many contemporary religious and non-religious movements come to share idioms which see the nationalist state within the Hindu pantheon.

During the British rule, it was important to reimagine a single idea of nationhood in order to drive away the Britishers. Thus, the task of glorifying only selective instances of certain episodes of history such as the Rajput states and the Maratha confederacy which resisted the Britishers coming to India. Gradually there began a symbolic representation of Hindu Motherland. Towards the later part of the 19th century, this idea was then borrowed and extended by Hindu reformist organisations such as the Arya Samaj which advocated a return to the Vedas and had confidence in the narrative Hindu decline with the advent of the colonial rulers which needs to be revived. Another strand borrowed from the European race theory, that India is a land of the Aryans was also injected to the nationalist paradigm.

In the writings of Savarkar reflected this notion and he writes that only those who could establish Aryan descent qualify to be within the Hindu “rashtra” and not others belonging to the other religious groups.

Jawaharlal Nehru’s secular notion of Indian identity was given cognizance, after the inception of India as a republic after 1947. The then prime minister was against the intrusion of any religious identity politics within the workings of the post colonial state. Here, what Nehru meant was to separate religion from state and to give importance to all religions. This is so because in order to overcome the divisive politics of the colonial state of dividing the Hindus and the Muslims. The alternate of portion and aftermath of partition and derisive politics in pre-independent India made it important that the solidarity of the nation was given a priority and consideration.

Thus under, Nehru’s secular guidance and Gandhi’s stewardship the Congress party that led India to Independence endorsed inter-communal tolerance rather than strong secularist ideology.

Check Your Progress II

i) In what ways did the colonialist viewpoint of communalism differed from the nationalist viewpoint? Discuss.

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ii) Fill in the blanks:-

- a) One of the notable theorist on communalism _____wrote the book “**Communalism in Modern India**” in 1984 where he has written that it is a _____phenomenon.
- b) During the British rule, it was important to _____ a single idea of nationhood in order to drive away the _____ from India.

This traditional secularism as propounded by Nehru and the Congress was based on religious freedom, neutrality and reformative justice. Though this notion of secularism did not appeal to many who felt it was pseudo secular, as they felt it oppressed certain communities over others.

However, it is not only the voices of some who were skeptical of independent India’s secular polity but also many intellectuals who have been criticising the notion of secularism on which the Indian Constitution was based. They see secularism as a myth and alien to India’s needs. Critics such as Ashish Nandy, Partha Chatterjee ,T.N. Madan and Gyanendra Pandey vehemently oppose the

Hinduistic notions of the Hindutva wagon as well as the Indian state which aspires for a homogenising modern state. Borrowing from Gandhi's concept of villages being little republics and whose very nature is local and fragmented, they argue that both Hindutva and secular nationalism are intolerant of diversity. Although these critics are powerful, we still need to comprehend that the issue of secularism produces equality in general, and therefore the idea of political democracy.

Box 11.1

We need to understand that the modern communalism or the rule of majoritarianism finds its justification from the historical past. And hence it is of utmost relevance to be aware of the communal approach to the interpretation of ancient and medieval history as well. The Hindu communalists try to project an ideal Hindu society while the Muslim communalists do the vice-versa. We should not forget that the historical interpretation can be the product of contemporary ideology. The choice of events that are chosen might be guided by the subjectivity of the historian. Hence, historiography is critical of such interpretation of the past that might not be objective. Historical writing is one of the most sensitive intellectual areas with repercussions on popular nationalism and beliefs. There are many instances and assumptions in relation to Indian history which might not be outrightly communal but can be fitted within the purview of communal viewpoint as certain instances and assumptions are not understood within its historical context. As for instance, Mahmud Ghazni, being a Muslim was assumed to be despoiler of Hindu Temples since Islam is against idol worship. Little effort is given to understand further the causes of Mahmud's such behaviour.

Such communal approach is crucial because of two factors. Firstly, communal interpretation of history is poor quality history and secondly, historians cannot accommodate their discipline to degenerate to the extent that false history becomes instrumental in the promotion of political mythology. These factors are crucial and needs to be taken into account in order to understand all the forces that went into the making of India's past.

Communal violence is common now days throughout the world. They are known by various alternative names, as in China, the communal violence in Xinjiang province is called ethnic violence. Communal violence and riots have also been called non-State conflict, violent civil or minorities unrest, mass racial violence, social or inter-communal violence and ethno-religious violence. The Indian society will continue to experience such violent caste and communal eruptions as long as it does not find political and economic equilibrium in terms of castes and communities. The rise of OBCs on one hand, and impact of globalisation on Indian economy on the other, will continue to cause occasional eruption of violence in Indian society for quite some time. Caste and communal polarisation will be with us as long as we are not able to create an egalitarian society.

11.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit on 'Communalism' we explained to you the meaning and definitions of 'communalism'. What are the basic reasons which cause the situation of communal tension and disharmony in a multi-religious society. Here in this unit

we have described to you the main factors which have led to the rise of 'communal' feelings in India. We have given the past history and described the three different viewpoints on communalism in India and tried to explain the different responses of different social scientists on communalism in India.

11.8 REFERENCES

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11.3 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

I) Check Your Progress I

- i) When different socio-religious, ethnic communities live together within a territory fight with one another for their exclusiveness, group identity or group interest even at the cost of national interest or they try to impose their way of life on others, thus causing communal disharmony and violence. This is so called communalism
- ii) (a) T (b) F (c) T (d) T

II) Check Your Progress II

- i) The colonialist believed that 'communalism' was a pre-colonial phenomena which is irremediable i.e. which cannot be treated. However, the nationalists believed that 'communalism' could be tackled effectively by nationalism itself since they believed that 'communalism' was nothing but nationalism gone the religious way. Nationalism was the right way while communalism was not, to deal with colonial rule in India.
- ii) a) Bipan Chandra, modern
b) reimagine, British



UNIT 12 SECULARISM*

Structure

- 12.0 Objectives
- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Secularisation and Secularism
 - 12.2.1 The Term Secularisation
 - 12.2.2 The Sociological Connotation of Secularisation
 - 12.2.3 Secularisation within Religion
 - 12.2.4 Secularism as a Value
- 12.3 The Secularisation Process
 - 12.3.1 The Struggle between the Sacred and the Secular
 - 12.3.2 The Church and the State
- 12.4 The Social Context of Secularisation Process
 - 12.4.1 Renaissance
 - 12.4.2 Growth of Science
 - 12.4.3 Expansion of Trade and Commerce
 - 12.4.4 Reformation
- 12.5 Secularisation in Contemporary World
- 12.6 Secularism in India
 - 12.6.1 India and Secularism
 - 12.6.2 The Meaning of Secularism in India
 - 12.6.3 Secular Concept and Ideology
- 12.7 Secularism in India
- 12.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 12.9 References
- 12.10 Specimen Answers to Check Your Progress

12.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will able to:

- understand the meanings of the terms secularization and secularism;
- discuss the social and historical background in which secularization emerged as a social phenomena;
- analyse the peculiar nature of secularism which is adopted in India; and
- understand the problems and difficulties in the practice of secularism in India.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

You learnt about “Communalism” in the previous unit and how this issue emerged and deeply influences society in India today. Related with the concept of communalism is the concept of secularism. Here, in this unit we will discuss the

process of secularism which is called secularisation and the concept of secularism which is a value.

In our first section we will introduce you to the meaning of the term secularization and secularism. To be able to understand how these terms came to be used we would like to take you to the historical and social background of these processes. We will also show the nature of secularization in contemporary society in our next section. Finally we will be discussing the nature of secularism in India. For you to understand the peculiarities and the difficulties thereof, we would appraise you with various historical as well as contemporary dynamics in the practice of secularism.

12.2 SECULARISATION AND SECULARISM

You must have come across the word secularism and secularisation several times. We are sure you must have wondered what exactly they mean.

The terms secularisation and secularism have no definite definition. They have different meanings depending on various situations and perspectives. We will try and have a look at some of these meanings. First, we will try and understand what secularisation is all about and then we will go on to the term secularism which is an outcome of the process of secularisation.

12.2.1 The Term Secularisation

The word secular is derived from the Latin word ‘secular’, which means the ‘present age or generation’. The word secular came to be associated with the social process of secularisation.

Secularisation came into use in Europe, to describe the transfer of territories previously under the control of the church to the dominion of secular authority or the state. The distinction that was already prevalent in Christian conception between the sacred and secular (sacred as all that is supernatural, and secular as all that is mundane) was brought into the fore to assert the superiority of the sacred.

The term, however, was applied in a different way when the concept of secularisation acquired a more general, sociological connotation.

12.2.2 The Sociological Connotation of Secularisation

Social thinkers have used the word secularisation to indicate a process whereby the religious institutions and religious conceptions and understanding have lost control in worldly matters — economy, polity, justice, health, family, and so on. Instead, there emerged empirical and rational procedures and conceptions about the world in general.

Describing the process of secularisation, Bryan R. Wilson writes that in secularisation process “the various social institutions gradually become distinct from one another and increasingly free of the matrix of religious assumptions that had earlier informed...inspired and dominated their operation. Prior to this change, social action over a very wide field of human activity and organisation (including work, social and interpersonal relationships, juridical procedures,

socialisation, healing) is regulated in accordance with supernaturalist pre-conceptions. The process of structure differentiation in which social institutions (the economy, the polity, morality, justice, education, health, and family) become recognised as distinctive concerns operating with considerable autonomy. It is a process in which conceptions of the supernatural lose their sovereignty over human affairs, a pattern broadly identified as secularism. Conceptions of the supernatural are gradually displaced from all social institutions except those specifically devoted to this — these are increasingly circumscribed religious institutions” (Wilson 1987 : 159).

The definition of secularisation is greatly bound by the definition of religion. As long as religion is defined in, not so abstract terms and is defined substantively as beliefs, attitudes, activities, institutions and structures pertaining to the supernatural, it is possible to assess the extent of decline of religious influence. But if we were to define religion in functional terms, as some sociologists have done, as any set of beliefs, ideas and activities that perform indispensable functions to the society it is very difficult to employ the term secularisation, because when we use the term secularisation we are discussing the process that leads to the decline of supernaturally oriented activities and beliefs in all aspects of life. And a distinct separation of various institutions in the society.

We can see the separation of the supernatural belief from secular activities by the way we approach and understand disease for instance. We don't always have a supernatural explanation to understand disease and illness. We have scientific and empirical explanations instead.

These changes have, in fact, affected even religion itself.

12.2.3 Secularisation within Religion

One aspect of secularisation is that religions modify their doctrines and practices in response to the changing needs of their members and in-response to changes in society.

For example, in 1976, the Episcopal Church in the United States of America officially allowed women to become priests. And. in England it was only recently that the Church allowed women to become priests, causing much controversy. We can see how the Church responded to the changing situation and the position of women in society.

Secularisation in religion is usually accompanied by increase in attention to public issues. Secular and profane activities have become as important as the sacred. Thus we find religious institutions getting involved with running of modern hospitals and secular educational institutions or engaging in philanthropic activities. Religion in industrial societies often reflects the pragmatism of our age, and in doing so, is increasingly moving away from the supernatural.

So far we have discussed what the term secularisation meant in its various situations and aspects. We still have not talked about the term secularism.

12.2.4 Secularism as a Value

Secularism was an ideological goal of the new political philosophy and movement after the French Revolution. Still later in 1851 George Jacob Holyoake coined

the term secularism. He declared it as the only rational basis of political and social organisation. Holyoake questioning the religious basis of civil society, recommended secularism as state ideology which promotes human welfare by material means and makes the service of others its duty.

Secularism as a progressive ideology was a necessary qualification for a liberal, democratic, state of the post French Revolution. These connotations are applied even to a modern democratic state now. A modern state by its definition and liberal and democratic policy makes no distinction between groups, classes etc. within society, irrespective of religious affiliation. The political philosophy on the part of the state required that the state shall not impose any religion on people and did not prohibit practice of religion by a section of the people.

Thus, with secularism as an ideological goal, the proponents of this ideology consciously denounce religious orthodoxy as the basis for social organisation and advocate civil values.

The development of secularism as an ideology was partly an outcome of the process of secularisation in Europe. And in many modern states it has been adopted as a state policy, without really going through a historical process which was in evidence in Europe at the time of the emergence of the phenomenon of secularism.

Let us go back into history and see how the process of secularism developed.

12.3 THE SECULARISATION PROCESS

In this section we will discuss the process of secularisation which essentially came about as a result of the struggle for supremacy between the church and the state. The social background to this struggle in a way shaped this secularisation process too.

12.3.1 The Struggle between the Sacred and the Secular

Secularisation has occurred throughout history. Though uneven, it was discernible from the very early times. In primitive societies it was often seen that supernaturalist apprehensions and explanations were intermingled with empirical knowledge and rational techniques. Magical means were mixed with pragmatic procedures. Slowly, the process which Max Weber phrased as the 'disenchantment of the world' removed the natural phenomena of their magico-religious meaning as man acquired more matter-of-fact and empirical and rationalistic orientations.

In fact, some sociologists see the seeds of secularisation in the very development of monotheistic conceptions religions, which rationalised and systematised the concept of the supernatural. These monotheistic religions like Judaism and Christianity steadily extinguished random magico-religious beliefs and introduced a more, universalistic conception of an increasingly transcendental and universal deity. In this process, these monotheistic religions heralded a process of systematisation or rationalisation which is an element of secularisation.

To unravel the complex factors and agencies contributing to the process of secularisation is difficult. In Western history (European history), the dissociation of religion and politics — seen in the separation of the Church and the state implies secularisation. Let us see then, how this separation came about.

12.3.2 The Church and the State

In Europe, from the very early times, the Roman Catholic Church exercised immense power in over all aspects of life.

The conversion of Emperor Constantine (306-37 AD) and socially influential classes, gave the Church an immense recognition and opportunity to enter the secular world. Emperor Constantine had established Christianity as the state religion of the Roman Empire.

Box 1

Constantine ascribed all his successes in war to Christian God. He is said to have had a dream in which God instructed him to paint the first two letters for Christ in Greek on the shields of his soldiers. Constantine did so and consequently won the battle. It is said that he converted to Christianity after this and made Christianity the state religion. His troops then on had the Christian monogram painted on their shield.

There was also the idea that the Church was not only meant for the salvation of souls for eternity, but also had a mission for this world — to establish a kingdom of God on earth. The clergy were not only involved in other-worldly aspects of life, but were also involved in the secular life.

Later, the theology of St. Augustine and the establishment of the Benedictine order, which recommended ‘useful work’ sought to establish the Church in its relation with the secular world. As Weber noted, labour became an essential component of the Christian way of life.

The organisation of the Church became increasingly formalised and systematised through the development of canon law and administrative agencies. This development became particularly crucial in the background of a centralised, segmented nature of emerging feudal society. In the face of these tendencies, the Church maintained a fundamental unity.

The organisational unity combined with its involvement with secular aspects of life enabled the Church to have immense influence over the social and political life. In a highly stratified society like medieval Europe where the society was divided into aristocratic haves and the poor, the Church played little role in condemning this highly stratified order. In fact, the Church was so interwoven with the feudal system that it became a property holder. The clergy became lords of the land with political jurisdiction.

These circumstances gave rise to the question of where and with whom did the authority lie? With the Church or the secular state?

The kings and commoners who were equally tired of the oppressive nature of the church struggled to get rid of the control of the Church and religion from political affairs, as well as affairs of everyday world.

The forces that set themselves in opposition to the Church and its power came to be known as secular. While the struggle against the Church and the process which eventually led to the decline of religious authoritarianism replaced it with a rational and scientific outlook. This has been termed secularisation.

The secularisation of society is not just an outcome of this struggle between the Church and the state, but is related to all other facets of social change.

In our next section, let us look into the social context in which secularisation took place.

Check Your Progress I

- i) What is the literal meaning of the term secular? Use three lines for your answer.

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- ii) Write five lines on the political philosophy after the French Revolution.

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- iii) Who was the first Roman Emperor to convert to Christianity? Use four lines for your answer.

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**12.4 THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF
SECULARISATION PROCESS**

In this section, we will be discussing the various facets of social change. At the time of secularisation in Europe, the society was waking up from the medieval slumber to whole new areas of change. There was growing rational-empirical inquiry. There was Reformation in the Church and Renaissance in the arts and learning.

12.4.1 Renaissance

Between the 14th and 16th centuries, many people in Europe who could read and write began to take less notice of what their rulers and priests told them and to work out new ideas for themselves. They also became interested in the arts, and learning of the ancient Greeks and Romans. This new way of thinking and rediscovery of earlier knowledge, led to an exciting period in history known as the Renaissance, a French word meaning rebirth.

Rational enquiry was the essence of this movement and this was evident in art, architecture, music, literature etc. Renaissance period emphasised on classics as contributing to thought and learning. Renaissance was a time when people became curious about the world they lived in. Rich men built libraries and universities and with the invention of the printing machine, books became more easily available not only to priests and scholars but also ordinary people.

By the end of the 16th century, Renaissance which started in Italy, with its awakening in learning and art spread to other parts of Europe. This was also the period which saw the growth of science.

12.4.2 Growth of Science

As we mentioned earlier, the medieval European society was characterised by the overriding influence of the church. Even learning was mostly of the religious variety. The Renaissance period saw the beginning of rational enquiry. It marked an area of description and criticism in the area of learning.

This development of detachment in observation and experimentation introduced new assumptions about the nature of the world. The rational and systematic, empirical knowledge questioned the supernatural conceptions of the world and gave an awareness to man's capacity to harness nature.

This was the period which saw the Copernican Revolution. It was generally believed that the Earth was stationary and the Sun and other heavenly bodies moved around it. Copernicus, with the help of detailed explanation demonstrated that the earth moved around a fixed sun. This findings of Copernicus shattered the very foundations on which the old world rested. The divine origins to heaven, earth and life were now being questioned.

This period also saw the growth of various disciplines of science. William Harvey discovered the circulation of blood. This led to the rethinking about the human body. In Physics, Galileo Galilei, Johannes Kepler, and subsequently Issac Newton shattered the earlier metaphysical thoughts of the universe. In short, the growth of science and the application of science reduced man's dependence on religion and the divine interpretation of the universe.

12.4.3 Expansion of Trade and Commerce

The 15th century AD also signalled a shift from the subsistent and stagnant economy to a dynamic and worldwide system. This expansion in trade was due to some extent, because of the initiative taken by the European states to develop and consolidate their economic and political power. The monarchy of Portugal Spain, Holland, and England sponsored overseas discoveries, trade and conquest

‘Trade with the Orient so far was carried on land and Italian cities had a monopoly in this. In a bid to destroy this monopoly and to seek new ways of reaching the East, the Portuguese and other pioneers in navigation took to sea voyage. You must have heard of the historic voyage of Vasco da Gama, who landed on the Indian west coast in 1498. Christopher Columbus made a similar voyage in the hope of finding a sea route to India and instead reached the shores of North America.

Britain, Holland followed Spain and Portugal and soon India, South East Asia, Africa and West Indies and South America came under the economic enterprise of these countries.

European markets were flooded with new commodities, spices, textiles, tobacco, cocoa, quinine, ivory, gold, silver, and above all human slaves from Africa. One of the most important results of this expansion of trade and commerce was the growth of middle class. This class, which included merchants, bankers, shipowners, became an influential and politically powerful group.

Besides these radical changes which were taking place, there emerged a break in thought and ecclesiastical organisation, which is called ‘the reformation’.

12.4.4 Reformation

In the 16th century, there was a movement within Christianity to purge the medieval abuses and to restore the doctrine and the practices that the reformers believed confirmed with the Bible. This led to a breach between the Roman Catholic Church, and the reformers whose belief and practices came to be called as Protestantism.

One of the principle initiators of this movement, Martin Luther King, questioned the practices of the Roman Catholic Church and called for a debate. The Papacy took this as a gesture of rebellion and proceeded to take steps against Luther as a heretic. Martin Luther refused to repent unless proven by Bible or clear reason. He believed that salvation was a free gift to persons through the forgiveness of sins by God’s grace alone and received by them through faith in Christ. Luther was protected by kings and princes partly out of religious conviction. But mainly because they were interested to seize the Church property and to assert the imperial independence.

The obvious result of Reformation was the division of Christendom into Catholic and Protestant denominations or sects. These strengthened the growth of modern national states. Reformation introduced radical changes in thought and organization of the Church and, thus began the trend of secularisation. The Protestant conception of the divine made God personal. God thus receded to the personal realm. Worldly personal activity was encouraged as a sign of faith in God.

As we already mentioned, there was a complex web of factors which contributed to the emergence of secularisation process. In our above discussion, we have given a few trends or happenings in a context in which secularisation occurred.

Now that we have discovered the history behind the concept and phenomenon of secularisation, let us see what it means in the contemporary world.

12.5 SECULARISATION IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD

It is true that religion has ceased to have a kind of hold that it had in the medieval society. We no longer define our world in mystical religious terms. It seems that religious institutions ceased to be central in society. But this secularisation has not occurred uniformly all over the world. We must remember that the events we described and discussed are specific to Europe and those changes had some effect on other countries. At the same time this process of secularisation does preclude the endurance of certain religiosity and emergence of new expressions of religion. The patterns of religiosity vary, and despite indicators of secularisation, spiritual survivals and new religious initiatives do occur.

Numerous new religious movements have emerged in recent decades and these may seem to be even responses to general secularisation: since they provide meaning, purpose, association, and support for a particular section of the people. Secularisation, as we said, is conspicuously a long-term historical occurrence in Western society.

Activity 1

To what extent is secularisation and secularism prevalent in India? Read newspapers and magazines, talk with other students and knowledgeable individuals before putting down your answer in your notebook.

Other religious systems did organise and systematise mystical and pagan beliefs, but they did so in different ways. Hinduism and Buddhism unlike Christianity, according to Bryan Wilson have tolerated more primitive supernaturalism than eradicating them. Besides, the long-term historical process of secularisation and the extension of rational principles to all areas of social life were less intense in non-Western countries like in Asia or the Middle East. Industrialisation and technological application to some extent rationalises and routinises framework of social life. Yet, so many religious and magical practices persist alongside, leading to paradox of magical practice alongside sophisticated industrial techniques.

The course of industrialisation has followed different paths and occurs in different forms than one which is available in the West. In our next section we will discuss the Indian experience of secularisation and secularism.

Check Your Progress II

i) questioned the practices of Roman Catholic Church.

ii) Match the following:

A	B
Vasco-de-Gama	Revolutionized physics
William Harvey	Sea-route to India
Copernicus	Protestantism
Martin Luther	Blood circulation

12.6 SECULARISM IN INDIA

In this section we will discuss how secularism is viewed in India and its practice. We are aware by now, that the historical process of secularisation has not occurred in India quite the way it did in Europe. But Indian situation generated its own conditions which made our national leaders feel a need for a secular ideology. Let us see how! But first let us try and understand what secularism means in India.

12.6.1 India and Secularism

India, as we all know is a home of many religions and is a multi-religious society. Religion plays an important role in the lives of Indians. Passions and hatred are whipped in the name of religion. Religious conflict and communal violence has become a part of our social scenario owing to the multi-religiosity of Indian society.

This situation puts into focus the fact that when a society has many religions the task of governance is that much more difficult.

Our leaders have responded to the situation by strengthening the values of secularism. The secular ideas are enshrined in our Constitution as well.

12.6.2 The Meaning of Secularism in India

In our preceding discussions, we have seen how secularisation in the West was a result of the secularisation process whereby the pervasive influence of religion in everyday life has lost its influence.

In India, however, secularisation and secular has been used in the context of nature of the state. It has been conceived in this way keeping in view multi-religiosity of the society and the religious conflicts thereof. In India, the term secularism implies that the state will not identify with any one religion but is tolerant of all religious practices. As Nehru declared in 1950, “the Government of a country like India with many religions that have secured great and devoted following for generations, can never function satisfactorily in the modern age except on a secular basis”.

The secular idea was adopted during the freedom struggle to unite the various communities against the colonial power. The maturing of secular concept is closely linked up with the development of nationalism during the long course of the freedom struggle. Later, the secular concepts were incorporated in the Constitution. And, for Nehru, the imperative of secularism was not only for detachment of religion in public life but progressive and modern outlook. It also meant that all the citizens enjoyed equal rights and statuses.

“Secularism, nationalism, and democracy are therefore, mutually reinforcing ideals that were sought to be emphasised by the post-colonial state in India” (Bhattacharya 190 : 178). K.M. Panikkar in explaining the content of the secular state in India stresses on this point:

“It (the secular state) eliminates from the body politics all ideas of division between individuals on the basis of its policy what Aristotle terms “distribution justice” that all communities must share as they must share the duties and responsibilities of being a citizen”.

One of the consequences of such a state policy is that holding of public office and government service should not be dependent on religious affiliation.

Yet at the same time the citizens enjoy the right to freedom of religion and worship, as a fundamental right. Although the Indian Constitution speaks against any principle of religious discrimination, it cannot prevent the state to legislate in favour of any oppressed community which includes the minority community. Thus minorities enjoy a right to cultural and educational rights.

The secular idea! enshrined in our Constitution has a peculiar mix of ethnic identities and common citizenship. It tries to ensure pluralities within a democratic nation-state.

This inbuilt contradiction in our polity makes it very difficult for the secular ideal to be practiced in reality. Let us go back into history and see how the secular ideal has been adopted and the problems which besetted this concept.

Activity 2

Do you think religious parties in political arena should be banned? Give reasons for your answer. You can discuss this with others in your study centre and your councillor.

12.6.3 Secular Concept and Ideology

Prior to the British intervention in Indian politics there existed no conflict between religion and politics. In fact, as Dumont observed: 'Religion here is constitutive of society. Politics and Economics are neither autonomous domain nor are they contradictory of religion, they are simply encompassed by religion'. recalling Dumont, T N Madan feels that "religion and secular cannot be separated, in other words, religion cannot be in any meaningful sense privatised" (Madan, 1981: 12).

However, the coming of the British made some change. The British state maintained an attitude of neutrality. Further, the British introduced the concept of equality before law, irrespective of caste and creed. Alongwith this break in tradition, modern education became an important factor of change.

An important element in the political awakening in India was the growing liberalism which came with modern education. The Indian middle-class was the major beneficiary of British education and one of the first to initiate a nationalist struggle against the British.

The nationalist feeling was carried down to the masses by the extraordinary growth of the vernacular cultures. This vernacular growth at the same time was not allowed to be chauvinistic because the nation as a goal was kept in mind. "Much of the power of the Indian nationalism came from its use of forces, idioms and symbolism of religion, especially Hinduism" (Kaviraj, 190 : 195). .

The secular ideology of the national leaders by keeping religion at a distance was challenged by the likes of B.G. Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh, Lajpat Rai. The Congress faced a dilemma whether to allow the mobilisation of the masses using religious symbols etc. or not, for it could alienate the Muslim community.

By 1920 the leadership of the Congress passed into the hands of Mahatma Gandhi. He openly declared the necessity of religion in politics. Although deeply rooted in Hindu popular ethos; Gandhi believed in pluralism and equal respect for all religions. In spite of Gandhi’s efforts to unite Hindus and Muslims, the excessive usage of Hindu symbols alienated the Muslims. There grew extremist tendencies both among Hindus and Muslims. Nationalism became polarised with the setting up of Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha and the militant socio-religious organisation called the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).» Instead of nationalism based on territories, these communities now struggled for nation on the basis of religious identity. Sudipto Kaviraj writes: “precisely because of long familiarity with other communities identities and the relative newness of identity of nation” there was a need for creating a feeling of nationalism through various means (in this case through religion, mainly) to face the British Colonialism.

India was partitioned in 1947 into India and Pakistan amidst communal riots. In 1948 there was the tragic assassination of Gandhi. This gruesome tragedy impressed upon the Indian leaders the need for a secular ideology to keep politics and religion separate.

Check Your Progress III

i) Write a few lines on the meaning of secularism in India.

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ii) openly declared the necessity of religion in politics.

12.7 SECULARISM IN INDIA

After Independence, Nehru took upon himself the task of modernising the country through the spread and application of science and technology for the removal of ignorance, ill health and poverty. Nehru was not against religion but he was aware of how harmful religion could be to India. Hence he lost no time in enshrining the secular ideal in the Constitution. Religion was not debarred from public life but was distanced from the State. Undoubtedly, constitutionally and legally we are a secular nation. But the question we must ask ourselves is — is this secularism constitutive and an integral part of our country? We find that secular nationalism is a concept that we adopted from the West in the face of British Colonialism. The dire necessity of that time was to fight the British on a united front. Secular ideal was adopted to unite the various pluralities in the nation. Modern education and the English language helped propagate this ideal and through the vernacular it was carried to the masses. And a semblance of nationalism was forged and the British were ousted.

Pointed out to this kind of nationalism, Sudipta Kaviraj feels that “as long as the national movement faced the British, this urgency in political discourse in constantly spelling, naming, repeating the making of the nation was evident.

After independence was achieved, this ... urgency was allowed to lapse” (Kaviraj, 1990 : 198). He further adds that our leaders who inherited this nation failed to see a situation where later generations may not take this nation for granted.

The State with its elitist leaders failed to form a dialogue with various vernacular cultures (which was the case during the freedom struggle) to achieve this ideal of secularism. It remained aloof from the masses. However, it needs to be pointed out that the masses are steeped in religion with its myths legends and folklore. As such secularism would take time to fully influence social process in India, where there is a plurality of religions.

Apart from this neglect, we are faced with contradictions present in a liberal democratic systems like ours, where there is a great deal of uneven economic development. With this arose a feeling of injustice and deprivation which finds expression in various ways. Mobilising one’s own community on religious and ethnic lines is very often the practice. The State political parties on the other hand address communities to gain support. This only reinforces the primordial identities of community aid religion. And they know that the only way to bring about pressure on the authorities is to mobilise on criteria like language, ethnicity and religion. So, as we can see in a multi-religious, multi-ethnic country, secularism even with best intentions is difficult to achieve.

12.8 LET US SUM UP

Unit 12: Secularism, had the basic objective of understanding the origin and the process of secularisation. The term secularism emerged out of this process of secularisation. Secularism as a state ideology has been adopted by, practically all modern states.

India, too, has adopted secularism as its state ideology. This was done keeping in view the pluralistic nature of Indian society and the consequent conflict which are there among communities. The section on secularism in India, has attempted to analyse the nature and practice of secularism. We have discussed the historical background which saw the emergence of the concept of secularism in Indian polity. In our final section, we have discussed the dynamics involved in the practice of secularism. Secularism as an ideology is indeed, difficult to practice, in a country like India where religion is deeply embedded in our society. And our democratic polity makes concessions to this religious need of the communities.

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12.10 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- i) The term secular is derived from the Latin word 'secular' which means the present age or generation. The word secular came to be associated with social process of secularisation later.
- ii) The new political philosophy which came about after the French Revolution questioned the religious basis of political and social organisation. It recommended rational basis for political and social organisation. Secularism was adopted as a political goal. Holyoake hoped and believed that secularism as a state ideology promotes human welfare by material means and makes the service of others its duty.
- iii) Emperor Constantine (307-37 A.D.) was the first Roman Emperor to convert to Christianity. He declared Christianity as a state religion.

Check Your Progress II

- i) Martin Luther
- ii)

A	B
Vasco-da-Gama	sea-route to India
William Harvey	blood circulation
Copernicus	revolutionized physics
Martin Luther	protestantism

Check Your Progress III

- i) India did not witness the secularisation process as did Europe. As a reason secularisation did not occur naturally in India, secularism as a political goal was adopted. Specially since India is a pluralistic country with variety of religions, languages and ethnic background.

In India, the term secularism implies that the state will not identify with any one religion but is tolerant of all religious practices.

- ii) Mahatma Gandhi

FURTHER READINGS

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GLOSSARY

Affinal: The principle of deriving relationship on the basis of marriage, such as, relation of uncle who married your mothers sister.

Agrarian Policies: Policies regarding ownership of land in the different states of India which determined who will cultivate or use the land. Here the conversion of land as private property decided by the Government left the non-private forest land areas as the property of the state. This policy adversely affected the tribal people who had traditional rights over the forests where they had lived since ages.

Agricultural Labourers: Social categories drawing livelihood mainly from selling their labour powers.

Bilateral or Cognatic: The system of descent in which a child is recognized as a descendant equally of both the father and the mother.

Brachycephalic: In terms of anthropometric measures, heads with a breadth of 80 cephalic index and over are categorised as broad or brachycephalic. Those with an index under 80, but not under 75, are classified 20 Social Structure Rural and Urban as medium heads or meso-or mesati-cephalic. Long or dolichocephalic heads are those heads, which have the cephalic index of below 75.

Brahmanic traditions: these traditions in the form of rituals and beliefs can be followed by any caste and are those ritual that provide supremacy to the priestly class and make them exclusive in the caste ladder.

Capitalism: An economic organisation which consists of private ownership of property, control of capital, has market mechanism and provisions of workers and which aims at making maximum profit.

Caucasian: Relating to the white race of mankind as classified according to physical features.

Cephalic Index: The proportion of the breadth of the head to its length is expressed as a percentage and it is called the cephalic index.

Collective Conscience: According to Emile Durkheim, Collective Conscience refers to the totality of belief and sentiments common to average member of society.

Commensality: Relating to those who are traditionally allowed to eat together.

Commercial and Industrial Capitalists: Owners of industrial establishment and large scale business.

Communalism: It is a term derived from the term community but it refers to a form of collective outburst where one community gets against another due to perceived differences or conflict of interests.

Consanguinity: The principle of recognising kinship by virtue of blood relationships.

Coparacenary: Joint ownership of property amongst the male members of the family, in a patrilineal society.

Cosmology: is the science of universe.

Cultural Imperialism: It is hegemony of the first world created by culture, economy and technology over the less developed nation by deciding standardized cultural and civilizational values.

Double Unilineal: The system of descent in which the child is affiliated to the group of either parent.

Empirical: Knowledge which is based on observation and experimentation.

Endogamy: as the system of marriage within one's own caste.

Ethnicity: State of belonging to a particular group with shared culture, language and region.

Ethno-centric: This is used to describe the attitude that one's group is superior.

Exogenous: This adjective is used to describe that which originates from external causes.

Exploitation: When the poor and marginalized people have no source of livelihood to survive they are forced to work as landless labour for the mines or development projects, fields, etc. where they get minimum salaries or wages.

Fascism: A totalitarian rule where a dominant rulers rule over a nation/state/country having all the powers in his/her hands.

Gender: Attributes associated with men and women which are socially constructed, such as, men are strong, women are weak etc.

Green Revolution: Accelerated growth of food production through combination of improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticide and irrigation.

Homophobia: Dislike or prejudice against homosexual people, sex desires or relationships.

Intermediaries: Social categories between state and the actual cultivators.

Kachcha food: It is the food cooked in water.

Land Alienation: When people are banned from using the vast tracts of forest land which their tribe(s) has customarily been using since ages due to the Govt. policies, it is considered to be land alienation. People of the tribes become landless.

Landlords: Owners of estates who leased out land to others in pre-British period.

Mass Media: Commonly understood as newspapers, radio and television, these are technologies which cater to the mass audience as well as an individual. It is meant to communicate or transmit information, influence and shape large number of audience.

Matrilineal: A principle to trace descent through the female line.

Mechanical Solidarity: The condition of unity or of one-ness in a society may be based on the elements of uniformity or similarities. Such condition is described by Durkheim as mechanical solidarity.

Mediterranean: Relating to a physical type of the Caucasian race characterised

by medium or short stature, slender build, long head with cephalic index of less than 75 and dark complexion.

Modernity: The core values of modernity are freedom, critical thinking, discoveries, new ideas and experimentation where everything has to be verified and tested.

Mongoloid: A major racial stock native to Asia including peoples of northern and eastern Asia. For example, Malaysians, Chinese, Japanese, Eskimos, and often American Indians also belong to this race. In India, besides several others the Naga tribes in north east belong to this race.

Movement: Action oriented towards the development/upliftment of certain group in a society.

Negrito: A people belonging to the African branch of the black race. In India, the south Indian tribes like Kadar, the Irula, etc. are said to belong to this race.

Nordic: Relating to the germanic peoples of northern Europe and specially of Scandinavia. This is a physical type characterised by tall stature, long head, light skin and hair, and blue eyes. In India, they are found in different parts of north of the country such as Punjab and Rajputana.

Organic Solidarity: The condition of unity or one-ness in a society may arise out of differences of socio-cultural characteristics. Such unity as described by Durkheim as organic solidarity.

Orthodoxy: A doctrine which is accepted and considered true, especially in religion it is what is authoritatively prescribed.

Pakka food: It is the food cooked in oil.

Panchayati Raj: is the system of local self-government.

Patri- virilocal- The term refers to the residence of a couple after marriage with the husband's father.

Patriarchal: where the father is the main authority in the family.

Patrilineal: A principle to trace descent through the male line.

Pauperization: The process due to which Tribal people loose not only their traditional livelihood but they become poor and marginalized.

Peasant Proprietors: Cultivators with proprietary rights in land who emerged after independence.

Petty Traders and Shopkeepers: Population engaged in small business and trading.

Polytheistic: Relating to the worship of more than one god.

Profane: The elements of a social system which are not connected with religion or religious purpose. In other words, they are secular.

Professional Classes: Occupational categories involving prerequisite qualifications such as, education, training and skill. **Sharecroppers** Tenants/cultivators cultivating land on share basis.

Proselytising: Converting from one religion to another.

Protestant Ethic: A doctrine of Christianity which provided much of the cultural content of capitalism, such as, individualism achievement motivation, hostility to inherited wealth and luxury. It emphasized on work and profit, opposition to magic and superstition and commitment to rational organisation.

Proto-Australoid: Relating to an ethnic group including the Australian aborigines and other peoples of southern Asia and Pacific Islands, including the Ainu of Japan the Vedda of Sri Lanka. In India, the Chotanagpur tribes of Bihar called Ho and Bhil are considered to be of this race.

Purity and Pollution: It is an ideology which considers one person or object or colour ritually pure (purity) and other ritually impure and unclean (pollution).

Queer: In the context of homosexuality it is an umbrella term for sexual minorities who are not heterosexual and have peculiar same sex desires or relationships.

Rational: Thinking based on senses and not on faith. Rejecting what cannot be tested.

Redemptive Changes: The changes that are linked to reclamation of community like religious conversions.

Reformative Movements: These movements bring partial change and mostly influence values and beliefs whereas transformatory are dense and bring larger changes.

Revolt: An act of resistance intended to bring in a change in the political system.

Revolutionary Changes: The changes in which much larger transformations take place and a complete new shift take place from the old structures.

Revolutionary Movements: These are those that bring far more radical shift in the social structure.

Revolutionary: An act on the part of a person to advocate political revolution.

Sacred: Refers to those elements of a social system which relate to religion or are set apart for the worship of deity i.e. God/Goddess.

Salvation: Saving the soul from sins and getting admission to heaven as a consequence of this.

Sanskritisation: is according to Srinivas a complex and heterogenous process that involves many concepts within it. The social and cultural process where lower castes imitate the higher ones or lets say 'twice-born (dwija) caste' in the hierarchy by following their customs, rituals, food and dress, is called Sanskritization. It is a social process to bring about Social mobility of caste groups where lower castes adopts the ways of the higher to acquire higher status in the society.

Secularism: It is an ideology introduced during the French Revolution. As a political philosophy on the part of the state it required that the state shall not impose any religion on as a state policy. However it did not prohibit practice of any religion on part of any section of its people.

Sex: Biological differences between men and women.

Social Classes: Social categories differentiated and hierarchically ranked in terms of primarily income, wealth and assets.

Social exclusion: When a community is excluded from the existing social order or do not enjoy the same status in society as others.

Tenants: Cultivators holding land from owners on some tenure.

Tribe: A group of people with shared culture, language, history and definite territory.

Twice-born: Generally the upper castes like Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas who had to undergo an 'upnayan ceremony' and were supposed to wear the sacred thread which elevated them to the status of 'twice born'. It meant that a person (male) has had not only a physical birth but also a spiritual birth.

Unilineal: The system of descent in which relationship with the ancestor is recognized in one line only, i.e., either of father or of mother.

Western Brachycephals: They have been divided into three types:

- i) The **Alpenoid** is characterised by broad head with rounded occiput (the back part of the head or skull) prominent nose, medium stature, round face. Skin colour is light; hair on face and body is abundant, body is thickly set. This type is found among the Bania of Gujarat, the Kathi of Kathiawar, the Kayastha of Bengal etc.
- ii) Amongst the **Dinaric** people, the head is broad with rounded occiput and high vault; nose is very long, stature is tall, face is long, forehead is receding; skin colour is darker, eyes and hair are also dark. This type is represented in Bengal, Orissa and Coorg. The Brahmin of Bengal and the Kanarese Brahmin of Mysore are also some of the representatives.
- iii) The **Armenoid** is in most of the characters like the Dinaric. In the former, the shape of occiput is more marked and the nose is more prominent and narrow. The Parsi of Bombay show typical Armenoid characteristics.

Westernisation: is the process of the adoption of the western lifestyle and values, especially of the Britishers

Working Class: Those who work in the industries.

Zamindars: Owners of estate, created due to the introduction of Permanent Settlement in 1793 in certain regions of India. However, the word Zamindar is used in different senses in different regions of India.

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