DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

MASTER OF ARTS-HISTORY

SEMESTER –I

HISTORY OF MODERN INDIA

(1757A.D – 1857 A.D)

ELECTIVE-105

BLOCK-2

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

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FOREWORD

The Self Learning Material (SLM) is written with the aim of providing simple and organized study content to all the learners. The SLMs are prepared on the framework of being mutually cohesive, internally consistent and structured as per the university's syllabi. It is a humble attempt to give glimpses of the various approaches and dimensions to the topic of study and to kindle the learner's interest to the subject

We have tried to put together information from various sources into this book that has been written in an engaging style with interesting and relevant examples. It introduces you to the insights of subject concepts and theories and presents them in a way that is easy to understand and comprehend.

We always believe in continuous improvement and would periodically update the content in the very interest of the learners. It may be added that despite enormous efforts and coordination, there is every possibility for some omission or inadequacy in few areas or topics, which would definitely be rectified in future.

We hope you enjoy learning from this book and the experience truly enrich your learning and help you to advance in your career and future endeavors.

HISTORY OF MODERN INDIA (1757 A.D – 1857 A.D)

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Unit 4: India in the 18th Century: Transition and Changes II
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BLOCK 2 : HISTORY OF MODERN INDIA (1757 – 1857 A.D)

Introduction to the Block

Unit 8 deals with new education (indigenous and modern) including scientific and technical institutions and also te importance of edcations in their contribution to social reforms.

Unit 9 deals with the village social life norms strengthen the authoritarian and hierarchical norms in administration. The village social life, which is based on the hierarchical exchange relations greatly influence the behavior of civil servants in public organizations.

Unit 10 deals with Economic organizational changes and continuity alongwith the Mercantile policies and Indian trade, to discuss the new land revenue settlements and know about the commercialization of agriculture.

Unit 11 deals with rural economy in eastern, western, south, central, northern India and Princely state and Rural Economy with special reference on new types of Land revenue administration.

Unit 12 deals with Urban economy in India and also history of the people, their social, economic and cultural life is certainly of great interest to the students of history than the political events or the military campaigns of any period.

Unit 13 deals with Resistance to Colonial rule in India produced several new policies that had deleterious consequences for the indigenous population of the country.

Unit 14 deals with description about the Pre -1857 peasant, tribal and cultural resistance in India against Britishers.

UNIT 8: SOCIAL POLICIES AND SOCIAL CHANGES II

STRUCTURE

8.0 Objectives
8.1 Introduction
8.2 The new education (indigenous and modern) including scientific and technical institutions
8.3 Education Policy for social reform in India
8.4 Educationists: Raja Rammohan, Vidyasagar etc.
8.5 Let us sum up
8.6 Key Words
8.7 Questions for Review
8.8 Suggested readings and references
8.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

8.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit, we can able to know:

- To know about the new education (indigenous and modern) including scientific and technical institutions
- To discuss the Education Policy for social reform in India
- To describe the contributions of educationists like Raja Rammohan, Vidyasagar etc.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The development of education is a continuum, which gathers its past history into a living stream, flowing through the present into the future. It is essential to see the historical background of educational development to understand the present and visualize the future. Hence the present

Chapter aims to briefly look at educational developments from the ancient 2nd millennium BC to the modern period. The development of the education system in India can be broadly divided into three stages

1. Pre British period
2. British period
3. Post Independence period.

While discussing about the pre- British period, a brief attempt has been made to see the evolution of education from the 2nd millennium BC up to the Muslim invasions. Focus is made on the character of education, the role of state (king), religious heads, institutions and people, and its accessibility to the larger community. Education in Indian Classical Cultures — Ancient Period : India is one of the ancient civilizations of the world. About the 2nd millennium B.C. i he Aryans entered the land and came into conflict with the 'dasas'. The non-Aryan tribes dominated them in all spheres. In the course of time, this led to the emergence of 'Chat urvarna' (four varnas) system in which 'dasas' were absorbed as 'sudras' or domestic sen ants. By about 500 B.C. the classes became hardened into castes. This was a typical hierarchical society. In it religion played a vital role. It even influenced education. The study of Vedic literature was indispensable to higher castes. The stages of instruction were very well defined - up to the age of seven at home, from eight to 16 at school and then at a university. During the first period, the child received primary education at home. Formal schooling, however, began with a ritual known as ‘Upanayana’ or thread ceremony, which was more or less compulsory for the three higher castes (at a later stage it was exclusively confined to the Brahmins).

The ceremony marked the beginning of secondary education. Then the boy would stay at the preceptor's 'ashrama' or house. Study at this stage consisted of the recitation of the Vedic mantras' or hymns and the auxiliary sciences, phoneJirs, grammar, astronomy, prosody and etymology. The important point to note here was that the character of education differed according to the needs of the caste. For a boy of the

priestly class, there was a definite syllabus of studies. The 'tryi vidya' or the knowledge of the 'vedas' was obligatory for him. The period of studentship normally extended to 12 years. Those who wanted to continue their studies joined a higher center of learning or a university presided over by a 'Kulapathi' (founder of a school of thought). Advanced students would improve their knowledge by taking part in philosophical discussions at a 'Parishad 'or academy. Some historians speculate that these centers mark the genesis of 'university education'. Education was not denied to women in principle but normally girls were instructed at home. The method of instruction differed according to the nature of the subject. The first duty of the student was to learn by heart the particular veda of his school. Every word and line of the text had to be learned from the lips of the teachers, and so correct pronunciation was stressed. In the study of such literary subjects as law, logic, rituals and prosody, comprehension played a very important role. The third raethod was the use of similitudes. They used to tell a fable or story to illustrate the doctrine. This w as usually employed in the personal spiritual teaching relating to the 'Upanishads*, or conclusions or 'Vedas.' Dialogical method or catechism which was a compendious system of teaching drawn up in the form of questions and answers, or discoursing was the method in higher learning or the teaching of "Sastras" (sciences). Memorization also played a significant role.

At the beginning of 19th century, the following were two types of indigenous Indian educational institutions- schools of learning' which more or less can be equated with colleges of modern type. i.e. a) Pathasala of the Hindus ;>r.d the b) Madrassahas of the Muslims, and elementary schools which were again of two types i.e. a) Persian Schools, b) schools teaching through modern Indian language . Both the Pathasalas of the Hindus and the Madrassahas of the Muslims, received assistance from rulers, chieftains, and opulent or religious citizens. They were medieval in character, used a classical language (Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian) as the medium of instruction, and imparted thought on traditional lines. (Generally these institutions were attached to a temple or mosque. The State had nothing to do with the governance of these

institutions. The chief objective of these institutions was to produce 'Moulvis' or 'Pandits'. These institutions were replicas of conservatism, obsolete ideals and methods of instruction. Elementary schools were the main agencies for spreading of mass education namely the three ' R's. These institutions were for fulfilling the mundane requirements of the petty Zamindars, Banias and well to do farmers. A small number of girls of upper classes and children of these communities formed the large majority.

8.2 THE NEW EDUCATION (INDIGENOUS AND MODERN) INCLUDING SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS

First it was the British who told Indians how they civilized them by bringing education to India. Today Christian missionaries and some Indian Christians (converts) keep on reminding Hindus of the pioneering role played by the Christian community in the field of education. I wondered! If this were true how did knowledge contained in the Vedas, Shastras and on Ayurveda, Astronomy, steel making etc be carried forward through generations. If it is the Christians whom we have to credit with educating us, how did numerous schools of Indian thought come into being and importantly survive for thousands of years.

Having read Arun Shourie's book 'Missionaries in India' I knew the missionary motive behind educating India but! Did not have knowledge of the system of education that existed in India before the Christians began to rule India. Therefore, I felt inadequate when Christians claimed to have educated India till I read 'The Beautiful Tree: Indigenous Indian Education in the 18th century" by Dharampalji. The book reproduces Reports of numerous Surveys undertaken in Bengal, Punjab and Madras Presidency by the British (between 1800-1830) to give you the state of education in India around 1800, number of schools/colleges, caste composition of students, how many Hindu & Muslim students, subjects taught and books used.

The book is volume 3 in a series of five books titled "Dharampal. Collected Writings". Volume 1 is "Indian Science & Technology in the 18th century". These five books are only available at the Other India Bookstore, Above Mapusa Clinic, Mapusa 403507, Goa, India. Nos 91-832263306, 256479.

While the bullet point summary explains in detail what the British did a brief outline is. First they criticized the local educational system for its inadequacies, then killed it by withdrawing financial support and lastly used the missionaries to thrust upon us their own system saying it was the best. It is indeed unfortunate that the educational system of today continues to by and large follow the British model. I have realized that the best way to defeat a country is to make her loose confidence in itself by criticizing everything that it stands for. Thereafter, sit back & monitor its performance against the benchmarks that you have set for the conquered. Unless we unshackle ourselves, decolonise our minds we will continue to be ruled by the British inspite of being a free country.

In October 1931 Gandhiji was invited to address the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London where he made two observations. One 'that today India is more illiterate than it was fifty or hundred years ago'. Two that 'the British administrators instead of looking after education and other matters which had existed began to root them out. They scratched the soil and began to look at the root, and left the root like that and the beautiful tree perished'. Sir Philip Hartog, a founder of the School of Oriental Studies, London and former vice-chancellor of the University of Dacca questioned Gandhiji and a long correspondence between them took place. In a way this book seeks to substantiate Gandhiji's remarks with reports of surveys undertaken by the British in the early 19th century.

Whenever someone refers to education I remember the following words of Mark Twain. He said, **"I do not allow my schooling to interfere with my education".** Learning is a continuous process and not limited to formal education. I have reproduced excerpts from the book, letters &

tables written by the British. This article is dedicated to Mohandas K Gandhi who triggered off a debate on the negative impact of British rule on India's indigenous educational system. I have used spellings as in the book e.g. the word **Hindus was spelt as Hindoos** then. Thus, you might find many spelling errors, please ignore but note difference in spellings.

No's	Chapter Title	Contents
1.	Bullet Point	Key points.
2.	Introduction includes Report on Madras Presidency.	Gives state of education in Britain 1700-1800, why did the British study about Indian knowledge-sciences, results of British survey on state of education app1825, compares state of education in India vs. Britain, nos of schools in Madras Presidency with caste break-up, age of enrolment, daily timings, education of girls.
3.	Adam's Report on education in Bengal, Bihar.	Through 3 surveys gives you number of schools, languages used, four stages of school instruction, Sanskrit learning and provision of elementary education for all section. Extracts from Adam's report on the state of medical practice.
4.	Leitner on education in Punjab.	Gives you the number of pupils in Panjab in 1850-1880, extracts from Leitner's report that contain classification of indigenous schools, list of Sanskrit books used.
5.	British Strategy, Impact.	One is comparison of education in Britain & Madras Presidency, two is how were indigenous schools organized, three is British strategy to kill indigenous educational system and four impact of point three.

6.	Collectors Reports, Tables	Reproduced actual letters & tables written by British collectors, shows Sudras having the highest number of scholars.
7.	Madras Presidency Table	Reproduced table-giving number of schools with caste composition of scholars.
8.	Young India articles	2 articles by Daulat Ram Gupta titled, The Decline of Mass Education in India How Indigenous education was crushed in Punjab.

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• Today Christian missionaries and some Indian Christians (converts) keep on reminding Hindus of the pioneering role played by the Christian community in the field of education. I wondered! If it is the Christians whom we have to credit with educating us, how did numerous schools of Indian thought come into being and importantly survive for thousands of years.

• In England at the end of the 17th century there are Charity Schools whose main purpose was that every child was to learn to read the Bible.

Around 1802, the monitorial method of teaching used by Joseph Lancaster (and also by Andrew Bell, supposedly borrowed from India, Ibid pg 246, Note on Indian Education by Alexander Walker quote 'The children were instructed without violence and by a process peculiarly simple. The system was borrowed from the Bramans and brought from India to Europe.

• Three approaches (seemingly different but in reality complementary to one another) began to operate in the British held areas of India regarding Indian knowledge, scholarship and centers of learning from about the 1770s. One they needed to provide a background of previous precedents to the new concepts being introduced by them. It was this requirement which gave birth to British Indology. Two the conquest of the American civilization led to the disappearance of all written records that existed. They did not want a repeat. Three they wanted to spread Christianity.

• For England had few schools for the children of ordinary people till about 1800. In his first report, Adam observed that there exist about 1,00,000 village schools in Bengal and Bihar around the 1830s, not to talk of the rest of India. The content of studies was better than what was then studied in England. The duration of study was more prolonged. The method of school teaching was superior and it is this very method which is said to have greatly helped the introduction of popular education in England but which had prevailed in India for centuries. The only aspect, and certainly a very important one, where Indian institutional education seems to have lagged behind was with regard to the education of girls.

• It was unthinkable for the British that India could have had a proportionately larger number receiving education than those in England itself.

• The British asked its Collectors to collect district wise data on number of schools and type of education that I have reproduced excerpts below.

• The actual situation, which is revealed, was different, if not quite

contrary, for at least amongst the Hindoos, in the districts of the Madras Presidency (and dramatically so in the Tamil-speaking areas) as well as the two districts of Bihar. It was the groups termed Soodras, and the castes considered below them who predominated in the thousands of the then still-existing schools in practically each of the areas.'

Madras Presidency 1822-25 (Collectors Reports)
Details of Schools & Colleges

Caste Division of Male school students

Speaking Language	Brahmins, Chettris	Vysee	Soodra	Other Caste	Muslims	Total Male Students
Total	30,211	13,459	75,943	22,925	10,644	1,53,182
% of total	20	9	50	15	6	100

• **Adam's 1st Report on Bengal.** Survey of Post 1800 material. His conclusions, one every village had atleast one school and in all probability in Bengal and Bihar with 1,50,748 villages, there will still be 1,00,000 villages that have these schools. Two on the basis of personal observation & evidence collected he inferred there were app 100 institutions of higher learning in each district meaning app 1,800 such institutions and 10,800 scholars in them.

• Adam said that he found a number of genuine, qualified medical practioners in Bengal who analyzed the symptoms of the disease before suggesting a cure.

• In **Punjab** there were 3,30,000 pupils in 1850 as compared to 1,90,000 in 1882 as per Leitner's Report.

• Schools were classified in Sikh, Muslim, Hindu using current descriptions.

• Sanskrit books were used to teach grammar, lexicology, mathematics, medical science, logic, law and vedant.

England-Madras comparison

	England	Madras Presidency
Population	95,43,610 (1811)	1,28,50,941 (1823)
Nos attending schools	App 75,000 (note below)	1,57,195 (ref chapter 2)

• About one third of the total revenue (from agriculture & sea ports) were according to ancient practice assigned for the requirements of the social & cultural infrastructure till the British overturned it all. The British increased the quantum of land revenue, made it payable twice a year at fixed timed (irrespective of weather conditions), had to be paid in cash not produce meaning the farmer had to sell his produce in the market to pay revenue exposing himself to the vagaries of market pricing. These moves towards centralization of revenue ensured that there was hardly any revenue to pay for social & cultural infrastructure resulting in its death.

• It was imperative to somehow uproot the Indian indigenous system for the relatively undisturbed maintenance and continuance of British rule. It is the same imperative which decided Macaulay, Bertinck, etc., to deliberately neglect large-scale school education-proposed by men like Adam - till a viable system of Anglicized higher education had first been established in the country.

• Consequences of Killing Indigenous Education System. One, it led to

an obliteration of literacy and knowledge of such dimensions amongst the Indian people. Two, it destroyed the Indian social balance in which, traditionally, persons from all sections of society appear to have been able to receive fairly competent schooling. Three it is this destruction along with similar damage in the economic sphere, which led to great deterioration in the status and socio-economic conditions and personal dignity of those who are now known as the scheduled castes; and to only a slightly lesser extent to that of the vast peasant majority encompassed by the term 'backward castes'. The recent movements embracing these sections to a great extent seem to be aimed at restoring this basic Indian social balance. Four & most importantly, till today it has kept most educated Indians ignorant of the society they live in, the culture which sustains this society, and their fellow beings; and more tragically, yet, for over a century it has induced a lack of confidence, and loss and bearing amongst the people of Indian in general.

• Number of Native Schools/Colleges in Madras Presidency &Number of Scholars. This table is an attachment to a report by J Dent, Secretary, Fort St George, 21/2/1825. Number of Schools 574 Colleges 0, Population 4,54,754, includes male & female. Students are male + female i.e. male 184100 balance is female.

Name of Collectorate	No of Schools	Madras Presidency	Vysea	Soodra	Other Caste	Muslims	Total Scholars
Total	12500	42502	19669	85400	27548	13561	188680
% of total		23	10	45	15	7	100

• Sudras made up 45% of the scholars as compared to Brahmins 23%, today is probably the reverse.

• High number of Muslim scholars in Malabar 4318.

• Only 7 % of the total number of scholars were Muslims. Meaning then & today it the Muslims continue to pay less attention to education. Be it

England or India does not matter.

• 12500 schools & colleges. The British first killed these institutions, then brought in Anglicized education into India through the missionaries.

Madhava of Sangamagrama (c. 1340 – 1425) and his Kerala school of astronomy and mathematics developed and founded mathematical analysis. Their rational approximation of the error for the finite sum of their series are of particular interest. They manipulated the error term to derive a faster converging series for. The development of the series expansions for trigonometric functions (sine, cosine, and arc tangent) was carried out by mathematicians of the Kerala School in the 15th century CE. Their work, completed two centuries before the invention of calculus in Europe, provided what is now considered the first example of a power series (apart from geometric series).

Shēr Shāh of northern India issued silver currency bearing Islamic motifs, later imitated by the Mughal empire. The Chinese merchant Ma Huan (1413–51) noted that gold coins, known as fanam, were issued in Cochin and weighed a total of one fen and one li according to the Chinese standards.[104] They were of fine quality and could be exchanged in China for 15 silver coins of four-li weight each.

Portrait of a young Indian scholar, Mughal miniature by Mir Sayyid Ali, c. 1550.

In 1500, Nilakantha Somayaji of the Kerala School of astronomy and mathematics, in his Tantrasangraha, revised Aryabhata's elliptical model for the planets Mercury and Venus. His equation of the centre for these planets remained the most accurate until the time of Johannes Kepler in the 17th century.

The seamless celestial globe was invented in Kashmir by Ali Kashmiri ibn Luqman in 998 AH (1589–90 CE), and twenty other such globes were later produced in Lahore and Kashmir during the Mughal Empire.

Before they were rediscovered in the 1980s, it was believed by modern metallurgists to be technically impossible to produce metal globes without any seams, even with modern technology. These Mughal metallurgists pioneered the method of lost-wax casting in order to produce these globes.

Gunpowder and gunpowder weapons were transmitted to India through the Mongol invasions of India. The Mongols were defeated by Alauddin Khalji of the Delhi Sultanate, and some of the Mongol soldiers remained in northern India after their conversion to Islam. It was written in the Tarikh-i Firishta (1606–1607) that the envoy of the Mongol ruler Hulagu Khan was presented with a pyrotechnics display upon his arrival in Delhi in 1258 CE. As a part of an embassy to India by Timurid leader Shah Rukh (1405–1447), 'Abd al-Razzaq mentioned naphtha-throwers mounted on elephants and a variety of pyrotechnics put on display. Firearms known as top-o-tufak also existed in the Vijayanagara Empire by as early as 1366 CE. From then on the employment of gunpowder warfare in the region was prevalent, with events such as the siege of Belgaum in 1473 CE by the Sultan Muhammad Shah Bahmani.

In A History of Greek Fire and Gunpowder, James Riddick Partington describes the gunpowder warfare of 16th and 17th century Mughal India, and writes that "Indian war rockets were formidable weapons before such rockets were used in Europe. They had bamboo rods, a rocket-body lashed to the rod, and iron points. They were directed at the target and fired by lighting the fuse, but the trajectory was rather erratic... The use of mines and counter-mines with explosive charges of gunpowder is mentioned for the times of Akbar and Jahāngir.

By the 16th century, Indians were manufacturing a diverse variety of firearms; large guns in particular, became visible in Tanjore, Dacca, Bijapur and Murshidabad. Guns made of bronze were recovered from Calicut (1504) and Diu (1533). Gujarāt supplied Europe saltpeter for use in gunpowder warfare during the 17th century. Bengal and Mālwa

participated in saltpeter production. The Dutch, French, Portuguese, and English used Chhapra as a center of saltpeter refining.

The construction of water works and aspects of water technology in India is described in Arabic and Persian works. During medieval times, the diffusion of Indian and Persian irrigation technologies gave rise to an advanced irrigation system which bought about economic growth and also helped in the growth of material culture. The founder of the cashmere wool industry is traditionally held to be the 15th-century ruler of Kashmir, Zayn-ul-Abidin, who introduced weavers from Central Asia.

The scholar Sadiq Isfahani of Jaunpur compiled an atlas of the parts of the world which he held to be 'suitable for human life'. The 32 sheet atlas—with maps oriented towards the south as was the case with Islamic works of the era—is part of a larger scholarly work compiled by Isfahani during 1647 CE. According to Joseph E. Schwartzberg (2008): 'The largest known Indian map, depicting the former Rajput capital at Amber in remarkable house-by-house detail, measures 661 × 645 cm. (260 × 254 in., or approximately 22 × 21 ft).'

8.3 EDUCATION POLICY FOR SOCIAL REFORM IN INDIA

Education in India: Colonial India

The ideas and pedagogical methods of education during the colonial period, from 1757 to 1947, were contested terrain. The commercial British East India Company ruled parts of India from 1764 to 1858. A few eighteenth-century company officials became scholars of Sanskrit, Persian, and Tamil and promoted "Oriental" learning, which was classical, demotic learning in indigenous languages. However, they were outnumbered by "Anglicists," those who denigrated "Oriental" learning and advocated the introduction of institutions for Western learning based upon the British curriculum with English as the medium of instruction. By the early nineteenth century, when English was made the official

language of government business, British policy promoted a cheap, trickle-down model for colonial education. When the British crown abolished company rule in 1858, government universities existed at Bombay (contemporary Mumbai), Calcutta (Kolkutta), and Madras (Chennai); about two thousand students studied at thirteen government colleges in all of British India, and another 30,000 students were in government secondary schools. Direct rule did not change the decision to deemphasize primary education to provide occupational training for young Indian men who took jobs both in the lower tiers of the government and in urban, Western-style legal and medical services.

Nongovernment schools established by Western Christian missions and Indian social and religious reform organizations provided the only opportunities for elementary education in the nineteenth century. American and English missionaries founded men's colleges, and by the twentieth century, Lucknow, Lahore, and Madras all had Christian women's colleges as well. Foreign teachers staffed these institutions, offering a Western curriculum in English with financial support for the children of Christian converts. Reformist societies also started schools, partly to provide Western education without the threat of Christian conversion. The curricula in private girls' schools ranged from the Urdu, Persian, writing, arithmetic, needlework, and Islamic studies of the Punjabi Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam primary schools in northwestern India to the Western-style liberal arts curriculum of Bethune College, founded by liberal Brahmo Samajists (Hindu reformers) in Calcutta. Even voluntary societies' members who wanted to provide educational alternatives for their children disagreed about the advantages and disadvantages of the colonial educational model for both content and the language of instruction.

When British officials who represented direct rule by the crown introduced modest self-government in the 1860s, they shifted financial responsibility for education to a growing Indian middle class. Educating urban sons for professions dominated local educational spending, to the detriment of rural and women's education. Families of respectable

middling status usually chose to send their daughters to gender-segregated educational institutions once there were schools taught in vernacular languages with general curricula. While older historians narrated the "insidious, total and transparent" domination of the educational system by the colonial state, more recent scholarship delineates the "'creative' resistance" to state agency and suggests that there was a "combat" between "consciously opposed sides" (Kumar). As the nationalist movement gained supporters in the twentieth century, Indian leaders developed several nationalist educational paradigms to challenge the colonial model. Mahatma Gandhi wanted the state to teach basic literacy in vernacular languages to the majority of the population. Rabindranath Tagore, India's first recipient of the Nobel prize for literature, believed that the English language provided Indians access to the sharing of knowledge across international borders and that education should include the teaching of India's cultural traditions. The fight for freedom from colonialism preempted decisions about educational ideologies until after 1947.

Reforms in the education sector have been one of the top priorities of the governments in India. Constant efforts have been taken continuously to effectively revamp the education system in India to provide equitable access to education. However, reforms can only be possible if it is implemented properly, which an extremely difficult challenge is. For a democratic country like India with such a diverse population, implementation of a pan India reform becomes a tough task owing to its varied political, economic and social situations.

The Government has introduced several schemes and policies to improve the education system of the country, particularly the quality and content of instruction. However, the system has failed to achieve its objectives and transform according to global standards. The Annual Status of Education Report claims that close to 50% of class V students were not able to read a text meant for class II students, which is not surprising. This calls for looking into the various barriers to implementing educational reforms —

Interests and ideologies

While carrying out a reform or implementing a policy, ministers and the ruling party, who are the key players are highly influenced by their personal opinions, interests and ideologies. Textbook and curriculum reforms have been difficult primarily because the ruling government would insert their political and ideological views into the textbook. This can be attributed to the government politics model of policy implementation which takes into consideration individual behaviour — an important factor in decision-making.

Systemic and structural issues

Education reforms have been majorly ineffective because of the deeply rooted systemic and structural problems within the system. These difficulties can be understood by Elmore's organizational models which can be applied to assess the implementation of social programmes like education reforms. Education reforms are focussed on inputs rather than learning outcomes as the performance of schools is assessed only by infrastructure and midday meals. Moreover, teachers tasked with raising student standards are burdened with administrative tasks, large class size, lack of training etc. As a result, they resort to rote-learning techniques to cope up with the mounting work pressures. Budgetary constraints and lack of manpower and technological resources can be the other possible barriers.

A top-down policy

India's unique federal structure, and education being a concurrent list subject, the policy interventions in education follows a top-down approach — major decisions are taken at the central level. This approach ignores the extent of change required in other areas for successful implementation of a reform. Hurdles in implementing a common entrance exam for admissions to medical colleges was a result of such an

approach. State governments opposed it stating that there was a huge variation in the syllabus of their respective boards.

Behavioural change for a Change

The policy designers ask the teachers, students and parents, the local implementing agents to do a thing in a particular order, which requires a change in behaviour. But a change in behaviour can only come through knowledge, experience and sense-making. Transforming the education system is a value-driven and emotional process, which needs to be implemented strategically through a behavioural change process. The best way could be following similar strategies as that of the Swachh Bharat Mission — the largest behaviour change programme and transplanting it to the education sector.

8.4 EDUCATIONISTS: RAJA RAMMOHAN, VIDYASAGAR ETC.

Ram Mohan Roy| Brahmo Samaj: Significance & Objectives

Raja Ram Mohan Roy is regarded as Father of Modern India who founded the first religious reform organisation i.e. Brahmo Samaj in 1828.The two most prominent leader of the Brahmo Samaj were Debendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen.

Beginning with the reform of certain aspects of religious and social life, this awakening, in course of time, affected every aspect of social, economic, cultural and political life of the country. From the late 18th century, a number of European and Indian scholars began the study of ancient India's philosophy, science, religions and literature. This growing knowledge of India's past gave to the Indian people a sense of pride in their civilization.

It also helped the reformers in their work of religious and social reforms. In their struggle against social evils, superstitions and inhuman practices

and customs, the reformers used the authority of the ancient texts. While doing so, most of them based themselves on reason rather than mere belief and faith. Thus, Indian religious and social reformers made use of their knowledge of western ideas as well as of ancient learning.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born in a well-to-do family in Bengal, probably in 1772. He received his traditional Sanskrit learning at Banaras and Arabic and Persian learning at Patna. Later, he learnt English, Greek and Hebrew. He also knew French and Latin. He made a deep study not only of Hinduism but also of Islam, Christianity and Judaism. He wrote a number of books in Bengali, Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian and English. He started two newspapers, one in Bengali and another in Persian. He was given the title of Raja and sent to England by the Mughal Emperor as his envoy. He reached England in 1831 and died there in 1833. He supported the introduction of English education in India, which was necessary to promote enlightenment and knowledge of science. He was a great believer in the freedom of the press and campaigned for the removal of restrictions on the press.

Ram Mohan Roy was convinced that to purify Hindu religion of the evils that had crept into it, it was necessary to bring to the knowledge of the people the original texts of their religion. For this purpose, he took up the hard and patient job of publishing the Bengali translations of the Vedas and Upanishads.

He advocated belief in a universal religion based on the principle of one supreme God. He condemned idol-worship and the rites and rituals.

The central figure of this cultural awakening was Raja Rammohan Roy. Known as the "father of the Indian Renaissance", Rammohan Roy was a great patriot, scholar and humanist. He was moved by deep love for the country and worked throughout his life for the social, religious, intellectual and political regeneration of the Indians.

Rammohan Roy was born in 1772 in Radhanagar, a small village in Bengal. As a young man he had studied Sanskrit literature and Hindu philosophy in Varanasi and Persian, Arabic and Koran in Patna. He was a great scholar Roy who mastered several languages including English, Latin, Greek and Hebrew.

In 1814, Rammohan Roy settled in Calcutta and dedicated his life to the cause of social and religious reform. As a social reformer, Rammohan Roy fought relentlessly against social evils like sati, polygamy, child marriage, female infanticide and caste discrimination. He organised a movement against the inhuman custom of sati and helped William Bentinck to pass a law banning the practice (1829). It was the first successful social movement against an age-old social evil.

A Depiction of Sati

Rammohan Roy was one of the earliest propagators of modern Western education. He looked upon it as a major instrument for the spread of modern ideas in the country. He was associated with the foundation the Hindu College in Calcutta (which later came to be known as the Presidency College). He also maintained at his own cost an English school in Calcutta. In addition, he established a Vedanta College where both Indian learning and Western social and physical science courses were offered.

Child Marriage

He sent petitions to the government to adopt a wider system of public education in English. He also recognised the importance of vernaculars for spreading new ideas. He compiled a Bengali grammar and developed an easy and modern style of Bengali prose.

Journalism:

Rammohan Roy was a pioneer of Indian journalism. He himself published journals in Bengali, Persian, Hindi and English to educate the public on various current issues. Samvad Kaumudi was the most important journal brought out by him.

Rammohan Roy and Internationalism:

Rammohan Roy was a firm believer in internationalism. He held that the suffering and happiness of one nation should affect the rest of the world. He took a keen interest in international events and always supported the cause of liberty and nationalism. He celebrated the success of the revolution in Spain in 1823 by hosting a public dinner.

Religious Reforms:

Rammohan Roy struggled persistently against social evils. He argued that ancient Hindu texts the Vedas and the Upanishads upheld the doctrine of monotheism. To prove his point, he translated the Vedas and five Upanishads into Bengali.

In 1849 he wrote Gift to Monotheism in Persian. Rammohan Roy was a staunch believer in the philosophy of Vedanta (Upanishads) and vigorously defended the Hindu religion and Hindu philosophy from the attack of the missionaries. He only wanted to mould Hinduism into a new cast to suit the requirements of the age.

In 1829 Rammohan Roy founded a new religious society known as the Atmiya Sabha which later on came to be known as the Brahmo Samaj. This religious society was based on the twin pillars of rationalism and the philosophy of the Vedas. The Brahmo Samaj emphasised human dignity, criticised idolatry and denounced social evils like sati.

Rammohan Roy represented the first glimmerings of the rise of national consciousness in India. He opposed the rigidity of the caste system because it destroyed the unity of the country. The poet Rabindranath Tagore has rightly remarked: “Rammohan was the only person in his

time, in the whole world of men, to realise completely the significance of the Modern Age."

Socio-Religious Reform Movements and Reformers in India

The dawn of the 19th century witnessed the birth of new vision- a modern vision among some enlightened sections of the Indian society. This enlightened vision was to shape the course of events for decades to come and even beyond. Here, we are giving a complete overview on the Socio-Religious Reform Movements and Reformers in India that will enhance the knowledge of readers to understand, how Indian Society transformed after reform movements.

The process of reawakening, sometimes, but not always follow the intended as the 'Renaissance', did not always follow the intended line and gave rise to some undesirable by-products as well, which have become as much a part daily existence in the whole of the Indian subcontinent as have the fruits of these reform movements.

Although, the majority of reformation associated with religious beliefs and therefore most of the movement of the 19th century were socio-religious character. Here, we are giving a complete overview on the Socio-Religious Reform Movements and Reformers in India that will enhance the knowledge of readers to understand, how Indian Society transformed after reform movements.

Brahama Samaj

His greatest achievement in the field of religious reform was the setting up of the Brahmo Sabha in 1828 and the Brahmo Samaj was the first important organization of religious reforms. It forbade idol-worship and discarded meaningless rites and rituals. The Samaj also forbade its members from attacking any religion.

The greatest achievement in the field of social reform was the abolition of Sati in1829. He had seen how the wife of his elder brother was forced to commit Sati. His campaign against Sati aroused the opposition of the orthodox Hindus who bitterly attacked him. Ram Mohan Roy realized that the practice of sati was due to the extremely low position of Hindu women. He advocated the abolition of polygamy, and wanted women to be educated and given the right to inherit property.

The influence of Brahmo Samaj spread and branches of the Samaj were opened in different parts of the country. The two most prominent leader of the Brahmo Samaj were Debendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen. To spread the message of Brahmo Samaj Keshab Chandra Sen travelled throughout Madras and Bombay presidencies and, later, the northern India.

In 1866, there was a split in the Brahmo Samaj when Keshab Chandra Sen and his group held views which were more radical than those of the original Brahmo Samajists. They proclaimed freedom from the bondage of caste and customs, and from the authority of scriptures. They advocated and performed inter-caste marriages and widow remarriages, opposed the custom of purdah and condemned caste divisions. They attacked caste rigidity, started taking their food with the people of the so-called lower castes and other religions, opposed restrictions about food and drink, devoted their life to the spread of education and condemned the old Hindu opposition to sea voyages. This movement influenced similar movements of reforms in other parts of the country. While this group rose in prominence, the influence of the other group, which showed little interest in social reforms, declined.

Ishwar Chandra Vidhya Sagar: Work and Teachings

Ishwar Chandra Vidhya Sagar was born in a poor Brahman family in 1820, and had a brilliant career as a student of Sanskrit. For his great learning, the Sanskrit College in Calcutta, of which he was the principal for a few years, conferred on him the title of ‘Vidyasagar’.

Ishwar Chandra Vidhya Sagar became a legendary figure for his simple living, fearlessness, spirit of self-sacrifice, his devotion to education, to the cause of the downtrodden.

He introduced the study of modern western thought in the Sanskrit College and admitted students belonging to the so-called lower castes to study Sanskrit.

Earlier, studies in Sanskrit College were confined to traditional subjects. The study of Sanskrit itself was a monopoly of Brahmins and the so-called lower castes were not allowed to study it. He made a great contribution to the Bengali language, and is considered the originator of modern Bengali language. He was closely associated with many journals and newspapers and wrote powerful articles advocating social reforms.

His greatest contribution was to the cause of widow upliftment and girl education. He played a great role in the passing of the law which made the marriage of widows legal. He personally took part in the first widow remarriage that was performed in Calcutta in 1856. He was attacked by the orthodox Hindus for his powerful support to the cause of widow remarriage as well as for his efforts at promoting education of girls.

In 1855 he was made special inspector of schools, he opened a number of new schools, including girls' schools, in the districts under his charge. The authorities did not like this and he resigned from his post. He was closely associated with Drinkwater Bethune who had started the first school for girls' education in Calcutta in 1849.

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, a towering personality of the mid- nineteenth century, was born in a poor Brahmin family of Bengal in 1820. He was a renowned Sanskrit scholar and became the Principal of the Sanskrit College in 1851. The Sanskrit College conferred on him the title of 'Vidyasagar' because of his profound knowledge of Sanskrit.

Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was both a scholar and a reformer. He was a great humanist and had deep sympathy for the poor and the oppressed. He dedicated his entire life to the cause of social reform which he thought was necessary for modernising India. By admitting non-Brahmin students to the Sanskrit College, he dealt a severe blow to the prevalent caste system.

Vidyasagar was a staunch supporter of women's education and helped Drinkwater Bethune to establish the Bethune School, the first Indian school for girls, in 1849. As Inspector of Schools, Vidyasagar opened a number of schools for girls in the districts under his charge.

Vidyasagar's greatest contribution lies in the improvement of the condition of widows. Despite opposition, Vidyasagar openly advocated widow remarriage. Soon a powerful movement in favour of widow remarriage was started. At last, after prolonged struggle the Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856. Through his efforts, twenty-five widow remarriages took place. He also spoke vehemently against child marriage and polygamy.

Major Contribution of Ishwar Chand

1. He introduced the study of modern Western thought in the Sanskrit college.

2. He played an important role in the upliftment of widow's and girl's education.

3. He was one of the contributors to the law passing which made the widow marriage legal.

4. He started the first school for girl's education in Calcutta in 1849.

5. He was a powerful supporter of widow re-marriage.

6. He was closely associated with many journal and newspapers and wrote powerful, articles advocating social reforms.

7. He was great contributor of Bengali language, and considered as originator of Modern Bengali Language.

Debendranath Tagore

He founded Tattavabodhini Sabha (1839) and also published Tattvabodhini Patrika. Tattvabodhini Sabha amalgamated with the Brahmo Samaj in 1859. He also compiled selected passage from the Upanishads, which known as Brahma Dharma.

Dadoba Pandurang

He founded Paramhansa Sabha in 1840, was the first reform organisation of the 19th century in Maharashtra. Its main objective was to demolish all caste distinctions.

Mahadev Gobind Ranade

He founded Prarthana Samaj along with Dr. Atmaram Pandurang. Two other social reformers who work with Ranade were Vishnu Shastri and DK Karue. Karue launched the Widow Remarriage Movement. Prarthana Samaj did not reject the Vedas or Upanishads. However, it paid more emphasis on Bhakti (devotion).

K Sridharalu Naidu

He founded Veda Samaj in Madras, under the guidance of Keshab Chandra Sen in 1864. It changed into Brahmo Samaj of Southern India in 1871. It also abstains from patronising dancing girls, child marriage and polygamy.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati

He started the Suddhi Movement to bring back the Hindu converted to other religions and played some role in the growth of communalism in the 20th century. It played a progressive role in the field of national awakening by attacking religious superstitions, polytheism and the supremacy of Brahmins.

He condemns idolatry, polytheism, Brahmin sponsored religious rites and superstitious practices. He advocated social equality improvement in the status of women and denounced untouchability, caste rigidities and encouraged rationality. He disregarded authority of later Hindu scriptures like Puranas.

He published his views in his famous work Satyartha Prakash (the true expositions in Hindi). He also wrote Veda-Bhasya Bhumika (partly in Hindi and partly in Sanskrit) and Veda-Bhashya (in Sanskrit). He accepted the doctrine of karma, but rejected the theory of Niyati (fatalism). He was the first man to advocate the concept of Swaraj.

Swami Vivekananda

He was a one of the greatest thinkers of India founded the Ramakrishna Mission in 1896. The headquarter was established at Bellur near Calcutta to carry out humanitarian and social work to all without any distinction, especially to help poor and destitute. The basic motto of the mission was to provide social service people, spread the meaning of Vedantic spiritualism and strive for harmony among various faiths and cults.

HP Blavatsky

She started Theosophical movement (Literally means all inclusive) in New York with Col HS Olcott (American) in 1875. They arrived in India in 1879 and established the headquarters of the society at Adyar near Madras in 1882. Theosophist popularised the study of oriental classics, especially Upanishads and Bhagwat Gita.

Annie Besant

She joined the Theosophical Society in England in 1889 and came to India in 1893. She became President of the society after death of Olcolt in 1907. She translated the Bhagwad Gita in English. She laid the foundation of the Central Hindu College at Banaras in 1898 that later became nucleus for the formation of Banaras Hindu University in 1916.

Swami Sahajanad (1781-1830)

He founded Swami Narain Sect in Gujarat. The main focus of the sect was social unity and harmony. It encouraged widow remarriage and discouraged institution of Sati, female infanticide etc.

Behramii M Malabari

He founded Seva Sadon in 1885. He opposed to child marriage and compulsory widowhood. This humanitarian organisation focused on the welfare of the socially deprived people especially women.

Radhakant Deb

He founded Dharma Sabha in 1830, in order to counter the ideas of Brahamo Samaj and advocated status quo and opposed abolition of Sati.

Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809-1831)

He started Young Bengal Movement in Calcutta. The movement attacked old traditional and decadent customs. It advocated women's rights and educated the public on socio-economic and political issues.

The establishment of the Hindu College in 1817 was a major event in the history of Bengal. It played an important role in carrying forward the reformist movement that had already emerged in the province. A radical

movement for the reform of Hindu Society, known as the Young Bengal Movement, started in the college.

Its leader was Henry Vivian Derozio, a teacher of the Hindu College. Derozio was born in 1809. He was of mixed parentage his father was Portuguese and his mother was Indian. In 1826, at the age of 17, he joined the Hindu College as a teacher and taught there till 1831.

Derozio was deeply influenced by the revolutionery ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity. He was a brilliant teacher and within a short period of time, he drew around him a group of intelligent boys in the college.

He inspired his students to think rationally and freely, to question authority, to love liberty, equality and freedom and to worship truth. By organising an association for debates and discussions on literature, philosophy, history and science, he spread radical ideas.

The movement started by Derozio was called the Young Bengal Movement and his followers were known as the Derozians. They condemned religious rites and the rituals, and pleaded for eradication of social evils, female education and improvement in the condition of women.

Derozio was a poet, teacher, reformer and a fiery journalist. He was perhaps the first nationalist poet of modern India. He was removed from the Hindu College because of his radicalism and died soon after at the age of 22.

The Derozians could not lead a very successful movement because social conditions were not yet ripe for their ideas to flourish. Yet they carried forward Rammohan's tradition of educating the people on social, economic and political questions.

Dadabhai naoroji

Dadabhai Naoroji along with his Western educated, progressive Parsis like Sorabjee Bengali, JB Wacha, KR Cama, Naoroji Furdonji etc, founded Rahanumai Mazdayasanan Sabha or religious reform association in 1851 with the objective of social regeneration of Parsis, removal of the purdah system, raising the age of marriage, education of women.

Shah Walliullah

He started Wahabi Movement. It was a revivalist movement with slogan to return to pure Islam. Jihad was declared with the prime objective of converting Dar-UL-Harb (land of infidels) into Dar-UL-Islam (land of Islam).

Haji Shariat Ullah

He founded an orthodox Islamic Movement, i.e. Farazi Movement. He called for a return to Faraid (the obligatory duties of Islam) like names, Zakat, Haj, fasting in Ramzan etc. In 1804, Haji Shariat Ullah began to preach his doctrine by attacking the superstitions and corruptions of the Islamic society. Gradually, the movement gained political shape, when he declared the country under British occupation to be far-UL-job.'

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-1898)

He started the Aligarh Movement to modernise Indian Muslims. He founded the Aligarh School in 1875, which was upgraded as Mohammodan-Anglo Oriental College, which became nucleus for the formation of Aligarh Muslim University in 1920. He stressed the need for Hindu-Muslim unity. Sir Syed Ahmad started a journal named tahzib-al-Akhlaq in 1870.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmed

He founded the Ahmadiya Movement in 1889 to liberalise the tenets of Islam in the context of modern enlightenment. He believed in rationalism and stood for Western system of education. He claimed himself as Messiah and the incarnation of Jesus and Krishna.

Mohammad Qasim Nanantavi and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi

They started the Deoband Movement at Deoband, Saharanpur in 1866 with two main objectives- (i) popularizing the teaching of the Kuran and Hadith and (ii) To initiate Jihad against foreign rule. They did not support Western education and culture. They advocated the unity of all religions.

Balak Singh

He started the Namdhari Movement in 1857 who advocated the forbidden of learning English and taking up a Government job.

Thakur Singh Sandhawalia and Giani Gian Singh

They founded Singh Sabha in 1875 in Amritsar with two main objectives (a) to bring to Sikh community the benefits of Western enlightenment through Western education; (b) To counter Hindu and Christian Missionaries that were influencing the Sikh community.

Jyotirao Phule

He established Satyashodhak Samaj on 24 September 1873 to liberate the Shundra and Untouchable castes from exploitation and oppression. He also challenges the superiority and domination complex of Brahmans.

EV Ramaswami Naicker

He started the Self-respect Movement, which was popularly known as Periyar. He vehemently supported the Harijans and became a hero of Satyagraha at Vaikom, Kerala, started his paper, Kudi Arasu in 1925 and turned into a radical social reformer. Self respect league was merged with Justice Party in 1944 to from Dravida Kazhagam.

TK Madhavan, K Kellapan and Keshava Menon

Vaikom Satyagraha (Kerala, 1924-25) was led by TK Madhavan, K Kellapan and Keshava Menon. It was the first organised temple entry movement of the depressed classes. They asserted along Gandhian lines the right of Ezhavas and other untouchables to use the road near Travancore temple.

Characteristics of the Reform Movements:

An analysis of the reform movements of the 19th century brings out several common features:

(1) All the reformers propagated the idea of one God and the basic unity of all religions. Thus, they tried to bridge the gulf between different religious beliefs.

(2) All the reformers attacked priesthood, rituals, idolatry and polytheism. The humanitarian aspect of these reform movements was expressed in their attack on the caste system and the custom of child marriage.

(3) The reformers attempted to improve the status of girls and women in society. They all emphasised the need for female education.

(4) By attacking the caste system and untouchability, the reformers helped to unify the people of India into one nation.

(5) The reform movements fostered feelings of self-respect, self-reliance and patriotism among the Indians.

Contribution of the reform movements:

Many reformers like Dayanand Saraswati and Vivekananda upheld Indian philosophy and culture. This instilled in Indians a sense of pride and faith in their own culture. Female education was promoted. Schools for girls were set up. Even medical colleges were established for women. This led to the development, though slow, of girls' education. The cultural and ideological struggle taken up by the socio-religious movements helped to build up national consciousness. They, thus, paved the way for the growth of nationalism.

Check Your Progress 1

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

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

1. How do you know about the new education (indigenous and modern) including scientific and technical institutions?

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2. Discuss the Education Policy for social reform in India.

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3. Describe the contributions of educationists like Raja Rammohan, Vidyasagar etc.

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8.5 LET US SUM UP

The history of science and technology in the Indian subcontinent begins with prehistoric human activity in the Indus Valley Civilization to early states and empires. Following independence, science and technology in the Republic of India has included automobile engineering, information technology, communications as well as space, polar, and nuclear sciences.

The education system, which the British had worked out to consolidate their rule, within four decades, produced results contrary to their expectations. The Curzon reforms reflected the fact that necessary changes had to be made corresponding to the needs of the ruling classes. This is only a brief description of official British educational policy in India. Now a brief mention is made about the efforts of some enlightened men and missionaries, to have a clear picture of the total educational development during this period.

8.7 KEY WORDS

Zamindars: A zamindar, zomindar, zomidar, or jomidar, in the Indian subcontinent was an aristocrat. The term means land owner in Persian.

Pathshala:Old schools

Madrassa: Madrasa is the Arabic word for any type of educational institution, secular or religious, whether for elementary instruction or higher learning. The word is variously transliterated madrasah, medresa, madrassa, madraza, medrese, etc.

8.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. How do you know about the new education (indigenous and modern) including scientific and technical institutions?
2. Discuss the Education Policy for social reform in India
3. Describe the contributions of educationists like Raja Rammohan, Vidyasagar etc.

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8.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 8.2
2. See Section 8.3
3. See Section 8.4

UNIT 9: IDEAS OF CHANGE

STRUCTURE

9.0 Objectives

9.1 Introduction

9.2 Ideas of change

9.3 Social reforms and emerging social classes

9.4 Indian society and historic importance

9.5 Let us sum up

9.6 Key Words

9.7 Questions for Review

9.8 Suggested readings and references

9.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

9.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit we can able to know:

- To know the Ideas of change.
- To discuss the Social reforms and emerging social classes.
- To know the Indian society and historic importance.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Among the earliest human groups, gathering was the main source of food. Gradually man acquired the skill and knowledge in agriculture. With the development of agriculture, people began to lead a settled life and human communities became more stationary. The emergence of village signified that man has passed from nomadic mode of collective life to the settled one. India is a land of villages. A great majority of villages are small with only around five hundred populations each. Mahatma Gandhi's view that India lives in villages still holds well, at least from the demographic point of view. The village social life has its own peculiar characteristics.

The village social life norms strengthen the authoritarian and hierarchical norms in administration. The village social life, which is based on the hierarchical exchange relations greatly influence the behavior of civil servants in public organizations. Sociologists think that for defining an Indian village, its population, physical structure, and modes of production are definitely important. Usually, a village has less than five thousand individuals. It is rightly said 'India is a country of villages'. Agriculture is the main occupation of the Indians and majority of people in India live in the villages. Our villages help in strengthening our social bonds and bringing stability to our society in many ways. Our villages also help our society in another way namely that of preserving our culture. The Indian rural society has undergone considerable change in the recent past, particularly since the Independence as a result of a series of the land reform legislations that have accelerated the pace of this change. India has a rich cultural heritage and is a land of diversities. The diversity in social life is reflected in multi-social, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-caste nature of the society. The important features of the Indian social structure are- predominant rural habitation in small villages; multi-religious and multi-caste social identities and important role of family in the social life. In recent years, the communal organisations have become very active in social life resulting in communal clashes in different parts of the country. The villages form the units of the Rural Society. These rural societies have their own structure. The structure formed out of the following units:-

1) Family
2) Caste System
3) Internal Organisation
4) Religion
5) Economic System.

9.2 IDEAS OF CHANGE

9.2.1 Social Change in Indian Society!

Our objective is to evaluate the existing concepts and propositions about social change in contemporary Indian society. We intend to show how either due to a partial focus on the social processes in India, or due to the limitations of the analytical categories used by individual sociologists, treatment of change in India remains narrow and inadequate. We suggest some major reformulations in these conceptual categories which are theoretically consistent and might also lead to a comprehensive understanding of the Indian processes of social change.

9.2.2 Social Change as Ideology:

The study of social change, in view of the nebulous nature of its theory is a difficult task, and it is more difficult in the case of a society like India which has not only a fathomless historical depth and plurality of traditions but is also engulfed in a movement of nationalistic aspirations under which concepts of change and modernization are loaded with ideologi-cal meanings.

In this form, change ceases to be viewed as a normal social process; it is transformed into an ideology that change is in itself desirable and must be sought for. This introduces non-scientific elements in the evaluation of social change in India, elements of which are found in many studies. Authors of these studies evaluate change or non-change in India from their own moral or ideological view-points. With varying emphasis, these writers accept the desirability of change for the sake of change.

Some of them assume prophetic aura, others express dismay at the slow change, and still others postulate quasi-deter-ministic interpretations about Indian phenomenon of change. The same tendency is manifest when change is treated by some social scientists as equivalent to ‘development’ and ‘progress’. “This,” Dumont says, “amounts to the justification of the social order being found not in what it is, but in what it is supposedly becoming….in such circumstances a great and increasing social pressure is brought upon those who in the public estimation should know about social change.”

The ideological orientation, however, is not only confined to the formula-tion of the goals of social change, but also extends to the specific form the sociological categories should have to analyze change. To achieve this goal a case for the development of a particularistic or typical Indian sociology is made. Its proponents admit, however, that sociological explanations involve some form of intellection which is universalistic, call, it 'sociological apper-ception', 'empathy'," or 'sociological imagination', but simultaneously they also hold that explanation of specific forms of change in the cultural context of a nation requires delineation of conceptual categories applicable only to that particular culture. Hence, they claim there should be an Indian sociology distinct from sociology in the West or in other parts of the world. This particularism of some Indian sociologists introduces yet another ideolo-gical element in the analysis of change.

This tendency owes its origin particularly to the reaction of Indian socio-logists to the ethnocentric formulation of the theories of social evolution pro- pounded during the 19th century.' In part, it also reflects the intellectual orientation of some sociologists which is humanistic and non-empirical, and as a safeguard for this which favours sociological particularism on the one hand, and, on the other, attempts to accord sociology the status of a meta-physical and historical-speculative discipline in conformity with Indian tradition.

The fact is, however, overlooked that even the Western sociology has a tradition of anti-positivism, and on this basis alone the case for Indian sociology cannot be defended. Obviously, a part of such reasoning is an out-come of the 'identity crisis' among the intellectuals and elite of the new nations.' To some extent it may also be a reflection of the way Indian politico-economic and cultural factors impinge upon the thinking of Indian sociologists… .a problem which is relevant to sociology of knowledge.

This orientation of Indian sociologists, however, is not entirely ideological. Quite a good deal of it also results from conceptual ambiguities common to sociology in general. For instance, some Indian sociologists object to a definition of social system which says: "(Social System) consists of a plurality of individual actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the optimiza-tion of gratification."

Their view is that Indian social system traditionally organized on caste lines idealized the value of 'self-denial', hierarchy and moral obligation (dharma) rather than 'optimization of gratification'. Such a notion of social system is derived from an individualistic frame of reference which did not apply to the Indian situation.

A closer scrutiny of the above will, however, reveal the way ideological elements are implicit in the arguments. Emphasis on the uniqueness of Indian society emerges from a confusion of levels between the raw data of sociology, such as the specific values, institutions, customs and cultural forms and its conceptual abstractions which constitute the basis of sociological categories. It is overlooked that 'society' or social structure as concepts are higher-level abstractions over culture.

A logical corollary of this view-point is the rejection of sociology for culturology, or probably for a series of culturologies, each based on different sets of ideological commit-ments.'5 Moreover, the claim for an Indian sociology is not entirely based on a humanistic methodological tradition which, as we mentioned above, also exists in the West; its roots lie rather in the ideology of nationalism.

A comparative study of institutions is a prerequisite for analysis 'bf social change which is not possible through a culturological approach to sociology as it overemphasizes the uniqueness of social phenomenon. For instance, how could the concept 'modernization' is explained from a purely Indological frame of reference? How could one explain the changes in the social structure of the Indian society, in the spheres of family, caste, civic and com-munity administration and bureaucracy,

without analyzing the significance of new heterogenetic developments in law, constitutional rights, bureaucracy, science and technology'?

Yet, none could deny that Indian cultural tradition is unique. But unique-ness is a common and simple fact of life; every concrete event in temporal sense is unique. Uniqueness is only one facet of reality; its other facet com-prises function…. the way social realities interact and are related to one another. A study of the latter aspect necessitates comparison which is impos-sible without conceptual abstraction.

These abstractions form a hierarchical order, and through them the sociologist translates 'the language of the sources', to borrow a term from Hans L. Zetterberg, into the language of sociology. The sociologist not only takes note of the concrete individualities of social events and forms, but also translates them into higher-order abstractions for comparison.

It is probably in this sense that Louis Dumont, who otherwise takes a cult-urological or, in his own words, "ideo-structural approach to Indian sociology, is able to arrive at the functional equivalent of the (Western idea of the) individual" in the Indian institution of caste.

Terms like 'individualism', 'atomism', 'secularism' are often used to oppose modern society to societies of the traditional type. In particular, the contrast between caste society and its modern counterpart is a com-monplace. Liberty and equality on the one hand, interdependence and hierarchy on the other, .are in the foreground. Permanence versus mobility, ascription versus achievement allows for a neat contrariety between the two kinds of social system.

We might well ask whether there was as much difference in social practice here and there, as between (explicit or implicit) social theories, and I shall point out that Western society is no stranger to the attitudes and even to the ideas which caste society upholds. …To return to our comparison, we may say that the individual, in so far as he is the main

bearer of the values in the modern society, is equivalent to order, or dharma in classical Hindu society…modern society has evolved from that of the Middle Ages, which certainly at first sight appears to be a society of the traditional type, more like the Indian than like the modern. …The conception of the Universities, i.e. of the social body as a whole of which living men are merely the parts, obviously belongs to the traditional conceptions of society and in particular is akin to the Hindu conception of dharma and the hierarchical interdependence of the several social statuses.

This implies that many elements of the Indian culture, which for the lack of methodological clarity are treated as unique, can with facility be analysed in terms of higher levels of abstractions without, however, distorting their distinctiveness as cultural symbols. Could we not, for instance, offer a functional equivalent of dharma .as normative order, of karma as personal moral commitment, of jati or caste as hierarchical principle of stratification? About caste, substantial comparative study has already been conducted to show how its structural counterparts are found even outside the Indian tradition.

Disciplinary isolationism is, moreover, contrary to the tendency in social sciences to come together. This, however, proceeds side by side with the process of internal differentiation in the fields of individual disciplines. A number of noted sociologists including Raymond Aron and Edward E. Shils have acknowledged this process. In this light the claim for an Indian sociology appears somewhat anachronistic.

Another bias in the studies of social change in India results from too much concern with culture and values. Structural realities are often ignored and studies suffer from ‘value bias’, as it were. Most studies are focused on acculturation, diffusion of norms and values; change is identified with ‘spread’ of these values in regional or national spheres.

The reason for this is mainly historical. Both the British and French social scientists who first conducted sociological studies in India were

more interested in the ethno-graphy of caste, custom and culture and they studied these phenomena from a descriptive or functional model. Studies employing a dialectical or conflict model have been fewer indeed.

The distinction between the functional and the dialectical models is too well-known to merit repetition. Functionalism assumes that "society is a relatively persisting configuration of elements" and consensus is an ubiquitous element of the social system. The dialectical model, on the contrary, treats 'change' or 'tension' to be ubiquitous in society. Since functionalism assumes social systems to be in a state of value consensus, it relegates the role of power in social relations to a secondary place; dialectical model, on the other hand, presupposes that value conflict is a universal reality of any stratified social structure.

Functionalism treats change as a slow, cumulative process of adjustment to new situations. Dialectical model holds that most changes are revolutionary in significance and effect qualitative transforma-tion in the social structure. According to functionalism, changes constantly take place in social systems through internal growth and adjustment with forces from without; in dialectical model, major sources of change are imma-nent in the system itself.

For ideological reasons, differences between these two models are exagger-ated when in reality they have many common elements. The dichotomy between consensus and conflict which is often used to counterpose the two models is, however, not absolute. Not only consensus but also conflict has system-integrative functions as noted by many sociologists. Moreover, both models take an evolutionary view of change and, in some respects, both are based on an equilibrium model of society.

It is a curious fact, however, that Indian sociologists who voice the need for a typical Indian sociology also identify themselves methodologically either with dialectical or functional approaches. This shows not only the extent of ambiguity but also conflict in the thinking of these sociologists.

Some illustrations of this we may find in their conceptual approaches to the study of social change in India.

9.3 SOCIAL REFORMS AND EMERGING SOCIAL CLASSES

Social Reforms:

A reform movement is a type of social movement that aims to bring a social or political system closer to the community's ideal. A reform movement is distinguished from more radical social movements such as revolutionary movements which reject those old ideals in the ideas are often grounded in liberalism, although they may be rooted in socialist (specifically, social democratic) or religious concepts. Some rely on personal transformation; others rely on small collectives, such as Mahatma Gandhi's spinning wheel and the self-sustaining village economy, as a mode of social change. Reactionary movements, which can arise against any of these, attempt to put things back the way they were before any successes the new reform movement(s) enjoyed, or to prevent any such successes.

Indian Society in the 19th century was caught in a vicious web created by religious superstitions and dogmas. All religions in general and Hinduism in particular had become a compound of magic, animism, and superstitions. The abominable rites like animal sacrifice and physical torture had replaced the worship of God. The priests exercised an overwhelming and unhealthy influence on the mind of people. The faithful lived in submission, not only to God, the powerful and unseen, but even to the whims, fancies, and wishes of the priests. Social Conditions were equally depressing. The most distressing was the position of women. The birth of a girl was unwelcome, her marriage a burden and her widowhood inauspicious. Another debilitating factor was Caste. It sought to maintain a system of segregation, hierarchically ordained on the basis of ritual status, hampering social mobility and fostered social divisions. There were innumerable other practices marked

by constraint, status, authority, bigotry and blind fatalism. Rejecting them as features of a decadent society, the reform movements sought to create a social climate for modernization. The conquest of India by the British during the 18th and 19th century exposed some serious weaknesses and drawbacks of Indian social institutions. The response, indeed, was varied but the need to reform social and religious life was a commonly shared conviction. It also brought in completely new sets of ideas and social world. The exposure to post-Enlightenment rationalism that came to signify modernity brought a change in the outlook of a select group of Indians. The introduction of western education and ideas had the far reaching impact on the Indian Society. Through the glasses of utility, reason, justice, and progress, a select group of individuals began to explore the nature of their own society. There was a gradual emergence of public opinion. The debates between the Orientalists, scholars of Eastern societies like India on one side, and the Utilitarians, Liberals and Missionaries on the other also enabled the penetration of ideas, at least amongst the upper section of society. The resultant cultural change led to introspection about Indian traditions, institution, and culture. The socio intellectual revolution that took place in the nineteenth century in the fields of philosophy, literature, science, politics and social reforms is often known as Indian Renaissance. An important part of this Renaissance was reforming Hinduism from within on the basis of PostEnlightenment rationalism. The Renaissance was especially focused in Bengal and is popularly known as the Bengal Renaissance. However, the use of 'renaissance' is slightly problematic as in European history it is used to refer to the "rebirth" or revival of Greco-Roman learning in the fifteen and sixteenth centuries after the long winter of the dark medieval period. But in Indian context, it implied rediscovering rationalism from within India's past.

Social and Religious Reform Movement

Social Reform Movement are linked with different ideas including presence of Colonial government, Economic and Social backwardness of society, influence of modern western ideas, rise of intellectual awakening

in the middle class and poor position of women in society. British rule in India acted as a catalyst to deep seated social changes. Western culture also influenced the Indian Life and thought in several ways. The most important result of the impact of western culture was the replacement of blind faith in current traditions, beliefs, and conventions by a spirit of rationalism.

The major social problems which came in the purview of the reforms movements were emancipation of women in which sati; infanticide, child marriage and widow re-marriage were taken up, casteism and untouchability, education for bringing about enlightenment in society. In the religious sphere main issues were idolatry, polytheism, religious superstitions, and exploitation by priest. Important characteristics of Social Reform Movement included leadership by wide emerging Intellectual middle class. Reform movement started in different parts of India in different period but having considerable similarities. They were link with one region or one caste. It was clear to them that without religious reformation, there cannot be any social reformation. Two Intellectual criteria of social reform movement included-

- Rationality

- Religious Universalism

Social relevance was judged by a rationalist critique. It is difficult to match the uncompromising rationalism of the early Raja Rammohan Roy or AkshaykumarDutt. Rejecting Supernatural explanations, Raja Rammohan Roy affirmed the principle of causality linking the whole phenomenal universe. To him demonstrability was the sole criterion of truth. In proclaiming that 'rationalism is our only preceptor', Akshaykumar Dutt went a step further. All natural and social phenomena, he held, could be analyzed and understood by purely mechanical processes. This perspective not only enabled them to adopt a rational approach to tradition but also to evaluate the contemporary socio-religious practices from the standpoint of social utility and to

replace faith with rationality. In the Brahmo Samaj, it led to the repudiation of the infallibility of the Vedas, and in the Aligarh Movement, to the reconciliation of the teachings of Islam with the needs of the modern age. Holding that religious tenets were not immutable, Syed Ahmed Khan emphasized the role of religion in the progress of society: if religion did not keep pace with and meet the demands of the time it would get fossilized as in the case of Islam in India. Similarly, while the ambits of reforms were particularistic, their religious perspective was universalistic. Raja Ram Mohan Roy considered different religion as national embodiments of Universal theism. The Brahmo Samaj was initially conceived by him as a Universalist church. He was a defender of the basic and universal principles of all religions- the monotheism of the Vedas and the Unitarianism of Christianity- and at the same time attacked polytheism of Hinduism and the trinitarianism of Christianity. Sir Syed Ahmed khan echoed the same idea: all prophets had the same din (faith) and every country and nation had different prophets. This perspective found clearer articulation in Kehsub Chandra Sen's ideas saying that our position is not that truths are to be found in all religions, but all established religions of the world are true. He also gave expression to the social implication of this Universalist perspective saying that whosoever worships the True God daily must learn to recognize all his fellow countrymen as brethren. Caste would vanish in such a state of a society.

Social Classes:

A social class is a set of concepts in the social sciences and political theory centered on models of social stratification in which people are grouped into a set of hierarchical social categories, the most common being the upper, middle and lower classes.

"Class" is a subject of analysis for sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists and social historians. However, there is not a consensus on a definition of "class" and the term has a wide range of sometimes conflicting meanings. Some people argue that due to social mobility,

class boundaries do not exist. In common parlance, the term "social class" is usually synonymous with "socio-economic class", defined as "people having the same social, economic, cultural, political or educational status", e.g., "the working class"; "an emerging professional class". However, academics distinguish social class and socioeconomic status, with the former referring to one's relatively stable sociocultural background and the latter referring to one's current social and economic situation and consequently being more changeable over time.

The precise measurements of what determines social class in society have varied over time. Karl Marx thought "class" was defined by one's relationship to the means of production (their relations of production). His simple understanding of classes in modern capitalist society is the proletariat, those who work but do not own the means of production; and the bourgeoisie, those who invest and live off the surplus generated by the proletariat's operation of the means of production. This contrasts with the view of the sociologist Max Weber, who argued "class" is determined by economic position, in contrast to "social status" or "Stand" which is determined by social prestige rather than simply just relations of production. The term "class" is etymologically derived from the Latin classis, which was used by census takers to categorize citizens by wealth in order to determine military service obligations.

In the late 18th century, the term "class" began to replace classifications such as estates, rank and orders as the primary means of organizing society into hierarchical divisions. This corresponded to a general decrease in significance ascribed to hereditary characteristics and increase in the significance of wealth and income as indicators of position in the social hierarchy.

Historically, social class and behavior were laid down in law. For example, permitted mode of dress in some times and places was strictly regulated, with sumptuous dressing only for the high ranks of society and aristocracy, whereas sumptuary laws stipulated the dress and jewelry appropriate for a person's social rank and station. In Europe, these laws

became increasingly commonplace during the Middle Ages. However, these laws were prone to change due to societal changes, and in many cases, these distinctions may either almost disappear, such as the distinction between a patrician and a plebeian being almost erased during the late Roman Republic.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau had a large influence over political ideals of the French Revolution because of his views of inequality and classes. Rousseau saw humans as "naturally pure and good." He believed that social problems arise through the development of society and suppressing the innate pureness of humankind. He also believed that private property, people having sole ownership of a good, is the main reason for social issues in society. Even though his theory predicted if there were no private property then there would be wide spread equality, Rousseau accepted that there will always be social inequality because of how society is run and viewed.

Later Enlightenment thinkers viewed inequality as valuable and crucial to society's development and prosperity. They also acknowledged that private property will ultimately cause inequality because specific resources that are privately owned can be stored and the owners profit off of the deficit of the resource.

Definitions of social classes reflect a number of sociological perspectives, informed by anthropology, economics, psychology and sociology. The major perspectives historically have been Marxism and structural functionalism. The common stratum model of class divides society into a simple hierarchy of working class, middle class and upper class. Within academia, two broad schools of definitions emerge: those aligned with 20th-century sociological stratum models of class society and those aligned with the 19th-century historical materialist economic models of the Marxists and anarchists.

Another distinction can be drawn between analytical concepts of social class, such as the Marxist and Weberian traditions, as well as the more

empirical traditions such as socio-economic status approach, which notes the correlation of income, education and wealth with social outcomes without necessarily implying a particular theory of social structure.

Marxist

"[Classes are] large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labor, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it."

—Vladimir Lenin, A Great Beginning on June 1919

For Marx, class is a combination of objective and subjective factors. Objectively, a class shares a common relationship to the means of production. Subjectively, the members will necessarily have some perception ("class consciousness") of their similarity and common interest. Class consciousness is not simply an awareness of one's own class interest but is also a set of shared views regarding how society should be organized legally, culturally, socially and politically. These class relations are reproduced through time.

In Marxist theory, the class structure of the capitalist mode of production is characterized by the conflict between two main classes: the bourgeoisie, the capitalists who own the means of production and the much larger proletariat (or "working class") who must sell their own labour power (wage labour). This is the fundamental economic structure of work and property, a state of inequality that is normalized and reproduced through cultural ideology.

For Marxists, every person in the process of production has separate social relationships and issues. Along with this, every person is placed into different groups that have similar interests and values that can differ

drastically from group to group. Class is special in that does not relate to specifically to a singular person, but to a specific role.

Marxists explain the history of "civilized" societies in terms of a war of classes between those who control production and those who produce the goods or services in society. In the Marxist view of capitalism, this is a conflict between capitalists (bourgeoisie) and wage-workers (the proletariat). For Marxists, class antagonism is rooted in the situation that control over social production necessarily entails control over the class which produces goods—in capitalism this is the exploitation of workers by the bourgeoisie.

Furthermore, "in countries where modern civilisation has become fully developed, a new class of petty bourgeois has been formed". "An industrial army of workmen, under the command of a capitalist, requires, like a real army, officers (managers) and sergeants (foremen, over-lookers) who, while the work is being done, command in the name of the capitalist".

Marx makes the argument that, as the bourgeoisie reach a point of wealth accumulation, they hold enough power as the dominant class to shape political institutions and society according to their own interests. Marx then goes on to claim that the non-elite class, owing to their large numbers, have the power to overthrow the elite and create an equal society.

In The Communist Manifesto, Marx himself argued that it was the goal of the proletariat itself to displace the capitalist system with socialism, changing the social relationships underpinning the class system and then developing into a future communist society in which: "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all". This would mark the beginning of a classless society in which human needs rather than profit would be motive for production. In a society with democratic control and production for use, there would be no class, no state and no need for financial and banking institutions and money.

These theorists have taken this binary class system and expanded it to include contradictory class locations, the idea that a person can be employed in many different class locations that fall between the two classes of proletariat and bourgeoisie. Erik Olin Wright stated that class definitions are more diverse and elaborate through identifying with multiple classes, having familial ties with people in different a class, or having a temporary leadership role.

Weberian

Max Weber formulated a three-component theory of stratification that saw social class as emerging from an interplay between "class", "status" and "power". Weber believed that class position was determined by a person's relationship to the means of production, while status or "Stand" emerged from estimations of honor or prestige.

Weber views class as a group of people who have common goals and opportunities that are available to them. This means that what separates each class from each other is their value in the marketplace through their own goods and services. This creates a divide between the classes through the assets that they have such as property and expertise.

Weber derived many of his key concepts on social stratification by examining the social structure of many countries. He noted that contrary to Marx's theories, stratification was based on more than simply ownership of capital. Weber pointed out that some members of the aristocracy lack economic wealth yet might nevertheless have political power. Likewise in Europe, many wealthy Jewish families lacked prestige and honor because they were considered members of a "pariah group".

Class: A person's economic position in a society. Weber differs from Marx in that he does not see this as the supreme factor in stratification.

Weber noted how managers of corporations or industries control firms they do not own.

Status: A person's prestige, social honor or popularity in a society. Weber noted that political power was not rooted in capital value solely, but also in one's status. Poets and saints, for example, can possess immense influence on society with often little economic worth.

Power: A person's ability to get their way despite the resistance of others. For example, individuals in state jobs, such as an employee of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or a member of the United States Congress, may hold little property or status, but they still hold immense power.

9.4 INDIAN SOCIETY AND HISTORIC IMPORTANCE

Concepts and Approaches about Social Change in India:

Some major concepts and approaches about social change in India can be grouped as:

(i) Sanskritization and Westernization;
(ii) Little and Great traditions consisting of (a) processes of parochialization and universalization, and (b) cultural performances and organization of tradition;
(iii) Multiple traditions;
(iv) Structural approach, based on (a) functional model, and (b) dialectical model; and
(v) Cognitive historical or Indological approach.
We shall briefly review each of them to find common grounds for a conceptual integration and also to show the biases and limitations from which they suffer.

Sanskritizalion and Westernization:

The term Sanskritization was used first by M.N. Srinivas to describe the process of cultural mobility in the traditional social structure of India. In his study of the Coorgs in Mysore he found that lower castes, in order to raise their position in the caste hierarchy, adopted some customs of the Brah-mins and gave up some of their own, considered to be impure by the higher castes.

For instance, they gave up meat-eating, consumption of liquor and animal sacrifice to their deities; they imitated the Brahmins in matters of dress, food and rituals. By doing this, within a generation or so they could claim higher positions in the hierarchy of castes. To denote this process of mobility Srinivas first used the term 'Brahmanization'. Later on, he replaced it by Sanskritization.

Sanskritization is a much broader concept than Brahmanization. Srinivas realized that the process which motivated the lower castes to imitate the customs of the Brahmins in Mysore was a specific case of a general tendency among the lower castes to imitate the cultural ways of the higher castes; in many cases these higher castes were non-Brahmins; they were Kshatriyas, Jats, Vaisyas, etc. in various regions of the country.

The crucial idea, how-ever, is that of hierarchy in the caste system theoretically represented by Varna. There are four Varna's, the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra in the same hierarchical order, and all individual castes or Sub-castes, with the exception of the untouchables, can be classified on the basis of Varna into u hierarchical order.

The untouchables have traditionally been outside the Varna hierarchy and form the lowest rung of the caste stratification. The Brahmins, who constitute the top of the Varna hierarchy, have since time immemorial enjoyed the most respectable position in the caste system.
They form the priestly class have the monopoly over the study and interpretation of the Hindu scriptures and sacred texts through

insti-tutionalized means. As custodians of the Hindu tradition a stricter con-formity with the ideal norms of Hinduism was expected from them; this expectation progressively became less and less strict for the castes lower down in the hierarchy until for the lower and untouchable castes the widest devia-tion from the ideal norms was tolerated.

Thus, in the social structure of the caste system the hierarchy of social positions coincided with the hierarchy of expectations about the conformity to ideal Hindu conduct-norms. Not only some form of deviance by the lower and untouchable castes from the sacred Hindu norms was tolerated but at one level their effort to follow the norms monopolized by the upper castes was stubbornly resisted. Status in caste being ascribed by birth, the chances of smooth mobility to high caste positions was more or less closed.

Despite this closure there have been changes in caste hierarchy and its norms from time to time. For instance, what was culturally accepted (Sanskritic) during the Vedic period of Hinduism was in some cases a taboo in the periods which followed. Vedic Hinduism was magico-animistic; Vedic Brahmins drank Soma (liquor), offered animal sacrifice and ate beef.

These were prohibited later and the only exception was made in cases of the lower and untouchable castes. The hierarchical principle, however, remained unchanged. It became rather stronger as with few exceptions the castes with ritual superiority had dominant economic and political positions. This cemented the hierarchical foundation of the caste system.

Sanskritization is the process of cultural and social mobility during these periods of relative closure of the Hindu social system. It is an endogenous source of social change. From a social psychological point, Sanskritization is a culturally specific case of the universal motivation toward ‘anticipatory socialization’ to the culture of a higher group in the hope of gaining its status in future.

The specific sense of Sanskritization lies in the historicity of its meaning based on the Hindu tradition. In this respect, Sanskritization is a unique historical expression of the general process of acculturation as a means of vertical mobility of groups.

Here, we must explain the two levels of meanings which are implicit in Sanskritization and which interchangeably have been made use of by Srinivas. We may call them 'historical specific' and 'contextual specific' connotations of Sanskritization. In historical specific sense Sanskritization refers to those processes in Indian history which led to changes in the status of various castes, its leadership or its cultural patterns in different periods of history.

It is indicative of an endogenous source of social change in the broad historical spectrum of India. In contextual specific sense, however, Sanskritization denotes contemporaneous processes of cultural imitation of upper castes by lower castes or sub-castes, in different parts of India. The nature of this type of Sanskritization is by no means uniform as the content of cultural norms or customs being imitated may vary from Sanskritic or Hindu traditional forms to the tribal and even the Islamic patterns.

This is illustrated by the diversity of patterns found in the contextual process of Sanskritization. Studies show that at many places lower castes imitate the customs of the Kshatriyas and not of the Brahmins; at other places tribes are reported to imitate the customs of the caste Hindus; in a few exceptional cases even the higher castes have been found imitating the tribal ways or undergoing the process called 'tribalization'.

In other contexts, Muslim cultural style is found to set the limit for imitation by upper as well as the lower castes. Islamic tradition being exogenous to the Hindu tradition, such forms of acculturation fall outside the scope of Sans-kritization. Beyond this a process of cultural interaction between the Sans-kritic and other orthogenetic traditions such

as those of the lower castes and the tribes has always existed in India; this renders it difficult to define the exact nature of Sanskritization.

Consequently, Srinivas has been changing his definition of Sanskritization from time to time. Initially he defines it as the tendency among the low castes to move higher in the caste hierarchy "in a generation or two" by "adopting vegetarianism and teetotalism, and by Sanskritizing its ritual and pantheon."

The caste system is far from a rigid system in which the position of each component caste is fixed for all time. Movement has always been possible, and especially so in the middle regions of the hierarchy. A low caste was able in a generation or two to rise to a higher position in the hierarchy by adopting vegetarianism and teetotalism, and by Sanskritizing its ritual and pantheon.

In short, it took over, as far as possible, the customs, rites and beliefs of the Brahmins, and the adoption of the Brahmanic way of life by a low caste seems to have been frequent, though theoretically for bidden. This process has been called 'Sanskritization'…in preference to 'Brahmanization', as certain Vedic rites are confined to the Brahmins and the two other 'twice born' castes.

Here Sanskritization is identified with imitation of the Brahmanical customs and manners by the lower castes. Srinivas later re-defines Sanskritiza-tion as "a process by which a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high, frequently, 'twice born' caste. Generally such changes are followed by a claim to a higher position in the caste hierarchy than that traditionally conceded to the claimant caste by the local community." (Italics added).

The new connotation of Sanskritization is evidently much broader; it is neither confined to Brahmins as a reference, – group nor to the imitation of mere rituals and religious practices. It now also means imitation of

ideologies but it is not clear in what sense the term 'ideology' has been used.

It could not be secular in meaning as in that case the distinction between Sanskritization and secularization (Westernization) would be blurred. Probably ideology refers to various thematic aspects of the Hindu tradition.

Westernization:

Compared with Sanskritization, Westernization is a simpler concept. It is defined by Srinivas as "the changes brought about in Indian society and culture as a result of over 150 years of British rule, the term subsuming changes occurring at different levels ….technology, institutions, ideology and values." Emphasis on humanitarianism and rationalism is a part of Westernization which led to a series of institutional and social reforms in India.

Establishment of scientific, technological and educational insti-tutions, rise of nationalism, new political culture and leadership in the country are all by-products of Westernization. According to Srinivas, the increase in Westernization does not retard the process of Sanskritization; both go on simultaneously, and to some extent, increase in Westernization accelerates the process of Sanskritization. For instance, the postal faci-lities, railways, buses and newspaper media which are the fruits of Western impact on India render more organized religious pilgrimages, meetings, caste solidarities etc. possible now than in the past.

Srinivas prefers the term Westernization to 'modernization'. He con-tends that modernization presupposes rationality of goals which in the ultimate analysis could not be taken for- granted, since human ends are based on value preferences and "rationality could only be predicted of the means not of the ends of social action." By Westernization he also means primarily the British impact which he admits is "historically untenable (yet) heuristically unavoidable".

Evidently, Sanskritization and Westernization as concepts are primarily focused to analyze cultural changes, and have no scope for systematize ex-planation of changes in the social structure. Srinivas concedes this point; ‘ to describe the social changes occurring in modem India in terms of Sanskritization and Westernization is to describe it primarily in cultural and not in structural terms. An analysis in terms of structure is much more difficult than an analysis in terms of culture.” He further adds that Sanskritization involves ‘positional change’ in the caste system without any structural change.

The questions, however, are: how far do Sanskritization and Westerni-zation as concepts describe the ramifications of cultural change in India? Arc the phenomena Sanskritization and Westernization inclusive enough to account for all the major cultural changes in India? The answers to these require a discussion of the concepts in two parts: first, in logical terms and second, in terms of contextual sufficiency.

Sanskritization and Westernization, in logical sense, are ‘truth asserting’ concepts which oscillate between the logics of ideal-typical and nominal definitions of phenomena. Hence their connotation is often vague, espe-cially as we move from one level of cultural reality (historical specific) to another (contextual specific).

Srinivas himself says about Sanskritization that it “is an extremely complex and heterogeneous concept. It is even possible that it would be more profitable to treat it as a bundle of concepts than as a single concept. The important thing to remember is that it is only a name for a widespread cultural process.”

The nominal nature of the concept is thus clearly evident. This is also why Sanskritization and Westernization fail to lead to a consistent theory of cultural change. Such consistency is far from realization since in Sri-nivas’ own words, “the heterogeneity of the concept of

Sanskritization…. subsumes mutually antagonistic values, perhaps even as Westernization does".

Even otherwise, nominal definitions are devoid of theory. They contain no hypotheses, and in Zetterberg's word "cannot be true or false. They can be clumsy or elegant, appropriate or inappropriate, effective or worthless but never true or false. Obviously, Sanskritization and Wester-nization are theoretically loose terms; but as truth-asserting concepts they have great appropriateness and viability.

Theoretical looseness of these concepts is evident also from the way scholars have interpreted them. E.B. Harper, for instance, treats Sanskriti-zation as a functional concept distinct from a historical concept of change.

Sanskritization, according to him, is an interpretative category to understand the relationship among the changing elements within the tradition than its historical reconstruction. Contrary to this, J.F. Staal writes: It should be clear that the concept of Sanskritization describes a process and is a concept of change.

It is not a concept at which synchronic analysis could ever arrive in order to explain material obtained by synchronic analysis. Sanskritization is a meta-concept in this sense, and all historical concepts" are meta-concepts in that they are based upon concepts of synchronic analysis.

He further adds: "Sanskritization as used by Srinivas and other anthropo-logists is a complex concept or a class of concepts. The term itself seems to be misleading, since its relationship to the term Sanskrit is extremely complicated."

The fluidity and contradiction in the meanings of Sanskritization are evident from the fact that it could be treated as a functional (a-historical) con-cept and a historical meta-concept at the same time. Staal's reference to Sanskritization as a meta-concept is also not clear as meta-concepts

are generally at a higher level of abstraction over the primary or primitive concepts. Sanskritization on the contrary is a primary concept which describes a particular set of substantive processes of cultural changes in India.

The emphasis in this concept is on the particular or specific and not on the general or universal. This is borne out from the following defense of this term by Srinivas: "There was (another) suggestion made that we should discard a local term like Sanskritization, and uses a univer-sal term like acculturation. I think this should be rejected for the reason that acculturation takes a particular form in Hindu society, and we want to characterize this particular form of acculturation. This contradicts the thesis of Staal.

Contextually, Sanskritization and Westernization are founded upon em-pirical observations and offer objective insight into some aspects of cultu-ral change. Difficulties, however, arise from the complexity of the contex-tual frame of reference. As we have said, these concepts do not have the same meaning or theoretical implications when used in 'historical specific' and 'contextual specific' terms.

Probably, the controversy whether Sans-kritization is a functional or historical concept is linked with these two levels of usages. In historical specific sense Sanskritization is a concept loaded with historical connotations closer to the view-point of Staal; but in contextual specific usage it tends to show many attributes of a functional concept implied by E.B. Harper.

However, Sanskritization fails to account for many aspects of cultural changes in past and contemporary India as it neglects the non-Sanskritic traditions. It may be noted that often a non-Sanskritic element of culture may be a localized form of the Sanskritic tradition. McKim Marriott finds such phenomenon in his study of a village community in India.

He observes no clear process of 'Sanskritization' at the expense of 'the non- Sanskritic traditions'. Instead of borrowing, he finds "evidence of accre-tion and of transmutation in cultural form without apparent replacement and without rationalization of the accumulated and transformed elements…. Sanskritic rites are often added on to non-Sanskritic rites without replacing them."

Moreover, Sanskritic influence has not been universal to all parts of the country. In most of northern India, especially in Punjab, it was the Is-lamic tradition which provided a basis for cultural imitation. Sikhism emerged here as a synthesis of the Hindu tradition with the Islamic move-ments of sufism and mysticism.

In Punjab, writes Chanana, "culturally Sanskritic influence has been but one of the trends and at times it could not have become the main trend. For a few centuries until the third quarter of the 19th century Persian influence had been the dominating one in this area."

Chanana also does not find Westernization to be a simple process. He says, "as regards the present (situation in Punjab), it would be better to say that Indianization is at work; by this we mean Westernization to a large extent in externals and the reassertion of largely Indian values, mingled with the humanitarian values of the West in matters of spirit. This cultural synthesis or Indianization has also been recognized by other historians.

There are, however, aspects of Indianization which do not conform to Sanskritization-Westernization approach. The increasing tendency among the new elite and some castes and religious groups to emphasize their own in group identity through isolationism and nativistic revivalism is a case in point. Some of these movements such as for Dravidian identity in the south, for tribal identity in the eastern border of India and for Muslim national identity in Kashmir are not even related to the process of Indiani-zation.

The forces working in such movements, as often also in Sanskritization, are not merely cultural; they emerge from latent structural tensions in the social system rooted in the intergroup and interclass conflict and rivalry for economic resources and power.

As suggested by Harold A. Gould, often the motive-force behind Sanskritization is not of cultural imitation per se but an expression of challenge and revolt against the socio-economic deprivations. Sanskritizations is thus a cultural camouflage for latent interclass and inter caste competition for economic and social power, typical of a tradition-bound society where the traditionally privileged upper castes hold monopoly to power and social status.

When the impact of the external forces like political demo-cratization, land reforms and other social reforms break this monopoly of the upper castes, the cultural camouflage of Sanskritization is thrown away in favor of an open conflict with the privileged classes based on nativistic solidarity.

The term Westernization, too, is not without complications. Srinivas equates westernization with the British impact on India, but this is too narrow since after independence the impact of the Russian and American versions of modernization in India has been considerable.

This form of modernization has also not been entirely free from the influence of impli-cit ideologies; take for instance, the policy with regard to industrialization. In this field the persistent controversy over the public versus private manage-ment and ownership of factories offers an ideological case in modernization.

These value conflicts which today form an integral aspect of change and modernization in India cannot be adequately accounted for by a term like Westernization. Moreover, for many new elite in India as also in the new states of Asia, the term Westernization has a pejorative connation because of its association with former colonial domination of these

countries by the West. It is, therefore, more value-loaded than the tern moder-nization, which to us appears as a better substitute.

Little and Great Traditions:

The approach to analyze social change with the help of the concepts of little and Great traditions was used by Robert Redfield in his studies of the Mexican communities. Influenced by this model, Milton Singer and McKim Marriott have conducted some studies on social changes in India utilizing this conceptual framework.

The basic ideas in this approach are 'civilization' and 'social organization of tradition'. It is based on the evolutionary view that civilization or the structure of tradition (which consists of both cultural and social structures) grows in two stages: first, through orthogenetic or indigenous evolution, and second, through heterogenetic encounters or contacts with other cultures or civilizations.

The social structure of these civilizations operates at two levels, first that of the folks or unlettered peasants, and second, that of the elite or the 'reflective few'. The cultural processes in the former comprise the little tradition and those in the latter constitute the Great tradition. There is, however, a constant interaction between the two levels of traditions.

Unity of a civilization is maintained by its cultural structure which per-petuates a unity of world-view through cultural performances and their products. These cultural performances are institutionalized around the social structure of both Little and Great traditions. "Those persisting and important arrangements of roles and statuses appearing in such corporate groups as castes, sects, or in teachers, recites, ritual leaders of one kind or another, which are concerned with the cultivation and inculcation of the Great tradition" form the social structure of this tradition.

The social structure of the little tradition consists of its own role-incumbents such as the folk artists, medicine men, tellers of riddles, proverbs and stories, poets and dancers, etc. Changes in the cultural system follow through the interaction between the two traditions in the orthogenetic or hetero-genetic process of individual growth. The pattern of change, however, is generally from orthogenetic to heterogenetic forms of differentiation or change in the cultural structure of traditions.

In this approach it is assumed that all civilizations start from a primary or orthogenetic level of cultural organization and, in course of time, are diversified not only through internal growth, but more important, through contact with other civilizations—a heterogenetic process.

The direction of this change presumably is from folk or peasant to urban cultural structure and social organization. In the final stages, however, this results into a global, universalized pattern of culture, especially through increased cross- contacts among civilizations.

With these assumptions, Milton Singer formulates a series of statements about cultural changes in India:

(1) That because India had a 'primary' or 'indigenous' civilization which had been fashioned out of pre-existing folk and regional cultures. Its – 'Great tradition' was continuous with the 'Little tradition' to be modernization of Indian tradition found in its diverse regions, villages, castes and tribes.

(2) That this cultural continuity was a product and cause of a common cultural cons-ciousness shared by most Indians and expressed in essential similarities of mental outlook and ethos.

(3) That this common cultural conscious-ness has been formed in India with the help of certain processes and factors…. i.e. sacred books and sacred objects……. a special class of (Brahmins) and other agents of cultural transmission…….

(4) That in a primary civilization like India's, cultural continuity with the past is so great that even the acceptance of 'modernizing' and 'progress' ideolo-gies does not result in linear form of social and cultural change but may result in the 'traditionalizing' of apparently 'modern' innova-tions.

Subsequent studies have revealed that little and Great traditions not only interact but are also interdependent in India, and modernizing forces arc not only accepted but also absorbed by the traditional way of life. Milton Singer concludes:

The weight of present evidence seems to me to show that, while moderni-zing influences are undoubtedly changing many aspects of Indian society and culture, they have not destroyed its basic structure and pattern. They have given Indians new alternatives and some new choices of Use style but the structure is so flexible and rich that many Indians have accept-ed many modern innovations without loss of their Indianans. They have, in other words, been able to combine choices which affirm some aspects of their cultural tradition with innovative choices.

Another noteworthy study based on this approach has been conducted by McKim Marriott in a village named Kishan Garhi in northern India. Marriott believes that "concept of a primary civilization type of process is one of the most inviting of available models for conceptualizing Kishan Garhi's relations with its universe."

He too finds that in the structure of the village culture and its social organization, which consist both of the little and Great traditional elements, there is a constant interaction of cultu-ral forms. Elements of the little tradition, indigenous customs, deities and rites circulate upward to the level of the Great tradition and are 'identi-fied' with its legitimate forms.

This process Marriott calls ‘universalization’. Likewise, some elements of the Great tradition also circulate downward to become organic part of the little tradition, and lose much of their original form in the process. He used the term ‘parochialization’ to denote this kind of transaction between the two traditions. Parochi-alization is defined as the “process of limitation upon the scope of intelligi-bility, of deprivation of literary form, of reduction to less systematic and less reflective dimensions” of the elements of the Great tradition.

Sanskritization, Marriott finds, does not proceed in the village as an independent process; it is superposed on non-Sanskritic cultural form through accretion rather than simple replacement.

Multiple Traditions:

The dominant feeling of some social scientists is that Indian society or culture could not be described fully either through the dichotomy of the Sanskritic and Western traditions or that of the little and Great traditions. Indian tradition is far too complex, and consists of a hierarchy of traditions each of which needs to be analyzed in order to unravel all the ramifications of change.

It may also be added that the Great tradition-Little tradition frame of reference does not allow proper scope for the consideration of the role and signi-ficance of regional, Western and emergent national traditions, each of which is powerful in its own way.

As an alternative, Dube offers a six-fold classification of traditions in India each of which is to be studied in rural as well as urban contexts to evaluate change. These are: the classical tradition, the emergent national tradition, the regional tradition, the local tradition, the Western tradition and the local subcultural traditions of social groups. These various levels of traditions no doubt offer a wide scope for the study of change but the

principle on which they have been classified is again ad hoc and nominalistic.

In substantive realm the emphasis here too is more on culture than on social structure. Needless to point out that a few other attempts toward multiple classification of traditions or cultural patterns in India, which have been made recently, also suffer from similar limitations.

Theories of Structural Changes:

A structural analysis of change differs from the cultural one which is in terms of particularities of customs, values and ideational phenomena, their integ-ration, interaction and change. Structural analysis is focused on the net-work of social relationships, which though culturally distinct share common and comparable attributes at a higher level of abstraction called social structure.

Thus, caste, kinship, class, occupational groups, factory and administrative structures which comprise distinctive fields of social interaction constitute structural realities. They emerge from human needs and existential conditions of man, and are comparable intra-culturally as well as cross-culturally. At the substratum of these structural realities are numberless particularities of values, customs and cultures.

The stability of social structure is contingent on culture. Yet, as abstrac-tion, structure forms a higher level than culture. A structural analysis of change consists of demonstrating the qualitative nature of new adap-tations in the patterned relationships, as when a joint family breaks and becomes nuclear, a caste group is transformed into a class group or when traditional charismatic leadership is replaced by leaders of popular choice, etc. From a functional view-point such "explanation consists essentially of pointing out how the different types of activity fit on top of one another, and are consistent with one another, and how conflicts are contained and prevented from changing the structure."

In India, for historical reasons, the cultural approaches to the analysis of change have been quite frequent but rarely structural. Still, structu-ral studies have not been altogether neglected. Quite a few such studies exist on the sociology of village communities, family structure, urban areas, leadership and political structure, etc. No attempt has, however, been made to compare the findings in these various fields for inter-structural compatibility tests, and for some broad generalizations about social change. In its absence discussion regarding change remains confined to raw parti-cularities of social data without abstract generalizations.

In most structural studies in India, the ideal-typical formulations and statements are not clearly indicated, although an implicit recognition of these is present. The differentiation of roles and shifting nuclei of autho-rity in family, the changing positions of caste and tribe in the power structure, emergence of new factions and dominant castes in villages, the spread of bureaucratic administration, the emergence of youth organi-zations, new labour movements, urban growth and industrial-demo-graphic changes and changes in leadership, etc., are some structural studies which offer valuable clues to social change in India.

In these studies, however, methodological orientation does not remain uniform which merits brief discussion. We shall discuss below a few salient orientations in the structural approaches for the analysis of social change in India.

Dialectical Approach:

From its early Marxist form, the dialectical approach in sociology has under-gone further refinements in concepts and propositions; its speculative- philosophical elements have been replaced by genuine sociological formu-lations of categories.

In India, Marxist theory did influence some scholars but as a whole failed to develop a scientific tradition of thinking and research. Among the early studies based on this model we may mention studies of caste

based on economic interpretation, interpretation of Indian history from a class view-point in the "chronological order of successive developments in the means and relations of production," and evolutionary formulation of the stages of social development in India, guided by economic institutions.

Marxist sensibility, however, remains diffused in the thought patterns of modern Indian intellectuals. It dominates the minds of the leaders in the Communist Party, and a large membership of the Congress and other liberal parties is also influenced by its ideology.

Generally, attachment to Marxism is less specific, and it often projects a spirit of militant anti-colonialism rather than function as an integrated world-view or system of thought. Intellectuals like M. N. Roy, Jawaharlal Nehru and Jayaprakash Narayan, who started as proponents of this philosophy, later controverter it. In sociology the influence of this approach was never strong in India probably because of the dominant influence that British sociology and social anthro-pology with its functional orientation exercised on its methodology and scope. Despite this a few sociologists were influenced by the methodology of the dialectical or Marxist sociology.

This process according to him started with the impact of Islam on India and continues up to this date; the British rule created a new historical con-tingency in India by creating a middle class with its roots neither in tradition nor modernity. Thus, Indian society ceased to be closed without being open.

The dialectical approach has been applied to the study of the emergence of nationalism in India by A.R. Desai. He contends that nationalism in India is a product of the material conditions created by the British colonia-lism, and it did not exist in pre-British India. The British rule simultaneous-ly led to economic disintegration as well as economic reforms which released new social consciousness and class structure from which nationalism followed.

Cognitive Historical Approach:

Analysis of social change from a cognitive historical view-point has been postulated by Louis Dumont. He conceives of Indian society not in terms of systems of relationship but as systems of ideational or value patterns or cognitive structures. Sociology itself is considered a vocation, attempting to place each simple fact of social life in the complex texture of society s collective representations. Dumont says:

The difficulty is that the thing is true at the same time at a multitude of levels Each field of thought, each point of view itself rests upon a simplification, but thought is discursive and it cannot only explore one field but make one point of view succeed another and, by combining this way different simplifications, reconstruct the complexity of the datum … If common thought simplifies itself in this way at each instant, the vocation of the sociologist is, in this sense, inverse.

His understanding consist in replacing the simple in the complex, the small in the great, in lighting up a restricted area by bringing back to it its environment which common thought (and often, following it, thought in general) suppresses. The sociologist has to construct a view in which the represen-tation is preserved as it presents itself and at the same time is seen in its relation to its non-conscious counterpart.

The focus in social change study, according to Dumont, should be on "the reaction of Indian minds to the revelation of Western culture," and on how under die impact of the cognitive elements of Western culture such as individualism, freedom, democracy, etc., the cognitive system of Indian tradition is reacting with rejection or acceptance.

The contrast in the Indian and Western cognitive systems lies in the holistic character of the former and the individualistic attribute of the latter; this contrast also poses the nature of tension between traditions versus modernity in India.

In the traditional social structure of India the principle of holism was maintained by the hierarchical organization of castes based on die conception of a moral order or dharma which reinforced the principle of hierarchy. From this followed the ideas of social inequality, pollution-purity and priest-king alliance to enforce social order through charismatic authority.

Dumont thinks that die complementary relationship between die priest and die king as formulated in die old Brahmana texts was necessary for the development of 'a language of pure hierarchy' in Indian social system.

Should this mean that Indian tradition is impervious to modernization? Dumont answers this in the negative, for two reasons: first, because die ideas of holism and hierarchy were predominant even in die pre-modem Western tradition, and second, because die traditional Indian social system did recognize die legitimacy of social and cultural innovations through die institutionalized role of the Renouncer or Sanyasi, who was liberated from die norm of social hierarchy or caste through spiritual transcendence and also authorized to re-interpret die meaning of tradition and thereby change it.

From the above it is evident that Dumont's primary focus is on changes in the basic themes of Indian cultural structure and not on the dynamics of social groups or structures as such. In his view sociological study should be concerned with deeper aspects of change in die 'ideo-structures' of a society rather than with expedient issues which are finally trivial.

He writes that "study of change answers a strong public demand, and for a part corresponds more to die subjective needs of die student as a member of a modern society, than to properly sociological issues." Moreover, the 'ideo-structural' approach has die added advantage of being fruitful for both synchronic and diachronic types of studies.

The cognitive historical approach has also the advantage of formulating a series of abstractions on cultural themes for comparative study, generally on the model of ideal-types.

This flexibility of abstractions on concepts renders it possible through this approach to study the various historical stages through which cultural changes have followed in India like sanskritization and Westernization, for instance, this model does not foreclose the possibility of studying the impact of Islamic culture on Indian culture and society. Despite this, the approach is mainly culturological and, there-fore, limited in scope.

Moreover, Dumont's assumption of a kingly model based on the alliance between the Kshatriya and the Brahmin to explicate the nature of traditional social order in India may not be acceptable to all and may not be applicable to every part of the Indian society.

Toward An Integrated Approach:

As we evaluate the above approaches we find that each one of them has advantages of its own for the study of social change, but these advantages arc limited as none of them provides a comprehensive enough perspective on social change in India. Sanskritization is an empirical reality, but it often takes a form which is more nativistic or de-Sanskritizing in orientation than being guided by the norms of the higher Sanskritic tradition.

It may also manifest suppressed inter-class hostility. Harold Gould observes: "….one of the prime motives behind Sanskritization is this factor of repressed hostility which manifests itself not in the form of rejecting the caste system but in the form of its victims trying to seize control of it and thereby expiate their frustrations on the same battlefield where they acquired them. Only then can there be a sense of satisfaction in something achieved that is tangible, concrete, and relevant to past experience."

This subsumption of many meanings by Sanskritization and Westernization is admitted by Srinivas: "Sanskritization … subsumes several mutually antagonistic values, perhaps even as westernization does." Limitations in other approaches have also been pointed out.

Little tradition-Great tradition approach is sounder in respect of the causal explanation of change but remains culturological in scope. It also does not take account of the more specific substructures of traditions. The multiple traditions theory goes deeper into the classification of traditions but lacks in theoretical or explanatory categories to account for change.

The dialectical and other structural theories stand on established foundation of logical categories but suffer from the paucity of empirical studies or docu-mentations on change. Each one of them has, however, something to offer toward an integrated approach to social change.

A series of concepts related to social change could be integrated in to a logical system on the basis of similarities in theoretical formulations. It is our endeavor to find out the underlying theoretical similarities in the conceptual formulations of various approaches to social change and then string them together on a systematic logical principle to achieve a fair degree of conceptual integration.

The first such theoretical unity exists in regard to the direction of change as implied in various approaches. Most of them assume a linear evolutionary direction toward which cultural! Changes are observed to be moving. As Milton Singer says, "culture change like any other kind of change, has a temporal dimension which is useful to distinguish into linear and cyclical varieties. Linear type of culture changes imply a specification of a date or approximate date which allows us to fix a 'before' and after' division.

Modernization of a cultural tradition is a linear type of change in this sense. It implies that tradition has been transformed which it did not have

before a certain date…. Not all changes which the tradition undergoes in the modern period, however, result into modernization … It is useful, in other words, to consider whether the "-result of any particular change in tradition is continuous with the structure prevailing before a certain date, or whether that structure has been replaced by a new one. In the former case we might speak of the change as a traditionalizing type, in the latter as a moderni-zing type…. If the change results in a structure which is neither quite like the traditional one nor a predominantly new one, we might speak of a com-promise formation."

Most formulations of social and cultural changes in India, however, are evolutionary linear in direction. Srinivas formulates stages of change from Sanskritization to Westernization in which the initial stage of pre-Sanskritization is logically implied. Broadly speaking, these stages closely resemble the major historical-cultural periods and their transitions in India.

Comparisons can, however, be made in terms of structural criteria, such as power or domination, occupational status and economic status, etc. It is, therefore, necessary that explanation of change is attempted both from structural as well as cultural view-points.

The form in which conceptual integration in the approaches to analyze social change in India can be attempted may be presented in a schematic form as given below:

PARADIGM FOR AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

MODERNIZATION

SOURCES OF CHANGES	*Cultural Structure*		*Social Structure*	
	Little-Tradition	*Great-Tradition*	*Micro-Structure*	*Macro-Structure*
HETEROGENETIC CHANGES	Islamization	Secondary-Islamic Impact	Role-Differentiation	Political-Innovations.
	Primary-Westernization	Secondary-Westernization or (modernization)	New-Legitimations	New Structures of Elite, Bureaucracy, Industry, etc.
ORTHOGENETIC CHANGES	Sanskritization or Traditionaliza-tion	Cultural Renaissance	Pattern-Recurrence, Compulsive Migration or Population Shift	Elite Circulation, Succession of Kings, Rise and Fall of Cities and Trade Centres

TRADITIONALIZATION

The above paradigm is a logical corollary of our analysis about the levels at which an integrated view on social change in India can be achieved. The causation of social change is to be sought both from within and without the social system or the tradition. For this we find the concepts employed by Redfield and Singer as being particularly useful and make a distinction between the heterogenetic or exogenous and orthogenetic or endogenous sources of change.

A distinction between cultural structure and social Structure is also made to focus upon the need to observe changes at the level of these two relatively independent substantive domains. Again, following Redfield, cultural structure has further been sub-divided into the categories of the little tradition and Great tradition.

Similarly, the social structure is divided to form categories of micro-structure and macro-structure. These distinctions follow from the need to focus upon the contexts, as discussed above, through which processes of change could be evaluated in matters of spread and depth.

Finally, the direction of change is represented in a linear evolutionary form from 'Traditionalization' toward 'Modernization'. Tradidonalization comprises the total range of changes governed by orthogenetic patterns in the cultural and social structures. Modernization

similarly represents the net balance of changes following from hetero-genetic contacts.

The causal forces, substantive domain, contexts and direction of change provide us the logical boundaries within which the more specific processes of social change in India could be observed and described. These specific processes and the relevant concepts describing them have been noted in the paradigm in each appropriate cell.

The significance of these specific concepts has been examined in course of the analysis of change pertaining to the relevant substantive domain. For instance, in the cultural structure of India, the Islamic impact constitutes an important heterogenetic source of cultural transformation and synthesis, and as we have analyzed below, its significance can be seen at the levels both of the Little and Great traditions.

This has been followed by Westernization as a major form of exogenous cultural impact on India, and its ramifications also have relevance for the Little and Great traditions. Srirnivas himself calk the two levels of Westernization as “primary” and “secondary”, and we have kept these terms to avoid unnecessary neologism.

Changes in the cultural structure of India from the orthogenetic sources also fall under many categories. Sanskritization is one such process of change. Theoretically, Sanskritization may represent changes in cultural structure, of the Little as well as the Great tradition, but most empirical observations about this process are confined to the Little tradition.

For this reason a distinction has been made between Sanskritization and cultural renaissance, the latter being indicative of orthogenetic changes in the Great tradition of the cultural structure. As for Sanskritization, we treat it as a process of change in the little tradition. As we shall discuss below, this concept has many unanticipated forms of implications for social change in India.

Check Your Progress 1

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

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

1. How do you know the Ideas of change?

   ……
   ……
   ……
   ……
   ……

2. Discuss the Social reforms and emerging social classes.

   ……
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3. How do you know the Indian society and historic importance?

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   ……

9.5 LET US SUM UP

The changes in social structure could also be discussed more fruitfully when a distinction is made between the macro- and micro-structures. The instances of macro-structures are: bureaucracy, industry, market, leadership, political parties, etc. These consist of role relationships which have a pan- Indian extension of boundaries.

In contrast, the micro-structures, such as kinship, family, caste and sub-caste and tribe, etc. have limited boundaries for extension of role

relationships and their obligations. Some of these structures like kinship and marriage are governed by inherent "principle of limit" which renders the nature of relationships implied by these insti-tutions, such as the number of kinship terms and the territorial limits in the selection of mates, narrowly circumscribed.

The basic changes in the micro- and macro-structures of Indian society have started taking place only after it came into contact with the West. The scientific and technological innovations which today constancy accelerates the momentum of changes in social structures towards an evolutionary direction have been inherited by India from the West.

Consequently, most structural changes during the pre-contact phase of Indian history, whether in the micro- or macro-structures used to be of an oscillatory rather than evolutionary pattern. In the micro-structures like caste, family, etc. pattern recurrence was the usual form of transformation.

Migration was an important source of change; but there being no scarcity of land, such migration used to be from one rural habitat to another and did not lead to urbanization. Hence, migration too had the character of pattern- recurrence.

The same was, broadly speaking, true of the macro-structures, also where the story of change mainly had its focus on the rise and fall of monarchies and expansion and constrictions of pre-industrial cities, which used to come into being as well as die out with the rising and falling fortunes of kingdoms.

Thus, the orthogenetic sources of change in the social structure of Indian society did not have the potential for real structural changes which have been set into action through the heterogenetic form of the contemporary processes.

For a comprehensive treatment of structural change, however, the nature of changes activated by both of these factors have to be taken into consideration. The integrated approach as offered by us through a sche-matic arrangement of the concepts of change has the advantage of being comprehensive as well as theoretically consistent.

9.6 KEY WORDS

Class: a set or category of things having some property or attribute in common and differentiated from others by kind, type, or quality.

Transformation: a marked change in form, nature, or appearance.

9.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

4. How do you know the Ideas of change?
5. Discuss the Social reforms and emerging social classes.
6. How do you know the Indian society and historic importance?

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9.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 9.2
2. See Section 9.3
3. See Section 9.4

UNIT 10: ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION: CHANGES AND CONTINUITY

STRUCTURE

10.0 Objectives

10.1 Introduction

10.2 Mercantile policies and Indian trade

10.3 The new land revenue settlements

10.4 The commercialization of agriculture

10.5 Let us sum up

10.6 Key Words

10.7 Questions for Review

10.8 Suggested readings and references

10.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

10.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit you will study:

- To know the Mercantile policies and Indian trade
- To discuss the new land revenue settlements
- To know about the commercialization of agriculture

10.1 INTRODUCTION

In England in 1750, in relation to the 40 to 45 per cent of national income originated in the agricultural sector; through 1851 agriculture‘s share diminished to 20 per cent and through 1881 it came down to in relation to the 10 percent. The contribution of foreign trade to England‘s national income was 14 per cent in 1790; it increased to 36 per cent through 1880. This helps us measure the rapid pace of industrialization in England; that country was transformed in the last half of the 18th and early 19th century. As a result industrial manufacture foreign trade in manufactures became the mainstay of the English economy. In

scrupulous the growth of English cotton textile industry obviously meant an end to the demand for Indian cloth in England. On the contrary, England was now seeking markets for her cotton textiles i.e., in the middle of other countries, India. Moreover, to create industrial goods, England needed now more raw material than before; for instance, England now, after her industrialization, would import raw cotton from, in the middle of other countries, India. Thus the whole foundation of economic connection flanked by England and India was dissimilar after the industrialization of England compared to what it had been in the era of merchant capitalism. in short, the Indian empire acquired through the merchant company had to fulfill a dissimilar role after the transformation of England into the first industrial capitalist country. The merchant company and their empire slowly veered towards a new role in the new scheme of things. In the era you are studying in this course, i.e. till 1857, only the beginnings of a new imperialism can be seen. It is seen in the decline of the export of Indian manufactured goods to England. The value of cotton cloth exported from India to England declined from pound 1.3 million to only pound 1 million in the years 1815 to 1832. In the same era the import of cotton cloth from England increased approximately 15 times. In the previous century the mainstay of the Company‘s mercantile policy was to purchase cotton cloth in India for export. That procurement or purchase was naturally abandoned in the early decades of the 19th century. In the last days of the Company‘s trading career, in the 1820‘s, no cotton manufactures were exported through it to England; the only goods it exported were raw silk, salt petre or raw material for gunpowder, indigo an agricultural product, and (the only manufactured commodity) a small amount of silk cloth. As regards imports from England, the East India Company stopped it altogether from 1824, except for military stores etc. used through the Company itself. The trade flanked by India and Europe passed from the hands of the Company to private traders; as you know, the Charter Act of 1813 fully opened Indian trade to the private traders. Another great change in the Company‘s policies and finances took lay in the first decades of the 19th century. This was the augment in noncommercial earnings, of the Company, i.e. what was described the Territorial Revenue which came

from the land revenue and other taxes composed from territories conquered through the Company. At the same time the commercial earning declined because, as you already know, the Company‘s trade diminished in these years to the vanishing point. Thus from I820‘s the Company depended approximately entirely on Territorial Revenue whereas up to the 1765 the only income had been from commercial profits. From 1765, the assumption through the Company of the Dewani of Bengal, territorial revenue began to augment and eventually outstrip commercial earnings. Thus the finances of the Company reflected its transformation from a merchant corporation to a territorial power. Finally, one may note that it was the Company‘s deliberate policy to divert the revenue it composed to commercial purposes. This was a result of the Company being simultaneously part of the government in Bengal from 1765 and a merchant company. A substantial portion of the revenue of Bengal was used in the purchase of goods for export to England, the so-described _investment‘. As a Committee of the English Home of Commons put it in 1783, such _investment‘ was not actually employment of trading capital brought into Bengal, but merely a means of ―payment of a tribute‖. This was a major instance of what the Indian economic nationalists later described _economic drain‘. The territorial revenues also enabled the Company to raise money on credit (the so-described Territorial Debt) and to pay for military action for further territorial expansion.

- How the East India Companies were structured as Joint stock enterprises of many investors?
- The nature of the trade of the English Company.
- The reasons why merchant capitalist enterprises turned towards acquisition of territories and political power.
- The meaning of the term 'revenue settlement'.
- The aims of the British in their various 'settlements'.
- The meaning of the term 'commercialization'.
- The connection between de-industrialization and the policies of the East India Company.

- The changes in the position of the Indian traders and bankers as the English East India Company and English private traders became dominant in India from the 1750's.

10.2 MERCANTILE POLICIES AND INDIAN TRADE

Structure of the East India Company

You necessity have observed that today business enterprise is dominated through companies which sell stocks and shares in order to raise the capital they need in business. These are joint stock companies as separate from business owned through a single proprietor or some proprietors in partnership. The East India Companies of Europe were some of the earliest joint stock companies in the world. What was so special in relation to these companies and how did the joint stock form of organisation provide them any advantage? To begin with, the joint stock structure, that is to say the collection of capital from a number of stock or shareholders enabled these companies to put together a much superior quantity of capital then was possible for a single proprietor or a few in partnerships. Moreover, a joint stock company ensured stability of business behaviors and policies in excess of a extensive era, sometimes for centuries; unlike the shorter life span of business run through a single proprietor. Consider also the information that in joint stock company there is scope for mobility of capital; in other words, the money invested in the shareholdings of one company could be taken out through the share owner (through selling his share to another) and put to other uses, including investment in another company. Thus capital was not tied up in one enterprise, but moved with greater ease to more profitable enterprises, thus ensuring the mainly efficient use of capital. For all these reasons the joint stock company form of organising the business of East Indian trade was superior to and more efficient than any earlier form. Particularly for the trade with India the European countries needed this new form of organisation because of the big amount of investment required, the uncertainty of business (ship-wreck, wars etc.), and the

extensive waiting era flanked by investment and realization of profit (due to the extensive voyage through sailing Ships approximately the continent of Africa to India). In the early days the English merchants used to pool their money to buy or hire and equip ships to go on a voyage to India for these reasons. The logical culmination of this development was the base of the East India Company (1600) as a joint stock enterprise. In the beginning only a few very wealthy merchants of London were shareholders of the East India Company. But in course of the 18th century relatively smaller shareholders began to participate in and became owners of the new United Company of the Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies (founded in 1708). This new company sustained to be described the East India Company as of old.

East India Company's Monopoly

Another structural characteristic of the English East India Company was that it was granted a monopoly through the government of England. What was meant through this monopoly and why did the government grant it? _Monopoly' in a common sense means the exclusive manage of trade with India and other countries on the Indian Ocean and further east up to China. In consequence only the East India Company (to the exclusion of any other person or business firm) was legally entitled to trade with the above-said countries This was a legal right conferred upon the East India Company through Queen Elizabeth 1 in the first instance and later through other monarchs. Why did the monarchs or governments do so in the 17th and 18th centuries? They gave this monopoly right to the East India Company partly because it was commonly whispered, under the power of the Mercantilist school of thought, that the state necessity promote trade abroad to bring home wealth from foreign trade. The risky trade with distant countries was supposed to be particularly in need of monopoly system so as to ensure to the investors profits of monopoly and thus to encourage such investment. Moreover, the relatively wealthy English merchants in the Indian trade were influential in the monarch's courts and the government. At any rate, the upshot was that the Government in England conferred a monopoly of trade on the

East India Company. This was done through granting to the Company a _charter, i.e. a deed or a written gram of monopoly rights renewed from time to time through the government. The instrument through which such a right was conferred on the company became recognized in late 18th and early 19th centuries as the _charter act', passed through the English Parliament. (The French and Dutch East Indian Companies also enjoyed monopoly rights granted through their government.) Now, it is one thing to declare such a government grant of monopoly, and it is quite another thing to create the monopoly (i.e. the exclusion of others) effective in information. What did the legal monopoly mean in actual practice?

Monopoly versus Free Trade

From the middle of the 18th century till 1813 the East India Company, particularly us top management, described the Court of Directors, had so struggle very hard to create the Company‘s monopoly rights effective, i.e., exclude others from entering the trade. This was no easy task. For one thing, the English East India Company's own employees were naturally not above the temptation to set up a private business beside with their official business, i.e. the Company‘s business. For another, there were always merchant and adventures creation their way to India and managing to set up business firms of their own; these were described _free merchants ‘or interlopers' (i.e. intruders occupied in unauthorized business). Both types of behaviors came in the way of the Company's monopoly. As regard the first of these the private business of the servants or employees of the East India Company, the problem was that the self-interest of the bulk of the Company's employees including the top men in India would not allow the strict implementation of the instructions of the Company Directors to stop private trade. The level of salary till the beginning of the 19th century was low, and the practice of supplementing the salary with profits of private trade was, widespread. What is more, the Company servants were in the habit of passing off their own private trade commodities as part of the Company‘s export commodities in order to claim exemption from internal duties in Bengal. This, recognized as the "abuse of the dastak" (i.e. permit to trade duty free), became the

subject of contention and a cause of disagreement, flanked by the Bengal Nawab and the English. In information the private trade interests of the Company‘s servants and the Company‘s official trade became practically inseparable in the last half of the 18th century. As for the Free Merchants’ their chief aim was to expand their business at the cost of the Company‘s business. Yet they were tolerated because the Company‘s servants establish them increasingly useful to enable the Company‘s servants to invest their savings and ill-gotten plunder. Sending money to England was also facilitated through the Free Merchants. As the Directors of the East India Company and conscientious Governors like Lord Cornwallis began to insist on the withdrawal of the servants of the Company from private trade, the Free Merchants obtained more capital from the Company servants. They acted so to speak as mediators of the Company Servants. Hence there urbanized a number of Agency Houses which later, in the last half of the 19th century, became recognized as Managing Agencies. In the meanwhile the monopoly privilege of the EIC came under attack in England. The doctrine of Free Trade, promoted through economists like Adam Smith (Wealth of Nations, 1776), was inimical to monopolies. The capitalists excluded from Indian trade through the EIC naturally lent support to the campaign for Free Trade. Capital accumulating in England wanted freedom from restrictions on investment. Moreover, the on-going Industrial Revolution brought to the fore in the last half of the 18th century industrial capitalist interest; the purely merchandising behaviors of the EIC, importing goods from India to England, diminished in importance in comparison with industrial manufacturing in England. There were strong lobbies in Parliament pressing for the abolition of the Company‘s monopoly. In these circumstances the Charter Act of 1813 was passed abolishing the monopoly in Indian trade; another Charter Act in 1833 abolished the remaining part of the Company‘s privileged monopoly, that in the China trade. Thus, after more than two hundred years, the monopoly conferred on the EIC was taken absent through the government.

Nature of the Company’s Trade

In information, the monopoly was entrenched upon, as we have noted. Though, in sure parts of India the Company and English private traders collectively enjoyed virtually a monopolistic location. This was, for instance, true of Bengal from the last decades of the 18th century. When the essence of mercantile capitalist business was buying cheap, and selling dear, reduction of competition would be inevitably the aim of business. If you were aiming to buy cheaply you would discover it advantageous to have as few buyers in the market as possible; obviously that helps to buy cheaply. Likewise it helps to sell your goods dear if you have as few sellers as possible. That is what monopolistic business is in relation to the. Though, real life seldom matches the text book definition of a monopolist on a single buyer in the market. Circumstances approximating that situation may exist under special circumstances, for instance the use of coercion or force, legislation, or even warfare to eliminate competitors. All these means were used through the English East India Company in India. The European East India Company's main business was to procure sure commodities like spices, indigo, cotton cloth etc. and export them to Europe. Procurement of these goods in India initially took lay under fairly competitive circumstances. A 17th century English Factory had usually to compete with local or _country merchants' and foreign traders, including other European East India Companies. In course of the 18th century the Englishmen increasingly acquired a location of advantage:

- Other European East India Companies were marginalized; the military and political victories of the English Company.

- The weakness of the successor states and principalities since the decline of the Mughal Empire allowed the East India Companies to bully and bribe the local powers to grant Europeans special trade privileges. Artisans as well as peasants, e.g., weavers and indigo growers, were sometimes subjected to coercive practice from the last decades of the 18th century in order to procure goods at a cheap price or to persuade them to produce the goods for the Company.

- Through the end of the 18th century the location acquired through the English East India Company and the servants of the Company in private trade may be described as a communal monopoly in respect of the chief commodities of export to Europe.

Mercantile Business and Political Power

We have discussed till now some of the characteristics of mercantile capitalist behaviors, typified through the East India Company, but we have not touched upon one question. What motivated a company of merchants like EIC to launch on territorial expansion and what did it have to do with politics? In the beginning of European trade with India there were only voyages to India through one or more ships from time to time. Though, it was not easy to procure big quantities of goods in India at short notice when a voyage 'visited an Indian port. Therefore, it became necessary to set up Factories in or close to major sea ports of manufacture centres. You necessity note that these were not factories of today where things are actually produced; the word factory' in 17th and 18th century English meant foreign trading stations set up through a merchant Company. The officials posted there were described factors'who essentially salaried mediators were purchasing goods on behalf of the East India Company for export. Now the English as well as the other East India Companies wanted to protect the factories with a fort approximately it. After the decline of the Mughal empire set in, such protective fortification may have been needed in some regions and some local government tacitly or explicitly allowed acquisition of land and structure of forts through East India Companies. Though, the Companies began to exceed the limits of legitimate self-protection and fortified and militarized their trading stations as centres of armed power demanding local governments. Fort William of Calcutta and Fort ST. George of Madras were prominent instances of this type. Thus, the fort provided a nucleus allowing the foreign merchants to spread their manage in excess of the neighbouring territory. The territorial claims of the Company sometimes had a legal foundation (e.g. the grant of zamindari rights, as

in Bengal), but more often than not the real foundation of the territorial claims in the last decades of the 18th century was the military strength of the Company. You already know how the European Companies operated as one of the territorial powers from the middle of the 18th century. The development of the English EIC from the Voyaga. system to factory system, from that to forts and eventually to the location of a territorial power helped in business; it was, not presently a fit of absent mindedness and an aberration from the proper task of merchants that led to the political hegemony of the Company that became the British Indian Empire. It was useful to have military power to back up coercion on the artisans (e. g the Bengal weavers) to produce goods at a cheap price, to bully the local merchants to create them subservient to English factors and private traders, and, of course, to eliminate other foreign merchants (particularly the French and the Dutch) from competing with the English. Moreover, a military and territorial power could extract from the local principalities and the local nobility ―Protection money‖, bribes etc, not to speak of plunder that warfare brought in. Finally, manage in excess of territories brought in revenue. The classic instance of this was the Dewani of Bengal from 1765. The Company‘s share of the land revenue of Bengal enabled it to reduce for several years the remittance of bullion from England. Bullion was needed to buy goods in India for export through the Company and it was, of course, desirable to reduce bullion export from England through raising cash in India to pay for exports from India. Thus the territorial ambitions of the East India Company made a lot of economic sense as distant as English interests were concerned. These are some of the reasons why we see the Company playing such a salient role in Indian political history in the 18th century to emerge as the main territorial power through the beginning of the 19th century.

10.3 THE NEW LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENTS

First Experiments in Land Revenue Management

After gaining manage of Bengal in 1757, the British thought that they would retain the administration recognized through the Nawabs of Bengal, but would use it to collect an ever-rising amount for themselves. Though, the rapacity and corruption of the Company‘s employees, and their continual interference in the administration led to complete disorganization, and was one of the causes of the terrible famine of 1769-70, in which it was estimated that one-third of the people of Bengal died. From 1772 therefore, a new system was introduced: this was the farming system. Under this system the government gave out the collection of land revenue on a contract foundation. The contractor who offered to pay the main amount from a sure district or sub-division was given full powers for a sure number of years. Obviously, such contractors (they were described _farmers‘ in those days), would try and extort as much as possible throughout the era that they held the contract; it would not matter to them if the people were ruined and the manufacture in the later years declined. After all, they would have made their profit. Extortion and oppression were the obvious results of such a system. Furthermore, several of the contractors had offered to pay very big amounts, and later establish that they could not collect so much, even with great oppression. Finally, the system also led to corruption. As with several government contracts even today, profitable contracts on very easy terms were given to the friends and favorites and benamidars‘ of men in power, leading to loss to the government. In 1786 Lord Cornwallis was sent out to India with orders to clean up and reorganize the administration.

The Permanent Resolution in Bengal

Cornwallis realized that the existing system was impoverishing the country—its agriculture was in decline. Furthermore, it was failing to produce the big and regular surplus that the Company hoped for. And it was also becoming hard for the Company to get the big quantities of Indian goods that it planned to export to Europe, because, as Cornwallis observed, the manufacture of silk, cotton, etc. all depended on agriculture. When agriculture was decaying, handicrafts could hardly be wealthy. And both the London authorities and Cornwallis were agreed

that much of the corruption and oppression originated in the information that the taxation had the character of an uncertain, arbitrary imposition'. It was decided therefore, that the land-tax would now be permanently fixed: the government would promise never to augment it in future. Many effects were expected from this measure. It would reduce the scope for corruption that lived when officials could alter the assessment at will. Furthermore, now that the state would not demand anything extra if the manufacture increased it was hoped that landholders would invest money in improving the land as the whole of the benefit would approach to them. Manufacture and trade would augment, and the government would also get its taxes regularly. Finally, Cornwallis whispered that even if the land tax was fixed, government could always levy taxes on trade and commerce in order to raise more money if it was needed. In any case, the land revenue was now fixed at a very high stage - an absolute maximum - of Rs. 2 crore and 65 lakhs.

A Resolution with Zamindars

So we see that the land revenue was fixed permanently. But from whom was it to be composed? The Nawabs of Bengal had composed taxes from the zamindars. These zamindars were usually in managed of big regions: sometimes whole districts. They had their own armed forces, and were termed Rajas. But there were also zamindars who held smaller regions, and either paid directly to the State, or paid through some big zamindar. The actual farming was accepted on through peasants who paid the zamindars at customary rates fixed in every sub-division (or pargana). Oppressive zamindars often added extra charges described abwabs' on top of the regular land revenue rates. Through 1790 British rule had greatly confused this picture. Some Zamindars were retained - others were replaced through contractors or officials. The old customary rates were ignored, and every abuse permitted, if it led to an augment in the revenues. Through the time Cornwallis arrived on the scene, the situation was one of the complete confusion. The new Governor-Common belonged to the landed aristocracy of Britain and was in favour of a resolution that gave the right of ownership to the zamindars, who, he

hoped, would improve the land as English landlords did. But separately from this preference on his part, it was hard for the government to create the resolution with any other class. To understand this you necessity bear in mind that there necessity have been in relation to the four or five million cultivating families in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa at that time. Collecting from them would have involved the preparation of detailed records of all their holdings, and the calculation of a tax on this foundation. This would take many years and a big staff to execute. In addition it would provide great opportunities for corruption. It was obviously much simpler to collect the revenue from a small number of big zamindars - and this was the arrangement made under the Permanent Resolution that was introduced in Bengal and Bihar in 1793. Every bit of agricultural land in these provinces therefore became part of some zamindari. The zamindar had to pay the tax fixed upon it: if he did so then he was the proprietor, the owner of his zamindari. He could sell, mortgage or transfer it. The land would be inherited through heirs in due course. If though, the zamindar failed to pay the tax due, then the Government would take, the zamindari and sell it through auction, and all the rights would vest in the new owner.

The Location of the Cultivators

The actual farming of the land was of course, accepted on through the lakhs of peasants who were now reduced to the status of tenants of the zamindars; Cornwallis had also decreed that the zamindars should issue written agreements (described pattas) to each cultivator, and these should specify what the tenant was to pay. He apparently whispered that this would prevent oppression through the zamindars. In practice, though, no such pattas were issued, and the peasants were wholly at the mercy of the zamindars. This was not accidental. As we have noted earlier, the permanent assessment was the main sum that could be got from the land. It was a heavy and oppressive assessment. Just as to the estimate of a knowledgeable official, John Shore, if a piece of land produced crops worth Rs. 100, then Rs. 45 went to the government, Rs. 15 to the zamindar and only Rs. 40 was left to the cultivator. Such oppressive

taxes could only be composed through oppressive methods. If the zamindars were not allowed to oppress the peasants then they would not be able to meet the demands of the State. Through regulations made in 1793, 1799 and 1812, the zamindar could seize, that is, carry absent the tenants‘property if the rent had not been paid. He did not need the permission of any court of law to do this. This was a legal method of harassment. In addition to this the zamindars often resorted to illegal methods, such as locking up or beating tenants who did not pay whatever was demanded. The immediate effect of the Resolution was therefore, to greatly worsen the location of the actual cultivators of the soil, in order to benefit the zamindars and the British Government.

Effects of the Permanent Resolution

It may appear that the resolution was greatly in favour of the zamindars but we should not forget that they were also now obliged to pay a fixed amount through fixed dates every year, and any failure on their part meant the sale of the zamindari. Furthermore, several of the zamindaris were rated for big sums that left no margin for shortfalls due to flood, drought or other calamity. As a result, several zamindars had their zamindaris taken absent and sold in the decades immediately after the permanent Resolution. In Bengal alone it is estimated that 68 per cent, of the zamindari land was sold flanked by 1794 and 1819. Merchants, government officials, and other zamindars bought these lands. The new buyers would then set in relation to the trying to augment the rents paid through the tenants in order to create a profit from their purchases. Raja Rammohan Roy remarked that: under the permanent resolution since 1793, the landholders have adopted every measure to raise the rents, through means of the power put into their hands. Though, several zamindars still establish it hard to pay the amount demanded through the British. One such zamindar, the Raja of Burdwan then divided mainly of his estate into lots‘or fractions described patni taluqs. Each such unit was permanently rented to a holder described a patnidar, who promised to pay a fixed rent. If he did not pay, his wife could be taken absent and sold. Other zamindars also resorted to this: thus a procedure of

subinfeudation commenced. Slowly the population of Bengal increased; waste and jungle land came under farming. Rents also increased. On the other hand, the tax payable to government was fixed, so the location of the zamindars improved, and they were able to lead lives of indolence and luxury at the expense of their tenants. Only in 1859 did the State take some step to protect the rights of tenant: a law passed that year bestowed a limited protection on old tenants, who were now termed occupancy tenants.

Disillusionment with Permanent Resolution

When Cornwallis introduced the Permanent Resolution in Bengal he expected that the same system would be recognized in the other British territories as well. And the Government of Madras in information began to introduce it in the lands under its manage. Though, British officials soon began to doubt the virtues of this system, while its defects became more prominent. A very significant defect, as distant as they were concerned, was that it left no scope for increases in taxation, while the expenditure of the Company, fuelled through repeated wars, sustained to expand. Lord Wellesley, Governor-Common from 1798 to 1806 actually diverted funds sent from England for the purchase of trade goods and used them for his military expenditures. So officials began to think of ways and means of raising the government‘s income. Some of the officials thought that in 1793 the zamindars had got off too easily, and this mistake should not be repeated in future. As early as 1811 the London authorities warned against the introduction of permanent settlements without a minute and detailed survey’ of the land.

The Emergence of Alternative Systems

Meanwhile other ways of assessing and collecting the land-tax were being devised through British officials. Two officers, Munro and Read were sent to administer a newly conquered region of Madras in 1792. Instead of collecting from the zamindars, they began to collect directly from the villages, fixing the amount that each village had to pay. After

this they proceeded to assess each cultivator or ryot separately - and thus evolved what came to be recognized as the Ryotwari‘ system. This early ryotwari was a field assessment system. This means that the tax payable on each field was fixed through a government officer, and then the cultivator had the choice of cultivating that field and paying that amount, or not cultivating it. If no other cultivator could be establish; then the field would not be cultivated: it would lie fallow.

Land Assessment Linder Ryotwari

You can see that the officer fixing the tax, or settling the revenue, has a hard task. He has to fix the tax on thousands of meadows in a sub-division or district, and to fix it in such a way that the burden on each such field is almost equal. If the burden is not equally distributed, then the cultivators will not inhabit the heavily assessed meadows, and cultivate only those with a light assessment. Now, in fixing the assessment of a field, the revenue officer had to consider two things: one was the excellence of the soil - whether it was rocky or rich, irrigated or arid etc.; the other was region of the field. It followed, therefore, that this system depended on a survey, that is, a classification of it. Thus one acre of first class rice land should pay the same amount regardless of whether it was located in this village or that one. But how was this amount to be fixed? Munro usually fixed it through estimating what the usual product of the land was—for instance—2600 lbs. of paddy per acre. He would then claim that the State share of this amounted to one third of this, or two-fifths of this, and thus calculate the amount that the cultivator had to pay the State. This, of course is the theory of ryotwari-in practice, the estimates were mainly guesswork, and the amounts demanded so high that they could be composed with great difficulty, and sometimes could not be composed at all.

The Adoption of Ryotwari in Madras

After some experiments with other ways of managing the land revenue, the Madras authorities were through 1820 converted to the ryotwari

system, and its triumph was indicated through the appointment of Munro as Governor of Madras. Munro advanced several arguments in favour of this system. He argued that it was the original - Indian land tenure, and the one best suited to Indian circumstances. Its adoption was due, though, to one main cause - it resulted in a superior revenue than any other system could have produced. This was because there were no zamindars or other intermediaries who received any part of the agricultural surplus-whatever could be squeezed from the cultivator went directly to the State. The Madras government was chronically short of funds, and such a system would naturally appeal to it. So, taking advantage of the rejection of the Permanent Resolution, it introduced the temporary ryotwari resolution.

Ryotwari Theory and Practice

We have outlined the ryotwari system as it was urbanized through Munro in the districts under his charge. After 1820 though, ryotwari was extended to mainly of the Madras Presidency in shapes quite dissimilar from those visualized through Munro. His ryotwari, you will keep in mind, was a field assessment, leaving the cultivator free to cultivate or provide up any scrupulous field. And, as we saw, the working of such a system depended upon the government carrying out a detailed measurement and assessment of each field. But after 1820 the system was extended to several districts where no surveys had ever been accepted out. No one knew how much land a peasant cultivated, or what its product might be. His tax came to be fixed on an arbitrary foundation, usually through looking at what he had paid in earlier years. This was recognized as a putcut‘assessment. Again, in theory the ryotwari allowed the ryot to provide up any field that he chose. But it soon became clear that if this was freely permitted the tax revenue of the State would fall. So government officers began to compel the cultivators to hold on to (and of course, pay for) land that they did not really want to cultivate. Since farming was not voluntary, it was always hard to collect the revenue, and so the use of beating and torture to enforce payment was also widespread. These methods were exposed through the Madras

Torture Commission in 1854. After this sure reforms were introduced. A scientific survey of the land was undertaken, the real burden of tax declined, and there was no need to use violent and coercive methods to collect the revenue. Though, these improvements occurred after 1860-beyond the era that we are studying at present.

Effects of the Ryotwari System in Madras

There is hardly any doubt that the effects of this system upon the rural economy were distinctly harmful. The peasants were impoverished and lacked the possessions to cultivate new lands. The Government of Madras itself noted in 1855 that only 141/2 million acres of ryotwari land were cultivated, while 18 million acres were waste. It confessed: There is no room for doubt that an augment of farming would follow reductions of the Government tax.' Separately from this depressing effect upon the rural economy, the heavy burden of taxation distorted the land market. Land in mainly districts of Madras had no value in the first half of the 19th century. No one would buy it, because buying it meant that the new owner would have to pay the extortionate land revenue. After paying it, he would have no income from the land, and obviously, in such circumstances, no one would purchase land.

The Ryotwari Resolution in Bombay

Ryotwari in the Bombay Presidency had its beginnings in Gujarat. The British began through collecting the land revenue through the hereditary officials described desais and the village headmen (Patel). Though, this did not produce as much revenue as the British wanted, so they began collecting directly from the peasants in 1813-14. When they conquered the Peshwa's territory in 1818 the ryotwari system on the Madras pattern was also introduced there, under the supervision of Munro's disciple Elphinstone. The abuses that characterised the Madras ryotwari soon appeared in the Bombay Presidency also, especially as the Collectors began trying to augment the revenue as rapidly as they could. A regular measurement and classification of the land was commenced under the

supervision of an officer named Pringle. This survey was supposed to be founded upon the theory of rent urbanized through the English economist Ricardo. This theory was hardly applicable to Indian circumstances, and, in any case, Pringle's calculations were full of errors, and the resulting assessment was distant too high. When the government tried to collect the amounts fixed through Pringle in Pune district, several of the cultivators gave up their lands and fled into the territory of the Nizam of Hyderabad. This assessment thus had to be abandoned after some years. It was replaced through a reformed system devised through two officers named Wingate and Goldsmid. Their system did not try to apply any theoretical rules: instead it aimed at moderating the demand to a stage where it could be regularly paid. The actual assessment of each field depended upon its soil and site. This new assessment began to be made in 1836 and sheltered mainly of the Deccan through 1865. Its effects upon agriculture were beneficial, and the cultivated region expanded as the new assessment was introduced.

Effects of the Ryotwari System in Madras and Bombay

We have seen how the Permanent Resolution recognized a few big zamindars in a location of dominance in excess of the mass of the peasants. The social effects of the ryotwari settlements were less dramatic. In several regions the actual cultivating peasants were recorded as the occupants or _ryots', and thus secured the title to their holdings. Though, as we saw, the tax was so heavy that several peasants would have gladly abandoned at least some of their land, and had to be prevented from doing so. It was also possible for non-cultivating landlords to have their names entered as the occupants (or owners) of scrupulous holdings, while the actual farming was accepted on through their tenants, servants or even bonded labourers. This was particularly the case in irrigated districts like Thanjavur (in Tamil Nadu) where several of the ryots' held thousands of acres of land. There was no limit to the amount of land that a ryot could hold, so there could be great variation in wealth and status flanked by one ryot and another. Though, money-lenders and other noncultivators were not much interested in

acquiring lands because of the heavy taxes that came with them. Hence the small peasants, oppressed though they might be through the tax-collector did not have to fear expropriation through the money-lender or landlord. Under the reformed ryotwari system that slowly urbanized in Bombay after 1836 and Madras after 1858 the burden of the land revenue was somewhat reduced, and land acquired a saleable value. The purchaser could now expect to create a profit from owning land :the State would not take it all as tax. One result of this was that money-lenders began to seize the lands of their peasant debtors and either evict them or reduce them to tenants. This procedure led to considerable social tension, and caused a major rural Uprising in the Bombay Deccan in 1875.

The other Alternative Resolution:

The Mahalwari System The aggressive policies of Lord Wellesley led to big territorial gains for the British in North India flanked by 1801 and 1806, These regions came to be described the North-Western Provinces. Initially the British planned a resolution on the Bengal pattern, Wellesley ordered the local officials to create the resolution with the zamindars wherever they could, provided they agreed to pay suitably high land revenue. Only if the zamindars refused to pay, or nor zamindars could be establish were the settlements to be made village through village _giving the preference to the mokuddums, perdhauns, or any respectable Ryotts of the village. Ultimately, the resolution was to be made permanent, as in Bengal. In the meantime, though, every effort was made to enlarge the revenue collection. The demand in 1803-4 was Rs.188 lakhsthrough 1817-18 it was Rs. 297 lakhs. Such enormous increases provoked resistance from several of the big zamindars and rajas, who had been approximately self-governing in the earlier era. Several of them were therefore driven off their lands through the new administration. In other cases the old zamindars could not pay the amount demanded, and their estates were sold through the Government. Increasingly, therefore, it became necessary to collect from the village directly through its pradhan or muqaddam (headman). In the revenue records the word used for a fiscal unit was a _mahal‘, and the village wise assessment therefore came

to be described a mahalwari resolution. It was though quite possible for one person to hold a number of villages, so that several big zamindars sustained to exist. Furthermore, as in Bengal, the confusion and coercion that accompanied the collection of the very heavy land tax created fine opportunities for the local officials, and big regions of land were illegally acquired through them in the early years. Meanwhile, the Government establishes that its expenditures were always exceeding its revenues, and the thought of a permanent resolution was dropped.

Mahalwari Theory and Practice

In 1819 an English official, Holt Mackenzie, urbanized the theory that taluqdars and zamindars were originally appointed through the State, and the real owners of villages were the zamindars who existed in them, or constituted the village society. He argued that their rights and payments should be clearly recognized through a survey. His thoughts were embodied in a law, Regulation VII of 1822. This required that Government officials should record all the rights of cultivators, zamindars and others, and also fix the amounts payable from every piece of land. The Governor-Common orders: It appears necessary to enter on the task of fixing in detail the rates of rent and manners of payment current in each village, and applicable to each field: and anything short of this necessity be regarded as a very imperfect Resolution. In practice, this proved impossible to implement. The calculations made were often quite inaccurate, and the Collectors in any case slanted them so as to augment the revenue due to the Government. Distant from favoring the village societies, the new mahalwari often ruined them through imposing impossible tax assessments. In 1833 it was decided that the detailed effort to regulate all rights and payments should be given up, and that a rough and ready estimate of what the village could pay to the State was adequate. In later years, these estimates came to be guided through the rents paid through the tenants of village lands to the owners. From these rents the Resolution officer would calculate the theoretical amount that all the lands of the village or mahal would yield. Then some part - ultimately 50 per cent of this would have to be paid to the Government.

All these calculations involved a big amount of guesswork: and, not surprisingly, the guesses tended to be on the high face, raising the amounts to be paid to the State.

Effects of the Mahalwari Resolution

One of the early effects was that the regions under the manage of the big taluqdars was reduced. The British officers made direct settlements with the village zamindars as distant as possible, and even supported them in the law courts when the taluqdars brought suits against them. But the so-described village zamindars were supported only because it was planned to extract the highest possible revenue from them. They were freed from taluqda's claims only to subject them to a full measure of government taxation. The result was often the ruin of the village zamindars. One officer accounted that in several villages of Aligarh: The Juma (land revenue) was in the first lay considerably too heavy; and in which the Malgoozars revenue payers appear to have lost all hope of improving their condition or of bearing up against the burden imposed on them. They are now deeply in debt, and utterly incapable of creation any arrangements for defraying their arrears.

The result of this situation was that big regions of land began to pass into the hands of money-lenders and merchants who ousted the old cultivating proprietors or reduced them to tenants' will. This occurred mainly regularly in the more commercialized districts, where the land revenue demand had been pushed to the highest stage, and where the landholders suffered mainly acutely from the business collapse and export depression after 1833. Through the 1840s it was not uncommon to discover that no buyers could be establish to take land that was being sold for arrears of land revenue. As in the Madras Presidency, the tax in these cases was so high that the buyer could not expect to create any profit from the purchase. Overall, therefore, the mahalwari resolution brought impoverishment and widespread dispossession to the cultivating societies of North India in the 1830s and 1840s, and their resentment expressed itself in popular uprisings in 1857. In that year villagers and

taluqdars all in excess of North India drove off government official, destroyed court and official records and papers and ejected the new auction, purchasers from the villages.

Check Your Progress 1

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 Mercantile policies and Indian trade in 18th Century.

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10.4 THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

The Range of Commercialization

Markets have not always lived. In information, they are relatively new in human society. Several societies have organised manufacture, sharing and consumption without resorting to buying and selling, without the attendance of money and markets. Slowly, though dissimilar things begin to be bought and sold, and thus markets develop. This is the procedure of commercialization. In a society that is undergoing commercialization, sure things may begin to be sold before others-for instance, forest tribes may begin selling wood or honey and buying salt and iron even when other things are not bought or sold through them. In the same way, when agriculture is commercialized, many dissimilar markets may approach into operation at dissimilar times. We shall try and create a rough list of these markets:

- Product markets-various agricultural products, such as wheat or rice or wool or ghee begin to be sold;
- Input markets-things needed for agricultural manufacture such as tools, seeds, fertilizers, bullocks, begin to be sold;
- Labour markets-when workers begin to be hired for money;
- Land markets-when farmers begin to buy and sell the land, or hire it for money;
- Market for money itself-as commercialization develops; the cultivators are often in need of money, to pay taxes or rents in cash to buy seed or bullocks, or even to feed themselves and their families. A market in loans grows up, and the price' of the loan is, of course, the interest that the borrower necessity pay.

Several other types of markets exist in a urbanized market economy, but we do not need to consider them. Thus we have seen that there are several types of markets, and some markets can function even where others do not exist. For instance, villagers may begin selling their surplus wheat or cotton even at a time when land is held on the foundation of traditional customs and cannot be sold at all. Again, it is quite possible for some of the crop to be sold while another part is disposed of in customary, non-market ways - for instance given to the village priest or carpenter or smith. So commercialization is a slow procedure, not a sudden or dramatic event.

Commercialization before the British

Markets have been recognized in India from ancient times, and agricultural products were bought and sold in them. In the Mughal Empire a big part of the land tax was composed in money from the cultivators, and this obviously meant that they were selling their products for money in order to pay the taxes. It has been estimated that this involved selling in relation to the 50 per cent of the agricultural produce. So virtually everyone was involved in swap as a producer or consumer, usually both. Specialized merchants, money-lenders and brokers were to be establishing, and there is even proof that some types of rights in land

(zamindari rights) were bought and sold. The Mughal Empire broke up in the 18th century, and was succeeded through various local kingdoms. They sometimes composed lower taxes than the Mughals had done, but they also composed mainly in cash which designates that the commercial system sustained to exist.

Commercialization under the British

In the middle of the new powers that took advantage of the decline of the Mughals was the British East India Company. It acquired territories in South India, and also the rich provinces of Bengal, Bihar and coastal Orissa in the East. These regions possessed a rich agriculture as also flourishing trade and handicrafts, and the Company as well as its servants and employees planned to enrich themselves through this conquest. It is the methods adopted through them that gave the commercialization under their manage its distinctive characteristics. In order to understand this we have to seem at the nature of this new ruling power. It was a trading company based in Britain, which had been granted a monopoly of the Eastern trade through the British Government. Its aims and objectives would therefore be dissimilar from those of an Indian ruler, or even a raider like Nadir Shah.

The Company's Aims

The Company was mainly concerned with acquiring Indian goods for sale in Europe. Since there was little demand for British goods in India at that time, the Company had to bring gold and silver bullion to India to pay for its purchases. After the conquest of Bengal it hoped that it would no longer have to import this bullion into India: instead, it would collect taxes from its Indian subjects and use the surplus in excess of its local expenditures to buy goods that would be exported to Europe. Then there would be no need to send out gold and silver from Britain. You can see that under such an arrangement India would, in a roundabout way pay a tribute to the Company in the form of goods to be sold in Europe. The

Company would use its political power to create commercial profits for itself.

Implications of These Aims'

Now, you will see that for this aim to be realized the Company had to manage to do two things: It necessity collect taxes so as to yield enough not only to pay its military and administrative expenses in India, but also to give a surplus for the finance of its trade; and India should produce at low prices goods for which there was a demand in the West, so that the surplus revenues could be remitted in the form of these goods.

No sooner had the company acquired the Diwani (revenue manage) of Bengal in 1763 than the Directors in London wrote to their employees in India to _enlarge every channel for conveying to us as early as possible the annual produce of our acquisitions' and to 'augment the investment of your company to the utmost extent that you can.' (The term investment 'referred to the money spent in buying goods for export to Europe.) More than twenty years later, the Governor Common, Lord Cornwallis, had the same aims. The value of Bengal to the British, he stated, depended on the continuance of its skill to furnish a big annual investment to Europe'.

Effect of the Export Trade on Agriculture

When Indian rulers composed taxes, mainly of the money was spent within the locality or region, and so agriculture was little affected through foreign demand. Indian exports of handicraft and other goods more than sheltered imports from outside the country. Initially the British also concentrated on exporting Indian manufactures, like textiles, to the West. But a dangerous rival to Indian textiles appeared in the later 18th century, as a cotton mill industry grew up in Britain. These mills establish it hard to compete with the Indian products, and in the 1780s they launched an agitation, claiming that the East India Company was injuring them through its import of Indian fabrics. The company realized

that it needed to promote other rows of export from India; agricultural products were a safe row.

They could not compete with British products, and might serve as raw materials for British industry. This strategy had been followed in the case of silk from the 1770s, but with the development of British industry this trend grew stronger. Furthermore, through the 1780s an indirect method of remitting the Indian tribute via China had begun to take form. The British imported big quantities of tea from China, and had to pay for it in silver, as the Chinese did not want Western goods. Though, the Chinese bought Indian products like ivory, raw cotton and (later on) opium. If the British controlled this trade, then they would not need to send silver to China - the tea could be got in swap for Indian products that the British acquired in India. This system became recognized as triangular trade, with the three points being Calcutta, Canton, and London. Wealth circulated through the first two but gathered in the Company‘s treasury in the third. So, to conclude. The East India Company was interested in producing a controlled commercialization of agriculture in order to give commodities for either the Chinese or the Western market.

The Selection of the Commercial Crops

The crops on which the company concentrated were indigo, cotton, raw silk, opium, pepper, and, in the 19th century, also tea and sugar. Of these, raw silk was used through British weavers; it could not be produced in Britain. The same was true of cotton, and it could also be sold to the Chinese. Opium, of course, was smuggled into China despite the Chinese prohibitions on its import. Indigo was a textile dye needed in the West. Tea farming was introduced in Assam from the 1840s so that Britain could manage its supply, and did not have to depend on China for it. None of these things we may note competed with or replaced any British product. All of them also had another feature in general; they were all valuable in relation to their bulk, which is to say that their price per kilogram or per cubic meter was high. At this time, we necessity

remember, ail goods went in excess of land in carts pulled through horses or bullocks, and in excess of the sea in sailing ships. It took four months or more for a ship to sail from India to Europe, and the ships accepted distant less than contemporary cargo vessels. So the cost of transport was high. Now, if cheap, bulky goods had been accepted they would have become very expensive after the shipping cost had been paid. This would create them unprofitable for the Company to trade in. So it was necessary for the products to be profitable in relation to their weight, so that the transport costs did not eat up the profits.

The Commercial Crops

Now we will talk about some crops which had great commercial prospects.

Raw Silk

The Company was interested in this product approximately from the beginning of its rule. In 1770 the Directors wrote from London that Bengal silk, if properly made, could replace the Italian and Spanish silk that the British weavers were then using. So experts were brought in to improve the methods of silk creation in India, and to set up workshops (described _filatures') where the cocoons were spun into silk thread for export. The company through its mediators and officials also coerced the growers of the mulberry trees (on whose leaves the silk-worms feed), so as to stay the price of silk low, so as to allow the contractors to create big profits. Silk remained an significant export until the last decades of the 19th century.

Opium

We have already seen that the British establish it hard to pay for the tea that they imported from China. Though, they soon hit upon the device of selling the Chinese opium. Opium is an addictive drug, like nicotine and alcohol, and once a person has started taking it, he discovers it hard to

provide up, and will pay high prices in order to get it. The British establish it highly profitable to smuggle opium into China Opium had extensive been produced in India in small quantities. It was used a medicine as well as a narcotic. In 1773 Warren Hastings, searching for fresh sources of revenue placed its manufacture and trade under Government manage, and appointed contractors to handle the crop. Later on officials recognized as opium mediators were put in charge of it. The opium poppy could only be grown under a contract to sell to the Government at a price fixed through it. Any effort to evade this manage was severely punished. The price fixed was as low as possible, so as to yield a big profit to the State. The supply was also sought to be controlled so as to uphold a high price on the Chinese market. Great efforts were made to put down the self-governing producers of opium in the Malwa region of Central India-when they failed the company contented itself through imposing a heavy export duty on the Malwa opium. Thus we see that the development of opium as a commercial crop fulfilled both the objectives of the Company-it gave big revenue in India, and also created a channel (via China) for the remittance of that income to London.

Indigo

This is a blue dye extracted from a tropical plant. It was used to color textiles. Up to the 1790s much of the Western supply had approach from the Caribbean colonies. But then, manufacture there declined, and Indian indigo establish a rising market. The company had been encouraging Europeans to settle in its territory to produce indigo, and purchasing it from them for export. Manufacture increased rapidly. It was less than 5,000 factory mounds in 1788- 9 and reached 133,000 mounds through 1829-30. Indigo was grown under two systems of manufacture and ryoti. Under the first, the planter undertook the farming with their own ploughs and cattle, employing hired labour for the purpose. The plant was cut and taken to the planters' factory for the dye to be extracted. Under the ryoti system (also recognized as -asamiwar), the peasants cultivated the plant on their own land, and had to deliver it to the factory at a fixed price.

Approximately all the indigo was produced under this system, as it had several advantages for the planter. To begin with, the price paid to the peasant was very low, and yet he could not refuse to grow the indigo. Refusal might lead to a beating or imprisonment and the destruction of the other crops on his land. To further strengthen the planters' powers, doctored accounts were maintained which showed the peasant to be in debt to the factory - a debt that was to be cleared through going on delivering indigo. Somehow, the debt was never cleared, but increased from year to year. The planters were Europeans, and maintained excellent dealings with the Magistrates and Government officers, so that no complaints against them were ever heeded through officials. So the peasants were compelled to go on raising this plant at a loss to them: their accumulated discontent finally establishes expression in what were recognized as the Indigo Riots' in 1859-60. Thus we see that this significant commercial crop was grown under a system of outright coercion.

Cotton

If indigo was the significant commercial crop in Eastern India, raw cotton was that of Western India. An important export to China had urbanized through the 1780s, and the East India Company and Bombay merchants, who enjoyed its favour, sought to manage the sources of supply. Through 1806 substantial territory had been acquired in Gujarat, and the Company began forcing the cultivators to sell to them at a price lower than that prevailing elsewhere. Now though, the Company came into disagreement with private European merchants and was compelled to provide up the system and retire from this trade in 1833.

Pepper

Here again the political power of the Company was used to force down the price, and to prevent merchants from selling to the French or other competitors. Here again, the company was forced to hand in excess of to private British merchants in the 1830s.

Sugar

The sugarcane is indigenous to India, and gur and chini have been produced here for several centuries. It was extensively consumed within India. In the 1830s the indigo planters were faced with a fall in prices and sales, and so capital began to be invested in producing sugar for the London market, where import duties had been reduced and demand was rising. Big regions of land were given to European speculators who began setting up sugar plantations in eastern Uttar Pradesh. The local peasants had extensive produced gurfor local consumption and sale to other parts of India, but they were now made to produce a thickened sugarcane juice (described rub) for delivery to the planters who processed it into sugar. As with indigo, the peasants received advances, and were then bound to deliver to the factory at a low, fixed price. Big profits were made through the planters, and exports grew; in 1833-34 Calcutta had sent less than 1,600 tons of sugar to England, but through 1846-7 it sent in excess of 80,000 tons-a fifty fold augment. This prosperity was short existed, and when prices fell after 1848 mainly of the factories shut down, and exports approximately ceased. Indian-gur merchants and khandsaris then took the trade back into the old channel of sale to Mirzapur and central India.

Tea

In the 1830s the Company faced mounting hostility in China because of its insistence on smuggling opium. It feared that its lucrative trade in tea might be interrupted, and began to promote the farming of tea within its own territories in Assam. When the experiment proved successful, the gardens were handed in excess of to a private company, the Assam Company. Other tea companies also set up gardens in the 1850s. Since there were no local labourers to be had, the tea gardens brought in indentured or bonded labourers from Chota Nagpur and elsewhere in big numbers. This is the only instance in which commercial crops were produced in big capitalist enterprises. Though, the expansion of tea,

coffee and other plantations really occurred after I860, and thus falls outside the era that we are studying now.

The Effects of Commercialization

We have how seen in detail how the dissimilar commercial craps were produced and sold. It will be obvious to you that each is dissimilar from the others in sure ways and it follows that the effects of commercialization will differ from time to time, lay to lay, and crop to crop. We cannot expect them to be exactly the same everywhere. Though, sure general characteristics, and sure general effects to exist: and it is on these that this part will focus.

1. Impoverishment

Let us start with the Indian economy as a whole. You will keep in mind that the substance of the British was to produce goods for export to Europe, so that funds could be accumulated in the Company‘s treasury in London. Private English businessmen also wanted to send money back so that they could ultimately retire to a life of comfort in Britain. The exports therefore served essentially to remit possessions out of India. It was the method through which the Indian tribute was transferred to Britain. India received no imports in return for these exports. Obviously such a transfer impoverished India. The growth and export of commercial crops thus served to impoverish rather than to enrich India.

2. Instability

Agriculture in India was exposed to several hazards; drought, flood or other calamity could destroy the crops and ruin the farmers. But with commercial agriculture a new set of dangers appeared. The crops were now going to distant markets. If the West Indian sugar crop was good, prices might fall in Calcutta, and the sugar factories in Azamgarh might

pay the peasants less than they had promised, and maltreat them if they complained. Likewise, Bundelkhand region (the northern part of Madhya Pradesh) began to grow a lot of cotton for the China market after 1816. The British officials claimed that the region thus became very wealthy, and increased the land tax. Though, the export declined in the 1830s, prices fell-but the taxes were not reduced. Both zamindars and peasants became impoverished, the land went out of farming, and finally in 1842 an uprising, recognized as the Bundela Rebellion broke out. Uttar Pradesh also suffered in a similar way in the 1830s. The price of cotton and indigo fell, and as Professor Siddiqi describes it: Peasants were abandoning their lands, Zamindars had suffered losses. Money-lenders had been ruined because the loans they had made had not been repaid; several of them now refused to lend money to the cultivators. Land had depreciated in value: innumerable cases were accounted of estates being put up for sale and no buyers coming forward. 'The situation in rural Bengal was also similar at this time. This was not the result of coincidence. Flanked by 1830 and 1833 approximately all the big firms linked with the export trade and the finance of commercial agriculture in Bengal, Bihar and U.P. went bankrupt. The cause was that they had gone on dispatching indigo to Britain even though prices were falling, because they wanted to get their money out of India. The Government made matters worse through sending out bullion to London, and thus causing a scarcity of money in India. Businessmen who had borrowed to produce the export crops establish that they could not repay the loans, and went bankrupt. Finally, of course the worst sufferers were the peasants who had been drawn through force and persuasion into the manufacture of the commercial crops. Falling prices in London came to ruin cultivators in India. This is what we mean when we say the commercialization added a fresh element of instability to the rural economy.

3. The Various Markets

We saw in 16.2 above that commercialization is to be viewed in terms of dissimilar markets. We have also seen how markets for various products (silk, opium, indigo etc.) grew up. So the product market widened and

enlarged itself. But what happened to the other markets that we had listed? Strange though it may appear, the way that commercialization urbanized in India actually tended to check the appearance of the other markets. First of all, except in the case of tea, the crops were not produced through hired labour. As we saw in the case of indigo, the preferred system was one in which the peasant could be coerced into supplying the required product at a very low price (what was described the ryoti system). In such a system, earnings would be very small which was why the peasants had to be coerced into it. They could survive because they and their families could grow food on the rest of their land- but a landless labourer could not do this, and would have had to be paid more. So the planters and businessmen did not like to employ wage labour, and the labour market did not develop. The effect on the input market was similar. The peasant had to use his own plough, bullocks, etc. to raise the commercial crop. But he was not paid enough for this —as that would reduce the planters' profits. He could bear the loss because these things were needed to grow his own food supply also, but as in the case with labour, no free market for these inputs could easily arise. The growth of a land market would also be inhibited. You will realize that land cannot be consumed like rice or dal. When we buy land we seem forward to getting some income from its yield. But no one will buy it if he is not reasonably sure that he will be allowed to get this income - that an indigo planter or opium agent will not suddenly create some new demand on him. The fear of such action will obviously prevent outsiders from buying land and thus creating a land market. The hereditary cultivators may go on tilling the soil: after all, what alternative employment do they have? But the exacting regime of the tax-collector, the zamindari and the planter will check the growth of a market in land. Finally, there is the credit market, the market for loans. Here also the effect of the system was to check its expansion. The indigo cultivators were given loans through the planters as a way of tying them down. An English official observed: If a ryot once received an advance he could very seldom or never clear himself and thus becomes little better than a bond-slave to the factory'. No one else would lend to a man in this situation, for how the loan could be repaid? On the other hand, the

planter himself did not want the advance repaid, because then the peasant would escape from his manage. Likewise, in the case of opium, the peasants took the advance to grow the crop at least in part because they feared that a refusal would anger the village headman and the Government. A free market, with the freedom for each individual to act in his own interest clearly did not exist.

Check Your Progress 2

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

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

1. Write an essay on new land revenue settlements in India.

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   ……

2. Discuss the commercialization of agriculture.

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   ……

10.5 LET US SUM UP

It is sometimes whispered that commercialization necessarily results in rising inequality within the peasantry, with some becoming wealthy and employing wage- labourers, and others losing their land and forced to work for wages. This may happen if the markets are allowed to develop and function freely, and, in scrupulous, the market for land becomes active. Though, we have been that this was not the case in the commercialization that we are studying. The continual use of coercion and State power distorted the markets and prevented the appearance of a full labour market. Instead, commercial manufacture fastened itself on the existing structure of small peasant manufacture and impoverished it. Manufacture sustained to be accepted on through the peasant and his family on their little plot of land, but now the indigo planter or opium

agent forced him to spot off a part of his land for a commercial crop, from which he earned little or nothing. The peasant was impoverished, but neither the method nor the organisation of manufacture was altered. The European businessmen establish it more profitable to use the small peasant household than to engage in big-level manufacture with hired labour.

10.6 KEY WORDS

Revenue: In accounting, **revenue** is the income that a business has from its normal business activities, usually from the sale of goods and services to customers.

10.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss the Mercantile policies and Indian trade in 18th Century.
2. Write an essay on new land revenue settlements in India.
3. Discuss the commercialization of agriculture.

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10.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 10.2

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section 10.3
2. See Section 10.4

UNIT 11: RURAL ECONOMYIN INDIA

STRUCTURE

11.0 Objectives

11.1 Introduction

11.2 Rural economy in eastern, western, south, central, northern India and Princely state

11.3 Rural Economy With special reference on new types of Land revenue administration

11.4 Commercialization of agriculture

11.5 Rural indebtedness

11.6 Rural power relations

11.7 Landlords, peasants and Agricultural labours and institutions

11.8 Let us sum up

11.9 Key Words

11.10 Questions for Review

11.11 Suggested readings and references

11.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

11.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit we can able to know:

- To know about the Rural economy in eastern, western, south, central, northern India and Princely state
- To discuss the Rural Economy With special reference on new types of Land revenue administration
- To know Commercialization of agriculture
- To know Rural indebtedness
- To discuss the Rural power relations
- To know about the Landlords, peasants and Agricultural labours and institutions.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction to Indian Economy during Pre-British Period:

During the pre-British period, i.e. during the mid-eighteenth century, the condition of Indian economy was not at all satisfactory. Just after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the central power at Delhi was so weak that the situation had led to disintegration and gradual downfall of deep rooted Mughal Empire.

During 1750, the Indian economy was passing through recurrence of crisis and disorders because by this time the central power at Delhi was either weakened or disappeared.

The writings of Dr. Francis Bukanon, Charles Metacalfe and Prof. Gadgil made available sufficient information about the conditions of Indian economy during the pre-British period.

Indian economy, during the pre-British period, consisted of backward, isolated and self sustaining villages on the one hand and on the other hand, there were number of towns which were the seats of administration, pilgrimage, commerce and handicrafts.

During this period, the mode of transport and communication of India were totally backward, underdeveloped and insufficient. Under such a situation, the size of market was also very small.

Condition of Indian Villages and Village Communities during Pre-British Period:

During the pre-British period, the village community was composed of different groups based on simple division of labour. There were farmers who cultivated land and tended cattle. Other groups of people were weavers, goldsmith, potters, washermen, carpenters, cobblers, oil pressers, barber-surgeons etc.

11.2 RURAL ECONOMY IN EASTERN, WESTERN, SOUTH, CENTRAL, NORTHERN INDIA AND PRINCELY STATE

All the above mentioned occupations were hereditary. These various groups of people were getting their remuneration in terms of crops during the harvesting period against the services rendered by them.

These Indian villages were functioning independently as most of food articles and raw materials produced within the villages were either consumed or purchased by the village communities itself. Agricultural and handicraft industry were interdependent and thus the village republics were able to function independently.

Indian villages were almost self-sufficient in respect of daily necessities excepting commodities like salt, spices, fine cloth, luxury and semi-luxury goods.

In this connection, Sir Charles Metacalfe wrote, "The village communities are little republics having nearly everything they want within themselves, and almost independent of foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing lasts. This union of the village communities each one forming a separate little state by itself…… is in a high degree conducive to their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence".

Thus during the pre-British period, Indian villages were mostly consisting of three distinct classes:

(a) the agriculturists,

(b) the village artisans and menials and

(c) the village officials.

There were again two types of agriculturists—the land owning and the tenants.

The village community had enjoyed a simple form of self-government. The headman, the watchman, the accountant, the preacher, the school teacher etc. were all village officers. Thus Indian villages during those days were working as a complete administrative and economic unit.

Condition of Agriculture during the Pre-British Period:

During the pre-British period, i.e., during the mid-eighteenth century, the condition of Indian agriculture was not at all satisfactory. During those days, agriculture was the main source of livelihood in India. The economic condition of Indian agriculturists was really very much painful.

Poor farmers had to pay a high rate of taxes as imposed by the then administrators of the country which led to high degree of exploitation on these farmers.

During those days Indian rulers had constructed and maintained some irrigation projects but these works were very much insufficient as compared to its requirement. Moreover, farmers were following traditional methods in their agricultural operations.

Important crops which were grown by Indian farmers included mainly rice, wheat, bajra, jowar and minor cereals alongwith the commercial crops like jute, raw cotton, groundnut, tobacco etc.

Again, the crop rotation practices of standard pattern were followed without any variation. Some strips of land were left fallow every year just for the interest of regaining fertility. In those days, the agricultural implements were mostly primitive and simple which included wooden plough, iron sickle, leather bag for drawing water etc. During those days, agriculturists were applying only natural organic manures.

Thus it is better to conclude with Dr. Buchanon and Prof. Gadgil that the conditions of Indian agriculturists in total were very much depressed. Moreover, the land policy followed by the rulers of those days was mostly going against the farmers and these policies were specially framed to serve the interests of rulers and zamindars of India.

Prices and Wages during the Pre-British Period:

During the pre-British period, the prices of foodgrains used to fluctuate widely between different places. Markets for most of the commodities were very much restricted to local areas in the absence of adequate means of transport and communications. Under such a situation, agricultural produces and the other commodities produced by artisans in the cottage industries were not getting remunerative prices.

During those days, the prevailing wage rates were very low. Wages of village artisans were paid not in terms of cash but in kind. The wages were paid mostly once in a year and that is just after the harvesting season. The rates of wages were mostly determined by customs and conventions.

The Structure and the Conditions of Towns during the Pre-British Period:

During the pre-British period, the major portion of the total population of India was living in the rural areas. Nearly 10 per cent of the total population was living in the urban areas and those towns were merely out grown villages.

According to Prof. D.R. Gadgil, towns of those days owed their existence principally due to the following three reasons:

(a) A good number of towns of India were places of pilgrimage or sacred religious centres (for example, Gaya, Benaras, Allahabad, Puri, Nasik etc.);

(b) A good number of towns were the seats of courts of Nawabs or kings or the capital of a province (for example, Bijapur, Golconda, Delhi, Lahore, Lucknow, Poona etc.); and

(c) A good number of towns were trading or commercial centres due to its trade importance (for example, Surat, Mirzapur, Hubli, Bangalore etc.). These towns were existing on different trade routes. Those towns which were actually the trade centres proved more stable.

Lifestyle in the towns was completely different from that of the villages. In these towns, a large category of occupations and different varieties of trades were existing. Thus the sizes of population of these towns were gradually increasing. Moreover, the size of market of these towns was also wide.

Industries and Urban Handicrafts during the Pre-British Period in India:

Although agriculture had dominated the Indian economy during the pre-British period yet some Indian industries, producing certain special products, enjoyed worldwide reputation. During those days, many of the handicrafts produced in the urban areas of India were quite famous. Among all those various famous urban handicrafts, textile handicrafts earned a special status and were also spread over the whole country.

During those days, the muslin of Dacca, silk sarees of Benaras, shawls and carpets of Kashmir and Amritsar, the calicos of Bengal, dhoti and dopattas of Ahmedabad, silk and bordered cloth of Nagpur and Murshidabad etc. were very famous and received much recognition in international markets.

While recognising the skill of Indian artisans, T.N. Mukherjee wrote, "A piece of the muslin 20 yards long and one yard wide could be to pass through a finger ring and required six months to manufacture."

Moreover, India was well known for her other artistic handicraft industries which include jewellery made of gold and silver, brass, copper and bell metal wares, marble work, carving works in ivory, wood, stone etc.

Artistic glassware were also produced in India during those days and had earned international reputation during those days. India had also developed high level of metallurgy by those days and the cast-iron pillar standing near Delhi is a real testament of that.

All these industries and handicrafts had its patronage of local administrators for their gradual development. In the urban area each handicraft was properly organised into a guild so as to safeguard their common interest. These guilds were enacting their own laws which were again respected by the then rulers of the country.

According to M.G. Ranade, the Indian industries "not only supplied all local wants but also enabled India to export its finished products to foreign countries." During those days, Indian export items were consisting mostly of manufactured items like cotton and silk fabrics, calicos, silk and woollen cloth and artistic wares made of glass and metal.

Besides, the other export items were cinnamon, pepper, opium, indigo etc. Throughout the 17th and 18th century, European countries were purchasing the above mentioned manufactures of India.

Thus considering this superior industrial state of India during the pre-British period, the Industrial Commission (1918) recorded the following lines:

"At a time when the West of Europe, the birth place of modern industrial system, was inhabited by uncivilised tribes, India was famous for the wealth of her rulers and for high artistic skill of her craftsmen. And even

at a much later period, when the merchant adventurers from the west made their first appearance in India, the industrial development of this country was at any rate, not inferior to that of the more advanced European nations."

Conditions of Transport and Trade during the Pre-British Period:

During the pre-British period, there were no proper transportation systems in India. In the absence of pucca roads, different villages of India were connected with dusty tracks. Naturally, most of the roads become muddy during the rainy season and even some of the villages were cut-off due to heavy rainfall followed by consequent flood.

In respect of water transport, it was only in some parts of Northern India where some rivers were navigable and small wooden country boats were used for carrying passengers as well as freights. But in most other part of the country, bullock carts and pack animals were considered as the standard modes of transport. Thus under such a condition, the movement of men and materials was very slow.

During those days weekly markets were organised in different parts of the country and most of the people used to make their daily purchases from these weekly markets. In some places annual fairs were organised in addition to these weekly markets. Thus, in fine, we can conclude that the transport system as well as the market conditions in India during the pre-British period was not at all satisfactory.

The structure of agricultural production in the village of bangle thus remained uninterfered with for centuries. No emperor or his viceroy ever challenged the ultimate customary right over the village land by the village community.

Further village agriculture produced for the needs of the village and, expecting a share of this produce which the village had to surrender to the lord of the moment may be the Suba, Sardar or Jamidar. The entire

produce was almost locally consumed by the peasant and non-peasant village population. Villages were isolated and self-sufficient socio-economic units, covering about ninety percent of the population of India. In 1872, 68.5 percent of male population derived their livelihood from land. Further, people who were engaged in industrial occupation had agriculture as a subsidiary occupation. Villages were self sufficient entities. There was a barter system of exchange. The means of transport and communication were underdeveloped. The old economic order was governed and regulated largely by prevailing customs and status. The joint family and the caste system decided the occupation of the individuals. Under the economic order, rent, wages and prices were determinate and regulated by the prevailing usages and customs. Rents paid by the cultivators to the landlord were customary. Wages were largely regulated by custom which regulated the remuneration of the hired labour for agricultural purposes. Custom also regulated prices. There was limited scope for the division of labour, because of the demand for their product was fixed and limited within village. There was absence of competition, so the products were stereotyped and determined by customs. A barter economy prevailed in villages. The use of money was very rare.

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION

Due to lack of means of communication and no desire of the rulers to interfere in the affairs of the villages, the villages had their own administrative units. The village administration was looked after by the organization of council of elders, i.e. Village Panchayat. These Panchayats consisted of five or more members. Village Panchayat had to perform various functions such as, maintenance of peace and order, collection of revenue, keeping of accounts, police duties etc.

OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE OF VILLAGE

It consisted of agriculturists, village artisans, village officers and menials. Agricultural cultivation was mainly for consumption and very

little was kept for market. Each village had its own artisans and menials. Besides the peasant families, the village population also included industrial workers such as a smith, a carpenter, a potter, a weaver, a cobbler, a washer man, an oilman, a barber and others. Local carpenters made their ploughs. Blacksmith made shears, potters made utensils, and weavers made cotton clothing, so also the washer men, barbers had their jobs. .they all worked almost exclusively for satisfying the needs of the village population.

Further, the village community generally also included within it 'a class of menials who did the work of scavenging, the outcasts, most of whom were the descendents of the aboriginal population of the country. Who were absorbed in the Hindu society of these early days, instead of being exterminated.

THE TREND OF EXCHANGE

All exchange of products produced by the village workers, agricultural or industrial, was related to village community and hence very restricted in scope. The village population consumed almost the whole of what it produced. Regarding the nature of the exchange of village products, Shelvankar comments:

"It is however, not strictly accurate to say that there was exchange between individuals. For while the peasants individually went to the artisans as and when they needed his services, the payment he received it return was not calculated on the basis of each job nor was it offered him by each customer (or client) separately. This obligation was borne by the village as a whole, which discharged it by permanently assigning to the craftsman a piece of land belonging to the community and/or the gift of a fixed measure of grain at harvest time. Thus the other party to the exchange was the collective organization of the village as much as the individual, and artisan was not merely a private producer but a short of public servant employed by the rural community."

Thus not only did the village not have any appreciable exchange relations with the outside world. But also within itself, the phenomenon of a market was absent. Gadgil remarks:

"The mare fact of the isolation of the village is not striking in itself, not was the fact that all the artisans lived in the village peculiar. But the peculiar feature of the village of Bangle was that the majority of the artisans were servants of the village."

Another feature of the village economic life was the low stage of the division of labour based on insufficient differentiating of agriculture and industry. While principally attending to agriculture, the farmer family also engaged itself in domestic spinning. Similarly the artisan who was often given a plot of village land by the village committee carried on agricultural activity for sometime in the year.

The village artisans secured the raw materials, such as, clay and hide, required for their crafts. Wood was available from the forest area in the periphery of the village. The carcasses of dead animals of the village provided the cobbler with hides. Cotton grew in almost every part of the country. Iron, however, had sometimes to b imported from outsides. On the whole, the village was almost self sufficient regarding the raw materials needed for the village artisan industry.

Thus, economically, the village was predominantly autarchic. Local produce prepared mainly by means of local labour and resources was almost locally consumed. There was very little exchange between the village and the outside world. Whatever little trade existed was carried on generally on a specific day of the week, at the market in a big village where a verity of goods from a number of centers was sold.

RAW MATERIALS

To complete the self sufficiency of the village it usually happened that even the raw materials were close at hand. Wood growing within the village area could be used for buildings and implements. Cotton was available in many parts of the country. Most of the goods produced were

consumed in the village and surplus could be disposed of the village fairs, held once a week. The handworkers derived their skill through the heritage of centuries. Their respective occupations had a religious sanction behind them.

AGRICULTURE

The technique of village agriculture and industry was on a low level. Simple agricultural equipment and the hand manipulated tools for manufacture were all that were known. Even wind-mills and water-wheels were seldom employed. The stickle and plough, the saw and chisel, the spinning-wheel and pit-loom were made of a riffling amount of material in a very short time. But sometimes give service for generations.

The village population lives for centuries and almost unvarying economic life based on self sufficient village agriculture and industry carried on by means of this feeble technique. The autarchic village, almost completely independent of the outside world and with the resultant absence of any appreciable social exchange, remained for centuries an invulnerable stronghold of the same stationary, stereotyped social existence.

"The only break was an occasional catastrophe, an invention from the land-hungry hordes behind the mountains, or the disturbance caused by drought."

Kurl Marks vividly picturesquely described this never changing type of social organism in the following words.

"Those small and extremely ancient Indian communities, some of which have continued down to this day, are based on possession in common of the land, on the blending of agriculture and handicrafts, and on an unalterable division of labour, which serves, whenever a new community is started, as a plan and scheme ready cut and dried. Occupying areas of

from 100 up to several thousand acres, each forms a compact whole producing all it requires. The chief part of the products is destined for direct use by the community itself, and does not take the form of a commodity. Hence, production here is independent of that division of labour brought about, in Indian society as a whole, by means of the exchange of commodities. It is the surplus alone that becomes a commodity, and a portion of even that, not until it has reached the hands of the State, into whose hands from time immemorial a certain quantity of these products has found its way in the shape of rent in kind. The constitution of these communities varies in different parts of India. In those of the simplest form, the land is tilled in common, and the produce divided among the members. At the same time, spinning and weaving are carried on in each family as subsidiary industries. Side by side with the masses thus occupied with one and the same work, we find the "chief inhabitant," who is judge, police, and tax-gatherer in one; the book-keeper, who keeps the accounts of the tillage and registers everything relating thereto; another official, who prosecutes criminals, protects strangers travelling through and escorts them to the next village; the boundary man, who guards the boundaries against neighboring communities; the water-overseer, who distributes the water from the common tanks for irrigation; the Brahmin, who conducts the religious services; the schoolmaster, who on the sand teaches the children reading and writing; the calendar-Brahmin, or astrologer, who makes known the lucky or unlucky days for seed-time and harvest, and for every other kind of agricultural work; a smith and a carpenter, who make and repair all the agricultural implements; the potter, who makes all the pottery of the village; the barber, the washer man, who washes clothes, the silversmith, here and there the poet, who in some communities replaces the silversmith, in others the schoolmaster. This dozen of individuals is maintained at the expense of the whole community. If the population increases, a new community is founded, on the pattern of the old one, on unoccupied land. The whole mechanism discloses a systematic division of labour; but a division like that in manufactures is impossible, since the smith and the carpenter, &c., find an unchanging market, and at the most there occur, according to the sizes of the villages, two or three of each,

instead of one. The law that regulates the division of labour in the community acts with the irresistible authority of a law of Nature, at the same time that each individual artificer, the smith, the carpenter, and so on, conducts in his workshop all the operations of his handicraft in the traditional way, but independently, and without recognizing any authority over him. The simplicity of the organization for production in these self-sufficing communities that constantly reproduce themselves in the same form, and when accidentally destroyed, spring up again on the spot and with the same name this simplicity supplies the key to the secret of the unchangeableness of Asiatic societies, an unchangeableness in such striking contrast with the constant dissolution and refunding of Asiatic States, and the never-ceasing changes of dynasty. The structure of the economic elements of society remains untouched by the storm-clouds of the political sky."

11.3 RURAL ECONOMY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE ON NEW TYPES OF LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

What is Land Revenue?

Definition of land revenue: Land revenue is tax or revenue levied on agricultural production on land. It is either collected as a percentage of the share of total crop or a monetary value is fixed on the land to be paid by the farmer. It has been the major source of revenue for empires.

Land Revenue System Under Mughals

Before the Britishers, the land revenue system in major parts of India was based on Mughal land revenue system. The land revenue system under Mughals can be divided into following three categories

Ghalla Bakshi (crop sharing) also known as Batai and Bhaoli. Abu Fazal in his Ain-i-Akbari has described three methods of crops sharing, they are:

- **Khet Batai:** In this method, the standing crop was divided by dividing the field between the share of the ruler and the farmer.
- **Lang Batai:** In this system, the harvested crops were divided without the separation of grains from it.

- Division of grains at the threshing floor after the grain from the crop has been obtained. The division was on the basis of an agreement. The crops sharing method was expensive as the state had to employ a large number of employees for the division of the crops. However, it was referred as the best method of revenue assessment system and Collection.

Kankut/ Dambandi: The word Kan means grain and Kat means to estimate, while the word Dam means grain and Bandi means fixing anything. In this method, the field was measured and then, per bigha productivity of good, middle and bad land was determined by an estimation. The revenue demand was based on this estimation.

Zabti or Dhasala system: This land revenue system was initially started by Sher Shah Suri and later adopted and modified by Akbar. In this system, the land was divided into four types as per the continuity and discontinuity of cultivation.

- **Polaj:** The land which was annually cultivated without any discontinuity of cultivation.
- **Parudi:** The land which was left uncultivated for some time to regain fertility.
- **Chachar:** These lands were left uncultivated for three to four years.
- **Bankar:** These lands were left uncultivated for more than five years or even longer.

Akbar appointed 'Karori to measure the actual produce, prices, and productivity of the land. On the basis of the information by Karoris, the average production and prices of crops were fixed by taking into account the estimation of last 10 years. One-third of the crop production was states minimum share. In general, under all systems, states share varied between one-third to two-thirds and even three-fourth in some cases.

Land Revenue System Under British

British got Diwani rights of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa in 1765. The major aim of British East India Company was to increase their land revenue collection. So its policies were aimed at getting maximum

income from land without caring about its consequences on cultivators and peasants.

They introduced the policy of revenue collection by abandoning the age-old system of revenue administration. The entire burden of Company s profits, cost of its administration and expenses on wars and conquests were mainly borne by the peasants.

Permanent Settlement System

Also known as Jagirdari, Malguzari or Bizwedari, it was introduced in the 19% of total area under British rule. This was implemented in states of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa, Northern Carnatic and Banaras divisions after the failure of revenue farming system in Bengal in which the right to collect revenue was given to the highest bidder which was introduced by Lord Warren Hastings.

In 1790 under Lord Cornwallis, a 10-year revenue settlement was made with the Zamindars and they were recognized as the owners of the land who could mortgage or sell the land, from being just the agent of the government for revenue collection. In 1793, this was converted into a permanent settlement and zamindari system was made hereditary and the land was made transferable.

The tenants were now at the mercy of zamindars and their customary rights were sacrificed. The zamindars had to pay 10/11th of rent taken from the peasant to the company and keep only 1/11th of revenue for themselves. This resulted in illegal extortions from peasants by the zamindars. One may note here that the state's share of revenue was fixed and no limit was kept on revenue collected by zamindar from the cultivator. In the very first year of its adoption, the company's revenues rose by 80%.

Reasons for Adopting the Permanent Settlement

- Due to the failure of the 'farming system' adopted by Lord Warren Hastings a new system of land revenue was required.
- The permanent settlement was to ensure a stable and fixed income for the company.

- To reduce the expenses of the Company on periodic revenue settlements and land assessments. It was also to end the corruption by the officials in revenue assessments.
- To reduce the burden of revenue collection on the company and to create a loyal group of zamindars whose interests were aligned to the continuation of British Raj.
- The company thought that fixed rates would increase investments in agriculture by the zamindars and company could benefit from the taxes from increased trade and commerce.

Impact of Land Revenue System Under Permanent Settlement

- As the land revenue was going to be permanently fixed, the company fixed the rates arbitrarily high (10/11th of total collection) much higher than the past rates. This placed a high burden on the zamindars which were ultimately borne by the peasants.
- Peasants were left at the mercy of zamindars as no rules were made for revenue collection by zamindars. The property rights of peasants suffered and they faced evictions and 'begar .
- It led to the growth of new landlords as the property was now transferable and those zamindars who could not pay rents, their lands were auctioned.
- It also led to the growth of a system of absentee landlordism. These zamindars were interested only to maximize their revenue collection and had no interest in the investments in agriculture.
- A new class of landless cultivators, agricultural coolies on one hand and money lenders on the other was now created.
- High revenue demand and harsh methods of collection, eventually led to frequent land transfers which didn't benefit zamindars either. Company's revenue collection also fell as agricultural output declined. By 1770's Bengal witnessed famines.

Ryotwari System

Ryotwari system was adopted in 51% of the total area under British rule that is in state of Malabar, Coimbatore, Madras, Assam, and Madurai and later it was extended to Maharashtra and East Bengal. It was introduced

on the recommendations of British officials Reed and Sir Thomas Munro. The state demand was fixed in cash and had no connection with actual yields. Besides, the revenue fixed was one of the highest in modern period, at 55 percent.

- Under this system, the taxes were directly collected by the government. It established a direct relationship between the government and the ryot (cultivator).
- Farmers had the right to sell, mortgage and lease the land but had to pay their taxes on time. If they failed to pay taxes, they were evicted from the land. Later on, the government went on to claim that the land revenue was rent and not a tax. This negated the ownership rights of farmers.
- The government fixed the tax rates for temporary periods of around 20 to 30 years after which land revenue was revised. But the government retained the rights to increase the land revenue anytime at its own will.

Reasons for the Adoption of Ryotwari System

- The British officials believed that there are no zamindars or feudal lords with large estates in these areas. So it was difficult for the British to implement the zamindari system.
- The government revenues were fixed in the permanent settlement so it could not gain from the rise in prices. Moreover, the government felt that the revenue was being unnecessarily shared with the zamindars which reduced its profits.
- The zamindari system was oppressive for the peasants and led to frequent agrarian revolts. The government wanted to avoid these situations. It also hoped that by introducing ryotwari system, the purchasing power of peasants would increase, which would increase the demands for British goods in India.

Impact of Land Revenue System Under Ryotwari System

- The peasants did not benefit from this land revenue system and felt that smaller zamindars we are replaced by one giant zamindar, the British government . The farmers were forced to pay land revenue even during the famines otherwise they were forced to evict the land.

- Further, the land revenue was very high, between 45% to 55% in different areas, which led to the impoverishment of farmers.
- A major drawback of this system was over assessment of crop yields.
- The system of tenancy and landlordism still existed as the artisans who were now unemployed, worked as tenants for rich farmers. In the several districts, more than two third of the total agricultural land was leased.
- The government insisted the peasants grow cash crops which required higher investments. It led to the indebtedness of farmers and when prices declined they suffered the most. For example, when the prices of cotton declined after the end of American Civil War the peasants suffered the most. This created conditions ripe for rebellion that came in the form of Deccan Agrarian riots in 1875.

Mahalwari System

The Mahalwari system was introduced in around 30% of total area under British rule. It was a modified version of zamindari system. It was introduced in the Gangetic valley, major parts of North West Frontier province, Punjab and in Central provinces. In these areas, more than often there was a system of collective land holdings by the heads of the families or the landlords. The village community mainly included the group of elders, mainly from the higher castes.

- The revenue settlement was made with the Mahal (a village or a group of villages). The taxes were imposed collectively on the members of the community. These taxes were revised periodically.
- The taxes were distributed between the individual farmers who paid their share in the tax revenue. However, the ownership rights of lands were with the individual peasants, who could mortgage or sell his land.

Impacts of Land Revenue System Under Mahalwari System

- As the areas covered under the Mahalwari system in Northern India were fertile, the government put the revenue demands between 50% to 75% of the crop production.

- Within subsequent generations, the lands were fragmented, but the revenue demand was still high which had to be paid in cash. This led to their indebtedness in the hands of money lenders.
- Further, this system led to the eviction of farmers from the land. Due to this sub-leasing of land was more common in Mahalwari areas.

British revenue systems therefore led to the impoverishment of peasantry. by making land a transferable property, the British facilitated rise of absentee landlords, oppressive moneylenders and pushed the peasant further into misery.

11.4 COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

The Effects of Commercialization

We have how seen in detail how the dissimilar commercial craps were produced and sold. It will be obvious to you that each is dissimilar from the others in sure ways and it follows that the effects of commercialization will differ from time to time, lay to lay, and crop to crop. We cannot expect them to be exactly the same everywhere. Though, sure general characteristics, and sure general effects to exist: and it is on these that this part will focus. Impoverishment Let us start with the Indian economy as a whole. You will keep in mind that the substance of the British was to produce goods for export to Europe, so that funds could be accumulated in the Company‘s treasury in London. Private English businessmen also wanted to send money back so that they could ultimately retire to a life of comfort in Britain. The exports therefore served essentially to remit possessions out of India. It was the method through which the Indian _tribute‘ was transferred to Britain. India received no imports in return for these exports. Obviously such a transfer impoverished India. The growth and export of commercial crops thus served to impoverish rather than to enrich India. Instability Agriculture in India was exposed to several hazards; drought, flood or

other calamity could destroy the crops and ruin the farmers. But with commercial agriculture a new set of dangers appeared. The crops were now going to distant markets. If the West Indian sugar crop was good, prices might fall in Calcutta, and the sugar factories in Azamgarh might pay the peasants less than they had promised, and maltreat them if they complained. Likewise, Bundelkhand region (the northern part of Madhya Pradesh) began to grow a lot of cotton for the China market after 1816. The British officials claimed that the region thus became very wealthy, and increased the land tax. Though, the export declined in the 1830s, prices fell-but the taxes were not reduced. Both zamindars and peasants became impoverished, the land went out of farming, and finally in 1842 an uprising, recognized as the Bundela Rebellion broke out. Uttar Pradesh also suffered in a similar way in the 1830s. The price of cotton and indigo fell, and as Professor Siddiqi describes it: Peasants were abandoning their lands, Zamindars had suffered losses. Money-lenders had been ruined because the loans they had made had not been repaid; several of them now refused to lend money to the cultivators. Land had depreciated in value: innumerable cases were accounted of estates being put up for sale and no buyers coming forward.' The situation in rural Bengal was also similar at this time. This was not the result of coincidence. Flanked by 1830 and 1833 approximately all the big firms linked with the export trade and the finance of commercial agriculture in Bengal, Bihar and U.P. went bankrupt. The cause was that they had gone on despatching indigo to Britain even though prices were falling, because they wanted to get their money out of India. The Government made matters worse through sending out bullion to London, and thus causing a scarcity of money in India. Businessmen who had borrowed to produce the export crops establish that they could not repay the loans, and went bankrupt. Finally, of course the worst sufferers were the peasants who had been drawn through force and persuasion into the manufacture of the commercial crops. Falling prices in London came to ruin cultivators in India. This is what we mean when we say the commercialization added a fresh element of instability to the rural economy.

Subordination of 'Native' Capital

The European system of merchant capitalist trade provided initially for an significant role for the Indian native' traders: they were needed for the procurement of goods for export. But, as the English East India Company began to acquire political hegemony and a dominant location as the chief buyer of export goods, the local traders' location was reduced to that of dependent mediators and, in some branches of trade, to the status of servants of the English. In the middle of 18th century there were flourishing native business societies in several parts of India. These incorporated the Hindu, Jain and Bohra merchants of the Gujarat coast, the Khatris and Lohnas of Punjab and Sind, the Marwari banias of Rajasthan, the Moplas and Syrian Christians and Cochin Jews of present day Kerala, the Chettis and Komtis of Tamil and Andhra region, the Vaniks of Bengal, etc. Some of them, e.g. those in Gujarat or Kerala region, were prominent in overseas trade, and in various degrees all of them played in the internal economy some significant roles (in addition to their usual trade functions), in the pre- colonial era. They facilitated tax collection in cash through converting crops into money and sometimes also through paying, on behalf of the landlords or tax farmers, cash to the state in advance: often they were also guarantors of the tax collectors. The traders and bankers also facilitated remittance of revenue. For instance through means of a bill of swap or hundi the banking home of Jagat Seth paid the annual revenue payable through the Bengal Nawab to the Mughal emperor. Money-changing was an significant function performed through bankers, particularly the Sarrafs. This was an significant service not only to trade but also the state at a time when numerous local states each minted currency of its own and coins also came in from foreign countries through trade channels. The State depended heavily on the traditional trading societies for provisioning the army throughout the wars. From late 17th century, as you know, warfare became quite frequent. For supply of food to the army on the march, for loan of money to pay the soldiers' wages, for sale of plundered goods, etc. the state depended on traders and banjaras (migrating dealers in food granules, livestock etc.). Finally the traders and bankers were vitally significant to the State and the nobility as source of loans throughout

crises like warfare or the failure of crops, as well as other credit necessities in normal times. Thus in the pre-colonial era there was secure interdependence flanked by the State and the traders and bankers. As the local States began to wilt before the onslaught of the British and the East India Company‘s tentacles began to spread in India, some of these rows of business began to secure for Indian business societies. For instance, the banking home of Jagat Seth ceased to be the state banker and repository of revenue in 1765 when the Company became Dewan of Bengal: the minting rights of Jagat Seth were slowly taken absent through the English: that banking home and other native ones also lost their European clients to English banks and agency houses of Calcutta. There was much change in the location of the local traders throughout the late 18th century in the trade in commodities for export. We can seem at the instance of Bengal trade in cloth, the leading export thing. Up to 1753 the English East India Company, like other European companies and private traders, depended on the Indian merchants to procure cloth: these merchants were described dadni merchants since they were the agency through which dadan or advance was given through the Company to the artisans or weavers. From 1753 the English Company began to replace the self-governing dadni merchants with gomastas who were mediators of the English and dependent on commission paid through the English as a percentage on value of cloth composed through these mediators. After the battle of Plassey the rising political power in the hands of the English enabled them to with in excess of to this new gomasta system which reduced the Indian merchants to commissioned brokers. In 1775 a variant of this system, recognized as the contract system‘, consolidated the location of the English in relation to the Indian brokers.

Finally, in 1789 the system of direct agency’ was introduced, dispensing with Indian middlemen altogether. Thus step through step Indian businessmen were reduced to a subordinate location (e.g. in salt, saltpetre business) or virtually excluded (e.g. in raw silk, cotton cloth) through the end of the 18th century. The decline of export industries in the early half of the 19th century, restricted opportunities for Indian businessmen

further. In the new rows opening up (e.g. jute and opium), a role subordinate to the English business houses was assigned to Indian businessmen. Petty money lending, internal trade in agricultural and artisanal products, the sale of imported manufacturesthese were the regions of action of Indian businessmen in Bengal in the first half of the 19th century. It is true, though, that within the in excess of all pattern of foreign capital‘s power in excess of Indian businessman, there remained spaces for the latter to do well in business and to accumulate capital. For instance, the business in raw cotton and opium in western India (commodities produced in big quantities in the princely states outside of Bombay Presidency), allowed considerable accumulation of capital in the hands of Indian businessmen; some of the Parsi businessmen in the first half of the 19th century became major exporters of these commodities. It is the capital accumulation which led to industrial investments in Bombay and the growth of a textile industry which challenged manchester‘s hold in excess of the Indian market in the early 20th century.

Check Your Progress 1

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 Rural economy in eastern, western, south, central, northern India and Princely state.

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2. Describe Rural Economy With special reference on new types of Land revenue administration.

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3. What is Commercialization of agriculture?

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11.5 RURAL INDEBTEDNESS

There is an extreme poverty in the rural areas of the country. Thus, the rural people are borrowing a heavy amount of loan regularly for meeting their requirements needed for production, consumption and for meeting social commitments. Thus debt passes from generation to generation.

Although they borrow every year but they are not in a position to repay their loans regularly as because either loans are larger or their agricultural production is not sufficient enough to repay their past debt. Thus, the debt of farmers gradually increases leading to the problem of high degree of rural indebtedness in our country.

Thus, it is quite correct to observe with Darling that **"Indian farmer is born in debt, lives in debt and dies in debt"**.

Essay # 2. Extent of Rural Indebtedness in India:

It is quite important to study the extent of rural indebtedness of an agricultural country like India. In the meantime several estimates have already been made on the rural indebtedness in India since its' pre-independence period. Table 11.1 shows some of those important estimates.

Table 11.1 Extent of Rural Indebtedness in India

Estimators	Year	Credit (₹ crore)
1. Mr. Maclagan	1911	300
2. M. L. Darling	1925	600
3. Central Banking Enquiry Committee	1931	990
4. P. J. Thomas	1933	2,200
5. R.K. Mukherjee	1935	1,200
6. Reserve Bank of India	1937	1,800
7. N.S. Naidu	1938	1,100
8. Shri Menon	1938	1,800
9. All India Rural Credit Survey Committee	1951-52	750
10. National Income Committee	1954	913
11. S. Thirumalai	1956	1,800
12. Ministry of Finance	1962	2,762
13. All India Rural Credit and Investment Survey	1972	4,000
14. Rural Credit Survey Report	1981	6,193

Table 11.1 reveals that the extent of rural indebtedness as per various estimates has been increasing considerably from Rs 600 crore in 1925 (as per M.L. Darling's estimates) to Rs 1800 crore in 1938 (as per RBI estimate) and to Rs 2,762 crore in 1962 (as per Ministry of Finance's estimates) and then finally to Rs 6,193 crore in 1981 (as per Rural Credit Survey Report).

As per the Rural Credit Survey Report in the last two decades, i.e., between 1961 and 1981, the extent of outstanding rural debt has increased from Rs 1,954 crore to Rs 6,193 crore. Further, the rural indebtedness grew by 97 per cent between 1961-71 and by 60 per cent between 1971-81.

The average debt for an indebted cultivator family had also increased from Rs 503 in 1971 to Rs 661 in 1981 indicating a rise of 31 per cent.

Some of the major observations of the survey were as follows:

(i) 48.6 per cent of farmers' households were indebted.

(ii) Of the total number of indebted farmers, 61 per cent had operational holding below 1 hectare.

(iii) Of the total outstanding amount, 41.6 per cent was taken for purposes other than the form related activities. 30.6 per cent of the total

loan was taken for capital expenditure purposes and 27.8 per cent was taken for current expenditure in form-related activities.

(iv) 57.7 per cent of the outstanding amount was sourced from institutional channels (including government) and the balance 42.3 per cent from money lenders, traders, relatives and friends.

(v) The expert Group estimate that in 2003 non-institutional channels accounted for Rs 48,000 crore of farmer's debt out of which Rs 18,000 crore was availed of at an interest rate of 30 per cent per annum or more.

The NSSO report has also made a revelation about Punjab. As per NSSO report, the amount of outstanding loan per farmer household for all classes in Punjab was Rs 41,576 against the all India average of Rs 12,585. Similarly, the number of farmer households having outstanding loan were 12.07 in Punjab against an all India number of 434.24 lakh.

Moreover, in terms of percentage, 65.4 per cent farmer households were indebted in Punjab against an all India average of 48.6 per cent.

Indebtedness or overhang of debt has been both due to the exogenous factors such as weather induced crop uncertainties and endogenous reasons such as consumption needs of the farmers hat have taken precedence over the repayment obligations. For many farmers this could be genuine as incomes from agriculture may not have been sufficient to generate a surplus.

Causes of Rural Indebtedness in India:

The following are the important causes of rural indebtedness in India:

(i) Poverty:

Indian farmers are very poor and do not have any past saving to repay their debt or to make improvement on their land. Thus, poverty forces the cultivators to multiply their debt.

(ii) Defective Agricultural Structure:

Rural indebtedness is also resulted from defective agricultural structure which includes defective land tenure system, adoption of outdated techniques, increasing pressure on land, defective marketing, absence of alternative sources of income etc.

(iii) No Past Savings:

Indian farmers have a tendency to borrow fund for the improvement of their land and agricultural operation although they have no past saving.

(iv) Unproductive Expenditure:

Indian farmers are very much accustomed to make huge expenditures for unproductive purposes such as marriage and other social ceremonies. All these have to led to growing indebtedness of the farmers of the country.

(v) Ancestral Debt:
Indian farmers inherit their father's debt.

(vi) Unscrupulous Moneylender:

Moneylenders in India are also very much responsible for the growing rural indebtedness in the country as they encourage the Indian farmers to borrow, charge a very exorbitant rate of interest and manipulate their accounts.

(vii) Uncertain Monsoon:

Indian agriculture is very much depending on monsoon. About 65 per cent of the agricultural operations are rainfed. As rain is most uncertain, therefore, agricultural operation has become a gamble in monsoon.

(viii) Illiteracy of Farmers:

Most of the Indian farmers are illiterate. Unscrupulous moneylenders or mahajans are utilizing this weakness of farmers to create a vicious circle of indebtedness.

(ix) Fragmentation:

There is a growing trend of sub-division and fragmentation of land holdings which has been resulting in a poor level of income for Indian farmers. Such poor income forces the farmers towards growing indebtedness.

(x) Litigation:

There is an increasing tendency of litigation among the Indian farmers which has magnified the problem of indebtedness in the country.

(xi) Defective Marketing:

Agricultural marketing in India is very much defective. This never allows the farmers a remunerative price for their products and sometimes forces them to go for a distress sale. Such a situation is highly responsible for growing poverty and indebtedness among the Indian farmers.

(xii) Natural Calamities:

Natural calamities like floods and droughts and backwardness of agriculture are also widely responsible for growing rural indebtedness in the country.

Thus, all these factors are responsible for growing rural indebtedness in India.

Consequences of Rural Indebtedness in India:

The consequences of rural indebtedness in India are analysed below:

(i) Pauperization:
Growing rural indebtedness is highly responsible for growing pauperization of the small and marginal farmers in India.

(ii) Loss of Interest:
Interest in cultivation is gradually being lost by the small farmers as they are deprived of much of their produce by the moneylenders due to their indebtedness.

(iii) Distress Sale:
Indebted small farmers are forced to sell their produce at a very minimum price.

(iv) Bonded Labour:
Indebtedness creates a class of landless labourers and tenants who have very little or nothing to pay to the landlords and moneylenders and become the bonded labour or solves of the landlords. All these have direct social consequences in India.

(v) Poor Livelihood:
The growing rural indebtedness has raised the problem of repayment of loan along with interest which forces the farmers to adopt a poor livelihood.

(vi) Transfer of Land:

The growing burden of indebtedness has forced the farmers even to sell their land to moneylenders and mahajans and thereby become a landless agricultural labourer.

(vii) Evil Social Impact:

Growing indebtedness usually divides the society into haves and have-not's leading to a rise of class conflicts in the society. This is really dangerous. In this connection, Prof. Thomas has rightly observed, "A society that sinks into indebtedness is like a volcano.

It erupts in the form of class conflict. The society is inflicted with inefficiency that hinders the pace of growth." Thus, rural indebtedness have many evil consequences. Thus, steps must be taken to remove it as early as possible.

11.6 RURAL POWER RELATIONS

Power—Market and the Producers

Let us now turn from the realm of traders to that of producers, the farmers and artisans. Very little is recognized of the trends in manufacture that could tell us in relation to the national income or in relation to the earnings of artisans and farmers. Though, we do know in relation to the way manufacture and marketing was organised in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. How was that affected through the behaviors of the English East India Company, its servants occupied in private trade and English free traders' and agency houses? The essence of merchant capitalist operation is to buy cheap and sell dear'. It is good to have a monopoly to enable one to do that. It is even better to be able to use coercion and state power to do that really well. This was the beau try of the location of the East India Company as a government (since 1765 in Bengal and in some other parts of India where the Company extended territorial manage. As you know, through the 1770's and I780's there had urbanized a communal monopoly of the English Company and its servants occupied in private trade in respect of sure commodities, particularly cotton cloth in Bengal. That meant that artisans had no

option but to sell their products to the Company and its servants. How was such a situation brought in relation to the? To a great extent this was the result of use of coercion. A classic instance is provided through the restructuration of the connection flanked by the weavers on the one hand, and the Company and the servants of the Company on the other, flanked by the 1750's and the 1780‘s in Bengal. Up to the middle of the 18th century, the weavers appear to have enjoyed independence and freedom to sell their products to the English, the French or the Dutch or to Indian merchants. From the 1750‘s, the gomastas began to compel weavers to sell their products to the English. The elimination of the French and the Dutch from competition through military means helped the procedure. Extortion through fraudulent undervaluation of cloth and chicanery in the English Factories became general. The weavers were bullied and harassed through the Factors, through the agency of Gomastas, to accept advance and to produce cloth. In the 1780‘s this practice became systematized as the Khatbandi system: the artisans were indentured to sell exclusively to the Company under Regulations passed through the Bengal government. Thus the artisans were reduced step through step to the location of bonded labourers through the denial of free access to the market, through the use of coercion, and through laws and regulations made through the Company‘s government. Another instance that you already know of is the manufacture of indigo: in the ryoti system the peasant was forced to cultivate and to supply indigo at a low price through the English indigo planters. To a lesser degree, opium was also produced under the threat of coercion. Now, what is the result of this system of semi-monopoly and coercion? It creates a buyers‘market, i.e. a situation where the buyer can dictate the price, the buyer being the English Company, its servants, and later, English traders, planters and agency houses. It was, of course, to be expected that an English Factor in the later 18th century would pay the weaver as little as possible, or that the English Indigo planter in early 19th century would pay the indigo-grower ryot as little as possible, if the Englishman had the advantage of a monopoly location or coercive power. Lower prices paid to the weaver or the indigo farmer would inflate the profit margin of the English trader. Thus, parts of the artisans and peasants were producing under coercion

goods which did not fetch a price that would allow more than subsistence to the producer. Consider this situation where trading capital gets a nice profit margin without having to create any capital investment in the manufacture of cotton cloth or indigo or opium.

Why should the trader invest his money in the manufacture procedure if he is creation good money merely through buying the product at a low price? And consider the producer who obtains such a low price that he cannot add to his capital stock, for he has scarcely any surplus after feeding himself and his family. How can the artisan or the weaver add to his capital stock, i.e. his tools and implements, if he is forced to sell his product at a price so low as to create accumulation of funds in his hands impossible? Then who will invest and add to the capital stock and generate higher manufacture with new tools and implements and machines? In other words who will invest in technological development and augment in productivity? The answer is, no one. Thus the scheme of things outlined above contains one of the explanations of the longstanding stagnation in technology and productivity characterizing 19th century India. In fairness one necessity add that Indian trading and money lending capital played the same role as that of foreign trading interests in this regard; the only variation was that the latter received more firm backing from state power in the initial stages of the establishment of this pattern. In short, capital remained outside of manufacture procedure, leaving technology and organization of manufacture through and big where it had been in the 18th century. It is of course true that there are variations from region to region, from industry to industry. In some cases the involvement of the capitalist was greater; e.g. in the raw silk industry in Bengal where wage employment was not uncommon, or in the nijabadi system where indigo planters employed people in farms owned through the planters. These are exceptional cases and affected only a small part of producers.

11.7 LANDLORDS, PEASANTS AND AGRICULTURAL LABOURS AND INSTITUTIONS

A **landlord** is the owner of a house, apartment, condominium, land or real estate which is rented or leased to an individual or business, who is called a tenant (also a lessee or renter). When a juristic person is in this position, the term landlord is used. Other terms include lessor and owner. The term landlady may be used for female owners, and lessor may be used regardless of gender. The manager of a pub in the United Kingdom, strictly speaking a licensed victualler, is referred to as the landlord/lady.

The concept of a landlord may be traced back to the feudal system of manoralism (seignorialism), where a landed estate is owned by a Lord of the Manor (mesne lords), usually members of the lower nobility which came to form the rank of knights in the high medieval period, holding their fief via subinfeudation, but in some cases the land may also be directly subject to a member of higher nobility, as in the royal domain directly owned by a king, or in the Holy Roman Empire imperial villages directly subject to the emperor. The medieval system ultimately continues the system of villas and latifundia (peasant-worked broad farmsteads) of the Roman Empire.

In modern times, landlord describes any individual(s) or entity (e.g. government body or institution) providing housing for persons who cannot afford or do not want to own their own homes. They may be peripatetic, stationed on a secondment away from their home, not want the risk of a mortgage and/or negative equity, may be a group of co-occupiers unwilling to enter into the ties of co-ownership, or may be improving their credit rating or bank balance to obtain a better-terms future mortgage.

Social stigmas of lower-market landlords and tenants in a property-owning culture

Renters (tenants or other licensees) at the lowest end of the payment scale may be in social or economic difficulty and due to their address or length of tenure may suffer a social stigma.

A sometimes widely promoted social stigma can impact certain for-profit owners of rental property, especially in troubled neighborhoods. The term "slumlord" / "slum landlord" is sometimes used to describe landlords in those circumstances. Public improvement money/private major economic investment can improve areas and negate the stigma. In the extreme government compulsory purchase powers in many countries enable slum clearance to replace the worst of neighbourhoods.

Peasants:

A peasant is a pre-industrial agricultural laborer or farmer with limited land ownership, especially one living in the middle ages under feudalism and paying rent, tax, fees, or services to a landlord. In Europe, peasants were divided into three classes according to their personal status: slave, serf, and free tenant. Peasants hold title to land either in fee simple or by any of several forms of land tenure, among them socage, quit-rent, leasehold, and copyhold.

In a colloquial sense, "peasant" often has a pejorative meaning that is therefore seen as insulting and controversial in some circles, even when referring to farm laborers in the developing world; as early as in 13th-century Germany the word also could mean "rustic," or "robber," as the English term villain. In 21st-century English, the term includes the pejorative sense of "an ignorant, rude, or unsophisticated person". The word rose to renewed popularity in the 1940s-1960s as a collective term, often referring to rural populations of developing countries in general - as the "semantic successor to 'native', incorporating all its condescending and racial overtones".

The word peasantry is commonly used in a non-pejorative sense as a collective noun for the rural population in the poor and developing

countries of the world. Via Campesina, an organization claiming to represent about 200 million farm-workers' rights around the world, self-defines as an "International Peasant's Movement" as of 2019. The United Nations Human Rights Council prominently utilizes the term "peasant" in a non-pejorative sense in its 2018 Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas. In general English-language literature, the use of "peasant" has been in steady decline since 1970.

More precise terms that describe current farm laborers without land ownership are farmworker or campesino, tenant farmer, and sharecropper.

Looking around, we find a great deal of confusion in present-day India, especially in the Hindi press, as regards ’peasant’. Quite often it is used interchangeably with ’farmer’. Technically, these two are different concepts with connotations of their own.

While ’peasant’ has been in existence ever since agriculture began, ’farmer’ has come into being only with the advent of capitalism when profit became the main motive of agricultural work. Strictly speaking, a peasant is one who has the right to cultivate the piece of land he has in his possession. He works and grows crops on this plot with the help of his and his family’s labour. The main aim of production is to satisfy the needs of his and his family, to have sufficient cattle-feed and to provide seeds for the next sowing. Since he cannot produce all the requisite goods and services to meet all his needs, he has to sell a portion of his produce to get money in order to buy goods and services he needs so that his consumption is enriched Thus he indulges in simple commodity production and the formula for this is commodity-money-commodity. The function of money and market here is just to facilitate exchange. Normally, he does not produce anything that he does not consume. In India, a peasant, for ages, has been getting the services of barber, washer man, carpenter, blacksmith, potter, priest, etc. on the basis of jajmani, that is, giving a share in the produce fixed by tradition and custom.

From time immemorial, the peasant had been paying rent to the feudal lord or some other representative of the supreme ruler in the form of a fixed proportion of the produce. In India, it had been known as bhawali (produce rent). Before the introduction of new land systems by the British, cash rent was not prevalent at all. As a result of the prevalence of bhawali rent, the state was also made to bear risks arising from drought, excess rains, floods, earth quake, attacks by locusts, etc. In old records one finds that the ruler was under obligation to provide irrigation and other requisite facilities to peasants.

As the peasant's activities remained confined to his village, his mental horizon was extremely limited. He was rarely aware of the happenings outside his locality. He used to go only to local markets, not very far from his village and, a few times, on pilgrimage. Most of his relatives were in or around his village. Obviously, his outlook and values of life remained narrow.

Agricultural activities remained dependent largely on nature. He was always troubled by worries such as: would rains come on time and adequate quantum? Would the rains be properly spread during the season so that sowing and ripening of crops could take place without any difficulty? The uncertainties associated with these questions made him superstitious and a staunch believer in astrology, religion, rituals, etc. It is needless to add that, in the olden days, there were neither meteorologists nor agronomists. He had to depend on the almanac and conventional wisdom. Most of the festivals were connected with various stages of crops. Gods and goddesses too had connections with agriculture. For example, the Hindus worshipped Indra for rains. Since the rate of growth of population was extremely slow and the average life span was very short, certain gods were especially worshipped for children and their long life. The struggle against nature was so difficult and prolonged that he did not have time to think of other things and be bold and brave.

Generally, peasants did not take much interest in the struggles to grab state power or the foreign invasions because they were busy eking out a living. The change of rulers did not affect them or their pattern of life in any significant way. One may recall what the maid servant Manthara told her mistress, the queen, in The Ramayana of Tulasidasa (translated into English by F.S. Growse): â€œWhoever is king, what do I lose? Shall I cease to be a servant and become a queen now?â€ Similarly, when the great battle of Mahabharata was fought for eighteen days, peasants remained unaffected nor did they take much interest in the progress of fighting. They went undisturbed with their chores. There is a story connected with Lord Buddha that illustrates this point more vividly.

It is said that, after achieving enlightenment, Buddha proceeded towards Varanasi, the most important cultural centre of the day to spread his message. Just before crossing the Ganges, at dawn, he found a peasant hurrying with his oxen and plough. Buddha hailed him and told him that the world was full of sorrows and sufferings and there was a way out of them and that way he had discovered and was eager to reveal to him. The peasant bowed to him and told him with great humility that he had no time to spare because his first priority was to plough and sow his plot before the moisture disappeared. In the evening he would come to him and listen to his sermon. Buddha crossed the Ganges and the Varuna and went to Sarnath where he got the only son of the richest trader of Varanasi as his disciple who was eager to listen to him.

During pre-capitalist days, land revenue was a major source of state's income and it was this that went into financing military expeditions, construction of palaces and marvels like Taj Mahal and Qutab Minar. Peasants tolerated the increasing burden of taxation only up to a point and beyond that they either rebelled or fled to some other kingdom or forests. It must not be forgotten that, even after the establishment of the British rule and introduction of new agrarian systems, for a long time, land was not a commodity, that is, it could not be sold and purchased. In the course of time, the situation changed and Bhawali (produce rent) gave way to cash rent and this freed the state and its agents from bearing

any portion of risks connected with agriculture. Peasants had to find requisite amount of cash to discharge their rent obligations and pay for other goods and services, which were no longer locally produced or available. They had to produce such crops that could not be wholly or partially consumed by them and had ready markets. They began growing poppy, indigo, cotton, etc. The quantum of demand and the prices for them came to depend on international market. Thus ups and downs there had far reaching impact on their life.

In Bengal and Bihar European planters secured zamindari rights and forced peasants to grow indigo on a fixed proportion of their land holdings. Consequently, during 1859-62, the rural areas of the then Bengal Presidency remained disturbed. In north Bihar, peasants remained agitated till 1920. Both poppy and indigo cultivation vanished because of the developments in the international market.

During the mid-19th century, as a result of the American Civil War, the supply of American cotton to British textile mills fell and the prices rose. The British millowners turned to the purchase of Indian cotton. Increasing demand as well as prices induced farmers here to divert more and more land to cotton. They increased their consumption spending and incurred debts to finance them, hoping that the future would be equally rosy. As ill luck would have it, both demand as well as prices for Indian cotton slumped when the American Civil war came to and end the supply of cotton from the USA was resumed. Consequently, a large number of cotton growers in the Deccan region of India failed to discharge their debt obligations and moneylenders began grabbing their land and other possessions. This led to widespread riots that came to be known as Deccan riots.

Again during the Great Depression, peasants could not pay up their rents because their produce failed to fetch sufficient cash. Their land was auctioned off to realize the arrears of rent. This led to widespread peasant agitations in Bihar and UP.

From the last decade of the 19th century onwards, it was found that traders, lawyers, doctors, teachers, bureaucrats, etc. who could generate savings began investing them in the purchase of land and tenures to derive regular incomes and, at the same time, advance their social standing. They engaged servants to manage their holdings and labourers to cultivate and grow crops mainly for the sale in the market. After Independence most of the tenure holders, exploiting the loopholes in land reform laws, transformed themselves into farmers. There were others who leased in land from small and marginal cultivators and began farming. Agri-business corporations induced farmers of al size to go in for genetically modified seeds, chemical fertilisers. Insecticides, pesticides, tractors, etc. and borrow from private lenders to finance them. When the crops failed or market was down, these farmers could not discharge their debt obligations and went under. Some of them committed suicide. This phenomenon is still on.

Rural India is fast undergoing such rapid changes that it is just a matter of time that peasant will become an endangered specie. The eminent historian, Eric Hobsbawm, has this to say in connection with â€œthe dramatic decline and fall of peasantry, which had until the nineteenth century formed the great bulk of the human race as well as the foundation of its economyâ€ :

The fall in the numbers working in agriculture is obvious in the developed world. Today, the figure is 4 per cent of the occupied population in OECDâ€¦and two per cent in the US; and it is evident elsewhere. In the mid-1960s there were five states in Europe with more than half the occupied population working in this area, eleven in the Americas, eighteen in Asia and, with three exceptionsâ€¦ all of Africa. The situation today is dramatically differentâ€¦ Even Pakistan has fallen below the 50 per cent mark, while Turkey has moved from a peasant population of three quarters to one third. Even the major fortress of peasant agriculture in south-east Asia has been breached in several placesâ€¦ By 2006 even China, with 85 per cent of its population peasants in 1950, was down to 50 per cent or so. In fact, with the

exception of most sub-Saharan Africa, the only solid bastions of peasant society left—say, over 60 per cent of the occupied population in 2000—are in the former South Asian empires of Britain and France—India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and the Indochinese countries. But, given the acceleration of industrialisation, for how long will this continue to be the case?

This poser needs to be taken seriously because the reduction of the proportion of peasantry in the occupied population is going to have tremendous impact India's social, cultural, economic and political life. The traditional parameters and paradigm of economics and sociology are going to become less and less relevant. The entry of big capital, whether Indian or foreign, through contract farming and retail trade is going to hasten the process of making peasantry redundant.

Agricultural Laborers:

Agricultural labourers are those persons who work on the land of others on wages for the major part of the year and earn a major portion of their income as a payment in the form of wages for works performed on the agricultural farms owned by others.

The first Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee of 1950-51 regarded those workers as agricultural workers who normally worked for 50 per cent of more days on the payment of wages.

The second Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee, 1956-57 accepted a broad view and included all those workers into agricultural labourers who were badly engaged in agriculture and allied activities like animal husbandry, dairy, piggery, poultry farming etc.

This first committee again classified the agricultural workers into two different categories such as:

(a) attached labourers are those workers who are attached to some other farmer households on the basis of a written or oral agreement.

These attached workers are working as per the wishes of their masters and are not free to work at any other place. They are working both in the house and farms of their masters. Thus, these attached labourers are working as serfs or servants and they are also known as bonded labourers.

(b) On the other hand, casual labourers are those workers who are free to work in any farm on the payment of daily wages.

In India these casual labourers include:

(a) small farmers having a very small size of holdings who devote most of their time working on the farm of others;
(b) landless labourers who exclusively work for others;
(c) tenants who work on leased land but work most of the time on the land of others;
(d) sharecroppers who also work as agricultural labourers.

Check Your Progress 2

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 rural indebtedness?

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2. What are rural power relations?

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3. Discuss about Landlords, peasants and Agricultural labours and institutions.

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11.8 LET US SUM UP

Contemporary historian Rajat Kanta Ray argues the economy established by the British in the 18th century was a form of plunder and a catastrophe for the traditional economy of Mughal India, depleting food and money stocks and imposing high taxes that helped cause the famine of 1770, which killed one-third of the people of Bengal.

William Digby estimated that from 1870-1900 £900 million was transferred from India.

The EIC's opium business was hugely exploitative and ended up impoverishing Indian peasants. Poppy was cultivated against a substantial loss to over 1.3 million peasants that cultivated it in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

In contrast, historian Niall Ferguson argues that under British rule, the village economy's total after-tax income rose from 27% to 54% (the sector represented three quarters of the entire population) and that the British had invested £270 million in Indian infrastructure, irrigation and industry by the 1880s (representing one-fifth of entire British investment overseas) and by 1914 that figure had reached £400 million. He also argues that the British increased the area of irrigated land by a factor of one-eight, contrasting with 5% under the Mughals.

The subject of the economic impact of British imperialism on India remains disputable. The issue was raised by British Whig politician Edmund Burke who in 1778 began a seven-year impeachment trial against Warren Hastings and the East India Company on charges including mismanagement of the Indian economy.

P. J. Marshall argues the British regime did not make any sharp break with the traditional economy and control was largely left in the hands of regional rulers. The economy was sustained by general conditions of prosperity through the latter part of the 18th century, except the frequent famines with high fatality rates. Marshall notes the British raised revenue through local tax administrators and kept the old Mughal rates of taxation. Marshall also contends the British managed this primarily indigenous-controlled economy through cooperation with Indian elites

11.9 KEY WORDS

Landlords: A landlord is the owner of a house, apartment, condominium, land or real estate which is rented or leased to an individual or business, who is called a tenant (also a lessee or renter). When a juristic person is in this position, the term landlord is used. Other terms include lessor and owner. The term landlady may be used for female owners, and lessor may be used regardless of gender. The manager of a pub in the United Kingdom, strictly speaking a licensed victualler, is referred to as the landlord/lady.

Agricultural Laborers: Agricultural labourers are those persons who work on the land of others on wages for the major part of the year and earn a major portion of their income as a payment in the form of wages for works performed on the agricultural farms owned by others.

11.10 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss the Rural economy in eastern, western, south, central, northern India and Princely state

2. Describe Rural Economy With special reference on new types of Land revenue administration
3. What is Commercialization of agriculture?
4. What is rural indebtedness?
5. What are rural power relations?
6. Discuss about Landlords, peasants and Agricultural labours and institutions.

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11.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 11.2
2. See Section 11.3
3. See Section 11.4

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section 11.5
2. See Section 11.6
3. See Section 11.7

UNIT 12: URBAN ECONOMY IN INDIA

STRUCTURE

12.0 Objectives

12.1 Introduction

12.2 Urban economy

12.3 Artisans and industrial production

12.4 Debate over deindustrialization

12.5 Rise of internal markets

12.6 Urban centres and communications

12.7 Let us sum up

12.8 Key Words

12.9 Questions for Review

12.10 Suggested readings and references

12.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

12.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit, we can able to know:

- To know the Urban economy;
- To discuss the Artisans and industrial production;
- To make Debate over deindustrialization;
- To know Rise of internal markets;
- To discuss the Urban centres and communications.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Town and Country in Medieval Age: Towns and Cities:

History of the people, their social, economic and cultural life is certainly of great interest to the students of history than the political events or the military campaigns of any period.

This is particularly true of the medieval period of Indian history. The real history of Mughal India consists in the socio-economic cultural condition of the people of the period.

During the Mughal period, particularly under Akbar's rule India had as many as 120 cities and 3,200 towns. These cities and towns differed in origin and history of their growth as well as in character from those of the Western world. While the towns and cities in the West grew centering round industry and commerce those in India, except, the port towns, most of the cities and towns grew on rural bases, that is, rural areas gradually developed into towns or cities due to residence of rulers, governors or high officials or because due to garrisoning of soldiers or encampment of royal army for long at times of expeditions.

Some towns, as has been mentioned above grew in port areas because of the growth of warehouses and influx of indigenous and foreign merchants. Some towns also originated as business marts. What distinguished the Indian towns and cities was that the bases of these towns and cities were rural and not only the food-stuff but also all other consumer goods would come into the towns and cities from the rural areas.

There were a few Karkhanas in the capital cities in which articles specially needed by the kings and Emperors, nobles and high officials, such as dresses, used to be manufactured. With the change of time, however, and in particular with the advent of the European merchants Indian towns and cities also gradually began to assume industrial and commercial character.

We have interesting observations of Ralph Fitch about the plenty and prosperity in the major Indian cities of India during the Mughal period (1585). He observes "Agra and Fatehpore are two very great cities, either of them much greater than London and very populous. Between Agra and Fatehpore are twelve miles, and all the way is a market of victual and other things, as full as though a man were in a market."

Similarly Edward Terry refers, to Punjab as a large province and most fruitful. "Lahore is the chief city thereof, built very large and abounds both in people and riches, one of the principal cities of trade in all India." According to C.D. Monserrate, Lahore was not second to any city in Europe or Asia. Abdul Fazl describes Ahmadabad as a "noble city in a high state of prosperity" and in climate and production of choicest things unrivalled in the world.

The ancient capitals like Kanauj, Vijayanagar, etc. where in a state of decay and the modern cities like Calcutta, Bombay and Madras had not come up. The more flourishing towns and cities besides the ones already referred to above were Delhi, Allahabad, Benares, Multan, Ajmer, Patna, Ujjain, Rajmahal, Dacca, Burdwan, Hughli, Chittagong, etc.

Different parts of the country and important towns and cities were connected by roads which were Kacha, i.e. not metalled. Roads were shaded by trees on both sides and dotted with Sarais for the merchants and the travellers. The city of Agra which was capital of the Mughals for a long time was connected with the rest of the empire by a network of roads. The Grant Trunk Road ran from Dacca in the east to Kabul in the north-west passing through Patna, Allahabad, Benares, Agra, Mathura, Lahore, Attock.

Another important road ran from Agra to Asirgarh in the south and a third from Agra to Ahmadabad. Apart from the roads, rivers afforded excellent means of communication both for human and mercantile traffic. The Ganga, Jamuna, Ghagra, Indus, the rivers of the south and of Bengal was navigable and frequently used for the transport of commercial goods and troops.

12.2 URBAN ECONOMY

India of those days as even of today lived in villages and the society was broadly divided into Hindus and Muslims. The Hindus needless to say formed the great majority of the population; they included the Jains, the Buddhists and the Sikhs among them. The upper classes of the Hindu

society mostly belonged to the Brahman, Kayastha, Rajput and Vaishya castes and did neither inter-dine nor inter-marry between them.

There were many other mixed classes in the society. The Baidyas were a mixed class next to the Brahmanas. These apart there were various other castes and sub-castes which grew up as a result of social mixture i.e. intermarriage between castes. There was much conservatism among the Hindus of upper classes.

The Muslims were divided into two major sections, viz:

(a) Those who came with the conquerors or for trade and commerce or employment from countries like Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, Abyssinia etc. and

(b) The converts from the indigenous Hindu population and their descendants.

As the country was open to foreign traders and travellers, there were also people of various nationalities from Europe, such as the Portuguese, English, Parsis, Chinese etc. The history of the medieval period of India like that of the Middle Ages of the European history is largely occupied by the story of warfare of the kings and emperors. The common people and their condition were by and large beyond the attention of the historians except insofar as they hurts themselves, into history by their activities in relation to the kings or emperors.

Abul Fazl and some European travellers of the Mughal period have referred to the contemporary people of India and their condition. Among the European travellers Ralph Fitch, William Hawking's, Sir Thomas Roe, Francisco Paelsart, Bernier, Tevernier, Thevenot etc. deserve special mention.

The society during the Mughal period was feudal in nature. Nobility and the officials of the state were entitled to high esteem in the society. Their

standard of living was very high. Luxury, debauchery, drinking etc. were their special characteristics. Apart from the kings and emperors the nobles also had their harem. From Abul Fazl it is known that the imperial harem had five thousand women. The nobility was characterised by mutual jealousy, conspiracy and recrimination.

Below the nobility, we find the existence of the middle class whose number was comparatively small. Their standard of living was moderate and far below that of the nobles and state officials. Middle class was above the contemporary vices of dinking, debauchery and lavity. But the merchants of the west-coast of India were fabulously rich and their standard of living was also very high.

The condition of the common people, compared to the nobility and the middle class was miserable. They had not the wherewithal to purchased warm clothes, shoes etc. which were luxury items to them. Francisco Paelsart remarked that in normal years although they would have no difficulty in maintaining themselves, in times of natural calamities like flood, drought and famine their condition would beggar description.

Paelsart who lived in India for long seven years during the Mughal rule remarked that the labourers, the grocers, the bearers or servant classes were three sections of the society who were nominally free men but in reality their condition was no better than that of the slaves.

The common people lived in huddles of mud and reeds. They were poor yet they were subjected to exactions by the state officials. From the time of Shah Jahan there was much repression on the common people, particularly the peasants. Gradually their condition became desperate. The provincial governors and officials realised as much money as they could from the peasants by repressing them.

About the social habits and practices Edward Terry remarks that “None of the people there at any time seen drunk (though they might find liquor enough to do it but the very offal and dregs of that people, and these

rarely or very seldom." In the diet and food habits the Indians were temperate; and they were polite to the strangers. The prominent social practices of the time among the Hindus were Suttee, Kulinism etc. and among the Hindus and the Muslims, child-marriage and dowry-system.

Akbar sought to check the evil practices of Suttee and child-marriage. From the writings of Bolt, Scrafton and Crauford we come to know that social evils increased in Bengal during the eighteenth century. In Maharashtra dowry-system was discouraged. Widow re-marriage was prevalent in certain parts of India.

Among the various types of deterioration in the social life in the eighteenth century, one redeeming feature was the continuity of Hindu-Muslim re-approachment and growth of understanding and amiability between the two great Indian communities. The reign of Akbar was remarkably important in this regard, even under Aurangzeb a Muhammadan poet Alwal wrote many Hindi poems and translated Padmavat into Bengali. While the Hindus showed reverence to Muslim Pirs (saints), the Muslims did likewise to the Hindu Yogis (Saints).

One of the demoralizing institutions of the society was slavery and there was a regular slave trade. Likewise eunuchs were bought and sold. Akbar's attempt to prohibit it did not succeed. The upper classes dressed themselves in a long coat and light trousers and turbans. Many wore a .silk or cotton scarf round the waist and slung down the ends of the scarf down the leg. Poor Hindus wore dhotis one end of which was tied round the waist. Poor Muslims put on pyjama and long shirt.

Perfumes and oils were used by men and women, both Hindu and Muslim. Pan served as a sort of lip stick. Hindu women wore saris while the Muslims women wore pyjamas or ghagras. Soap made of pulses or soap berry was used. Muslim men and women used collyrium in their eyes and women coloured their palms and feet with Mehdi.

Among the indoor games chess, cards, games of guites, satranj and among outdoor games hunting, polo (Chaugan) etc. was popular with the high ranking people. Wrestling, juggler's feats, magic shows etc. were enjoyed by all. Games like tiger hunting, elephant snaring were the privileges of the Emperor. Music both in the court and in private residences fairs and festivals, especially those sponsored by the state, for example Nauroj were occasions for enjoyment by all people.

Hindu festivals like Dasserah, Vasant, Dipavali (prohibited during Aurangzeb's reign) and Muslim festivals of two Ids, Shab-i-barat etc. were festivals of great enjoyment by the respective communities. Occasional fairs were held at Hardwar, Prayag, Mathura, Kurukshetra and many other places of Hindu pilgrimages and also in places of Muslim Pilgrimages like Ajmer, Panipat," Sirhind etc.

The position of women under the Mughals marked a definite deterioration. Purdah system of the Muslim women and the growing conservatism in the Hindu family life precluding Hindu women except of the low castes from coming out of their houses made the life of the women rather un-enjoyable.

Polygamy was permitted by the Quranic law and a Muslim could take four wives at a time. A Shiah Muslim has no restriction as to the number of wives. While the Hindu ruling class indulged in polygamy the Muslims almost as a rule would have more them one wife. The Emperors and nobles maintained harem i.e. a number of women not formally married.

12.3 ARTISANS AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

Economy: Agriculture in the Medieval Period:

The most remarkable feature of the economic system of the Mughals was the gap that kept the producers and the consumers far asunder. The

producers were agriculturists, workers in the cottage industries, artisans, producers of consumer's goods like oil, cloth, sugar etc. workers in the Karkhanas.

The consumers were the rulers, nobles, officers both civil and military, professional and religious classes, slaves, servants and other sundry people. The result was, particularly in view of lack of every transport, that the producers received only marginal profits whereas the middlemen and traders got the lion's share of the profit. This is largely true even today.

Another important feature of the Mughal economic system was the unnecessary burden that the state economy was made to bear due to the huge number of servants and slaves retained by the emperor, nobles and high officials, who practically served more as decoration rather than actual service-hands. This was a great waste of the state income.

The riotous living by the nobles and the officials, their costly jewels, dresses, lavish expenses during the marriage of their children, maintenance of horses, elephants and retainers needed enough money which compelled them to extort the same from the peasants.

Under Aurangzeb agriculture, industry, trade and commerce were very adversely affected by his incessant wars and slack administration. "Thus ensued the great economic impoverishment of India, not only a decrease of the national stock, but also a rapid lowering of mechanical skill and standard of civilisation, a disappearance of art and culture over wide tract of the country" (Sir J. N. Sarkar).

Agriculture depended on rainfall and naturally failure of seasonal rain fall of heavy down pour resulting in flood would result in failure in agricultural crops which meant famine. There were frequent outbreaks of famine in Mughal India during which the sufferings of the peasants and common people would know no bounds.

Lack of any systematic effort to provide relief to the famine stricken people or to allow remission of revenue collection from the peasants made the condition of the people, the peasants in particular, indescribably miserable. Famine was followed by pestilence which was an additional scourge of the people. During 1556-57 a terrible famine broke out in the north-western India followed by pestilence which took a heavy toll of life.

Badauni who saw the famine-stricken people with his own eyes remarks that "men ate their own kind and the appearance of the famished sufferers was so hideous that one could scarcely look upon them…. The whole country was a desert and no husbandman remained to till the ground." During 1573-74 Gujarat suffered from similar famine and pestilence and still another in Kashmir in 1595-96.

Bengal was visited by famine in 1575 and the Deccan and Gujarat during 1630-32. A number of famines broke out during the reign of Aurangzeb. From Akbar downwards, the Mughal emperors tried to relieve the distress of the people, but as there was no systematic effort, nor any famine policy nor any easy means of transport were the relief measures inadequate.

Industries and Trade in Medieval Age:

During the Mughal period the most important economic activity besides, agriculture was the varied industrial production by the people of India. The industrial products could not only meet the internal needs of the country but also supply the demands of the

European merchants as well as merchants from different parts of Asia. Manufacture of cotton cloth was the most important industry during the period under discussion. The principal centres of cotton manufacture were distributed all over the country, for instance, the coromandel coast, Patan in Gujarat, Khandesh, Burhampur, Jaunpur, Benares, Patna, some

other places in United Provinces, Bihar, many centres in Orissa and Bengal.

"The whole country from Orissa to East Bengal looked like a big cotton factory, and Dacca district was especially famous for finest cotton fabrics called muslin—"the best, the finest cloth made of cotton." According Paelsant, in Chabaspur and Sonargaon in East Bengal", all lived by weaving industry and the produce has the highest reputation and quality.

"Bernier called Bengal store-house of cotton and silk not only of Hindustan but also of Europe. Edward Terry refers to the flourishing condition of dyeing industry of Bengal. Dyeing and printing were of such high quality that these would not be washed out."

Silk industry, however, was limited in scope compared to the cotton industry. Abul Fazl tells us that silk industry was patronised by Akbar. Bengal was the most important centre of silk production and silk manufacture. Other centres of silk manufacture were Lahore, Fathepur Sikri, Agra, Gujarat, Benares, Bhagalpur, Kashmir etc. From Tavernier we know that Bengal produced silk and silk goods worth two and half million pounds. Three-fourth million pounds worth raw silk used to be exported to foreign countries by the Dutch.

Woolen goods such as blankets, shawl, carpets etc. were woven at Kashmir, Lahore, Alwar, Jaunpur and Agra. The shawl industry flourished due to the patronage of Akbar. The state encouraged manufacture of various articles particularly for the use of the Emperors, nobles and the state officials in Karkhanas to which many skilled workers were engaged.

Saltpetre was manufactured in Bihar and was exported by the European traders to their countries. It was used for the manufacture of gun-powder. Copper mines existed in Central India and Rajasthan. Iron was found in many parts of India. Red stone quarries were there in Rajasthan and Fathepur. Marble came from Rajasthan. Opium, an agricultural produce,

was exported after meeting internal consumption. Gold mines were found in Kumayun and in the hills and rivers of the Punjab.

From Abul Fazl and other contemporary writers, we learn that prices of articles such as rice, oil, ghee, spices, vegetables, milk, meat, and live-stock were very low. Terry remarks that there were "plenty of provisions" and people "eat bread without scarceness." From what we know from the foreign travellers and the contemporary writers, we may observe that the people did not grovel in misery since the prices were low, although in times of natural calamities they had to suffer.

12.4 DEBATE OVER DEINDUSTRIALIZATION

What do we mean through De-Industrialization?

De-industrialization refers to the procedure of a sustained and marked industrial decline. The proportion of the national income generated through industry and the percentage of population dependent on it are commonly used as quantitative events of industrial growth or decline. An augment in these proportions suggests industrialization while a decrease designates industrial decline or de-industrialization. The whole question of the destruction of Indian industries and the realization of the country received a lot of attention both in Colonial India as well as in Britain through the various political and economic interest groups. The Indian Nationalists used the destruction of Indian craft industries under early British rule to substantiate their point that India was being exploited under British rule. The nascent free trade group in Britain attacked the East India Company's monopolistic manage in excess of India through criticizing the destruction of the country's traditional crafts under the Company rule.

The Pre-British Economy

The pre-British industrial sector in India has been described as exceptionally vibrant and buoyant through some observers and as

stagnant and technically backward through others. The very limited quantitative data on significant indicators of industrial change such as output, productivity, capital investment and the size of the workforce prevent any conclusive assessment of pre-colonial India‘s industrial performance. Qualitative proof , though, does help us in forming a fairly reliable picture of the state of the industrial sector throughout this era. In spite of a highly uneven sharing of income in Mughal India the demand in the home market for essential manufactured consumer goods appears to have been big in absolute terms and exhibited an rising trend. The rich nobility provided the market for the manufacture of high class luxury goods. Cotton textiles which were produced virtually all in excess of India constituted the mainly significant manufacture. Dye stuffs (predominantly indigo) and sugar were the after that mainly significant commercial industrial products. The other important agro-based industries incorporated oils, tobacco, opium and alcoholic beverages. Although the mining industry was inadequately urbanized, India was self-sufficient in iron. Ship structure was another significant and developing industry. In Mughal India, unlike pre-industrial Europe, there was no sharp division flanked by urban centres where industries were concentrated and the countryside which supplied primary produce. Industrial manufacture in India sustained to be a mainly rural based action. The Mughal economy while marked through expanding demand and organizational growths grew very slowly. Relative stagnation in demand, a low rate of capital formation and the absence of rapid technological innovations contributed to the Mughal industrial economy as a whole rising rather slowly.

The Nature of Early Trade with Europe

Early European trade with India was heavily balanced in India‘s favour. The seventeenth century saw Indian cotton textiles rapidly displacing pepper and other spices to become the mainly significant Asian, import into the west. Through 1664, the English East India Company imported more than 750,000 pieces of cotton goods from India, which accounted for 73 per cent of the Company‘s total trade. In the following two

decades the figure further increased to 1.5 million pieces with cotton textiles now contributing to 83 per cent of the total import value. The marked expansion of Indian cotton textile exports substantially accelerated the growth of the textile industry _which almost certainly provided employment to a sizeable part of the population.‘ This unprecedented growth of Indian textile imports into Europe was accompanied through a steady inflow of bullion into India from the buyer nations, because India sustained to enjoy a positive balance of trade vis-à-vis these nations. It has been suggested that the Indo European trade of this era, which has clearly tilted in favour of India could not have been sustained at the stage for almost three centuries without the detection of American mines. The increased European liquidity became a vital prerequisite for permitting the sustained financing of this trade with its highly adverse balance of payments. Modern Western observers who were influenced through mercantilist thinking attributed the instability in national finances of Western countries to their markedly negative balance of trade. The shipment of big quantities of treasure to Asia through the European companies made them the focus of criticism. European trade with India up to the early years of the nineteenth century was based upon the price differential flanked by Asia and the rest of the world. That is European merchants bought goods at a low price in India and sold them for a much higher price in the European, African and New World markets. The profits were based on the variation flanked by the purchase price and selling price. The main problem which the European companies faced in their trade with India was the financing of their Indian purchases. Since there was no demand for British or European exports in India the purchases of Indian goods had to be financed through bullion payments. Although estimating the magnitude of bullion exports to India through European companies has proved to be problematic European trade through the first half of the eighteenth century appears to have had a important impact on Indian foreign trade and industry.

The Fall Out of (he Early Trade with Europe The same era witnessed the emergence of Bengal as a important commercial entity. European trade

overtook country trade‘ in importance. The Indian secondary industry responded through rising localized manufactures to meet the increased demand. Though, the European traders do not appear to have stimulated new form of commercial and industrial organizations. They latched themselves on to the existing organizations of commercial and industrial manufacture. The expansion of Indian manufactured exports to Britain and other foreign countries though stopped through the first years of the nineteenth century. In the course of the first half of the nineteenth century India progressively lost its export market in manufactures. The commodity composition of India‘s foreign trade also underwent a radical change, with agricultural products gaining in importance and manufactures declining. This becomes clear from the table 12.1 below:

Table 12.1: Commodity Composition and percentage share of selected Items in the total valve of Indian exports-1811 to 1850-1

	Indigo	Piece goods	Raw Silk	Raw Cotton	Opium	Sug-ar	Total
1811-12	18.5	33.0	8.3	4.9	23.8	1.5	90.0
1814-15	20.0	14.3	13.3	8.0	NA	3.0	58.6
1828 29	27.0	110	10.0	15.0	17.0	4.0	84.0
1834-35	15.0	7.0	8.0	21.0	25.0	2.0	78.0
1839-40	26.0	5.0	7.0	20.0	10.0	7.0	75.0
1850-51	10.9	3.7	3.8	19.1	30.1	10.0	77.6

Trade After Battle of Plassey

In the pre-1757 era, 80 to 90 per cent of the East India Company‘s exports from India were financed through bullion imports. Slowly this situation started changing and throughout the era 1795 to 1812 the East India Company were importing into Bengal goods worth almost 33 per cent of the exports they made from Bengal. The first six decades since the Battle of Plassey was a era dominated through the use of India through merchant capital. Throughout this era the East India Company began to set up manage in India and monopolized all British trade with the subcontinent.

After the assumption of the Diwani' of Bengal the pressure on the East India Company to export bullion into Bengal to finance its investments decreased. The Bengal plunder, profits from the duty free inland trade and the 'surplus' from Diwani revenues were not used to finance the Company‘s investments. The Company progressively abandoned free competition to secure its goods in the local markets. The producers of these goods were forced to supply their produce to the Company at low prices arbitrarily fixed through the Company. An observation through a modern commentator clearly highlights this point——―The roguery practiced in this department is beyond imagination: but all terminates in defrauding the poor weaver; for the prices which the Company's Gomastas, and in confederacy with them the Jachendars (examiners of fabrics) fix upon goods, are in all spaces at least 15 per cent, and some even 40 per cent less than the goods so manufactured would sell in the public bazaar or market upon free sale". (William Bolts ―Thoughts on India Affairs‖, 1772). The years flanked by the Battle of Plassey and 1813 saw the East India Company administration in Bengal in virtual anarchy. The English Company servants indulged in private‘trade and started remitting their money to Europe mainly through foreign companies and clandestine English trade.

The Impact of the European Trade

The pre-1813 British use of India can be termed as use through merchant capital in a context of mercantilism. The East India Company‘s objective was to buy the maximum quantity of Indian manufactured goods at the cheapest possible price so that substantial profits can be made through selling these goods in Britain and other foreign countries. The reckless and anarchic attempts to augment their purchases while forcing down the price adversely affected the traditional Indian export industry, especially the cotton textile manufacture. In the absence of reliable quantitative data on the various indices of indigenous industrial manufacture for this era, historians and economists have been forced to rely mainly on qualitative proof on British use of the Indian economy and the disastrous impact that it had on the artisans and the agricultural population. Separately from the

shortsighted, anarchic use of the country‘s industries through the Company throughout this era, British textile manufacturers at home had begun to force the British Government to impose restrictive import tariffs and bans on the import of fine Indian textiles. As early as 1720 the British manufacturing interests had successfully prohibited the importation of Indian silks and printed calicoes into Britain. The duty for home consumption of Indian calicoes and muslins was very heavy. In 1813 the Parliament again imposed an increased consolidated duty on home consumption of calicoes and muslins. Thus we discover that in the era till 1813 Indian industry, especially the textile industry was being adversely affected in two ways. On the one hand the Company in its eagerness to depress the purchase price of cotton manufactures in India, virtually reduced the weavers to the status of indentured labourers, through forcing them to take advances from the Company and sell their products below market prices. Through the regulation of 1789, for instance, they were forced to pay a penalty of 35 per cent on the advance taken if they defaulted in supplying the goods. The rapacious private trade of the Company servants and the shortsighted policy of creation quick big profits severely affected the textile industry as well as the economy as a whole. On the other hand, the East India Company, which had a monopoly on the trade with India itself became the focus of attacks from traders who had been excluded from having a share in the Indian trade as well as from the nascent British manufacturers who perceived the manufactures imported through the Company into Britain to be threatening their own industries. The Company‘s own shortsighted use and the free trader inspired sanctions against Indian manufactured imports into Britain resulted in a progressive decline in the share of Indian cotton piece goods in the Company‘s investments from Rs, 92,68,770 in 1705 to Rs.90,51,324 in 1799 and to Rs.25,50,000 in 1810. The value of cotton piece goods exported on Company explanation from Bengal declined from Rs.61,67,851 in 1792 to Rs.3,42,843 in 1823. The shift in the commodity composition of Indian exports from manufactured goods to primary products since the early nineteenth century is accompanied through a complimentary augment in the share of manufactured goods in Indian imports (See Table 12.2).

Table 12.2: Commodity composition of selected imports into India, 1828- 1840

	Value	(%)	Value	m	Value	(%)	Value	<*)	Value	(%)
1828-29	4.2	7.8	11.8	22.0	8.6	16.0	4.6	8.6	2.6	4.9
1831-32	5.1	11.4	9.6	21.4	8.6	19.1	2.5	5.5	2.1	4.6
1834-35	4.1	9.7	8.9	21.0	6.0	14.0	3.4	8.0	2.2	5.2
1837-38	6.2	12.8	13.6	28.0	5.1	10.6	2.6	5.3	1.4	2.9
1839-40	7.5	13.3	18.3	32.3	6.1	11.0	3.1	5.5	1.2	2.1

De-Industrialization

Early nationalist economists such as R.C. Dutt and subsequently Madan Mohan Malaviya (in his dissent note at the Indian Industrial Commission) argued that India underwent de-industrialization; their proof was statistics of import of manufactures, particularly import figures of Manchester made cotton cloth. For instance Dutt showed that the value of cotton goods sent from England and its ports east of the Cape of Good Hope mainly to India, increased in value from 156 in 1794 to 108824 in 1813. In the pre-1813 era it was the excessive use of the Indian industrial sector especially the textile industry through the monopolistic East India Company which led to the progressive degeneration of this industry. Forcible reduction of purchase prices in India was resorted to through the East India Company to augment the variation flanked by its buying and selling price and consequently augment its trading profits. The import restrictions on Indian textiles in England further weakens this industry. The income of weavers and spinners were drastically reduced, thereby restricting any possibility of capital accumulation and technological innovations in this traditional industrial sector. While India‘s traditional manufacturing sector was being steadily weekend under the Company, in the same era Britain had begun its Industrial Revolution and was rapidly expanding its industries through revolutionizing its technology as well as organization beside principles of capitalist manufacture. The rising British textile industry had ail the advantage which were dented to its Indian counterpart. The British industry had a rapidly developing technological base, it had the

advantages of economies of level and finally it was cautiously protected in its formative years from foreign competition. Some historians have put forward the view that the export of British machine made yarn and cloth did not harm the indigenous textile industry because under British rule the growth of political stability, better transport facilities and market expansion led to increase per capita agricultural productivity; moreover, it is argued that cheaper machine-made yam strengthened the indigenous handloom sector, while a growth in per capita real income and new economic behaviors compensated for the decline in earlier enterprises. Though, historical proof does not bear out these arguments. There is no proof whatsoever for a growth in the demand for cotton goods or a rise in per capita real income in the nineteenth century. Further, as Bipan Chandra has argued, the decline in the per unit price of cloth was much faster than that of yarn. This combined with the information that the ratio prevented any benefit accruing to the Indian weaver. Though, historical proof does not bear out these arguments. There is no proof whatsoever for a growth in the demand for cotton goods or a rise in per capita real income in the nineteenth century. Further, the decline in the per unit price of cloth was much faster than that of yarn.

Check Your Progress 1

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

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

1. How do you know the Urban economy?

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2. Discuss the Artisans and industrial production.

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3. Discuss the Debate over deindustrialization.

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12.5 RISE OF INTERNAL MARKETS

By the Mughal period, inland trade had developed considerably. Internal trade constituted a small fraction as it provided employment to very few percentage of the total population and generated much less income in proportion to agricultural economy. Internal trade in the 16th century did witness substantial changes both in terms of commodities of exchange as well as growth of markets.

The flow of commodities was mostly from rural to urban areas, from the villages to the towns. There was abundance of food in rural areas. Despite being self-sufficient, rural economy did develop a rudimentary form of market system. There was elaborate system of exchange that had developed at the village levels. Every locality had regular markets in nearby towns where people from the surrounding areas could sell and purchase things.

Trade at the local level was also conducted through periodic markets known as Haats or Penths, which were held on fixed days in a week. In these local markets, commodities like food grain, salt, wooden and iron equipment, coarse cotton textile, etc. were available. These local markets were linked to bigger commercial centres in that region. These centres served as markets for products not only from their specific region but

also from other regions. Delhi, Agra, Lahore, Multan, Bijapur, Hyderabad, Calicut, Cochin, Patna etc. were some of such trading regions during the Mughal period.

Trade at the urban level was more complex. The Mughals during their town planning always developed a great bazaar along with succession of other types of bazaars selling commodities from external trade and making urban markets catering to the requirements and demands of wider section of the Mughal society.

An outcome of this process was the development of trade links between different regions of the country. Both urban and rural trade was carried out through waterways that included both inland and coastal trade as it was inexpensive. Land as well as coastal linkages was established. Through a network of land and river routes, commodities from one region were carried to another. In the coastal regions, this was done through the sea route, and it was quite well developed in the west coast.

A major feature of the inter-local trade was the predominantly one-way flow of commodities from the villages to towns, a corollary of rural self-sufficiency. The inter-local trade — both the country to town and inter-town flow of commodities — was essentially a short-distance version of the interregional trade. The villages around a town are often described as being dependent on the latter, implying primarily an administrative relationship; the economic ties between town and country were no less strong. The collection of revenue in cash generated a pressure to sell; the towns, providing the necessary demand, were dependent on the villages for the supply of not only primary products but most of the manufactured goods they consumed. A striking feature of the inter-local trade was the extreme responsiveness of food supply to market demand.

A brisk inter-regional trade was conducted in food grains, raw materials, luxury commodities.

1. Coromandel Coast dealt in its own produce and imported luxuries items that were traded with west coast, Gujarat, Deccan and Burhanpur.
2. Bengal raw silk was sent to Gujarat silk industries while in return Bengal imported cotton grown between Surat and Burhanpur
3. From Rajasthan along with precious stones, white and pink marble were exported.
4. Tobacco produced in Burhanpur was sold all over
5. Kashmir specialized in luxurious commodities like shawls, carpets, and saffron.
6. Gwalior was famous for jasmine oil
7. Malabar traded in pepper, ginger, cardamom, and cinnamon which were brought spices to be sold in Coromandel, Konkan Coast and Gujarat.

Water being the most inexpensive form of transporting goods was used extensively during the Mughal period. In northern India, the river Ganges linked Allahabad to Rajmahal via Benaras and Patna. In the north-west, the river Indus became a major hub between Lahore and the mouth of the river.

Land transport was the second most preferred avenue of transporting commodities. Some of the important land routes were from Agra to Patna; Benaras to Patna; Bengal to Balasore upto Patna; and Surat was linked with Agra then Rajasthan from there to Ahmadabad, Cambay and Broach and Malwa was linked with Khandesh.

The use of water and land routes is indicative of growth of integrated market network system assisting in flow of commodities north-south and east-west. The common mode of transport were packed-oxen and ox drawn carts along with camels as most of the horses were used in the army or for maintaining commercial linkages or used by rich merchants and the ruling classes. Elephants and mules were used for land transport and for water boats and ships were used during the Mughal times.

According to **Tapan Raychaudhari**, there were 4 types of markets in the Mughal Empire:

1. The markets for long distance trade that had many regional variations – inland, overland and overseas
2. Small bazaars where products were procured locally and sold for local consumption
3. Periodic fairs held both for common consumers and specialized commodity traders
4. Isolated rural markets

12.6 URBAN CENTRES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Urban Centres:

A discussion on urban centres of the period should begin with a brief summary of the debate that is linked with the question of urban decay in early medieval India. According to R.S. Sharma, B.N.S.Yadav and others, this period ushered in History of India Page 3 of 15 widespread decay of urban centres. Urban contraction was said to have been the result of agrarian expansion. The haphazard lay out, re-use of old bricks and a decline in the material milieu of some archaeological sites have been taken as signs of general de-urbanization for the entire subcontinent. Hsuan Tsang's account has been taken into consideration in support of urban decay. On re-examination of the available evidence some historians like D.C.Sircar, B.D.Chattopadhyaya, R. Champaklakshmi and others have challenged the theory of urban decay. It has been suggested that while some urban sites of the early historical period show proof of their decay, there are others which provided no signs of desertion. Excavations at Chirand, Varanasi, Ahichhatra, Purana Qila, in the Ganga valley and Ahar and Ujjayini in Malwa point to continuous occupation during 700-1200 CE. Moreover we have regular mention of pura, pattana and nagara , signifying urban tradition in the epigraphic records of early medieval times. In this period we come across some new urban centres. An important town was that of

Tattanandapura, identified with present Bulandshahr. Ten inscriptions dated between CE 867 and 904, speak of its importance. It was known as a purapattana (town) as against a grama or a palli, denoting village settlements. From the inscriptions we get glimpse of its lay out which talks about the existence of brhadrathya (wide roads), kurathya (small or History of India Page 4 of 15 narrow lanes) and hatta marga (roads leading to the market centre). The presence of shops and residential structures, ordinary ones as well as ones with balcony are clearly mentioned. Siyadoni, also labelled as a pattana, where stood a mandapika was another urban centre of prominence, marked by trade in essentials and also as a religio-cultural centre. Another town existed at Gwalior, the ancient name being Gopagiri or Gopadri. It was known as a kotta implying that it was an administrative cum military head quarter. Nadole in Rajasthan was transformed from a village to a trade centre and finally became the political centre of the local Chahamana rulers. In eastern India we have reference to Dhritipura in early medieval Vanga under the Chandra kings. Ramavati was another capital city, named after the Pala ruler Ramapala and the city of Lakhnauti, named after the Sena ruler of Bengal, Lakshmanasena was mentioned in the writings of Minhaj-us-Siraj. The urban centres in Tamilnadu which developed as a result of increasing non-agricultural or craft production and trade had the Brahmadeyas and temples, apart from royal centres as their focus and arose in nodal points. Some of them developed from clusters of Brahmadeyas such as Kudamukku- Palaiyarai in the Kaveri delta and Kanchipuram in the Palar-Ceyyar valley. They are mostly multi temple centres, each temple marking the growth of its town and economic importance. History of India Page 5 of 15 Thus it may be said that the period from 650CE to 1200CE did not experience a general urban decay. Urban centres of this phase were distinct from early historical urbanization. The second urbanization in Indian history had an epicentre in the Ganga valley but there was no such epicentre in the early medieval phase. On the other hand these urban centres were strongly rooted to their respective regions and should be studied in terms of regional formations. B.D.Chattopadhyaya would like to call it third phase of urbanization in Indian history.

Craft, Guild and Industries:

In this period there was cultivation of many cash crops which created favourable conditions for the development in several agro based crafts and industries. We learn of the sugar making industry as there are many references to sugar presses. Chinese and Arabic accounts refer to Malwa as an important area of sugar industry. References to new centres of textile production like Mulasthana (Multan), Anahilapataka (in Gujarat),Vanga (in Bangladesh) and Nagapattinam (in Tamilnadu) are made in the Manasollasa (11th century). Textile products of early medieval Bengal are hailed as superb quality in Arabic, Persian and Chinese texts. Another important industry was the oil making industry. This is known from numerous epigraphic and textual sources which speak of History of India Page 6 of 15 the gifts of oil presses as meritorious act. This period is also noted for more regular use of metal implements. The copper plates betray the artisans' mastery over metal. Proficiency in bronze work is evident from the large number of bronze images. The Arabic accounts speak of the excellence of the swords from Anga (Bhagalpur region in Bihar). In South India, textile as a major craft developed in various regions due to royal patronage, elite demands and the needs of the temple, the focus of all economic activities. The well-known tendency of craftsmen to combine into guild like organizations called Sreni continued in this period. Both legal literature and epigraphic documents bear testimony to this. There was however a decline in the position of guilds in north India. The guilds were no longer acting as banks as in the early historical period. There were multiple head men which points to the loosening of the compactness and cohesion among the practitioners of the same craft and profession. The lessening of monetary deposits to and the decreasing cohesiveness of guilds would suggest their gradual fading away as important economic organizations. The case was different in South India where numerous merchant guilds were very active both in intra-regional or inter regional trading activities. Some of them ventured in the maritime trade network too. The inter

regional movement of goods History of India Page 7 of 15 was also controlled by these organizations. Some such organizations were Five hundred Svamis of Ayyavole, Nanadesi, Manigramam, Ainnurruvar and many others. The Ayyavole 500 could have been the most important of these organizations and was at the apex of the itinerant trading bodies.

Trade and Trade networks:

Trade and trade networks require the presence of markets and merchants. Ranabir Chakravarti's study of the copper plates and other inscriptions have brought to light the different types of merchants and various levels of market places and exchange centres over the greater parts of the subcontinent. In the hierarchy of markets, at the village level stood the rural market places known as hattika or hatta, adda and santhe. Their nature could be periodic. In the urban centres we come across pattanas as large scale market places. Between the villages and the urban centres we have middle category market centres called mandapika in the north, pentha in the Deccan and nagaram in the far south. Thus early medieval India witnessed three commercial centres, mandapika, pentha and nagaram, rooted to their respective regions. They provided linkages between the rural and urban centres of exchange. Other items like spices and animals were also traded. In the early medieval inscriptions, we have the active presence of merchants of various types, including the petty trader, hawker or peddler, caravan merchant, rich trader, royal merchant, ship owning merchant and so on. This is suggestive of the existence of a strong mercantile community. Images of mercantile activities could be seen in various types of literary texts. Some of these texts give us lively account of assembly of merchants and their sharing of experiences.

Trade Contacts with West Asia and South East Asia:

The rise and spread of Islam in West Asia, parts of Africa and in the Mediterranean region right up to Spain helped in the development of trade networks as Islam is marked by a distinct orientation to trade and urbanism. With the establishment and consolidation of the Abbasid

Caliphate in the eighth century, there was a spurt in the movement of men and merchandise between West Asia, South Asia, Central Asia and China. After the coming of the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt in the tenth century, maritime commerce received a boost and the Red sea lane became very active. During the time of the Abbasids it was the Persian Gulf which was important. History of India Page 9 of 15 an important port of the early medieval period, located in the Indus delta was Daybul (ruins found in present day Banbhore, in Pakistan). It had significant maritime links with Sri Lanka. In the Gujarat coast after the decline of the famous early historical port of Bhrigukachchha, the Sristambhapura or modern Cambay was the focus of attention of the Arabic accounts right from Sulaiman, ibn Khurdadbeh, al Masudi, the anonymous author of Hudud al Alam, al Biruni, al Idrisi and many others. Chau-ju-kua and Marco Polo also refer to this port. This port maintained contacts with both Persian Gulf ports and Red Sea ports. There were several feeder ports like Somnath and Gogha which were linked with Cambay. Gogha is specifically mentioned as a point of arrival for ships from Hormuz. Cambay was also linked with the ports of the Konkon coast like Thana, Sanjan and Chaul. Accounts of Sulaiman and ibn Khurdadbeh give interesting facts about the trading network connecting Konkan and Malabar with Cambay. We learn from Jagaducharita that merchants like Jagadu had Indian agents at Hormuz and maintained regular trade with Persia. Linkages between Manjrur, a leading port in the northern part of Malabar and Aden are attested by the Cairo Geniza records of Jewish merchants. Quilon in the Malabar Coast was also another important port. It is said that the king of Quilon provided facilities to foreign merchants. These Jewish traders regularly traded between the west coast of History of India Page 10 of 15 India and the Red Sea. Their main points of contact were the Karnataka and Malabar coasts. The western terminus for the Indian ships would appear to have changed from time to time. Thus in the seventh century it was Basra, from where it was transferred to Siraf and then successively to Kish and Hormuz. The eastern sea board was naturally oriented towards movements in the eastern sector of the Indian Ocean which was further linked up with Java and the China Seas. The Bengal coast in the eastern sector could boast of the port of

Tamralipti till the seventh or eighth century. With the decline of Tamralipti, another port rose to importance to the east of Meghna, known in the writings of the Arab writers as Samandar, which has been located near present Chittagong in Bangladesh. In the Andhra-Kalinga coast was situated Vishakhapattanam also known as Kulottungacholapattanam. The Coromandel Coast could boast of Mamallapuram of the Pallava times and Nagapattinam during the Chola rule as important ports of international trade. One distinctive characteristic of trade in south India during this period is the presence of mercantile organizations . These organizations are linked with the Indian Ocean network that was burgeoning. The merchants and their organizations figure in inscriptions in diverse contexts. Many of these inscriptions of History of India Page 11 of 15 Tamil merchants are found in regions outside India, leaving little room for doubt on their regular presence in Srilanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Sumatra and China. We have reference to merchant organizations like Manigramam at Takuapa, southern Thailand in a ninth century inscription. Mention of manigramam in this inscription attests to their participation in overseas trade. The establishment of a base of the Manigramam at Takuapa may be seen as a continuation of old historical links of the Indian subcontinent with Southeast Asia and also as a further indication of the Indian role in maritime trade. Sailors from India appear to have visited from very early times, the isthmus of Kra, the narrow neck of land linking present day Thailand with Malayasia. The isthmus provided a halting place for traders from both directions. Goods for exchange could have been off loaded, stored or transported across the isthmus. A very interesting inscription from Barus, Indonesia (1088) also narrates the presence of Tamil mercantile organization. The location of this Tamil inscription in Sumatra has to be viewed as an extension of the activities of the Ayyavole 500 guild within and beyond south India in the 11th century. The significance of the Barus inscription is best appreciated when it is situated in the broader context of India's role in the Indian Ocean network. We have evidence of the presence of Indian ship owning merchants in maritime South-East Asia.

Check Your Progress 2

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

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

1. Describe the Rise of internal markets.

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2. Discuss the Urban centres and communications.

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12.7 LET US SUM UP

The period from c. 650 CE to 1200 CE is designated as early medieval period in Indian history. Usage of the term 'early medieval' implies that this period marked the transition from the ancient to the medieval. This is a phase which brought in regional features in socio-economic, political and cultural life in the whole of India. For the study of non-agrarian sector of economy, new types of source materials and documents are taken into consideration. Among the epigraphic documents, copper plate charters form the bulk of the relevant source. History of India Page 2 of 15 Though these charters are primarily used for understanding the process of transfer of landed property, rural settlement pattern, revenue demands and so on, they also throw significant light on merchants, craftsmen and markets. The voluminous legal or theoretical treatises like the smriti literature and the Dharmasastras provide us information on trade and urban centres. Relevant data on commercial activities are available in the technical treatises and creative literature of the period. Non indigenous textual material like the writings of Syrian, Chinese and

Arab travellers and Arab Geographers are invaluable sources for understanding the trade relations with countries of South East Asia, West Asia and China. The letters of the Jewish merchants are another kind of valuable document for the study of long distance trade, particularly between the west coast of India and the Red sea. Not many excavations have been done in the various sites of the period and so we have limited field archaeological data. Numismatics also forms a source for the understanding of the economy of the period.

The picture that emerges from this brief overview of nonagrarian economic life of early medieval India does not tally with the image of a languishing economy as propounded by the proponents of feudalism. In the numismatic front we find that money production and money circulation were in full spate in the period. Long distance trade in both the sectors of the Indian Ocean was also another key feature of the period. We have seen that a general urban decay did not engulf the period and the urban centres were of varied nature. No blanket term could be used for the large group of merchants trading in singular product or in a number of products.

12.8 KEY WORDS

De-centralization: Decentralization or decentralisation is the process by which the activities of an organization, particularly those regarding planning and decision making, are distributed or delegated away from a central, authoritative location or group.

Communication: Communication is the act of conveying meanings from one entity or group to another through the use of mutually understood signs, symbols, and semiotic rules. The main steps inherent to all communication are: The formation of communicative motivation or reason.

Industrialization: Industrialisation is the period of social and economic change that transforms a human group from an agrarian society into an industrial society, involving the extensive re-organisation of an economy for the purpose of manufacturing.

12.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. How do you know the Urban economy?
2. Discuss the Artisans and industrial production.
3. Discuss the Debate over deindustrialization.
4. Describe the Rise of internal markets.
5. Discuss the Urban centres and communications.

12.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

- Radha Kumar, The History of Doing: An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women's Rights and
- Feminism in India, 1800-1990, Verso
- Tirthankar Roy, The Economic History of India, 1857-1947, Oxford University Press
- Anjana Motihar Chandra, India Condensed: 5000 Years of History and Culture, Marshall Cavendish Corporation

12.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 12.2
2. See Section 12.3
3. See Section 12.4

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section 12.5
2. See Section 12.6

UNIT 13: RESISTANCE TO COLONIAL RULE I

STRUCTURE

13.0 Objectives
13.1 Introduction
13.2 Nature of Colonial Rule
13.3 Resistance Rule
13.4 Nature and forms of resistance
13.5 Let us sum up
13.6 Key Words
13.7 Questions for Review
13.8 Suggested readings and references
13.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

13.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit, we can able to understand:

- To know the Nature of Colonial Rule;
- To discuss the Resistance Rule;
- To know about Nature and forms of resistance.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Colonial rule in India produced several new policies that had deleterious consequences for the indigenous population of the country. In the broadest sense, the British approached the jungles with an overarching goal of bringing 'primitive' peoples under the control of a modern, centralized bureaucracy. This led to the official classification of tribal populations—a chief example was the institution of the Criminal Tribes Act in 1871, which sought to control the movement of certain tribes with a history of criminal activity. But under the Act all members of a designated tribe were considered criminals, even if they had never committed a crime, which led to widespread social stigmatization.

Another major change dealt with forest policies and tribal land displacement. Colonial rule marked the first time in Indian history that a government claimed a direct proprietary right over forests. This was something the preceding Mughals, for example, had not done. The British state became the conservator of forests when it passed the Indian Forest Act of 1878. Hundreds of thousands of acres of forest lands that adivasis had used unfettered for centuries were suddenly kept in reserve, a practice that did not change for the rest of the colonial period. With British control of the forests came the concomitant rise of moneylenders, traders, and immigrants, and the influx of these new intermediary groups led to widespread adivasi land displacement. These are only some of the major changes instituted during the colonial period; myriad smaller developments—such as the introduction of money rather than a barter economy—also transformed the nature of tribal society during the course of British rule.

Consequently, revolts among the indigenous population became a routine occurrence during colonialism, especially in the nineteenth century. For instance, in 1855 the Santhals rebelled; in 1868 the Naikdas; in 1873 the Kolis; and in 1895 the Birsas. This is only a small smattering of the total number of conflicts. Guha has documented over 110 different colonial-era peasant revolts, and Gough records at least 77 since the advent of British rule.

Colonial administrators, however, only directly governed three-quarters of the population of India; the remainder lived in semi-autonomous princely states. These areas did not experience nearly the same level of tribal discontent or conflict. Despite having a reputation as feudal autocrats, many princes pursued liberal policies towards the same tribal groups that rebelled in British India. In Rajputana, for example, both the Bhil and Mina tribes were incorporated into the structure of the princely government because Rajput leaders recognized them as the original inhabitants of the land. These tribes were also charged with ceremonially placing the rajatilaka (a red powder mark used during the coronation process) on the brow of the newly crowned king. In Jaipur, the Minas

were designated the guardians of the royal treasury. 19 In Travancore and Cochin, tribal groups were given ownership of their land, government subsidies to improve it, and were shielded by special policies that limited the imposition of the outsiders who were a major problem for adivasis throughout British India. 20 In Jammu and Kashmir, many members of the Bakkarwal tribe were employed as tax collectors (zaildaars) and became an important part of the Dogra government. 21 In 1942, most of the rulers of the Eastern Feudatory States approved a draft policy (although it was not implemented) declaring that tribal groups ought to be the first claimants to forest lands and should also have the right to be governed by independent panchayats (village councils). 22 Princes displayed much more tolerance for tribal groups, and adivasis fared better under their rule than that of British administrators in the provinces. The same encroachments on tribal society that occurred in British India were largely absent in the princely states; as Verrier Elwin, famed anthropologist of Indian adivasis, summarized the situation, it was 'most refreshing to go to Bastar from the reform-stricken and barren districts of the Central Provinces'British colonial rule had a tremendous impact on all sections of Indian society. Can you imagine being ruled by some strangers year after year? No, we cannot. Most of us were born after 1947 when India had already become independent. Do you know when the British conquered India and colonised its economy they faced stiff resistance from the people. There were a series of civil rebellions. These rebellions were led by rulers who were deposed by the Britishers, ex-officials of the conquered Indian states, impoverished zamindars and poligars. It brought together people having different ethnic, religious and class background against the British rule. In this lesson, we will read about some important popular uprisings, their nature and significance. We will also read about the uprising of 1857 which had a major impact on our National Movement.

18th Century: A Dark Age ?

Till recently the 18th century was described as a Dark Age when chaos and anarchy ruled. The Mughal Empire collapsed, local powers failed to

set up empires and stability returned only with the spread of British supremacy in the late 18th Century. It suited the British writers of the Cambridge History of India, and their Indian followers, to paint the 18th Century as black so that British rule would illustrate up as a blessing in comparison. Historian Jadunath Sarkar‘s words in the History of Bengal, Vol. II, deserve to be quoted: On 23rd June 1757 the Middle ages of India ended and her contemporary age began... in the twenty years from Plassey Warren Hastings ... all felt the revivifying touch of the impetus from the west. There are obvious troubles with such a view. The Mughal Empire‘s power was not as widespread or deep as was whispered. Important parts of India, especially in the North East and South, remained outside it, as did several social groups. Hence Mughal decline cannot serve as an adequate theme for discussing changes taking lay all in excess of India. Scholars have recently argued that the establishment of local polities was perhaps the dominant characteristic of the eighteenth century, rather than the fall and rise of all-India empires. The 18th Century is presented through Satish Chandra, a leading historian of medieval India, as a separate chronological whole, rather than split into two halves, pre-British and British.

Decline of the Mughal Empire

The first half of the eighteenth century witnessed the decline of the Mughal Empire. Through 1740, when the era of our study begins, Nadir Shah had laid waste to Delhi. It was the Marathas, not the Mughals, who fought Abdali in 1761. Through 1783 the Mughal emperor was a pensioner of the British.

Internal Weaknesses:

Struggle for Power Aurangzeb's misguided policies had weakened the stable Mughal polity. But the two main pillars on which the empire rested-the army and the administration-were still upright in 1707. Wars of succession and weak rulers plagued Delhi from 1707 to 1719. Muhammad Shah's rule from 1719 to 1748 was extensive enough for a

revival of imperial fortunes but the complete incompetence of the emperor ruled out this possibility. It was in his region that Nizam-ul-Mulk resigned as wazir and set up the self-governing state of Hyderabad in 1724. Bengal, Awadh, and Punjab followed the same pattern and the empire was split up into successor states. Petty chiefs interpreted this as a signal for rebellion and the Marathas began to create their bid to inherit the imperial mantle.

External Challenge

The Persian monarch, Nadir Shah attacked India in 1738-39. Lahore was soon conquered and the Mughal army was defeated at Karnal on 13th February 1739. To complete the ignominy, the Mughal emperor Mohammed Shah was captured and Delhi lay waste. The well recognized poets Mir and Sauda lamented the devastation of Delhi. Though, the impact of Nadir Shah‘s invasion on Delhi was not as big a setback as commonly whispered. Abdali's invasions left Delhi worse off but through 1772 the municipality had revived. 70 crores of rupees were gathered from the official treasury and the safes of the rich nobles. The Peacock Throne and the Kohinoor diamond were the two mainly priced items of his loot. Nadir Shah gained strategically crucial Mughal territory to the west of the river Indus including Kabul. India was once more vulnerable to attacks from the North West. Ahmad Shah Abdali gained prominence as Nadir Shah‘s commander and recognized his rule in excess of Afghanistan after the death of Nadir Shah. He invaded North India several times flanked by 1748 and 1767. The mainly well recognized was his victory in excess of the Marathas in 1761 which is recognized as the third Battle of Panipat.

Decline: Some Interpretations

Our understanding concerning the decline of the Mughal power has changed in excess of the decades. The traditional view, presented through Irving, Sarkar etc., highlighted the personal failings of the emperors and the nobles, their immorality and indulgence in luxury.

Mughal rule was portrayed through Sarkar and others as Muslim rule and Maratha, Sikh and Bundela uprisings were understood as a Hindu reaction to Islamic onslaught. As opposed to this view point, the crisis in the Mughal economic system has been rightly stressed through Satish Chandra and Irfan Habib. Satish Chandra has pointed to the crisis in the jagirdari system as the vital cause for the downfall, caused through a shortage of jagirs and in excess of abundance of jagirdars. Irfan Habib showed the agrarian system becoming more exploitative as pressure on limited possessions grew. This sparked off peasant revolts which ruined imperial stability. The New Cambridge History of India takes a totally opposite stand from Habib. Mughal decline is seen as the result of the success of the Mughal system, rather than its failure. It is argued, for instance, that the zamindars whose rebellions against the Mughals spelled the end of the latter‘s empire, were rich not poor farmers, backed through wealthy merchants. Though, this view is yet to be recognized with further proof. The usually accepted view remnants one of economic crisis.

Stability of Mughal Traditions

In sharp contrast to the rapid territorial disintegration of the Mughal empire was the stubborn survival of the Mughal tradition of government. Through 1761 the Mughal empire was an empire only in name; it could better be described as the state of Delhi. But the prestige of the emperor, the king of kings, was so considerable, that whether it was acquiring territory, a throne or an empire, the sanction of the emperor was sought. Even rebel chiefs of the Marathas and Sikhs sometimes recognized the emperor as the fount of power. The Sikhs made offerings to the Delhi court in 1783 (despite their gurus having been killed through the Mughals) and the Maratha leader, Shahu, visited Aurangzeb‘s tomb in 1714. The British and the Maratha fought in excess of possession of the person of the emperor, hoping to gain legitimacy for their claims to inherit the imperial mantle. Shah Alam II was made a pensioner of the company after the battle of Buxar but he preferred the protection of the Marathas at Delhi. British job of Delhi in 1803 brought him once again

under British protection. Mughal administrative practice was adopted through the local powers. It was natural for the successor states of the Mughal empire to continue with old Mughal practice. Even the states, such as the Maratha, which began as popular reactions against imperial rule, copied Mughal methods of administration. Several officers schooled in Mughal practice establish employment in numerous local kingdoms.

13.2 NATURE OF COLONIAL RULE

Can you think of a reason why these resistance movements are called popular? Was it because of the large number of people who participated in them? Or was it because of the success they met with? After reading this section you will be able to arrive at a conclusion.

13.2.1 Causes of Popular Resistance Movements

Why do people resist? They resist when they feel that their rights are being taken away. That means all resistance movements started against some form of exploitation. British rule whose policies had undermined rights, status and economic position of Indians symbolised this exploitation. The protest and resistance was mainly offered by the displaced ruling classes, peasantry and tribals. For example, when Warren Hastings attacked Banaras and imprisoned King Chet Singh to fulfill his unjustified demand of money and army, the people of Banaras rebelled. In Madras Presidency, Poligars rebelled, when the British tried to snatch away their military and land rights. Interference in religious practices was another cause of these popular rebellions. Often these revolts were anti-Christian. This was due to the socio-religious reforms introduced by the British which were unacceptable to the people. In some other rebellions, difference between the religion of the ruler and exploited classes became the immediate cause for the rebellion. This happened in Mappila Rebellion of Malabar region. Here the Muslim peasantry fought against the Hindu landlords and moneylenders. In the next section we shall read about the nature of this movement.

13.2.2 Nature of Popular Resistance Movements

Violence and plunder were the two most popular tools used by the rebels to express their resistance against their oppressors. Lower and exploited classes often attacked their exploiters. They were the Britishers or the zamindars or the revenue collecting officials, wealthy groups and individuals. Santhal Rebellion saw mass scale violence where account books of moneylenders and government buildings were burnt and their exploiters punished. In a previous lesson we read about the land policies of the British. The purpose was to extract as much money as possible from the peasants and tribal people. This caused so much unrest among the peasants and the tribals that they started expressing their resentment against the British. It is important to know that these popular resistance movements aimed at restoration of old structures and relations which had been done away with by the British. Each social group had its own reasons to raise its voice against the colonial powers. For example, displaced zamindars and rulers wanted to regain their land and estates. Similarly, the tribal groups rebelled because they did not want the traders and moneylenders to interfere in their lives.

13.2.3 Peasant Movements And Tribal Revolts In The 19th Century

You would be surprised to know that beginning with the Sanyasi Rebellion and Chuar Uprising in Bengal and Bihar in the 1760s, there was hardly a year without an armed opposition. From 1763 to 1856 there were more than 40 major rebellions apart from hundreds of minor ones. These rebellions were, however, local in character and effects. They were isolated from each other because each rebellion had a different motive. We will now read more about these movements in the next section of this lesson.

1. **Peasant and Tribal Uprisings:**

Origins In pre-colonial India popular protest against the Mughal rulers and their officials was not uncommon. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed several peasant uprisings against the ruling class. Imposition of a high land revenue demand through the state, corrupt practices and harsh attitude of the tax collecting officials, were some of the several reasons which provoked the peasants to rise in revolt. Though, the establishment of colonial rule in India and the various policies of the colonial government had a much more devastating effect on the Indian peasants and tribes. Some of the changes in Indian economy brought throughout this era were

- Promotion of British manufactured goods in Indian markets leading to destruction of Indian handloom and handicraft industries.
- Vast transfer of wealth from India to England (Drain of Wealth). Popular Revolts and Uprisings
- British land revenue settlements, a heavy burden of new taxes,
- Eviction of peasants from their lands, encroachment on tribal lands.
- Growth and strengthening of use in rural society beside with the growth of intermediary revenue collectors and tenants and money-lenders.
- Expansion of British revenue administration in excess of tribal territories leading to the loss of tribal people‘s hold in excess of agricultural and forest land.

The overall impact of these changes on the peasant and tribal society was very destructive. The appropriation of peasants surplus through the company and its mediators, the rising burden of taxes made the peasants totally dependent on the mercy of the revenue intermediaries and officials, the merchants and the money-lenders. Moreover, the destruction of indigenous industry led to migration of big level workers from industry to agriculture. The pressure on land increased but the land revenue and agricultural policy of the government allowed little scope for the improvement of Indian agriculture. While the British economic

policy led to pauperization and impoverishment of the Indian peasantry, the British administration turned a deaf ear to the peasant‘s grievances. British law and judiciary did not aid the peasantry; it safeguarded the interest of the government and its collaborators—the landlords, the merchants and the money-lenders. Thus being the prey of colonial use and being deprived of justice from the colonial administration the peasants took up arms to protect themselves. The grievances of the tribal people were not dissimilar from those of the peasants. But what made them more aggrieved was the encroachment through outsiders into their self-governing tribal polity.

Some Significant Uprisings

The simmering discontent of the peasants and tribal people broke out into popular uprisings in dissimilar parts of India at dissimilar points of time in the first hundred years of British rule. Whatever may be the immediate cause of each uprising through and big these protest movements were molded through a shared experience of oppression in various shapes, including colonial oppression. We would talk about in brief some of the significant uprisings of this era.

2. The Sanyasi Rebellion, 1763-1800

The East India Company‘s official correspondence in the second half of the eighteenth century referred several times to the incursion of the itinerant Sanyasis and Fakirs, mainly in northern Bengal. Even before the great famine of Bengal (1770) small groups of Hindu and Muslim holymen traveled from lay to lay and made sudden attacks on the store houses of food crops and property of the local richen and government officials. Though the Sanyasis and Fakirs were religious mendicants, originally they were peasants, including some who were evicted from land. Though, the rising hardship of the peasantry, rising revenue demand and the Bengal famine of 1770 brought a big member of dispossessed small Zamindars, disbanded soldiers and rural poor into the bands of Sanyasis and Fakirs. They moved approximately dissimilar

parts of Bengal and Bihar in bands of 5 to 7 thousand and adopted the guerilla technique of attack. Their target of attack was the grain stocks of the rich and at later stage, government officials. They looted local government treasuries. Sometimes the wealth looted was distributed in the middle of the poor. They recognized an self-governing government in Bogra and Mymensingh. The modern government records describe these insurrections in their own way, thus:

―A set of lawless banditti recognized under the name of Sanyasis and Fakirs, have extensive infested these countries and under the pretence of religious pilgrimage, have been accustomed to traverse the chief parts of Bengal, begging, stealing and plundering wherever they go and as it best suits their convenience to practice. In the years subsequent to the famine, their ranks were swollen through a crowd of starving peasants, who had neither seed nor implements to recommence farming with, and the cold weather of 1772 brought them down upon the harvest meadows of lower Bengal, burning, plundering, ravaging in bodies of fifty to thousand men.‖ One noticeable characteristic of these insurrections was the equal participation of Hindus and Muslims in it. Some of the significant leaders of these movements were Manju Shah, Musa Shah, Bhawani Pathak and Debi Chaudhurani. Encounter flanked by the Sanyasis-Fakirs and the British forces became a regular characteristic all in excess of Bengal and Bihar till 1800. The British used its full force to suppress the rebels.

3. Peasant Uprising of Rangpur, Bengal, 1783

The establishment of British manage in excess of Bengal after 1757 and their various land revenue experiments in Bengal to extract as much as possible from peasants brought unbearable hardship for the general man. Rangpur and Dinajpur were two of the districts of Bengal which faced all types of illegal demands through the East India Company and its revenue contractors. Harsh attitude of the revenue contractors and their exactions became a regular characteristic of peasant life. One such revenue contractor was Debi Singh of Rangpur and Dinajpur. He and his mediators created a reign of terror in the two districts of northern Bengal.

Taxes on the Zamindars were increased which actually were passed on from Zamindars to cultivators or ryots. Ryots were not in a location to meet the rising demands of Debi Singh and his mediators. Debi Singh and his men used to beat and flog the peasants, burn their houses and destroy their crops and not even women were spared. Peasants appealed to the company officials to redress their grievances. Their appeal though remained unheeded. Being deprived of justice the peasants took the law in their own hands. Through beat of drum the rebel peasants gathered big number of peasants, armed with swords, shields, bows and arrows. They elected Dirjinarain as their leader and attacked the local cutcheries and store houses of crops of local mediators of the contractors and government officials. In several cases they snatched absent the prisoners from the government guards. The rebels shaped a government of their own, stopped payments of revenue to the existing government and levied _insurrection charges' to meet the expenses of the rebellion. Both Hindus and Muslims fought face through face in the insurrection. Ultimately the government's armed forces took manage of the situation and suppressed the revolt.

4. The Uprising of the Bhils, 1818-31

The Bhils were mostly concentrated in the hill ranges of Khandesh. The British job of Khandesh in 1818 enraged the Bhils because they were suspicious of outsiders' incursion into their territory. Moreover, it was whispered that Trimbakji, rebel minister of Baii Rao II, instigated the Bhils against the British job of Khandesh. There was a common insurrection in 1819 and the Bhils in many small groups ravaged the plains. T here were similar types of insurrection quite often through the Bhil chiefs against the British. The British government used its military force to suppress the rebels and at the same time tried to win them in excess of through various conciliatory events. But the British events failed to bring the Bhils to their face.

5. The Rebellion at Mysore, 1830-31

After the final defeat of Tipu Sultan the British restored Mysore to the Wodeyar ruler and imposed on him the subsidiary alliance. The financial pressure from the company on the Mysore ruler compelled him to augment revenue demands from the Zamindars. The rising burden of revenue ultimately fell on the cultivators. The corruption and extortion of local officials added to the existing miseries of the peasants. The rising discontent of the peasants broke out into an open revolt in the province of Nagar, one of the four divisions of Mysore. Peasants from other provinces joined the rebellious peasants of Nagar and the rebel peasants establish their leader in Sardar Malla, the son of a general ryot of Kremsi. The peasants defied the power of the Mysore ruler. The British force regained manages of Nagar from the rebel peasants after strong opposition and ultimately the administration of the country passed into the hands of the British.

6. The Kol Uprising, 1831-32

The Kols of Singhbhum for extensive centuries enjoyed self-governing power under their chiefs. They successfully resisted all attempts made through the Raja of Chota Nagpur and Mayurbhanj to subdue them. British penetration into this region and the effort to set up British law and order in excess of the jurisdiction of the Kol Chiefs generated tensions in the middle of the tribal people. As a result of British job of Singhbhum and the neighbouring territories, a big number of people from outside began to settle in this region which resulted in transfer Of tribal lands to the outsiders. This transfer of tribal lands and coming of merchants, money-lenders and the British law in the tribal region posed a great threat to the hereditary self-governing power of the tribal chiefs. This created great resentment in the middle of the tribal people and led to popular uprisings against the outsiders in the tribal region. The rebellion spread in excess of Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Palamau and Manbhum. The target of attack was the settlers from other regions whose houses were burnt, and property looted. The insurrection was ruthlessly suppressed through the British militia.

7. The Faraizi Disturbances, 1838-51.

The Faraizi sect was founded through Haji Shariatullah of Faridpur. Originally Faraizi movement was fuelled through the grievances of rackrented and evicted peasants against landlords and British rulers. The Faraizis under Dudu Miyan, the son of the founder of the sept, became united as a religious sect with an egalitarian ideology. His simple way of teaching and belief that all men are equal and land belongs to god and no one has right to levy tax on it appealed to the general peasants. The Faraizis set up parallel administration in some parts of Eastern Bengal and recognized village courts to settle the peasant‘s disputes. They protected cultivators from Zamindar‘s excesses and asked the peasants not to pay taxes to the Zamindars. They raided the Zamindars‘ houses and cutcheries and burnt indigo factory at Panch-char. The government and Zamindars‘ forces crushed the movement and Dudu Miyan was imprisoned.

8. The Mappila Uprisings, 1836-54

In the middle of the various peasant uprisings that posed serious challenge to the colonial rule the Mappila uprisings of Malabar inhabit an significant lay. Mappilas are the descendants of the Arab settlers and converted Hindus. Majority of them were cultivating tenants, landless labourers, petty traders and fishermen. The British job of Malabar in the last decade of the eighteenth century and the consequent changes that the British introduced in the land revenue administration of the region brought unbearable hardship in the life of the Mappilas. Mainly significant change was the transfer of Janmi from that of traditional, partnership with the Mappila to that of a self-governing owner of land and the right of eviction of Mappila tenants which did not exist earlier. In excess of-assessment, illegal taxes, eviction from land, hostile attitude of government officials were some of the several reasons that made the Mappilas rebel against the British and the landlords. The religious leaders played an significant role in strengthening the solidarity of the Mappilas through socio-religions reforms and also helped in the

development of anti-British consciousness in the middle of the Mappilas. The rising discontent of the Mappilas broke out in open insurrections against the state and landlords. Flanked by 1836 and 1854 there were in relation to the twenty-two uprisings in Malabar. In these uprisings the rebels came mostly from the poorer part of the Mappila population. The target of the rebels was usually the British officials. Janmis and their dependents. The British armed forces swung into action to suppress the rebels but failed to subdue them for several years.

9. The Santhal Rebellion, 1855-56

The Santhals were inhabitants of the districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Murshidabad, Pakur, Dumka, Bhagalpur and Purnea. The region of maximum concentration of Santhals was described Daman-i-koh or Santhal Pargana. When the Santhals cleared the forest and started farming in this region the neighbouring Rajas of Maheshpur and Pakur leased out the Santhal villages to Zamindars and money-lenders. Gradual penetration through outsiders (described dikus through the Santhals) in the territory of the Santhals brought misery and oppression for the simple livelihood Santhals. In Calcutta Review of 1856 a modern writer depicted the condition of the Santhals in the following words: ―Zamindars, the police, the revenue and court alas have exercised a combined system of extortions, oppressive exactions, forcible dispossession of property, abuse and personal violence and a variety of petty tyrannies upon the timid, and yielding Santhals. Usurious interest on loans of money ranging from 50 to 500 per cent; false events at the haut (weekly market) and the market; willful and uncharitable trespass through the rich through means of their untethered cattle, tattoos (small ponies), ponies and even elephants, on the rising crops of the poorer race; and such like illegalities have been prevalent.

The oppression through money-lenders, merchants, Zamindars and government officials forced the Santhals to take up arms in order to protect themselves. Initial protests of the Santhals were in the form of robbery and looting of Zamindars and money-lenders houses. But violent

suppression of these behaviors and harassment of Santhals at the hands of police and local officials made them more violent. The rebel Santhals establish their leaders in two brothers, Sidhu and Kanu, who were whispered to have received blessings from the gods to put an end to the ongoing oppression of the Santhals and to restore "the good old days". Many thousand Santhals armed with their traditional weapons of bows, arrows, axes assembled and took the decision to provide an ultimatum to the Zamindars and the government officials to stop oppression immediately. They decided to get back manage of their lands and to set up their own government. The authorities though paid no serious attention to this ultimatum. Ultimately the grievances of the Santhals flared up in open armed insurrection against the local government officials, Zamindars and money-lenders. The insurrection spread rapidly in the whole Santhal Pargana. Big numbers of low caste non-Santhals also came out in support of the Santhals. The government and Zamindars started counter-attacking the insurgents. The heroic struggle of the Santhals ultimately failed because of British superiority of arms.

Check Your Progress 1

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

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

1. Causes of Popular Resistance Movements.

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2. How do you know the Nature of Colonial Rule?

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13.3 RESISTANCE RULE

East India Company

British involvement in India during the 18th century can be divided into two phases, one ending and the other beginning at mid-century. In the first half of the century, the British were a trading presence at certain points along the coast; from the 1750s they began to wage war on land in eastern and south-eastern India and to reap the reward of successful warfare, which was the exercise of political power, notably over the rich province of Bengal. By the end of the century British rule had been consolidated over the first conquests and it was being extended up the Ganges valley to Delhi and over most of the peninsula of southern India. By then the British had established a military dominance that would enable them in the next fifty years to subdue all the remaining Indian states of any consequence, either conquering them or forcing their rulers to become subordinate allies.

...India became the focal point of the Company's trade.

At the beginning of the 18th century English commerce with India was nearly a hundred years old. It was transacted by the East India Company, which had been given a monopoly of all English trade to Asia by royal grant at its foundation in 1600. Through many vicissitudes, the Company had evolved into a commercial concern only matched in size by its Dutch rival. Some 3000 shareholders subscribed to a stock of £3 200 000; a further £6 million was borrowed on short-term bonds; twenty or thirty ships a year were sent to Asia and annual sales in London were worth up to £2 million. Twenty-four directors, elected annually by the shareholders ran the Company's operations from its headquarters in the City of London.

Towards the end of the 17th century India became the focal point of the Company's trade. Cotton cloth woven by Indian weavers was being

imported into Britain in huge quantities to supply a worldwide demand for cheap, washable, lightweight fabrics for dresses and furnishings. The Company's main settlements, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta were established in the Indian provinces where cotton textiles for export were most readily available. These settlements had evolved from 'factories' or trading posts into major commercial towns under British jurisdiction, as Indian merchants and artisans moved in to do business with the Company and with the British inhabitants who lived there.

Regional politics

The East India Company's trade was built on a sophisticated Indian economy. India offered foreign traders the skills of its artisans in weaving cloth and winding raw silk, agricultural products for export, such as sugar, the indigo dye or opium, and the services of substantial merchants and rich bankers. During the 17th century at least, the effective rule maintained by the Mughal emperors throughout much of the subcontinent provided a secure framework for trade.

The Mughal empire had disintegrated...

The Company's Indian trade in the first half of the 18th century seemed to be established on a stable and profitable basis. Those who directed its affairs in London could see no case for military or political intervention to try to change the status quo. The British did, however, start to intervene in Indian politics from the 1750s, and revolutionary changes in their role in India were to follow. This change of course can best be explained partly in terms of changed conditions in India and partly as a consequence of the aggressive ambitions of the local British themselves.

Conditions in India were certainly changing. The Mughal empire had disintegrated and was being replaced by a variety of regional states. This did not produce a situation of anarchy and chaos, as used once to be assumed. Some of the regional states maintained stable rule and there was no marked overall economic decline throughout India.

A successful kingmaker...could become prodigiously rich.

There were, however, conflicts within some of the new states. Contestants for power in certain coastal states were willing to seek European support for their ambitions and Europeans were only too willing to give it. In part, they acted on behalf of their companies. By the 1740s rivalry between the British and the French, who were late comers to Indian trade, was becoming acute. In southern India the British and the French allied with opposed political factions within the successor states to the Mughals to extract gains for their own companies and to weaken the position of their opponents. Private ambitions were also involved. Great personal rewards were promised to the European commanders who succeeded in placing their Indian clients on the thrones for which they were contending. A successful kingmaker, like Robert Clive, could become prodigiously rich.

Company government

Inscription on a stone laid by the Honourable Warren Hastings The new Company governments were based on those of the Indian states that they had displaced and much of the effective work of administration was initially still done by Indians. Collection of taxes was the main function of government. About one third of the produce of the land was extracted from the cultivators and passed up to the state through a range of intermediaries, who were entitled to keep a proportion for themselves.

In addition to enforcing a system whose yield provided the Company with the resources to maintain its armies and finance its trade, British officials tried to fix what seemed to them to be an appropriate balance between the rights of the cultivating peasants and those of the intermediaries, who resembled landlords. British judges also supervised the courts, which applied Hindu or Islamic rather than British law. There was as yet little belief in the need for outright innovation. On the contrary, men like Warren Hastings, who ruled British Bengal from 1772

to 1785, believed that Indian institutions were well adapted to Indian needs and that the new British governments should try to restore an 'ancient constitution', which had been subverted during the upheavals of the 18th century. If this were done, provinces like Bengal would naturally recover their legendary past prosperity.

The ignorance and superstition...should be challenged...

By the end of the century, however, opinions were changing. India seemed to be suffering not merely from an unfortunate recent history but from deeply ingrained backwardness. It needed to be 'improved' by firm, benevolent foreign rule. Various strategies for improvement were being discussed. Property relations should be reformed to give greater security to the ownership of land. Laws should be codified on scientific principles. All obstacles to free trade between Britain and India should be removed, thus opening India's economy to the stimulus of an expanding trade with Europe. Education should be remodelled. The ignorance and superstition thought to be inculcated by Asian religions should be challenged by missionaries propagating the rationality embodied in Christianity. The implementation of improvement in any systematic way lay in the future, but commitment to governing in Indian ways through Indians was waning fast.

13.4 NATURE AND FORMS OF RESISTANCE

Nature of Popular Movements before 1857

Peasant and tribal movements have been interpreted differently through dissimilar schools of historians. The historians with sympathies towards the British and the recognized order often regarded these uprisings as a problem of law and order. The range of troubles faced through these tribals and peasants from the pre-colonial to the colonial times were often overlooked as possible causes for these uprisings. The rebels were often portrayed as primitive savages resisting ―culture‖. The Nationalists tended to appropriate the peasant the tribal history to the purposes of the

anti-colonial struggle ignoring sure other facets of the oppressed people‘s struggle. Those more sympathetic to the cause of the tribals and peasants though tended to negate very often the logic of peasant and tribal protest in terms of the people‘s own experience. It is also necessary to understand the domain of peasant and tribal action in its own terms. This effort has scarcely begun yet.

Leadership

In the movements we have studied above the question of leadership, i.e., who led these movements becomes significant. Movements in this stage of our history tended to throw up leaders who rose and fell with the movement. The context in which these movements arose gave very little scope for a leadership to create an entry from outside the immediate context of the rebellion. This is quite in contrast to the times of the national movement where leaders from various parts of upper strata consciously, or sure ideological premises, made an intervention into the peasant and tribal movements. The leadership of these movements often devolved upon men or women who were within the cultural world of the peasants they led. They were able to articulate the protest of the oppressed. The Faraizi rebellion illustrated how holymen as leaders were on the one hand trying to return to a past purity of their religion and on the other, also addressed the peasant‘s troubles. Thus the notion that all land was god‘s land the everyone had an equal share in it, mobilized the oppressed peasants and also invoked the sanctity of true religion.

Participation and Mobilization

Some characteristics of the peasant and tribal protest movements demonstrate a sure stage of political and social consciousness. For instance, it has been pointed out that the rebels against Debi Sinha in 1783 attacked Kacharis in a definite recognition of where the political source of the peasant‘s oppression lay. Likewise the Kols in 1832 did not attack the tribal population in a clear recognition of who their allies were. In course of the development of a movement it sometimes broadened its

ambit to contain issues beyond the immediate grievances which started off a protest movement. For instance the Moplah rebellions in the nineteenth century Malabar started as struggles against the landlord but ended up as protest against British rule itself. Protest of the oppressed also often involved redefinition of the connection of the oppressed to the language, civilization and religion of the dominant classes. This may take the form of denial of the convention of respect and submission in speech or the destruction of spaces of worship or of symbols of power or oppression. Thus protests took myriad shapes in several spheres, from everyday life to organised insurgency. In so distant as protest movements, took on the character of public and communal acts, the peasants and tribal participant‘s methods have some specific characteristics. Being public and open these rebellions were political actions, dissimilar from crime. Inspite of the effort of British officials to portray them as criminals, the rebel‘s mode of action tell another story. For instance the Santhals gave ample warning in advance to the villages they attacked. The legitimacy for such public declarations often came from a higher power. The Santhal leaders Sidho and Kanho for instance claimed in information that it was the thakoor (local god) who himself would fight the white soldiers. It was. this public legitimacy which allowed the Rangpur rebellion‘s leaders to impose a dhing-kharcha (levy for insurrection) on the peasantry. The public legitimacy ultimately allowed public conference, scheduling, assembly and attack. As Sido Santhal put it ―all the pergunnaits and manjees consulted and advised me to fight‖. Likewise the legitimacy to fight expressed itself in the grand ceremonies of a rebel march. For instance the leaders of the Santhal rebellion were accepted in a palanquin and their followers were festive red clothes. Then the public character was reinforced through drawing on the corporate labour action. For instance the Santhal tribals for whom shikar or hunting was the main society action for obtaining food, often characterised a rebellion as a shikar. But now the shikar gathering was used for wilder political purposes and this was reflected in behaviors like burning, wrecking and destruction of recognized targets to create a political point. What was the underlying bond uniting the rebels against the perceived enemy? These often lived in varying degress of tensions

flanked by class, caste or ethnic and religious groups. In Mapilla rebellion for instance religion forged a bond flanked by the poorer and more affluent parts of the peasantry to make grounds for a fight against landlord oppression. Likewise ethnicity created bonds of solidarity. For instance in 1852 the Dhangar Kols of Sonepur who were the first to rise in that region were promptly given support through the Larka Kols of Singhbhum where no disturbances had yet taken lay. Solidarity in the protests above was reinforced through society mobilization, forcing the vacillators to join the rebel ranks and a harsh attitude towards the traitors. Protest movements of the oppressed peasants and tribals did not emerge in a full-blows form. In the early stages they are form of social action which the state several seem upon as plain crime. Mainly often in the British official records this transition from crime to rebellion is ignored and the two are seen as the same.

Also obscured is the information that crimes ranging from starvation, thefts to murder spring from the violent circumstances of livelihood in the countryside. Often an insurgency was preceded through the rise in the rate of rural crimes. For instance in 1854, a year before the Santhal rebellion, a number of dacoities were committed against the local moneylenders. The Santhal leaders later justified them on moral grounds to the British court saying that their complaints against the money-lenders were never heeded through the officials. The local spread of rebellions of tribal and peasant societies was influenced, if not determined, through that society‘s perception of the region they belonged to, the geographical boundaries within which that society existed and worked as also the ties of ethnicity. For the Santhals it was a battle for their fatherland which had been grabbed through the outsiders. Their fight then was for this land which belonged to them in the good old past and was now snatched absent from them. Sometime ethnic bonds extended the territorial limits of a tribal group as we saw in the case of Larka and Dhangar Kols who came together in rebellion.

Likewise the peasants and tribal people‘s conception of their past went into the creation of the consciousness of the rebellious and the insurgent.

We have already seen that their notions of their own past inspired rebels to struggle to recover circumstances that prevailed before they fell upon bad times, before their oppressors acquired power in excess of them. The Faraizi and Santhal rebellions give particularly apt examples. This did not necessarily mean that the protest movements were backward looking; it symbolizes an effort to construct and ideal to strive for.

Check Your Progress 2

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 Resistance Rule?

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2. Describe about Nature and forms of resistance.

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13.5 LET US SUM UP

British colonial rule in India precipitated a period of intense rebellion among the country's indigenous groups. Most tribal conflicts occurred in the British provinces, and many historians have documented how a host of colonial policies gave rise to widespread rural unrest and violence. In the post-independence period, many of the colonial-era policies that had

caused revolt were not reformed, and tribal conflict continued in the form of the Naxalite insurgency. This article considers why the princely state of Bastar has continuously been a major centre of tribal conflict in India. Why has this small and remote kingdom, which never came under direct British rule, suffered so much bloodshed? Using extensive archival material, this article highlights two key findings: first, that Bastar experienced high levels of British intervention during the colonial period, which constituted the primary cause of tribal violence in the state; and second, that the post-independence Indian government has not reformed colonial policies in this region, ensuring a continuation and escalation of tribal conflict through the modern Naxalite movement.

At least three separate events are called the Sannyasi Rebellion. One refers to a large body of Hindu sannyasis who travelled from North India to different parts of Bengal to visit shrines. En route to the shrines, it was customary for many of these ascetics to exact a religious tax from the headmen and zamindars or regional landlords. In times of prosperity, the headmen and zamindars generally obliged. However, since the East India Company had received the Diwani or right to collect the tax, many of the tax demands increased and the local landlords and headmen were unable to pay both the ascetics and the English. Crop failures, and famine, which killed ten million people or an estimated one-third of the population of Bengal, compounded the problems since much of the arable land lay fallow.

Majnun Shah, the leader of a large group of fakirs who were traveling through Bengal, claimed in 1772 that 150 of them had been killed without cause in the previous year. Such repression was one of the reasons that caused distress leading to violence, especially in Natore in Rangpur, now in modern Bangladesh. However, some modern historians argue that the movement never gained popular support.

The other two movements involved a sect of Hindu ascetics, the Dasnami naga sannyasis who likewise visited Bengal on pilgrimage mixed with moneylending opportunities. To the British, these ascetics were looters

and must be stopped from collecting money that belonged to the Company and possibly from even entering the province. It was felt that a large body of people on the move was a possible threat

The Sannyasi rebellion was the first of a series of revolts and rebellions in the Western districts of the province including (but not restricted to) the Chuar Revolt of 1799 and the Santhal Revolt of 1855–56. What effect the Sannyasi Rebellion had on rebellions that followed is debatable. Perhaps, the best reminder of the Rebellion is in literature, in the Bengali novel Anandamath, written by India's first modern novelist Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. The song, Vande Mataram, which was written in 1876, was used in the book Anandamath in 1882 (pronounced Anondomôţh in Bengali) and the 1952 movie based on the book. Vande Mataram was later declared to be India's National Song (not to be confused with the Indian National Anthem).

13.6 KEY WORDS

Sanyasis: Sannyasa is the life stage of renunciation within the Hindu philosophy of four age-based life stages known as ashramas, with the first three being Brahmacharya, Grihastha and Vanaprastha.

Tribal: In anthropology, a tribe is a human social group. Exact definitions of what constitutes a tribe vary among anthropologists. The concept is often contrasted by anthropologists with other social groups' concepts, such as nations, states, and forms of kinship

Santhal: The Santal, or Santhal, are an ethnic group native to India and Bangladesh in South Asia. Santals are the largest tribe in the Jharkhand state of India in terms of population and are also found in the states of Assam, Bihar, Odisha and West Bengal.

Resistance: **Resistance** is a measure of the opposition to current flow in an electrical circuit. **Resistance** is measured in ohms, symbolized by the Greek letter omega (Ω). Ohms are named after Georg Simon Ohm (1784-

1854), a German physicist who studied the relationship between voltage, current and **resistance**.

Revolt: Take violent action against an established government or ruler; rebel.

13.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. How do you know the Nature of Colonial Rule?
2. Discuss the Resistance Rule?
3. Describe about Nature and forms of resistance.
4. Do the peasant and tribal movements of our period demonstrate certain level of consciousnesses? How?
5. Comment briefly on the changes in agrarian society in the North Western Provinces and Awadh on the eve of the revolt.

13.8 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

- Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire in The New Cambridge History of India (vol. II, 1) by C A Bayly (Cambridge, 1988)
- Revenue and Reform: The Indian Problem in British Politics, 1757-1813 by H V Bowen (Cambridge, 1991)
- The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company 1600-1760 by K N Chaudhuri (Cambridge, 1978)
- The East India Company: A History by Philip Lawson (London, 1993)
- Bengal: The British Bridgehead, Eastern India, 1740-1828 in The New Cambridge History of India, (vol. II, 2) by P J Marshall (Cambridge, 1987)
- Lorenzen, D.N. (1978). "Warrior Ascetics in Indian History". Journal of the American Oriental Society. 98 (1): 617–75. doi:10.2307/600151. JSTOR 600151.
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13.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Sub Section 13.2.1
2. See Sub Section 13.2.2

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section 13.3
2. See Section 13.4

UNIT 14: RESISTANCE TO COLONIAL RULE II

STRUCTURE

14.0 Objectives
14.1 Introduction
14.2 Causes of Resistance
14.3 Colonial Rule in Pre-1857
14.4 Pre -1857 peasant, tribal and cultural resistance
14.5 Let us sum up
14.6 Key Words
14.7 Questions for Review
14.8 Suggested readings and references
14.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

14.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit we can able to understand the bellow mentioned points in details with the theme on resistance to colonial rule in 18th Century.

- To know the Causes of Resistance
- To discuss the Colonial Rule in Pre-1857
- To describe in details about the Pre -1857 peasant, tribal and cultural resistance.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

After the battle of Plassey in 1757, the political control of the East India Company increased and by the end of the eighteenth century, the British emerged as the main power in India. As the Company gained in political sphere it became imperative to introduce and implement policies in the fields of land revenue, law and order, and set-up an administration. Implementation of such policies created turmoil in the Indian society and led to changes. Moreover, Company's main aim was to utilize the resources of India for the development of England. These changes led to

dislocation in the socio-cultural, economic and political life of the people. The subsequent turmoil led to outbreak of rebellion in different parts of the country. Rebellions were not confined to the later period of the British Empire but were a constant feature of it from its very beginning, culminated in to the revolt of 1857. Erosion of the traditional forms of authority and increased economic pressure were two basic reasons for these uprisings. The Revolt of 1857 was the most dramatic instance of traditional India's struggle against foreign rule. But it was no sudden occurrence. It was the culmination of a century long traditions of fierce popular resistance to British domination. The establishment of British power in India was a prolonged process of piecemeal conquest and consolidation and the colonization of the economy and society. This process produced discontent, resentment and resistance at every stage. Social base of the rebellions At a time when the newly created class of urban intelligentsia was reaping the benefits of the British rule, it were the traditional sections of society whose lives had been almost completely changed for the worse, who rebelled. The series of civil rebellions were often led by deposed rulers or their descendants, uprooted and impoverished zamindars, landlords and poligars (landed military magnates in South India) and ex-retainers and officials of the conquered Indian States. The backbone of the rebellions, their mass base and striking power came from the rack-rented peasants, ruined artisans and demobilized soldiers. Political religious movements like Faqir uprising and Sanyasi uprising were led by the religious mendicants whose religious practices couldn't be understood by the British.

14.2 CAUSES OF RESISTANCE

- The major cause of all these civil rebellions taken as a whole was the rapid changes the British introduced in the economy, administration and land revenue system. These changes led to the disruption of the agrarian society, causing prolonged and widespread suffering among its constituents.

- Above all, the colonial policy of intensifying demands for land revenue and extracting as large an amount as possible produced a veritable

upheaval in Indian villages. In Bengal, for example, in less than thirty years land revenue collection was raised to nearly double the amount collected under Mughals. The pattern was repeated in other parts of the country as British rule spread and aggravating the unhappiness of the farmers was the fact that not even a part of the enhanced revenue was spent on the development of agriculture or the welfare of the cultivator.

- Thousands of zamindars and poligars lost control over their land and its revenue either due to the extinction of their rights by the colonial state or by the forced sale of their rights over the land because of their inability to meet the exorbitant land revenue demanded. The proud zamindars and poligars resented this loss even more when they were displaced by rank outsiders-government officials and the new men of moneymerchants and money lenders. Thus they, as also the old chiefs, who had lost their principalities, had personal scores to settle with the new rulers.

- Peasants and artisans, as indicated earlier, had their own reasons to rise up in arms and side with the traditional elite. Increasing demands for land revenue were forcing large numbers of peasants into growing indebtedness or into selling their lands. The new landlords, bereft of any traditional paternalism towards their tenants, pushed up rents to ruinous heights and evicted them in case of non- payment. The economic decline of the peasantry was reflected in twelve major and numerous minor famines from 1770 to 1857.

- The new courts and legal system gave a further fillip to the dispossessors of land and encouraged the rich to oppress the poor. Flogging, torture and jailing of the cultivators for arrears of rent or land revenue or interest on debt were quite common. The ordinary people were also hard hit by the prevalence of corruption at the lower levels of the police, judiciary and general administration. The petty officials enriched themselves freely at the cost of the poor. The police looted, oppressed and tortured the common people at will. William Edwards, a British official, wrote in 1859 that the police were ‘a scourge to the

people' and that 'their oppression and exaction form one of the chief grounds of dissatisfaction with our governments.'

- The ruins of Indian handicraft industries, as a result of the imposition of free trade in India and levy of discriminatory tariffs against Indian goods in Britain, pauperized millions of artisans. The misery of the artisans was further compounded by the disappearance of their traditional patrons and buyers, the princes, chieftains and zamindars.

- The scholarly and priestly were also active in inciting hatred and rebellion against foreign rule. The traditional rulers and ruling elite had financially supported scholars, religious preachers, priests, pundits and maulvis and men of arts and literature.

Classification of the popular uprisings

Political-religious Movements - Fakir Uprising, Sanyasi Uprising, Pagal Panthis, Wahabi Movement, Faraizi Movement, Kuka Movement and Moplah Rebellions Movement by deposed rulers and Zamindars- Velu Thampi and Polygar Rebellions

Movements by the dependents of the deposed ruler- Ramosi Uprising, Gadkari Revolt and Sawantwadi Revolt Tribal Movementsa)

a) Non-Frontier Tribal movements- These are divided in three phases

i. First Phase- 1795-1860: Santhal Rebellion and Khond uprising

ii. Second Phase- 1860-1920: Munda uprising and Koya Rebellion

iii. Third Phase- 1920-1947: Rampa Rebellion and Chenchu tribal Movements

b) Frontier Tribal Movements: Khasi Uprising, Singphos Rebellion and Rani Gaidiniliu's Naga Movement.

Check Your Progress 1

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 Causes of Resistance.

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14.3 COLONIAL RULE IN PRE-1857

British policies during 1861-1900

1. Indian Civil Service Act of 1861

During company's time, all post in Presidency was reserved and many more appointments were made than actually planned. These all appointments were regularized and schedule for future was created (Schedule Post). For being a Civil Servant, 7 year service in India was required and appointment was invalid if it was not approved by Secretary of State within 12 months.

2. Indian High Court Act of 1861

It amalgamated Supreme Court and Sadar Diwani Adalat in Presidency town and British Crown establish High Court of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras by which former Supreme Court, Sadar Nizamut Adalat and Faujdari Adalat were abolished and each High Court was a Supreme Court in its region. Similarly by the High Court Act of 1865, Governor

General was empowered to alter the limits of jurisdiction. e.g. by the Act of 1869, Jurisdiction was extended to all Indian Subjects (from native Christian)

3. Royal Title Act of 1876

Queen Victoria assume the title of "Empress of India"

4. Indian Council Act of 1861

There was change in composition of Governor General Executive council for legislative purposes. Power of legislation was restore to Bombay and Madras which was taken away by Charter Act of 1833. Similarly Governor General was empowered to appoint President of Council in case of his absence from Head Quarter. His decision could be overruled by Crown through Secretary of State. Governor General was having power to issue ordinance in extra ordinary circumstances valid for 6 months. There was no distinction between Legislative Power of Centre and Local Council however Governor General Sanction was required in certain cases. Councils were proposing for Bengal, Punjab and North West under Lieutenant Governor and Nominated Member.

5. Indian Council Act of 1892

Circumstances included Role of Congress resolution in 1885 and 1889 demanding reforms and expansions with increase proportion of elected members. Local Councils were to be setup for Punjab, North West and Awadh. Governor General council was enlarge and was empowered to make regulations and prescribe the manner in which regulation were to be put in effect so Secretary of State believe it was possible for Governor General to make arrangement by which certain person might be presented to him. There was Official Majority in Council and representative element was introduced as District Board, Municipalities, Universities, and Chamber of Commerce were empowered to return their member to council so for 1st time, representative element were

introduced through indirect election. The members could ask questions but no supplementary question could follow. Similarly, member could discuss budget but were not allowed to vote and could ask question on public interest with some restrictions.

6. Other Major Financial and Administrative Policies

In terms of financial policies and separation of power since 1833, financial power with Governor General Council and Provincial Government were not having any power of taxation. It was Lord Mayo inaugurated financial devolution in India with heads of expenditure i.e. Reserved and Transfer head in1860. In times of Lord Lytton, it was John Strachey who transfers Heads of expenditure like revenue (land), excise, stamps and General administration to provincial government. It was Lord Rippon who abolished the System of Fixed grant by central government to provinces and assigns certain source of revenue and share from central source to provincial government i.e. Imperial Head, Provincial Head and Divided Head. There was Royal Commission on Decentralization in 1907 which had focus upon Distribution of Finances on need based attitude and central government was not to interfere with revenue assignment to provincial government. In terms of Local Self-government, Presidency Town were having Municipal Government But it was Act X of 1842 that 1st attempt was made in Bengal to have Municipal Government to enable public to have better public health and conveyances. Therefore different Municipal Act were passed and report were submitted by Royal Army Sanitary Commission (1863) authorizing process of election to be used for constitution of municipal institution. Similarly in 1881, Government of Rippon passed resolution for sense of responsibility, action and involvement of Public representation on Local Bodies leading to Local Self Government Act of 1882 resulting in to formation of local board throughout the country having sufficient fund and in rural areas, these board will replace Local Consultative committee having independent status and non-official chairman as far as possible and same was true for urban board and district councils.

14.4 PRE-1857 PEASANT, TRIBAL AND CULTURAL RESISTANCE

Distress of the Peasant: Peasants' Revolt:

The Mughal revenue system according to Prof. Habib suffered from two infirmities. First, the revenue was set at the highest in order that the military contingents to be supplied by the mansabdars could be met out of the revenue collection of the jagir. Secondly, the revenue was fixed at so high a level that it left only the marginal surplus, that is enough margin for the survival of the peasants, which was the barest minimum needed for his subsistence.

This meant while the appropriation of the surplus produce constituted the great wealth and the wherewithal of the Mughal imperial government to maintain its pomp and splendour as also its military strength, it left the actual producers of the wealth in a state of utter poverty.

As Paelsart observed, the contrast between the rich and the common people was so great that "the rich in their great superfluity and the utter subjection and poverty of the common people" was the economic picture of the Mughal times. But this was not a static situation, with the passage of time there was a progressive increase in the revenue demand with the rise in prices. Bernier gives us a reasonable explanation of this situation. According to him, "The country is ruined by the necessity of defraying the enormous charges required to maintain the splendour of a numerous court and to pay a large army maintained for keeping the people in subjection. No adequate idea can be conveyed of the sufferings of the people. The cudgel and the whip compel them to incessant labour for the benefit of others."

A jagirdar who was liable to be transferred from his jagir at any moment or after three or four years was not likely to follow a far- sighted policy of development of the condition of the peasants under him, rather he would allow oppression on the peasants for his personal benefit even if it

would ruin the peasantry or destroy the revenue yielding capacity of the land for all time in future.

This narrow selfish outlook of the jagirdars has been nicely described by Bernier in the following lines: "Why the neglected state of this land creates uneasiness in our minds? And why should we expand our money and time to render it fruitful? We may be deprived of it in a single moment and our exertions would benefit neither ourselves nor our children. Let us draw from the soil all the money we can though the peasant should starve or abscond and we should leave it. When commanded to quit, a dreary wilderness."

Similar observations are to be found also in the writings of Xavier, Hawkins, and Manrique. Indian writer Bhimsen observes that unpredictable and constant transfer of Jagirdars made the agents of the jagirdars to help the rayotwari or istiqlal arrangements. The amils of the jagirdars were also not sure of the tenure of service and as such were unrelenting and tyrannical in revenue collection. What was even worse, the jagirdars even resorted to farming out revenue instead of appointing their own agents for tax collection.

Sadiq Khan, writing during Shah Jahan's reign observed that lands were being laid waste through bribery, revenue farming the result of which was impoverishment of the peasantry who were literally plundered and robbed. Thus the system of jagir transfer in the 17th century led to reckless exploitation of peasant population of the country. The imperial administration could check this evil partially for some time only but not permanently, for the imperial regulations left much liberty to the jagirdars, for it was within the discretion of the jagirdars to assist the peasants by granting loans, remission of revenue in times of famine or other calamities or to insist on payment even before harvesting of the crops.

Aurangzeb's Farman in regard to the revenue demand in Gujarat and his regulations prohibiting realising certain taxes remained effective on

paper, but not in practice. In the circumstances the burden on the peasantry became so heavy in certain areas that they were even left without the means of subsistence.

As Manrique observes where the raiyats, peasants could not pay the exhorbitant revenue were "beaten unmercifully and maltreated" Manucci, who on this, occasion assumes the view point of the rulers, declares that it is the peasants habit to go on refusing payment, asserting that they have no money. The chastiments and instruments (of torture) are very severe. They are also made to endure hunger and thirst…. "They feign death (that sometimes really happens)… But this trick secures them no compassion."

The misery of the peasants was such and torture so inhuman that they were obliged to sell their women, children and cattle to meet the revenue demand. The villages which could not pay the full amount, of the revenue-farm were put on a charge of rebellion and the wives, the children of the peasants were sold or carried off and attached to heavy iron-chains sent with their wives and children to various markets and fairs to be sold.

Even when robbery took place within the jurisdiction of a jagirdar or faujdar, the villagers were to find out the culprits and recover the lost properties or compensate the loss. This was also a pretext for the jagirdar or faujdar to sack the village or villages, kill the men folk and sell the women to slavery. Akbar's ordinance not to seize or sell women or children of combatants was directed to stop the avaricious men who would on false imputation of disloyalty or on mere suspicion would sack and plunder villages and carry away the women.

From the narrative of J. Xavier we know that Mughal conquest of Kashmir and Gujarat resulted in fall in cultivation and the number of runaway peasants grew due to oppression of the peasants. Under Jahangir's reign the peasants were "so cruelly and pitilessly oppressed" that the agricultural fields often lay "unsown and grow into

wildernesses." The poor labourers also deserted the villages as a result these were poorly populated.

A historian of the reign of Shah Jahan remarks that "owing to natural calamities, the rebellions of seditious zamindars and the cruelty of ill-fated officers "vast areas were depopulated and despite best efforts of the Emperor and his well-meaning ministers the land looked more deserted than it had been under Jahangir. In Gujarat a Dutch traveller in 1629 noted that "the peasants are more oppressed than formerly (and) frequently abscond."

The same thing was noted by an Indian writer with regard to Sind which according to him "was the land of the forsaken, of the cruel and the helpless." This was due to the oppression of the jagirdars. In the Deccan the period before the second vice-royalty of Aurangzeb, desolation was stalking the land and the peasant population dispersed due to the oppression of the governors.

During the early years of Aurangzeb's reign a great portion of good cultivable land remained uncultivated for want of labourers a large number of whom had perished due to the bad treatment and oppression of the governors, or had left the country.

Khafi Khan gives us a clear picture of the condition of the peasantry under Muhammad Shah. According him all experienced and thoughtful persons who used to manage the offices of the state, protect peasantry and encourage the prosperity of the country had departed, the revenue-farmers became veritable sewerage of the revenue- paying peasantry.

As these revenue farmers had no guarantee of being confirmed in their office next year would extort as much as possible from the peasants and sell away both the state's share and peasants share. They even sell away the fruit-bearing trees and the hereditary lands of the peasants.

Many of the parganas had been so ruined and devasted due to the oppression by the revenue-farmers that these turned into deep forests

infested by tigers and wild beasts. "Oppression and injustice of the officials, who have no thought of God, has reached such a degree that if one wishes to describe a hundredth part of it, it will still defy description."

There were, however, certain areas, for instance deltaic Bengal, particularly its eastern portions, parts of Terai etc. where there were extensions of cultivation. But these constituted an insignificant part of the Empire.

Certain points which require to be specially stressed are that (1) flight of peasant population was a common phenomenon during the 17th century of the Mughal period. Famine was an added cause to the oppression by the jagirdars, revenue farmers etc. Accumulation of arrear of revenue demand was another cause of absconding.

There were cases where peasantry gave up cultivation as a profession altogether. As Bernier observes, "some left country to seek a more tolerable mode of existence either in the towns or in the camps, as bearers of burdens, carriers of water or servants of horsemen." As under the Mughal rule the urban population was numerous there were needs of innumerable peons, menials, labourers and slaves in the towns and cities. According to Manucci in southern India where oppression was equally severe, the lot of people leaving rural areas was only to accept slavery or to resort to armed resistance.

Peasants' Revolt in the Medieval Age:

Considered from the general inclination of the common people during the period under review, there was no trend toward rebellion. In Malwa the artisans and the peasants used to carry arms with them, but that was no indication of their war-like inclination.

Paelsart writing about the third decade of the seventeenth century observed "that despite much misery and poverty the people endure

patiently, professing that they do not deserve anything better." But patient endurance also has its limit and the way in which the peasants knew to show defiance was by stoppage of the payment of land revenue. When saturation point was reached under oppression, even a small act of oppression might lead them to rebellion. Villages or areas protected by ravines, forests or hills are naturally convenient for rebellions. Rebellious villages or peasants who ceased to pay land revenue were called Zortalab and mawas as distinguished from revenue-paying villages called raiyati. When the rebellion would be put down the fate of the rebels could only be imagined. "Everyone is killed that is met with and their wives, sons and daughters and cattle carried off."

It goes without saying that the intensity of oppression varied from place to place as also due to the variance in the character of the jagirdars and their agents or revenue- farmers. As such while the rebellion in the village or group of villages when put down and men were butchered and their wives and children carried away, the neighbouring areas remained placid and unconcerned. But this was always not the thing.

The community of caste often played a cementing factor and in extending the scale of rebellion out of an urge to collectively defend common interests. According to Prof. Habib "In the Jat revolt we have, perhaps, the clearest instance of how an essentially peasant rebellion proceeded along caste lines. The same influence is visible also in the 'lawless' activities of such seditious castes as the Mewatis and the Wattus and the Dogras."

Religious community is another factor that was responsible for extension of the scale of rebellion. Kabir, Nanak, Dadu did not preach militancy but humility and resignation. Their approach to a caste-less society made a deep appeal to the hearts of the masses. They provided inspiration for two powerful revolts, namely, the Satnami and Sikh revolts against the Mughals.

A third factor was that the Zamindars had their own objects in opposing the Mughal ruling class. They at certain stage of the peasants' revolt

assumed leadership or the leaders of the peasants became themselves Zamindars or in desperation the peasants provided recruits for the rebellious zamindars.

Zamindars: Their Evolution in the Medieval Age, Categories: Their Revolts:

The term zamindar connotes holders of certain rights based on revenue collection and there are degrees of zamindars from those who have rights over to small portions of a village upwards to the ruler of a kingdom. The zamindars have certain features in common. The rights of zamindars did not originate from imperial grants although there were some exceptions to this. Zamindars were commanders of retainers under them and often they were leaders of caste groups.

Literally the term zamindar means 'holder' of land. According to Moreland in North India, it meant "a chief, that is a landholder with title or claim antecedent to Moslem rule, commonly a Raja Rao, or some other Hindu king or ex-king, who had become tributary to the Moslem state." But as there were zamindars in other areas directly administered by the Muslim Emperors which were not within tributary states, the definition of Moreland is not wholly correct. In Bengal, the term zamindar had a wider meaning.

There were landholders the Rajas, whose title to land was antecedent to Moslem rule' and there were other great landholders not holders of so large estates as those of the Rajas, who traced their origin to fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Even under Murshid Quli Khan a number of zamindari families had originated.

Reference to sanad that is formal grant, patent by the Board of Revenue during early years of the East India Company's rule does not find corroboration in Ain-i-Akbari. A sanad was, as John Shore stated a confirmation of rights and also an honourable distinction issued to "principal zamindars who enjoyed extensive jurisdiction and the right to be admitted to the presence of the sovereign or his viceroy."

Smaller zamindars did not enjoy that kind of formal acknowledgement of their rights. Under the Mughal Emperors, there was, however the system of confirmation of the proprietary right on the soil to zamindars, or inheritance of zamindari. According to Shore the Mughal principle of finance established the practice that the "rents belong to the sovereign, and the land to the zamindar."

It goes without saying the zamindars were a class of intermediaries between the peasants and the state, their primary function being collection of rent. There were three main categories of intermediaries. The first was those who paid tributes. These zamindars were rulers and often called Rajas, Raos etc. The tributes might be in cash or only symbolic payment by way of presentation say of an elephant or horse etc.

The second category comprised the zamindars who paid peshkash that is the revenue payable to the state. In revenue payable the peshkash was also included. Ordinary zamindars formed the third category and they occupied a position inferior to those of the first two categories namely the tribute paying and peshkash-paying zamindars.

The zamindars derived their right and title to the management of the zamindari from a sanad which was in the nature of a contract emphasizing the obligations of the zamindars. Default in payment would render a sanad revoked. A zamindari might be leased out that is given of ijara or even sold out. With the increasing weakness of the imperial administration there was a progressive increase in the autonomy of the Zamindars.

There was a gradation among the landholders. The first among the rank were the zamindars. Next to the zamindars were the chaudhuris below whom in rank were the talukdars. The Talukdars were of two groups the huzuri talukdars who had to pay a fixed revenue to the state. The other groups were of the mazkuri talukdars who paid their rent to the zamindar or chaudhuri. Zamindars during Akbar's reign were revenue farmers on

annual contract basis, with ten percent of the revenue demand as commission and small estate. There were also some hereditary proprietors of zamindari estates.

The ryots were under obligation to pay mal i.e. land revenue, sair i.e. other taxes, abwabs i.e. irregular and extra exactions by the state officials, zamindars or their agents! The zamindars, during the Mughal period, maintained an attitude of hostility towards the imperial administration and often sided with whoever appeared to be powerful and tumult-raising. This is known from Abul Fazl. He also praises Raja Beharimal who "out of wisdom and good fortune, aspired to leave the ranks of zamindars and become one of the select of the Court." Prof. Habib very rightly questions if zamindar's position and when become one of the court were mutually incompatible. Abul Fazl as well as the chroniclers of Aurangzeb mentions of the opportunism and disloyalty of the zamindars.

Prof. Habib states that "In documents written from the official point of view, it is assumed as a matter of course that the main danger to law and order came from the zamindars who refused to pay the revenue and had to be cowed down or destroyed by force either by the faujdar or the jagirdar. Erection of fort by any zamindar immediately aroused the suspicions of the authorities and could apparently be a sufficient justification of punitive action against him."

The correspondence from Radandaz Khan faujdar of Biswara reveals the condition arising out of non-payment of revenue in an area in the very heart of the empire by the zamindars against whom expeditions had to be sent. The zamindars were also engaged in robbery. Appointment of zamindars direct from the court under Aurangzeb was a method adopted for the purpose of counter-balancing the power of the.old houses of zamindars.

One of the important political features of the period under review was the struggle between the zamindars and the imperial administration, often

breaking out into open hostility. Manucci, writing in 1700, says "usually the viceroys and the governors are in a constant state of quarrel with the Hindu princes and zamindars—with some because they wish to seize their lands, with others, to force them to pay more revenue than customary…… usually there is some rebellion of the rajahs and zamindars going on in the Mughal kingdom."

As the zamindars were weaker in comparison with the imperial government, they always tried to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the peasants whose support was very much needed both for defence and fight as well as for finance by way of timely payment of revenue. The zamindars having been conversant with the local customs could make their relation and arrangements with the peasants more flexible than what the imperial administration could do in Khalisa lands or the assignees could do in the lands under them.

The imperial administration in Khalisa lands and the assigness were more interested in realising more and more revenue. Bernier observed that the peasants found "less oppression and allowed greater degree of comfort in the territories of the Raja. Even the court chronicler of Aurangzeb observed that the zamindars" for winning the hearts of and conciliating the peasants, in order that may not cease to obey or pay revenue to them" conducted themselves gently.

Frequently if happened that peasants fleeing the lands under the imperial administration were attracted to the lands of the zamindars. In this way the peasants and the zamindars were often associated in the struggle against the Mughal authorities. The peasants added to the resources of the zamindars by engaging in cultivation and also to their fighting strength by providing recruits.

Although such ill-equipped and ill-trained troops were no match for the imperial force, yet the difficult terrain, interspersed by rivers gave some advantage to such troops and they could continue their struggle. During Aurangzeb's reign a new feature was added to the nature of the struggle

of the zamindars. It was not only defensive, but now assumed also an offensive character.

Peasants Revolts in the 17th and 18th Centuries:

It is customary for the seventeenth and eighteenth century writers to emphasise economic and administrative causes behind the upheavals, against the Mughals. It has also been argued by some authors that opposition to the Mughals was due to Hindu reaction or national awakening. Prof. Habib, however, emphasis religious reaction and national consciousness as the motive force behind the opposition to the Mughals.

Jat Revolt:

From Abul Fazl it is known that the peculiar climate of the province of Agra made the peasant masses of the area notorious in the whole of the country "for religion, bravery and courage." The two sides of the Jumna figured constantly in military operations against the rebellious peasantry of the area.

The Emperor had once to lead personally, an expedition against a Raja of a pargana in Kanauja who used to engage robbers and peasants to defend himself when attacked. During the reign of Jahangir it was reported that "ganwars and cultivators" on the east of Jumna, near Mathura "do- not cease to commit highway robbery, and protected by dense jungle and fastness, live in rebellion, have no fear of anyone and do not pay the revenue to the jagirdars."

In an expedition which was sent against them resulted in the death of a number of rebels and captivity of their wives and children. This happened in the twelfth regnal year of Jahangir. In 1634 a larger expedition had to be dispatched against the rebels on both sides of the river Jumna who committed robberies on the Delhi-Agra route. Ten

thousands of the "human looking beasts were slaughtered" and their women, children and cattle beyond computation were seized.

In the year of the death of Sadullah Khan, wazir of Shah Jahan, the peasants of the villages near Agra rose in arms. They were surprised by Abdul Nabi, faujdar of the deceased Sadullah Khan, who put to sword or imprisoned all those who could not flee in time. This was the history of the cradle of the Jat rebellion in the reign of Aurangzeb. It is noteworthy that the rebels were not named as Jats, but called ganwars or villagers and in a few cases they were perhaps led by the Rajputs.

Manucci who wrote about Aurangzeb's time and knew about the Jat revolts called them as peasants. The Jats are "a peasant caste", who inhabited the villages between Delhi and Agra, and were entered as zamindars in many mahals in the Doab. The Jat rebellion, speaking properly, dates from the time of Gokla Jat, the zamindar of Talpat near Mathura! He collected a large number of Jat soldiers and other villagers and raised a rebellion.

He was killed in 1669, but the leadership passed to his son, Raja Ram Jat and then his nephew, Churaman Jat who is said to have been the son of a zamindar of eleven villages. Over wide areas the peasants refused to pay revenue and took to arms. From a grant 'of a zamindari it is found that the new zamindar was required to expel the "evil-mannered rebels", who inhabited the 25 villages near Mathura. In 1681 the Faujdar Multafat Khan of the district around Agra lost his life while leading an attack on a village that refused to pay the revenue. In the same decade for three years a jagirdar failed to get anything by way of revenue payment from his jagirs near Agra due to rebellion.

Leadership of the Jat rebellion was provided by the zamindars and capture-of the estates of other zamindars was the aim of the leaders of the rebellion. In the mid-eighteenth century much of the lands under the possession of the Jats was not in their own hands. The king or Raja who wanted to render assistance to the old zamindars, would bring him

inevitably in conflict with the Jats. One net result of the Jat rebellion was extension of Jat zamindari in the middle of the Doab.

About the character of the Jat rebellion it may be said that it was a huge plundering movement. "This was, perhaps, inevitable under the narrow caste-horizons of the peasants and the plundering instincts of their zamindar-leaders." Gokla plundered the pargana of Sadabad, the pargana around Agra was plundered by Raja Ram and all the parganas under Agra and Delhi had been sacked and plundered by Churaman. "So far as we know", says Prof. Irfan Habib, the Jat rebels (in spite of Haridas) had no connection with any particular religious movement.

Satnami Revolt:

While the Jat rebellion was unconnected with religion the Satnami (as also the Sikh) rebellions were entirely based on religion and not on casteism. The Satnamis were a sect of the Bairagis, which was founded in 1657 at Narnaul by a native of the place. They were believers in monotheism and abhorred formal rituals and superstition. They did not believe in caste distinctions and would not live on the charity of others. Sympathy with the poor and hostility towards authorities and wealth were their commandments.

"Do not harass the poor, Shun the company of an unjust king and wealthy and dishonest man, do not accept a gift from these or from kings." Naturally such a religion appealed to the conscience of the poor and the lower classes of the people. A contemporary historian describes the Satnamis as a group of Hindu mendicants also called Mundiyas. In the parganas of Narnaul and Mewat they numbered four or five thousand householders.

"Although those Mundiyas dress like mendicants, yet their livelihood and profession are usually agriculture and trade in the manner of grain-merchants with some capital. Living according to the ways of their own community, they aspire to reach the status of a good name (nek-nam),

which is the meaning of the word satnam. But if anyone should want to impose tyranny and oppression upon them as a display of courage or authority they will not tolerate it; and most of them bear arms and weapons."

From another contemporary writer we come to know that they were extremely dirty, foul, filthy and impure. They did "not differentiate between Muslims and Hindus, who eat pig's flesh and other disgusting things."

The Satnamis were habitually of rebellious conduct and even before they had rebelled they did not appear to have been loyal to authorities. They brought the cultivators and their families and possessions in the pargana of Bhatnair under their control and they were "not free from the thoughts of sedition and robbery." The revolt of the Satnamis in 1672 began as a village affray.

One Satnami while working in a field had hot exchange of words with a trooper who was guarding the corn-heap which led to a fracas and the trooper struck the satnami with a stick breaking his skull. Other Satnamis gathered and beat the trooper almost to death whereupon the Shiqdar sent a contingent of troops to chastise the Satnamis and the hostilities began.

That the rebellion was that of the lower classes of people which gave it a plebeian character can be clearly understood from the composition of the rebellious force of the Satnamis. They were the destitute gangs of carpenters, peasants, and sweepers, tanners who suddenly burst forth in the region of Mewat and fell upon the imperial troops like locusts.

But after their initial success and capture of Narnaul and Bairat they were finally destroyed by the large army sent from the court. Masir-i-Alamgiri compares their valiant defence against the imperial army by remaking that "despite the lack of all materials of war, they repeated the scenes of the great war of Mahabharat."

Prof. Habib would even feel like calling the rising of the Sikhs a peasant's revolt on the grounds that Sikhism is a peasant religion and the verses of Guru Nanak were all in the language of the Jats which means, in the dialect of the Punjab village. But these facts as well as the plebeian character of the rebellion, for "most of the chiefs of the highest dignity among the Sikhs", he points out, "were low-born persons, such as carpenters, shoe-markers and Jats", prove that the rise of the Sikhs was a peasants' revolt. On similar arguments Prof. Habib regards that other revolts in northern India as well as the Maratha rise in the south were mainly due to agrarian reasons.

While these revolts had contributed to the fall of the Mughal empire to characterise all of them as mainly due to oppression of the peasants from economic or religious points of view will be over simplification of the causes of the fall of the empire. Oppression of the lower classes constitutes an important factor in the ruin of empires as it definitely did in case of the Persian empire and the poet Sadi in his immortal poem wrote a sort of an epitaph to the falling Persian empire by saying that the glory and empire of the Emperors are gone the same way as the oppressor emperors themselves and their tyranny over the peasants had also thus ended. All the same, there is a risk in taking Sadi literally in case of the fall of the Mughal Empire.

The failure of the peasants' revolts which took place during the Mughal period was due largely to

(i) historical environment of the time,

(ii) (particular correlation of class- forces existing at that time. Lack of new class relation or class force, lack of any new economic relation and lack of capable political leadership led to the failure of the peasants. China's past history offers a parallel instance.

Tribal Movements/ Tribal Uprisings

Tribal movements are further subdivided into two categories along two main divisions of tribes based on the geographical region occupied.

a) Non- Frontier Tribe: constitute 89 percent of the total tribal population. The nonfrontier tribes were mainly confined to central India, West-Central India and Andhra. Among the tribes that participated in the movements were Khonds, Savara, Santhal, Munda, Oraon, Koya, Kol, Gond and Bhil. The uprising of these tribes was quite volatile and constitute some of major uprising.

b) Frontier Tribes: of the seven North-eastern frontier states of Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura. Status of Tribes in relation to the mainstream society Tribals are located on the fringes of the mainstream society and constitute the lower stratum. Tribals, Adivasis, Aboriginals were usually the original inhabitants of vast tracts in western, central, southern, eastern, and north eastern parts of the country. With the exception of the north east, they had been reduced to a minority with the influx of outsiders and exposed to rapid changes. Barring a few, especially the frontier tribes, most tribes had some form of contact with the mainstream society. The socio economic differentiation amongst them in comparison to the mainstream society was significantly less. The tribes were politically autonomous and had their own system of justice. Economic Base of tribal population Shifting agriculture, hunting, Fishing and forest produce form the mainstay of their economic base. Use of forest products and shifting agriculture were very important parts of the tribal economy.

Causes of Tribal Movements

1. Imposition of Land revenue Settlement: Expansion of agriculture by the non- tribals to tribal area or over forest cover let to the erosion of tribal traditions of joint ownership and increased the socio-economic differentiation in the egalitarian structure of the tribal society.

2. Work of Christian Missionaries brought about further changes in the socio economic and cultural equation of the tribals and the mainstream society plus in turbulent times, the tendency of the missionaries to refuse to take up arms or in discouraging people from rising against the government made the missionaries to be viewed as extension of colonialism and were often attacked by the rebels.

3. Increasing demand for good from early nineteenth century- first for the royal navy and then railways, led to increasing control of government over forest land. The establishment of the Forest department in 1864, Government Forest Act (1865) and Indian Forest Act in 1878 together established complete government monopoly over Indian forest land. Shifting Agriculture, a wide spread practice amongst the various tribal communities was banned from 1864 onwards on the reserved forest. Restrictions were imposed on the previously sanctioned timber and grazing facilities.

4. Extension of settled agriculture led to influx of non tribals in the tribal areas. These outsiders exploited them and extension of settled agriculture led to the loss of land by the tribals which reduced them to agricultural labourers.

5. Some of the tribal uprising took place in reaction to the effect of the landlords to impose taxes on the customary use of timber and grazing facilities, police exaction, new excise regulations, exploitation by low country traders and money lenders, and restrictions on shifting cultivation in forest.

6. The rebellions by the non-frontier tribals were usually reactions against outsiders (dikus), local landlords and rulers, the support provided to the later by the British administration and intervention by them in the life of the tribals. The indigenous names for these tribal movements were Meli, Hool and Ul-Gulan.

7. Introduction of the notion of private property- Land could be bought, sold, mortgaged which led to loss of land by the tribals.

Nature of Tribal Movements

The Colonial intrusion and the triumvirate of trader, money lender and revenue farmer in sum disrupted the tribal identity to a lesser or greater degree. In fact, ethnic ties were a basic feature of tribal rebellions. The rebels saw themselves not as a discreet class but as having a tribal identity. At this level the solidarity shown was of a very high order.

Fellow tribals were never attacked unless they had collaborated with the enemy. Three phases of the tribal movements' Tribal movements are divided into following three phases

The First Phase (1795-1860) It coincided with the rise, expansion and establishment of the British Empire. The leadership emerged from the upper crust of the tribal society led by the traditional section whose privileges had been undermined by colonization of India.

Main Tribal Uprisings- Santhal rebellion; Khond Uprisings; Early Munda Uprisings

A. Santhal Rebellion:

Among the numerous tribal revolts, the Santhalhool or uprising was the most massive one. With the introduction of permanent settlement in Bengal in 1793, the Santhals were employed as labourers with the promise of wages or rent free lands. However they were forced to become agricultural surfs, exploited at will. The first rebellion of messianic character erupted in 1854 under Bir Singh of Sasan in Lachimpur. The second Santhal rebellion of 1855-56 was marked by some of the worst features of elemental tribal passion and open denunciation of the British rule. The Santhal, who lived in the area between Bhagalpur and Rajmahal, known as Daman-i-koh, rose in

revolt; made a determined attempt to expel the outsiders- the dikus- and proclaimed the complete 'annihilation' of the alien regime. The rebellion covering the districts of Birbhum, Singbhum, Bankura, Hazaribagh, Bhagalpur and Monghyr in Orissa and bihar was precipitated mainly by economic causes. The social conditions which drove them to insurrection were described by a contemporary in the Calcutta Review as follows:' Zamindars, the Police, the revenue and court alas have exercise a combined system of extortions, oppressive exactions, forcible dispossession of property, abuse and personal violence and a variety of petty tyrannies upon the timid and yielding Santhals. Usurious interest on loans of money ranging from 50 to 500 percent; false measures at the haut and the market; willful and uncharitable trespass by the rich by means of their untethered cattle, tattoos, ponies and even elephants, on the growing crops of the poorer race; and such like illegalities have been prevalent. The Company's government too protected the oppressors rather than redressing the grievances which turned them against the British. Under the leadership of two brothers Siddhu and Khanu, more than 10000 santhals assembled in June 1855, when a divide order was issued asking the santhals to break the control of their oppressors and "take possession of the country and set up a government of their own."With in a month a rebellion had assumed a formidable shape. The rebels cut-off the postal and railway communication between Bhagalpur and Rajmahal, proclaimed the end of the company's rule and commencement of the santhal regime. They attacked the houses of money-lenders, zamindars, white planters, railway engineers and British officials. The open war with the British continued till 1856, when the rebel leaders were finally captured and the movement was brutally suppressed.

B. Khond Uprising:

The Khonds lived in vast hill tracts stretching from Tamil-nadu to Bengal, covering central provinces, and in virtual independence due to the inaccessible mountainous terrain. Their uprisings from 1837 to 1856 were directed against the British, in which the tribals of Ghumsar, china-

ki-medi, kalahandi and Patna actively participated. The movement was led by Chakra Bisoi in the name of the young Raja. The main issue was the attempt by the government to suppress human sacrifice (Mariah), introduction of new taxes by the British and the influx of Zamindars and sahookars (money-lenders) into their areas which was causing the tribals untold misery. The British formed a Maria agency, against which the Khonds fought with Tangi, a king of battle axe, bows-arrows and even swords. Latter Savaras and some local militia clans also joined in, led by Radha Krishna Dand Sena. Chakra Bisoi disappeared in 1855 after which the movement petered out.

C. Early Munda Uprising:

In the period of 1789-1832, the Munda rose up in rebellion seven times against the landlords, dikhus, money-lenders and the British, who instead of protesting them sided with the oppressors. In the post 1857 period with a hope of better future many Mundas turned to the Evangilical Lutheran mission, which was overseeing mission work in Chhotanagpur. However, many apostates became more militant and broke away, spear heading the cause of seeking redressal of their grivances once they realized that the missionaries could not provide the solution to them. Their movement identified as ‘sardariladai’ or ‘war of the leaders’ was fought with the aim of expelling dikhus; and restoration of the Munda domination over their homeland. The tribal chiefs rose up against the erosion of Khuntkatti System or Joint tenures. While it failed it did not peter out but remained dormant and in need of a charismatic leader. It was given a new life by Birsa Munda in 1899.

D. Bhils and Kolis Uprisings:

The Bhils were concentrated in the hill ranges of Khandesh in the previous Maratha territory. British occupation of this region in 1818 brought in, the outsiders and accompanying dislocations in their community life. A general Bhil insurrection in 1817-19 was crushed by the British Military forces and though some conciliatory measures were

taken to pacify them, they again revolted under the leadership of Seva Ram in 1825 and the situation remained unsettled until 1831 when the Ramosi Leader Umaji Raje of Purandhar was finally captured and executed. Minor revolts again took place in 1836 and 1846 as well. The Bhils' local rivals for power, the Kolis of Ahmednagar district, also challenged the British in 1829, but were quickly subdued by a large army contingent. The seeds of rebellion however persisted, to erupt again in 1844-46, when a local Koli leader successfully defied the British government for two years.

The Second Phase (1860-1920): It includes Munda Uprising under Birsamunda; Koya Rebellion. It will be discussed in next chapter.

The Third Phase (1920-1947): It includes Tanabhagat movement/Oraon Movement, Rampa rebellion, and Chenchu tribal movement. It will be discussed in next chapter.

Movements of the frontier tribes

The other region to have witnessed tribal movements of considerable proportion was the North-Eastern frontier. The region differed substantially from the rest of the tribal India in two basic aspects. Here the tribals formed an overwhelming majority and thus were relatively economically and socially secure. The other factor was that because of their geo-political situation and historical background of living in the vicinity of the international border in relative isolation, this region was not completely integrated with in the politico-economic system of colonialism and remained somewhat cut-off from the cultural patterns of the main land. These characteristics affected the types of movements that occurred here. In the first place with one striking exception these movements tended to remain aloof from the freedom struggle often incorporating a demand for political autonomy either within the Indian union or as a separate unit. This was also because many of the tribes were living on the international frontier and thus shared ethnic and cultural affinities with tribesmen across the border. Similarly in contrast

to central-India, there was hardly any agrarian forest-based movement as the tribals remained in possession of land and surrounding forests except Tripura. The movements in the north-east were by and large revolutionary or revivalist, rather than having sanskritising tendency which the plains tribal movement often incorporated. This again was partly on account of their relative isolation from the Hindu society, and a strong Christian missionary influence in their process of modernization. The movements in the North-East tended to be political and secular with a definite progressive course, unlike those of Chhotanagpur which were often followed by long periods of dormancy or even extinction.

Two aspects may be noted in these movements, which differentiated them from the anti-British movements in the plains First tribals deeply resented British penetration in their areas, which took place somewhat later here than in the plans. The British penetrated the area during the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-26), Annexed the Jaintia hills in 1832, including the earlier 25 khasi states. Each of these events was followed by revolts. Second, these movements under the traditional chiefs continued much later than in the plains. Main frontier uprisings before 1857 were: -Khasi Uprising, Ahom Revolt and Singhphos Rebellion.

A. Khasi Uprising:

As a result of the Burmese war, the British occupied the hilly region between Garo and Jaintiahills, in intention of building a road linking the Brahmaputra valley with Sylhet passing through the entire length of the Khasi domain. Conscriptions of labourers for road construction led the khasis to revolt under the leader ship of Tirut Singh, a khasi chief. The Garos joined them. The long and harassing warfare with Khasis continued for four years and was finally suppressed in early 1833.

B. Ahom Revolt:

The british had pledged to withdraw after the first Burma war (1824-26) from Assam but in contrast, the British attempted to incorporate the

Ahoms territories in the company's dominion after the war. This sparked off a rebellion in 1828 under the leadership of Gomdhar Konwar. Finally the company decided to follow a conciliatory policy and handed over upper Assam to Maharaja Purandar Singh Narendra and parts of the kingdom was restored to the Assamese king.

C. Singhphos rebellion:

While the British were engaged in a harassing warfare with the Khasis, the Singhphos broke into open rebellion in early 1830, which was suppressed after 3 months. But the Singhphos remained in a mood of sullen discontent and again rose in rebellion in 1839, when they killed the British political agent. In 1843 the Singhphos Chief Nirang Phidu attacked the British garrison and killed several soldiers. In 1849, Khasma Singhphos attacked British village in Assam and was captured in 1855. Rani Gaidiniliu's Naga Movement (1905-31) was another such movement which will be covered in later chapters.

Check Your Progress 2

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 Colonial Rule in Pre-1857.

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2. Explain two common features of the Peasant and Tribal Revolts.

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14.5 LET US SUM UP

When the elites of the Indian society were busy in initiating and social reforms to change their society from within to answer the moralistic critiques of the West, the rural society was responding to the imposition of colonial rule in an entirely different way. In contrast to the urban intelligentsia, who were also the chief beneficiaries of colonial rule, the response of the traditional elite and the peasantry, who were losing out as a result of colonial impositions, were that of resistance and defiance, resulting in a series of unsuccessful attempts at restoring the old order. Not that peasant revolts were unknown in Mughal India; indeed, they became endemic in the first half of the eighteenth century as the rising revenue demands breached the Mughal compromise and affected the subsistence provision of the peasants, and the Mughal provincial bureaucracy became ever more oppressive and rigorous in collecting it. The tendency became even more pervasive as the colonial regime established itself, enhanced its power and introduced a series of revenue experiments, the sole purpose of which was to maximize its revenue income. Ruin of handicraft added to the situation.

Thus it can be said that resistance to colonial rule was there as old as the rule itself. Some of the peasant rebellions in pre-1857 India were participated exclusively by the tribal population whose political autonomy and control over local resources were threatened by the establishment of British Rule and the advent of its non-tribal agents. But as the time line of peasant movement mainly stretches from 1857 to 1957 we will discuss it in detail in next chapters. Thus it is evident that the colonial rule even, during the days of the east India Company witnessed numerous uprising and disturbances.

The nature of these disturbances varied from elitist grievances as manifested in the rebellions headed by deposed rulers to the popular grassroots or people's movement, as exemplified by various tribal

movements. These varied grievances reached their climax in the revolt of 1857, which in spite of targeting certain groups of Indians remains the prominent uprising against the British before the beginning of the Indian Freedom movement.

14.6 KEY WORDS

Peasant: A peasant is a pre-industrial agricultural laborer or farmer with limited land ownership, especially one living in the Middle Ages under feudalism and paying rent, tax, fees, or services to a landlord. In Europe, peasants were divided into three classes according to their personal status: slave, serf, and free tenant.

Colonial Rule: **Colonial rule** is the subjection, subjugation and presidency over the native peoples of a particular country or area which is then claimed on behalf of the sovereign state which 'visited' the country or area.

14.7 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss the Causes of Resistance.
2. Discuss the Colonial Rule in Pre-1857.
3. Explain two common features of the Peasant and Tribal Revolts.

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14.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 14.2

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section 14.3
2. See Section 14.4