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2 SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

— Social background of Indian nationalism

— Modernization of Indian tradition

— Protests and movements during the colonial period and Social reforms.

What is Nationalism?

Nationalism is a sense of identity with the nation. **Liah Greenfeld** has defined nationalism as "an image of a social order, which involves the people as a sovereign elite and a community of equals." The original use of the term nationalism refers to elite groups, but in modern usage it refers to a very large group, sometimes as large as empire. The relationship of members of a nation is, theoretically, an equal relationship between citizens. It develops differently in different national communities under different historical circumstances.

Like all other social phenomena, nationalism is a historical category. It emerged in the social world at a certain stage of evolution, the life of the community when certain socio-historical conditions, both subjective and objective, matured. **E.H.Carr** has remarked, "Nations" in the modern sense of world, did not emerge until the close of the Middle ages.

Before national communities, national societies, national states, and national cultures came into existence. Communities in various parts of the world generally lived through tribal, slave and feudal phases of social existence. At a certain stage of social, economic and cultural development, nations came into being. They were generally distinguished from non-national communities of previous periods of social existence by certain specific characteristics such as, an organic welding of the members of the nation,

- living in a distinct territory within a single economy, conscious of common economic existence
- generally one common language is used by them,
- a similar psychological structure among its members and a common culture evolved by it.

Though an ideal nation possessing all these traits in a state of fullest development remained an abstraction. This is because the elements of the past always survived, in a varying degree, in economy, social structure, psychological habits and culture of any nation. Still from the seventeenth century onward, national communities, in different stages of national consolidation, have appeared.

INDIAN NATIONALISM

Indian nationalism is a modern phenomenon. It came into being during the British period. This came as a result of the action and interaction of numerous subjective and objective forces and factors which developed within the Indian society, under the conditions of British rule and the impact of world forces. The process of the growth of Indian nationalism has been very complex and many-sided. This is due to a number of reasons. The pre-British Indian society had a social structure quite unique and perhaps without a parallel in history. Hinduism itself was not a homogenous religion but a conglomeration of religious cults which divided Hindu people into a number of sects. These extreme social and religious divisions of the Hindus in particular and the Indians, in general, presented a peculiar background to the growth of nationalism in India. Nationalism in other countries did not rise amidst such peculiarly powerful traditions and institutions. The self-preservative will of the past social, economic and cultural structure was stronger in India than perhaps in any country in the world.

Another very striking thing about Indian nationalism is that it emerged under conditions of political subjection of the Indian people by the British. The advanced British nation for its own purpose radically changed the economic structure of Indian society. They established centralized state, and introduced modern education, modern means of communication and other institutions. This resulted in growth of new social classes and the unleashing of new social forces, unique in themselves. These social forces by there very nature came into conflict with British Imperialism and became the basis of and provided motive power for the rise and development of Indian nationalism.

FACTORS WHICH PREPARED BACKGROUND OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

The British government, Christian mission and English education were three main sources of colonial impact on Indian society. The British government replaced the indigenous systems of administration and governance. The mission made efforts to convert Indian to Christianity. British educationists tried to spread education to bring about a change in the outlook of the indigenous population. The British community in India also had an influence on the people in different parts of the country. The port, towns and coastal areas were more affected, at least in the beginning of the British Raj. The emergence of a national consciousness, the realization of the value of organization and of the importance of agitation led to the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Formation of Congress was a strong foundation of Indian nationalism.

K.M. Pannikkar notes that "the most notable achievement of British rule was the unification of India". This was done unconsciously by the British in the interest of the Indian people. They were interested in spreading and consolidating their rule throughout the country. The same argument can be made about the introduction of western education, means of transport, communication, technology and judiciary.

Y. Singh observes that "the contact of the Indian (Hindu) tradition with the West was of a different and radical sociological significance. Historically, it was a contact between a pre-modern and a modernizing cultural system". The western tradition had "the scientific and technological world-view based on rationalism, equality and freedom". Consequently, the Indian tradition, which already had a sort of 'breakdown', became further open, liberal, equalitarian and humanistic. The western tradition posed a serious challenge to the Indian tradition. Hierarchy, the principle of social ranking based on birth in a particular caste group, and holism, the 'organic' interdependence between different caste groups, based on norms relating to performances of the assigned functions and duties by various groups, were considerably affected by the western tradition.

M.N. Srinivas defines 'westernization' in terms of the change in Indian society due to the impact of British rule in India. The areas of change

nclude technology, dress, food and changes in the habits and lifestyles of people. Westernization takes place at three levels: Primary, secondary, and tertiary.

- At the primary level were a minority of people who first came into contact with western culture and were its first beneficiaries.
- The secondary level of westernization refers to those sections of Indian society who came into direct contact with the primary beneficiaries.
- At the tertiary level are those who came to know indirectly about the advices introduced by the British.

However, the spread of westernization has ceen uneven and unequal among different sections of Indian society. Though Srinivas has mentioned humanitarianism and egalitarianism as its positive features, there are others who consider westernization as a process of cultural and cognitive colonialism and as a model of an "impersonal, non-cultural and non-sovereign state".

Westernization has contributed to the re-emergence of a pan-Indian culture on new grounds. Some areas of western impact include education, law, science, technology, new forms of politicization, urbanization, industrialization, the press, means of transport and communication.

Y. Singh calls this the process of 'cultural modernization. The western impact has brought about "a new great tradition of modernization". Certainly, this poses the problem of conflict between the indigenous tradition and the western tradition on Indian soil. A synthesis between the two has occurred, particularly in regard to the elite sections of Indian society. Today, 'globalization' has far more impact on Indian society. In fact, India is in the process of becoming a global market/centre of economic and professional activities.

The British rule created a new consciousness and structure of values. As observed by **Y. Singh** westernization has created the following: the growth of an universalistic legal superstructure expansion of education, urbanization and industrialization, increased network of communication and growth of nationalism and politicization of the society. These elements contributed to modernization throughout the country. The judiciary, law courts, legislations for prohibiting child marriage, infanticide and sati, etc., law commissions, land rights, trade, commerce, industries, labour, etc., were enacted.

- **Education:** Macaulay's policy of 1935 to promote English education and language, the emergence of missions to spread education and the first Indian Education Commission of 1882 are the highlights of the British period. The British policy put more emphasis on higher education. Education at the primary and secondary levels was considerably neglected. Even today, in terms of course contents and management of educational institutions, India continues to follow the British model. Development of education inculcated new consciousness of nationalism among masses.
- Urbanization and industrialization in India are generally concomitant. Several studies have shown that both the processes reinforce tradition. Urbanization is a slow process in India compared to the developed countries. However, urban population has increased over the years. Cities or urban centres have a concentration of all the major infrastructural facilities and highly skilled professionals. Urbanization has been uneven for different cities and regions, and so is in the case of industrialization. A number of institutional factors have hindered the rapid growth of industrialization in the past. However, studies by **Richard Lambert, Milton Singer, N. R. Seth**, etc., have shown that caste, joint family and other traditional values have not obstructed a healthy pattern of social relations in factories and industrial organizations.

- Development of transport and communication started during colonial rule has really ushered in an era of new social and cultural contacts. Newspapers, periodicals and magazines, particularly in the regional languages, postal services, movies and radio were all introduced by the British. The same is true of the railways, roadways and airways. These new devices weakened the institution of caste, notions of pollution-purity and hindrances in migration. Spatial mobility was undoubtedly a concrete gain of these means, but 'psychic mobility' also became a fact of life. These contributed a lot in the development of nationalism.

- National and social awakening was created by the British. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Mahatma Gandhi borrowed several humanistic elements from the British tradition and used them for creating national feeling and political consciousness. The ideas of communalism, secularism and nationalism borrowed from the western philosophers proved very useful.

INDIAN NATIONALISM AND ITS CHIEF PHASES

Indian nationalism has grown and developed in a complex and peculiar social background.

It has passed through various phases of development. As it advanced from one phase to another its social basis broadened, its objective became more clearly defined and bold. Its forms of expression became more varied. As a result of the impact of forces of Indian and world development, increasing strata of the Indian people evolved a national consciousness and outlook and were drawn into the orbit of the nationalist movement. This national awaking found expression in varied spheres of national life — social, political, cultural.

As the nationalist movement grew and gathered strength, new classes increasingly organized themselves on a national scale and started various movements to remove the obstacles impeding their growth. These new classes were offspring of the new economic structure which were living under the same state regime.

FIRST PHASE

In its first phase, Indian nationalism had a very narrow social basis. The Intelligentsia was the product of the modern education imparted in the new educational institutions, established by the British in India in the first decades of the nineteenth century. They had studied western culture and greatly assimilated its democratic and nationalist ideas. They formed the first stratum of the Indian society to develop a national consciousness and aspirations. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his group of enlightened Indians were the pioneers of Indian nationalism. They were the exponents of the concept of the Indian nation which they propagated among the people. They initiated social-reform and religious-reform movements which represented endeavours to remould the Indian society and religion in the spirit of the new principles of democracy, rationalism, and nationalism. In fact, these movements were the expression of the rising national democratic consciousness among a section of the Indian people.

These founders and first fighters of Indian nationalism stood up for democratic rights, such as the freedom of the Press, and put forth demands like the right of the nation to have a voice in the administration of the country.

SECOND PHASE

The first phase extended till 1885 and culminated in the rise of the Indian National Congress in that year. The second phase roughly covered the period from 1885 to 1905.

The Liberal intelligentsia who were at the helm of the Congress were the leaders of the Indian nationalist movement during the second phase. Their ideology and method determined the programme and forms of the movement which reflected the interest of the development of the

new bourgeois society in India. The social basis of the movement was extended during this period to the educated middle class which, by the end of nineteenth century, had appreciably grown as a result of the expansion of modern educating, and to a section of the merchant class which had developed during this period as a result of the growth of Indian and international trade. Modern industries also grew steadily during this period as a result of which the class of industrialists emerged and began to gain strength they started orienting towards the Congress which adopted the programme of industrialization of the country and in 1905 actively organized the Swadeshi campaign.

The Indian National Congress, under the leadership of the Liberals, mainly voiced the demands of the educated classes and the trading bourgeoisie such as the Indianization of Services, the association of the Indians with the administrative machinery of the state, the stoppage of economic drain etc. It also set forth such democratic demands as those of representative institutions and civil liberties. Its methods of struggle dominated by Liberal conceptions were principally constitutional agitation, effective argument, and fervent appeal to the democratic conscience and traditions of the British people.

Since the British government did not satisfy the most vital demands of the Indian nationalist movement, disillusionment set in among a section of the nationalists regarding the ideology and methods of the Liberals. A group, with a new philosophy, political ideology and conception of the methods of struggle crystallized within the Congress.

Increasing unemployment among the educated middle class youths due to the inability of the social and state apparatus to incorporate them, and further, economic misery among the people due to devastating epidemics and famines at the close of the nineteenth century, created favourable conditions for the growth of the influence of the new group, the Extremists. Various

unpopular measures during the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon, such as the Indian Universities Act and the Partition of Bengal further estranged the people from the government and made the politically conscious middle class rally round the Extremists who possessed such capable and self-sacrificing leaders as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Aurobindo Ghose, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai. By 1905, even some of the Liberals began to lose faith in the British government. However, they did not renounce their political philosophy and methodology of struggle.

The ideology of the Extremists was, in vital respects, the antithesis of that of the Liberals. While the Liberals had a profound faith in the mission of Britain to raise the Indian people to a high level of progressive social, political and cultural existence, the Extremists interpreted the British rule in India as the means of the British to keep the Indian people in a state of subjection and economically exploit them. Further, while the Liberals glorified the western culture, the Extremists looked back to India's past, idealized the ancient Hindu culture and desired to resuscitate it.

Again the Extremists had no faith in the political efficacy of the Liberal method of appealing to British Democracy. Instead, to secure a demand, they stood for organizing extra-parliamentary pressure on the government such as the Boycott campaign. The Extremists were also not satisfied merely with the demand of administrative reform but set forth the goal of self-government which was endorsed by the Liberals in 1906.

Political discontent, during the second phase, also expressed itself in the growth of the terrorist movements. A small section of nationalist youths organized themselves in terrorist bands and relied upon such methods such as assassination of individual officials and sometimes fomenting of mutinies in the army for achieving political freedom.

THIRD PHASE

The third phase in the development of the nationalist movement extended from 1905 to 1918.

During this phase, the Liberals were supplanted by the Extremists as the nationalist movement progressed.

In spite of the strong government repression, the nationalist movement registered an advance. The political propaganda of the Extremists instilled a feeling of national self-respect and self-confidence among the people who, instead of looking to the British for political freedom as counselled by the Liberals, began to rely on their own strength for achieving it. The movement, however, suffered from the defect that its leaders attempted to base it on a resurrected Hindu philosophy. This, to some extent, mystified the movement and weakened its secular character. It was also one of the reasons why it could not appeal to the Muslims.

During the third phase, the Indian nationalist movement became militant and challenging and acquired a wider social basis by the inclusion of sections of the lower-middle class. The agitation for Home Rule during wartime further strengthened the political consciousness of the people.

It was during this phase that sections of upper class Muslims developed political consciousness and founded their all-India political organization in 1906, the Muslim League. Due to a number of reasons, the rising political consciousness of the Muslim upper and educated middle classes took a communal form, and resulted in the formation of their organization on a communal basis.

FOURTH PHASE

The fourth phase in the evolution of the Indian nationalist movement commenced from 1918 and extended roughly up to the Civil Disobedience Movement. One striking development during this phase was that the nationalist movement gained a broad mass basis and added to its arsenal, the weapon of direct mass action. The nationalist movement, which was hitherto restricted mainly to upper and middle classes, further extended, during this phase, to sections of the Indian masses. There were a number of factors which brought about national awakening among the Indian masses during the years immediately

succeeding the war. The post-war economic crisis, the disillusionment about the government promises, and the increased repression by the state had seriously affected the people including the **peasantry and the working-class** and they were in a state of great ferment.

The great events in the international world such as a number of democratic revolutions in European countries and the socialist revolution in Russia had deeply stirred the consciousness of the Indian people. The Home Rule agitation during wartime also had the effect of intensifying and extending political consciousness among the Indian people.

The Indian capitalists who had become economically stronger during the war as a result of industrial expansion, also, more actively than before, supported the Indian National Congress. The Swadeshi and Boycott slogans of the Congress objectively served the interests of industrialists who financially supported it. Gandhi's doctrine of class harmony and social peace and his support to the Swadeshi resolution at the Calcutta Congress in 1919 made sections of the Indian bourgeois support Gandhi, the Congress, and the nationalist movements organized by the Congress under Gandhi's leadership from this time onward. It was from 1918 that the Indian industrial bourgeois began to exert a powerful influence in determining the programme, policies, strategies, tactics and forms of struggle of the Indian nationalist movement led by the Congress of which Gandhi was the leader.

Another development during this phase was the growth of **socialist and communist groups** in the country. By 1928, these groups succeeded in initiating independent political and trade union movements of the working class based on the doctrine of class struggle. They further stood for a socialist state of India declaring it as the objective of the India national movement. While in the non-cooperation movement, politically conscious workers, who participated in it, lacked an independent class programme, after 1926 those who joined movements like the Simon Commission Boycott, did so with their own slogans and flag, and frequently under their own

leaders. Thus, after 1926, the **Indian working class** increasingly entered the nationalist movement as an independent political unit. This was a new phenomenon in the history of the nationalist movement.

It was during this period Congress defined its political objective from the nebulous term Swaraj to that of Independence. Various Youth and Independence Leagues which sprang up in the country also adopted Independence as their political goal. Parallel to these developments, reactionary communal forces also began to organize themselves during this period. The period witnessed a number of communal riots. The phase culminated in the Civil Disobedience Movement organized by the Congress under the leadership of Gandhi. It was the second mass movement in the history of India nationalism.

The principal gains to the Indian nationalist movement during this phase were the acquisition of a mass basis, the definition of its goal as Independence, the entry of a section of the working class into the movement as an independent political force, the growth of various Youth and Independence Leagues, and the wider participation of peasants in the movement. The factors which had a retarding influence on the movement were mainly the combining of religion with politics by Gandhi, with the result that the national consciousness was befogged and national movement confused; the increased grip of the capitalists over the congress organization and the resultant modulation of its programme and policies to serve their sectional interest at the expense of national advance; and the accentuation of communal feelings.

FIFTH PHASE

The next phase covers the period from 1934 to 1939, the year of the outbreak of World War II. There were a number of new developments during this period. A section of Congressmen lost their confidence in the ideology, programmes and methods of Gandhi and formed the Congress Socialist Party which stood for the organization of the workers and peasants on class lines. and

made them the motive force of the nationalist movement. The party, however, remained heterogeneous, being composed of groups who broke from Gandhism in varying degrees and having a petty-bourgeois social basis. There also grew up other dissident tendencies from Gandhism like the Forward Bloc led by Subhas Chandra Bose.

Another development was the steady growth of the movements of the depressed classes. The Muslim League also, organizationally and politically, grew stronger in the final years of this period. Further, a number of other Muslim organizations, both of nationalist and communal politics, also sprang up.

The rapid growth of the **Communist Party** increasingly spreading its influence among students, workers and kisans, also was another significant development. The rapid growth of the **peasant movement** was one of the striking developments during this period. Larger and larger sections of peasantry developed national and class consciousness. Further, they began to evolve their own class organization, class leadership, programmes, slogans and flags. Hitherto, the politically awakened peasants had followed the Congress leadership; henceforth, a large section of them followed its own leaders, put forth their own class demands including those of the abolition of landlordism itself and the repudiation of all debts. The All India Kisan Sabha, the organization of the conscious section of the Indian peasantry, formulated for its objective the socialist state of India. It organized independent struggles of the Kisans and joined the nationalist movement as an independent unit.

Another remarkable development during this phase was the growth of the democratic struggle of the people of the Indian states with a programme of demands such as the abolition of state monopoly, representative institutions, civil liberties, and others. The states 'peoples' movement was mainly controlled by the merchant class of these states. The Indian National Congress supported and aided the struggle of the people of these states.

Another development of importance during this period was the growing awakening among the nationalities constituting the Indian people. This awakening was reflected in their demands of the reconstitution of provinces on a linguistic basis. The movements of such nationalities as the Andhra, the Oriyas, the Karnatakis, and others, which had awakened to life and which felt and expressed the urge to be integrated into distinct political administrative zones based on common language, revealed this new development.

The rise of an independent Kisan movement, the growth of socialist forces, the movements of awakened nationalities, and other developments, however, still represented only minority tendencies within the nationalist movement. The national movement still remained essentially determined and dominated by the Gandhian outlook and Gandhi's political philosophy and leadership. It still, in the main, reflected the interests of the capitalists and other upper classes.

However, the new forces and movements had begun to exert some pressure of the Indian National Congress as a result of which the latter included in its programme a charter of fundamental rights guaranteeing civil liberties and alleviatory economic measures to the workers and peasants. The Indian National Congress, the premier national organization in the country and the principal leader of the nationalist movement, also recognized the cultural and other aspirations of awakened nationalities, stood for cultural autonomy and linguistic provinces and even recognized the right of the populations of the provinces reconstituted on the linguistic basis to secede from the Indian Federation of the future free India if they so desired.

However, a struggle that was increasingly sharpening went on among the various social classes within the nationalist movement for the hegemony of the movement. The political groups representing workers, kisans and left sections of the middle classes, were striving more and more, as they gathered more political consciousness and independent organizational strength, to influence the programme and policies of the Congress which had hitherto been appreciably controlled by the capitalist class. The awakened nationalities were also increasingly pressing their demands vigorously for the removal of the obstacles which thwarted their free and full development.

MODERNIZATION OF INDIAN TRADITION

WHAT IS MODERNIZATION?

Modernization is a process associated with the sweeping changes that took place in the society, particularly social, economic, political and cultural changes. It represents substantial breaks with traditional society. Modernization is an idea before it is a process. As it is an idea, there is no agreement among social scientists on its meaning and interpretation. The concept of modernization, emerged as an explanation of how Western countries/ societies developed through capitalism. By providing such an explanation Western scholars desired to convince the underdeveloped countries like India that economic development was possible under capitalism.

According to this approach, *modernization depends primarily on introduction of technology and the knowledge required making use of it.* Besides, several social and political prerequisites have been identified to make modernization possible. Some of these prerequisites are:

- Increased levels of education;
- Development of mass media;
- Accessible transport and communication;
- Democratic political institutions;
- More urban and mobile population;
- Nuclear family in place of extended family;
- Complex division of labour;
- Declining public influence of religion, and;

- Developed markets for exchange of goods and services in place of traditional ways of meeting such needs.

Modernization is, thus, supposed to be the result of the presence of these prerequisites in the social system. It is clear that the term modernization has been used here in a very broad sense. We, therefore, find different views about the scope and area to be covered by the concept of modernization.

Debate on Concept of Modernization

Some sociologists limit modernization to its structural aspect, others emphasise its cultural dimension. A few studies highlight the issue of political modernization and still others analyze its psychological meaning. Of course, the treatment of the concept in terms of it being a process of social change is found in writings of many scholars.

Daniel Thorner in his essay on 'Modernization' explains the modernization in these words: *"modernization is the current term for an old process of social change whereby less developed society's acquired characteristics common to more developed societies."* He further writes *"Modernization, therefore, is the process of social change in which development is the economic component".* Obviously this understanding of the term corresponds with the meaning which we have given to the term at the beginning of our discussion. Accordingly, *modernization is a process of change, which takes a country from underdevelopment to development.* It produces social environment for economic development. The growths in industrialization, urbanization, national income and per capital *income are taken as criteria of development.*

However, *while accepting the economic criteria of development, some sociologists have added non-economic criteria to judge development.* They argue that rising output alone is not sufficient to assess the level of development. A society has to move from rising output to self-sustaining growth. Therefore, non-economic criteria such *as the level of education, function of media, growth of communication and social norms conducive to change have to be taken into consideration.*

The meaning of modernization given above incorporates, primarily, structural aspects of change. In other words, under modernization structural transformation takes place in economy, polity and social institution. It is to be noted here *that the concept of modernization has also been explained in cultural terms.* In cultural term, modernization implies change in values and attitudes. Modernity involves values and norms that are universal in nature. Explaining this aspect of modernization **Yogendra Singh** suggests that *'modernization implies a rational attitude towards issues and their evaluation from a universal viewpoint'.* Thus, technological advancement and economic growth are not the sole criterion to judge the level of modernization of the society. The commitment to scientific world view and humanistic ideas are equally important.

Moreover, the idea of modernization has also been analyzed in terms of the paired concepts of **tradition and modernity**. It has been argued that *modernity stands as opposite to tradition. In this sense, all the underdeveloped societies are characterized as traditional and the developed societies as modern. Modernization, thus, implies a change from tradition to modernity.* Change occurs according to this view, *in predicable direction.* In other words, *in order to modernize, every society has to follow the same direction and adopt a similar path.* All the existing values and structures have to be replaced by the new values and structures.

Nonetheless, sociologists from the developing countries are critical of this understanding of modernization. *They maintain that modernization does not stand as a polar opposite to tradition. Traditional values and institutions are not necessarily discarded while taking up new values in the process of change.*

Society adopts new values because they are considered more efficient and rewarding. In view of this, these sociologists hold that modernization would develop typical forms in different societies. *Patterns of modernization, thus, may vary from society to society. The discussion shows that processes of modernization involve both structural and cultural dimensions.*

WHAT IS TRADITION?

According to Yogendra Singh, tradition refers to those 'value-themes' which encompass the entire social system of Indian society prior to the beginning of modernization. These value themes were organized on the principles of **hierarchy, holism, continuity and transcendence**. These four value themes were deeply interlocked with other elements of Indian social structure:

- *Hierarchy* was engrained in the system of caste and subcaste stratification. It was also there in the Hindu concepts of nature, occupational lifecycles (ashramas), and moral duties (dharma)

- *Holism* implied a relationship between individual and group in which the former was encompassed by the later in respect of duties and rights. Here precedence was given to community or sangha, not the individual. This overshadowing of individual by collectivity persisted all along the line of traditional social structure, e.g. family, village community, caste and nation.

- *Continuity* in Hinduism was symbolized by principles of karma, transmigration of soul and a cyclical view of change. Communalism in traditional social system was reinforced through the value system of continuity.

- *The principle of transcendence* also posited that legitimating of traditional values could never be challenged on grounds of rationality derived from the non-sacred or profane scales of evaluation. It formed a super concept contributing to integration as well as rationalization of the other value themes of the tradition.

The organization of tradition based on these value-components could not be called typical only of the Indian society, since at one level similar phenomenon also existed in the traditional West. The divergence between the two traditions, however, arose from their unique social heritage, existential situation and historicity of circumstances.

Modernization of Indian Traditions :

Some sociologists make a distinction between social change and modernization in order to assess the nature of change in the traditional Indian society. *Though, social change occurred in traditional India. It was essentially pre-modern in nature. One traditional institution was just replaced by the other and no basic structural change took place in social system and culture.*

Historically, *modernization in India started from the establishment of the British rule and had continued even after the independence.* The nature and direction of modernization during these two phases have been different.

Initially, the contact with British led to growth of a modernizing sub-culture or Little tradition of Westernization, especially during the seventeenth century in Bengal, Madras and Bombay, where a small nucleus of interpreters, trader-cum-middlemen emerged who were slowly being socialized to Western ways. Subsequently, there also emerged sects which emphasised assimilation of Western cultural norms, and Western modes of learning (e.g. Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, etc.); these also ran a crusade against obscurantism in Hindu traditions. These movements on one hand and the consolidation of the British power towards the middle of the nineteenth century on other finally led to the institution of a modernizing Great tradition. Its components were :

- The contact with the West brought about far reaching changes in social structure and cultural institutions. *Changes were witnessed in almost all-important areas of*

life. The British administration introduced new arrangements in legal, agrarian, educational and administrative domains. Most of these led to structural modernization.

- For instance, **the bureaucratic system of administration and judiciary introduced by them were based on modern rational norms, which replaced the traditional Indian legal norms, based on the principle of hierarchy and ascription.**

- **A similar transformation took place in the system of education and agrarian structure.** The Western system of education was introduced towards the middle of the nineteenth century and expanded significantly thereafter.

- **New patterns of land settlements such as Zamindari, Ryotwari and Mahalwari covering the whole of British India resulted in systematization of revenue administration.**

- **Some other areas experiencing modernizing trends were industrialization, urbanization, transport and communication, army and the emergence of industrial working class and so forth.**

- **The emergence and growth of a nationalist political leadership was also the result of growing modernization of Indian society.** In fact, the nationalist leadership became so strong that freedom movement itself generated a new culture of modernization.

It is apparent from the above that the colonial phase of modernization created wide networks of structure and culture which were modern and had an all India appeal. There was, however, one important feature of Indian modernization during the British-period. The growth of this process was selective and segmental. It was not integrated with the micro-structures of Indian society, such as family, caste and village community. At these levels, the British by and large followed a policy of least interference,

especially after the rebellion of 1857. Moreover, some British administrators were wrongly impressed by the staticness and autonomy of these micro-structures compared with the rest of the Indian society. This was especially so about the notion of village community and importance attributed to caste. For a long time caste and ethnic factors were given recognition in recruitment of officers to army and middle and lower ranks of bureaucracy. Later, in the twentieth century, as the nationalist movement gathered momentum, a communal electorate system was introduced. These historical factors have deeply influenced the process of modernization which followed during the post-colonial period. It increased the contingency of traditional institutions and symbolisms to the Indian process of modernization.

Freedom movement ushered in a new political culture of modernization. At its centre was the personality of Mahatma Gandhi whose one foot was always deeply embedded in tradition. His emergence during the peak of Westernization process in India signifies an orthogenetic response of Indian tradition to the new challenges of social change. Gandhi successfully mobilized Indian people for the attainment of freedom, but he could not, however, avert one serious breakdown in the process... the partition of India into two independent nations. As we mentioned above, it followed from the uneven growth of sub-cultural traditions of modernization in Hinduism and Islam, each conditioned by unique historicity of their own. The quest for a separate nationhood by the Muslim community in India reflected a crisis of aspiration along with that of confidence.

After the independence modernization process has undergone some fundamental changes. Every domain of social system is under the active influence of modernizing process. Modernization has, now, become an integral part of the developmental strategy. Now modernization has been envisaged for all levels of cultural and

structural systems. Discontinuity in modernization between macro-structures and micro-structures and between the Little and Great traditions, as during the British regime, has now been consciously abolished.

- The **political system** has assumed a new shape after adoption of the parliamentary form of government based on adult franchise. Political parties have emerged as powerful organs of the system. Thus, democratic political structure has effectively led to increasing political consciousness among the people. The process of politicization has further, been accelerated through the Panchayat Raj institutions.

- The foundations of traditional **family structure** have come under influence of legal reforms in marriage and inheritance. The family introduced equalitarian norms in family leading to raised status of women.

- Community Development Projects have carried the cultural norms and role-structures of modernity to each and every **village** in India, and this, coupled with introduction of land reforms and elective village panchayats, has initiated villagers to a bureaucratic form of participation in local level management and administration of justice.

- Similarly, **caste** has assumed new functional roles. It has acquired an associational character. New consciousness has emerged among dalits. Increasing role of caste in politics is a pointer to this trend.

- Moreover, **land reforms**, too, have brought structural transformation in agrarian social structure.

However, it is pertinent to call attention to the fact that modernization in India has not been uniformly progressive movement. Two crucial issues may be pointed out in this regard :

- First, in the process of modernization several traditional institutions and activities have been reinforced. **For example,** religious preachers are using modern media to spread their ideas. Now, there are television channels in India exclusively developed to religious preaching. Caste associations are using new modes of communication to consolidate their position.

- Second, inconsistencies are visible in patterns of modernization. Though structural change is witnessed in family, joint family loyalties and norms still prevail. Democratic participation is increasing despite of increasing caste conflicts.

Thus, modernization in India has not thoroughly dispensed with traditional institutions. **Yogendra Singh** has, appropriately, highlighted this fact in his study entitled **Modernization of Indian Tradition**. He writes, "The form of traditional institutions may remain intact but their substance might undergo major transformations incorporating modernization." In this sense modernization process in India has acquired a typical form. Traditional institutions have displayed their potential for adaptations in course of change.

CONTINUITY AND BREAKDOWNS IN MODERNIZATION IN INDIA

According to Eisenstaedt, modernization, in its initial stages in India, did not lead to any serious breakdown because of the peculiar structural characteristics of the Indian society. Here, cultural system was fairly independent of political system. **Louis Dumont** writes: 'This domain of polity or artha is, in the dominant tradition, relatively autonomous with regard to absolute values; there was also independence between the political system and the system of caste stratification.' Castes had their own panchayats and plural traditions, and similarly there also existed autonomy for groups and regional communities. *This inter-structural autonomy facilitated assimilation of modernizing innovations, without introducing major breakdown.* Modernity, however, mainly developed as a sub-culture without pervasive expansion in all sectors of life.

The colonial phase of modernization did not seriously articulate many structural challenges which now with the totalization of this process in free India implies. As segmental nature of modernization becomes encompassing, relevance of structural autonomy ceases to operate as a shock-absorber. *Changes in political system begin increasingly to impinge upon the system of stratification (caste, class, ethnic communities), and these together create serious stresses for the cultural system as a whole. The cultural pre-requisites of a comprehensive modernization necessitate adaptive changes in the system of values which come in direct confrontation with tradition cultural values and norms.* For instance, secularism, untouchability, non-parochialism are some cultural demands of modernization in contemporary India which its traditional value system continues to resist. Important trends of social and cultural change in India which are relevant to the process of modernization are,

- In cultural sphere, major changes have been introduced by legislations.

- These seek to abolish social inequalities and exploitations handed down by tradition and accord democratic rights and constitutional privileges to all members of society.

- This has led to a trend away from Sanskritisation (Emulation of the Great tradition) and towards formation of new identities and associations of castes, regional groups and tribes.

- These processes are accelerated by 'Great traditions' of modernization such as, urbanization, industrialization, spread of education and politicization.

- The traditional structures and loyalties are being mobilized for objectives which are essentially modern and an increased emphasis is on protest movements.

However, the tradition also gets reinforcement in the process; modern media of communication and transport are increasingly used for spreading ritual order and for national organization of religious groups and their mode of activities and social participation. There is a tendency among religious sects to organize themselves on rational bureaucratic model, and the previous fission of each new sect form the parent body has now changed into strong orientation towards fusion.

Inconsistencies are also there in structural changes that India has undergone during the post-colonial phase of modernization. These are :

- *Micro-structures like caste, family and village community have retained their traditional character.* Caste has shown unexpected elasticity and latent potential for adaptation with modern institutions such as democratic participation, political party organization and trade unionism, and it persists unabatedly. Joint family loyalties and particularistic norms continue to prevail.

- *These contradictions are, however, further magnified at the level of macrostructures, such as the political system, bureaucracy, elite structure, industry and economy.*

- *The post-colonial period of modernization had homogeneity in elite structure.* These elite from industrial, civil and military bureaucracies, as well as political spheres came from similar class- caste stratum; they had equitable exposure to Western education and socialization. They also had uniformity of ideologies and aspirations. This was because the social base for recruitment of these elite was limited.

- *Elite structure has fairly widened during the post-independence period;* it may not be equitable in terms of stratification system, but in cultural background there is enough representativeness which leads to many contradictions.

- *A gap is specially coming into being between political elite and non-political*

elite; the former are less Westernized, and externally at least identify with traditional cultural symbolisms more strongly than the latter.

Contradictions are also growing in the federal structure of the Union:

- One party government is being replaced by multi-party government in States, having divergent ideological policies (Communist-led united fronts in Kerala and West Bengal, D. M. K. in Tamil Nadu).

- There is also evidence that, in the course of three five-year plans additional income generated by economic investment has gone in favour of only the well-to-do classes to the detriment of poorer sections. Planning has thus accentuated and sharpened the gaps in social stratification.

- This along with slow rate of economic growth and rapid increase in population creates additional intensities for structural tensions.

- Despite the years of effort at industrialization, India continues to be rural-peasant dominated society with general poverty of living standards.

Thus, major potential sources of breakdown in the Indian process of modernization may, in one form or another, be attributed to structural inconsistencies, such as :

- democratization without spread of civic culture (education),

- bureaucratization without commitment to universalistic norms,

- rise in media participation (communication) and aspiration, without proportionate increase in resources and distributive justice,

- verbalization of a welfare ideology without its diffusion in social structure and its implementation as a social policy,

- over-urbanization without industrialization, and

- finally modernization without meaningful change in the stratification system.

Gunnar Myrdal refers to similar impediments to modernization in India and other Asian countries in his work Asian Drama. According to him,

- nationalism and democratic institutions themselves have grown in a structurally uneven form in these countries.

- In Europe, he says, strong independent State with a fairly effective government and a common pattern of law enforcement, preceded nationalism, and both preceded democracy. In South Asian countries democratic ideology has, due to special historicity, preceded strong and independent State and effective government, and this is further complicated by onslaught of nationalism. This uneven historicity goes along with economic dependence of these countries on developed nations and slow rate of economic growth and still slower pace in institutional changes.

- According to Myrdal, India, which has a more viable size of intellectuals and middle classes necessary for democracy, planned economic growth has not made as deep an impact towards liberalizing the structural bottlenecks for modernization.

- According to him, India's 'soft-state' policy after Independence inhibited its leadership from going to the root of the problem, that is, introduction of basic changes in the institutional structure of society.

- The inegalitarian structure of society continued to grow and consolidate itself; there developed a long gap between verbalization and implementation of policies of reform;

- The decentralization of power in rural sectors led to concentration of power in the hands of a petty plutocracy. Also the leadership of the country as a whole remained with those who are opponents of real economic and social change.

CONCLUDING ANALYSIS

The emergent tensions caused by process of modernization in India, direct our attention to much needed further coordination in the strategy of change. Contradictions are emerging in the system at various levels as a result of uncoordinated institutional reforms and economic measures introduced for modernization during the post-Independence period. These contradictions, however, also inhere and symbolize the frictions caused by upward movement of hitherto suppressed aspirations and interests of groups. Protest movements whether disguised (like Sanskritisation, Islamization, formation of parochial associations based on caste, language and regional culture) or overt (Centre-State tensions) are inevitable in democratic transition to modernization. These, of course, indicate the specific areas where institutional and other reforms could further be accelerated to remove friction in the process of change. Modernization should thus proceed by a series of conciliatory steps through a forceful strategy of mobilization in the course of the developmental process. The need is also simultaneously to reinforce the democratic values and institutions. Given a democratic political framework, there exists a built-in mechanism in this system to build pressures for removal of inconsistencies emerging from uncoordinated changes in the 'conditions' of modernization; but the same cannot be said to be true for other forms of totalitarian political systems.

On the whole it appears that, despite continual tensions and contradictions, chances of the institutional breakdown are minimal; democratic values have fairly institutionalized in the political system; cultural gap which has recently widened between various levels of the elite does not go far enough to introduce major conflict about the ideology of modernization. Caste, which represents institutionalized form of inequality sanctioned by tradition now fights battles against inequality and inegalitarianism by its own rational self-transformation into associations: many independent or categorical values of tradition

have shown a surprising degree of elasticity of adapt themselves to the cultural system of modernization. Some of these traditions even thrive as modernization processes accelerate without creating major contradictions. In the realm of material resources too, the recent 'agricultural revolution' in the countryside has created a new atmosphere of optimism for future progress. This, along with people's increasing awareness to curb the birth-rate may point towards new hopeful signs of modernization without a breakdown. A constant coordination of mobilization with conciliation is a pre-requisite for democratic form of modernization in India.

PROTESTS AND MOVEMENTS DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD AND SOCIAL REFORMS

Understanding Protest and Movement : An element of dissatisfaction with the existing system can be found in every society. Dissatisfaction may be caused by poverty, social discrimination or lack of privilege. People may develop a strong desire to change the situation by raising their voices against the existing order. They may start questioning established practices of society. This difference of opinion actually reflects a desire for change. Social movements emerge under this situation. However, a movement does not occur suddenly. It begins with dissent, moves towards protests and finally takes the form of a social movement. This sequence – dissent, protest and social movements – represents different phases of social change. But in some cases all these may be in operation at the same time.

The term dissent refers to ideas and activities which are different from those prevailing in a society at a given point of time. Differences of opinion and disagreement on certain issues are bases of dissent. Dissent is thus the beginning of a movement for change. For example, the struggle against the inhuman practice of untouchability in India was initiated

only when the people who were suffering from this cruel practice raised their voices against it.

Protest is *generally specific in nature. When dissent is expressed openly it assumes the form of protest. When a dissenting opinion crystallizes further the situation of protest is created. Thus protest, in order to be meaningful, has to be supported by dissent in respect of the institutional arrangements prevailing in society at a given point of time.* In fact, a consciousness of injustice and deprivation takes place at this stage. Accordingly, we may say that the social sharing of discrimination and deprivation is the starting point of protest. Thus, we may say that dissent expresses dissatisfaction with the existing situation and registers disagreement. Protest, on the other hand, is a formal declaration of dissent and represents a more crystallized state of opposition and conflict.

Social movements are of great sociological interest because they are a major source of social change. A social movement is a sustained collective effort that focuses on some aspect of social change. M.S.A Rao says that a social movement essentially involves sustained collective mobilization through either informal or formal organization and is generally oriented towards bringing about change in the existing system of relationships. Rao considers ideology as an important component of a social movement.

Protests and movements during colonial period mainly aimed at socio-religious reform. A reform movement attempts to improve conditions within an existing social system without changing the fundamental structure of the society itself. Reforms are often linked with belief systems, rituals and life-styles of the concerned people. There are several examples of reform movements in India. The most well-known reform movement was the Bhakti (devotional) movement of medieval India. It was an all-India movement which involved the lower caste people, and the poor. It protested against ritualism and caste barriers. Thus, the primary objective of the movement was to reform

world view and social practices of the people. It never tried to transform the social system radically, but advocated partial changes in the value system.

Several reform movements also engendered the socio-cultural regeneration, which occurred in the nineteenth century in India. It started with the formation of the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal in 1828 which had branches in several parts of the country.

According to K. L. Sharma Socio-religious reforms in British India were felt necessary due to three reasons:

- the selection of texts from various commentaries on the code of Manu had not always been enlightened;

- the reliance on law courts for interpretation had resulted in greater conservatism;

- the law, as applied by the law courts and British judges, was a combination of ancient Hindu and Victorian English conservatism. particularly in regard to women, inheritance, marriage and the rights of married women.

The right to property of individual members in a joint family or the granting of property right to women took many years from their acceptance in letter to their actual acceptance. The joint family, caste and Hinduism have always been the pivoted institutions and have discouraged any legislation which would weaken them manifestly or even latently.

Besides these reasons, there were several socio-cultural and economic problems which demanded mass mobilization, awakening and action against the British Raj, feudals and upper sections of society. There was a need to attack the institutional mechanisms, which had made society rigid and exploitative.

According to A.R. Desai reform movements during British period were an expression of national awakening due to contradictions between the old value system and new socio-economic realities.

- The aim of these movements was to revive the old religion in the context of nationalism

and democracy as the cardinal principles for the emergence of modern India. Modern society established liberty, freedom of competition, contact and freedom of the individual to own and manipulate property at will. Individualism was its keynote in contrast to the pre-capitalist society which was authoritarian in character; maintained social distinctions based on birth and sex, and subordinated the individual to caste and the joint family system.

- The new society demanded, as the very condition of its development, the abolition of privileges based on birth or sex. The reform movements were against medievalism in socio-cultural realms. They attacked the caste system and its allied institutions, polytheism, superfluous religious rites and dogmas.

- These religio-reform movements were national in content but religious in form.

Apart from the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal, the Prarthana Samaj in Maharashtra and the Arya Samaj in Punjab and north India were some of the other reform movements among the Hindus. The work of reformation was also undertaken by other organizations which were led by the backward castes and the members of other religious groups. For example, the Satya Sodhak Samaj of Jotiba Phule in Maharashtra and the Sri Narayan Dharma Paripalana Sabha in Kerala were started by the backward castes. Similarly, the Ahmadiya and Aligarh movements represented the spirit of reform among the Muslims. The Sikhs had their Singh Sabha and the Parsees, the Rehnumai, Mazdeyan Sabha. The major concerns of these movements and organizations were no doubt religious reform, but the social content was not missing from them. These movements brought about remarkable changes in the life of the people.

THE BRAHMO SAMAJ

Raja Ram Mohan Roy is considered to be the father of modern Indian renaissance. Besides English and Bengali, Ram Mohan Roy acquired knowledge of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. He also knew Hebrew, Latin and Greek. He made a deep study of Hindu and Muslim laws, literature and philosophy. He believed in the progressive reform of religion and a society with a liberal outlook. Ram Mohan Roy did not believe in worshipping the images of God. Monotheism was his main slogan.

On 20 August 1828, he founded the Brahmo Samaj, the literal meaning of which is "One God Society". The orthodox Hindus did not cherish the ideals of this institution, but generally people welcomed this new organization. Ram Mohan Roy was a secularist as he was inspired by Christianity, Islam and the Upanishads. He had great faith in the uncompromising monotheism of Islam. He learnt about the concept of the unity of God as an essence of Hinduism from the study of the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras and Gita.

- Ram Mohan Roy thought that without sacrificing or discarding the genuine spiritual and cultural heritage, India could not have a new philosophy, absorbing and assimilating the modernism imported from the west.

- He strongly advocated use of modern science and technology in education and also use of the English language. Ram Mohan Roy was, in fact, a rationalist and a pioneer of English education and enlightened journalism.

- He championed the cause of the exploited peasantry.

- His main aim was to relate religion to all aspects of life – individual, social and national.

- Universal theism was his message. He, however, used the Vedas and the Upanishads, in worship, sermons and devotional music, with emphasis on the universality of their contents.

- Ram Mohan Roy champion of the cause of women. He worked against irrational institutions like sati and child marriage. Through the Brahmo Samaj, he advocated for women. Inheritance of property for women,

and inter-caste marriage were special programmes undertaken by the Brahmo Samaj.

- He was against the caste system, as it put barriers in the ways of growth of Indian society. Ram Mohan Roy was essentially a democrat and humanist.

- He did not hesitate in borrowing well from the British Raj and western culture. The Brahmo Samaj was an institution for all sorts of people, without distinction, for the workship of the some Supreme God, without idolatry.

However, the historians R.C. Majumdar, H.C. Roychaudhuri and Kalikinker Datta are of the view that Ram Mohan Roy never regarded himself as anything but a Hindu. He stoutly denied that he had founded a different sect. He always entertained the recital of the Vedas even by orthodox Brahmans. No non-Brahmana was allowed in the Brahmo Sabha room. Ram Mohan Roy himself wore the sacred thread of the Brahmanas up to his death.

- Debendranath Tagore provided a solid organizational set-up to the Brahmo Samaj after the death of Ram Mohan Roy in England.

- He decided to make the propagation of 'Brahmo Dharma' the main programme or the Brahmo Samaj. His Tattvabodhini Sabha, or Truth Teacing Society, preached the Vedas and Vedantism as the basic of the Samaj.

- The system of initiation and from of divine service were introduced by the new leader. He maintained and carried the best traditions of the days of Ram Mohan Roy.

- He gave a new direction to Brahminism by abandoning belief in the infallibility of scriptures. The Samaj continued to work for ameliorating the condition of women and children and for modernization of education.

- A new phase began with the emergence of the dynamic personality of Keshub Chandra Sen. Sen advocated radical reforms with the zeal of a missionary.

- His mission was to broaden the activities of the Brahmo movement and to extend it to other parts of the country. In 1867, the Brahmo Samaj started functioning at Bombay under the leadership of Ranade and Bhandarkar.

- It organized several programmes in Madras. Keshub fervent devotion, passionate enthusiasm and powerful eloquence gave a new life to the Samaj.

- His rationalistic principles reached new heights. The true spirit of repentance and devotional fervour increased the strength of the movement. He toured Madras and Bombay and other places to propagate the ideals of the Samaj.

Debendranath and Keshub soon fell out, as the two cherished different ways of functioning within the Samaj. Debendranath had a radical approach. In 1866, Keshub established the Brahmo Samaj of India. The parent body was known as the Adi Brahmo Samaj. The new organization tried to foster the sense of spiritual and national unity in India. Keshub visit to England in 1869 spread the message of the Samaj in the West.

- The splinter Samaj advocated radical changes, including complete abolition of the caste system.

- Female emancipation and female education received top priority.

- Due to Christian influence, greater emphasis was put on the sense of sin, the spirit of repentance, and the efficacy of prayer.

- Religion was treated as a practical recourse to solve human problems rather than a dogmatic doctrine.

- His thesis of 'New Dispensation' (Nava Vidhan) declared on 25 January 1880 promoted a new synthesis of different religions.

The fourth phase in the Brahmo Samaj emerged when some followers of Keshub Chandra Sen left him and founded the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj on. The new organization was founded for the following reasons:

- the demand for the introduction of a new constitution was not accepted ;
- there was disagreement on the question of adesha or Divine Command.
- Keshub Chandra Sen's daughter was married to the prince of Cooch Bihar, in violation of the Native Marriage Act of 1872.

The founder adopted a new constitution based on universal adult franchise. The old organization went into oblivion. The new Samaj is active even today, with its branches all over the country.

- It has followed the path of constitutionalism and radical reformism.
- Its programmes include the removal of the purdah system, introduction of widow remarriage, abolition of polygamy and early marriage and provision of higher education for women.
- It has attacked rigidities based on caste system. Inter-caste commensal relations, such as eating and drinking water, have been encouraged by the Samaj.
- Emphasis on monotheism continues to be its primary ideal.

THE PRARTHANA SAMAJ

The Prarthana Samaj, an offshoot of the Brahmo Samaj, came into existence in 1867 under the leadership of Justice Mahadeo Govinda Ranade. Keshub was a source of inspiration for this organization.

- The followers of the Prarthana Samaj never looked upon themselves as adherents of a new religion or of a new sect, outside and alongside the general Hindu body, but saw it simply as a movement within it. They were staunch theists in the Vaishnavite tradition of Maharashtra. The saints, like Namdeo, Tukaram and Ramdas influenced them to a large extent.
- They devoted themselves to social reforms such as inter-caste dining and marriages, remarriage of widows, and improvement of the lot of women and depressed classes.

- The Samaj founded the following organization and institutions: an asylum and orphanage at Pandharpur; night schools; a widow home: and a depressed classes mission.

Justice Ranade devoted his life to the Prarthana Samaj. He contributed to the formation of the Widow Marriage Association in 1861, and the Deccan Education Society in 1884-85. Ranade conveyed two things:

- the whole man was his concern; and
- there was continuity even in face of radical transformation.

He advocated that these two should become a part of the reformist philosophy.

THE ARYA SAMAJ

The Arya Samaj was founded in 1875 by Swami Dayananda Saraswati. He was a Sanskrit scholar with no English education. He gave the call "Go back to the Vedas". He had no regard for the Puranas. Swami received education on Vedanta. His views were similar to that of Ram Mohan Roy. Disbelief in polytheism and image worship, opposition to caste-based restriction, child marriage, and opposition to the prohibition of sea voyages, and advocating female education and widow remarriage were important programmes common to the followers of Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj. Like other reforms of his times, Swami Dayananda Saraswati regarded the Vedas as eternal and infallible. His monumental work – Satyartha Prakash is an interpretation of the Vedas. Swami considered the epics – the Ramayana and the Mahabharata – as literary treasures.

- Swami launched the Shuddhi (purification) movement, conversion of non-Hindu to Hinduism. This was begun to realize the ideal of unifying India notionally, socially and religiously.
- Direct contact with the masses had immense in the Punjab and the United Provinces.
- He advocated that Vedas had all the truth. Every modern thing could be found in them.

- Swami strongly attacked the hereditary basis of the caste system, idolatry and the belief in the superiority of Brahmanas over caste groups.
- He rejected unsociability and pleaded that the study of the Vedas be made open to all. The work of the Swami after his death was carried forward by Lala Hansraj, Pandit Guru Dutt, Lala Lajpat Raj and Sawami Sradhananda.
- The Samaj, to prevent child marriage, fixed the minimum marriageable age at 25 years for boys and 16 for girls.
- Inter-caste marriage and widow remarriage were encouraged. Even today, Arya Samaj Mandirs (temples) performs such acts with sincerity and promptness.
- Equal status for women was their demand, both in letter and spirit.
- The Samaj also helped the people in crises like floods, famines and earthquakes.
- The Samaj opened orphanages and widow homes at various religious places.
- The Samaj has also attempted to give a new direction to education. The revival of the 'Gurukula' pattern, an ancient system of Hindu education, has been its goal. However, at the higher level, the value of English education was recognized. Today, the Arya Samaj has a widespread network of Dayananda Anglo-Vedic schools and colleges throughout India.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

The Ramakrishna Mission is an embodiment of the synthesis of ancient India and modern western cultures. Ramakrishna Paramahansa was the founder of this socio-religious movement.

- He had faith in all religions and performed religious and performed exercises in accordance with Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. All the different religious views are different ways leading to the same goals – was the message of Ramakrishna.

- God is both one and many. He has form and is also without it. This message is a great universal spirit as well as a constellation of symbols.
- Thus, catholicity was the essence of the Mission's founder. He led a life of a secluded saint with broad catholicity, mysticism and spirituality.

Formally, the Mission was founded in May 1897 by Paramahansa disciple, Narendranath Dutta, who was later on known as Swami Vivekananda. Vivekananda was a graduate of Calcutta University. Two objectives of the Mission are :

- to bring into existence a band of monks dedicated to a life of renunciation and practical spirituality, from among whom teachers and workers would be sent out to spread the universal message of Vedanta as illustrated in the life of Ramakrishna;
- in conjunction with lay disciples, to carry on preaching, philanthropic and charitable works. looking upon all men, women and children. irrespective of caste, creed or colour, as veritable manifestations of the Divine.

Paramahansa himself founded the Ramakrishna Math with his young monastic as a nucleus to fulfil the first objective. The second objective was taken up by Swami Vivekananda after Ramakrishna's death. Vivekananda carried the message of Ramakrishna all over India. He was an eloquent speaker with a charming personality. Vivekananda's followers included people of all strata including prices and priests In 1893, he attended the famous "Parliament of Religions" at Chicago. He delivered lectures on Hindu philosophy as enunciated by Ramakrishna Paramahansa at various places in the UK and the USA.

The headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission are at Belur, near Kolkata. The Math is a religious trust dedicated to the nursing of the inner spiritual life of the members of the monastery.

The Mission is a charitable society dedicated to the expression of inner spiritual life in outward collective action in the service of men.

- The Mission stands for religious and social reforms. The Vedantic doctrine is its ideal.

- Its emphasis is on the development of the highest spirituality inherent in man.

- Certain spiritual experiences of Ramakrishna, the teachings of the Upanishads and the Gita, and the examples of the Buddha and Jesus are the basis of Vivekananda message to the world about human values.

- He wanted to make the Vedanta practical. His mission was to bridge the gulf between paramartha (service) and vyavahara (behaviour), and between spirituality and day-to-day life.

- He advocated the doctrine of service – the service of all beings. The service of jiva (living objects) is the worship of Siva. Life itself is religion. By service, the Divine exists within man.

- Vivekananda was for using technology and modern sciences in the service of mankind.

The Mission has been in existence for more than a century. It has now developed into a worldwide organization. The Mission is a deeply religious body; but it is not a proselytizing body. It is not a sect of Hinduism. In fact, this one of the strong reasons for the success of the Mission. The Mission has given top priority to the idea of social service, both in terms of philanthropic work and upliftment of religious and spiritual life. It has been successful in propagating the universal principle of Vedanta and giving a true picture of India to the western world. It believes that the philosophy of Vedanta will make a Christian a better Christian and a Hindu a better Hindu.

The Mission has opened many schools and dispensaries, and helped the victims of natural calamities. Millions of men and women suffering from dumbness have been helped by the Mission.

The Mission has published books on the Vedanta, and it also publishes about ten journals and magazines in English and other Indian languages.

THE SERVANTS OF INDIAN SOCIETY

Like other nineteenth century organizations for socio-religious reforms, the Servants of Indian Society undertook various welfare programmes in the early twentieth century. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a liberal leader of the Indian National Congress, founded the Society in 1905.

- The aim of the Society was to train "national missionaries for the service of India, and to promote, by all constitutional means, the true interests of the Indian people".

- Its members were called upon "to devote their lives to the cause of the country in a religious spirit".

- It was a society dedicated to the service of the country. Its aim was to prepare a cadre of selfless workers.

Srinivas Shastri succeeded Gokhale as its president, after Gokhale's death in 1915. Some of the members devoted themselves to selfless politics, others took up welfare activities. In 1911, Narayan Malhar Joshi, a follower of Gokhale, founded the Social Service League in Bombay.

- Its aim was "to secure for the masses of the people better and reasonable conditions of life and work".

- In 1926, they ran 17 night nurseries. They organized over libraries and reading rooms and 2 days nurseries. They organized over a hundred cooperative societies.

- Other activities included Police Court Agent's work, legal advice and aid to the poor and illiterate, excursions for slum-dwellers, facilities for gymnasia and theatrical performances, sanitary work, medical relief and Boys' Clubs and Scout Corps. Joshi also founded the All-India Trade Union Congress in 1920.

REFORM MOVEMENTS AMONG MUSLIMS, SIKHS AND PARSIS :

The Muslims had Four Revivalist Movements:

- the Ahmadiya movement; the Aligarh movement; Sir Mohammad Iqbal's movement; and Sheikh Abdul Halim Sharar's movement.

- These movements stressed upon universal brotherhood, liberal education and liberal interpretation of the Quran.

- Parsis and Sikhs also launched several socio-religious reforms in their respective communities.

- Parsis vowed to discard orthodoxy, particularly in regard to education of women, marriage and social position of women.

- The Sikhs did a lot of work to reform the management of the Gurudwaras. There was practically a revolt against the Mahants of these shrines. The Khalsa College at Amritsar was established by the end of the nineteenth century.

THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT

The Swadeshi movement aimed at the indigenization by discarding use of foreign goods and inculcation of nationalist spirit among the people of India. 'Lokahitawadi', a reformer in Maharashtra, an ardent advocate of the Swadeshi movement, listed the following points for reforming society:

- all should devoutly worship God;

- all ceremonies, except those connected with initiation, marriage and death should be abolished. Ceremonials and prayers should be performed in one's own language;

- every person should have liberty to act, speak and write according to what he thinks;

- men and women should have equal rights in social and religious functions;

- morality if higher than performance of ritual;

- no person is to be treated with contempt. Pride of caste is unbecoming. All men are to be treated with charity. Do good to all;

- love of the motherland and good of the country should always be borne in mind;

- the rights of the people are higher than those of the governments,

- the rules laid down by the government and rules suggested by reason should be observed;

- everybody should strive for the growth of learning; and

- truth should be the abiding principle of conduct.

These canons of conduct show that India was trying to rejuvenate its socio-cultural fabric and make a dignified place for itself in the changed circumstances. It had become necessary to change, to discard and to adopt some elements simultaneously. Striving for synthesis had become a necessity. Condemnation of ritual paraphernalia, caste system, rules of marriage, and of differences between the sexes had become absolutely necessary.

THE SATYASHODHAK SAMAJ MOVEMENT

Jotiba Phule organized a powerful movement against the Brahmanas in Maharashtra. He started a school for girls, and one for girls, and one for the 'untouchables', and also a home for widows. He challenged the supremacy of the Brahmanas. His two writings – Saravajanik Satyadharma Pustak and Gulamgiri became sources of inspiration for the common masses.

- He founded the Satyashodhak Samaj (Truth Seekers' Society) to carry out his crusade against the Brahmana hegemony.

- The Satyashodhak Samaj, besides being anti-Brahmanic, had a programme of positive action for women liberation, propagating education, and for economic betterment.

- Mahatma Phule used the symbol of Rajah Bali as opposed to the Brahmana's symbol of Rama.

- The middle castes, the Kunbis, Malis and Dhangars, developed a sense of identity as a

class against Brahmanas, who are thought of as exploiters.

- In the 1990s, the Maharaja of Kolhapur encouraged the non-Brahmana movement. The movement spread to the southern states in the first decade of twentieth century. Kammas, Reddis and Vellalas, the powerful intermediate castes, joined hands against the Brahmanas. Muslims also joined them.

THE SNDP MOVEMENT

·A number of backward class movements were launched in the pre-independence period. The backward classes organized themselves against the Brahmanas in particular as they thought that most of the socio-economic advantages were cornered by them depriving the agricultural intermediate castes and communities. These were similar to Jotiba Phule's Satyashodhak Samaj movement, with the similar aim of ending oppression by the Brahmanas. The Brahmanas were the first to exploit modern educational and employment opportunities. The upper non-Brahmana castes failed to get access to these opportunities. The Sri Narayan Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) movement, among the Ezhavas of Kerala, is an example of conflict between the depressed classes and the upper non-Brahmana castes. The Ezhavas were a caste of toddy-tappers in Kerala. They were like the Nadars of Tamil Nadu and the Idigas of Karnataka. The Ezhavas were the largest single caste group constituting 26 per cent of the total population of Kerala. In a developing country like India, movements led by the backward classes speak of their low status, disadvantages, discriminations and deprivations which they suffered for a long time at the hands of the ruling classes and communities.

The SNDP movement is an example of a 'regional' movement. It pertains to the Ezhavas of Kerala who were untouchables. The ideology of the movement was formulated by Sri Narayan Guru Swamy. He formed a programme of action known as the 'SNDP Yogam'.

- The Yogam took up several issues, including the right of admission to public schools, recruitment to government employment, entry into temple, on roads and political representation.

- Most of these objectives were realized. The movement, as a whole, brought about transformative structural changes which included upward social mobility, shift in the traditional distribution of power, and a federation of 'backward castes' into a large conglomeration.

- Caste reforms and mobility movement were launched in almost all parts of India during the British period.

- These movements had two objectives: to protest against the hegemony of Brahmanas, in particular and of other upper castes, in general; and to elevate the position of the backward castes in the caste hierarchy by imitating lifestyles of the upper castes, including having higher education and prestigious jobs.

- These movements invariably created 'ethnic' awareness and politicization among various caste groups.

FAR REACHING IMPACT OF THESE MOVEMENTS

The greatest impact of the nineteenth century socio-religious reform movements was:

- the creation of national awakening among the masses;

- the revival of Hinduism as a tolerant, rational religion to restore its lost prestige in the wake of Islam in the past and Christianity in the nineteenth century;

- an onslaught on the indignities committed on women, untouchables and other oppressed and depressed sections of Indian society;

- the creation of the feelings of sacrifice, service and rationalism;

- an attack on the hereditary character and rigidities of the caste system; and finally

- a sense of equality, indigenization and co-existence of cultures and religions.

It has been noted earlier that atrocities on women through purdah, child marriage, hypergamy, dowry and sex-based inequality in regard to division of work, education, occupation, freedom, etc., moved all the reformists. Not only were legislations against these ills passed, but concrete social actions were also taken to ameliorate the plight of women. It was an era of new enlightenment, of indigenization with an open mind, welfarism, liberalism and equalitarianism. This sort of awakening contributed a lot to India's freedom struggle.

These socio-religious movements were for introducing humanistic social reforms by stopping the moral and material decadence of India. Even radical westernization was pleaded for by Ram Mohan Roy as a means to rejuvenate the decaying Indian culture and society. These movements did not have an all-India character. They were localized in Bengal, Maharashtra, Punjab, etc. Their impact was generally limited to the educated, upper middle and middle classes. Assimilation of the values of rationalism, universal brotherhood, and freedom of man and equality of sexes was not easy with the Indian tradition and culture. These movements have been called "denationalized and hyper-westernized" by some critics. It is certainly undeniable that these movements made tremendous and everlasting impact in terms of socio-cultural awakening against social evils.

POSITIVE ASPECT OF REFORM MOVEMENTS AND SOCIAL REFORM

The orthodox sections of society could not accept the scientific ideological onslaught of the socio-religious rebels. As a result of this, the reformers were subjected to abuse, persecution, issuing of *fatwa* and even assassination attempts by the reactionaries.

- However, in spite of opposition, these movements contributed towards liberation of the individual from the conformity born out of fear and from uncritical submission to exploitation by the priests. The translation of religious texts into vernacular languages, emphasis on individual's right to interpret the scriptures and simplification of rituals made worship a more personal experience. The movements emphasised the human intellect's capacity to think and reason.

- By weeding out corrupt elements, religious beliefs and practices, the reformers enabled their followers to meet the official taunt that their religions and society were decadent and inferior. It gave the rising middle classes the much needed cultural roots to cling to, and served the purpose of reducing the sense of humiliation which the conquest by a foreign power had produced.

- A realization of the special needs of modern times, especially in terms of scientific knowledge, and thus promoting a modern, this-worldly, secular and rational outlook was major contribution of these reform movements.

- Socially, this attitude reflected in a basic change in the notions of 'pollution and purity'. Although traditional values and customs were a prominent target of attack from the reformers yet the reformers aimed at modernization rather than outright westernizing based on blind imitation of alien western cultural values. In fact, the reform movements sought to create a favourable social climate for modernization. To that extent, these movements ended India's cultural and intellectual isolation from the rest of the world. The reformers argued that modern ideas and culture could be best imbibed by integrating them into Indian cultural streams.

- The underlying concern of these reformist efforts was revival of the native cultural personality which had got distorted by colonial domination. This cultural ideological struggle was to prove to be an important instrument of evolution of national consciousness and a part of Indian national resolve to resist colonial cultural and ideological hegemony.

- However, not all these progressive, nationalist tendencies were able to outgrow the sectarian and obscurantist outlook. This was possibly due to divergent duality of cultural and political struggles resulting in cultural backwardness despite political advancement.

NEGATIVE ASPECT OF REFORM MOVEMENTS AND SOCIAL REFORM

- One of the major limitations of these religious reform movements was that they had a narrow social base, namely the educated and urban middle classes, while the needs of vast masses of peasantry and the urban poor were ignored.

- The tendency of reformers to the greatness of the past and to rely on scriptural authority encouraged mysticism in new garbs and fostered pseudo-scientific thinking while exercising a check on full acceptance of the need for a modern scientific outlook. But, above all, these tendencies contributed, at least to some extent, in compartmentalizing Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis, as also alienating high caste Hindus from low caste Hindus.

- An overemphasis on religious and philosophical aspects of the cultural heritage got somewhat magnified by an insufficient emphasis on other aspects of culture – art, architecture, literature, music, science and technology.

- To make matters worse, the Hindu reformers confined their praise of the Indian past to its ancient period and looked upon the medieval period of Indian history essentially as an era of decadence. This tended to create a notion of two separate peoples, on the one hand, on the other; an uncritical praise of the past was not acceptable to the low caste sections of society which had suffered under religiously sanctioned exploitation precisely during the ancient period.

- Moreover, the past itself tended to be placed into compartments on a partisan basis. Many in the Muslim middle classes went to the extent of turning to the history of West Asia for their traditions and moments of pride.

- The process of evolution of a composite culture which was evident throughout Indian history showed signs of being arrested with the rise of another form of consciousness – communal consciousness – along with national consciousness among the middle classes.

- Many other factors were certainly responsible for the birth of communalism in modern times, but undoubtedly the nature of religious reform movements also contributed to it.

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