SOCIAL SCIENCE

OUR PASTS – III

PART 2

Textbook in History
for Class VIII

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FOREWORD

The National Curriculum Framework, 2005, recommends that children's life at school must be linked to their life outside the school. This principle marks a departure from the legacy of bookish learning which continues to shape our system and causes a gap between the school, home and community. The syllabi and textbooks developed on the basis of NCF signify an attempt to implement this basic idea. They also attempt to discourage rote learning and the maintenance of sharp boundaries between different subject areas. We hope these measures will take us significantly further in the direction of a child-centred system of education outlined in the National Policy on Education (1986).

The success of this effort depends on the steps that school principals and teachers will take to encourage children to reflect on their own learning and to pursue imaginative activities and questions. We must recognise that, given space, time and freedom, children generate new knowledge by engaging with the information passed on to them by adults. Treating the prescribed textbook as the sole basis of examination is one of the key reasons why other resources and sites of learning are ignored. Inculcating creativity and initiative is possible if we perceive and treat children as participants in learning, not as receivers of a fixed body of knowledge.

These aims imply considerable change in school routines and mode of functioning. Flexibility in the daily time-table is as necessary as rigour in implementing the annual calendar so that the required number of teaching days are actually devoted to teaching. The methods used for teaching and evaluation will also determine how effective this textbook proves for making children's life at school a happy experience, rather than a source of stress or boredom. Syllabus designers have tried to address the problem of curricular burden by restructuring and reorienting knowledge at different stages with greater consideration for child psychology and the time

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available for teaching. The textbook attempts to enhance this endeavour by giving higher priority and space to opportunities for contemplation and wondering, discussion in small groups, and activities requiring hands-on experience.

NCERT appreciates the hard work done by the textbook development committee responsible for this book. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the Advisory Group on Social Science, Professor Hari Vasudevan and the Chief Advisor for this book, Professor Neeladri Bhattacharya for guiding the work of this committee. Several teachers contributed to the development of this textbook; we are grateful to their principals for making this possible. We are indebted to the institutions and organisations, which have generously permitted us to draw upon their resources, material and personnel. We are especially grateful to the members of the National Monitoring Committee, appointed by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development under the Chairpersonship of Professor Mrinal Miri and Professor G. P. Deshpande, for their valuable time and contribution. As an organisation committed to systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinement.

Director
National Council of Educational
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30 November 2007

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Shyama Warner has done several rounds of editing with care and understanding, suggesting changes, tracking mistakes and improving the text in innumerable ways. We thank her for her involvement in the project. Ritu Topa has designed the book with an interest and care that went well beyond the call of duty.

We have made every effort to acknowledge credits, but we apologise in advance for any omission that may have inadvertently taken place.

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Contents

Foreword *iii*

7. Weavers, Iron Smelters and Factory Owners 79
8. Civilising the "Native", Educating the Nation 95
9. Women, Caste and Reform 108
10. The Changing World of Visual Arts 123
11. The Making of the National Movement: 1870s-1947 141
12. India After Independence 160

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Contents of Part 1

1. How, When and Where 1
2. From Trade to Territory 9
   The Company Establishes Power
3. Ruling the Countryside 26
4. Tribals, *Dikus* and the Vision of a Golden Age 39
5. When People Rebel 51
   1857 and After
6. Colonialism and the City 64
   The Story of an Imperial Capital

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7 Weavers, Iron Smelters and Factory Owners

Fig. 1 *– Trading ships on the port of Surat in the seventeenth century*

Surat in Gujarat on the west coast of India was one of the most important ports of the Indian Ocean trade. Dutch and English trading ships began using the port from the early seventeenth century. Its importance declined in the eighteenth century.

This chapter tells the story of the crafts and industries of India during British rule by focusing on two industries, namely, textiles and iron and steel. Both these industries were crucial for the industrial revolution in the modern world. Mechanised production of cotton textiles made Britain the foremost industrial nation in the nineteenth century. And when its iron and steel industry started growing from the 1850s, Britain came to be known as the "workshop of the world".

The industrialisation of Britain had a close connection with the conquest and colonisation of India. You have seen (Chapter 2) how the English East India Company's interest in trade led to occupation of territory, and how the pattern of trade changed over the decades. In the late eighteenth century the Company was buying goods in India and exporting them to England and Europe, making profit through this sale. With the growth of industrial production, British industrialists began to see India as a vast market for their industrial products, and over time manufactured goods from Britain began flooding India. How did this affect Indian crafts and industries? This is the question we will explore in this chapter.

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Indian Textiles and the World Market

Let us first look at textile production.

Fig. 2 – Patola *weave, mid-nineteenth century*

Patola was woven in Surat, Ahmedabad and Patan. Highly valued in Indonesia, it became part of the local weaving tradition there.

Around 1750, before the British conquered Bengal, India was by far the world's largest producer of cotton textiles. Indian textiles had long been renowned both for their fine quality and exquisite craftsmanship. They were extensively traded in Southeast Asia (Java, Sumatra and Penang) and West and Central Asia. From the sixteenth century European trading companies began buying Indian textiles for sale in Europe. Memories of this flourishing trade and the craftsmanship of Indian weavers is preserved in many words still current in English and other languages. It is interesting to trace the origin of such words, and see what they tell us.

Words tell us histories

European traders first encountered fine cotton cloth from India carried by Arab merchants in Mosul in present-day Iraq. So they began referring to all finely woven textiles as "muslin" – a word that acquired wide currency. When the Portuguese first came to India in search of spices they landed in Calicut on the Kerala coast in south-west India. The cotton textiles which they took back to Europe, along with the spices, came to be called "calico" (derived from Calicut), and subsequently calico became the general name for all cotton textiles.

There are many other words which point to the popularity of Indian textiles in Western markets. In Fig. 3 you can see a page of an order book that the English East India Company sent to its representatives in Calcutta in 1730.

The order that year was for 5,89,000 pieces of cloth. Browsing through the order book you would have seen a list of 98 varieties of cotton and silk cloths. These were known by their common name in the European trade as piece goods – usually woven cloth pieces that were 20 yards long and 1 yard wide.

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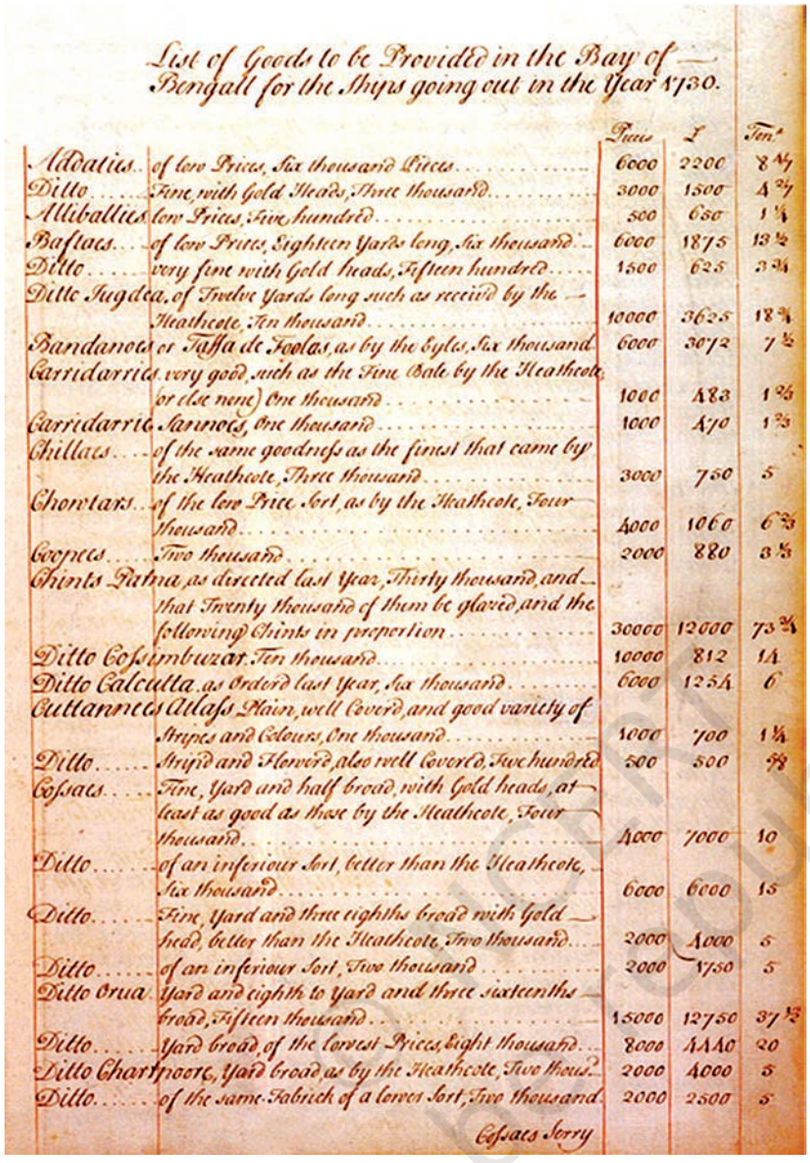

List of Goods to be Provided in the Bay of Bengall for the Ships going out in the Year 1730.

		Pieces	£	Ton.s
Aldatis..	of low Prices, Six thousand Pieces	6000	2200	8 4/7
Ditto	Fine, with Gold Heads, Three thousand	3000	1500	4 2/7
Alliballies	low Prices, Five hundred	500	650	1 1/4
Baftaes...	of low Prices, Eighteen Yards long, Six thousand	6000	1875	13 1/2
Ditto	very fine with Gold heads, Fifteen hundred	1500	625	3 3/4
Ditto Jugdea.	of Twelve Yards long such as received by the Heathcote, Ten thousand	10000	3625	18 3/4
Bandanoes	or Tassa de Foolas, as by the Eyles, Six thousand	6000	3072	7 1/2
Carridarris	very good, such as the Fine Bale by the Heathcote or else none) One thousand	1000	483	1 2/3
Carridarris	Sannoes, One thousand	1000	470	1 2/3
Chillaes...	of the same goodness as the finest that came by the Heathcote, Three thousand	3000	750	5
Chowtars..	of the low Price Sort, as by the Heathcote, Four thousand	4000	1060	6 2/3
Coopees...	Two thousand	2000	880	3 1/3
Chints Patna	as directed last Year, Thirty thousand, and that Twenty thousand of them be glazed, and the following Chints in proportion	30000	12000	73 3/4
Ditto Cossimbuzar.	Ten thousand	10000	812	14
Ditto Calcutta.	as Ordered last Year, Six thousand	6000	1254	6
Cuttannees	Atlass Plain, well Covered, and good variety of Stripes and Colours, One thousand	1000	700	1 1/4
Ditto	Striped and Flowered, also well Covered, Five hundred	500	500	78
Cossaes....	Fine, Yard and half broad, with Gold heads, at least as good as those by the Heathcote, Four thousand	4000	7000	10
Ditto	of an inferiour Sort, better than the Heathcote, Six thousand	6000	6000	15
Ditto	Fine, Yard and three eighths broad with Gold head, better than the Heathcote, Two thousand	2000	4000	5
Ditto	of an inferiour Sort, Two thousand	2000	1750	5
Ditto Orua.	Yard and eighth to Yard and three sixteenths broad, Fifteen thousand	15000	12750	37 1/2
Ditto	Yard broad, of the lowest Prices, Eight thousand	8000	4440	20
Ditto Chartpoore,	Yard broad, as by the Heathcote, Two thous.d	2000	4000	5
Ditto	of the same Fabrick of a lower Sort, Two thousand	2000	2500	5
	Cossaes Sorry			

Fig. 3 *– A page from an order book of the East India Company, 1730*

Notice how each item in the order book was carefully priced in London. These orders had to be placed two years in advance because this was the time required to send orders to India, get the specific cloths woven and shipped to Britain. Once the cloth pieces arrived in London they were put up for auction and sold.

Now look at the names of the different varieties of cloth in the book. Amongst the pieces ordered in bulk were printed cotton cloths called chintz, *cossaes* (or *khassa)* and *bandanna.* Do you know where the English term chintz comes from? It is derived from the Hindi word *chhint*, a cloth with small and colourful flowery designs. From the 1680s there started a craze for printed Indian cotton textiles in England and Europe mainly for their exquisite floral designs, fine texture and relative cheapness. Rich people of England including the Queen herself wore clothes of Indian fabric.

Similarly, the word *bandanna* now refers to any brightly coloured and printed scarf for the neck or head. Originally, the term derived from the word

Fig. 4 – Jamdani *weave, early twentieth century*

Jamdani is a fine muslin on which decorative motifs are woven on the loom, typically in grey and white. Often a mixture of cotton and gold thread was used, as in the cloth in this picture. The most important centres of *jamdani* weaving were Dacca in Bengal and Lucknow in the United Provinces.

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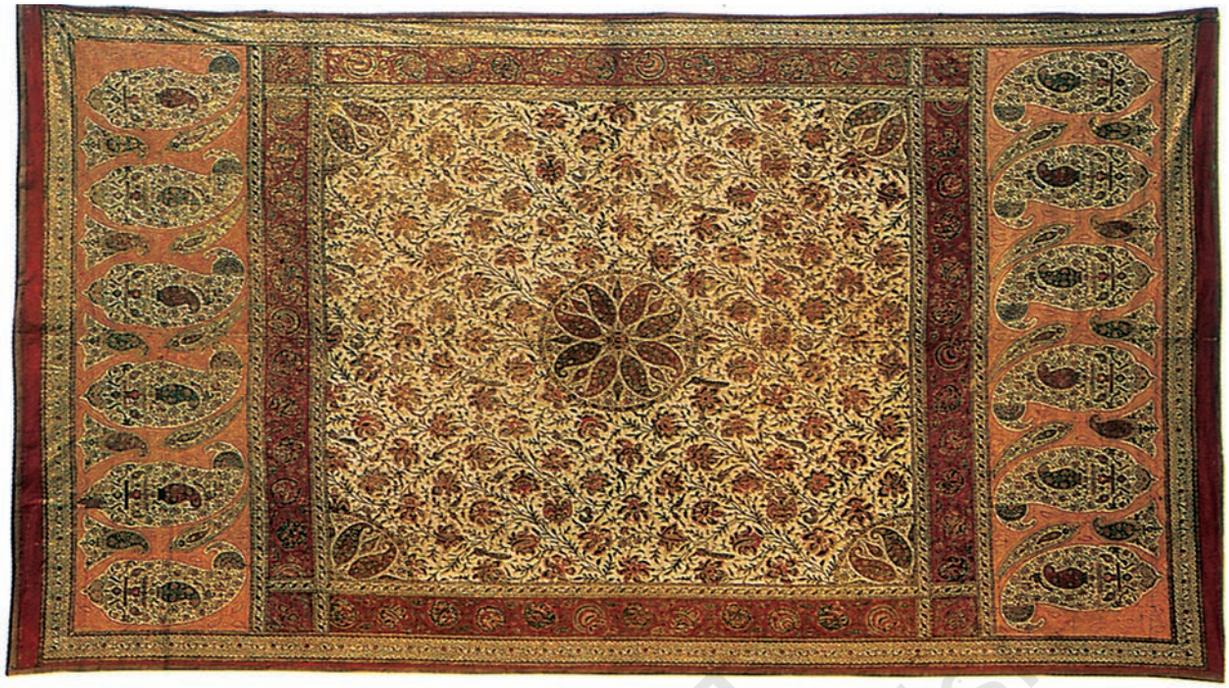

Fig. 5 *– Printed design on fine cloth (chintz) produced in Masulipatnam, Andhra Pradesh, mid-nineteenth century*

This is a fine example of the type of chintz produced for export to Iran and Europe.

"*bandhna*" (Hindi for tying), and referred to a variety of brightly coloured cloth produced through a method of tying and dying.

There were other cloths in the order book that were noted by their place of origin: Kasimbazar, Patna, Calcutta, Orissa, Charpoore. The widespread use of such words shows how popular Indian textiles had become in different parts of the world.

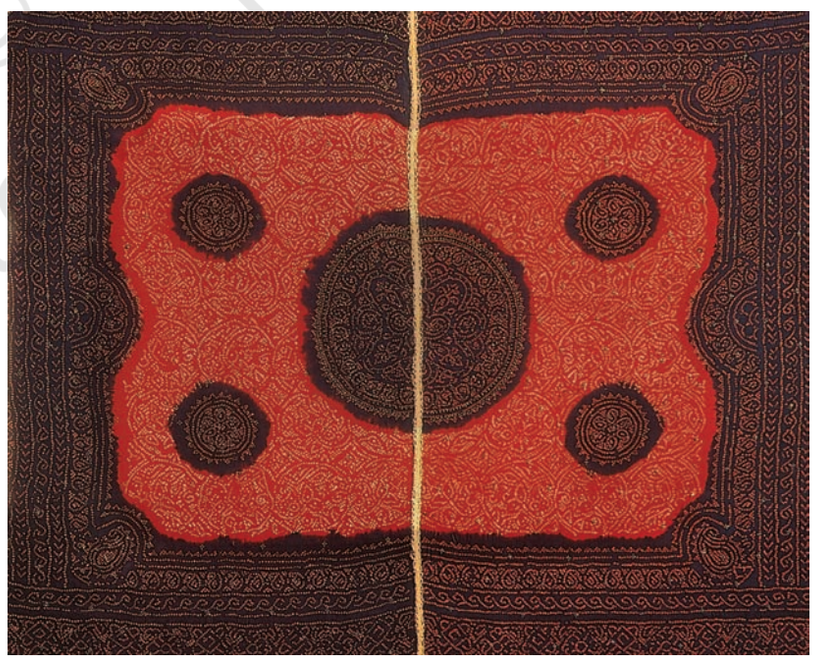

Fig. 6 *– Bandanna design, early twentieth century*

Notice the line that runs through the middle. Do you know why? In this *odhni*, two tie-and-dye silk pieces are seamed together with gold thread embroidery. Bandanna patterns were mostly produced in Rajasthan and Gujarat.

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Indian textiles in European markets

By the early eighteenth century, worried by the popularity of Indian textiles, wool and silk makers in England began protesting against the import of Indian cotton textiles. In 1720, the British government enacted a legislation banning the use of printed cotton textiles – chintz – in England. Interestingly, this Act was known as the Calico Act.

At this time textile industries had just begun to develop in England. Unable to compete with Indian textiles, English producers wanted a secure market within the country by preventing the entry of Indian textiles. The first to grow under government protection was the calico printing industry. Indian designs were now imitated and printed in England on white muslin or plain unbleached Indian cloth.

Competition with Indian textiles also led to a search for technological innovation in England. In 1764, the **spinning jenny** was invented by John Kaye which increased the productivity of the traditional spindles. The invention of the steam engine by Richard Arkwright in 1786 revolutionised cotton textile weaving. Cloth could now be woven in immense quantities and cheaply too.

However, Indian textiles continued to dominate world trade till the end of the eighteenth century. European trading companies – the Dutch, the French and the English – made enormous profits out of this flourishing trade. These companies purchased cotton and silk textiles in India by importing silver. But as you know (Chapter 2), when the English East India Company gained political power in Bengal, it no longer had to import precious metal to buy Indian goods. Instead, they collected revenues from peasants and zamindars in India, and used this revenue to buy Indian textiles.

Activity

Why do you think the Act was called the Calico Act? What does the name tell us about the kind of textiles the Act wanted to ban?

Spinning Jenny – A machine by which a single worker could operate several spindles on to which thread was spun. When the wheel was turned all the spindles rotated.

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Fig. 7 *– A sea view of the Dutch settlement in Cochin, seventeenth century*

As European trade expanded, trading settlements were established at various ports. The Dutch settlements in Cochin came up in the seventeenth century. Notice the fortification around the settlement.

Where were the major centres of weaving in the late eighteenth century?

Fig. 8 *– Weaving centres: 1500-1750*

If you look at the map you will notice that textile production was concentrated in four regions in the early nineteenth century. Bengal was one of the most important centres. Located along the numerous rivers in the delta, the production centres in Bengal could easily transport goods to distant places. Do not forget that in the early nineteenth century railways had not developed and roads were only just beginning to be laid on an extensive scale.

Dacca in Eastern Bengal (now Bangladesh) was the foremost textile centre in the eighteenth century. It was famous for its *mulmul* and *jamdani* weaving.

If you look at the southern part of India in the map you will see a second cluster of cotton weaving centres along the Coromandel coast stretching from Madras to northern Andhra Pradesh. On the western coast there were important weaving centres in Gujarat.

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Who were the weavers?

Weavers often belonged to communities that specialised in weaving. Their skills were passed on from one generation to the next. The *tanti* weavers of Bengal, the *julahas* or *momin* weavers of north India, *sale* and *kaikollar* and *devangs* of south India are some of the communities famous for weaving.

The first stage of production was spinning – a work done mostly by women. The *charkha* and the *takli* were household spinning instruments. The thread was spun on the *charkha* and rolled on the *takli*. When the spinning was over the thread was woven into cloth by the weaver. In most communities weaving was a task done by men. For coloured textiles, the thread was dyed by the dyer, known as *rangrez*. For printed cloth the weavers needed the help of specialist block printers known as *chhipigars*. Handloom weaving and the occupations associated with it provided livelihood for millions of Indians.

Fig. 9 *– A* tanti *weaver of Bengal, painted by the Belgian painter Solvyns in the 1790s*

The *tanti* weaver here is at work in the pit loom. Do you know what a pit loom is?

The decline of Indian textiles

The development of cotton industries in Britain affected textile producers in India in several ways. First: Indian textiles now had to compete with British textiles in the European and American markets. Second: exporting textiles to England also became increasingly difficult since very high duties were imposed on Indian textiles imported into Britain.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, English-made cotton textiles successfully ousted Indian goods from their traditional markets in Africa, America and Europe. Thousands of weavers in India were now thrown out of employment. Bengal weavers were the worst hit. English and European companies stopped buying Indian goods and their agents no longer gave out

Aurang – A Persian term for a warehouse – a place where goods are collected before being sold; also refers to a workshop

Source 1

"We must starve for food"

In 1823 the Company government in India received a petition from 12,000 weavers stating:

> Our ancestors and we used to receive advances from the Company and maintain ourselves and our respective families by weaving Company's superior assortments. Owing to our misfortune, the ***aurangs*** have been abolished ever since because of which we and our families are distressed for want of the means of livelihood. We are weavers and do not know any other business. We must starve for food, if the Board of Trade do not cast a look of kindness towards us and give orders for clothes.

Proceedings of the Board of Trade, 3 February 1824

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Source 2

"Please publish this in your paper"

One widowed spinner wrote in 1828 to a Bengali newspaper, *Samachar Darpan*, detailing her plight:

> To the Editor, *Samachar*,
>
> I am a spinner. After having suffered a great deal, I am writing this letter. Please publish this in your paper ... When my age was ... 22, I became a widow with three daughters. My husband left nothing at the time of his death ... I sold my jewellery for his *shraddha* ceremony. When we were on the verge of starvation God showed me a way by which we could save ourselves. I began to spin on *takli* and *charkha* ...
>
> The weavers used to visit our houses and buy the *charkha* yarn at three tolas per rupee. Whatever amount I wanted as advance from the weavers, I could get for the asking. This saved us from cares about food and cloth. In a few years' time I got together ... Rs. 28. With this I married one daughter. And in the same way all three daughters ...
>
> Now for 3 years, we two women, mother-in-law and me, are in want of food. The weavers do not call at the house for buying yarn. Not only this, if the yarn is sent to market it is still not sold even at one-fourth the old prices.
>
> I do not know how it happened. I asked many about it. They say that Bilati 2 yarn is being imported on a large scale. The weavers buy that yarn and weave ... People cannot use the cloth out of this yarn even for two months; it rots away.

A representation from a suffering spinner

advances to weavers to secure supplies. Distressed weavers wrote petitions to the government to help them.

But worse was still to come. By the 1830s British cotton cloth flooded Indian markets. In fact, by the 1880s two-thirds of all the cotton clothes worn by Indians were made of cloth produced in Britain. This affected not only specialist weavers but also spinners. Thousands of rural women who made a living by spinning cotton thread were rendered jobless.

Handloom weaving did not completely die in India. This was because some types of cloths could not be supplied by machines. How could machines produce saris with intricate borders or cloths with traditional woven patterns? These had a wide demand not only amongst the rich but also amongst the middle classes. Nor did the textile manufacturers in Britain produce the very coarse cloths used by the poor people in India.

Activity

Read Sources 1 and 2. What reasons do the petition writers give for their condition of starvation?

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You must have heard of Sholapur in western India and Madura in South India. These towns emerged as important new centres of weaving in the late nineteenth century. Later, during the national movement, Mahatma Gandhi urged people to boycott imported textiles and use hand-spun and hand-woven cloth. *Khadi* gradually became a symbol of nationalism. The *charkha* came to represent India, and it was put at the centre of the tricolour flag of the Indian National Congress adopted in 1931.

What happened to the weavers and spinners who lost their livelihood? Many weavers became agricultural labourers. Some migrated to cities in search of work, and yet others went out of the country to work in plantations in Africa and South America. Some of these handloom weavers also found work in the new cotton mills that were established in Bombay (now Mumbai), Ahmedabad, Sholapur, Nagpur and Kanpur.

Cotton mills come up

The first cotton mill in India was set up as a spinning mill in Bombay in 1854. From the early nineteenth century, Bombay had grown as an important port for the export of raw cotton from India to England and China. It was close to the vast black soil tract of western India where cotton was grown. When the cotton textile mills came up they could get supplies of raw material with ease.

Fig. 10 *– Workers in a cotton factory, circa 1900, photograph by Raja Deen Dayal*

Most workers in the spinning departments were women, while workers in the weaving departments were mostly men.

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Smelting – The process of obtaining a metal from rock (or soil) by heating it to a very high temperature, or of melting objects made from metal in order to use the metal to make something new

By 1900, over 84 mills started operating in Bombay. Many of these were established by Parsi and Gujarati businessmen who had made their money through trade with China.

Mills came up in other cities too. The first mill in Ahmedabad was started in 1861. A year later a mill was established in Kanpur, in the United Provinces. Growth of cotton mills led to a demand for labour. Thousands of poor peasants, artisans and agricultural labourers moved to the cities to work in the mills.

In the first few decades of its existence, the textile factory industry in India faced many problems. It found it difficult to compete with the cheap textiles imported from Britain. In most countries, governments supported industrialisation by imposing heavy duties on imports. This eliminated competition and protected infant industries. The colonial government in India usually refused such protection to local industries. The first major spurt in the development of cotton factory production in India, therefore, was during the First World War when textile imports from Britain declined and Indian factories were called upon to produce cloth for military supplies.

Fig. 11 *– Tipu's sword made in the late eighteenth century*

Written with gold on the steel handle of Tipu's sword were quotations from the Koran with messages about victories in war. Notice the tiger head towards the bottom of the handle.

The sword of Tipu Sultan and Wootz steel

We begin the story of Indian steel and iron metallurgy by recounting the famous story of Tipu Sultan who ruled Mysore till 1799, fought four wars with the British and died fighting with his sword in his hand. Tipu's legendary swords are now part of valuable collections in museums in England. But do you know why the sword was so special? The sword had an incredibly hard and sharp edge that could easily rip through the opponent's armour. This quality of the sword came from a special type of high carbon steel called Wootz which was produced all over south India. Wootz steel when made into swords produced a very sharp edge with a flowing water pattern. This pattern came from very small carbon crystals embedded in the iron.

Francis Buchanan who toured through Mysore in 1800, a year after Tipu Sultan's death, has left us an account of the technique by which Wootz steel was produced in many hundreds of **smelting** furnaces in Mysore. In these furnaces, iron was mixed with charcoal and put inside small clay pots. Through an intricate control of temperatures the smelters produced steel ingots that were used for sword making not just in India but in West and Central Asia too. Wootz is an anglicised

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version of the Kannada word *ukku*, Telugu *hukku* and Tamil and Malayalam *urukku* – meaning steel.

Indian Wootz steel fascinated European scientists. Michael Faraday, the legendary scientist and discoverer of electricity and electromagnetism, spent four years studying the properties of Indian Wootz (1818-22). However, the Wootz steel making process, which was so widely known in south India, was completely lost by the mid-nineteenth century. Can you guess why this was so? The swords and armour making industry died with the conquest of India by the British and imports of iron and steel from England displaced the iron and steel produced by craftspeople in India.

Activity

Why would the iron and steel making industry be affected by the defeat of the nawabs and rajas?

Abandoned furnaces in villages

Production of Wootz steel required a highly specialised technique of refining iron. But iron smelting in India was extremely common till the end of the nineteenth century. In Bihar and Central India, in particular, every district had smelters that used local deposits of ore to produce iron which was widely used for the manufacture of implements and tools of daily use. The furnaces were most often built of clay and sun-dried bricks. The smelting was done by men while women worked the **bellows**, pumping air that kept the charcoal burning.

Bellows – A device or equipment that can pump air

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Fig. 12 *– Iron smelters of Palamau, Bihar*

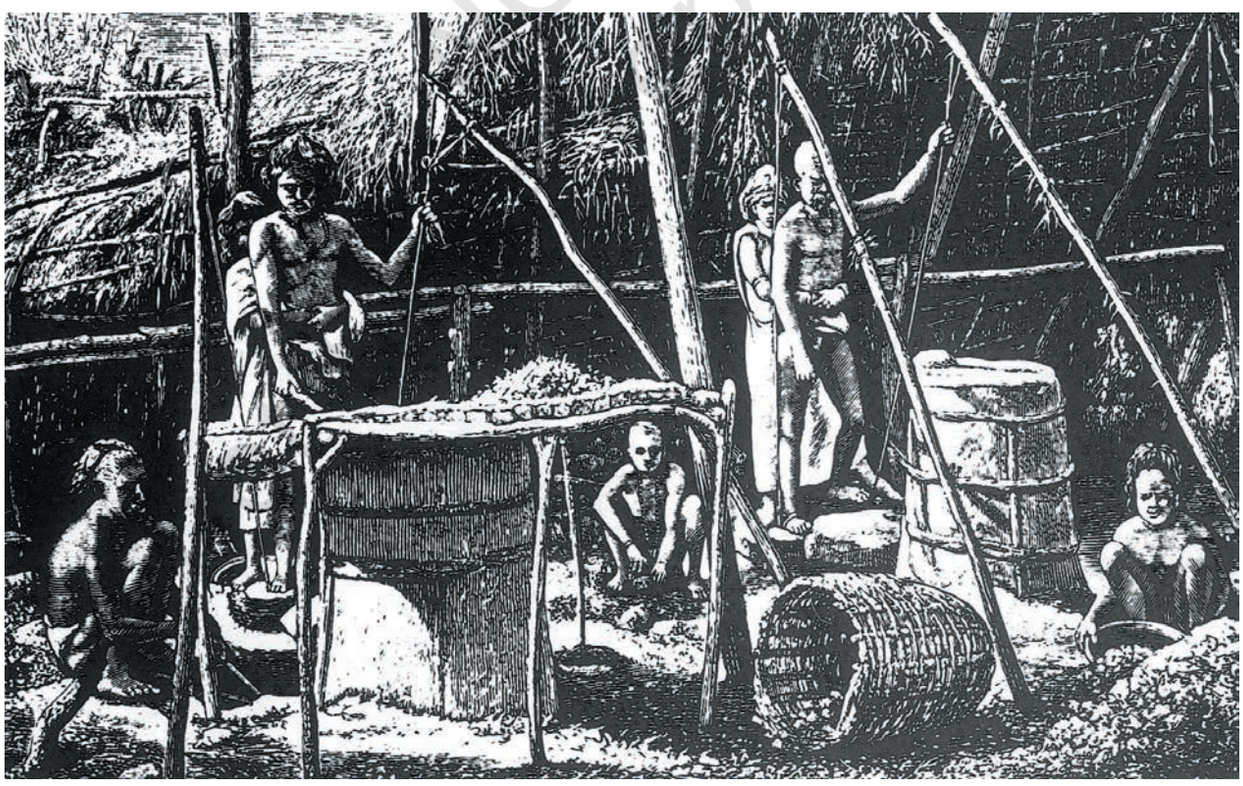

Fig. 13 *– A village in Central India where the Agarias – a community of iron smelters – lived.*

Some communities like the Agarias specialised in the craft of iron smelting. In the late nineteenth century a series of famines devastated the dry tracts of India. In Central India, many of the Agaria iron smelters stopped work, deserted their villages and migrated, looking for some other work to survive the hard times. A large number of them never worked their furnaces again.

Source 3

A widespread industry

According to a report of the Geological Survey of India:

> Iron smelting was at one time a widespread industry in India and there is hardly a district away from the great alluvial tracts of the Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra, in which **slag heaps** are not found. For the primitive iron smelter finds no difficulty in obtaining sufficient supplies of ore from deposits that no European ironmaster would regard as worth his serious consideration.

By the late nineteenth century, however, the craft of iron smelting was in decline. In most villages, furnaces fell into disuse and the amount of iron produced came down. Why was this so?

One reason was the new forest laws that you have read about (Chapter 4). When the colonial government prevented people from entering the reserved forests, how could the iron smelters find wood for charcoal? Where could they get iron ore? Defying forest laws, they often entered the forests secretly and collected wood, but they could not sustain their occupation on this basis for long. Many gave up their craft and looked for other means of livelihood.

In some areas the government did grant access to the forest. But the iron smelters had to pay a very high tax to the forest department for every furnace they used. This reduced their income.

Moreover, by the late nineteenth century iron and steel was being imported from Britain. Ironsmiths in India began using the imported iron to manufacture utensils and implements. This inevitably lowered the demand for iron produced by local smelters.

By the early twentieth century, the artisans producing iron and steel faced a new competition.

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Iron and steel factories come up in India

Slag heaps – The waste left when smelting metal

The year was 1904. In the hot month of April, Charles Weld, an American geologist and Dorabji Tata, the eldest son of Jamsetji Tata, were travelling in Chhattisgarh in search of iron ore deposits. They had spent many months on a costly venture looking for sources of good iron ore to set up a modern iron and steel plant in India. Jamsetji Tata had decided to spend a large part of his fortune to build a big iron and steel industry in India. But this could not be done without identifying the source of fine quality iron ore.

One day, after travelling for many hours in the forests, Weld and Dorabji came upon a small village and found a group of men and women carrying basketloads of iron ore. These people were the Agarias. When asked where they had found the iron ore, the Agarias pointed to a hill in the distance. Weld and Dorabji reached the hill after an exhausting trek through dense forests. On exploring the hill the geologist declared that they had at last found what they had been looking for. Rajhara Hills had one of the finest ores in the world.

But there was a problem. The region was dry and water – necessary for running the factory – was not to be found nearby. The Tatas had to continue their search for a more suitable place to set up their factory. However, the Agarias helped in the discovery of a source of iron ore that would later supply the Bhilai Steel Plant.

A few years later a large area of forest was cleared on the banks of the river Subarnarekha to set up the factory and an industrial township – Jamshedpur. Here there was water near iron ore deposits. The Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) that came up began producing steel in 1912.

TISCO was set up at an opportune time. All through the late nineteenth century, India was importing steel that was manufactured in Britain. Expansion of the railways in India

Fig. 14 *– The Tata Iron and Steel factory on the banks of the river Subarnarekha, 1940*

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had provided a huge market for rails that Britain produced. For a long while, British experts in the Indian Railways were unwilling to believe that good quality steel could be produced in India.

By the time TISCO was set up the situation was changing. In 1914 the First World War broke out. Steel produced in Britain now had to meet the demands of war in Europe. So imports of British steel into India declined dramatically and the Indian Railways turned to TISCO for supply of rails. As the war dragged on for several years, TISCO had to produce shells and carriage wheels for the war. By 1919 the colonial government was buying 90 per cent of the steel manufactured by TISCO. Over time TISCO became the biggest steel industry within the British empire.

In the case of iron and steel, as in the case of cotton textiles, industrial expansion occurred only when British imports into India declined and the market for Indian

Fig. 15 *– Expansion at the end of the war*

To meet the demands of the war, TISCO had to expand its capacity and extend the size of its factory. The programme of expansion continued after the war. Here you see new powerhouses and boiler houses being built in Jamshedpur in 1919.

2018-19

industrial goods increased. This happened during the First World War and after. As the nationalist movement developed and the industrial class became stronger, the demand for government protection became louder. Struggling to retain its control over India, the British government had to concede many of these demands in the last decades of colonial rule.

ELSEWHERE

Early years of industrialisation in Japan

The history of industrialisation of Japan in the late nineteenth century presents a contrast to that of India. The colonial state in India, keen to expand the market for British goods, was unwilling to support Indian industrialists. In Japan, the state encouraged the growth of industries.

The Meiji regime, which assumed power in Japan in 1868, believed that Japan needed to industrialise in order to resist Western domination. So it initiated a series of measures to help industrialisation. Postal services, telegraph, railways, steam powered shipping were developed. The most advanced technology from the West was imported and adapted to the needs of Japan. Foreign experts were brought to train Japanese professionals. Industrialists were provided with generous loans for investment by banks set up the government. Large industries were first started by the government and then sold off at cheap rates to business families.

In India colonial domination created barriers to industrialisation. In Japan the fear of foreign conquest spurred industrialisation. But this also meant that the Japanese industrial development from the beginning was linked to military needs.

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Let's recall

1. What kinds of cloth had a large market in Europe?
2. What is *jamdani*?
3. What is *bandanna*?
4. Who are the Agaria?

Let's imagine

Imagine you are a textile weaver in late-nineteenth-century India. Textiles produced in Indian factories are flooding the market. How would you have adjusted to the situation?

5. Fill in the blanks:

   (a) The word chintz comes from the word _____.

   (b) Tipu's sword was made of_____ steel.

   (c) India's textile exports declined in the _____ century.

Let's discuss

6. How do the names of different textiles tell us about their histories?
7. Why did the wool and silk producers in England protest against the import of Indian textiles in the early eighteenth century?
8. How did the development of cotton industries in Britain affect textile producers in India?
9. Why did the Indian iron smelting industry decline in the nineteenth century?
10. What problems did the Indian textile industry face in the early years of its development?
11. What helped TISCO expand steel production during the First World War?

Let's do

12. Find out about the history of any craft around the area you live. You may wish to know about the community of craftsmen, the changes in the techniques they use and the markets they supply. How have these changed in the past 50 years?
13. On a map of India, locate the centres of different crafts today. Find out when these centres came up.

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8 Civilising the "Native", Educating the Nation

In the earlier chapters you have seen how British rule affected rajas and nawabs, peasants and tribals. In this chapter we will try and understand what implication it had for the lives of students. For, the British in India wanted not only territorial conquest and control over revenues. They also felt that they had a cultural mission: they had to "civilise the natives", change their customs and values.

What changes were to be introduced? How were Indians to be educated, "civilised", and made into what the British believed were "good subjects"? The British could find no simple answers to these questions. They continued to be debated for many decades.

Linguist – Someone who knows and studies several languages

How the British saw Education

Let us look at what the British thought and did, and how some of the ideas of education that we now take for granted evolved in the last two hundred years. In the process of this enquiry we will also see how Indians reacted to British ideas, and how they developed their own views about how Indians were to be educated.

The tradition of Orientalism

In 1783, a person named William Jones arrived in Calcutta. He had an appointment as a junior judge at the Supreme Court that the Company had set up. In addition to being an expert in law, Jones was a **linguist**. He had studied Greek and Latin at Oxford, knew French and English, had picked up Arabic from a friend, and had also learnt Persian. At Calcutta, he began spending many hours a day with pandits who taught him the subtleties of Sanskrit language, grammar and

Fig. 1 *– William Jones learning Persian*

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Fig. 2 *– Henry Thomas Colebrooke*

He was a scholar of Sanskrit and ancient sacred writings of Hinduism.

poetry. Soon he was studying ancient Indian texts on law, philosophy, religion, politics, morality, arithmetic, medicine and the other sciences.

Jones discovered that his interests were shared by many British officials living in Calcutta at the time. Englishmen like Henry Thomas Colebrooke and Nathaniel Halhed were also busy discovering the ancient Indian heritage, mastering Indian languages and translating Sanskrit and Persian works into English. Together with them, Jones set up the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and started a journal called *Asiatick Researches.*

Jones and Colebrooke came to represent a particular attitude towards India. They shared a deep respect for ancient cultures, both of India and the West. Indian civilisation, they felt, had attained its glory in the ancient past, but had subsequently declined. In order to understand India it was necessary to discover the sacred and legal texts that were produced in the ancient period. For only those texts could reveal the real ideas and laws of the Hindus and Muslims, and only a new study of these texts could form the basis of future development in India.

So Jones and Colebrooke went about discovering ancient texts, understanding their meaning, translating them, and making their findings known to others. This project, they believed, would not only help the British learn from Indian culture, but it would also help Indians rediscover their own heritage, and understand the lost glories of their past. In this process the British would become the guardians of Indian culture as well as its masters.

Influenced by such ideas, many Company officials argued that the British ought to promote Indian rather than Western learning. They felt that institutions should be set up to encourage the study of ancient Indian texts and teach Sanskrit and Persian literature and poetry. The officials also thought that Hindus and Muslims ought to be taught what they were already familiar with, and what they valued and treasured, not subjects that were alien to them. Only then, they believed, could the British hope to win a place in the hearts of the "natives"; only then could the alien rulers expect to be respected by their subjects.

Madrasa – An Arabic word for a place of learning; any type of school or college

With this object in view a **madrasa** was set up in Calcutta in 1781 to promote the study of Arabic, Persian and Islamic law; and the Hindu College was established in Benaras in 1791 to encourage the study of ancient Sanskrit texts that would be useful for the administration of the country.

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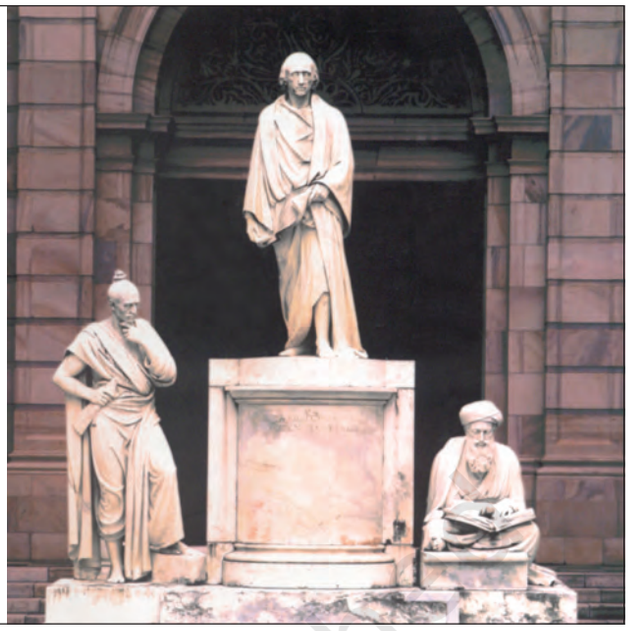

Fig. 3 *– Monument to Warren Hastings, by Richard Westmacott, 1830, now in Victoria Memorial in Calcutta*

This image represents how **Orientalists** thought of British power in India. You will notice that the majestic figure of Hastings, an enthusiastic supporter of the Orientalists, is placed between the standing figure of a pandit on one side and a seated **munshi** on the other side. Hastings and other Orientalists needed Indian scholars to teach them the **"vernacular"** languages, tell them about local customs and laws, and help them translate and interpret ancient texts. Hastings took the initiative to set up the Calcutta Madrasa, and believed that the ancient customs of the country and Oriental learning ought to be the basis of British rule in India.

Not all officials shared these views. Many were very strong in their criticism of the Orientalists.

"Grave errors of the East"

From the early nineteenth century many British officials began to criticise the Orientalist vision of learning. They said that knowledge of the East was full of errors and unscientific thought; Eastern literature was non-serious and light-hearted. So they argued that it was wrong on the part of the British to spend so much effort in encouraging the study of Arabic and Sanskrit language and literature.

James Mill was one of those who attacked the Orientalists. The British effort, he declared, should not be to teach what the natives wanted, or what they respected, in order to please them and "win a place in their heart". The aim of education ought to be to teach what was useful and practical. So Indians should be made familiar with the scientific and technical advances that the West had made, rather than with the poetry and sacred literature of the Orient.

By the 1830s the attack on the Orientalists became sharper. One of the most outspoken and influential of such critics of the time was Thomas Babington Macaulay. He saw India as an uncivilised country that needed to be civilised. No branch of Eastern knowledge, according to him could be compared to what England had produced. Who could deny, declared Macaulay, that

Orientalists – Those with a scholarly knowledge of the language and culture of Asia

Munshi – A person who can read, write and teach Persian

Vernacular – A term generally used to refer to a local language or dialect as distinct from what is seen as the standard language. In colonial countries like India, the British used the term to mark the difference between the local languages of everyday use and English – the language of the imperial masters.

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Fig. 4 *– Thomas Babington Macaulay in his study*

"a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia". He urged that the British government in India stop wasting public money in promoting Oriental learning, for it was of no practical use.

With great energy and passion, Macaulay emphasised the need to teach the English language. He felt that knowledge of English would allow Indians to read some of the finest literature the world had produced; it would make them aware of the developments in Western science and philosophy. Teaching of English could thus be a way of civilising people, changing their tastes, values and culture.

Source 1

Language of the wise?

Emphasising the need to teach English, Macaulay declared:

> All parties seem to be agreed on one point, that the dialects commonly spoken among the natives ... of India, contain neither literary nor scientific information, and are, moreover, so poor and rude that, until they are enriched from some other quarter, it will not be easy to translate any valuable work into them ...

From Thomas Babington Macaulay, Minute of 2 February 1835 on Indian Education

Following Macaulay's minute, the English Education Act of 1835 was introduced. The decision was to make English the medium of instruction for higher education, and to stop the promotion of Oriental institutions like the Calcutta Madrasa and Benaras Sanskrit College. These institutions were seen as "temples of darkness that were falling of themselves into decay". English textbooks now began to be produced for schools.

Education for commerce

In 1854, the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London sent an educational despatch to the Governor-General in India. Issued by Charles Wood, the President of the Board of Control of the Company, it has come to be known as Wood's Despatch. Outlining the educational policy that was to be followed in India, it emphasised once again the practical benefits of a system of European learning, as opposed to Oriental knowledge.

One of the practical uses the Despatch pointed to was economic. European learning, it said, would enable Indians to recognise the advantages that flow from the expansion of trade and commerce, and make them see the importance of developing the resources of the country. Introducing them to European ways of life, would change their tastes and desires, and create a demand for British goods, for Indians would begin to appreciate and buy things that were produced in Europe.

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Wood's Despatch also argued that European learning would improve the moral character of Indians. It would make them truthful and honest, and thus supply the Company with civil servants who could be trusted and depended upon. The literature of the East was not only full of grave errors, it could also not instill in people a sense of duty and a commitment to work, nor could it develop the skills required for administration.

Following the 1854 Despatch, several measures were introduced by the British. Education departments of the government were set up to extend control over all matters regarding education. Steps were taken to establish a system of university education. In 1857, while the sepoys rose in revolt in Meerut and Delhi, universities were being established in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Attempts were also made to bring about changes within the system of school education.

Activity

Imagine you are living in the 1850s. You hear of Wood's Despatch. Write about your reactions.

Source 2

An argument for European knowledge

Wood's Despatch of 1854 marked the final triumph of those who opposed Oriental learning. It stated:

> We must emphatically declare that the education which we desire to see extended in India is that which has for its object the diffusion of the improved arts, services, philosophy, and literature of Europe, in short, European knowledge.

Fig. 5 *– Bombay University in the nineteenth century*

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The demand for moral education

Fig. 6 *– William Carey was a Scottish missionary who helped establish the Serampore Mission*

The argument for practical education was strongly criticised by the Christian missionaries in India in the nineteenth century. The missionaries felt that education should attempt to improve the moral character of the people, and morality could be improved only through Christian education.

Until 1813, the East India Company was opposed to missionary activities in India. It feared that missionary activities would provoke reaction amongst the local population and make them suspicious of British presence in India. Unable to establish an institution within British-controlled territories, the missionaries set up a mission at Serampore in an area under the control of the Danish East India Company. A printing press was set up in 1800 and a college established in 1818.

Over the nineteenth century, missionary schools were set up all over India. After 1857, however, the British government in India was reluctant to directly support missionary education. There was a feeling that any strong attack on local customs, practices, beliefs and religious ideas might enrage "native" opinion.

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Fig. 7 *– Serampore College on the banks of the river Hooghly near Calcutta*

What Happened to the Local Schools?

Do you have any idea of how children were taught in pre-British times? Have you ever wondered whether they went to schools? And if there were schools, what happened to these under British rule?

Fig. 8 – *A village* pathshala
This is a painting by a Dutch painter, Francois Solvyn, who came to India in the late eighteenth century. He tried to depict the everyday life of people in his paintings.

The report of William Adam

In the 1830s, William Adam, a Scottish missionary, toured the districts of Bengal and Bihar. He had been asked by the Company to report on the progress of education in vernacular schools. The report Adam produced is interesting.

Adam found that there were over 1 lakh *pathshalas* in Bengal and Bihar. These were small institutions with no more than 20 students each. But the total number of children being taught in these *pathshalas* was considerable – over 20 lakh. These institutions were set up by wealthy people, or the local community. At times they were started by a teacher *(guru)*.

The system of education was flexible. Few things that you associate with schools today were present in the *pathshalas* at the time. There were no fixed fee, no printed books, no separate school building, no benches or chairs, no blackboards, no system of separate classes, no roll-call registers, no annual examinations, and no regular time-table. In some places classes were held under a banyan tree, in other places in the corner of a village shop or temple, or at the *guru's* home. Fee depended on the income of parents: the rich had to pay more than the poor. Teaching was oral, and the *guru* decided what to teach, in accordance with the needs of the students. Students were not separated out into different classes: all of them sat together in one place. The *guru* interacted separately with groups of children with different levels of learning.

Adam discovered that this flexible system was suited to local needs. For instance, classes were not held during harvest time when rural children often worked in the fields. The *pathshala* started once again when the crops had been cut and stored. This meant that even children of peasant families could study.

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Activity

1. Imagine you were born in a poor family in the 1850s. How would you have responded to the coming of the new system of government-regulated *pathshalas*?
2. Did you know that about 50 per cent of the children going to primary school drop out of school by the time they are 13 or 14? Can you think of the various possible reasons for this fact?

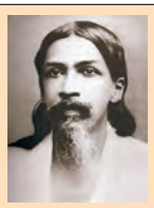

Fig. 9 *– Sri Aurobindo Ghose*

In a speech delivered on January 15, 1908 in Bombay, Aurobindo Ghose stated that the goal of national education was to awaken the spirit of nationality among the students. This required a contemplation of the heroic deeds of our ancestors. The education should be imparted in the vernacular so as to reach the largest number of people. Aurobindo Ghose emphasised that although the students should remain connected to their own roots, they should also take the fullest advantage of modern scientific discoveries and Western experiments in popular governments. Moreover, the students should also learn some useful crafts so that they could be able to find some moderately remunerative employment after leaving their schools.

New routines, new rules

Up to the mid-nineteenth century, the Company was concerned primarily with higher education. So it allowed the local *pathshalas* to function without much interference. After 1854 the Company decided to improve the system of vernacular education. It felt that this could be done by introducing order within the system, imposing routines, establishing rules, ensuring regular inspections.

How was this to be done? What measures did the Company undertake? It appointed a number of government pandits, each in charge of looking after four to five schools. The task of the pandit was to visit the *pathshalas* and try and improve the standard of teaching. Each *guru* was asked to submit periodic reports and take classes according to a regular timetable. Teaching was now to be based on textbooks and learning was to be tested through a system of annual examination. Students were asked to pay a regular fee, attend regular classes, sit on fixed seats, and obey the new rules of discipline.

Pathshalas which accepted the new rules were supported through government grants. Those who were unwilling to work within the new system received no government support. Over time *gurus* who wanted to retain their independence found it difficult to compete with the government aided and regulated *pathshalas*.

The new rules and routines had another consequence. In the earlier system children from poor peasant families had been able to go to *pathshalas*, since the timetable was flexible. The discipline of the new system demanded regular attendance, even during harvest time when children of poor families had to work in the fields. Inability to attend school came to be seen as indiscipline, as evidence of the lack of desire to learn.

The Agenda for a National Education

British officials were not the only people thinking about education in India. From the early nineteenth century many thinkers from different parts of India began to talk of the need for a wider spread of education. Impressed with the developments in Europe, some Indians felt that Western education would help modernise India. They urged the British to open more schools, colleges and universities, and spend more money on education. You will read about some of these efforts in

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Chapter 9. There were other Indians, however, who reacted against Western education. Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore were two such individuals.

Let us look at what they had to say.

"English education has enslaved us"

Mahatma Gandhi argued that colonial education created a sense of inferiority in the minds of Indians. It made them see Western civilisation as superior, and destroyed the pride they had in their own culture. There was poison in this education, said Mahatma Gandhi, it was sinful, it enslaved Indians, it cast an evil spell on them. Charmed by the West, appreciating everything that came from the West, Indians educated in these institutions began admiring British rule. Mahatma Gandhi wanted an education that could help Indians recover their sense of dignity and self-respect. During the national movement he urged students to leave educational institutions in order to show to the British that Indians were no longer willing to be enslaved.

Mahatma Gandhi strongly felt that Indian languages ought to be the medium of teaching. Education in English crippled Indians, distanced them from their own social surroundings, and made them "strangers in their own lands". Speaking a foreign tongue, despising local culture, the English educated did not know how to relate to the masses.

Western education, Mahatma Gandhi said, focused on reading and writing rather than oral knowledge; it valued textbooks rather than lived experience and practical knowledge. He argued that education ought to develop a person's mind and soul. Literacy – or simply learning to read and write – by itself did not count as education. People had to work with their hands, learn a craft, and know how different things operated. This would develop their mind and their capacity to understand.

Fig. 10 *– Mahatma Gandhi along with Kasturba Gandhi sitting with Rabindranath Tagore and a group of girls at Santiniketan, 1940*

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Source 3

"Literacy in itself is not education"

Mahatma Gandhi wrote:

> By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man – body, mind and spirit. Literacy is not the end of education nor even the beginning. It is only one of the means whereby man and woman can be educated. Literacy in itself is not education. I would therefore begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training … I hold that the highest development of the mind and the soul is possible under such a system of education. Only every handicraft has to be taught not merely mechanically as is done today but scientifically, i.e. the child should know the why and the wherefore of every process.

The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. 72, p. 79

As nationalist sentiments spread, other thinkers also began thinking of a system of national education which would be radically different from that set up by the British.

Tagore's "abode of peace"

Many of you may have heard of Santiniketan. Do you know why it was established and by whom?

Rabindranath Tagore started the institution in 1901. As a child, Tagore hated going to school. He found it suffocating and oppressive. The school appeared like a prison, for he could never do what he felt like doing. So while other children listened to the teacher, Tagore's mind would wander away.

The experience of his schooldays in Calcutta shaped Tagore's ideas of education. On growing up, he wanted to set up a school where the child was happy, where she could be free and creative, where she was able to explore her own thoughts and desires. Tagore felt

Fig. 11 *– A class in progress in Santiniketan in the 1930s*

Notice the surroundings – the trees and the open spaces.

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that childhood ought to be a time of self-learning, outside the rigid and restricting discipline of the schooling system set up by the British. Teachers had to be imaginative, understand the child, and help the child develop her curiosity. According to Tagore, the existing schools killed the natural desire of the child to be creative, her sense of wonder.

Tagore was of the view that creative learning could be encouraged only within a natural environment. So he chose to set up his school 100 kilometres away from Calcutta, in a rural setting. He saw it as an abode of peace (*santiniketan*), where living in harmony with nature, children could cultivate their natural creativity.

In many senses Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi thought about education in similar ways. There were, however, differences too. Gandhiji was highly critical of Western civilisation and its worship of machines and technology. Tagore wanted to combine elements of modern Western civilisation with what he saw as the best within Indian tradition. He emphasised the need to teach science and technology at Santiniketan, along with art, music and dance.

Many individuals and thinkers were thus thinking about the way a national educational system could be fashioned. Some wanted changes within the system set up by the British, and felt that the system could be extended so as to include wider sections of people. Others urged that alternative systems be created so that people were educated into a culture that was truly national. Who was to define what was truly national? The debate about what this "national education" ought to be continued till after independence.

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Fig. 12 *– Children playing in a missionary school in Coimbatore, early twentieth century*

By the mid-nineteenth century, schools for girls were being set up by Christian missionaries and Indian reform organisations.

ELSEWHERE

Education as a civilising mission

Until the introduction of the Education Act in 1870, there was no widespread education for the population as a whole for most of the nineteenth century. Child labour being widely prevalent, poor children could not be sent to school for their earning was critical for the survival of the family. The number of schools was also limited to those run by the Church or set up by wealthy individuals. It was only after the coming into force of the Education Act that schools were opened by the government and compulsory schooling was introduced.

One of the most important educational thinkers of the period was Thomas Arnold, who became the headmaster of the private school Rugby. Favouring a secondary school curriculum which had a detailed study of the Greek and Roman classics, written 2,000 years earlier, he said:

> It has always seemed to me one of the great advantages of the course of study generally pursued in our English schools that it draws our minds so continually to dwell upon the past. Every day we are engaged in studying the languages, the history, and the thoughts of men who lived nearly or more than two thousand years ago…

Arnold felt that a study of the classics disciplined the mind. In fact, most educators of the time believed that such a discipline was necessary because young people were naturally savage and needed to be controlled. To become civilised adults, they needed to understand society's notions of right and wrong, proper and improper behaviour. Education, especially one which disciplined their minds, was meant to guide them on this path.

Can you suggest how such ideas might have influenced thinking about education of the poor in England and of the "natives" in the colonies?

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Let's imagine

Imagine you were witness to a debate between Mahatma Gandhi and Macaulay on English education. Write a page on the dialogue you heard.

Let's recall

1. Match the following:

William Jones	promotion of English education
Rabindranath Tagore	respect for ancient cultures
Thomas Macaulay	*gurus*
Mahatma Gandhi	learning in a natural environment
Pathshalas	critical of English education

2. State whether true or false:

   (a) James Mill was a severe critic of the Orientalists.

   (b) The 1854 Despatch on education was in favour of English being introduced as a medium of higher education in India.

   (c) Mahatma Gandhi thought that promotion of literacy was the most important aim of education.

   (d) Rabindranath Tagore felt that children ought to be subjected to strict discipline.

Let's discuss

3. Why did William Jones feel the need to study Indian history, philosophy and law?
4. Why did James Mill and Thomas Macaulay think that European education was essential in India?
5. Why did Mahatma Gandhi want to teach children handicrafts?
6. Why did Mahatma Gandhi think that English education had enslaved Indians?

Let's do

7. Find out from your grandparents about what they studied in school.
8. Find out about the history of your school or any other school in the area you live.

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9 Women, Caste and Reform

Have you ever thought of how children lived about two hundred years ago? Nowadays most girls from middle-class families go to school, and often study with boys. On growing up, many of them go to colleges and universities, and take up jobs after that. They have to be adults before they are legally married, and according to law, they can marry anyone they like, from any caste and community, and widows can remarry too. All women, like all men, can vote and stand for elections. Of course, these rights are not actually enjoyed by all. Poor people have little or no access to education, and in many families, women cannot choose their husbands.

Fig. 1 *– Sati, painted by Balthazar Solvyn, 1813*

This was one of the many pictures of sati painted by the European artists who came to India. The practice of sati was seen as evidence of the barbarism of the East.

Two hundred years ago things were very different. Most children were married off at an early age. Both Hindu and Muslim men could marry more than one wife. In some parts of the country, widows were praised if they chose death by burning themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands. Women who died in this manner, whether willingly or otherwise, were called "sati", meaning virtuous women. Women's rights to property were also restricted. Besides, most women had virtually no access to education. In many parts of the country people believed that if a woman was educated, she would become a widow.

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Differences between men and women were not the only ones in society. In most regions, people were divided along lines of caste. Brahmans and Kshatriyas considered themselves as "upper castes". Others, such as traders and moneylenders (often referred to as Vaishyas) were placed after them. Then came peasants, and artisans such as weavers and potters (referred to as Shudras). At the lowest rung were those who laboured to keep cities and villages clean or worked at jobs that upper castes considered "polluting", that is, it could lead to the loss of caste status. The upper castes also treated many of these groups at the bottom as "untouchable". They were not allowed to enter temples, draw water from the wells used by the upper castes, or bathe in ponds where upper castes bathed. They were seen as inferior human beings.

Over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many of these norms and perceptions slowly changed. Let us see how this happened.

Working Towards Change

From the early nineteenth century, we find debates and discussions about social customs and practices taking on a new character. One important reason for this was the development of new forms of communication. For the first time, books, newspapers, magazines, leaflets and pamphlets were printed. These were far cheaper and far more accessible than the manuscripts that you have read about in Class VII. Therefore ordinary people could read these, and many of them could also write and express their ideas in their own languages. All kinds of issues – social, political, economic and religious – could now be debated and discussed by men (and sometimes by women as well) in the new cities. The discussions could reach out to a wider public, and could become linked to movements for social change.

These debates were often initiated by Indian reformers and reform groups. One such reformer was Raja Rammohun Roy (1772-1833). He founded a reform association known as the Brahmo Sabha (later known as the Brahmo Samaj) in Calcutta. People such as Rammohun Roy are described as reformers because they felt that changes were necessary in society, and unjust practices needed to be done away with. They thought that the best way to ensure such changes was by persuading people to give up old practices and adopt a new way of life.

Activity

Can you think of the ways in which social customs and practices were discussed in the pre-printing age when books, newspapers and pamphlets were not readily available?

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Fig. 2 *– Raja Rammohun Roy, painted by Rembrandt Peale, 1833*

Rammohun Roy was keen to spread the knowledge of Western education in the country and bring about greater freedom and equality for women. He wrote about the way women were forced to bear the burden of domestic work, confined to the home and the kitchen, and not allowed to move out and become educated.

Changing the lives of widows

Rammohun Roy was particularly moved by the problems widows faced in their lives. He began a campaign against the practice of sati.

Rammohun Roy was well versed in Sanskrit, Persian and several other Indian and Europeon languages. He tried to show through his writings that the practice of widow burning had no sanction in ancient texts. By the early nineteenth century, as you have read in Chapter 7, many British officials had also begun to criticise Indian traditions and customs. They were therefore more than willing to listen to Rammohun who was reputed to be a learned man. In 1829, sati was banned.

The strategy adopted by Rammohun was used by later reformers as well. Whenever they wished to challenge a practice that seemed harmful, they tried to find a verse or sentence in the ancient sacred texts that supported their point of view. They then suggested that the practice as it existed at present was against early tradition.

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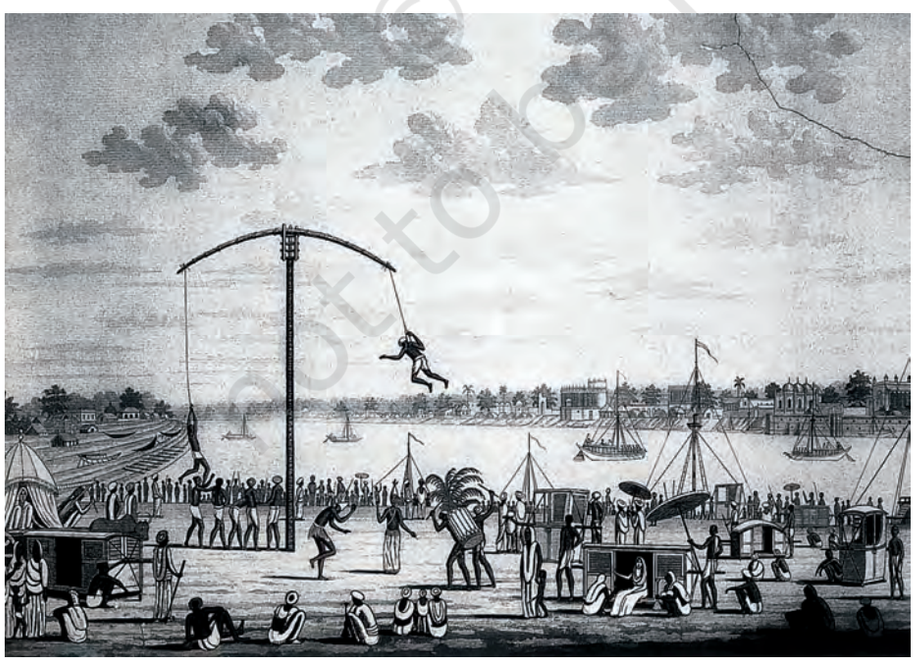

Fig. 3 *– Hook swinging festival*

In this popular festival, devotees underwent a peculiar form of suffering as part of ritual worship. With hooks pierced through their skin they swung themselves on a wheel. In the early nineteenth century, when European officials began criticising Indian customs and rituals as barbaric, this was one of the rituals that came under attack.

Source 1

"We first tie them down to the pile"

Rammohun Roy published many pamphlets to spread his ideas. Some of these were written as a dialogue between the advocate and critic of a traditional practice. Here is one such dialogue on sati:

ADVOCATE OF SATI:

Women are by nature of inferior understanding, without resolution, unworthy of trust ... Many of them, on the death of their husbands, become desirous of accompanying them; but to remove every chance of their trying to escape from the blazing fire, in burning them we first tie them down to the pile.

OPPONENT OF SATI:

When did you ever afford them a fair opportunity of exhibiting their natural capacity? How then can you accuse them of want of understanding? If, after instruction in knowledge and wisdom, a person cannot comprehend or retain what has been taught him, we may consider him as deficient; but if you do not educate women how can you see them as inferior.

Activity

This argument was taking place more than 175 years ago. Write down the different arguments you may have heard around you on the worth of women. In what ways have the views changed?

For instance, one of the most famous reformers, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, used the ancient texts to suggest that widows could remarry. His suggestion was adopted by British officials, and a law was passed in 1856 permitting widow remarriage. Those who were against the remarriage of widows opposed Vidyasagar, and even boycotted him.

By the second half of the nineteenth century, the movement in favour of widow remarriage spread to other parts of the country. In the Telugu-speaking areas of the Madras Presidency, Veerasalingam Pantulu formed an association for widow remarriage. Around the same time young intellectuals and reformers in Bombay pledged themselves to working for the same cause. In the north, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, who founded the reform association called Arya Samaj, also supported widow remarriage.

Yet, the number of widows who actually remarried remained low. Those who married were not easily accepted in society and conservative groups continued to oppose the new law.

Fig. 4 *– Swami Dayanand Saraswati*

Dayanand founded the Arya Samaj in 1875, an organisation that attempted to reform Hinduism.

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Fig. 5
Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar

Girls begin going to school

Many of the reformers felt that education for girls was necessary in order to improve the condition of women.

Vidyasagar in Calcutta and many other reformers in Bombay set up schools for girls. When the first schools were opened in the mid-nineteenth century, many people were afraid of them. They feared that schools would take girls away from home, prevent them from doing their domestic duties. Moreover, girls had to travel through public places in order to reach school. Many people felt that this would have a corrupting influence on them. They felt that girls should stay away from public spaces. Therefore, throughout the nineteenth century, most educated women were taught at home by liberal fathers or husbands. Sometimes women taught themselves. Do you remember what you read about Rashsundari Debi in your book *Social and Political Life* last year? She was one of those who secretly learned to read and write in the flickering light of candles at night.

In the latter part of the century, schools for girls were established by the Arya Samaj in Punjab, and Jyotirao Phule in Maharashtra.

In aristocratic Muslim households in North India, women learnt to read the Koran in Arabic. They were taught by women who came home to teach. Some reformers such as Mumtaz Ali reinterpreted verses from the Koran to argue for women's education. The first Urdu novels began to be written from the late nineteenth century. Amongst other things, these were meant to encourage women to read about religion and domestic management in a language they could understand.

Fig. 6 *– Students of Hindu Mahila Vidyalaya, 1875*

When girls' schools were first set up in the nineteenth century, it was generally believed that the curriculum for girls ought to be less taxing than that for boys. The Hindu Mahila Vidyalaya was one of the first institutions to provide girls with the kind of learning that was usual for boys at the time.

Women write about women

From the early twentieth century, Muslim women like the Begums of Bhopal played a notable role in promoting education among women. They founded a primary school for girls at Aligarh. Another remarkable woman, Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain started schools for Muslim girls in Patna and Calcutta. She

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was a fearless critic of conservative ideas, arguing that religious leaders of every faith accorded an inferior place to women.

By the 1880s, Indian women began to enter universities. Some of them trained to be doctors, some became teachers. Many women began to write and publish their critical views on the place of women in society. Tarabai Shinde, a woman educated at home at Poona, published a book, *Stripurushtulna,* (A Comparison between Women and Men), criticising the social differences between men and women.

Fig. 7
Pandita Ramabai

Pandita Ramabai, a great scholar of Sanskrit, felt that Hinduism was oppressive towards women, and wrote a book about the miserable lives of upper-caste Hindu women. She founded a widows' home at Poona to provide shelter to widows who had been treated badly by their husbands' relatives. Here women were trained so that they could support themselves economically.

Needless to say, all this more than alarmed the orthodox. For instance, many Hindu nationalists felt that Hindu women were adopting Western ways and that this would corrupt Hindu culture and erode family values. Orthodox Muslims were also worried about the impact of these changes.

As you can see, by the end of the nineteenth century, women themselves were actively working for reform. They wrote books, edited magazines, founded schools and training centres, and set up women's associations. From the early twentieth century, they formed political pressure groups to push through laws for female suffrage (the right to vote) and better health care and education for women. Some of them joined various kinds of nationalist and socialist movements from the 1920s.

In the twentieth century, leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose lent their support to demands for greater equality and freedom for women. Nationalist leaders promised that there would be full suffrage for all men and women after Independence. However, till then they asked women to concentrate on the anti-British struggles.

Source 2

Once a woman's husband has died...

In her book, *Stripurushtulna,* Tarabai Shinde wrote:

> Isn't a woman's life as dear to her as yours is to you? It's as if women are meant to be made of something different from men altogether, made from dust from earth or rock or rusted iron whereas you and your lives are made from the purest gold. ... You're asking me what I mean. I mean once a woman's husband has died, ... what's in store for her? The barber comes to shave all the curls and hair off her head, just to cool your eyes. ... She is shut out from going to weddings, receptions and other auspicious occasions that married women go to. And why all these restrictions? Because her husband has died. She is unlucky: ill fate is written on her forehead. Her face is not to be seen, it's a bad omen.

Tarabai Shinde, *Stripurushtulna*

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Law against child marriage

With the growth of women's organisations and writings on these issues, the momentum for reform gained strength. People challenged another established custom – that of child marriage. There were a number of Indian legislators in the Central Legislative Assembly who fought to make a law preventing child marriage. In 1929 the Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed without the kind of bitter debates and struggles that earlier laws had seen. According to the Act no man below the age of 18 and woman below the age of 16 could marry. Subsequently these limits were raised to 21 for men and 18 for women.

Fig. 8 *– Bride at the age of eight*

This is a picture of a child bride at the beginning of the twentieth century. Did you know that even today over 20 per cent of girls in India are married below the age of 18?

Caste and Social Reform

Some of the social reformers we have been discussing also criticised caste inequalities. Rammohun Roy translated an old Buddhist text that was critical of caste. The Prarthana Samaj adhered to the tradition of Bhakti that believed in spiritual equality of all castes. In Bombay, the Paramhans Mandali was founded in 1840 to work for the abolition of caste. Many of these reformers and members of reform associations were people of upper castes. Often, in secret meetings, these reformers would violate caste taboos on food and touch, in an effort to get rid of the hold of caste prejudice in their lives.

There were also others who questioned the injustices of the caste social order. During the course of the nineteenth century, Christian missionaries began setting up schools for tribal groups and "lower"-caste children. These children were thus equipped with some resources to make their way into a changing world.

At the same time, the poor began leaving their villages to look for jobs that were opening up in the cities. There was work in the factories that were coming up, and jobs in municipalities. You have read about

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the expansion of cities in Chapter 6. Think of the new demands of labour this created. Drains had to be dug, roads laid, buildings constructed, and cities cleaned. This required coolies, diggers, carriers, bricklayers, sewage cleaners, sweepers, palanquin bearers, rickshaw pullers. Where did this labour come from? The poor from the villages and small towns, many of them from low castes, began moving to the cities where there was a new demand for labour. Some also went to work in plantations in Assam, Mauritius, Trinidad and Indonesia. Work in the new locations was often very hard. But the poor, the people from low castes, saw this as an opportunity to get away from the oppressive hold that upper-caste landowners exercised over their lives and the daily humiliation they suffered.

Fig. 9 *– A coolie ship, nineteenth century*

This coolie ship – named *John Allen* – carried many Indian labourers to Mauritius where they did a variety of forms of hard labour. Most of these labourers were from low castes.

Who could produce shoes?

Leatherworkers have been traditionally held in contempt since they work with dead animals which are seen as dirty and polluting. During the First World War, however, there was a huge demand for shoes for the armies. Caste prejudice against leather work meant that only the traditional leather workers and shoemakers were ready to supply army shoes. So they could ask for high prices and gain impressive profits.

Fig. 10 *– Madigas making shoes, nineteenth-century Andhra Pradesh*

Madigas were an important untouchable caste of present-day Andhra Pradesh. They were experts at cleaning hides, tanning them for use, and sewing sandals.

There were other jobs too. The army, for instance, offered opportunities. A number of Mahar people, who were regarded as untouchable, found jobs in the Mahar Regiment. The father of B.R. Ambedkar, the leader of the Dalit movement, taught at an army school.

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No place inside the classroom

In the Bombay Presidency, as late as 1829, untouchables were not allowed into even government schools. When some of them pressed hard for that right, they were allowed to sit on the veranda outside the classroom and listen to the lessons, without "polluting" the room where upper-caste boys were taught.

Activity

1. Imagine that you are one of the students sitting in the school veranda and listening to the lessons. What kind of questions would be rising in your mind?
2. Some people thought this situation was better than the total lack of education for untouchable people. Would you agree with this view?

Fig. 11 *– Dublas of Gujarat carrying mangoes to the market.*
Dublas laboured for upper-caste landowners, cultivating their fields, and working at a variety of odd jobs at the landlord's house.

Demands for equality and justice

Gradually, by the second half of the nineteenth century, people from within the Non-Brahman castes began organising movements against caste discrimination, and demanded social equality and justice.

The Satnami movement in Central India was founded by Ghasidas who worked among the leatherworkers and organised a movement to improve their social status. In eastern Bengal, Haridas Thakur's Matua sect worked among Chandala cultivators. Haridas questioned Brahmanical texts that supported the caste system. In what is present-day Kerala, a guru from Ezhava caste, Shri Narayana Guru, proclaimed the ideals of unity for his people. He argued against treating people unequally on the basis of caste differences. According to him, all humankind belonged to the same caste. One of his famous statements was: *"oru jati, oru matam, oru daivam manushyanu"* (one caste, one religion, one god for humankind).

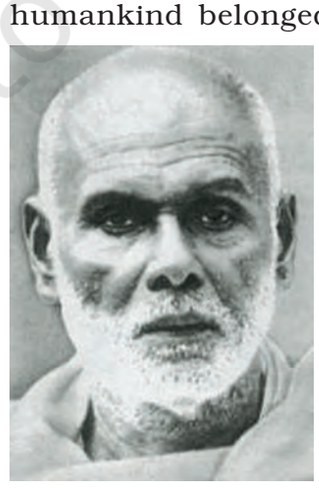

Fig. 12 *– Shri Narayana Guru*

All these sects were founded by leaders who came from Non-Brahman castes and worked amongst them. They tried to change those habits and practices which provoked the contempt of dominant castes. They tried to create a sense of self-esteem among the subordinate castes.

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Gulamgiri

One of the most vocal amongst the "low-caste" leaders was Jyotirao Phule. Born in 1827, he studied in schools set up by Christian missionaries. On growing up he developed his own ideas about the injustices of caste society. He set out to attack the Brahmans' claim that they were superior to others, since they were Aryans. Phule argued that the Aryans were foreigners, who came from outside the subcontinent, and defeated and subjugated the true children of the country – those who had lived here from before the coming of the Aryans. As the Aryans established their dominance, they began looking at the defeated population as inferior, as low-caste people. According to Phule, the "upper" castes had no right to their land and power: in reality, the land belonged to indigenous people, the so-called low castes.

Fig. 13 – *Jyotirao Phule*

Phule claimed that before Aryan rule there existed a golden age when warrior-peasants tilled the land and ruled the Maratha countryside in just and fair ways. He proposed that Shudras (labouring castes) and Ati Shudras (untouchables) should unite to challenge caste discrimination. The Satyashodhak Samaj, an association Phule founded, propagated caste equality.

Source 3

"Me here and you over there"

Phule was also critical of the anti-colonial nationalism that was preached by upper-caste leaders. He wrote:

> The Brahmans have hidden away the sword of their religion which has cut the throat of the peoples' prosperity and now go about posing as great patriots of their country. They ... give this advice to ... our Shudra, Muslim and Parsi youth that unless we put away all quarrelling amongst ourselves about the divisions between high and low in our country and come together, our ... country will never make any progress ... It will be unity to serve their purposes, and then it will be me here and you over there again.
>
> *Jyotiba Phule,* The Cultivator's Whipcord

Activity

Carefully read Source 3. What do you think Jyotirao Phule meant by "me here and you over there again"?

In 1873, Phule wrote a book named *Gulamgiri*, meaning slavery. Some ten years before this, the American Civil War had been fought, leading to the end of slavery in America. Phule dedicated his book to all

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Source 4

"We are also human beings"

In 1927, Ambedkar said:

> We now want to go to the Tank only to prove that like others, we are also human beings … Hindu society should be reorganised on two main principles – equality and absence of casteism.

those Americans who had fought to free slaves, thus establishing a link between the conditions of the "lower" castes in India and the black slaves in America.

As this example shows, Phule extended his criticism of the caste system to argue against all forms of inequality. He was concerned about the plight of "upper"-caste women, the miseries of the labourer, and the humiliation of the "low" castes. This movement for caste reform was continued in the twentieth century by other great dalit leaders like Dr B.R. Ambedkar in western India and E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker in the south.

Who could enter temples?

Ambedkar was born into a Mahar family. As a child he experienced what caste prejudice meant in everyday life. In school he was forced to sit outside the classroom on the ground, and was not allowed to drink water from taps that upper-caste children used. After finishing school, he got a fellowship to go to the US for higher studies. On his return to India in 1919, he wrote extensively about "upper"-caste power in contemporary society.

In 1927, Ambedkar started a temple entry movement, in which his Mahar caste followers participated. Brahman priests were outraged when the Dalits used water from the temple tank.

Ambedkar led three such movements for temple entry between 1927 and 1935. His aim was to make everyone see the power of caste prejudices within society.

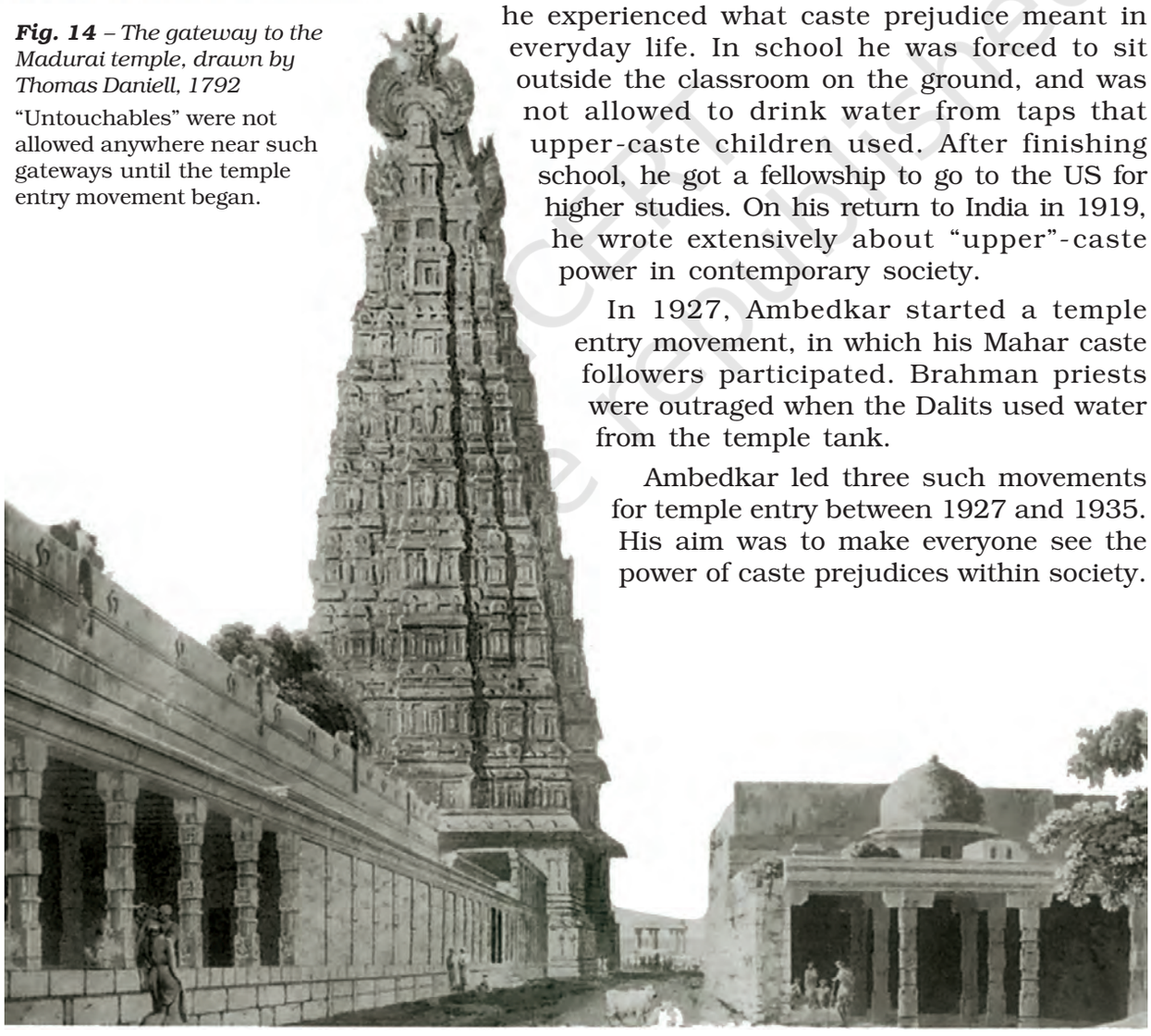

Fig. 14 *– The gateway to the Madurai temple, drawn by Thomas Daniell, 1792*

"Untouchables" were not allowed anywhere near such gateways until the temple entry movement began.

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The Non-Brahman movement

In the early twentieth century, the non-Brahman movement started. The initiative came from those non-Brahman castes that had acquired access to education, wealth and influence. They argued that Brahmans were heirs of Aryan invaders from the north who had conquered southern lands from the original inhabitants of the region – the indigenous Dravidian races. They also challenged Brahmanical claims to power.

E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker, or Periyar, as he was called, came from a middle-class family. Interestingly, he had been an ascetic in his early life and had studied Sanskrit scriptures carefully. Later, he became a member of the Congress, only to leave it in disgust when he found that at a feast organised by nationalists, seating arrangements followed caste distinctions – that is, the lower castes were made to sit at a distance from the upper castes. Convinced that untouchables had to fight for their dignity, Periyar founded the Self Respect Movement. He argued that untouchables were the true upholders of an original Tamil and Dravidian culture which had been subjugated by Brahmans. He felt that all religious authorities saw social divisions and inequality as God-given. Untouchables had to free themselves, therefore, from all religions in order to achieve social equality.

Periyar was an outspoken critic of Hindu scriptures, especially the Codes of Manu, the ancient lawgiver, and the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Ramayana.* He said that these texts had been used to establish the authority of Brahmans over lower castes and the domination of men over women.

These assertions did not go unchallenged. The forceful speeches, writings and movements of lower-caste leaders did lead to rethinking and some self-criticism among upper-caste nationalist leaders. But orthodox Hindu society also reacted by founding Sanatan Dharma Sabhas and the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal in the north, and associations like the Brahman Sabha in Bengal. The object of these associations was to uphold caste distinctions as a cornerstone of Hinduism, and show how this was sanctified by scriptures. Debates and struggles over caste continued beyond the colonial period and are still going on in our own times.

Fig. 15 *– E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker (Periyar)*

Source 5

Periyar on women

Periyar wrote:

> Only with the arrival of words such as Thara Mukurtham our women had become puppets in the hands of their husbands ... we ended up with such fathers who advise their daughters ... that they had been gifted away to their husbands and they belong to their husband's place. This is the ... result of our association with Sanskrit.

Periyar, cited in Periyar Chintahnaikal

Activity

Why does caste remain such a controversial issue today? What do you think was the most important movement against caste in colonial times?

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Fig. 16 *– Keshub Chunder Sen – one of the main leaders of the Brahmo Samaj*

Organising for reform

The Brahmo Samaj

The Brahmo Samaj, formed in 1830, prohibited all forms of idolatry and sacrifice, believed in the Upanishads, and forbade its members from criticising other religious practices. It critically drew upon the ideals of religions – especially of Hinduism and Christianity – looking at their negative and positive dimensions.

Fig. 17
Henry Derozio

Derozio and Young Bengal

Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, a teacher at Hindu College, Calcutta, in the 1820s, promoted radical ideas and encouraged his pupils to question all authority. Referred to as the Young Bengal Movement, his students attacked tradition and custom, demanded education for women and campaigned for the freedom of thought and expression.

Fig. 18 *Swami Vivekananda*

The Ramakrishna Mission and Swami Vivekananda

Named after Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Swami Vivekananda's guru, the Ramakrishna Mission stressed the ideal of salvation through social service and selfless action.

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), whose original name was Narendra Nath Dutta, combined the simple teachings of Sri Ramakrishna with his well founded modern outlook and spread them all over the world. After hearing him in the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893, the New York Herald reported, "We feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation". Indeed, Swami Vivekananda was the first Indian in modern times, who re-established the spiritual pre-eminence of the Vedanta philosophy on a global scale. But his mission was not simply to talk of religion. He was extremely pained at the poverty and the misery of his country men. He firmly believed that any reform could become successful only by uplifting the condition of the masses. Therefore, his clarion call to the people of India was to rise above the narrow confines of their 'religion of the kitchen' and come together in the service of the nation. By sending out this call he made a signal contribution to the nascent nationalism of India. His sense of nationalism was, however, not narrow in its conception. He was convinced that many of the problems facing the mankind could only be overcome if the nations of the world come together on an equal footing. Therefore, his exhortation to the youth was to unite on the basis of a common spiritual heritage. In this exhortation he became truly 'the symbol of a new spirit and a source of strength for the future'.

The Prarthana Samaj

Established in 1867 at Bombay, the Prarthana Samaj sought to remove caste restrictions, abolish child marriage, encourage the education of women, and end the ban on widow remarriage. Its religious meetings drew upon Hindu, Buddhist and Christian texts.

The Veda Samaj

Established in Madras (Chennai) in 1864, the Veda Samaj was inspired by the Brahmo Samaj. It worked to abolish caste distinctions and promote widow remarriage and women's education. Its members believed in one God. They condemned the superstitions and rituals of orthodox Hinduism.

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The Aligarh Movement

The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, founded by Sayyid Ahmed Khan in 1875 at Aligarh, later became the Aligarh Muslim University. The institution offered modern education, including Western science, to Muslims. The Aligarh Movement, as it was known, had an enormous impact in the area of educational reform.

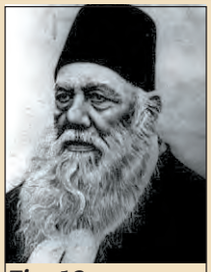

Fig. 19
Sayyid Ahmed Khan

The Singh Sabha Movement

Reform organisations of the Sikhs, the first Singh Sabhas were formed at Amritsar in 1873 and at Lahore in 1879. The Sabhas sought to rid Sikhism of superstitions, caste distinctions and practices seen by them as non-Sikh. They promoted education among the Sikhs, often combining modern instruction with Sikh teachings.

Fig. 20 *– Khalsa College, Amritsar, established in 1892 by the leaders of the Singh Sabha movement*

ELSEWHERE

Black slaves and white planters

You have read about how Jyotirao Phule established a connection in his book *Gulamgiri* between caste oppression and the practice of slavery in America. What was this system of slavery?

From the time that European explorers and traders landed in Africa in the seventeenth century, a trade in slaves began. Black people were captured and brought from Africa to America, sold to white planters, and made to work on cotton and other plantations – most of them in the southern United States. In the plantations they had to work long hours, typically from dawn to dusk, punished for "inefficient work", and whipped and tortured.

Fig. 21 *– Slave Sale, South Carolina, USA, 1856*

Here you see potential buyers examining African slaves at an auction.

Many people, white and black, opposed slavery through organised protest. In doing so, they invoked the spirit of the American Revolution of 1776, exhorting: "See your Declaration, Americans! Do you understand your own language?" In his moving Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln held that those who had fought slavery had done so for the cause of democracy. He urged the people to strive for racial equality so that "government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth".

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Let's imagine

Imagine you are a teacher in the school set up by Rokeya Hossain. There are 20 girls in your charge. Write an account of the discussions that might have taken place on any one day in the school.

Let's recall

1. What social ideas did the following people support.
   Rammohun Roy
   Dayanand Saraswati
   Veerasalingam Pantulu
   Jyotirao Phule
   Pandita Ramabai
   Periyar
   Mumtaz Ali
   Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar
2. State whether true or false:
   (a) When the British captured Bengal they framed many new laws to regulate the rules regarding marriage, adoption, inheritance of property, etc.
   (b) Social reformers had to discard the ancient texts in order to argue for reform in social practices.
   (c) Reformers got full support from all sections of the people of the country.
   (d) The Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed in1829.

Let's discuss

3. How did the knowledge of ancient texts help the reformers promote new laws?
4. What were the different reasons people had for not sending girls to school?
5. Why were Christian missionaries attacked by many people in the country? Would some people have supported them too? If so, for what reasons?
6. In the British period, what new opportunities opened up for people who came from castes that were regarded as "low"?
7. How did Jyotirao the reformers justify their criticism of caste inequality in society?
8. Why did Phule dedicate his book *Gulamgiri* to the American movement to free slaves?
9. What did Ambedkar want to achieve through the temple entry movement?
10. Why were Jyoti rao Phule and Ramaswamy Naicker critical of the national movement? Did their criticism help the national struggle in any way?

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10 The Changing World of Visual Arts

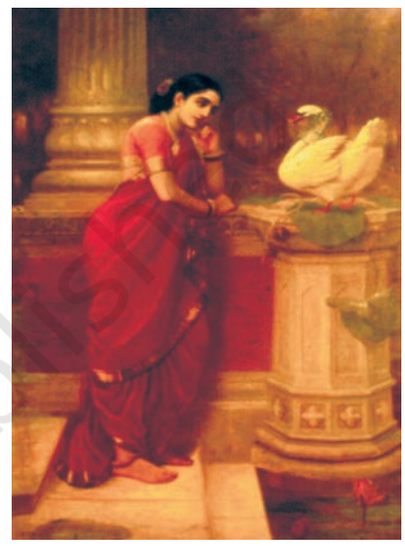

Fig. 1 *– Damayanthi, painted by Raja Ravi Verma*

When you look at a work of art – a painting, sculpture, etc. – it may not be obvious that like most other things, art too is influenced by the world around it. You may not realise that what you see also shapes your own ideas. In this chapter we will be looking at the changes in the world of visual arts during the colonial period, and how these changes are linked to the wider history of colonialism and nationalism.

Colonial rule introduced several new art forms, styles, materials and techniques which were creatively adapted by Indian artists for local patrons and markets, in both elite and popular circles. You will find that many of the visual forms that you take for granted today – say, a grand public building with domes, columns and arches; a scenic landscape, the realistic human image in a portrait, or in popular icons of gods and goddesses; a mechanically printed and mass-produced picture – had their origins in the period we will discuss in this chapter.

To understand this history we will focus primarily on the changes in one sphere – painting and print making.

New Forms of Imperial Art

From the eighteenth century a stream of European artists came to India along with the British traders and rulers. The artists brought with them new styles and new **conventions** of painting. They began producing pictures which became widely popular in Europe and helped shape Western perceptions of India.

Convention – An accepted norm or style

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European artists brought with them the idea of realism. This was a belief that artists had to observe carefully and depict faithfully what the eye saw. What the artist produced was expected to look real and lifelike. European artists also brought with them the technique of oil painting – a technique with which Indian artists were not very familiar. Oil painting enabled artists to produce images that looked real.

Not all European artists in India were inspired by the same things. The subjects they painted were varied, but invariably they seemed to emphasise the superiority of Britain – its culture, its people, its power. Let us look at a few major trends within imperial art.

Engraving – A picture printed onto paper from a piece of wood or metal into which the design or drawing has been cut

Looking for the picturesque

One popular imperial tradition was that of picturesque landscape painting. What was the picturesque? This style of painting depicted India as a quaint land, to be explored by travelling British artists; its landscape was rugged and wild, seemingly untamed by human hands. Thomas Daniell and his nephew William Daniell were the most famous of the artists who painted within this tradition. They came to India in 1785 and stayed for seven years, journeying from Calcutta to northern and southern India. They produced some of the most evocative picturesque landscapes of Britain's newly conquered territories in India. Their large oil paintings on canvas were regularly exhibited to select audiences in Britain, and their albums of **engravings** were eagerly bought up by a British public keen to know about Britain's empire.

Fig. 2 – Ruins on the banks of the Ganges at Ghazipur, painted by Thomas Daniell (oil, 1791)

Fig. 2 is a typical example of a picturesque landscape painted by the Daniells. Notice the ruins of local buildings that were once grand. The buildings are reminders of past glory, remains of an ancient civilisation that was now in ruins. It was as if this decaying civilisation would change and modernise only through British governance.

2018-19

Fig. 3 *– Clive street in Calcutta, drawn by Thomas and William Daniell, 1786*

This image of British rule bringing modern civilisation to India is powerfully emphasised in the numerous pictures of late-eighteenth-century Calcutta drawn by the Daniells. In these drawings you can see the making of a new Calcutta, with wide avenues, majestic European-style buildings, and new modes of transport (Fig. 3). There is life and activity on the roads, there is drama and excitement. Look carefully at Figs. 2 and 3. See how the Daniells contrast the image of traditional India with that of life under British rule. Fig. 2 seeks to represent the traditional life of India as pre-modern, changeless and motionless, typified by faqirs, cows, and boats sailing on the river. Fig. 3 shows the modernising influence of British rule, by emphasising a picture of dramatic change.

Portraits of authority

Another tradition of art that became immensely popular in colonial India was **portrait** painting. The rich and the powerful, both British and Indian, wanted to see themselves on canvas. Unlike the existing Indian tradition of painting portraits in miniature, colonial portraits were life-size images that looked lifelike and real. The size of the paintings itself projected the importance of the patrons who commissioned these portraits. This new style of **portraiture** also served as an ideal means of displaying the lavish lifestyles, wealth and status that the empire generated.

Portrait – A picture of a person in which the face and its expression is prominent

Portraiture – The art of making portraits

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Commission – To formally choose someone to do a special piece of work usually against payment

As portrait painting became popular, many European portrait painters came to India in search of profitable **commissions**. One of the most famous of the visiting European painters was Johann Zoffany. He was born in Germany, migrated to England and came to India in the mid-1780s for five years. Figs. 3 and 4 are two examples of the portraits that Zoffany painted. Notice the way figures of Indian servants and the sprawling lawns of colonial mansions appear in such portraits. See how the Indians are shown as submissive, as inferior, as serving their white masters, while the British are shown as superior and imperious: they flaunt their clothes, stand regally or sit arrogantly, and live a life of luxury. Indians are never at the centre of such paintings; they usually occupy a shadowy background.

Fig. 4 *– Portrait of Governor-General Hastings with his wife in their Belvedere estate, painted by Johann Zoffany (oil, 1784)*

Notice the grand colonial mansion in the background.

Fig. 5 *– The Aurial and Dashwood Families of Calcutta, painted by Johann Zoffany (oil, 1784)*

Thomas Dashwood was married to Charlotte Lousia Aurial. Here you see them entertaining their friends and relatives. Notice the various servants serving tea.

Activity

Look at Figs. 4 and 5.

1. In what ways are the Indians depicted as inferior?
2. Notice the clothes the British are wearing. What do they convey to you?

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Many of the Indian nawabs too began commissioning imposing oil portraits by European painters. You have seen how the British posted Residents in Indian courts and began controlling the affairs of the state, undermining the power of the king. Some of these nawabs reacted against this interference; others accepted the political and cultural superiority of the British. They hoped to socialise with the British, and adopt their styles and tastes. Muhammad Ali Khan was one such nawab. After a war with the British in the 1770s he became a dependant pensioner of the East India Company. But he nonetheless commissioned two visiting European artists, Tilly Kettle and George Willison, to paint his portraits, and gifted these paintings to the King of England and the Directors of the East India Company. The nawab had lost political power, but the portraits allowed him to look at himself as a royal figure. Look at the painting by Willison (Fig. 6). Notice the way the nawab poses, and how he asserts his majesty.

Fig. 6 *– Portrait of Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan of Arcot, painted by George Willison (oil, 1775)*

Painting history

There was a third category of imperial art, called "history painting". This tradition sought to dramatise and recreate various episodes of British imperial history, and enjoyed great prestige and popularity during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

British victories in India served as rich material for history painters in Britain. These painters drew on first-hand sketches and accounts of travellers to depict for the British public a favourable image of British actions in India. These paintings once again celebrated the British: their power, their victories, their supremacy. One of the first of these history paintings was produced

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Fig. 7 *– Lord Clive meeting Mir Jafar, Nawab of Murshidabad, after the Battle of Plassey, painted by Francis Hayman (oil, 1762)*

by Francis Hayman in 1762 and placed on public display in the Vauxhall Gardens in London (Fig. 7). The British had just defeated Sirajuddaulah in the famous Battle of Plassey and installed Mir Jafar as the Nawab of Murshidabad. It was a victory won through conspiracy, and the traitor Mir Jafar was awarded the title of Nawab. In the painting by Hayman this act of aggression and conquest is not depicted. It shows Lord Clive being welcomed by Mir Jafar and his troops after the Battle of Plassey.

Activity

Look carefully at Figs. 7 and 8.

1. How is Clive portrayed in Fig. 7?
2. What are the ways in which the artist has depicted the victory of the British?
3. Notice the position of the British flag (the Union Jack) in Figs. 7 and 8. Why is it placed there?

2018-19

Fig. 8 *– The Storming of Seringapatam, painted by Rober Kerr Porter (panorama in oil, 1800)*

The celebration of British military triumph can be seen in the many paintings of the battle of Seringapatam (now Srirangapatnam). Tipu Sultan of Mysore, as you know, was one of the most powerful enemies of the British. He was finally defeated in 1799 at the famous battle of Seringapatam. Notice the way the battle scene is painted in Fig. 8. The British troops are shown storming the fort from all sides, cutting Tipu's soldiers to pieces, climbing the walls, raising the British flag aloft on the ramparts of Tipu's fort. It is a painting full of action and energy. The painting dramatises the event and glorifies the British triumph.

Imperial history paintings sought to create a public memory of imperial triumphs. Victories had to be remembered, implanted in the memory of people, both in India and Britain. Only then could the British appear invincible and all-powerful.

Fig. 9 *– The discovery of the body of Sultan Tipu by General Sir David Baird, 4 May 1799, painted by David Wilkie (oil, 1839)*

Look at the way General Baird, who led the British army that stormed Tipu's fort, is shown standing triumphantly in the middle. The lantern lights up Baird, making him visible to the spectator. Tipu lies dead (left corner), his body hidden in semi-darkness. His forces are defeated, his royal clothes torn and stripped off. The painting seems to announce: this is the fate of those who dare to oppose the British.

Activity

Look at Fig. 9
David Wilkie was commissioned by David Baird's wife to paint this picture. Why do you think she wanted such a picture painted?

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What Happened to the Court Artists?

What happened to artists who earlier painted miniatures? How did the painters at Indian courts react to the new traditions of imperial art?

We can see different trends in different courts. In Mysore, Tipu Sultan not only fought the British on the battlefield but also resisted the cultural traditions associated with them. He continued to encourage local traditions, and had the walls of his palace at Seringapatam covered with **mural** paintings done by local artists. Fig. 10 shows you one of these. This painting celebrates the famous battle of Polilur of 1780 in which Tipu and Haidar Ali defeated the English troops.

Mural – A wall painting

Fig. 10 *– Detail from a mural painting commissioned by Tipu Sultan at the Dariya Daulat palace at Seringapatam, commemorating Haidar Ali's victory over the English army at the battle of Polilur of 1780*

Activity

Compare Figs. 8 and 10.

1. What similarities and differences do you see in the themes of the paintings?
2. If you were a nawab fighting the British, which battle scenes would you ask the artists to paint – the ones you lost or the ones you won?
3. Do you think that the mural in Fig. 10 is realistic?

In the court of Murshidabad we see a different trend. Here, after defeating Sirajuddaulah the British had successfully installed their puppet Nawabs on the throne, first Mir Zafar and then Mir Qasim. The court

2018-19

at Murshidabad encouraged local miniature artists to absorb the tastes and artistic styles of the British. You can see this in Fig. 11. This is a picture of an Id procession painted by a court painter in the late eighteenth century. Notice how local miniature artists at Murshidabad began adopting elements of European realism. They use **perspective**, which creates a sense of distance between objects that are near and those at a distance. They use light and shade to make the figures look life like and real.

Perspective – The way that objects appear smaller when they are further away and the way parallel lines appear to meet each other at a point in the distance

With the establishment of British power many of the local courts lost their influence and wealth. They could no longer support painters and pay them to paint for the court. How could the artists earn a living? Many of them turned to the British.

Fig. 11
Nawab Mubarakuddaulah of Murshidabad at an Id procession, a miniature copy by a local court painter of an oil painting by the visiting British artist, G. Farrington (1799-1800)

At the same time, British officials, who found the world in the colonies different from that back home, wanted images through which they could understand India, remember their life in India, and depict India to the Western world. So we find local painters producing a vast number of images of local plants and animals, historical buildings and monuments, festivals and processions, trades and crafts, castes and communities. These pictures, eagerly collected by the East India Company officials, came to be known as Company paintings.

Not all artists, however, were court painters. Not all of them painted for the nawabs. Let us see what was happening outside the court.

2018-19

Fig. 12 *– Paired couples representing different religious sects of the Tanjore region, Company painting from Tanjore (1830)*

In Company paintings, such as this one, people are painted against empty spaces. We get no idea of the social surroundings within which they lived or worked. The paintings tried to identify some of the visible features through which people and communities could be recognised with ease by people from foreign lands. Like the different types of Indian plants, birds and animals depicted in Company paintings, the human figures are shown as mere specimens of different trades, castes and sects of a region.

Scroll painting
Painting on a long roll of paper that could be rolled up

The New Popular Indian Art

In the nineteenth century a new world of popular art developed in many of the cities of India.

In Bengal, around the pilgrimage centre of the temple of Kalighat, local village **scroll painters** (called *patuas*) and potters (called *kumors* in eastern India and *kumhars* in north India) began developing a new style of art. They moved from the surrounding villages into Calcutta in the early nineteenth century. This was a time when the city was expanding as a commercial and administrative centre. Colonial offices were coming up, new buildings and roads were being built, markets were being established. The city appeared as a place of opportunity where people could come to make a new living. Village artists too came and settled in the city in the hope of new patrons and new buyers of their art.

Fig. 13 *– Battle between Hanuman and Jambuvan, Kalighat painting, mid-nineteenth century, Calcutta (watercolour on paper)*

Notice how the artists have modernised traditional images. Hanuman is wearing footwear which became popular in the nineteenth century.

Before the nineteenth century, the village *patuas* and *kumors* had worked on mythological themes and produced images of gods and goddesses. On shifting to Kalighat, they continued to paint these religious images. Traditionally, the figures in scroll paintings looked flat, not rounded. Now Kalighat painters began to use shading to give them a rounded form, to make the images look three-dimensional. Yet the images were not realistic and lifelike. In fact, what is specially to be noted in these early Kalighat paintings is the use of a bold, deliberately non-realistic style, where the figures emerge large and powerful, with a minimum of lines, detail and colours.

After the 1840s, we see a new trend within the Kalighat artists. Living in a society where values, tastes, social

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norms and customs were undergoing rapid changes, Kalighat artists responded to the world around, and produced paintings on social and political themes. Many of the late-nineteenth-century Kalighat paintings depict social life under British rule. Often the artists mocked at the changes they saw around, ridiculing the new tastes of those who spoke in English and adopted Western habits, dressed like sahibs, smoked cigarettes, or sat on chairs. They made fun of the westernised *baboo*, criticised the corrupt priests, and warned against women moving out of their homes. They often expressed the anger of common people against the rich, and the fear many people had about dramatic changes of social norms.

Many of these Kalighat pictures were printed in large numbers and sold in the market. Initially, the images were engraved in wooden blocks. The carved block was inked, pressed against paper, and then the woodcut prints that were produced were coloured by hand. In this way, many copies could be produced from the same block. By the late-nineteenth century, mechanical printing presses were set up in different parts of India, which allowed prints to be produced in even larger numbers. These prints could therefore be sold cheap in the market. Even the poor could buy them.

Popular prints were not painted only by the poor village Kalighat *patuas*. Often, middle-class Indian artists set up printing presses and produced prints for a wide market. They were trained in British art schools in new methods of **life study**, oil painting and print making. One of the most successful of these presses that were set up in late-nineteenth-century Calcutta was the Calcutta Art Studio. It produced lifelike images of eminent Bengali personalities as well as mythological pictures. But these mythological pictures were realistic. The figures were located in picturesque landscape settings, with mountains, lakes, rivers and forests. You must have seen many popular calendar pictures of Hindu deities in shops and roadside stalls. The characteristic elements

Fig. 14 *– Englishman on an elephant hunting a tiger, Kalighat painting, mid-nineteenth century, Calcutta (watercolour on paper)*

This painting is a typical example of how *patuas* depicted English life in India. In the colonies Englishmen loved to hunt. They saw hunting as a sport that could demonstrate their courage and manliness.

Life study – Study of human figures from living models who pose for the artists

Fig. 15 – Baboo *on a chair, Kalighat painting, nineteenth century*

In paintings like this you can see the artist's fear that the *baboos* will imitate the West and give up all that is valuable within the local culture. The *baboo* here is shown as a clownish figure, wearing shoes with high heels and sitting on a chair with ridiculously pointed legs.

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Fig. 16 *– Mythological scene from the legend of Nala and Damayanti, produced by Calcutta Art Studio, 1878-1880*

Notice the contrast between this picture and Fig. 15. Which one do you think looks more realistic?

of these pictures came into being in the late nineteenth century.

These types of popular pictures were printed and circulated in other parts of India too. With the spread of nationalism, popular prints of the early twentieth century began carrying nationalist messages. In many of them you see Bharat Mata appearing as a goddess carrying the national flag, or nationalist heroes sacrificing their head to the Mata, and gods and goddesses slaughtering the British.

Fig. 17 *– Kali, produced by Calcutta Art Studio, 1880s*

This is an advertisement of an Indian brand of cigarette that was banned by the British in 1905. You can see the heads of British soldiers amongst the demons killed by the goddess. Religious images were thus used to express nationalist ideas and inspire people against British rule.

Fig. 18 *– Bharat Mata, a popular print*

2018-19

Photographing India

You have seen how European painters created a variety of images of India. Such images were being produced by photographers as well.

By the mid-nineteenth century photographers from Europe began travelling to India, taking pictures, setting up studios, and establishing photographic societies to promote the art of photography. Some of them were portrait painters who began taking photographs of imperial officials, presenting them as figures of authority and power. Others travelled around the country searching for ruined buildings and picturesque landscapes, very much like some of the painters we have discussed. Yet others recorded moments of British military triumph. There were also those who recorded the cultural diversity of India in ways that tried to show how India was a primitive country.

Fig. 19 *– The Horse Regiment led by William Hodson, which played an important role in suppressing the 1857 revolt, photograph by Felice Bearto, 1858*

Notice the way the British officer is shown at the centre, standing in an assertive and authoritative way, while his soldiers gather around him.

Fig. 20 *– Sati Chaura Ghat, Kanpur, photograph by Samuel Bourne, 1865*

Samuel Bourne came to India in the early 1860s and set up one of the most famous photographic studios in Calcutta, known as Bourne and Shephard. Compare this photograph with Fig. 2. Notice how the painter and the photographer are both fascinated by the image of ruins.

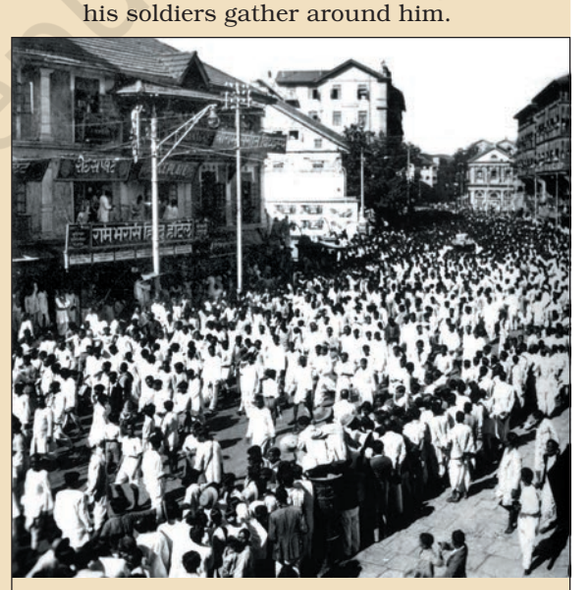

Fig. 21 *– A nationlist demonstration in a Bombay street, photograph by Vikar*

By the late nineteenth century Indian photographers began taking pictures that often offer us a different image of India. They recorded the nationalist marches and meetings, as well as the everyday life of the people.

2018-19

Fig. 22 *– Victoria Terminus, Bombay*
The railway station was built between 1878 and 1887.

New buildings and new styles

With British rule, architectural styles also changed. New styles were introduced as new cities were built, new buildings came up.

Look at Fig. 22. The pointed arches in the buildings and the elongated structures are typical of a style known as Gothic. The new buildings that came up in the mid-nineteenth century in Bombay, were mostly in this style. Now compare this building with that in Fig. 23. The rounded arches and the pillars that you see were typical of another style that the British used in Calcutta. It was borrowed from the Classical style of Greece and Rome. The British wanted their buildings to express their power and glory, and their cultural achievements.

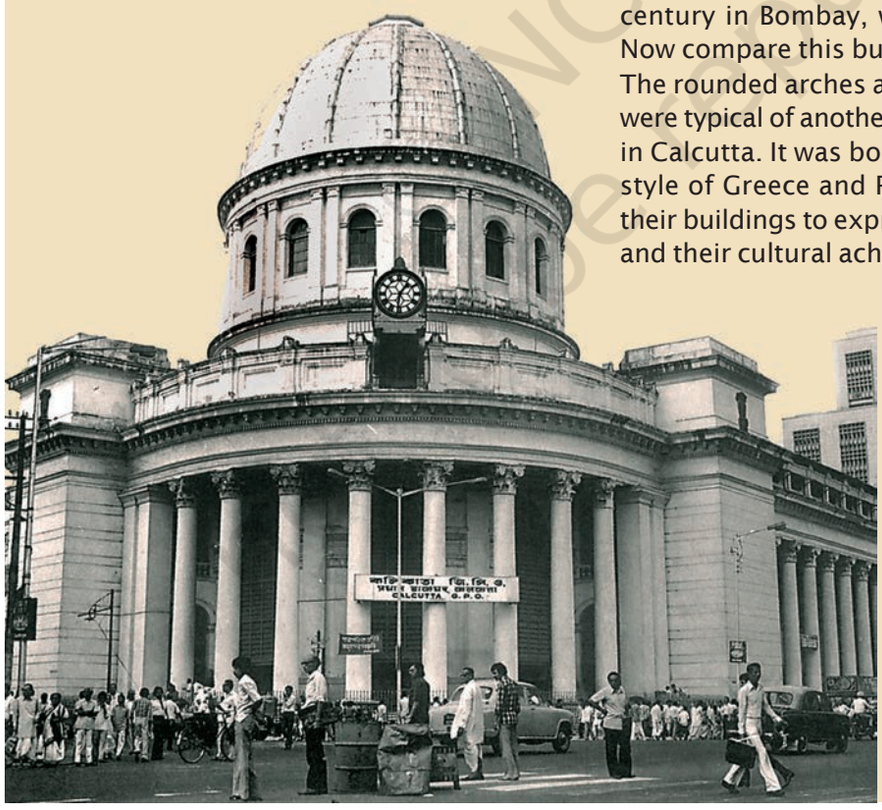

Fig. 23 *– Central Post Office, Calcutta, built in the1860s*

2018-19

The Search for a National Art

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a stronger connection was established between art and nationalism. Many painters now tried to develop a style that could be considered both modern and Indian.

What could be defined as a national style?

The art of Raja Ravi Varma

Raja Ravi Varma was one of the first artists who tried to create a style that was both modern and national. Ravi Varma belonged to the family of the Maharajas of Travancore in Kerala, and was addressed as Raja. He mastered the Western art of oil painting and realistic life study, but painted themes from Indian mythology. He dramatised on canvas, scene after scene from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, drawing on the theatrical performances of mythological stories that he witnessed during his tour of the Bombay Presidency. From the 1880s, Ravi Varma's mythological paintings became the rage among Indian princes and art collectors, who filled their palace galleries with his works.

Responding to the huge popular appeal of such paintings, Ravi Varma decided to set up a picture production team and printing press on the outskirts of Bombay. Here colour prints of his religious paintings were mass produced. Even the poor could now buy these cheap prints.

Fig. 24 *– Krishna Sandhan, by Raja Ravi Varma*

A different vision of national art

In Bengal, a new group of nationalist artists gathered around Abanindranath Tagore (1871-1951), the nephew of Rabindranath Tagore. They rejected the art of Ravi Varma as imitative and westernised, and declared that such a style was unsuitable for depicting the nation's ancient myths and legends. They felt that a genuine Indian style of painting had to draw inspiration from non-Western art traditions, and try to capture the spiritual essence of the East. So they broke away from the convention of oil painting and the realistic style, and turned for inspiration to medieval Indian traditions of miniature painting and the ancient art of mural

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Fig. 25 *– My Mother, painted by Abanindranath Tagore (watercolour)*

Fig. 26 *– The Banished Yaksha of Kalidas's poem* Meghaduta, *painted by Abanindranath Tagore (watercolour, 1904)*

Notice the misty background, the soft colours, and the absence of any hard lines in the painting. These are stylistic elements you will often find in many Japanese water colour landscapes (see Fig. 28).

Fig. 27 *– Jatugriha Daha (The Burning of the House of Lac during Pandava's exile in the forest), painted by Nandalal Bose (watercolour, 1912)*

Nandalal Bose was a student of Abanindranath Tagore. Notice the lyrical flow of lines, the elongated limbs and the postures of the figures.

Abanindranath and Nandalal did not simply follow an earlier style. They modified it and made it their own. In this painting you can see how Nandalal uses shading to give a three-dimensional effect to the figures. You will not find this in Ajanta paintings.

Activity

Look at Fig.25 along with the images of Indian miniatures you saw in the History book of Class VII. Can you identify some of the elements of similarity between them? Look for differences too.

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painting in the Ajanta caves. They were also influenced by the art of Japanese artists who visited India at that time to develop an Asian art movement.

We can see a combination of these different pictorial elements in some of the new "Indian-style" paintings of these years. Look at Fig. 25. In this painting by Abanindranath Tagore we can see the influence of Rajput miniatures. The influence of Japanese paintings can be seen in Fig. 26, and the style of Ajanta is apparent in Fig. 27.

The effort to define what ought to be an authentic Indian style of art continued. After the 1920s, a new generation of artists began to break away from the style popularised by Abanindranath Tagore. Some saw it as sentimental, others thought that spiritualism could not be seen as the central feature of Indian culture. They felt that artists had to explore real life instead of illustrating ancient books, and look for inspiration from living folk art and tribal designs rather than ancient art forms. As the debates continued, new movements of art grew and styles of art changed.

ELSEWHERE

Kakuzo and the movement for an Asian art

In 1904, Okakura Kakuzo published a book in Japan called *The Ideals of the East*. This book is famous for its opening lines: "Asia is one." Okakura argued that Asia had been humiliated by the West and Asian nations had to collectively resist Western domination.

Fig. 28 *Pine trees, painted by Hasegawa Tohaku, sixteenth century*

Okakura researched on Japanese art and emphasised the need to save traditional techniques of traditional Japanese art at a time they were being replaced by Western-style painting. He tried to define what modern art could be and how tradition could be retained and modernised. He was the principal founder of the first Japanese art academy.

Okakura visited Santiniketan and had a powerful influence on Rabindranath Tagore and Abanindranath Tagore.

Let's recall

1. Fill in the blanks:

   (a) The art form which observed carefully and tried to capture exactly what the eye saw is called _____.

   (b) The style of painting which showed Indian landscape as a quaint, unexplored land is called _____.

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Let's imagine

Imagine you are a painter living in the early-twentieth-century India trying to develop a "national" style of painting. What elements discussed in this chapter will form part of that style? Explain your choice.

(c) Paintings which showed the social lives of Europeans in India are called _____.

(d) Paintings which depicted scenes from British imperial history and their victories are called _____.

2. Point out which of the following were brought in with British art:

   (a) oil painting (b) miniatures (c) life-size portrait painting (d) use of perspective (e) mural art

3. Describe in your own words one painting from this chapter which suggests that the British were more powerful than Indians. How does the artist depict this?

4. Why did the scroll painters and potters come to Kalighat? Why did they begin to paint new themes?

5. Why can we think of Raja Ravi Varma's paintings as national?

Let's discuss

6. In what way did the British history paintings in India reflect the attitudes of imperial conquerors?

7. Why do you think some artists wanted to develop a national style of art?

8. Why did some artists produce cheap popular prints? What influence would such prints have had on the minds of people who looked at them?

Let's do

9. Look at any tradition of art in your locality. Find out how it has changed in the last 50 years. You may check who supports the artists, and who looks at their art. Remember to examine the changes in styles and themes.

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11 The Making of the National Movement: 1870s-1947

Fig. 1 *– Police teargas demonstrators during the Quit India movement*

In the previous chapters we have looked at:

- The British conquest of territories, and takeover of kingdoms
- Introduction of new laws and administrative institutions
- Changes in the lives of peasants and tribals
- Educational changes in the nineteenth century
- Debates regarding the condition of women
- Challenges to the caste system
- Social and religious reform
- The revolt of 1857 and its aftermath
- The decline of crafts and growth of industries

On the basis of what you have read about these issues, do you think Indians were discontented with British rule? If so, how were different groups and classes dissatisfied?

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The Emergence of Nationalism

The above-mentioned developments led the people to ask a crucial question: what is this country of India and for whom is it meant? The answer that gradually emerged was: India was the people of India – *all the people* irrespective of class, colour, caste, creed, language, or gender. And the country, its resources and systems, were meant for all of them. With this answer came the awareness that the British were exercising control over the resources of India and the lives of its people, and until this control was ended India could not be for Indians.

This consciousness began to be clearly stated by the political associations formed after 1850, especially those that came into being in the 1870s and 1880s. Most of these were led by English-educated professionals such as lawyers. The more important ones were the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, the Indian Association, the Madras Mahajan Sabha, the Bombay Presidency Association, and of course the Indian National Congress.

Note the name, "Poona Sarvajanik Sabha". The literal meaning of "*sarvajanik*" is "of or for all the people" (*sarva* = all + *janik* = of the people). Though many of these associations functioned in specific parts of the country, their goals were stated as the goals of all the people of India, not those of any one region, community or class. They worked with the idea that the people should be **sovereign** – a modern consciousness and a key feature of nationalism. In other words, they believed that the Indian people should be empowered to take decisions regarding their affairs.

Sovereign – The capacity to act independently without outside interference

The dissatisfaction with British rule intensified in the 1870s and 1880s. The Arms Act was passed in 1878, disallowing Indians from possessing arms. In the same year the Vernacular Press Act was also enacted in an effort to silence those who were critical of the government. The Act allowed the government to confiscate the assets of newspapers including their printing presses if the newspapers published anything that was found "objectionable". In 1883, there was a furore over the attempt by the government to introduce the Ilbert Bill. The bill provided for the trial of British or European persons by Indians, and sought equality between British and Indian judges in the country. But when white opposition forced the government to withdraw the bill, Indians were enraged. The event highlighted the racial attitudes of the British in India.

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The need for an all-India organisation of educated Indians had been felt since 1880, but the Ilbert Bill controversy deepened this desire. The Indian National Congress was established when 72 delegates from all over the country met at Bombay in December 1885. The early leadership – Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Badruddin Tyabji, W.C. Bonnerji, Surendranath Banerji, Romesh Chandra Dutt, S. Subramania Iyer, among others – was largely from Bombay and Calcutta. Naoroji, a businessman and **publicist** settled in London, and for a time member of the British Parliament, guided the younger nationalists. A retired British official, A.O. Hume, also played a part in bringing Indians from the various regions together.

Publicist – Someone who publicises an idea by circulating information, writing reports, speaking at meetings

Source 1

Who did the Congress seek to speak for?

A newspaper, *The Indian Mirror,* wrote in January 1886:

> The First National Congress at Bombay … is the nucleus of a future Parliament for our country, and will lead to the good of inconceivable magnitude for our countrymen.

Badruddin Tyabji addressed the Congress as President in 1887 thus:

> this Congress is composed of the representatives, not of any one class or community of India, but of all the different communities of India.

Fig. 2 – Dadabhai Naoroji

Naoroji's book *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* offered a scathing criticism of the economic impact of British rule.

A nation in the making

It has often been said that the Congress in the first twenty years was "moderate" in its objectives and methods. During this period it demanded a greater voice for Indians in the government and in administration. It wanted the Legislative Councils to be made more representative, given more power, and introduced in provinces where none existed. It demanded that Indians be placed in high positions in the government. For this purpose it called for civil service examinations to be held in India as well, not just in London.

The demand for Indianisation of the administration was part of a movement against racisim, since most important jobs at the time were monopolised by white

Activity

From the beginning the Congress sought to speak for, and in the name of, *all* the Indian *people*. Why did it choose to do so?

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Repeal – To undo law; to officially end the validity of something such as a law

officials, and the British generally assumed that Indians could not be given positions of responsibility. Since British officers were sending a major part of their large salaries home, Indianisation, it was hoped, would also reduce the drain of wealth to England. Other demands included the separation of the judiciary from the executive, the **repeal** of the Arms Act and the freedom of speech and expression.

The early Congress also raised a number of economic issues. It declared that British rule had led to poverty and famines: increase in the land revenue had impoverished peasants and zamindars, and exports of grains to Europe had created food shortages. The Congress demanded reduction of revenue, cut in military expenditure, and more funds for irrigation. It passed many resolutions on the salt tax, treatment of Indian labourers abroad, and the sufferings of forest dwellers – caused by an interfering forest administration. All this shows that despite being a body of the educated elite, the Congress did not talk only on behalf of professional groups, zamindars or industrialists.

The Moderate leaders wanted to develop public awareness about the unjust nature of British rule. They published newspapers, wrote articles, and showed how British rule was leading to the economic ruin of the country. They criticised British rule in their speeches and sent representatives to different parts of the country to mobilise public opinion. They felt that the British had respect for the ideals of freedom and justice, and so they would accept the just demands of Indians. What was necessary, therefore, was to express these demands, and make the government aware of the feelings of Indians.

Source 2

In pursuit of gold

This is what a Moderate leader, Dinshaw Wacha, wrote to Naoroji in 1887:

> Pherozeshah is nowadays too busy with his personal work ... They are already rich enough ... Mr. Telang too remains busy. I wonder how if all remain busy in the pursuit of gold can the progress of the country be advanced?

Activity

What problems regarding the early Congress does this comment highlight?

"Freedom is our birthright"

By the 1890s many Indians began to raise questions about the political style of the Congress. In Bengal, Maharashtra and Punjab, leaders such as Bepin Chandra Pal, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai were beginning to explore more radical objectives and methods. They criticised the Moderates for their "politics of prayers", and emphasised the importance of self-reliance and constructive work. They argued that people must rely on their own strength, not on the "good" intentions of the government; people must fight for *swaraj*. Tilak raised the slogan, "Freedom is my birthright and I shall have it!"

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In 1905 Viceroy Curzon partitioned Bengal. At that time Bengal was the biggest province of British India and included Bihar and parts of Orissa. The British argued for dividing Bengal for reasons of administrative convenience. But what did "administrative convenience" mean? Whose "convenience" did it represent? Clearly, it was closely tied to the interests of British officials and businessmen. Even so, instead of removing the non-Bengali areas from the province, the government separated East Bengal and merged it with Assam. Perhaps the main British motives were to curtail the influence of Bengali politicians and to split the Bengali people.

Fig. 3 *– Balgangadhar Tilak*

Notice the name of the newspaper that lies on the table. *Kesari*, a Marathi newspaper edited by Tilak, became one of the strongest critics of British rule.

The partition of Bengal infuriated people all over India. All sections of the Congress – the Moderates and the Radicals, as they may be called – opposed it. Large public meetings and demonstrations were organised and novel methods of mass protest developed. The struggle that unfolded came to be known as the Swadeshi movement, strongest in Bengal but with echoes elsewhere too – in deltaic Andhra for instance, it was known as the Vandemataram Movement.

Fig. 4 *– Thousands joined the demonstrations during the Swadeshi movement*

2018-19

Fig. 5 *– Lala Lajpat Rai*
A nationalist from Punjab, he was one of the leading members of the Radical group which was critical of the politics of petitions. He was also an active member of the Arya Samaj.

The Swadeshi movement sought to oppose British rule and encourage the ideas of self-help, *swadeshi* enterprise, national education, and use of Indian languages. To fight for *swaraj*, the radicals advocated mass mobilisation and boycott of British institutions and goods. Some individuals also began to suggest that **"revolutionary violence"** would be necessary to overthrow British rule.

The opening decades of the twentieth century were marked by other developments as well. A group of Muslim landlords and nawabs formed the All India Muslim League at Dacca in 1906. The League supported the partition of Bengal. It desired separate electorates for Muslims, a demand conceded by the government in 1909. Some seats in the **councils** were now reserved for Muslims who would be elected by Muslim voters. This tempted politicians to gather a following by distributing favours to their own religious groups.

Meanwhile, the Congress split in 1907. The Moderates were opposed to the use of boycott. They felt that it involved the use of force. After the split the Congress came to be dominated by the Moderates with Tilak's followers functioning from outside. The two groups reunited in December 1915. Next year the Congress and the Muslim League signed the historic Lucknow Pact and decided to work together for representative government in the country.

Revolutionary violence The use of violence to make a radical change within society

Council – An appointed or elected body of people with an administrative, advisory or representative function

The Growth of Mass Nationalism

After 1919 the struggle against British rule gradually became a mass movement, involving peasants, tribals, students and women in large numbers and occasionally factory workers as well. Certain business groups too began to actively support the Congress in the 1920s. Why was this so?

The First World War altered the economic and political situation in India. It led to a huge rise in the defence expenditure of the Government of India. The government in turn increased taxes on individual incomes and business profits. Increased military expenditure and the demands for war supplies led to a sharp rise in prices which created great difficulties for the common people. On the other hand, business groups reaped fabulous profits from the war. As you have seen (Chapter 7), the war created a demand for industrial goods (jute bags, cloth, rails) and caused a decline of imports from other countries into India. So

Activity
Find out which countries fought the First World War.

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Indian industries expanded during the war, and Indian business groups began to demand greater opportunities for development.

The war also lead the British to expand their army. Villages were pressurised to supply soldiers for an alien cause. A large number of soldiers were sent to serve abroad. Many returned after the war with an understanding of the ways in which imperialist powers were exploiting the peoples of Asia and Africa and with a desire to oppose colonial rule in India.

Furthermore, in 1917 there was a revolution in Russia. News about peasants' and workers' struggles and ideas of socialism circulated widely, inspiring Indian nationalists.

The advent of Mahatma Gandhi

It is in these circumstances that Mahatma Gandhi emerged as a mass leader. As you may know, Gandhiji, aged 46, arrived in India in 1915 from South Africa. Having led Indians in that country in non-violent marches against racist restrictions, he was already a respected leader, known internationally. His South African campaigns had brought him in contact with various types of Indians: Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians; Gujaratis, Tamils and north Indians; and upper-class merchants, lawyers and workers.

Mahatma Gandhi spent his first year in India travelling throughout the country, understanding the people, their needs and the overall situation. His earliest

Fig. 6 *– Founders of the Natal Congress, Durban, South Africa, 1895*

In 1895, along with other Indians, Mahatma Gandhi established the Natal Congress to fight against racial discrimination. Can you identify Gandhiji? He is standing at the centre in the row at the back, wearing a coat and tie.

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interventions were in local movements in Champaran, Kheda and Ahmedabad where he came into contact with Rajendra Prasad and Vallabhbhai Patel. In Ahmedabad he led a successful millworkers' strike in 1918.

Let us now focus in some detail on the movements organised between 1919 and 1922.

The Rowlatt Satyagraha

In 1919 Gandhiji gave a call for a *satyagraha* against the Rowlatt Act that the British had just passed. The Act curbed fundamental rights such as the freedom of expression and strengthened police powers. Mahatma Gandhi, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and others felt that the government had no right to restrict people's basic freedoms. They criticised the Act as "devilish" and tyrannical. Gandhiji asked the Indian people to observe 6 April 1919 as a day of non-violent opposition to this Act, as a day of "humiliation and prayer" and *hartal* (strike). *Satyagraha Sabhas* were set up to launch the movement.

Activity

Find out about the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. What is Jallianwala Bagh? What atrocities were committed there? How were they committed?

Fig. 7 *– The walled compound in which General Dyer opened fire on a gathering of people*

The people are pointing to the bullet marks on the wall.

The Rowlatt Satyagraha turned out to be the first all-India struggle against the British government although it was largely restricted to cities. In April 1919 there were a number of demonstrations and *hartals* in the country and the government used brutal measures to suppress them. The Jallianwala Bagh atrocities, inflicted by General Dyer in Amritsar on Baisakhi day (13 April), were a part of this repression. On learning about the massacre, Rabindranath Tagore expressed the pain and anger of the country by renouncing his **knighthood**.

Knighthood – An honour granted by the British Crown for exceptional personal achievement or public service

2018-19

During the Rowlatt Satyagraha the participants tried to ensure that Hindus and Muslims were united in the fight against British rule. This was also the call of Mahatma Gandhi who always saw India as a land of *all* the people who lived in the country – Hindus, Muslims and those of other religions. He was keen that Hindus and Muslims support each other in any just cause.

Khilafat agitation and the Non-Cooperation Movement

The Khilafat issue was one such cause. In 1920 the British imposed a harsh treaty on the Turkish Sultan or Khalifa. People were furious about this as they had been about the Jallianwala massacre. Also, Indian Muslims were keen that the Khalifa be allowed to retain control over Muslim sacred places in the erstwhile Ottoman Empire. The leaders of the Khilafat agitation, Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, now wished to initiate a full-fledged Non-Cooperation Movement. Gandhiji supported their call and urged the Congress to campaign against "Punjab wrongs" (Jallianwala massacre), the Khilafat wrong and demand *swaraj*.

The Non-Cooperation Movement gained momentum through 1921-22. Thousands of students left government-controlled schools and colleges. Many lawyers such as Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das, C. Rajagopalachari and Asaf Ali gave up their practices. British titles were surrendered and legislatures boycotted. People lit public bonfires of foreign cloth. The imports of foreign cloth fell drastically between 1920 and 1922. But all this was merely the tip of the iceberg. Large parts of the country were on the brink of a formidable revolt.

People's initiatives

In many cases people resisted British rule non-violently. In others, different classes and groups, interpreting Gandhiji's call in their own manner, protested in ways that were not in accordance with his ideas. In either case, people linked their movements to local grievances. Let us look at a few examples.

In Kheda, Gujarat, Patidar peasants organised non-violent campaigns against the high land revenue demand of the British. In coastal Andhra and interior Tamil Nadu, liquor shops were **picketed**. In the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh, tribals and poor peasants staged a number of "forest *satyagrahas*", sometimes sending their cattle into forests without paying grazing fee. They were protesting because the colonial state

Source 3

The eternal law of suffering

What did Mahatma Gandhi mean by *ahimsa* (non-violence)? How could *ahimsa* become the basis of struggle? This is what Gandhiji said:

> Non-violence comes to us through doing good continually without the slightest expectation of return. ... That is the indispensable lesson in non-violence ... In South Africa ... I succeeded in learning the eternal law of suffering as the only remedy for undoing wrong and injustice. It means positively the law of non-violence. You have to be prepared to suffer cheerfully at the hands of all and sundry and you will wish ill to no one, not even to those who may have wronged you.
>
> *Mahatma Gandhi, 12 March 1938*

Picket – People protesting outside a building or shop to prevent others from entering

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Mahants – Religious functionaries of Sikh gurdwaras

Illegal eviction – Forcible and unlawful throwing out of tenants from the land they rent

had restricted their use of forest resources in various ways. They believed that Gandhiji would get their taxes reduced and have the forest regulations abolished. In many forest villages, peasants proclaimed *swaraj* and believed that "Gandhi Raj" was about to be established.

In Sind (now in Pakistan), Muslim traders and peasants were very enthusiastic about the Khilafat call. In Bengal too, the Khilafat-Non-Cooperation alliance gave enormous communal unity and strength to the national movement.

In Punjab, the Akali agitation of the Sikhs sought to remove corrupt ***mahants*** – supported by the British – from their gurdwaras. This movement got closely identified with the Non-Cooperation Movement. In Assam, tea garden labourers, shouting *"Gandhi Maharaj ki Jai"*, demanded a big increase in their wages. They left the British-owned plantations amidst declarations that they were following Gandhiji's wish. Interestingly, in the Assamese Vaishnava songs of the period the reference to Krishna was substituted by "Gandhi Raja".

The people's Mahatma

We can see from the above that sometimes people thought of Gandhiji as a kind of messiah, as someone who could help them overcome their misery and poverty. Gandhiji wished to build class unity, not class conflict, yet peasants could imagine that he would help them in their fight against zamindars, and agricultural labourers believed he would provide them land. At times, ordinary people credited Gandhiji with their *own* achievements. For instance, at the end of a powerful movement, peasants of Pratapgarh in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) managed to stop **illegal eviction** of tenants; but they felt it was Gandhiji who had won this demand for them. At other times, using Gandhiji's name, tribals and peasants undertook actions that did not conform to Gandhian ideals.

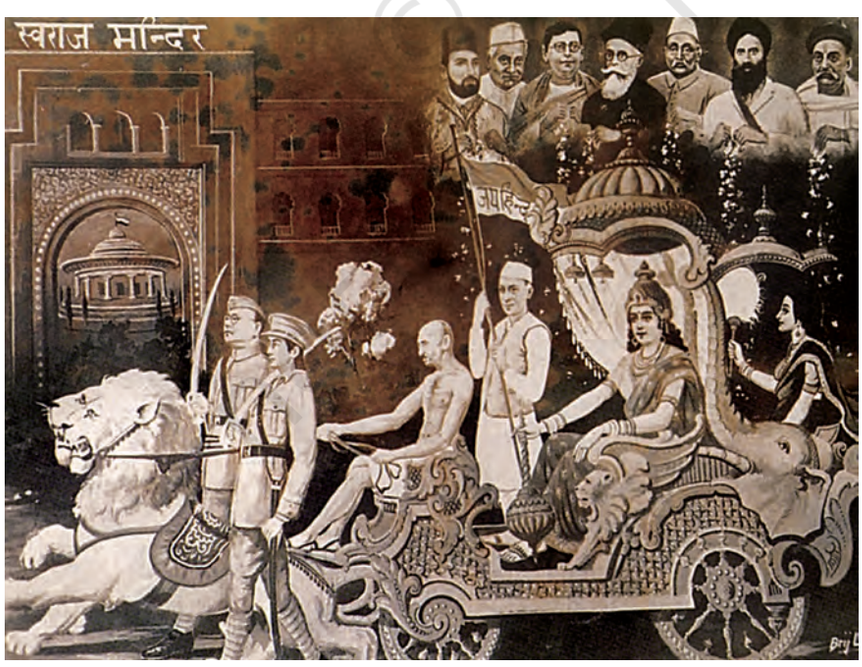

Fig. 8 – *A popular representation of Mahatma Gandhi*

In popular images too Mahatma Gandhi is often shown as a divine being occupying a place within the pantheon of Indian gods. In this image he is driving Krishna's chariot, guiding other nationalist leaders in the battle against the British.

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Source 4

"It was he who got *bedakhli* stopped in Pratapgarh"

The following is an extract from a CID report on the kisan movement in Allahabad district, January 1921:

> The currency which Mr. Gandhi's name has acquired even in the remotest villages is astonishing. No one seems to know quite who or what he is, but it is an accepted fact that what he says is so, and what he orders must be done. He is a Mahatma or *sadhu*, a Pundit, a Brahmin who lives at Allahabad, even a *deota* … the real power of his name is to be traced back to the idea that it was he who got *bedakhli* [illegal eviction] stopped in Pratapgarh … as a general rule, Gandhi is not thought of as being antagonistic to Government, but only to the *zamindars* … We are for Gandhiji and the Sarkar.

Activity

Read Source 4. According to this report, how did people view Mahatma Gandhi? Why do you think they felt that he was opposed to zamindars but not to the government? Why do you think they were in favour of Gandhiji?

The happenings of 1922-1929

Mahatma Gandhi, as you know, was against violent movements. He abruptly called off the Non-Cooperation Movement when in February 1922 a crowd of peasants set fire to a police station in Chauri Chaura. Twenty-two policemen were killed on that day. The peasants were provoked because the police had fired on their peaceful demonstration.

Once the Non-Cooperation movement was over, Gandhiji's followers stressed that the Congress must undertake constructive work in the rural areas. Other leaders such as Chitta Ranjan Das and Motilal Nehru argued that the party should fight elections to the councils and enter them in order to influence government policies. Through sincere social work in villages in the mid-1920s, the Gandhians were able to extend their support base. This proved to be very useful in launching the Civil Disobedience movement in 1930.

Two important developments of the mid-1920s were the formation of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu organisation, and the Communist Party of India. These parties have held very different ideas about the kind of country India should be. Find out about their ideas with the help of your teacher. The revolutionary nationalist Bhagat Singh too was active in this period.

Fig. 9 *– Chitta Ranjan Das*

A major figure in the freedom movement, Das was a lawyer from East Bengal. He was especially active in the Non-Cooperation Movement.

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Fig. 10 *– Demonstrators oppose the Simon Commission*

In 1927 the British government in England decided to send a commission headed by Lord Simon to decide India's political future. The Commission had no Indian representative. The decison created an outrage in India. All political groups decided to boycott the Commission. When the Commission arrived it was met with demonstrations with banners saying "Simon Go Back".

The decade closed with the Congress resolving to fight for *Purna Swaraj* (complete independence) in 1929 under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru. Consequently, "Independence Day" was observed on 26 January 1930 all over the country.

"It takes a loud voice to make the deaf hear. *Inquilab Zindabad !*"

Fig. 11 *– Bhagat Singh*

Revolutionary nationalists such as Bhagat Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Sukhdev and others wanted to fight against the colonial rule and the rich exploiting classes through a revolution of workers and peasants. For this purpose they founded the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) in 1928 at Ferozeshah Kotla in Delhi. On 17 December, 1928, Bhagat Singh, Azad and Rajguru assassinated Saunders, a police officer who was involved in the lathi-charge that had caused the death of Lala Lajpat Rai.

On 8 April, 1929, Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt threw a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly. The aim, as their leaflet explained, was not to kill but "to make the deaf hear", and to remind the foreign government of its callous exploitation.

Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were executed on March 23, 1931. Bhagat Singh's age at that time was only 23.

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The March to Dandi

Purna Swaraj would never come on its own. It had to be fought for. In 1930, Gandhiji declared that he would lead a march to break the salt law. According to this law, the state had a monopoly on the manufacture and sale of salt. Mahatma Gandhi along with other nationalists reasoned that it was sinful to tax salt since it is such an essential item of our food. The Salt March related the general desire of freedom to a specific grievance shared by everybody, and thus did not divide the rich and the poor.

Gandhiji and his followers marched for over 240 miles from Sabarmati to the coastal town of Dandi where they broke the government law by gathering natural salt found on the seashore, and boiling sea water to produce salt.

Fig. 12 *– Mahatma Gandhi breaking the salt law by picking up a lump of natural salt, Dandi, 6 April 1930*

Women in the freedom struggle: Ambabai from Karnataka

Women from diverse backgrounds participated in the national movement. Young and old, single and married, they came from rural and urban areas, from both conservative and liberal homes. Their involvement was significant for the freedom struggle, for the women's movement, and for themselves personally.

Both British officials and Indian nationalists felt that women's participation gave the national struggle an immense force. Participation in the freedom movement brought women out of their homes. It gave them a place in the professions, in the governance of India, and it could pave the way for equality with men.

What such participation meant for women is best recounted by them. Ambabai of Karnataka had been married at age twelve. Widowed at sixteen, she picketed foreign cloth and liquor shops in Udipi. She was arrested, served a sentence and was rearrested. Between prison terms she made speeches, taught spinning, and organised *prabhat pheris*. Ambabai regarded these as the happiest days of her life because they gave it a new purpose and commitment.

Women, however, had to fight for their right to participate in the movement. During the Salt Satyagraha, for instance, even Mahatma Gandhi was initially opposed to women's participation. Sarojini Naidu had to persuade him to allow women to join the movement.

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Fig. 13 *– Sarojini Naidu with Mahatma Gandhi, Paris, 1931*

Active in the national movement since the early 1920s, Naidu was a significant leader of the Dandi March. She was the first Indian woman to become President of the Indian National Congress (1925).

Peasants, tribals and women participated in large numbers. A business federation published a pamphlet on the salt issue. The government tried to crush the movement through brutal action against peaceful *satyagrahis*. Thousands were sent to jail.

The combined struggles of the Indian people bore fruit when the Government of India Act of 1935 prescribed **provincial autonomy** and the government announced elections to the provincial legislatures in 1937. The Congress formed governments in 7 out of 11 provinces.

In September 1939, after two years of Congress rule in the provinces, the Second World War broke out. Critical of Hitler, Congress leaders were ready to support the British war effort. But in return they wanted that India be granted independence after the war. The British refused to concede the demand. The Congress ministries resigned in protest.

Provincial autonomy
Capacity of the provinces to make relatively independent decisions while remaining within a federation

Source 5

Veer Lakhan Nayak was hanged

Baji Mohammed, President of the Nabrangpur Congress, Orissa in the 1930s, reports:

> On August 25, 1942 ... nineteen people died on the spot in police firing at Paparandi in Nabarangpur. Many died thereafter from their wounds. Over 300 were injured. More than a thousand were jailed in Koraput district. Several were shot or executed. Veer Lakhan Nayak (a legendary tribal leader who defied the British) was hanged.

Nayak, Baji tells us, was not worried about being executed, only sad that he would not live to see freedom's dawn.

Baji Mohammad mobilised 20,000 people to join the national struggle. He offered *satyagraha* many times over. He participated in protests against the Second World War and in the Quit India movement, and served long jail terms.

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Fig. 14 *– Quit India movement, August 1942*

Demonstrators clashed with the police everywhere. Many thousands were arrested, over a thousand killed, many more were injured.

Quit India and Later

Mahatma Gandhi decided to initiate a new phase of movement against the British in the middle of the Second World War. The British must quit India immediately, he told them. To the people he said, "do or die" in your effort to fight the British – but you must fight non-violently. Gandhiji and other leaders were jailed at once but the movement spread. It specially attracted peasants and the youth who gave up their studies to join it. Communications and symbols of state authority were attacked all over the country. In many areas the people set up their own governments.

The first response of the British was severe repression. By the end of 1943 over 90,000 people were arrested, and around 1,000 killed in police firing. In many areas orders were given to machine-gun crowds from airplanes. The rebellion, however, ultimately brought the Raj to its knees.

Towards Independence and Partition

Meanwhile, in 1940 the Muslim League had moved a resolution demanding "Independent States" for Muslims in the north-western and eastern areas of the country. The resolution did not mention partition or Pakistan. Why did the League ask for an autonomous arrangement for the Muslims of the subcontinent?

From the late 1930s, the League began viewing the Muslims as a separate "nation" from the Hindus. In developing this notion it may have been influenced by the history of tension between some Hindu and Muslim groups in the 1920s and 1930s. More

Bose and the INA

Fig. 15 *– Subhas Chandra Bose*

A radical nationalist, with socialist leanings, Bose did not share Gandhiji's ideal of *ahimsa,* though he respected him as the "Father of the Nation". In January 1941, he secretly left his Calcutta home, went to Singapore, via Germany, and raised the Azad Hind Fauj or the Indian National Army (INA). To free India from British control, in 1944, the INA tried to enter India through Imphal and Kohima but the campaign failed. The INA members were imprisoned and tried. People across the country, from all walks of life, participated in the movement against the INA trials.

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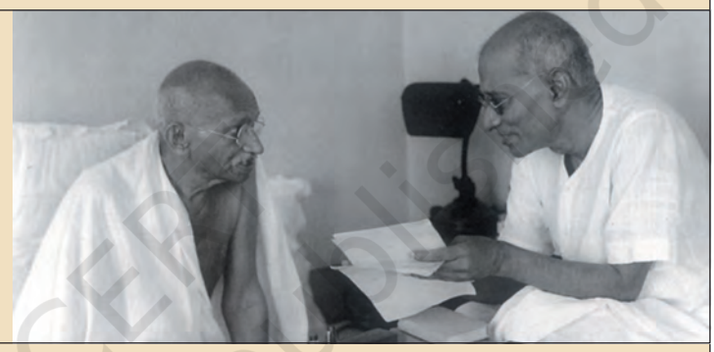
Fig. 16 *– Maulana Azad with other members at the Congress Working Committee, Sevagram, 1942*

Azad was born in Mecca to a Bengali father and an Arab mother. Well-versed in many languages, Azad was a scholar of Islam and an exponent of the notion of *wahadat-i-deen*, the essential oneness of all religions. An active participant in Gandhian movements and a staunch advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity, he was opposed to Jinnah's two-nation theory.

Fig. 17 *– Chakravarti Rajagopalachari speaking to Gandhiji before the Gandhi-Jinnah talks, 1944*

A veteran nationalist and leader of the Salt Satyagraha in the south, C. Rajagopalachari, popularly known as Rajaji, served as member of the Interim Government of 1946 and as free India's first Indian Governor-General.



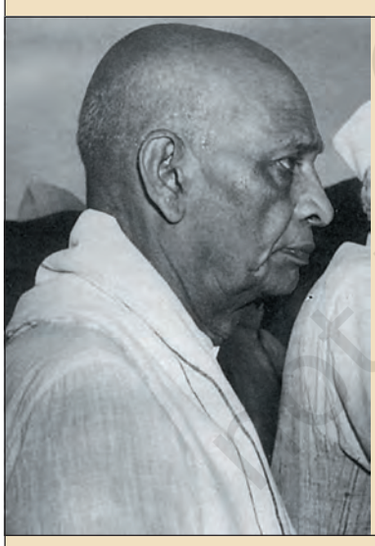


Fig. 18 *– Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel played an important role in the negotiations for independence during 1945-47*

Patel hailed from an impoverished peasant-proprietor family of Nadiad, Gujarat. A foremost organiser of the freedom movement from 1918 onwards, Patel served as President of the Congress in 1931.

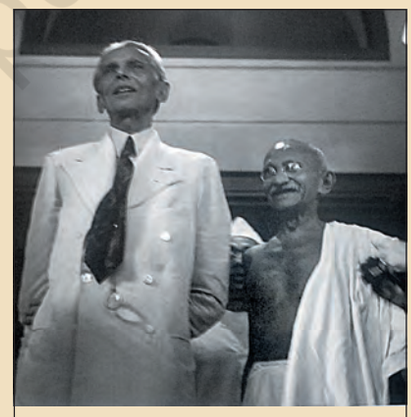


Fig. 19 *– Mohammad Ali Jinnah with Mahatma Gandhi, Bombay, September 1944*

An ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity until 1920, Jinnah played an important role in the making of the Lucknow Pact. He reorganised the Muslim League after 1934, and became the major spokesperson for the demand for Pakistan.

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Fig. 20 *– Jawaharlal Nehru listens to Mahatma Gandhi before the Bombay session of the Congress, July 1946*

Gandhiji's disciple, a Congress Socialist, and an internationalist, Nehru was a leading architect of the national movement and of free India's economy and polity.

"General" constituencies
Election districts with no reservations for any religious or other community

importantly, the provincial elections of 1937 seemed to have convinced the League that Muslims were a minority, and they would always have to play second fiddle in any democratic structure. It feared that Muslims may even go unrepresented. The Congress's rejection of the League's desire to form a joint Congress-League government in the United Provinces in 1937 also annoyed the League.

The Congress's failure to mobilise the Muslim masses in the 1930s allowed the League to widen its social support. It sought to enlarge its support in the early 1940s when most Congress leaders were in jail. At the end of the war in 1945, the British opened negotiations between the Congress, the League and themselves for the independence of India. The talks failed because the League saw itself as the sole spokesperson of India's Muslims. The Congress could not accept this claim since a large number of Muslims still supported it.

Elections to the provinces were again held in 1946. The Congress did well in the **"General" constituencies** but the League's success in the seats reserved for Muslims was spectacular. It persisted with its demand for "Pakistan". In March 1946 the British cabinet sent a three-member mission to Delhi to examine this demand and to suggest a suitable political framework for a free India. This mission suggested that India should remain united and constitute itself as a loose confederation with some autonomy for Muslim-majority areas. But it could not get the Congress and the Muslim League to agree to specific details of the proposal. Partition now became more or less inevitable.

Fig. 21 *– Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Pashtun leader from the North West Frontier Province, with his colleagues at a peace march through Bihar, March 1947*

Also known as Badshah Khan, he was the founder of the Khudai Khidmatgars, a powerful non-violent movement among the Pathans of his province. Badshah Khan was strongly opposed to the Partition of India. He criticised his Congress colleagues for agreeing to the 1947 division.

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Fig. 22 *– Refugees from riot-torn Punjab gather in New Delhi, in search of shelter and food*

After the failure of the Cabinet Mission, the Muslim League decided on mass agitation for winning its Pakistan demand. It announced 16 August 1946 as "Direct Action Day". On this day riots broke out in Calcutta, lasting several days and resulting in the death of thousands of people. By March 1947 violence spread to different parts of northern India.

Many hundred thousand people were killed and numerous women had to face untold brutalities during the Partition. Millions of people were forced to flee their homes. Torn asunder from their homelands, they were reduced to being refugees in alien lands. Partition also meant that India changed, many of its cities changed, and a new country – Pakistan – was born. So, the joy of our country's independence from British rule came mixed with the pain and violence of Partition.

ELSEWHERE

Nationalism in Africa: The case of Ghana

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed the rise of nationalism in many Afro-Asian countries. In many of these, nationalism arose as a part of the anti-colonial struggles for independence.

Colonial rule in Africa was dictatorial. Only the "Chiefs" were allowed to rule on behalf of the foreign powers. Alternately, laws affecting Africans were created in all-white legislatures. Africans had no decision-making powers or representation, not until after the Second World War at least. The forcible takeover of land from local owners or users, increased taxation and poor working conditions led to many African protests.

In 1957, Ghana, known until then as the Gold Coast, became the first sub-Saharan African country to gain independence. The freedom movement was led by Kwame Nkrumah's Convention People's Party through strikes, boycotts and mass rallies. In 1951 this party won a huge electoral victory. It opposed the existing system in which the British rulers had allowed the Chiefs to nominate representatives to the legislature. It pressed the British to grant a legislature that contained no nominated or special members and won this demand in 1954. Elections to the new Legislative Council were held in 1956. The Convention People's Party won these, thus paving the way for the proclamation of an independent nation under the name "Ghana".

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Let's recall

1. Why were people dissatisfied with British rule in the 1870s and 1880s?
2. Who did the Indian National Congress wish to speak for?
3. What economic impact did the First World War have on India?
4. What did the Muslim League resolution of 1940 ask for?

Let's discuss

5. Who were the Moderates? How did they propose to struggle against British rule?
6. How was the politics of the Radicals within the Congress different from that of the Moderates?
7. Discuss the various forms that the Non-Cooperation Movement took in different parts of India. How did the people understand Gandhiji?
8. Why did Gandhiji choose to break the salt law?
9. Discuss those developments of the 1937-47 period that led to the creation of Pakistan.

Let's do

10. Find out how the national movement was organised in your city, district, area or state. Who participated in it and who led it? What did the movement in your area achieve?
11. Find out more about the life and work of any two participants or leaders of the national movement and write a short essay about them. You may choose a person not mentioned in this chapter.

Let's imagine

Imagine that you are involved in the Indian national movement. Based on your reading of this chapter, briefly discuss your preferred methods of struggle and your vision of a free India.

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12 India After Independence

A New and Divided Nation

When India became independent in August 1947, it faced a series of very great challenges. As a result of Partition, 8 million refugees had come into the country from what was now Pakistan. These people had to be found homes and jobs. Then there was the problem of the princely states, almost 500 of them, each ruled by a maharaja or a nawab, each of whom had to be persuaded to join the new nation. The problems of the refugees and of the princely states had to be addressed immediately. In the longer term, the new nation had to adopt a political system that would best serve the hopes and expectations of its population.

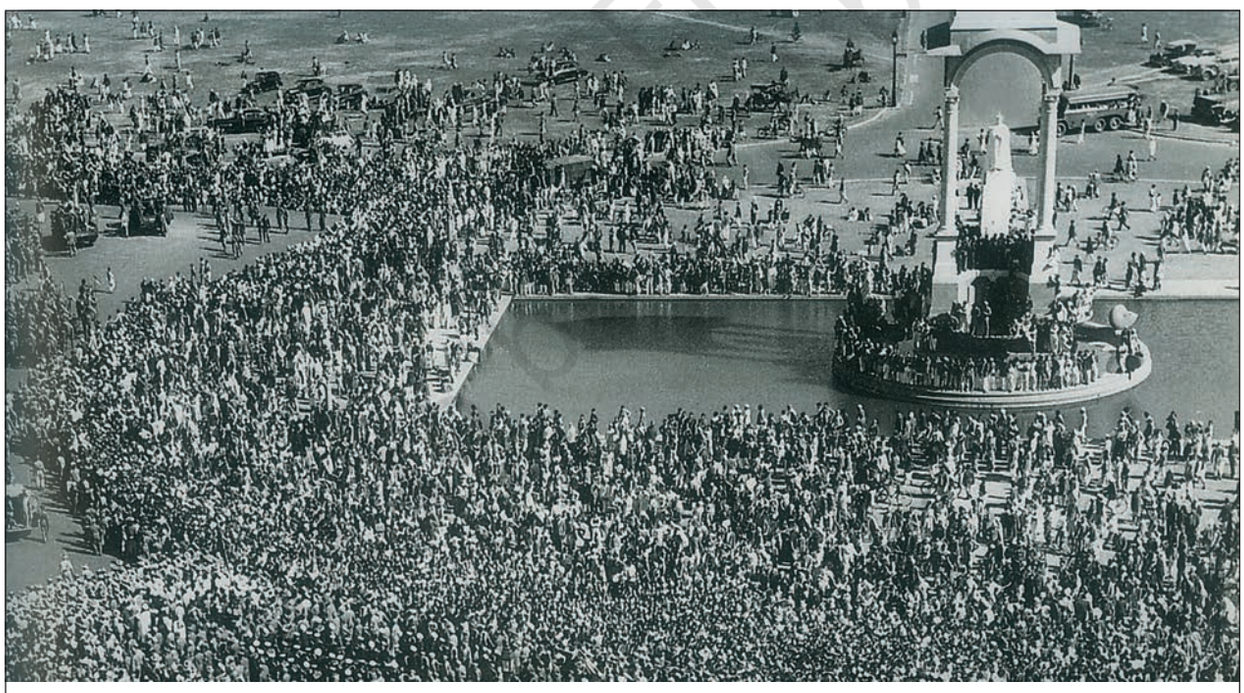

Fig. 1 – *Mahatma Gandhi's ashes being immersed in Allahabad, February 1948*

Less than six months after independence the nation was in mourning. On 30 January 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by a fanatic, Nathuram Godse, because he disagreed with Gandhiji's conviction that Hindus and Muslims should live together in harmony. That evening, a stunned nation heard Jawaharlal Nehru's moving statement over All India Radio: "Friends and comrades, the light has gone out of our lives and there is darkness everywhere … our beloved leader … the Father of the Nation is no more."

India's population in 1947 was large, almost 345 million. It was also divided. There were divisions between high castes and low castes, between the majority Hindu community and Indians who practised other faiths. The citizens of this vast land spoke many different languages, wore many different kinds of dress, ate different kinds of food and practised different professions. How could they be made to live together in one nation-state?

To the problem of unity was added the problem of development. At Independence, the vast majority of Indians lived in the villages. Farmers and peasants depended on the monsoon for their survival. So did the non-farm sector of the rural economy, for if the crops failed, barbers, carpenters, weavers and other service groups would not get paid for their services either. In the cities, factory workers lived in crowded slums with little access to education or health care. Clearly, the new nation had to lift its masses out of poverty by increasing the productivity of agriculture and by promoting new, job-creating industries.

Unity and development had to go hand in hand. If the divisions between different sections of India were not healed, they could result in violent and costly conflicts – high castes fighting with low castes, Hindus with Muslims and so on. At the same time, if the fruits of economic development did not reach the broad masses of the population, it could create fresh divisions – for example, between the rich and the poor, between cities and the countryside, between regions of India that were prosperous and regions that lagged behind.

Activity

Imagine that you are a British administrator leaving India in 1947. You are writing a letter home where you discuss what is likely to happen to India without the British. What would be your views about the future of India?

A Constitution is Written

Between December 1946 and November 1949, some three hundred Indians had a series of meetings on the country's political future. The meetings of this "Constituent Assembly" were held in New Delhi, but the participants came from all over India, and from different political parties. These discussions resulted in the framing of the Indian Constitution, which came into effect on 26 January 1950.

One feature of the Constitution was its adoption of universal adult **franchise**. All Indians above the age of 21 would be allowed to vote in state and national elections. This was a revolutionary step – for never before had Indians been allowed to choose their own leaders. In other countries, such as the United Kingdom and

Franchise – The right to vote

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Fig. 2 *– Jawaharlal Nehru introducing the resolution that outlined the objectives of the Constitution*

the United States, this right had been granted in stages. First only men of property had the vote. Then men who were educated were also added on. Working-class men got the vote only after a long struggle. Finally, after a bitter struggle of their own, American and British women were granted the vote. On the other hand, soon after Independence, India chose to grant this right to all its citizens regardless of gender, class or education.

A second feature of the Constitution was that it guaranteed equality before the law to all citizens, regardless of their caste or religious affiliation. There were some Indians who wished that the political system of the new nation be based on Hindu ideals, and that India itself be run as a Hindu state. They pointed to the example of Pakistan, a country created explicitly to protect and further the interests of a particular religious community – the Muslims. However, the Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, was of the opinion that India could not and must not become a "Hindu Pakistan".

Besides Muslims, India also had large populations of Sikhs and Christians, as well as many Parsis and Jains. Under the new Constitution, they would have the same rights as Hindus – the same opportunities when it came to seeking jobs in government or the private sector, the same rights before the law.

A third feature of the Constitution was that it offered special privileges for the poorest and most disadvantaged

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Indians. The practice of untouchability, described as a "slur and a blot" on the "fair name of India", was abolished. Hindu temples, previously open to only the higher castes, were thrown open to all, including the former untouchables. After a long debate, the Constituent Assembly also recommended that a certain percentage of seats in legislatures as well as jobs in government be reserved for members of the lowest castes. It had been argued by some that Untouchable or as they were now known, Harijan, candidates did not have good enough grades to get into the prestigious Indian Administrative Service. But, as one member of the Constituent Assembly, H.J. Khandekar, argued, it was the upper castes who were responsible for the Harijans "being unfit today". Addressing his more privileged colleagues, Khandekar said:

> We were suppressed for thousands of years. You engaged us in your service to serve your own ends and suppressed us to such an extent that neither our minds nor our bodies and nor even our hearts work, nor are we able to march forward.

Along with the former Untouchables, the *adivasis* or Scheduled Tribes were also granted reservation in seats and jobs. Like the Scheduled Castes, these Indians too had been deprived and discriminated against. The tribals had been deprived of modern health care and education, while their lands and forests had been taken away by more powerful outsiders. The new privileges granted them by the Constitution were meant to make amends for this.

The Constituent Assembly spent many days discussing the powers of the central government versus those of the state governments. Some members thought that the Centre's interests should be foremost. Only a strong Centre, it was argued, "would be in a position to think and plan for the well-being of the country as a whole". Other members felt that the provinces should have greater autonomy and freedom. A member from Mysore feared that under the present system "democracy is centred in Delhi and it is not allowed to work in the same sense and spirit in the rest of the country". A member from Madras insisted that

Source 1

We must give them security and rights

Nehru wrote in a letter to the Chief Ministers of states:

> ... we have a Muslim minority who are so large in numbers that they cannot, even if they want, go anywhere else. That is a basic fact about which there can be no argument. Whatever the provocation from Pakistan and whatever the indignities and horrors inflicted on non-Muslims there, we have got to deal with this minority in a civilised manner. We must give them security and the rights of citizens in a democratic State.

Activity

Imagine a conversation between a father and son in a Muslim family. After Partition, the son thinks it would be wiser for them to move to Pakistan while the father believes that they should continue to live in India. Taking information from the chapter so far (and Chapter 11), act out what each would say.

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Fig. 3 *– Dr B.R. Ambedkar*

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (1891-1956), respectfully referred to as Babasaheb, belonged to a Marathi-speaking *dalit* family. A lawyer and economist, he is best known as a revered leader of the Dalits and the father of the Indian Constitution

"the initial responsibility for the well-being of the people of the provinces should rest with the Provincial Governments".

The Constitution sought to balance these competing claims by providing three lists of subjects: a Union List, with subjects such as taxes, defence and foreign affairs, which would be the exclusive responsibility of the Centre; a State List of subjects, such as education and health, which would be taken care of principally by the states; a Concurrent List, under which would come subjects such as forests and agriculture, in which the Centre and the states would have joint responsibility.

Another major debate in the Constituent Assembly concerned language. Many members believed that the English language should leave India with the British rulers. Its place, they argued, should be taken by Hindi. However, those who did not speak Hindi were of a different opinion. Speaking in the Assembly, T.T. Krishnamachari conveyed "a warning on behalf of people of the South", some of whom threatened to separate from India if Hindi was imposed on them. A compromise was finally arrived at: namely, that while Hindi would be the "official language" of India, English would be used in the courts, the services, and communications between one state and another.

Many Indians contributed to the framing of the Constitution. But perhaps the most important role was played by Dr B.R. Ambedkar, who was Chairman of the Drafting Committee, and under whose supervision the document was finalised. In his final speech to the Constituent Assembly, Dr Ambedkar pointed out that political democracy had to be accompanied by economic and social democracy. Giving the right to vote would not automatically lead to the removal of other inequalities such as between rich and poor, or between upper and lower castes. With the new Constitution, he said, India was

> going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics

Activity

Discuss in your class, one advantage and one disadvantage today of the decision to keep English as a language of India.

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we will be recognising the principle of one man one vote and one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value.

How were States to be Formed?

Back in the 1920s, the Indian National Congress – the main party of the freedom struggle – had promised that once the country won independence, each major **linguistic** group would have its own province. However, after independence the Congress did not take any steps to honour this promise. For India had been divided on the basis of religion: despite the wishes and efforts of Mahatma Gandhi, freedom had come not to one nation but to two. As a result of the partition of India, more than a million people had been killed in riots between Hindus and Muslims. Could the country afford further divisions on the basis of language?

Linguistic – Relating to language

Both Prime Minister Nehru and Deputy Prime Minister Vallabhbhai Patel were against the creation of linguistic states. After the Partition, Nehru said, "disruptionist tendencies had come to the fore"; to check them, the nation had to be strong and united. Or, as Patel put it:

> ... the first and last need of India at the present moment is that it should be made a nation ... Everything which helps the growth of nationalism has to go forward and everything which throws obstacles in its way has to be rejected ... We have applied this test to linguistic provinces also, and by this test, in our opinion [they] cannot be supported.

That the Congress leaders would now go back on their promise created great disappointment. The Kannada speakers, Malayalam speakers, the Marathi speakers, had all looked forward to having their own state. The strongest protests, however, came from the Telugu-speaking districts of what was the Madras Presidency. When Nehru went to campaign there during the general elections of 1952, he was met with black flags and slogans demanding "We want Andhra". In October of that year, a veteran Gandhian named Potti Sriramulu went on a hunger strike demanding the formation of Andhra state to protect the interests of Telugu speakers. As the fast went on, it attracted much support. *Hartals* and *bandhs* were observed in many towns.

Fig. 4 *– Potti Sriramulu, the Gandhian leader who died fasting for a separate state for Telugu speakers*

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On 15 December 1952, fifty-eight days into his fast, Potti Sriramulu died. As a newspaper put it, "the news of the passing away of Sriramulu engulfed entire Andhra in chaos". The protests were so widespread and intense that the central government was forced to give in to the demand. Thus, on 1 October 1953, the new state of Andhra came into being, which subsequently became Andhra Pradesh.

After the creation of Andhra, other linguistic communities also demanded their own separate states. A States Reorganisation Commission was set up, which submitted its report in 1956, recommending the redrawing of district and provincial boundaries to form compact provinces of Assamese, Bengali, Oriya, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu speakers respectively. The large Hindi-speaking region of north India was also to be broken up into several states. A little later, in 1960, the bilingual state of Bombay was divided into separate states for Marathi and Gujarati speakers. In 1966, the state of Punjab was also divided into Punjab and Haryana, the former for the Punjabi speakers (who were also mostly Sikhs), the latter for the rest (who spoke not Punjabi but versions of Haryanvi or Hindi).

The making of Linguistic States

Fig. 5 (a)
Indian Provinces and Princely States before 14 August 1947

Princely States
British India

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Erstwhile Princely States*

Other States

*A state ceased to be a "princely state" as and when its prince agreed to merger with India or Pakistan or was defeated. But many of these states were retained as administrative units until 31 October 1956. Hence the category, "erstwhile princely states" for the period 1947-48 to 31 October 1956.

Fig. 5 (b) *– Indian States before 1 November 1956*

Activity

Look at Figs. 5 (a), 5 (b) and 5 (c). Notice how the Princely States disappear in 5 (b). Identify the new states that were formed in 1956 and later and the languages of these states.

Fig. 5 (c) *– Indian States in 1975*

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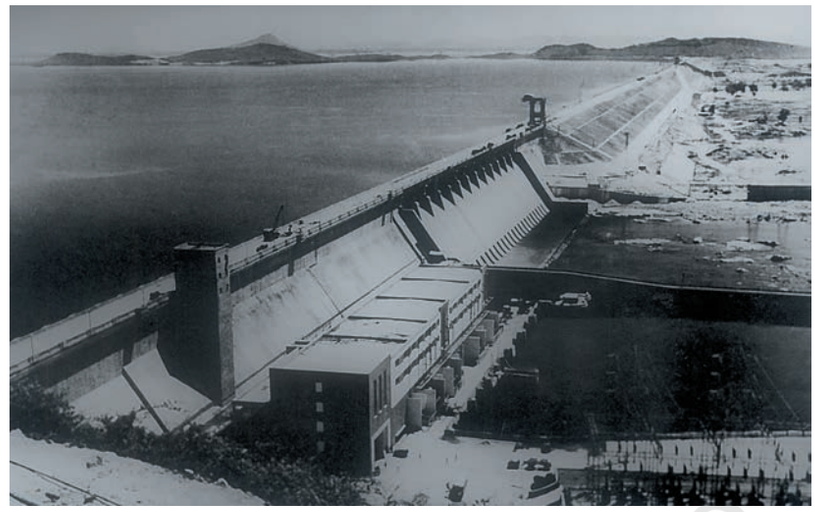

Fig. 6 *– The bridge on the Mahanadi river constructed to control the flow of water*

Bridges and dams became the symbol of development in independent India.

State – Concerned with the government. (Note that used in this sense, the word does not refer to the different states which are found in a country.)

Planning for Development

Lifting India and Indians out of poverty, and building a modern technical and industrial base were among the major objectives of the new nation. In 1950, the government set up a Planning Commission to help design and execute suitable policies for economic development. There was a broad agreement on what was called a "mixed economy" model. Here, both the **State** and the private sector would play important and complementary roles in increasing production and generating jobs. What, specifically, these roles were to be – which industries should be initiated by the state and which by the market, how to achieve a balance between the different regions and states – was to be defined by the Planning Commission.

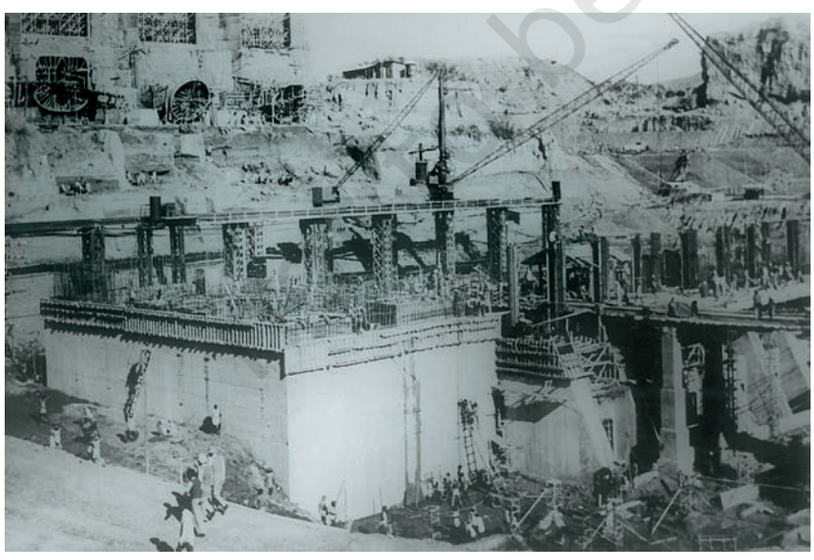

Fig. 7 *– Work going on at the Gandhi Sagar* bandh

This was the first of the four dams built on the Chambal river in Madhya Pradesh. It was completed in 1960.

In 1956, the Second Five Year Plan was formulated. This focused strongly on the development of heavy industries such as steel, and on the building of large dams. These sectors would be under the control of the State. This focus on heavy industry, and the effort at state regulation of the economy was to guide economic policy for the next few decades. This approach had many strong supporters, but also some vocal critics.

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Source 2

Nehru on the Five Year Plans

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was a great supporter of the planning process. He explained the ideals and purposes of planning in a series of letters he wrote to the chief ministers of the different states. In a letter of 22 December 1952, he said that:

> ... behind the First Five Year Plan lies the conception of India's unity and of a mighty co-operative effort of all the peoples of India ... We have to remember always that it is not merely the governmental machinery that counts in all this, but even more so the enthusiasm and co-operation of the people. Our people must have the sensation of partnership in a mighty enterprise, of being fellow-travellers towards the next goal that they and we have set before us. The Plan may be, and has to be, based on the calculations of economists, statisticians and the like, but figures and statistics, very important as they are, do not give life to the scheme. That breath of life comes in other ways, and it is for us now to make this Plan, which is enshrined in cold print, something living, vital and dynamic, which captures the imagination of the people.

Some felt that it had put inadequate emphasis on agriculture. Others argued that it had neglected primary education. Still others believed that it had not taken account of the environmental implications of economic policies. As Mahatma Gandhi's follower Mira Behn wrote in 1949, by "science and machinery he [mankind] may get huge returns for a time, but ultimately will come desolation. We have got to study Nature's balance, and develop our lives within her laws, if we are to survive as a physically healthy and morally decent species."

Fig. 8– *Jawaharlal Nehru at the Bhilai Steel Plant*

The Bhilai steel plant was set up with the help of the former Soviet Union in 1959. Located in the backward rural area of Chhattisgarh, it came to be seen as an important sign of the development of modern India after Independence.

Activity

Discuss in your class whether Mira Behn was right in her view that science and machinery would create problems for human beings. You may like to think about examples of the effects of industrial pollution and de-forestation on the world today.

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The search for an independent foreign policy

Fig. 9 *– Jawaharlal Nehru and Krishna Menon arriving at the United Nations*

Krishna Menon led the Indian delegation to the UN between 1952 and 1962 and argued for a policy of non-alignment.

India gained freedom soon after the devastations of the Second World War. At that time a new international body – the United Nations – formed in 1945 was in its infancy. The 1950s and 1960s saw the emergence of the Cold War, that is, power rivalries and ideological conflicts between the USA and the USSR, with both countries creating military alliances. This was also the period when colonial empires were collapsing and many countries were attaining independence. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who was also the foreign minister of newly independent India, developed free India's foreign policy in this context. Non-alignment formed the bedrock of this foreign policy.

Led by statesmen from Egypt, Yugoslavia, Indonesia, Ghana and India, the non-aligned movement urged countries not to join either of the two major alliances. But this policy of staying away from alliances was not a matter of remaining "isolated" or "neutral". The former means remaining aloof from world affairs whereas non-aligned countries such as India played an active role in mediating between the American and Soviet alliances. They tried to prevent war — often taking a humanitarian and moral stand against war. However, for one reason or another, many non-aligned countries including India got involved in wars.

By the 1970s, a large number of countries had joined the non-aligned movement.

Fig. 10 *– Leaders of Asian and African countries meet at Bandung, Indonesia 1955*

Over 29 newly independent states participated in this famous conference to discuss how Afro-Asian nations could continue to oppose colonialism and Western domination.

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The Nation, Sixty Years On

On 15 August 2007, India celebrated sixty years of its existence as a free nation. How well has the country done in this time? And to what extent has it fulfilled the ideals set out in its Constitution?

That India is still united, and that it is still democratic, are achievements that we might justly be proud of. Many foreign observers had felt that India could not survive as a single country, that it would break up into many parts, with each region or linguistic group seeking to form a nation of its own. Others believed that it would come under military rule. However, as many as thirteen general elections have been held since Independence, as well as hundreds of state and local elections. There is a free press, as well as an independent judiciary. Finally, the fact that people speak different languages or practise different faiths has not come in the way of national unity.

On the other hand, deep divisions persist. Despite constitutional guarantees, the Untouchables or, as they are now referred to, the Dalits, face violence and discrimination. In many parts of rural India they are not allowed access to water sources, temples, parks and other public places. And despite the secular ideals enshrined in the Constitution, there have been clashes between different religious groups in many states. Above all, as many observers have noted, the gulf between the rich and the poor has grown over the years. Some parts of India and some groups of Indians have benefited a great deal from economic development. They live in large houses and dine in expensive restaurants, send their children to expensive private schools and take expensive foreign holidays. At the same time many others continue to live below the poverty line. Housed in urban slums, or living in remote villages on lands that yield little, they cannot afford to send their children to school.

Fig. 11 *– Dharavi in Bombay is one of the world's largest slums*

Notice the high-rise buildings in the background.

The Constitution recognises equality before the law, but in real life some Indians are more equal than others. Judged by the standards it set itself at Independence, the Republic of India has not been a great success. But it has not been a failure either.

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ELSEWHERE

What happened in Sri Lanka

In 1956, the year the states of India were reorganised on the basis of language, the Parliament of Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) introduced an Act recognising Sinhala as the sole official language of the country. This made Sinhala the medium of instruction in all state schools and colleges, in public examinations, and in the courts. The new Act was opposed by the Tamil-speaking minority who lived in the north of the island. "When you deny me my language," said one Tamil MP, "you deny me everything." "You are hoping for a divided Ceylon," warned another, adding: "Do not fear, I assure you [that you] will have a divided Ceylon." An Opposition member, himself Sinhala speaking, predicted that if the government did not change its mind and insisted on the Act being passed, "two torn little bleeding states might yet arise out of one little state".

Fig. 12 *– Gun-carrying Tamil militant – a symbol of the civil war in Sri Lanka*

For several decades now, a civil war has raged in Sri Lanka, whose roots lie in the imposition of the Sinhala language on the Tamil-speaking minority. And another South Asian country, Pakistan, was divided into two when the Bengali speakers of the east felt that their language was being suppressed. By contrast, India has managed to survive as a single nation, in part because the many regional languages were given freedom to flourish. Had Hindi been imposed on South India, in the way that Urdu was imposed on East Pakistan or Sinhala on northern Sri Lanka, India too might have seen civil war and fragmentation. Contrary to the fears of Jawahalal Nehru and Sardar Patel, linguistic states have not threatened the unity of India. Rather, they have deepened this unity. Once the fear of one's language being suppressed has gone, the different linguistic groups have been content to live as part of the larger nation called India.

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Let's imagine

You are witness to an argument between an adivasi and a person who is opposed to the reservation of seats and jobs. What might be the arguments you heard each of them put forward? Act out the conversation.

Let's recall

1. Name three problems that the newly independent nation of India faced.
2. What was the role of the Planning Commission?
3. Fill in the blanks:
   (a) Subjects that were placed on the Union List were _____, _____ and _____.
   (b) Subjects on the Concurrent List were _____ and _____.

(c) Economic planning by which both the state and the private sector played a role in development was called a _____ _____ model.

(d) The death of _____ sparked off such violent protests that the government was forced to give in to the demand for the linguistic state of Andhra.

4. State whether true or false:

(a) At independence, the majority of Indians lived in villages.

(b) The Constituent Assembly was made up of members of the Congress party.

(c) In the first national election, only men were allowed to vote.

(d) The Second Five Year Plan focused on the development of heavy industry.

Let's discuss

5. What did Dr Ambedkar mean when he said that "In politics we will have equality, and in social and economic life we will have inequality"?

6. After Independence, why was there a reluctance to divide the country on linguistic lines?

7. Give one reason why English continued to be used in India after Independence.

8. How was the economic development of India visualised in the early decades after Independence?

Let's do

9. Who was Mira Behn? Find out more about her life and her ideas.

10. Find out more about the language divisions in Pakistan that led to the creation of the new nation of Bangladesh. How did Bangladesh achieve independence from Pakistan?

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