

# HISTORY OF BRITAIN II

COURSE CODE: SGB24HS202MI

BA English Language and Literature (Honours)

Minor Course

Self Learning Material

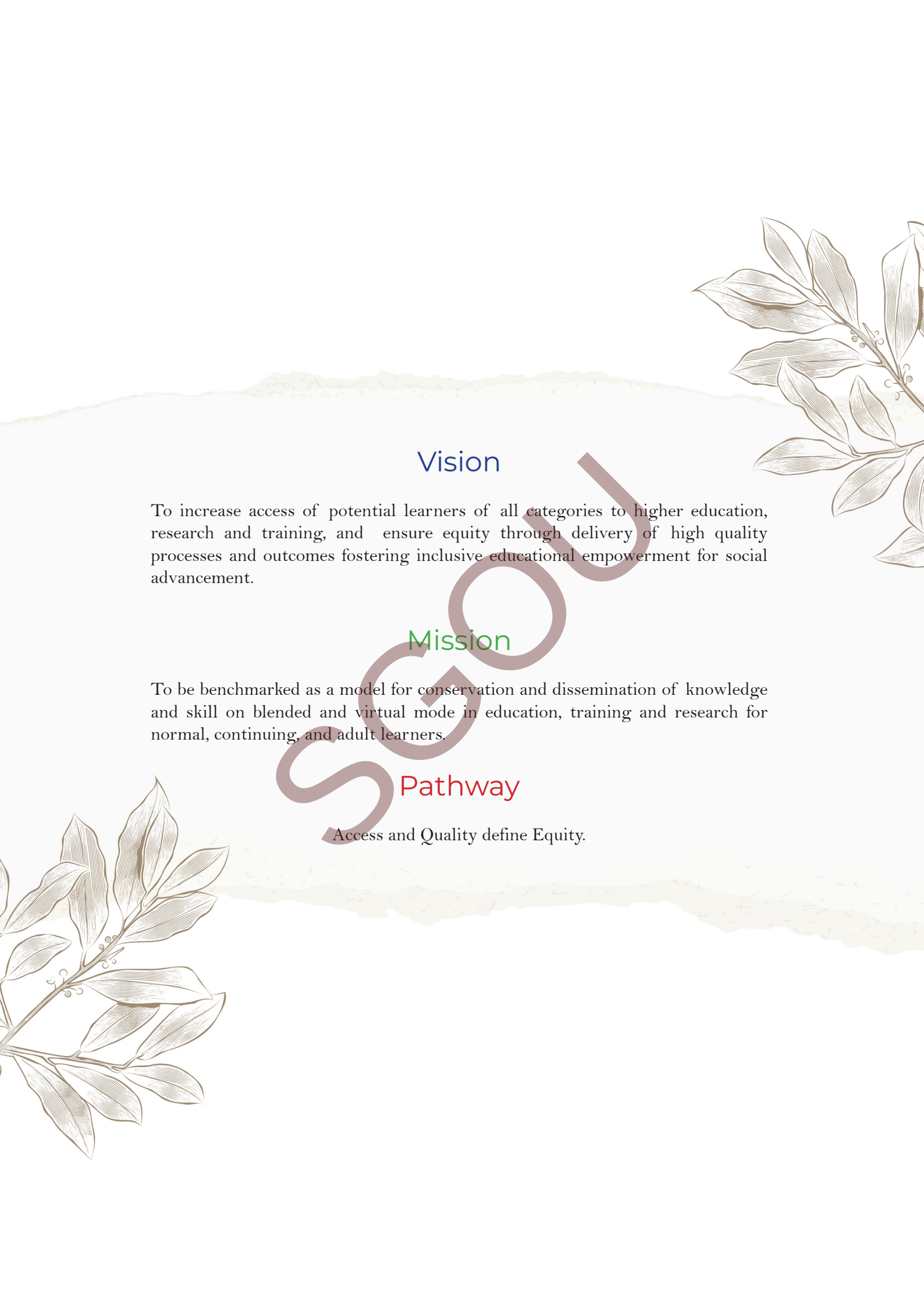


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The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala



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# History of Britain II

Course Code: SGB24HS202MI

Semester - V

Four Year Undergraduate Programme  
English Language and Literature (Honours)  
Minor Course  
Self Learning Material



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# History of Britain II

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Semester- V

Minor Course

BA English Language and Literature (Honours)

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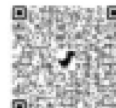
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# MESSAGE FROM VICE CHANCELLOR

Dear Learner,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Four Year UG Malayalam Language and Literature Programme offered by Sreenarayanaguru Open University.

Established in September 2020, our university aims to provide high-quality higher education through open and distance learning. Our guiding principle, 'access and quality define equity', shapes our approach to education. We are committed to maintaining the highest standards in our academic offerings.

Our university proudly bears the name of Sreenarayanaguru, a prominent Renaissance thinker of modern India. His philosophy of social reform and educational empowerment serves as a constant reminder of our dedication to excellence in all our academic pursuits.

The Four Year UG Malayalam Language and Literature Programme covers all relevant areas aligned with Malayalam language and literary studies. We have incorporated the latest trends in Malayalam studies to ensure a comprehensive and up-to-date curriculum. Moreover, the programme encompasses flexible options for learners to choose from a range of Ability Enhancement Courses, Multi-disciplinary Courses, Value Added Courses, and Skill Enhancement Courses, complemented by discipline-oriented Advanced and Additional Advanced Courses.

Our teaching methodology combines three key elements: Self Learning Material, Classroom Counselling, and Virtual modes. This blended approach aims to provide a rich and engaging learning experience, overcoming the limitations often associated with distance education. We are confident that this programme will enhance your understanding of Malayalam language and literature, preparing you for various career paths and further academic pursuits.

Our learner support services are always available to address any concerns you may have during your time with us. We encourage you to reach out with any questions or feedback regarding the programme. We wish you success in your academic journey with Sreenarayanaguru Open University.

Best regards,



Dr. Jagathy Raj V.P.  
Vice Chancellor

01-06-2026

# Contents

|                                                                                                 |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>BLOCK 1 Political and Economic Revolutions</b>                                               | <b>1</b>   |
| UNIT 1 Impact of American and French Revolutions -<br>Thomas Paine, Edmund Burke                | 2          |
| UNIT 2 Romantic Revival                                                                         | 18         |
| UNIT 3 Agrarian, Industrial and Commercial Revolutions                                          | 30         |
| <b>BLOCK 2 New Economic Ideology</b>                                                            | <b>50</b>  |
| UNIT 1 Trade Unionism – Robert Owen                                                             | 51         |
| UNIT 2 Chartism - Development of Party System                                                   | 62         |
| UNIT 3 Laissez-Faire, Methodism, Gladstone and Disraeli                                         | 78         |
| <b>BLOCK 3 Consolidation of British Empire</b>                                                  | <b>94</b>  |
| UNIT 1 Imperialism and Colonialism                                                              | 95         |
| UNIT 2 Orientalism                                                                              | 110        |
| UNIT 3 Major Trends and Writings                                                                | 122        |
| UNIT 4 Utilitarianism and Evangelicalism                                                        | 130        |
| <b>BLOCK 4 The Victorian Age</b>                                                                | <b>144</b> |
| UNIT 1 Victorian Society                                                                        | 145        |
| UNIT 2 Literary Developments                                                                    | 157        |
| UNIT 3 Oxford Movement - Liberalism, Charles Dickens                                            | 169        |
| UNIT 4 Late Victorian Literature – Thomas Hardy,<br>Oscar Wilde and G.B.Shaw                    | 180        |
| <b>BLOCK 5 Socialist Movement and Post Modernism</b>                                            | <b>189</b> |
| UNIT 1 Ideology and Practice: Fabian Socialism and Labour Party                                 | 190        |
| UNIT 2 Decolonization and Major Thinkers                                                        | 205        |
| UNIT 3 Modernism, Postmodernism- D. H. Lawrence,<br>W. H. Auden, T. S. Elliot and George Orwell | 218        |
| UNIT 4 Contemporary Cultures – Globalization, Terrorism,<br>Feminism and Gender                 | 226        |
| <b>BLOCK 6 English Language &amp; Indian English Writers</b>                                    | <b>237</b> |
| UNIT 1 Introduction of Western Education in India                                               | 238        |
| UNIT 2 Indian Writing in English                                                                | 250        |
| <b>Model Question Paper Sets</b>                                                                | <b>269</b> |







**BLOCK**

# Political and Economic Revolutions



# UNIT

## Impact of American and French Revolutions - Thomas Paine, Edmund Burke

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ identify the major causes and events of the American Revolution
- ◆ explain the social, economic and political causes of the French Revolution
- ◆ describe the impact of the American and French Revolutions on Britain and Europe
- ◆ compare Edmund Burke's conservative criticism of the French Revolution with Thomas Paine's radical defence of popular rights
- ◆ recognise how revolutionary ideas influenced English political thought and literary writing

### Prerequisite

Try to imagine a world where kings ruled by hereditary right and ordinary people had very little say in government. In the eighteenth century, such ideas began to be questioned strongly. In America, British colonists objected to taxes and trade restrictions imposed by a distant Parliament in which they had no representation. Their protest slowly grew into a war for independence. In France, the unequal division of society into privileged estates and the burden placed on common people created anger against monarchy and aristocracy.

These revolutions were not only political events; they also changed the language of rights, citizenship and government. Words such as liberty, equality, representation and constitution became powerful ideas. Writers and thinkers responded sharply to these changes. Edmund Burke feared that the French Revolution destroyed tradition and social order too violently. Thomas Paine, on the other hand, defended the rights of people to challenge unjust governments. This unit will help you see how revolutions shaped both history and literature.



## Keywords

Colonialism, Revolution, Taxation, Declaration of rights, *Estates*, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Age of reason

## Discussion

The thirteen British colonies in America were founded by men who, deep down, cherished the desire to live a life free from persecution and interference of any kind. Each of these colonies had an independent legislature and a Governor appointed by the King of England. The colonists worked hard to establish themselves in the New World, and as a natural consequence, a strong spirit of independence developed within them. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the American colonists were unwilling to tolerate any interference in their trade with the outside world. While such sentiments were growing, the British attitude remained unchanged. Britain maintained the view that the colonies existed solely for the benefit of the mother-country.

One of the things that irritated the colonists was the Navigation Act, which required all goods to and from the colonies to be carried in English ships. Foreign goods could not be imported into the colonies without first being landed in England, and goods could not be shipped to foreign countries from the colonies without first being landed in England. Additionally, the colonists were prohibited from producing items like hats, woolen goods, or iron goods that could compete with English industry. But, for many years these laws were not enforced, allowing for plenty of smuggling opportunities. However, during the time of George III, special courts were established to try people who violated the trade laws, and

customs officers were given the power to enter and search American homes for smuggled goods. This infuriated the people

The Seven Years War (1756-1763) between England and France was fought partly to protect the interests of the colonists. The British Government believed that the colonists should help shoulder the financial burden, which led to the passing of the Stamp Act in Parliament by Prime Minister George Grenville in 1765. The Stamp Act required that all documents, licenses, and wills have stamps affixed to them in order to be considered valid. This tax caused widespread outrage among the colonists. On the day the Act went into effect, colonists burned stamps in the streets of New England, closed whale shops, tolled church bells, and flew flags at half-mast. An American lawyer argued that Parliament had no right to tax the colonists since they were not represented in the House, and this argument was encapsulated in the popular slogan “No taxation without representation.” A few individuals, including William Pitt in England, recognized the gravity of the situation and convinced Parliament to repeal the Stamp Act, which was withdrawn in 1766.

In 1767, Charles Townshend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, introduced a new series of customs duties on paper, paints, glass, and tea. Once again, there were riots, public meetings, pamphlets, and newspapers containing inflammatory



leading articles. The resentment was so strong that in 1769, a mob in Rhode Island burnt the British revenue ship. In 1770, Lord North (Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1770 to 1782) foolishly repealed all duties except that on tea. The people took advantage of the weakness of the Government, and the soldiers in Boston were the victims of all kinds of insults. On a wintry day in 1770, the soldiers fired on the demonstrating crowd, resulting in the death of five people. The American newspapers called it the “Boston Massacre”.

Most of the tea drunk in the colonies was smuggled Dutch Tea. In 1773 the East India Company, the chief importer of tea to Great Britain, had with it an immense quantity of tea. Lord North allowed the Company to sell its tea in America. Though this tea was cheaper than the smuggled tea, the Americans considered it as an interference in their trade. So when the ships carrying the Company’s tea arrived in Boston, local men disguised as Red Indians, got into the ships and threw the tea into the sea. This event was known as the Boston Tea Party.

The British Government at once adopted repressive measures. The Boston harbour was closed to trade and the Charter of Massachusetts was cancelled. The Massachusetts Bay Colony charter of 1629 was a royal document that gave the Massachusetts Bay Company permission from the English crown to establish a colony in New England. The charter was granted by King Charles I on March 4, 1629. A charter is a document that gives certain rights to a colony. At the same time the colonists felt that it was high time for them to fight for their independence. The representatives of all colonies, except Georgia, for the first time in American history, met at Philadelphia in 1774. This gathering, called the First Continental

Congress, included many distinguished men like George Washington of Virginia. They issued Declaration of Rights and agreed to meet again in 1775. Meanwhile, the patriots of the States were preparing for war. The newly appointed Governor in Boston, General Gage, came to know that the colonists were gathering arms at Concord, a place about twenty miles north-west. He sent troops to confiscate the arms, but by the time they reached Concord, the arms had disappeared. On their return journey, the troops became the target of attacks by colonists who had risen in rebellion and suffered heavy losses. With this, the American War of Independence had begun.

In the beginning, the odds were against the colonists. The most important drawback of America was that she did not have a regular army. So the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia in 1775 and organized an army with George Washington as Commander-in-Chief. Though the colonial army suffered some initial defeats, the soldiers gained experience and, in the end, were able to defeat the more powerful British army. The autocratic George III had hired 20,000 German soldiers to fight the rebels. Enraged by this, the Congress met again in Philadelphia and issued the unanimous Declaration of Independence on July 4th, 1776. It was drawn up by Thomas Jefferson. Justifying the revolution, the Declaration says, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by the Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness, that to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the

Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government". In the same year, the American army under Washington defeated the British army at Trenton and a few days later at Princeton. A year later, in October 1777, the British army under Burgoyne was forced to surrender at Saratoga. In 1778, France joined the American side, but in that year and the following year, no decisive fighting took place. In 1780, the British began to win a series of victories in the South, even beyond South Carolina. However, 1781 was a bad year for the British. General Cornwallis, who had won a number of victories against the colonists, was forced to surrender to the American army at Yorktown. The last blow came when other European countries, such as Spain and Holland, joined forces with the Americans, and Russia and other powers formed an Armed Neutrality against Britain.

The most important reason for the defeat of the British was that the British government had to conduct its campaigns from 3,000 miles away. Normally, it took at least three months for a message and its answer to cross the Atlantic. Secondly, the area of fighting was large, and the British soldiers had little experience of warfare in colonial conditions. Another thing that accounted for the British defeat was the fact that Lord North, the then Prime Minister of England, was not competent to manage the situation. The European forces, particularly France, turning against Britain was a blow too much for her to withstand. Above all, the colonists were able to find in George Washington one of the outstanding leaders of modern times.

By the peace treaty signed in 1783 at the palace of Versailles in France, George III recognised the independence of the American colonies. In many respects, the American Revolution was one of the

most important events in the history of the modern world. It brought into existence a great new nation and a Government which claimed to represent the will of the people rather than the wishes of a king. The French soldiers who fought on the American side took with them the idea of a representative government to the continent where kings ruled as representatives of God on earth. The leaders of the French Revolution which broke out in another six years drew inspiration for their course of action from the American example. The Americans were the first to show in practice that a revolution is justified to alter a form of government which has become unpopular. The American Revolution had its impact on British politics also. The autocratic king and the selfish politicians of the aristocracy were not allowed to have a monopoly of power. Their handling of the American problem was an eye-opener to the common people. It was evident that these aristocrats were first and foremost concerned about keeping themselves in power and that they were not in the least interested in the well-being of the common man. People were convinced that any improvement in their lot in life depended solely on their active participation in the administration of the country. So they started agitating for parliamentary reform.

### 1.1.1 French Revolution

In the 1780s, the population of France was around *twenty-four million and seven hundred thousand* and it was divided into *three estates*. The *First Estate* was the *Roman Catholic clergy*, which numbered about *100,000*. The *Second Estate* consisted of the *French nobility*, which numbered about *400,000*. Everyone else in France; including *merchants, lawyers, labourers and peasants*; belonged to the *Third Estate*, which comprised around *98% of the French population*.





The Third Estate was excluded from positions of honour and political power and was looked down upon by the other estates. It was thus angered and resented its position in French society. This led to them coming together to launch the French Revolution in 1789.

The First Estate in France, also known as the clergy, owned 10% of the land, despite comprising less than 0.5% of the population. They were extremely wealthy and were not required to pay any taxes. The clergy had various privileges, one of which was the ability to collect tithes. Tithes were a form of tax where one-tenth of annual produce or earnings was taken in support of the Church.

The Second Estate, consisting of the nobles, owned roughly 25% of the land. They were exempt from paying numerous taxes and were permitted to collect dues from peasants. In contrast, the Third Estate, which included the majority of the population, was burdened with heavy taxes while the other two estates enjoyed exemptions. These inequities placed a significant strain on the Third Estate, prompting them to question the fairness of the Estates System and contemplate its overthrow.

The bourgeoisie were the wealthy individuals of the Third Estate who began to gain influence in the years leading up to the revolution. They formed a new social class with their own goals and political aspirations. The bourgeoisie resented the privileged positions of the First and Second Estates, which they believed were not earned through their own efforts. Furthermore, they aspired to achieve political equality with the other two estates. The bourgeoisie's desire to eliminate feudal and royal infringements on their personal freedom, economic opportunities, and property ownership

was one of the factors that contributed to the French Revolution.

The Age of Enlightenment was an intellectual and philosophical movement that dominated the world of ideas in Europe during the 18th century. Enlightenment philosophers like John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Montesquieu questioned the traditional absolute authority of the monarch and divisions of society, such as the Estates System. For example, Locke argued that a leader could only govern a society if he had the consent of those he governed. Rousseau opposed all class divisions, while Montesquieu advocated for a system of government based on the separation of powers. The writings of Enlightenment thinkers were discussed in France more than anywhere else, greatly influencing the revolutionaries.

Throughout the 18th century, France participated in a series of expensive wars primarily against its long-term rival Great Britain. Louis XV, who ruled over France from 1715 to 1774, lost the Seven Years' War against Britain. He then drew up a plan to avenge the loss by building a larger navy and an anti-British coalition of allies. However, this only resulted in a mountain of debt. Louis XVI, grandson of Louis XV who succeeded him in 1774, then involved France in the *American War of Independence* against Britain. Though the U.S. won the war, France gained little from it. French support for the war was expensive costing 1.066 million French livres, a huge sum at the time. This worsened the economic crisis in the nation and pushed it toward bankruptcy.

In June 1783, the *Laki volcano* in Iceland erupted sending volcanic ash high into the atmosphere in Europe. This led to a severe winter in Europe in 1784 and the following summers included extreme droughts that

caused poor harvests and famine. France then experienced another series of poor harvests in 1787 and 1788 with extreme winters. A decade of extreme weather conditions and poor harvests took a toll on the poor peasants of France, who were struggling to survive day to day. The frustration of the peasants angered them to revolt.

The situation in France worsened when poor harvests caused the price of flour to increase dramatically, which in turn raised the price of bread. Bread was the staple food for most French citizens and it has been estimated by historians that the working class of France was spending upwards of 90% of their daily income on just bread. Louis XVI implemented deregulation of the grain market but it resulted in further increasing the bread prices. The rise in the cost of bread severely affected the common French citizens, who resented the monarch for not being able to solve the food crisis.

In France, as in most other European nations, the monarch ruled based on the divine right of kings. He was thus not answerable to his subjects. However, the philosophies of Enlightenment thinkers made the public think differently. Louis XV failed to overcome the financial problems facing France. He was not able to harmonise the conflicting parties in court to arrive at coherent economic policies. Louis XVI then tried to bring about radical reforms but failed miserably. The poor economic condition of the nation angered the masses and they became critical of their king. Moreover, both Louis XV and his grandson were aware of anti-monarchist forces that were threatening their family's rule but they were unable to stop them.

Several French ministers, including Anne Robert Jacques Turgot and Jacques

Necker, proposed revisions to the French tax system to include the nobles as taxpayers. This may have reduced the financial crisis in the nation and would have lessened the anger of the poor as the tax system would have become more just. A Parliament in France was a provincial appellate court. They were not legislative bodies but consisted of appellate judges. The Parliament were the spearhead of the nobility's resistance to royal reforms and they prevented any reform in taxation which would include the nobility.

The extravagant expenditure on luxuries, first by Louis XV and then by Louis XVI, compounded the economic crisis facing the nation and was one of the primary reasons behind the revolution. For example, the construction and remodeling of the Palace of Versailles throughout the 17th and 18th centuries incurred a huge cost to the country. These large expenditures by the French monarchy caused dissatisfaction among the people, who began to view its leaders as wasteful, while they suffered due to the poor economic state of the nation. This, in turn, led to national unrest and ultimately the Revolution.

### 1.1.2 Effects

France was ruled by despots like Louis XIV for many years. The kings ruled the country as they pleased, without caring for the well-being of the common people. As a result of this indifference from the autocratic monarchs, there was famine and suffering throughout the country. The popular uprising against the tyranny of the kings culminated in the abolition of monarchy and the establishment of the French Republic. This great political event, known as the French Revolution, began with the storming of the State prison known as the Bastille on July 14, 1789. The reign of terror that followed



the execution of King Louis XVI and his Queen only came to an end when Napoleon became Emperor in May 1804. In 1793, England was forced to declare war against the French Revolution because the French revolutionary rulers offered to assist any nation that wanted to follow the French example and overthrow their own kings. The war continued until the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 when Lord Wellington inflicted a crushing defeat on Napoleon.

This prolonged war of twenty years had lasting effects on England. The most important and immediate effect was the huge National Debt. It has been estimated that the cost of the war from the beginning to the end was nearly £1,000,000,000. The nation, which consisted of nineteen million people had to pay annually a large amount by way of interest. In 1815 the country had to raise £ 74,000,000 by taxation alone.

The peace that followed the war caused a fall in the prices of coal and iron, which resulted in many men employed in the industry being thrown out of their jobs. After the signing of the peace treaty, nearly half a million soldiers, sailors, and others who had been engaged directly in the war were dismissed from active service, further contributing to the already swelling army of the unemployed. Thus, the problem of unemployment became much more acute than before.

During the twenty years of war, there was no import of European corn into England, which caused the price of corn to go high. However, the agricultural lords stood to benefit from this. After the restoration of peace, the free flow of European corn was resumed, which brought down the price of English corn. This was resented by the English agriculturists, and so, to protect their interests, the Corn Law was passed in 1816. This had disastrous effects on the

poor, especially during times of famine. Their sufferings led to the formation of the Anti-Corn Law League. It was this association that was ultimately responsible for the repeal of the Corn Law in 1846 by the then Prime Minister Robert Peel.

There was widespread discontent among poor people on account of various factors like low wages, high price of corn, and unemployment. There were fierce riots in many places and the Government authorities tried to put down these riots with an iron hand. In 1819 the magistrates of Manchester foolishly attempted to arrest a radical leader known as Orator Hunt at a large gathering in St. Peter's Field. On meeting with resistance from the crowd, the Government officer ordered a cavalry charge upon the unarmed mob. Eleven persons were killed and six hundred were wounded. The event popularly called the Battle of Peterloo or the Manchester massacre was used by agitators to embarrass the Government. To get their grievances redressed the poor agitated for parliamentary reform and after much opposition from the lords, the first Reform Bill was passed in 1832.

Another effect of the French Revolution was that both the Navy and Army were recognized as national institutions. The Battle of Trafalgar, won by Lord Nelson during the Revolutionary War in 1805, highlighted the greatness of the English Navy. The victory was commemorated by renaming a part of Trafalgar Square, where the statue stands on a lofty column Trafalgar, with its 51.5-meter column topping the statue of Admiral Lord Nelson looking out the River Thames, is one of the favourite tourist spots in London. It is the end of most protest marches and rallies in the capital. With the victories of Wellington at Waterloo in 1815 on land, the army became as popular as it had never been before. Barracks were built to house



the troops, and the haphazard billeting of soldiers in public houses came to an end. This was done to the great relief of both the civilian population and the soldiers themselves.

The French Revolution served as an inspiration for many English writers, influencing them to create some of their most well-known works. One such writer was Edmund Burke, who was motivated to write his famous book *Reflections on the French Revolution*. Written in a unique style, Burke poses questions about the propriety of the actions of the revolutionaries, particularly regarding the abolition of the monarchy and the concentration of power in the National Assembly. He expresses the opinion that the flawed institutions of the old regime should have been reformed rather than completely dismantled.

In response to Burke's book, Thomas Paine wrote *Rights of Man*, which was published in two volumes. The first part of the book defends the idea that a country's constitution should be created by the people and argues that a government without a written constitution is a form of tyranny. Paine goes to great lengths to justify the French Revolution and explains the circumstances that led to the National Assembly's Declaration of the Rights of Man. The second part of the book presents proposals for improving the conditions in Europe and England. While these suggestions were considered to be highly revolutionary at the time, democratic governments in various countries around the world took them seriously and implemented them. Notable among these proposals were significant reductions in administrative expenses and taxation, support for the elderly poor, family allowances, funding for the education of the poor, maternity grants, funeral grants, a

progressive income tax, and the limitation of armaments through treaties.

Another work of literary importance inspired by the same political event is the *French Revolution* by Thomas Carlyle, though considered by some as a very partial view of the Revolution, it is no doubt the poetic unrolling of a great historical melodrama illustrating the nemesis that comes upon the oppression of the poor. The book also contains a gallery of magnificent pen portraits of historical figures like Mirabeau, Lafayette, Danton, and Robespierre. *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens is yet another book which gives a true picture of Paris and London during the time of the French Revolution.

English literary history entered a new era with the French Revolution. English Romanticism could be viewed as a byproduct of this significant political event, emerging as it did. The publication of the *Lyrical Ballads* by Wordsworth and Coleridge in 1798 marked the beginning of Romanticism, also known as the Romantic Movement. Wordsworth abandoned the artificial style and demonstrated by practice that exquisite poetry could be composed using everyday language and topics. Younger poets like Byron, Shelley, and Keats advanced the trend.

Burke was a statesman and political thinker who dominated debates in the British Parliament during the late 1700s. His principled stand on such controversies as the American and French revolutions inspired modern political conservatism. Edmund Burke was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1729. In 1765, when the prime minister lost majority support in Parliament, King George III appointed Rockingham prime minister. Rockingham saw to it that Burke secured a seat in the House of Commons as a member of the Whig Party. One very important example



of this is his treatment of the American Revolution. Burke immediately plunged into the hot debate in Parliament over the repeal of the Stamp Act. This was a tax on newspapers and legal documents in the American colonies. Its purpose was to help pay off the British debt from the French and Indian War in North America, which had ended in 1763.

The Americans resisted the Stamp Act by boycotting English goods. Since they lost business, English merchants and manufacturers demanded that Parliament repeal this tax. Rockingham Whigs sympathized with their economic troubles. Burke also favoured repealing the tax but for a different reason. As a matter of principle, he argued that Americans should not be taxed without their consent. He quickly impressed many with his excellent debating skills and speeches.

The Rockingham government repealed the Stamp Act. But Rockingham lost support in the House of Commons within a year, and King George appointed William Pitt the Elder as the new prime minister. In 1767, Pitt's treasury minister, Charles Townshend, pushed through Parliament another series of taxes on Americans that further angered them.

### **1.1.3 Burke and the American Revolution**

The American colonists continued their cry of "no taxation without representation" in opposing the Townshend's duties. The duties were taxes on glass, paper, tea and other imports from Britain. In 1770, the unpopular taxes resulted in a violent clash, known as the Boston Massacre, between Bostonians and British troops. To calm things down, Parliament repealed the Townshend duties, except for the one on tea. When the famous Boston Tea Party took place in 1773, the Tory

government then in power decided to punish the Americans. Urged on by King George, Tory Prime Minister Lord North ordered the port of Boston closed until the colonists accepted the tea tax.

The following year, Burke, now also a lobbyist for New York's colonial legislature, made the first of two major speeches in Parliament in defence of the American colonists. Burke objected to Lord North's policy of imposing taxes on them without their consent. Burke advised the British government to leave the Americans alone to tax themselves. He predicted that they would voluntarily contribute their share for the defence of the empire. Otherwise, he concluded, the policy of forced taxation would only lead to disobedience, and, "after wading up to your eyes in blood," would result in no revenue from the Americans at all.

In March 1775, Burke delivered a speech on the escalating crisis in America. As descendants of Englishmen, Burke declared, the Americans were right to object to forced taxes. Throughout English history, he reminded his colleagues in Parliament, that taxation had always been at the centre of the English fight for freedom.

Burke's practical thinking about the dispute between the British parliament and its North American colonies began with a situation, not of his making, that is to say, the rejection of the Stamp Act by the colonists, and its withdrawal by the ministry headed by Lord Rockingham in 1765–6. The Rockingham ministry followed up this concession by way of letting the colonists alone with the explicit assertion of Parliament's right to legislate for the colonies in the Declaratory Act of 1766. The repeal of the Stamp Act was followed by the passing of the Declaratory

Act. Burke was practically successful in 1766 with the House of Commons because he was speaking for the executive.

In July 1789, the French Revolution exploded in Paris. Some in Britain applauded the extraordinary events in France for expanding the “rights of man.” But Burke did not. “As much injustice and tyranny has been practiced in a few months by a French democracy,” Burke wrote to a friend, “as in all the arbitrary monarchies in Europe.” Burke saw the revolutionary ideas let loose in France as a threat to the British system of government. In 1790, he published his most famous written work, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

Burke’s name is indissolubly connected to his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, though a more perceptive account of the causes of the Revolution of 1789 can be found in *A Letter to William Elliot* (1795), and *the Letters on a Regicide Peace* (1795–7) investigate the character and consequences of the Revolution from 1791 in a more thoroughgoing way. In an important sense, however, the judgement of posterity is right for our purposes because *Reflections* illustrate very clearly the central importance of philosophy and ‘philosophical’ history for Burke’s writing about one of the greatest changes of his day.

*Reflections* was published on 1 November 1790, less than eighteen months after the storming of the Bastille. The intervening period had been characterised by a mixture of popular violence and peaceable, if feverish political activity in France, as its absolute monarchy gave way to a constitutional monarchy. A detached observer would be unsure of the future—whether destruction and violence would predominate or whether an enduring constitutional order would emerge was

a question that events had not answered. In the event, of course, the Revolution would be characterised by violence and constitutional development alike at different times, but this was as unknowable in 1790 as it is obvious in the twenty-first century. Burke’s philosophical repertoire and historical understanding thus provided the structure of *Reflections*, and, perhaps more importantly, suggested insights into the character of the Revolution. He condemned the newly elected French National Assembly for abolishing ancient laws, confiscating the property of nobles and the Catholic Church, and driving aristocrats into exile.

Burke assaulted the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* that the National Assembly had enacted. He refused to accept the declaration’s theories about vague rights of liberty and equality for all. “By having a right to everything,” he wrote, “they want everything.”

#### 1.1.4 Thomas Paine

Thomas Paine was a pamphleteer, controversialist and international revolutionary. His *Common Sense* (1776) was a central text behind the call for American independence from Britain; his *Rights of Man* (1791–2) was the most widely read pamphlet in the movement for reform in Britain in the 1790s and for the opening decades of the nineteenth century; he was active in the French Revolution and was a member of the French National Convention between 1792 and 1795; he is seen by many as a key figure in the emergence of claims for the state’s responsibilities for welfare and educational provision, and his *Age of Reason* provided a popular deist text that remained influential throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In his own lifetime, and subsequently, he has been extensively vilified and often dismissed. Yet many





of his ideas still command wide interest and enthusiasm in readers throughout the world.

Thomas Paine was born on January 29, 1737, to a family of moderate means in Norfolk, England. His father was a Quaker and his mother was an Anglican. His career turned to journalism while in Philadelphia, and suddenly, Thomas Paine became very important. In 1776, he published *Common Sense*, a strong defence of American Independence from England. He travelled with the Continental Army and wasn't a success as a soldier, but he produced *The American Crisis* (1776-83), which helped inspire the Army. This pamphlet was so popular that, as a percentage of the population, it was read by or read to more people.

In 1791-92, he wrote *The Rights of Man* in response to criticism of the French Revolution. This work caused Paine to be labelled an outlaw in England for his anti-monarchist views. His success suggests that he was reaching the popular audience who attached diminishing weight to these traditions and was struck by his insistence on their essential equality and their right to challenge the status quo. The book immediately created a sensation. At least eight editions were published in 1791, and the work was quickly reprinted in the U.S., where it was widely distributed by the Jeffersonian societies. When Burke replied, Paine came back with *Rights of Man, Part II*, published on February 17, 1792.

What began as a defence of the French Revolution evolved into an analysis of the basic reasons for discontent in European society and a remedy for the evils of

arbitrary government, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and war. Paine spoke out effectively in favour of republicanism as against monarchy and went on to outline a plan for popular education, relief of the poor, pensions for aged people, and public works for the unemployed, all to be financed by the levying of a progressive income tax. To the ruling class Paine's proposals spelled "bloody revolution," and the government ordered the book banned and the publisher jailed. In May 1792 a prosecution for sedition was initiated against him. When the case was heard in November of that year he was outlawed—but by this time he had returned to France, having been elected as a member of the National Convention in the summer of 1792.

By 1793, he was imprisoned in France for not endorsing the execution of Louis XVI. During his imprisonment, he wrote and distributed the first part of what was to become his most famous work at the time, the anti-church text, *The Age of Reason* (1794-96). He was freed in 1794 (narrowly escaping execution) thanks to the efforts of James Monroe, then U.S. Minister to France. After his release, he stayed in France until 1802, when he sailed back to America, after an invitation by Thomas Jefferson who had met him before when he was a minister in Paris and who admired him. Back in the United States, he learned that he was seen as a great infidel, or simply forgotten for what he had done for America. He continued his critical writings, for instance against the Federalists and on religious superstition. Derided by the public and abandoned by his friends, he died on June 8, 1809, at the age of 72 in New York City.

## Recap

- ◆ The Navigation Act and other trade restrictions, initially unenforced, led to smuggling opportunities, but the enforcement of trade laws, especially under George III, sparked anger among the colonists.
- ◆ The Seven Years War and the financial burden on the colonists, exemplified by the Stamp Act, fuelled discontent until its repeal in 1766, but new customs duties in 1767 and the Boston Massacre escalated tensions.
- ◆ The Boston Tea Party, protesting interference in trade, triggered repressive measures from Britain, leading to the First Continental Congress, the gathering of arms in Concord, and the start of the American War of Independence.
- ◆ The American Revolution had a profound impact on the world, inspiring movements for representative government in France and agitations for parliamentary reform in Britain.
- ◆ The French Revolution of 1789 was triggered by the resentment of the Third Estate, representing 98% of the population, against the privileged First and Second Estates, leading to a call for equality
- ◆ The bourgeoisie, emerging as a powerful class in the Third Estate, sought political equality and aimed to eliminate feudal and royal constraints, contributing to the causes of the French Revolution
- ◆ France's involvement in costly wars, economic mismanagement, and Louis XVI's support for the American War of Independence exacerbated the nation's financial crisis, contributing to the revolutionary climate
- ◆ A decade of extreme weather conditions, poor harvests, and famine, along with economic struggles, fuelled peasant frustration and played a role in sparking the revolution
- ◆ Soaring bread prices, exacerbated by poor harvests and ineffective government policies, intensified public resentment towards the monarchy and contributed to the revolutionary fervour
- ◆ The failure of Louis XV and Louis XVI to address financial issues, implement reforms, and include nobles in the tax system heightened public dissatisfaction and anti-monarchist sentiments
- ◆ Various factors, including low wages, high corn prices, and unemployment, fuelled discontent among the poor, resulting in the Peterloo Massacre in 1819 and the subsequent demand for parliamentary reform, leading to the passage of the first Reform Bill in 1832

- ◆ The French Revolution also gave rise to English Romanticism, with Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats contributing to this literary movement that emerged in 1798 with the publication of *Lyrical Ballads*
- ◆ Edmund Burke, a prominent political thinker, played a key role in British politics during the late 1700s, advocating for principles such as consent-based taxation and influencing modern political conservatism, particularly in the context of the American Revolution
- ◆ In 1789, Burke opposed the French Revolution, viewing it as a threat to the British system of government, and published *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in 1790, criticizing the abolition of laws, property confiscation, and the Declaration of the Rights of Man
- ◆ Thomas Paine, a central figure in American independence, the French Revolution, and an advocate for welfare and education, faced vilification but retained widespread interest in his ideas
- ◆ Paine's defence of the French Revolution expanded into an analysis of societal issues, proposing solutions like republicanism, popular education, relief for the poor, pensions, and public works, leading to a sedition charge and outlaw status in England

## Objective Questions

1. Britain set up its first colony in which place in North America?
2. In the American War of Independence, who were persons led the British forces and the American forces ?
3. Who wrote the famous The Declaration of Independence, adopted on 4th July 1776?
4. Who formed the National Assembly in France in 1789?
5. To whom was the taxes called Tithes payable by the peasants in the eighteenth century France?:
6. Which class of society in France was behind the French Revolution?
7. Who wrote the book Reflections on the revolutions in France?
8. Who authored the book 'Age of Reason'?

## Answers

1. Virginia
2. British forces by Lord Cornwallis and American forces by George Washington
3. Thomas Jefferson
4. Third Estate
5. Church.
6. Middle class
7. Edmund Burke
8. Thomas Paine

## Self Assessment Questions

1. Why did the slogan “No taxation without representation” become important in the American Revolution?
2. How did trade restrictions create dissatisfaction among the American colonies?
3. What role did the Boston Tea Party play in worsening relations between Britain and the colonies?
4. How did the Declaration of Independence express the idea of popular sovereignty?
5. Why was the Third Estate dissatisfied with the social order in France?
6. How did Enlightenment ideas challenge monarchy and inherited privilege?
7. What were the major effects of the French Revolution on Britain?
8. Why did Edmund Burke oppose the French Revolution?
9. How did Thomas Paine defend the idea of people’s rights?
10. In what ways did revolutionary politics influence English literary culture?



## Assignments

1. Explain three key reasons that contributed to the start of the American Revolution.
2. Compare and contrast the roles of the First, Second and Third Estates in French society leading up to the French Revolution.
3. Discuss the impacts of the French Revolution on the literature and politics of Britain in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.
4. Analyze the philosophical ideas of the Age of Enlightenment and how they influenced the French Revolution.
5. Write an essay evaluating Edmund Burke's criticisms of the French Revolution in his "Reflections on the Revolution in France." Discuss whether you agree or disagree with his perspective.

## Suggested Reading

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6. Cobban, Alfred (1968). *Aspects of the French Revolution*. New York: George Braziller.
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8. Fremont-Barnes, Gregory; Ryerson, Richard A, eds. (2006). *Encyclopedia of the American Revolutionary War: A Political, Social, and Military History*. ABC-CLIO.

9. Harlow Giles Ungar, *Thomas Paine and the Clarion Call for American Independence* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2019)
10. Jensen, Merrill (2004). *The Founding of a Nation: A History of the American Revolution 1763–1776*. Hackett Publishing.

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## UNIT

# Romantic Revival

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain Romanticism as a reaction against eighteenth-century rationalism and neo-classicism
- ◆ identify the major features of Romantic literature, including imagination, emotion, individualism, nature and medievalism
- ◆ discuss the contributions of William Blake, Walter Scott, Jane Austen, William Wordsworth and John Keats
- ◆ recognise the influence of the French Revolution and social change on Romantic thought
- ◆ relate the Romantic Revival to changes in British literary taste and cultural life

### Prerequisite

Think of two different ways of looking at the world. One way values order, rules, reason and discipline. Another way values emotion, imagination, freedom and personal experience. The eighteenth century largely preferred the first way, often called rationalism or neo-classicism. The Romantic Revival grew as a response to this attitude. Romantic writers believed that human feeling, imagination and individuality were as important as reason.

The Romantic period also encouraged writers to turn towards nature, folk traditions, medieval stories, simple language and ordinary human experience. Instead of writing only for elite society, many writers wanted literature to speak to the deeper emotions of common people. The French Revolution, with its ideals of liberty and equality, also strengthened the Romantic spirit. In this unit, you will meet writers such as Blake, Wordsworth, Scott, Austen and Keats, who shaped the literary imagination of the period in different ways.

## Keywords

Enlightenment, Romanticism, Classicism / neo-classicism, Jacobites, Nature, Ballads, Individualism

## Discussion

If the eighteenth century is called the Age of Rationalism, the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is often called the Age of Romanticism. There were indeed other powerful influences at work but romanticism was the dominant one, at least in literature and fine arts.

To a broad sense, romanticism was a reaction against the form and conventions of eighteenth-century literature. Enlightenment told the people how exactly to think, feel and behave. The result was that rules, formulas and conventions reigned supreme in literature in fine arts and in society generally. Romanticism was a revolt against classical restraint, intellectual discipline and artificial standards. Romanticism did not oppose everything for which the past stood as literary romanticism proceeded from neo-classicism. A writer or an artist is neither exclusively classical nor romantic. Wordsworth was not entirely free of classicism. Pope was not wholly unromantic.

While Enlightenment and neo-classicism emphasized reason, romanticism emphasized feelings and imagination. During the Age of Reason, both feeling and imagination were kept under the restraint of taste and decorum. A cultured person was expected to check his feelings and imagination as “something plebian and uncultured”. Lord Chesterfield told his son that he had so laughed since he had the use of his reason. The restraint which was exercised in polite society was

expected to be maintained in literature and fine arts. Only those sentiments were allowed to be expressed which could be suitably displayed in a drawing room.

The romanticists asserted the rights of feelings and imagination. According to them, feeling was more important than reason. Novalis wrote: “The heart is the key to the world” Goethe maintained that “feeling is everything”. Imagination must be free from its shackles. The romanticists believed that there should be no check on genius and hence men must follow their imagination. If a work of literature or art shows the sovereignty of reason with measure, harmony and sympathy in representation, it may be called classical. If it is characterised by the dominance of feeling and imagination it can be called romantic.

As feelings and imagination differ in each person, romanticism involves the accentuation of the personal or individual. Hence, some of the writers styled romanticism as “the liberation of personality” or “the Emancipation of the ego.” During the Age of Reason, there was standardisation which avoided local variations and individual diversities. The individual was subordinated to the general or universal. The rules of neo-classics demanded that the subject matter of literature must be limited to that which is universal in human experience. As opposed to this, romanticism emphasises the particular and the personal. It was not contrary to good taste to exploit one’s





personality. Accentuation of the person accounts for the diversity of subjects treated in romantic literature and art. The various romanticists led their imaginations to roam far and wide. What was interesting to them was the primitive, the grotesque, the supernatural, the infinite, the exotic, the medieval, the pastoral, the startling and anything novel.

The origins of Romanticism cannot be traced to one figure or one specific movement. There were stirrings in various religious movements that had given way to mere acceptance of certain dogmas and obedience to the authority of the church. Gradually, religion became as cold in its formality as the literature of that time. In Germany, the reaction against dogmatism appeared in the form of Pietism, which emphasized the inner spirit and emotions rather than outward conformity. It considered reason as presumptuous and misleading, asserting the value and dignity of the individual human soul, with an emphasis on God's love for the individual. The Quakers, Baptists, and Methodists in England protested against the age of reason. The Methodist movement rekindled a sense of religious order and enthusiasm in England, bringing feelings once more into repute. Methodist preachers proclaimed their message with fervent enthusiasm and their hymns were full of emotions. They sounded a deep personal note by emphasizing God's interest in every human being and stressing the supreme value of the individual soul and its preciousness in the sight of God. The opening line of a hymn by Charles Wesley was: "Jesus, Lover of my soul." There was also a reaction in the Roman Catholic Church against reason.

Romanticism did not leave any area of life untouched, but it found its widest expression in literature. Neo-classicists had shown a preference for city life as

contrasted with life in the country. To quote Dr. Johnson, "a man is tired of London, he is tired of life." Life in the country without society, without coffee houses, without news was considered dreary and monotonous.

Some romanticists regarded folk poetry as the only true poetry because it was the spontaneous expression of the natural impulses of man. They also held legends and myths in high regard. Numerous poets were inspired to write in the manner of the folk song. Collections of folk poetry, folk tales and fairy tales were published. Among them were Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) and Herder's *Volkslieder* (1778-1779). The Grimm brothers published their collection of folk and fairy tales in 1812.

The rationalists of the eighteenth century regarded the medieval period of history as a period of barbarism and superstition. They called them the Dark Ages. Hume treated the Middle Ages with contempt. Moliere Racine and Corneille simply ignored the Middle Ages. Voltaire compared the study of the Middle Ages with a study of the doings of wolves and bears. However, the romanticists considered the Middle Ages as the Golden Age. They found in that period more justice, more happiness, more variety, more colour, more romance and more adventure. Novalis, another German romanticist, praised the Middle Ages as the age of spiritual unity, profound humanitarianism and joy in poverty. In a series of Waverly novels, Sir Walter Scott revived interest in the Middle Ages in Britain. His novels were widely read in Europe. In France, medievalism became almost a mania. Young men wore their hair long and grew beards like the people of the Middle Ages. The ladies of France copied the medieval style in their headdresses and jewellery. Masked balls were staged in medieval

dress. Plays, operas and novels were built around medieval subjects.

The period between the late 1780s & 1790s until the 1850s came to be known as the 'Romantic Age'. Famous poets, apart from William Wordsworth, of the Romantic Age include William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, Percy Shelley, Walter Alva Scott, Robert Burns, and Lord Byron. Romanticism had a significant effect on the sociopolitical scenario of Europe, and then later, of South America, as the romantic thinkers had a great influence on strong social values like liberalism, radicalism, conservatism, and patriotism.

### 1.2.1 William Blake

William Blake (1757–1827) is famous today as an imaginative and original English poet, painter, engraver and mystic. He is regarded as one of the central figures in Romanticism and is best known as the author-artist of *Songs of Innocence and Experience* which combines simple language with complex subject matters, and for his epic poems, *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, that contrasted the canon of classical epic.

Growing up, Blake was considered "different" and he was homeschooled. At age 8 or 10, he reported seeing angels and spangled stars, but it was a world where having visions wasn't so peculiar. His parents recognised his artistic talent and his father bought him plaster casts and gave him small change to buy prints at auction houses. That's where he was first exposed to the works of Michelangelo and Raffaello. From age 10 to 14, he went to drawing school, and after that, he started his apprenticeship with an engraver, where he stayed for the next seven years. Blake finished his apprenticeship at age 21 and became a professional engraver.

For some time, he was enrolled in the Royal Academy of Arts in London. In 1783, he published *Poetical Sketches* and opened his print shop with fellow apprentice James Parker in 1784. It was a turbulent time in history: the American revolution was coming to a close, and the French revolution was approaching. It was a period marked by instability, which affected him enormously.

The engraver's name was James Basire and he was the official engraver of the Society of Antiquaries and the Royal Society. He never had more than two apprentices. Near the end of his apprenticeship, Blake was sent to Westminster Abbey to draw the tombs of the ancient kings and queens of England. This "gothicized" Blake's imaginary, as he acquired a feeling of the medieval, which proved to be a lasting influence throughout his career.

In 1790, Blake and his wife moved to North Lambeth and he had a decade of success, where he made enough money to produce his best-known works. These include *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and *Songs of Experience* (1794) which are the two states of the soul. These were first written separately and then published together in 1795. *Songs of Innocence* is a collection of lyric poems, and superficially they appear to be written for children. Their form, however, sets them apart: they're hand-printed and hand-coloured works of art. The poems do have a nursery-rhyme quality about them.

*Songs of Experience* presents the same themes as *Songs of Innocence* but is examined from the opposite perspective. "The Tyger" is one of the most notable examples; it's a poem that's seen in dialogue with "The Lamb of Innocence" where the speaker asks the lamb about



the Creator who made it. The second stanza answers the question. "The Tyger" consists of a series of questions that are not answered, and is a source of energy and fire, something uncontrollable. God made both "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" and by stating this, Blake defied the idea of moral opposites.

*Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790–1793), a prose work containing paradoxical aphorisms, presents the devil as a heroic figure; while *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793) combines radicalism with ecstatic religious imagery.

After Sussex, Blake returned to London and started working on *Milton* (1804–1808) and *Jerusalem* (1804–20), his two epic poems, the latter of which has its premise in a poem contained in the preface of the former. In *Milton*, Blake turned away from the classical epics—while typically this format deals with war, *Milton* was about poetic inspiration, featuring Milton coming back to Earth and trying to explain what had gone wrong. He wants to set mankind against the movement towards war, which he identifies as the celebration of the classics and wants to rectify with a celebration of Christianity.

In *Jerusalem*, Blake portrayed the "sleep of Albion," a figure for the nation, and it encouraged people to think beyond their limits. Jerusalem is a utopian idea of how mankind can live. Around 1818, he wrote the poem "The Universal Gospel." In parallel to his poetic activity, his illustration business thrived. His Bible illustrations were popular objects, and in 1826, he was commissioned to illustrate Dante's *Divine Comedy*. While this work was cut short by his death, the existing illustrations show that they're not just decorative pieces, but are a commentary on the source material.

William Blake died on August 12, 1827, and was buried in a ground for dissenters. On the day of his death, he still worked on his Dante illustrations.

### 1.2.2 Walter Scott

Scott's father was a lawyer, and his mother was the daughter of a physician. From his earliest years, Scott was fond of listening to his elderly relatives' accounts and stories of the Scottish Border, and he soon became a voracious reader of poetry, history, drama, fairy tales and romances.

Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, influential novelist, poet, historian, and biographer, Sir Walter Scott studied law as an apprentice to his father before his writing career flourished. At age 25, he published his first work, *The Chase, and William and Helen* (1796), a translation of two Romantic ballads by the German balladeer G.A. Bürger.

Scott became an instant best seller with historical narrative poems like "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" (1805), followed by "The Lady of the Lake" (1810), "Rokeby" (1813), and "The Lord of the Isles" (1815). He also wrote immensely successful historical novels. *Waverley*, which he published anonymously in 1814, is now considered the first historical novel in Western literature. This story revolves around the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. Scott's many other novels include *Ivanhoe* (1819), *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818), *Rob Roy* (1817), *The Antiquary* (1816), and *Guy Mannering* (1815).

After living in Naples, Italy in 1831, Scott returned home as his health declined, and he died in Abbotsford, Roxburgh, Scotland, on September 21, 1832.

### 1.2.3 Jane Austen

Jane Austen, one of England's foremost novelists, was never publicly acknowledged as a writer during her lifetime. Austen was born on December 16, 1775, at Steventon Rectory in Hampshire, the seventh child of a country clergyman and his wife, George and Cassandra Austen. Her closest friend was her only sister, Cassandra, almost three years her senior.

As a child, Austen began writing comic stories, now referred to as the Juvenilia. Her first mature work, composed when she was about 19, was a novella, *Lady Susan*, written in epistolary form (as a series of letters). This early fiction was preserved by her family but was not published until long after her death.

In her early twenties, Austen wrote the novels that later became *Sense and Sensibility* (first called "Elinor and Marianne") and *Pride and Prejudice* (originally "First Impressions"). Her father sent a letter offering the manuscript of "First Impressions" to a publisher soon after it was finished in 1797, but his offer was rejected by return post. Austen continued writing, revising "Elinor and Marianne" and completing a novel called "Susan" (later to become *Northanger Abbey*). In 1803 Austen sold "Susan" for £10 to a publisher, who promised early publication, but the manuscript languished in his archives until it was repurchased a year before Austen's death for the price the publisher had paid her.

When Austen was 25 years old, her father retired, and she and Cassandra moved with their parents to Bath, residing first at 4 Sydney Place. During the five years she lived in Bath (1801-1806), Austen began one novel, *The Watsons*, which

she never completed. After Mr. Austen's death, Austen's brothers contributed funds to assist their sisters and widowed mother. Mrs. Austen and her daughters set up housekeeping with their close friend Martha Lloyd. Together they moved to Southampton in 1806 and economized by sharing a house with Frank and his family.

### 1.2.4 William Wordsworth

It can be rightly deduced from the various works of William Wordsworth that he admired the peace and tranquility he found in nature. Moreover, in some of his poems, Wordsworth indicated how dearly he yearned for the peace he found in observing nature. For instance, "Daffodils." Wordsworth is well-known to be a nature worshipper. Throughout his works, it is clearly evident that Wordsworth believed nature is a living soul, and is present in every atom of the tangible universe, like the mountains, forests, rivers, sky, human beings, and animals. In his masterpiece, *The Prelude*, which also happens to be a biographical depiction of Wordsworth's own life, he expresses his faith in the soul of the universe, which is nothing but the soul of the earth. Reminiscent to the ancient Greek philosophers like Socrates and Aristotle, Wordsworth, too, believed that nature is the greatest teacher for mankind, and promoted this perspective thoroughly in his works *The Table Turned*.

After studying all of these things, one gets a glimpse into the immense depth of Wordsworth's poetry, particularly for nature and the love for it, which forms the core basis of Romanticism. The biggest contribution William Wordsworth made to romantic poetry, is to give perceptions of seeing, observing, and understanding nature, and its innumerable secrets. Therefore, Wordsworth is rightly credited to be the *Poet of Nature* by his admirers





and critics alike. This way of thinking took a strong position in the works of the later generation of romantic poets, not only in the United Kingdom, but also throughout Europe, and the Americas. In this way, it wouldn't be wrong if we say that William Wordsworth is the father of Romanticism.

Through his poems, Wordsworth speaks about how being around nature and engaging in natural sports like fishing, boating, swimming, etc. influenced his personality. He, therefore, advocated for people to return to a natural part of life, which has faded away in big cities like London. Further, he discussed his life at the university, where he felt loneliness in the big city, and how boring life had become. He also mentions his experiences while travelling through Europe extensively, in countries like France, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, etc.

*Lyrical Ballads* is undisputedly one of the greatest collections of poems, not only of the romantic age but of all time. The collection was anonymously published in the year 1798, and the second edition was published under Wordsworth's name in 1800, the third in 1802, and the fourth edition in 1805. The second edition came to be known as the "*Preface to Lyrical Ballads*", as he also wrote a preface for it. Factually, *Lyrical Ballads* was a compilation of the works of William Wordsworth, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. However, the fame which Wordsworth got after the launch was immense, and remains unmatched even today. The poems which were later discovered to be written by Wordsworth have gone on to become the epitomes of romantic poetry, especially in terms of their expression, structure, style, conceptualisation, and emotions.

*Lyrical Ballads* inspired a generation of poets to write romantic poetry, and consequently, the glorification of nature,

emotions, human relationships, and spirituality, which are found extensively in Wordsworth's works, is heavily found in the works of other poets of the Romantic era. Though poets like PB Shelly and Lord Byron took a different approach to romanticism, they also seem to be inspired by Wordsworth.

Wordsworth's passion for democracy, as is clear in his "Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff" (also called "Apology for the French Revolution"), is the result of his two youthful trips to France. In November 1791 Wordsworth returned to France, where he attended sessions of the National Assembly and the Jacobin Club.

### 1.2.5 John Keats

The English Romantic poet John Keats was born on October 31, 1795, in London. While Wordsworth was reforming poetry or upholding moral laws, with Scott merely telling romantic stories, Byron voicing his own egoism and the political discontent of the times, and Shelley advocating impossible reforms, Keats lived away from men and politics, worshipping beauty like a devotee. The might slogans of the French Revolution and the deafening cries of the Napoleonic campaign blew over his head. He was perfectly content to write what was in his own heart, or to reflect some splendour of the natural world as he saw or dreamt it to be. Keats' poetry reveals almost all the features of Romantic poetry, such as subjectivity, escapism, addition of strangeness to beauty, love of nature, melancholy notes and lyricism.

Keats, referred to as "a pure Romantic" poet, was part of the Second Generation of Romantics. Among other things, Keats is regarded as a Romantic poet for his 'fondness of sensation, the rich aesthetic of his language and his love for nature'. Know more through this analysis of John

Keats as a Romantic poet. Romanticism in Europe and America was partly in response to developments like industrialisation, the age of revolutions and the scientific rationalisation of nature. In the fields of art and philosophy, the period would see the rejection of established ideas of balance, restraint, proportion and objectivity in favour of the values of 'imaginative spontaneity, wonder and emotional self-expression'. The cultural movement would thus redefine the fundamental ways in which people in Western cultures thought about themselves and their world.

John Keats, along with Shelley and Byron, is regarded as the most prominent among the second generation of Romantic poets, following the likes of Wordsworth and Coleridge, who belonged to the first generation. Born in the age of transition and revolution, the Romantics had quite consciously set out to transform how people perceived the world. For them, 'imagination was the supreme faculty of the mind' as opposed to the traditional view of the superiority of reason. "Nature" was often presented by them as a work of art born from the divine imagination, displacing the rationalistic view of the universe as a machine. The Romantics asserted the importance of individualism; and emphasised instinct, intuition and the power of emotion as opposed to pure logical reason. They declared freedom from what they saw as mechanical rules. Moreover, they advocated boldness over restraint; and suggestiveness and symbolism over the neoclassical ideas of clarity.

An early imitator of Spenser, Leigh Hunt and Milton, John Keats showed tremendous growth in a short span of time and developed his craft to match the best in the business. His distinct choice of subjects and style made him stand out among other major poets of his time. He

was thus a poet of *legend and myth*, of *romance* and *chivalric tale*, his style laden with *rich ornamented diction* bringing out the suggestive beauty of his art.

Keats is considered a Romantic for his fondness of sensation, the rich aesthetic of his language, his fascination towards Medieval and Hellenic themes, his love for nature and his poetic quest for true beauty. Like other Romantics, imagination played a vital role in his poetry. He would once write to Shelly "My Imagination is a Monastery and I am its Monk". Keats's imagination was however supported by what he called "negative capability": "when man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason". The poem "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" is cited as a prime example of this theory.

Keats's once famously said, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever". His devotedness to nature and beauty may be observed in his various creations, where almost like a painter he paints his creations with vivid colours and sensual imagery. Poems like "Endymion", the "Pot of Basil" and "The Eve of St. Agnes" are noteworthy. Such poems stimulated the imagination of several readers, including notable artists and illustrators, particularly from the 1840s through the 1930s.

John Keats died in obscurity at the young age of 25, receiving little appreciation during his short career. He was however later revisited and revived by forthcoming generations and emerged to be considered as a profound Romantic poet. Poetry did not come easily to him; though his dedicated efforts and devotion to the art may have awakened his genius within. His rich compositions, intending to be truthful to his imagination and emotions, lacked any philosophical theory



or morality. He was thus referred to as “a pure Romantic” poet by notable critic and writer Middleton Murry, an observation that many would agree on.

The ideas of the French Revolution such as liberty, equality, and fraternity encouraged the growth of the romantic spirit. The literature and arts of ancient Greece and Rome and the writings of philosophers like Rousseau also had an impact on the Romantic Revival. Victor

Hugo defined romanticism as liberalism in literature. The romantic outlook emphasised spontaneity of expression and encouraged man’s right to utter his thoughts without restrictions.

The spirit of the Romantic Revival was best expressed in the novels of Walter Scott. Even the prose writings of Charles Lamb were coloured by romantic sentiments.

## Recap

1. The Age of Romanticism, a reaction against 18th-century rationalism, emphasized feelings and imagination, asserting individuality and exploring diverse, personal subjects in literature and art.
2. Romanticism touched all aspects of life, with a focus on literature, rejecting urban-centric views, valuing folk poetry, legends, and myths; it challenged the rationalists’ negative view of the Middle Ages, considering it a Golden Age.
3. The period from the late 1780s to the 1850s, known as the Romantic Age
4. William Blake, a central figure in Romanticism, was a poet, painter, engraver, and mystic known for Songs of Innocence and Experience, exploring complex themes with simple language, and for his epic poems Milton and Jerusalem, influenced by his turbulent times.
5. Walter Scott, born in Edinburgh, Scotland, immersed himself in Scottish Border stories and diverse literature from an early age, eventually becoming a renowned novelist, poet, and historian with influential works like The Lay of the Last Minstrel and Waverley, often considered the first historical novel.
6. Jane Austen, born in 1775, a prominent English novelist, spent her early years writing comic stories and later produced significant works like Lady Susan, Sense and Sensibility, and Pride and Prejudice, facing rejection before achieving posthumous recognition.
7. William Wordsworth’s profound admiration for nature is evident in his poetry, particularly “Daffodils,” where he expresses a deep yearning for the peace found in nature, reflecting his belief that nature is a living soul present in every aspect of the universe.

8. Wordsworth's role as the Poet of Nature and father of Romanticism is highlighted by his influential contributions to romantic poetry
9. Lyrical Ballads, a groundbreaking collection by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, became a hallmark of romantic poetry
10. John Keats, a pure Romantic poet, distanced himself from political turmoil, cherishing nature, beauty, and imagination in his poetry, embodying the key features of Romanticism.
11. Keats, part of the Second Generation of Romantics, exemplifies Romantic poetry through his rich aesthetic language, love for nature, and rejection of traditional norms, contributing to a cultural movement redefining Western perceptions during the age of revolutions.
12. Keats, a Romantic known for his fondness for sensation, rich language, and poetic quest for true beauty, emphasized imagination supported by "negative capability," leaving a profound impact on subsequent generations despite his initial obscurity
13. The Romantic Revival, expressed in Charles Lamb's prose and Walter Scott's novels, emphasized spontaneity, individual expression, and a liberal outlook, reflecting the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity from the French Revolution.

## Objective Questions

1. When did the Renaissance period begin?
2. Who is the author of the work *Pride and Prejudice* ?
3. Who wrote Song of Innocence?
4. Which literary work narrated the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745?
5. Which Romanticist poet is called as 'Pure Romantic poet'
6. What was the policy of Romanticism influenced by?
7. What type of poetry is Romanticist poetry?
8. Who said Romanticism is a 'liberalism in literature'?
9. Who were quakers?
10. Who wrote the letter "To the Bishop of Llandaff"?



## Answers

1. 16<sup>th</sup> century
2. Jean Austein
3. William Black
4. Waverly
5. Keats
6. Nature and Individual feelings
7. Progressive poetry
8. Victor Hugo
9. Quakers are people who belong to the Religious Society of Friends, a historically Protestant Christian set of denominations.
10. William Wordsworth

## Self Assessment Questions

1. How did Romanticism differ from the rationalism of the eighteenth century?
2. Why did Romantic writers give importance to imagination and emotion?
3. What is meant by the “liberation of personality” in Romantic literature?
4. How did folk poetry and ballads influence Romantic writing?
5. Why did Romantic writers show interest in the Middle Ages?
6. How does William Blake combine simplicity and deep meaning in his poetry?
7. Why is Walter Scott important in the development of the historical novel?
8. How does Wordsworth present nature as a teacher?
9. Why is John Keats described as a poet of beauty and imagination?
10. How did the ideals of the French Revolution encourage Romantic writing?

## Assignments

1. Explain the key features of Romantic poetry and how they differ from earlier literary traditions. Cite examples from the works of William Blake and William Wordsworth.
2. What major cultural and political events influenced the emergence of Romanticism? Discuss with reference to specific examples.
3. Analyze William Wordsworth's views on nature as reflected in his poetry. Cite examples from at least 2 of his poems.
4. Discuss the contributions of John Keats to Romantic poetry. Provide examples from his important works.
5. Compare and contrast the poetry styles and themes of William Blake and John Keats. Cite specific poems to support your analysis.

## Suggested Reading

1. David Daiches, *Critical Approaches to Literature London*, 1956 (Indian Edition, Orient Longman, 1967) T.S. Eliot, *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, London, Faber and Faber, 1933.
2. M.H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* New York Oxford University Press, 1953.
3. Rene Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism 1750-1950*, Vol. 2 (London: Jonathan Cope, 1955).
4. Wimsalt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism : A Short History* Vol.3, London, Routledge Kegan Paul, 1957



## UNIT

# Agrarian, Industrial and Commercial Revolutions

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the meaning and importance of the Agrarian Revolution in Britain
- ◆ identify the major agricultural changes that improved productivity
- ◆ describe the Industrial Revolution and its effects on production, labour and society
- ◆ explain the Commercial Revolution and its connection with trade, banking, markets and capitalism
- ◆ analyse the positive and negative consequences of agrarian, industrial and commercial change

### Prerequisite

To understand this unit, imagine Britain changing from a mainly rural society into an industrial and commercial power. In the countryside, old patterns of farming slowly gave way to new methods, improved tools, enclosure, crop rotation and better livestock management. These changes increased agricultural production, but they also displaced many rural workers and pushed them towards towns.

At the same time, factories, machines, steam power and new transport systems transformed production. Goods could now be produced faster, cheaper and in larger quantities. Towns expanded, workers migrated, and new social problems appeared. Along with this, trade widened across regions and continents. Banks, stock exchanges, insurance, navigation, overseas markets and commercial networks helped the rise of capitalism. This unit therefore connects three major changes: the reorganisation of agriculture, the rise of industry and the expansion of commerce.

## Keywords

Open field system, Crop rotation system, Common field system, Steamships, Cotton, Unemployment, Chartist, Insurance, Stock exchange

## Discussion

The term “Agrarian Revolution” implies the significant changes that occurred in the agricultural methods of England during the second half of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century. During this Revolution, the open field system disappeared, crop rotation was introduced, and scientific methods were applied to agriculture. Smallholdings were replaced by large farms. The Agricultural Revolution led to an unprecedented increase in agricultural production in Britain, thanks to improvements in labour and land productivity between the mid-17th and late 19th centuries.

The causes of the revolution were many. First of all, the old open-field system was wasteful of land because, according to this arrangement, every year one of the three fields was to be out of cultivation. Secondly, the old system of land distribution was wasteful of time. A farmer’s holdings were scattered, so he had to walk considerable distances to reach the remote strips of his land. Thirdly, there was the necessity of conforming to the customs of the village, which made experiments in agricultural methods impossible. There were other causes as well. In the eighteenth century, the population was increasing, and thus more food was needed. However, the yield could not be enlarged under the old system of cultivation, so it had to be replaced by another. Due to the scarcity of food materials, there was a rise in prices. The old-fashioned farmers believed that they could earn more money if they produced

more. This idea served as an incentive for them to improve their agricultural methods.

For the reallocation of lands in consolidated blocks which could be enclosed, a number of Enclosure Acts were passed in the reign of George II and George III. Enclosure Acts was the legal process in England during the 18th century of enclosing a number of small landholdings to create one larger farm. Once enclosed, the use of the land became restricted to the owner and ceased to be common land for communal use. In England and Wales, the term is also used for the process that ended the ancient system of arable farming in open fields. When an Enclosure Act was passed a commissioner was appointed to visit the village concerned and carry out the work of reallocating the land. There were many cases of the poor peasants being not satisfied with the reallocation. Such people sold away their small holdings to wealthy businessmen of the city who were eager to possess lands of their own. The final result of this tendency was that the class of rural inhabitants known as yeomen disappeared.

One of the advantages of the enclosure system was that it gave scope for many enterprising people to do experiments. One such person who did some pioneering work in the field of agricultural improvement was Jethro Tull of Berkshire. He was the inventor of a drill for sowing seeds. He did much important experimental work in connection with the depth to which





seeds should be sown and the amount which should be sown per acre. He also emphasized the necessity of careful selection of seeds if good crops were to be obtained.

Another pioneer was Walpole's brother-in-law, Charles Townshend of Norfolk. He adopted Tull's principles in working his estate at Rainham and paid much attention to the question of the rotation of crops. He introduced the Norfolk or four-course rotation of turnips, barley, clover, rye-grass, and wheat. These measures prevented unproductive fallow and enabled him to carry more stock on his lands, and more stock meant more manure, which in turn led to still better crops and therefore to still more stock. His innovations made Norfolk a leading agricultural country, with the result that in thirty years the rental of one farm rose from 180 pounds to 800 pounds a year.

The work of Townshend was continued by Thomas Coke of Holkham in Norfolk. He followed the precepts of Tull and in addition, fed the soil with manures including bones. As a matter of fact, he was one of the first farmers to use bones as manure. In nine years he was able to grow excellent wheat crops, and by means of clover and other roots, he was able to make his land carry three times as many sheep and cattle as it had ever done before. He also introduced new artificial foods such as oil cake that led the way in fattening cattle for the London markets. He held yearly meetings of farmers at his house, and at these meetings, farming topics were discussed and much advice was given and received. He changed the appearance of the countryside by planting trees on his land. It is estimated that the annual rental of his estate rose from 2,200 pounds in 1776 to 20,000 pounds in 1816.

While Norfolk landlords were thus making great improvements in arable farming, a Leicestershire farmer, Robert Bakewell was revolutionising English methods of stock breeding. Up to this time, sheep had been valued chiefly for their wool, the production of mutton had been only secondary. Bakewell was the first to turn his attention to the production of meat as the main consideration of stock breeders. By patient choice and experiment, he succeeded in producing a new breed of sheep which fattened quickly and weighed heavy. His success attracted the attention of many. Farmers from far and wide visited his farm at Dishley and became converted to his new methods. Bakewell succeeded in producing a breed of sheep which fattened quickly. For the first time in history, wholesale slaughter of stock stopped. Salted meat was replaced by fresh beef and mutton. Others who did pioneering work in this field were George Culley, Charles Colling and John Ellman.

Royal patronage was also given to the movement of revolutionising agricultural methods. George affectionately known to his subjects as 'Farmer George', established a model farm at Windsor. Much of the success of the movement was due to the writings of agricultural writers, the most famous of whom was Arthur Young. When a Board of Agriculture was established in 1793, Young was made its secretary. He made a vigorous crusade in favour of enclosures, large farms and longer leases, and made the new methods more widely known by his writings.

With the advent of the enclosure system, the English banking system also grew. It was a time when even wealthy landlords did not have enough money to enclose their land and make other improvements. As a result, they had to borrow money from the banks. Due to the enclosure

system, many small, independent farmers were forced to sell their lands. They either became paid labourers or moved to the cities in search of employment. They were no longer able to gather firewood from the common land. During the process of land redistribution, many poor people were unable to prove their legal right to their lands. This led to disappointment and added to the growing number of paupers and unemployed individuals. Eventually, even the Commons were enclosed as part of the system. While this measure was beneficial for national production, it had a negative impact on the poor peasants, as it deprived them of their ability to graze their cattle and gather firewood from the Commons.

### 1.3.1 Crop Rotation

One of the most important innovations of the Agricultural Revolution was the development of the Norfolk four-course rotation, which greatly increased crop and livestock yields by improving soil fertility and reducing fallow.

Crop rotation is the practice of growing a series of dissimilar types of crops in the same area in sequential seasons to help restore plant nutrients and mitigate the build-up of pathogens and pests that often occur when one plant species is continuously cropped. Rotation can also improve soil structure and fertility by alternating deep-rooted and shallow-rooted plants. The Norfolk System, as it is now known, rotates crops so that different crops are planted with the result that different kinds and quantities of nutrients are taken from the soil as the plants grow. An important feature of the Norfolk four-field system was that it used labour at times when demand was not at peak levels. Planting cover crops such as

turnips and clover was not permitted under the common field system because they interfered with access to the fields and other people's livestock could graze the turnips. It was the farmers in Flanders (in parts of France and current-day Belgium) that discovered a still more effective four-field crop rotation system, using turnips and clover (a legume) as forage crops to replace the three-year crop rotation fallow year. The four-field rotation system allowed farmers to restore soil fertility and restore some of the plant nutrients removed from the crops. Turnips first show up in the probate records in England as early as 1638 but were not widely used until about 1750. Fallow land was about 20% of the arable area in England in 1700 before turnips and clover were extensively grown.

### 1.3.2 Significance of the Agricultural Revolution

The Agricultural Revolution in Britain proved to be a major turning point, allowing the population to far exceed earlier peaks and sustain the country's rise to industrial preeminence. Although evidence-based advice on farming began to appear in England in the mid-17th century, the overall agricultural productivity of Britain grew significantly only later. It is estimated that total agricultural output grew 2.7-fold between 1700 and 1870 and output per worker at a similar rate. The Agricultural Revolution gave Britain at the time the most productive agriculture in Europe, with 19th-century yields as much as 80% higher than the Continental average. Even as late as 1900, British yields were rivalled only by Denmark, Netherlands, and Belgium. But Britain's lead eroded as European countries experienced their own agricultural revolutions, raising grain



yields on average by 60% in the century preceding World War I. Interestingly, the Agricultural Revolution in Britain did not result in overall productivity per hectare of agriculture that would rival productivity in China, where intensive cultivation (including multiple annual cropping in many areas) had been practised for many centuries. Towards the end of the 19th century, the substantial gains in British agricultural productivity were rapidly offset by competition from cheaper imports, made possible by the exploitation of colonies and advances in transportation, refrigeration, and other technologies.

### 1.3.3 Industrial Revolution

The term “Industrial Revolution” was coined by Auguste Blanqui French economist, in 1837 to denote the economic and social changes arising out of the transition from industries carried in the homes with simple instruments, to industries in factories with power-driven machinery in Britain. but it came into vogue when Arnold J. Toynbee, the great historian, used it in 1882. However, historians question the appropriateness of the term on the grounds that the Industrial Revolution covers a period far too long to justify a single label. The period is from about 1740 to about 1850 in Britain and from 1815 to the end of the nineteenth century in Europe. Moreover, the term “Revolution” is misleading for describing a complicated series of forces, processes and discoveries which worked very slowly but gradually and created a new economic organisation. It is contended that it is better to call it evolution and not revolution. It is also suggested that instead of calling it the Industrial Revolution, it should be called “The Transition of Industrialism”. In spite of these objections, the term industrial Revolution is preferred and is in common usage.

Up to the middle of the eighteenth century, European society was mainly agricultural. The Industrial Revolution brought a series of changes in the methods of manufacture, production and distribution and drastically affected the economic and social life of the people.

It transformed an overwhelmingly agricultural society into an industrial society. This revolution was not a revolution in the normal sense of the word. Revolutions are generally associated with suddenness, violence and bloodshed. However, the Industrial Revolution was free from all these characteristics. It was a long, slow process of change, beginning obscurely, we cannot say precisely when, and only ending recently, if indeed it has ended yet.

#### 1.3.3.1 Why Did It Begin In England?

Political and economic conditions in England in the latter half of the eighteenth century were most suitable for the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in that country. It enriched her and gave her a lead over other European countries. It spread to the main Continent of Europe and further abroad almost fifty years later. It influenced Belgium, France and the United States only after the fall of Napoleon in 1815. Germany was affected still later and the East European countries continued to be mostly agricultural right up to the end of the nineteenth century.

The Industrial Revolution was preceded by the Agrarian Revolution in England. Jethro Tull (1674-1741) invented a drill which deposited the seeds in straight furrows with adequate space in between to help luxurious growth. Tull is rightly called the ‘father of scientific agriculture’. Viscount Townshend (1674-1738) turned his lands into an agricultural laboratory. He is called the founder of the innovation commonly known as the rotation of crops.

In the past, every piece of cultivable land was left fallow for a year after two years of consecutive cultivation to recuperate itself which meant that every year one-third of the arable area grew no crops. Through his experiments, Townshend showed that the existing method was wasteful and suggested that if root crops and artificial grasses were alternately grown on the same piece of land in successive seasons with grain, depletion in the mineral salt required for healthy growth of plants. He recommended a system of four-year rotation which means wheat in the first year followed by turnips in the second, barley in the third and clover in the fourth. Through this system of rotation of crops, Townshend doubled his income. As he popularised the growth of a new plant called turnip, Townshend got the nickname of “Turnip” Townshend. In the field of cattle breeding, Robert Backwell tried in 1750 a novel method of mating the finest specimens with a certain breed and then making their offspring mate with offspring of better breeds of species. The result was that more meat was available for human consumption at cheaper rates. At the end of the eighteenth century, iron ploughs drawn by horses began to displace wooden ploughs drawn by oxen. A new threshing machine displaced the existing threshing implement. In 1884, McCormick developed a new reaper which revolutionised the process of harvesting. Increased agricultural output was achieved by the new trend of enclosures.

Shipbuilding was an old and popular industry in England. England had a powerful navy which had defeated all her rivals like the Dutch and the French. She was the undisputed mistress of the seas. This enabled her to build up an enormous and lucrative trade. Her ships sailed to many parts of the world and brought raw materials, tobacco, tea, sugar, spices and cotton in large quantities. England

acquired a number of colonies and founded a few settlements. British expansion beyond the seas opened up new vistas of foreign trade. Her expanding foreign trade made it necessary that her exports should keep pace with imports. It was necessary to step up domestic industries to meet the increased demands. If England were to become the richest country in the world, more and more goods for export must be manufactured to capture foreign markets. That required great effort. Stakes were high and the prize was worth attaining. The English capitalists and inventors rose to the occasion. There was a strong urge among the people to improve production and that prompted the people to make a number of inventions. Nature was especially kind to England. She had given England vast stores of iron and coal which are the lifeblood of industry.

The Bank of England which was started in 1694 and the National Debt were institutions of great importance. They were brought into existence to provide ready money to finance the war against Louis XIV. Loans were made available to the state on the security of the taxes. In peaceful times, that money was available for economic and industrial development at a nominal rate of interest. “The engines of the Industrial Revolution which made England so rich and powerful that she was able to stand the strain of Napoleonic wars were moved by the oil of finance, and at the heart of the English financial system stood the Bank.”

Political conditions in England were also favourable for the Industrial Revolution. England was a free country. Her parliamentary system of Government had become stable and there were no political upheavals to disturb domestic peace, unlike France and other European countries. Peaceful political conditions provided a suitable environment for the





growth and development of commerce and industry. The capitalists of England felt secure in investing money in them and were not afraid of a change of Government.

No other country in Europe had so many potentialities for industrial development. Forces were favourable for a change in England. The Industrial Revolution provided England with money for her wars against Revolutionary France and Napoleon. As a matter of fact, those wars gave a further fillip to the English Industrial Revolution and encouraged greater production. "Napoleon's career enabled the Industrial Revolution to go forward in England and the Industrial Revolution enabled England to overthrow Napoleon."

**Cotton Industry:** The Industrial Revolution was mainly confined to developments in the fields of cotton industry, mining and transport. As regards the cotton industry, the urge to increase the production of cotton cloth led men to apply their knowledge and energy to invent machines and a number of weaving and spinning machines were invented. In 1733 John Kay invented what was known as "The Flying Shuttle". This doubled the speed of weaving and saved labour considerably. This invention enabled the weavers to turn out greater output. It made possible the weaving of broadcloth by one man. In 1765, James Hargreaves invented a machine known as "The Spinning Jenny". The new machine had 8 spindles and consequently, one spinner was able to do the work of 8 spinners. The Spinning Jenny was a simple wooden frame on which 8 spindles moved by the turning of a wheel.

The new machine combined the advantages of the Spinning Jenny of Hargreaves and the water-frame of Arkwright. It made the production of

fine muslin possible. In 1785, Edmund Cartwright invented what was called "The Power Loom". Although the Power Loom was clumsy in shape, it helped the work of weaving to be done with great speed. In 1793, Whitney invented the machine by which seeds could be separated from cotton fibers. Previously, this was done with the help of hand and that was a slow process. In 1785, cylinder printing was invented. A roller with a design engraved upon it ran over paper.

The steam engine revolutionised industry and mining. As motive power, steam had a distinct advantage over water power. It was not necessary now to set up factories near waterfalls. Steam could be produced anywhere and everywhere. James Watt (1736-1819) studied the steam engine of Newcomen removed its defects and invented a new engine with a separate condenser. The new engine was called Beelzebub. It was first employed in mines. Later on, the invention of the rotary motion brought the steam engine into cotton factories also. Steam replaced horse and water power in the textile industry.

There was a great demand for steam engines. With the financial assistance of Boulton, James Watt began to produce steam engines for industrial purposes. "The union of machinery with steam force multiplied tremendously the resources of mankind". On account of the lack of precision tools, James Watt had great difficulty in making the steam engine. Maudslay's "Slide-Rest" was a great invention which helped considerably in the making of such tools.

**Transport:** As regards transport, the old roads were in very bad condition. Navigation by sea and river was very slow. There were yet no railways or aeroplanes. There was the necessity of improving the means of transport. John Metcalf, Thomas

Telford and John Macadam (1756-1836) made tremendous improvements in the art of road construction. Gravel, stone and tar were used in making pucca roads and a network of roads was laid all over the country. Travelling by coach became more comfortable and transport quicker. According to a distinguished British historian, “Macadamising was not only, in its liberal sense, a practical work of great public utility; it became a symbol of all progress and was metaphorically used in common parlance for any aspect of a new age where improved and uniform scientific methods were in demand.”

Calder canals were dug George Stephenson (1781-1848) is called the father of steam locomotive. He invented the first locomotive for hauling coal over iron rails. It moved at a speed of 3 miles an hour. Gradually, it was improved. By 1823, a locomotive factory was established at Newcastle. At the opening of the Liverpool- Manchester Railway in 1830, the locomotive moved at the speed of 30 miles an hour. The invention of locomotives and the introduction of railways were a great boon to mankind. It became possible to transport goods more speedily and cheaply from one part of the country to another. His motive power of steam was also applied to transport by sea. In 1807, a steamboat constructed by Robert Fulton sailed from New York to Albany, a distance of 150 miles in 32 hours. The first regular steamboat service in Great Britain was inaugurated in 1812 on the Clyde between Glasgow and Greenock by a boat called the Comet. In 1819, the first steamship, the Savannah, crossed the Atlantic from the United States to England in 29 days with the help of sails.

Faraday’s invention of electroplating iron plates with nickel stopped rusting and increased the life of machines. Siemen’s dynamo supplemented steam power.

Bunsen’s electric lighting made life more cheerful. Kelvin enabled submarine cables to be laid between America and England. Clement’s planning machine. Nasmyth’s steam hammer and machine for cutting grooves in metal, Robert’s drilling machine and Bessemer and Siemens processes for large-scale conversion of iron into steel revolutionised and expanded industry. The cotton and wool industries became more and more mechanised. The expansion of steam navigation was phenomenal. The steamships could now cross the Atlantic and other seas without fear. Steamship companies like the Cunard Lines were inaugurated.

### **Industrial Development in England:**

The period between 1830 and 1848 was the heroic age of railway building. To begin with, railroads were resisted by the existing interests of roads and canals. There were people who had advanced money for making and repairing the turnpike roads and canals. Some people were making a living as coach makers, harness-makers, horse dealers, innkeepers, etc. The first attempt to get through the Parliament bill permitting the making of the railroad between Liverpool and Manchester failed. It cost £70,000 to secure parliamentary permission in 1826 even before starting the capital outlay needed to buy the land and construct the line. British railroad builders were pioneers and they incurred the costs and burdens of all pioneers and paid the price for technical experiments and mistakes. The opening of the Liver Pool and Manchester Railway in 1830 inaugurated the new era. By 1838 there were 490 miles of railroad in England and Wales and 50 in Scotland. Their construction cost more than £13 million. By the end of 1850, there were 6,621 miles of railroad in operation. The two boom periods of the building came in 1836 and the years 1844-47. In spite of wild speculations



and financial disasters in 1847, there was considerable consolidation of lines which had been built piecemeal. George Hudson, the British “Railway king”, devoted his business and administrative skills to bringing about extensive amalgamations and improvements in their general running.

The revolution in transport through railways brought with it new demands for coal and iron and stimulated a revolution in heavy industries, especially mining and metallurgy. Britain’s coal output which was about 16 million tons in 1815, rose to 30 million tons by 1835 and 50 million tons by 1848. Her output of iron doubled from one million tons in 1835 to two million tons in 1848. By 1850, about half the whole world’s production of pig iron took place in Great Britain. Engineering proper and the industries devoted to making machines were still small-scale in 1848. The main progress in engineering techniques came after 1848. The railroads encouraged the rise of big contractors. They offered employment to thousands. A great new industry was born in little more than years and the fears of unemployment proved to be unfounded. There was a general stimulus to the whole economic system.

Above all other commodities, cotton was linked with the expansion of British overseas trade. In 1830, three-quarters of the new cotton came from the United States. In 1849, the total import was as high as 346,000 tons, worth about £15 million. By the middle of the nineteenth century, more than half a million people were engaged in the cotton industry alone. Textiles as a whole employed more than one million. Textile manufacture was the industry which was most representative of the age of machinery and power. Although mechanisation was slow, cotton set the

pace in factory production.

Cotton trade boosted shipping. Between 1827 and 1848 the total tonnage of British shipping, both sail and steam, rose from 2 to 4 million tons. In the middle of the 19th century, 60 per cent of the world’s ocean-going tonnage was British. The tonnage of all shipping entered and cleared from ports in the United Kingdom rose from 6 million tons in 1834 to more than 14 million tons in 1847. By 1850, the United Kingdom had established itself as not only “the workshop of the world” but also as the shipper, trader and to a great extent the banker of the world.

### ***1.3.3.2 Economic Results***

The Industrial Revolution had its effect in various fields. As regards its economic effects, it resulted in the factory system. A variety of articles and goods began to be manufactured in large quantities in big factories. The factory led to the division of labour and mass production through the standardisation of processes and parts. Before the Industrial Revolution, the industry was the handmaid of commerce. After the Industrial Revolution, the industry became a big choice for investment. It was the industry that furnished commerce with an ever-increasing supply of saleable commodities and extended enormously its range. Commerce grew by leaps and bounds. There was a rapid rise in the producer’s goods industries as distinguished from consumer goods industries.

The Industrial Revolution created ripen wealth which came to be owned by the capitalists with the progress of the Industrial Revolution, and they shaped the course of further initialisation by reinventing their gains in new enterprises. There was much of an increase in production by machines that despite lavish

personal expenditures on non-productive display, only a small fraction of the total increase in wealth was immediately consumed. The growth of the joint stock companies with limited liability facilitated the investment of surplus capital and the progress of new industries,

Machines produced much more than what was necessary for the domestic markets and hence arose the necessity of foreign markets for the disposal of the surplus goods. That ultimately led to imperialistic expansion and spheres of influence in the undeveloped countries of the world. The Industrial Revolution introduced the new phenomena of large-scale booms and depressions the interval Industrial Revolution led to economic dependence. The cotton spindles of Britain depended upon an international steady supply of raw cotton from the United States As urbanization progressed in Britain and Europe, less food was grown in these countries which became heavy importers of wheat, meat and tropical food products. Europe exported manufactured goods in exchange for food. The entire world became a marketplace. Dislocation of industry in any part of the world often has important repercussions in countries thousands of miles away.”

The Industrial Revolution led to the expansion of trade all over the world. There was expansion of trade, both inland and overseas Articles made in one country found their way into foreign countries and brought in a good deal of wealth to the producers. Before the Industrial Revolution, there was a great strain on manual labour. The rate of production was low. The output was small and the finished products were costly. The new machines worked by steam power or by oil worked faster and saved time and labour. They produced much more and more cheaply

too.

The Industrial Revolution was directly responsible for the construction of tarred roads, the introduction of steam engines, railways and steamships and the expansion of the canal systems. The Industrial Revolution had its impact on agriculture, the inventions included agricultural machines: mechanical ploughs, cultivators, drills, threshers, etc. reduced the labour and time of farmers and performed their work better. The result was a larger production, more food and greater prosperity.

**Social Results:** As regards the social results of the Industrial Revolution, there was a migration of workers on a vast scale from small agricultural villages in cities. Thousands of agricultural workers who were without work on account of the Agrarian Revolution and the “Enclosure” movement in England left their homes in the agricultural South for the industrial North in the hope of finding employment in factories. That caused untold miseries and hardships. Those workers found that the living conditions in the industrial towns were absolutely unfit for human beings No attention was paid to sanitation and the workers had to live in slums with foul smell. The employers found it more profitable to employ women and children in their factories because they were easier to control than men and they could be employed on lower wages. The result was that while men were unemployed their wives and children worked in factories. The children and women were mercilessly exploited. Children of pauper parents were farmed out to factory owners on terms which amounted to slavery. They were literally worked to death. They were given something as trifling wage. Sometimes only board and lodging. They were forced to work for very long hours





till they dropped from sheer exhaustion. Not infrequently, they fell into the machinery to be killed maimed for life. The brutality with which they were treated was simply unbelievable. The food given to them was bad and insufficient. Many of the factories were entirely without ventilation. Not infrequently, workers were victims of certain diseases traceable to the character of their work. Schapiro writes, "Early every morning the pauper children, sent to factories by the overseers of the poor were awakened and taken to the mill where, in stench, in heated rooms and constant whirling of a thousand wheels. idle fingers and little feet were kept in ceaseless action, forced into unnatural activity by blows from the heavy hands and feet of the merciless overlookers and the infliction of bodily pain by instruments invented by the sharpened ingenuity of insatiable selfishness. If they were suspected of a desire to run away in order to escape from their unbearable misery, they were regarded as criminals, mercilessly chained to the machines which they operated." Dance observes. "Most of the factories were cramped, dirty, unhealthy places merely to work in and often causing the working people to catch diseases of various kinds. Often too, they were badly built so that they collapsed under the weight of their machines and injured the workmen.

It was not at all unusual for men to be kept at work from six in the morning till ten at night often without a break, even for meals. In the cotton factories in Lancashire, it was worse still. In many cotton mills, the air had to be kept very warm and very damp, or the cotton was spoiled. This warm, damp atmosphere was very bad for the workers and in the old days of 16 hours' work, many of them got fearful coughs, "consumption

and rheumatism so that before long they either died or became crippled. Worst of all, the women and children suffered from all this just as much as the men who could stand it better. Their hours were as long as the men's, they were kept in the same unhealthy rooms and the children were especially given the dullest work to do since they were not old enough to do the more difficult work. Boys and girls of six had to work even for 12 or 16 hours and remained without attention. There were no proper arrangements for latrines as well as for recreation after hard labour,"

The Industrial Revolution led to the insecurity of work. The number of workers who went to industrial towns was considerably more than the total number of jobs available in factories. The result was that many of them remained unemployed. That led to the practice of underselling themselves in order to get employment. The problem of unemployment of men was aggravated by the employment of women and children on lower wages. If a worker employed on daily wages became unwell or otherwise he could on a particular day, he lost his wages. There was no provision for old age or insurance against unemployment. They did not know what was in store for them in future.

When the industry was in the domestic stage, there was a variety of work for a worker. The workers completed all the processes of manufacturing themselves. A change from one process to another provided recreation for them. A shoemaker would cure and tan the skin cut the "upper" and the sole and finish the entire job of making the shoe himself. Under the factory system, there was specialisation and day after day, the worker had to handle the same machine. Consequently, the work became monotonous and uninteresting and the worker felt bored.

Although under the Industrial Revolution, the factory owners and big industrialists made fortunes and lived in luxury, the workers remained miserably poor. Their wages were small. They were forced to live in abominable conditions. The disparity between the living standards of the capitalists and workers was very great. The factory workers launched the Chartist movement claiming better conditions of work and higher wages. That resulted in a perennial strife between capital and labour. There was insecurity and mass unemployment as a result of the Industrial Revolution. There was also the danger of large-scale shut-downs as a result of business depressions. Mass unemployment became one of the gravest social problems arising from the Industrial Revolution.

As a result of the Industrial Revolution, the old personal relationship between the employers and the employees disappeared. Under the domestic system, the employers brought raw materials to the worker to be turned into finished products and those were returned to the employer. The workers themselves often possessed the spindles and looms. Under the factory system, the employer seldom saw his workers and much of the capital invested in the factory was owned by the people who never saw the factory. Although their interests were common, there was an unbridgeable gulf between the industrial masters and their men.

Under the factory system, labour became more and more impersonal. For example, the man who made a shoe was himself concerned with the making of every part of it. There was a chance to display individual skills. Things changed after the Industrial Revolution. The worker performed only a fraction in the process of making a shoe. That function was purely mechanical. He was merely a hand. Work

was changed by the Industrial Revolution into a monotonous and deadening affair. The unskilled labourer largely replaced the skilled labourer.

**Political Results:** As regards the political results of the Industrial Revolution, there was a strengthening of the middle class. A large number of villages became rotten boroughs. While the rotten boroughs were sending two members each to the British Parliament, very many new industrial towns were completely unrepresented. The result was that Parliament passed a bill to remove discrepancies in the teeth of bitter opposition from the big landlords who constituted a large majority of the Conservative Party. There was the necessity of disenfranchising the rotten boroughs and giving representation to the newly founded industrial towns. Parliament passed laws to remove this anomaly. The Reform Act of 1832 redistributed seats in Parliament to give representation to the new industrial centres. The bourgeoisie were successful in putting down the Chartist agitation which aimed at the extension of political power to the working classes. The position of the bourgeoisie in France was strengthened by the July Revolution of 1830 which put Louis Philippe on the throne of France.

The Industrial Revolution also had intellectual and cultural results. In his book entitled "Wealth of Nations," Adam Smith (1723-1790) forcefully expressed himself against interference by government with business. His view was that each man is the best judge of his own economic affairs.

The Industrial Revolution was all-pervasive and comprehensive. It radically altered the face of Europe. Its impact was on every phase of European life. However, it was not an unmixed blessing. It had both its merits and demerits. It raised the standard of living of Europeans but made



them psychologically shaky. It opened new vistas of unusual potentialities but also aggravated the rat race which tended to dehumanise them. If there were numerous pockets of affluence, there were more segments of poverty and starvation. There were more slums than the skyscrapers. The rich became richer and the poor poorer. Urbanisation spoiled the beauty and serenity of the natural landscape. Population increase upsets the ecological balance. Life expectancy of men went up but along with it, insecurity has increased. Spiritualism has been thrown in the background. Industrialisation reinforced by rapid scientific progress has made man arrogant and belligerent and he is fast losing his balance and sobriety. Man has lost his sense of direction. Moral values are being obscured. There was a craze for more material possessions. Industrialisation has many more boons and provided man to tame it for the welfare of humanity at large.

### 1.3.4 Commercial Revolution

The Commercial Revolution is defined as a massive economic and cultural shift that began in the mid-Middle Ages tenth or eleventh century and lasted until the eighteenth or nineteenth century in Europe. Many people consider the Commercial Revolution to have occurred from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth century C.E. because this time period was when most of the developments of the Commercial Revolution became codified, or at least widely used. We call it a revolution because it was so big and well-planned. These countries took the initiative to grow and strengthen their economic and political power, leading to this growth. Spain, Portugal, Holland, and England were the countries in this group.

The term itself was used by Karl Polanyi

in his book, *The Great Transformation*. Politically, the centralized state was a new creation called forth by the Commercial Revolution. Italy first felt huge economic changes in Europe from the 11th to the 13th centuries. It is estimated that the per capita income of northern Italy nearly tripled from the 11th century to the 15th century. This was a highly mobile, demographically expanding society, fueled by the rapidly expanding Renaissance commerce. The Italian states were the top manufacturers of finished woollen products. However, with the Black Death in 1348, the birth of the English woollen industry, and general warfare, Italy temporarily lost its economic advantage. However, by the late 15th century, Italy was again in control of trade along the Mediterranean Sea. It found a new niche in luxury items like ceramics, glassware, lace, and silk, as well as experiencing a temporary rebirth in the woollen industry. By the late 12th century, a new and remarkable society had emerged in Northern Italy - a society that was rich, mobile, expanding, and had a mixed aristocracy.

The deterioration of the climate that brought about the end of the medieval warm period (or medieval weather anomaly) caused an economic decline at the beginning of the 14th century. However, demographic expansion continued until the arrival of the Black Death epidemic in 1347 when 50 percent of the European population was killed by this plague. The economic effects of a labour shortage caused wages to rise, while agricultural yields were once again able to support a diminished population. By the beginning of the 15th century, the economic expansion associated with the Commercial Revolution in earlier centuries returned in full force, aided by improvements in navigation and cartography. Geopolitical, monetary, and

technological factors drove the Age of Discovery. During this period (1450-17th century), the European economic centre shifted from the Islamic Mediterranean to Western Europe.

#### **1.3.4.1 Monetary Factors**

The need for silver coinage also affected the desire for expanded exploration as silver and gold were spent for trade to the Middle and Far East. The Europeans had a constant deficit in that silver and gold coin only went one way: out of Europe, spent on the very type of trade that they were now cut off from by the Ottomans.

Another issue was that European mines were exhausted of silver ore and gold. What ore remained was too deep to recover, as water would fill the mine, and technology was not sufficiently advanced enough to successfully remove the water to get to the ore or gold.

A second argument is that trade during the youth of the Commercial Revolution blossomed not due to explorations for bullion (gold and silver coining) but due to a newfound faith in gold coinage. A new, stable and universally accepted coinage that was both compatible with traditional European coinage systems and serviced the increased demand for currency to facilitate trade made it even more lucrative to carry out trade with the rest of the world.

#### **1.3.4.2 Technological factors**

From the 16th to 18th centuries, Europeans made remarkable maritime innovations. These innovations enabled them to expand overseas and set up colonies, most notably during the 16th and 17th centuries. They developed new sail arrangements for ships, skeleton-based shipbuilding, the Western “galea” (at the end of the 11th century), sophisticated navigational instruments,

and detailed charts and maps. After Isaac Newton published the *Principia*, navigation was transformed, because sailors could predict the motion of the moon and other celestial objects using Newton’s theories of motion starting in 1670, the entire world was measured using essentially modern latitude instruments. In 1676, the British Parliament declared that navigation was the greatest scientific problem of the age.

Banks, stock exchanges, and insurance became ways to manage the risk involved in the renewed trade. New laws came into being. Travel became safer as nations developed. Economic theories began to develop in light of all of the new trading activity. The increase in the availability of money led to the emergence of a new economic system and new problems to go with it. The Commercial Revolution is also marked by the formalisation of pre-existing, informal methods of dealing with trade and commerce. Spending this money to finance wars and the arts. The spent silver, suddenly being spread throughout a previously cash-starved Europe, caused widespread inflation. The inflation was worsened by a growing population but a static production level, low employee salaries and a rising cost of living. This problem, combined with underpopulation, affected the system of agriculture. The landholding aristocracy suffered under inflation since they depended on paying small, fixed wages to peasant tenants who were able to demand higher wages. The aristocracy made failed attempts to counteract this situation by creating short-term leases of their lands to allow periodic revaluation of rent. The Manorial System (manor system of lord and peasant tenant) eventually vanished, and the landholding was forced to sell pieces of their land in order to maintain their style of living.





### ***1.3.4.3 Banks***

Various legal and religious developments in the late Middle Ages allowed for the development of the modern banking system at the beginning of the 16th century. Interest was allowed to be charged, and the profit generated from holding other people's money.

Banks in the Italian Peninsula had great difficulty operating at the end of the 14th century, due to a lack of silver and gold coins. Nevertheless, by the later 16th century, enough bullion was available that many more people could keep a small amount hoarded and use it as Capital.

Banking offices were usually located near centres of trade, and in the late 17th century, the largest centres for commerce were the ports of Amsterdam, London, and Hamburg. Traders in the lucrative East India trade purchased bills of credit from these banks, but the price they received for commodities was dependent on the ships returning (which often did not happen on time) and on the cargo they carried (which often did not follow the plan). The commodities market was very volatile for these reasons, as well as the many wars that led to cargo seizures and loss of ships.

### ***1.3.4.4 Managing Risk***

Trade in this period was a risky business: war, weather, and other uncertainties often kept merchants from making a profit, and frequently an entire cargo would disappear altogether. To mitigate this risk, the wealthy got together to share the risk through stock: people would own shares of a venture so that if there was a loss, it would not be an all-consuming loss costing the individual investor everything in one transaction. Other ways of dealing with the risk and expense associated with all of

the new trade activity include insurance and joint stock companies which were created as formal institutions. People had been informally sharing risk for hundreds of years, but the formal ways they were now sharing risk were new.

Even though the ruling classes would not often directly assist in trade endeavours, and individuals were unequal to the task, rulers such as Henry VIII of England established a permanent Royal Navy, with the intention of reducing piracy and protecting English shipping.

### ***1.3.4.5 Joint Stock Companies and Stock Exchanges***

Stock exchanges were developed as the volume of stock transactions increased. The London Royal Exchange established in 1565 first developed as a securities market, though by 1801 it had become a stock exchange

Bankers in Pisa and Genoa and Florence also began trading in government securities during the 14th century. This practice was only possible because these independent city-states were not ruled by a duke but by a council of influential citizens. The Dutch later started joint stock companies, which let shareholders invest in business ventures and get a share of their profits - or losses. In 1602, the Dutch East India Company issued the first shares on the Amsterdam Stock Exchange. It was the first company to issue stocks and bonds.

### ***1.3.4.6 Insurance companies***

Insurance companies were another way to mitigate risk. Insurance in one form or another has been around as far back as there are records. What differed about insurance going into the 16th and 17th centuries was that these informal mechanisms became formalised. Lloyd's of London

came into being in 1688 in English coffee shops that catered to sailors, traders, and others involved in trade. Unlike most of its competitors in the industry, it is not an insurance company; rather, Lloyd's is a corporate body governed by the Lloyd's Act of 1871. It operates as a partially-mutualised marketplace within which multiple financial backers, are grouped in Syndicate. Lloyd's Coffeehouse published a newspaper, which gave news from various parts of the world, and helped the underwriters of the insurance at the coffeehouse to determine the risk. This innovation was one of many that allowed for the categorization of risk. Another innovation was the use of ship catalogues and classifications. Other forms of insurance began to appear as well.

#### ***1.3.4.7 Trade monopolies***

Governments became involved in trade directly through the granting of royal trade monopolies. For example, Sir Walter Raleigh had been granted a trade monopoly by Elizabeth I of England, for the export of Broadcloth and wine. Ironically, competition between colonial powers led to their granting of trade monopolies to the East India Company.

A Triangular trade (triangle trade is three ports and regions) between three ports or regions. occurred in this period: between Africa, North and South America, and Europe; and it worked in the following way: Slaves came from Africa, and went

to the Americas; raw materials came from the Americas and went to Europe; from there, finished goods came from Europe and were sold back to the Americas at a much higher price.

Laws began to change to deal with commerce, both internationally, and locally within individual countries. The Navigation Acts, or more broadly the Acts of Trade and Navigation, was a long series of English laws that developed, promoted, and regulated English ships, shipping, trade, and commerce between other countries and with its own colonies. The laws also regulated England's fisheries and restricted foreigners' participation in its colonial trade. The Navigation Acts were repealed in 1849 under the influence of a Laissez-faire philosophy. The Navigation Acts were passed under the economic theory of Mercantilism, under which wealth was to be increased by restricting colonial trade to the mother country rather than through free trade.

The Commercial Revolution, coupled with other changes in modern Britain, had dramatic effects on the globe. England's commercial revolution also created a foundation of wealth needed for the Industrial Revolution. The expanding labour force was also redirected into nascent Industrialization. Economic prosperity financed new forms of Western cultural expression during this period.



## Recap

- ◆ The Agricultural Revolution led to an unprecedented increase in agricultural production in Britain
- ◆ Enclosure Acts was the legal process in England during the 18th century of enclosing a number of small landholdings to create one larger farm
- ◆ The work of Townshend was continued by Thomas Coke of Holkham in Norfolk
- ◆ Robert Bakewell was the first to turn his attention to the production of meat as the main consideration of stock breeders
- ◆ With the advent of the enclosure system, the English banking system also grew
- ◆ One of the most important innovations of the Agricultural Revolution was the development of the Norfolk four-course rotation
- ◆ Rotation can also improve soil structure and fertility by alternating deep-rooted and shallow-rooted plants
- ◆ An important feature of the Norfolk four-field system was that it used labour at times when demand was not at peak levels
- ◆ The Agricultural Revolution in Britain proved to be a major turning point
- ◆ The term “Industrial Revolution” was coined by Auguste Blanqui French economist
- ◆ Industrial Revolution transformed an overwhelmingly agricultural society into an industrial society
- ◆ The Industrial Revolution was preceded by the Agrarian Revolution in England
- ◆ Jethro Tull is considered as the ‘father of scientific agriculture’
- ◆ Viscount Townshend is widely credited with creating the idea of crop rotation
- ◆ George Stephenson is called the father of steam locomotive
- ◆ Above all other commodities, cotton was linked with the expansion of British overseas trade
- ◆ The factory workers launched the Chartist movement claiming better conditions of work and higher wages

- ◆ The position of the bourgeoisie in France was strengthened by the July Revolution of 1830 which put Louis Philippe on the throne of France.

## Objective Questions

1. Who coined the term 'Industrial Revolution'?
2. Where did the Industrial Revolution start?
3. What three Inventions led to the spread of mass communication?
4. What type of economy did the Industrial Revolution lead us into?
5. In 1733 John Kay invented an improved part of the weaver's loom. What was it called?
6. Who improved the steam engine?
7. Who invented the Cotton Gin?
8. When was the Bank of Britain established?
9. When was the Navigation Act repealed?
10. Who is the author of the book Wealth of Nations?

## Answers

1. Auguste Blanqui, French economist
2. Britain
3. Telegraph, Transatlantic cable, Telephone
4. Production based
5. Flying shuttle
6. James Watt
7. Eli Whitney
8. 1764
9. 1849
10. Adam Smith





## Self Assessment Questions

1. How did changes in agriculture prepare the ground for industrial growth?
2. What was the significance of enclosure in rural Britain?
3. How did improved farming methods increase agricultural productivity?
4. Why did many rural workers migrate to industrial towns?
5. How did machines reduce dependence on manual labour?
6. What were the social problems faced by workers in early industrial towns?
7. How did steam power support both industry and transport?
8. Why did overseas trade become important during the Commercial Revolution?
9. How did banks and insurance support commercial expansion?
10. What were the major benefits and hardships created by the Agrarian, Industrial and Commercial Revolutions?

## Assignments

1. Discuss the major innovations in agriculture during the British Agricultural Revolution and how they transformed productivity.
2. Explain the most significant inventions that catalyzed the Industrial Revolution in Britain and how they impacted manufacturing.
3. Analyze the key political, economic, and social factors that enabled Britain to spearhead the Industrial Revolution in Europe.
4. Assess the positive and negative social consequences of industrialization in Britain during the 19th century.
5. Describe the major financial innovations and institutions that arose from the Commercial Revolution and facilitated capitalist growth.

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**BLOCK**

# New Economic Ideology



# UNIT

## Trade Unionism – Robert Owen

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the meaning of trade unionism in the context of industrial Britain
- ◆ describe how the factory system created new conditions for workers' organisation
- ◆ identify the legal and political obstacles faced by early trade unions
- ◆ discuss the importance of the Combination Laws and their impact on workers
- ◆ evaluate the contribution of Robert Owen to labour welfare, factory reform and early socialism

### Prerequisite

Think about the life of a factory worker in early industrial Britain. Long working hours, low wages, unsafe workplaces and lack of job security made life difficult for labourers. In earlier rural settings, workers were scattered and had fewer opportunities to organise themselves. With the growth of large factories and industrial towns, workers began to meet, discuss their problems and recognise their common interests.

Trade unionism grew from this shared experience of hardship. It was an attempt by workers to improve wages, reduce working hours and secure better working conditions. However, the ruling classes often feared workers' associations, especially after the French Revolution. Laws were passed to suppress collective action. In this background, reformers such as Robert Owen became important. Owen believed that workers' lives could be improved through better education, humane factory conditions, cooperation and social reform. This unit introduces the early struggle for organised labour in Britain.



## Keywords

Unions, Factory, Laissez-faire, Socialism, Agitation, Employees

## Discussion

Trade unionism in England was the natural outcome of industrialism in that country. Before the Industrial Revolution, there was no or very little chance for workers to meet and discuss their problems. However, after the Industrial Revolution and the establishment of big factories in industrial towns and cities, there were very many opportunities for the labourers to meet and talk about their grievances. Trade unionism, therefore, can be defined as associations of workers formed with the purpose of improving the conditions under which work is carried out.

### 2.1.1 Advent of Factory System

These conditions disappeared with the advent of the factory system. The prevalence of the principle of laissez-faire led to the disregard of the statute of artificers so that the conditions of early industrial towns were unregulated. In the factories large number of working people got opportunities to place their views before their employers. Towards the end of the 18th century, small societies of the nature of trade unions came into existence. By securing observance of the statute of artificers, earlier unions sought to improve their working conditions

### 2.1.2 Fear of French Imitation

Towards the end of the 1st century, the governing classes in England were alarmed at the poshness of the common people imitating the French. They took measures to repress any movement of

revolutionary tendency. In 1799 and 1800, Combination Laws were passed, which made associations in restraint of trade illegal.

### 2.1.3 Status of Trade Unions (1799-1824)

From 1700 to 1824, organised trade unionism was declared illegal. Workmen demanding higher wages or shorter hours of work in association with others were to be imprisoned. The reason for this was political, but the current economic theory influenced the government. It was contended that their operations were detrimental to the body of working classes. It was opposed to the idea that wages were extracted from a fixed-wage fund. If one group, by concerted action, secures advance, others must necessarily receive less. Thus, trade unions were suppressed by: Combination Laws, Ancient statutes, and Common Law.

In 1799 and 1800 Combination Laws were passed by which trade unions were made illegal. It was declared that workers who associated with their fellow workers to demand higher wages or shorter hours of work were liable to be sent to prison. Yet trade unions did exist in the shape of friendly societies to which legal status was granted in 1790. The members of these units contributed money to be utilized in times of distress. They thus fulfilled some specific purposes which were later followed by trade unions.

### 2.1.4 Existence of Secret Societies

Besides, some secret societies also existed in defiance of the law. During this period there was little agitation among working men for the repeal of Combination. La Men were so illiterate and unintelligent that they failed to realise the importance of combination. They were poorly paid and ignorant. They even did not know that their working conditions affected men in other towns and other industries. But men like Francis Place continued to attempt to educate stimulating public opinion on the matter. There were some people who did some pioneering work in the field. One such person was Francis Place, a master-tailor who worked ceaselessly for many years with a view to securing the repeal of the legislations which were detrimental to the interests of the workers. In the eighteenth century, there were many small secret trade unions in England.

After 1824 trade unions were no longer organised in secret. In the next few years, efforts were made to combine small local trade unions with larger organisations. Thus the Grand General Union of the United Kingdom and the National Association for the Protection of Labour came into existence. Thanks to the efforts of the magnanimous Robert Owen, the Grand Consolidated Traded Union was formed in the year 1834. The membership of this union was about one million.

### 2.1.5 Joseph Hume Committee

The ruling classes always looked upon these unions with suspicion and disfavour. Towards the close of the century, in the wake of the atrocities committed by the French revolutionaries, the authorities thought that similar things might happen in England also. So they wanted to

do something to forestall such violent happenings. It was against such unjust practices that Francis Place worked. He even withdrew from his business so that he might devote his full time to the task. As a result of his efforts, in 1824 the House of Commons appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Joseph Hume.

Hume, due to his sympathies with the movement, presented extensive arguments and evidence in favour of relaxing the combination laws. Combination laws were allowed for negotiating with employers regarding wages and working hours. It was hoped that this freedom would lead to better relationships between masters and workers. However, the Act of 1824 led to an increase in strikes and disorder. Politicians and employers were alarmed, and in 1825, a new Act was passed to undermine the freedom granted by the previous Act. Thankfully, the skill of Hume and Place prevented the danger. The Act of 1824 was repealed, and the new Act was designed to prosecute individuals who combined for reasons other than bargaining for wages and working hours. Additionally, it was clarified that strikers could not force their colleagues and other workers to join them.

### 2.1.6 Small Unions with Short Durations (1824-1834)

The history of the Trade Union Movement for a decade after 1824 is the history of various small unions with short durations. After 1824, efforts were made to combine local trade unions into large organisations like the (1) Grand General Union of the UK, (2) the National Association for the Protection of Labour, and (3) the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union, founded in 1834 through the efforts of Robert Owen. These groups failed after brief periods, and for some



years, the working class seemed to lose faith in the trade union's efficacy.

### **2.1.7 Revival of Trade Unions**

In about 1834, a revival began. New unions were formed, and a change in their aims, methods, and organisation appeared. In 1851, the Amalgamated Society for Engineers was formed with such sound principles that these are being followed today. It preferred to settle disputes with employers through negotiations and, if necessary, by arbitration. Its funds were substantial; it maintained a staff of officials. Subsequently, however, many other such trade unions cropped up. One of the most important features of the unions of this period was that they demanded substantial subscriptions from their members and offered (1) friendly society benefits as well as (2) trade benefits. They considered payment in times of sickness and death and also managed the payment of allowances during periods of strikes and unemployment.

### **2.1.8 Trade Unionism 1860**

Trade unionism again became active in the 1860s. This was an eyesore and a potential danger for the employers. In 1867, a Royal Commission was instituted to investigate their conduct. The combination law was hoped to be restored in parliamentary circles.

### **2.1.9 Charges against Trade Unions**

The opponents of Trade Unions levelled certain charges against the unionists which included (1) the destruction of friendly relations between employers and employees, deterioration in the character of working men, a financial advantage to members, organisation of strikes, and acting in restraint of trade.

**Trade Unions Complaints:** These organisations complained that the Act of 1825 legalised combination for certain purposes only, so the activities of most such unions were illegal. Then since this act did not sanction the collection of funds, and the holding of property by the unions they were at the mercy of their officials. A defaulting treasurer could be prosecuted.

#### **2.1.9.1 Report of Royal Commission**

The majority report of the Commission declared that the disposition to strike would not increase with the power of the union and recommended the Further relaxation of the combination and (2) Registration of Trade Unions, (3) Protection of funds. (4) Separation of trade unions and friendly societies funds.

#### **2.1.9.2 Minority Report**

The minority report of the Commission found that (1) the disposition to strike is proportionate to the strength of the union. (2) Larger unions contributed to the stability of trade. (3) Acts of violence occurred chiefly where trade unions were weak or nonexistent, and it accordingly recommended that (a) there should be no separation of funds, (b) Combination Laws should be repealed, (c) it recommended registration of trade unions, and (d) it also suggested effective steps for the protection of funds.

### **2.1.10 Trade Unions during 1870**

During the 1870s, many new unions were formed, but the contemporary trade depression had a prejudicial effect on the fortunes of the movement. Unemployment increased, wages fell, and membership and the funds of the unions declined. Some unions failed, but the majority served unions of agricultural labourers, unskilled workers, gas workers, match girls, dock labourers, railway workers, etc.

### 2.1.11 Right to Vote

Since the right to vote at parliamentary elections had been conceded to artisans in towns in 1567 and agricultural labourers in 1884, the organisers of the unions considered that the working classes could secure these benefits for themselves through direct political action. Political support at parliamentary elections was accorded to candidates who were in sympathy with the ideals of new unionism. Such men usually belonged to the Liberal Party and were designated labourers. In 1893, it was decided to form an independent labour party, a political group distinct from the existing parties and having its own aims. These included the amelioration of the conditions of the working classes by state action and ultimately the complete reorganisation of society on the basis of socialism.

### 2.1.12 Blows in the Twentieth Century

(i) In the early years of the 20th century, trade unionism suffered two severe blows. In 1900, a strike occurred among the Taffvale Railway Company Employees. The company brought an action for damages against the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants which was granted by the court, and the union had to pay heavy damages.

However, the Trade Disputes Act of 1906 forbade courts to entertain action against trade unions in respect of 'losses'. It legalised peaceful picketing, it permitted actions in restraint of trade, and it put the civil liability for conspiracy on the same footing as the criminal liability had been placed by the Act of 1875.

ii) The second blow was the Osborne case in which the political activity of the

unions was denied by the courts. However, Trade Union Act of 1913 sanctioned political activity, subject to contracting out.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Trade Union movement of recent years is the formation of large federations and alliances. In England for instance there are the Miners Federation, Engineering Federation, and Printing Traders' Federation. In certain cases, unions of allied industries may join together. The Triple Alliance of Miners, Railway Workers and Transport Workers is an example. Yet another interesting feature of trade unionism today is the formation of the Trade Union Congress which is affiliated with many unions.

### 2.1.13 Robert Owen

Robert Owen (May 14, 1771, Newtown, Powys – November 17, 1858) was a Welsh Utopia Socialist and social reformer, whose attempts to reconstruct society widely influenced social experimentation and the cooperative movement. The innovative social and industrial reforms which he introduced at his New Lanark Mills during the early 1800s made it a place of pilgrimage for social reformers and statesmen from all over Europe. He advocated the elimination of poverty through the establishment of self-sustaining communities, and experimented with such a utopian community himself at New Harmony, Indiana, from 1825 to 1828.

Owen believed that a man's character was completely formed by his environment and circumstances and that placing man under the proper physical, moral, and social influences from his earliest years was the key to the formation of good character and the amelioration of social problems. Owen's doctrines were





adopted as an expression of the workers' aspirations, and he became a leader of the trade union movement in England, which advocated control of production by the workers. The word "Socialism" first became current in the discussions of the "Association of all Classes of all Nations," which Owen formed in 1835.

### 2.1.14 Plans for Alleviating Poverty Through Socialism

Gradually Owen's ideas led him from philanthropy into socialism and involvement in politics. In 1817, he presented a report to the committee of the House of Commons on the Poor Law. The general misery, and stagnation of trade consequent on the termination of the Napoleonic wars, were engrossing the attention of the entire country. After tracing the special causes, connected with the wars, which had led to such a deplorable state of the economy and society, Owen pointed out that the permanent cause of distress was to be found in the competition of human labour with machinery, and that the only effective remedy was the united action of men, and the subordination of machinery.

His proposals for the alleviation of poverty were based on these principles. Communities of about 1,200 persons each should be settled on quantities of land from 1,000 to 1,500 acres (4 to 6 km<sup>2</sup>), all living in one large building in the form of a square, with public kitchen and mess rooms. Each family should have its private apartments, and the entire care of the children till the age of three, after which they should be brought up by the community, their parents having access to them at meals and all other proper times.

These communities might be established by individuals, by parishes, by counties, or by the state; in every case, there should be effective supervision by duly qualified persons. Work, and the enjoyment of its results, should be in common. The size of his communities was probably suggested by his village of New Lanark, and he soon proceeded to advocate such a scheme as the best form for the re-organisation of society in general.

In its fully developed form, the scheme did not change much during Owen's lifetime. He considered an association of from 500 to 3,000 as the fit number for a good working community. While mainly agricultural, it should possess all the best machinery, should offer every variety of employment, and should, as far as possible, be self-contained. "As these townships" (as he also called them) "should increase in number, unions of them federatively united shall be formed in circles of tens, hundreds and thousands," till they should embrace the whole world in a common interest.

Owen's plans for the cure of pauperism were received with considerable favour until, at a large meeting in London, Owen explicitly declared his hostility to revealed religion. Many of his supporters believed that this action undermined his support among the upper classes. Owen's denunciation of religion evoked a mounting campaign against him which in later years damaged his public reputation and the work associated with his name. His last substantial opportunity to secure official approval for his scheme came in 1820 when he produced his *Report to the County of Lanark* in which his communitarian and educational theories were blended with David Ricardo's labour theory of value.



### 2.1.15 Trade Union Movement

In his *Report to the County of Lanark* (a body of landowners) in 1820, Owen declared that reform was not enough and that a transformation of the social order was necessary. His proposals for self-sufficient communities attracted the younger workers who had been brought up under the factory system. Between 1820 and 1830, a number of societies were formed and journals were established which advocated his views. The growth of labour unionism and the emergence of the working class into politics caused Owen's doctrines to be adopted as an expression of the workers' aspirations, and when he returned to England from New Harmony in 1829, he found himself regarded as their leader. The word "socialism" first became current in the discussions of the "Association of all Classes of all Nations," which Owen formed in 1835. During these years, his teaching gained such influence among the working classes that the *Westminster Review* (1839) stated that his principles were the actual creed of a great portion of them.

In the unions, Owenism stimulated the formation of self-governing workshops. The need for a market for the products of such shops led to the formation of the National Equitable Labour Exchange in 1832, applying the principle that labour is the source of all wealth. The exchange was effected by means of labour notes; this system superseded the usual means of exchange and middlemen. The London exchange lasted until 1833, and a Birmingham branch operated for only a few months until July 1833.

The growth of labour unions made it seem possible that all the various industries might someday be organised by them. Owen and his followers carried

on a Propaganda campaign all over the country, which resulted in the new National Operative Builders Union turning itself into a guild to carry on the building industry, and the formation of a Grand National Consolidated Trades Union in 1834. However, determined opposition from employers and severe restrictions imposed by the government and law courts suppressed the movement within a few months.

### 2.1.16 Labour Reforms

Owen had originally been a follower of the classical liberal and Utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham. However, whereas Bentham thought that free markets (in particular, the right for workers to move and to choose their employers) would free the workers from the excess power of the capitalists, Owen became more and more socialist as time passed.

At New Lanark, Owen instituted a number of reforms intended to improve the circumstances of workers and to increase their investment in the products of their labour. Many employers operated the "truck system," whereby all or part of a worker's salary was paid in tokens which had no value outside the factory owner's "truck shop." The owners were able to supply shoddy goods to the truck shop and still charge top prices. A series of "Truck Acts" (1831-1887) stopped this abuse. The Acts made it an offence not to pay employees in common currency. Owen opened a store where people could buy goods of sound quality at little more than cost, and he placed the sale of Alcohol under strict supervision. He sold quality goods and passed on the savings from the bulk purchase of goods to the workers. These principles became the basis for the co-operative shops in Britain that continue to trade today.

To improve the production standards of his workers, Owen installed a cube with different coloured faces above each machinist's workplace. Depending on the quality of the work and the amount produced, a different colour was displayed, so that all the other workers could see who had the highest standards, and each employee had an interest in doing his best. Owen also motivated his workers by improving the living conditions at New Lanark for the workers and their families. His greatest success, however, was in the education of the young, to which he devoted special attention. He was the founder of infant schools in Great

Britain. Though his ideas resemble the efforts being made in Europe at the time he probably arrived at them on his own.

After 1834 Owen devoted himself to propagating his ideas on education, Morality, Rationalism, and marriage reform. By 1846, the only permanent result of Owen's agitation zealously carried on in public meetings, pamphlets, periodicals, and occasional treatises, remained the co-operative movement, and for a time even that seemed to have utterly collapsed. In his later years, Owen became a firm believer in Spiritualism. He died in his native town on November 17, 1858.

## Recap

- ◆ Trade unionism in England was the natural outcome of industrialism in that country
- ◆ From 1700 to 1824, organised trade unionism was declared illegal
- ◆ Trade unions were suppressed by: Combination Laws, Ancient statutes, and Common Law
- ◆ One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Trade Union movement of recent years is the formation of large federations and alliances
- ◆ The word "Socialism" first became current in the discussions of the "Association of all Classes of all Nations," which Owen formed in 1835

## Objective Questions

1. What was the main aim of Common Law?
2. Which year Trade Dispute Act passed?
3. Which Commission Legalised the status of trade unions in Britain?
4. What is the importance of the Trade Union Act of 1871?

5. In which year Taffvale Railway Company Employees conducted a strike?
6. Who propounded the labour theory of value?
7. 'Truck System' was stopped by which act?
8. What is the name of the individual who was assigned by the House of Commons to investigate labour union issues?
9. Who founded the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union?

## Answers

1. To declare trade unions illegal
2. 1906
3. Royal Commission of 1867
4. Working with Trade unions rationalized
5. 1900
6. David Ricardo
7. Truck Acts
8. Joseph Hume
9. Robert Owen

## Self Assessment Questions

1. Why did the factory system encourage the growth of trade unionism?
2. What were the major difficulties faced by industrial workers in early Britain?
3. How did laissez-faire ideas affect the condition of workers?
4. Why did the British government fear workers' associations after the French Revolution?
5. What were the Combination Laws?



6. How did early trade unions continue to function despite legal restrictions?
7. Why is Robert Owen considered an important social reformer?
8. What changes did Owen introduce for improving workers' lives?
9. How did Owen's ideas contribute to British socialism?
10. In what ways did trade unionism challenge the power of employers?

## Assignments

1. Explain the early opposition to trade unions in Britain in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. What were the Combination Laws and how did they constrain unions?
2. Analyze the key reforms and innovations Robert Owen introduced at his New Lanark textile mills to improve conditions for workers. How radical were they for the time?
3. Assess the influence of Robert Owen's ideas on the early socialist and trade union movements in Britain in the 1820s-1830s. What were his main proposals?
4. Discuss the charges leveled against trade unions by the 1867 Royal Commission in Britain. What recommendations did the majority and minority reports make?
5. Explain how the political and legal status of British trade unions evolved from initial suppression to legitimacy by the early 20th century.

## Suggested Reading

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## UNIT

# Chartism - Development of Party System

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ define Chartism as a working-class political movement in nineteenth-century Britain
- ◆ identify the social and political causes that led to the Chartist movement
- ◆ explain the six major demands of the People's Charter
- ◆ describe the course, leadership and limitations of Chartism
- ◆ understand the development of the British party system from Whigs and Tories to Liberals, Conservatives and Labour

### Prerequisite

Imagine a society where people work in factories, pay taxes, suffer from poverty and unemployment, but still have no vote in Parliament. This was the experience of many working-class people in Britain after the Reform Act of 1832. The Act gave political power mainly to the middle classes, while workers remained excluded. The disappointment of the poor was deepened by the Poor Law of 1834, factory hardships and the failure of non-political methods of protest.

Chartism emerged from this frustration. It was not merely a protest against poverty; it was a demand for political rights. The People's Charter asked for reforms such as universal manhood suffrage, secret ballot, payment for Members of Parliament and equal electoral districts. Though Chartism failed immediately, many of its demands were later accepted. The unit also connects Chartism with the wider development of the party system in Britain, showing how political power gradually moved from aristocratic groups to organised mass politics.

## Keywords

Working class, Trade union, Bill, Parliament, Petition, Secret ballot, Middle class, Corruption, Factory act

## Discussion

Chartism was a mass movement that emerged in the political disappointments and economic difficulties of the later 1830s and was active until 1848. The movement centered on the People's Charter (May 1838), which made six demands: universal manhood suffrage, annual parliaments, a secret ballot, equal electoral districts, abolition of the property qualification for Members of Parliament (MPs), and payment of MPs. Chartism was the culmination of a well-established tradition of radical politics in both its analysis and strategy.

Chartism was the culmination of a well-established tradition of radical politics in both its analysis and strategy. Chartism blames political corruption and “class legislation” for working-class hardships. It sought to mobilise its supporters and intimidate its opponents through demonstrations of the strength of popular opinion in mass meetings and petitions to Parliament. Chartism proffered three petitions (in 1839, 1842, and 1848); each one of these got rejected. The movement also marked a development in the nature of radical politics in that it was a more exclusively and assertively working-class body. The National Charter Association, established in 1840, and, more controversially, the Chartist Land Plan of 1845, provided the working-class political movement with its first permanent organization. Chartism failed to achieve any of its aims but bequeathed a significant legacy of working-class activism.

### 2.2.1 Origins and Causes

Chartism was not, as portrayed in the past, “hunger politics”—an irrational, untutored response to economic hardship—but economic circumstances were significant in its origins and course. The movement grew as industrialisation took hold. Artisanal trades were increasingly subject to market pressures and mechanised competition; although Chartism was not the prerogative of the so-called declining trades, these literate craftsmen formed a significant component of their support. Skilled factory workers also fought to defend their working conditions and retain some control over the labour process. In fact, Chartism provided the umbrella under which a wide cross-section of the working population struggled to defend its status. Chartism peaked at times of economic depression. A slump that began in the late 1830s and peaked in 1842 provided powerful momentum for Chartist protest. Chartist activity declined in the mid-1840s as conditions improved, but the economic difficulties of 1847–1848 revived the mass movement. At the heart of the Chartists' economic grievances, however, lay a powerful political analysis. The labour theory of value (i.e., that the value of an item derives from the labour applied to produce it), which had developed in the 1820s, strengthened the Chartists' sense of exploitation, but the exploitation itself was attributed not to the economic process as such but to the political system. Chartists,

as had their radical forebears, blamed their poverty on “Old Corruption,” which was construed as a greedy and self-interested governing elite that taxed the wealth of the “producing classes” to maintain its extravagant and parasitic lifestyle. The 1815 Corn Laws (which placed a duty on imported grain) and the variety of other tariffs on consumption gave this analysis credibility. Up to sixteen percent of working-class income went to indirect taxation.

The Chartists, therefore, sought political redress and were strengthened in their demand for political power by the 1832 Reform Bill and its aftermath. This bill, which was brought about in large measure by working-class protest, extended the franchise to the property-owning middle classes while deliberately excluding working-class men from the vote.

The 1833 Factory Act disappointed a widespread working-class protest movement by refusing to legislate a 10-hour working day. The 1834 Poor Law, with its provision that any relief must be provided in a workhouse, seemed to punish the poor and rob the state of any legitimising paternalist role. Attempts to defend living conditions through nonpolitical means failed. Owenite cooperation, represented in the National Equitable Labour Exchange of 1832, proved impractical. The upsurge of trade unionism in the early 1830s, notably the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union (GNCTU) of 1834, collapsed as a result of both its own internal weaknesses and government repression. This repression was exemplified by the transportation of the “Tolpuddle martyrs.” (In 1834, six agricultural labourers from the village of Tolpuddle in Dorset, who formed a trade union lodge, were sentenced to seven years’ transportation

under an Act of 1797 forbidding ‘unlawful oaths.’ Their leader, George Loveless, was a methodist and seems to have been in contact with delegates from Robert Owen. Although unions were no longer illegal after the repeal of the Combination Acts (these acts were part of the government’s reaction against radical workers), and the Tolpuddle men sought only to resist a reduction in wages, the government feared rural unrest, including rick-burning and machine-breaking. The harsh sentence provoked a campaign of petitions and mass demonstrations organised by the GNCTU in 1834 and the prosecution of the Glasgow cotton spinners for strike activity in 1838.

Although the Charter itself was little more than a tabulation of long-established radical demands, the London Workingmen’s Association provided the programme of the nascent Chartist movement by drafting the six points and publishing the People’s Charter in May 1838. Some 600 radical societies formed in the North and provided strength and depth to the movement. Feargus O’Connor played a leading role, and many activists and leaders such as J. R. Stephens switched directly from anti-Poor Law agitation to the wider politics of Chartism. O’Connor’s newspaper, the Northern Star, was first published in 1837 and sold 50,000 copies weekly at its peak in 1839; it provided propaganda and cohesion to the growing movement, which coalesced in a series of mass meetings that were held in Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester, and elsewhere between May and September 1838. These meetings elected the 53 delegates to the “General Convention of the Industrious Classes,” which convened in February 1839 to oversee strategy and present the Chartist Petition.

### 2.2.2 The Course of Chartism

Chartism represented a powerful convergence of experience, agitation, and organisation, yet it remained rooted in the fallible radical conviction that the strength of mass public opinion could persuade the ruling classes to relinquish their power. The General Convention discussed a variety of “ulterior measures” to be implemented when the petition fails. These included a general strike on banks and a boycott of hostile traders. The delegates were divided in temperament and tactics. However, no coherent response emerged when Parliament rejected the petition, with its 1.28 million signatures, in July 1839 by 235 votes to 46. Depleted by arrests and split by the resignation of more moderate, often middle-class delegates, the convention eventually dissolved itself in September, having first endorsed and then rescinded the general strike tactic.

Some radical Chartists believed that the time had come for insurrection. The most violent response came in Newport, South Wales, where, in November 1839, John Frost led 5000 miners to release imprisoned Chartists. Troops dispersed the attack, killing 24. A rise in Sheffield in January 1840, which had been reported to the authorities, was even less successful. Whether any more concerted action was planned or, at least, hoped for is difficult to determine, but the government’s fear of the Chartist threat was demonstrated by its arrest of 543 Chartist leaders between June 1839 and July 1840. This was an effective move that disoriented the movement at a crucial time by robbing Chartism of its local and national leadership and instilling fear of the power of the state.

Chartism regrouped in July 1840 with the foundation of the National Charter Association (NCA), which was intended to provide a permanent leadership and

organisation. By April 1842, the NCA had 401 branches and some 50,000 subscribing members. The NCA, championed by O’Connor, represented the mainstream of the movement. Traditional historians, influenced by the partisan memoirs of some of O’Connor’s opponents, have emphasised at this point a growing rift in the movement between so-called “Physical Force” Chartists and their “Moral Force” adversaries. In reality, the Chartist slogan, “Peaceably if we may, forcibly if we must,” represented the viewpoint of most Chartists and reflected the widespread and well-established radical belief in the justifiability, and perhaps necessity, of working-class self-defence against state oppression.

William Lovett, the founder of the National Association for Promoting the Political and Social Improvement of the People in 1841, emphasized working-class self-improvement; the movement rejected his doctrine not for its object per se but for its implication that the vote had to be earned rather than granted as a right. O’Connor’s rejection of any alliance with middle-class groups that were campaigning for parliamentary reform or the repeal of the Corn Laws also reflects Chartism’s deep distrust of any compromise that might detract from the integrity of their cause.

In May 1842, the House of Commons rejected the second Chartist petition, which claimed 3.3 million signatures, by 287 votes to 49. The rejection came at a time of severe economic depression. A strike wave, protesting wage cuts, spread from the Midlands to the North and Scotland. (The removal of boiler plugs from steam engines as a means of enforcing the stoppage gave this strike wave its pejorative name, the “Plug Plot.”) Though the strikes originated in economic grievances,



they took on a political character: some strikers and a delegate conference of trade union leaders in Manchester vowed not to resume work until the Charter was granted. The Conservative Government of Robert Peel responded firmly by arresting approximately 1500 strikers. The strikes petered out by September.

Its second failure and the economic recovery after 1842 hit Chartism hard. O'Connor used this hiatus to promote the Land Plan, which he launched formally in 1845. The plan established a subscription fund to purchase land and provide members, selected by ballot, with smallholdings. By 1851, the plan had accrued only 250 subscribers and was beset by financial and legal difficulties. Though frequently criticized as a sign of O'Connor's eccentricity and incompetence, the plan had greater attraction and relevance to the urban working classes than often credited. Some 70,000 eventually subscribed, drawn by its promise of self-reliance and also by its intended benefit to industrial workers (i.e., that land settlement would reduce pressure on the labour market and raise working-class incomes). The plan at least provided a cause and a focus for Chartism when the movement was at a low ebb.

Poor harvests starting in 1846 and a commercial crisis in 1847 provided the conditions for the last upsurge of Chartism. Meetings resumed and the collection of signatures for a third petition commenced. The Chartist Convention, buoyed by the success of the February revolution in France, planned a mass meeting in Kennington Common, south London, to present the petition with its claimed 5.5 million signatures. The authorities, alarmed at the threat of insurrection, recruited 170,000 special constables and deployed 7,000 regular troops. The Chartist leadership, intent on a peaceful

meeting, abandoned a planned march on Parliament. Parliament inspected the petition, found that only some 1.5 million signatures were genuine, and rejected it. The government easily suppressed the poorly planned August Chartist rising and arrested approximately 300 participants. Chartism, humiliated in hostile eyes, was at least outfaced and dissolved as a mass movement. In the 1850s, O'Connor lapsed into insanity. Earnest Jones, an upper-class barrister, Jones became active in Chartist politics in the mid-1840s as an ally of Feargus O'Connor and co-editor of the *Northern Star* sought to move what remained of the movement in a socialist direction, but most former Chartist activists moved into other areas of working-class politics.

### 2.2.2.1 Significance

Chartism did not achieve any of its objectives though all (with the exception of annual parliaments) were enacted subsequently. Parliament abolished the property qualification for MPs in 1858, extended the franchise to working-class males in 1867 and 1884, introduced the Secret ballot in 1872, redistributed constituencies in 1885, and established payment for MPs in 1911.

Traditionally, the Chartist movement's failure was explained by the "premature" and "extreme" nature of its demands and the immaturity of the working class. The decline of Chartism in times of economic prosperity and its demise as working-class living standards rose after 1850 is seen as confirmation that the movement was essentially an inchoate and reflexive response to economic hardship.

### 2.2.3 Why did Chartism Fail?

Though the movement was many-sided, it failed.



**1. Reactionary Movement:**

The Chartist movement failed because it was largely a reactionary movement of an economically superseded and politically powerless class. Chartism in the North was popular among the handloom weavers and stockingers whose hope lay in the passionate denial of the industrial system- this mass movement became reactionary in its aims and revolutionary in spirit and tactics. The capitalist industry was strongly against the reversal of development as these people wanted to achieve.

**2. Role of industrial Fluctuations:**

Chartism waned with industrial fluctuations, even with the rise in prices. The peak years of Chartism were characterized by industrial depression and high prices. However, from the forties till the seventies, British prosperity and a fall in unemployment silenced the Chartism movement. The textile workers received increased wages and improved conditions through the implementation of the Factory Acts. Handloom weavers were absorbed into the expanding industry, with many of them becoming industrial handweavers. This weakened the Chartist movement as industrialization became more widely accepted.

**3. No coordinated purpose:**

It failed because it lacked a coordinated purpose. The adherents of the Charter were deeply divided among themselves and felt that their

approach to public relations was rational and reasonable. They were not prepared to budge even an inch from the stand they had taken. Not only that, but the charter embraced too much, and its scope was too wide to be covered by any simple movement.

**4. Lack of Leadership:**

Chartism lacked strong, agreed leadership. Lovett, O'Connor, O'Brien, Vincent etc could not be combined into one effective team. Temperaments clashed, tactics differed, and aims conflicted. Consequently movement was split up by local loyalties.

**5. Middle-Class Ignored:**

Chartism failed because it alienated the might of the middle classes-"the leading poachers, who since 1832 had turned gamekeeper." Conflict between the Chartism and the Anti-Corn Law League for eight years ate up all the energies of the middle classes. The middle-class industrialists emerged with both political as well as economic power and then each step made the possibility of working-class victory more remote,

**6. Revolt against Industrialism.**

Neither the trade unions nor the Oceanites supported the movement. Trade unions wanted improvement of industrial conditions Chartism was a revolt against industrialisation itself. At the same time, it was not a socialist movement. Owen, the greatest socialist, was no chartist, O'Connor the Chartist leader, was no socialist.



In subsequent working-class movements, some signs of Chartist revival are perceptible but not in Trade Union or Labour movements. The Chartist movement was, in fact, the product of a transition period in capitalist development. Though it failed all the important points have since been won. Nobody can deny that it was a necessary step in working-class development and although it left no direct heir it has bequeathed a very real inspiration to the generation that followed. The inherent defect of the whole movement was that it was anti to the industrialisation of the country and thus unnecessarily tried to check the process of history.

#### **2.2.4 Party System In England**

In England there exists at present the Parliamentary or cabinet system of government which implies that the King or Queen is only a nominal head of the government whereas the cabinet or ministers who are chosen from the majority party in the House of Commons under the leadership of Prime Minister and who are individually and collectively responsible to the House of Commons exercise the real executive authority in the State. The working of the cabinet system is closely connected with the existence of a well-organised party system. The party system in England received considerable strength under the first two Georges, namely George I & II, but during George III, the whole system received considerable setbacks, as the King wanted to establish his rule.

##### ***2.2.4.1 Attitude of Whigs and Tories towards Hanoverian Succession***

It has already been stated above that shortly before Queen Anne's death the Whigs were successful in getting representation in the ministry and it was on account of their sudden and quick

action that the Hanoverian Succession took place in England in 1714 in spite of the efforts of the Tories to restore the Stuarts. The Tories believed in the right of James II and his successors to rule England though, of course, they disliked the Catholic religion adopted by these princes. It is said that Bolingbroke, the Tory leader, plotted for the restoration of the Stuarts just before the death of Queen Anne but fortunately for the Whigs the Queen died suddenly and they at once proclaimed George of Hanover as King in accordance with the provisions of the Act of Settlement, 1701. On the accession of George I to the English throne the Tory leaders were impeached for treason and consequently Bolingbroke fled to France. With his flight, the Tories became discredited and leaderless.

##### ***2.2.4.2 Whig Ascendancy (1714-1769)***

During the period of about fifty years from 1714 to 1760 the reins of government remained in the hands of the Whigs, George I and George II could not speak or understand the English language. They were also not interested in English politics and government. The vast powers of the Crown were allowed by them to be exercised by the Whigs. They knew that they had succeeded to the English throne owing to the support of the Whigs and therefore in return for this support they showered favours upon them. The Whigs were appointed to all posts of importance in the Church and the State. The domestic and foreign policies were now decided by the Whigs. They exercised control over the Parliament. This is why the period from 1714 to 1760 is known as the 'Golden Period of the Whigs', or the period of "Whig Ascendancy" or "Whig Supremacy. This period is also known as the period of "Whig Oligarchy" or "Whig Aristocracy because ultimately the power in this period rested with about seventy big families of the Whigs.

These aristocratic Whig families enjoyed a majority in the House of Lords and also manipulated a majority in the House of Commons through bribery, corruption and the power of patronage. The royal pre-Whig Ascendancy (1714-1769). During the period of austerity years from 1714 to 1760 the reins of government remained in the hands of the Whigs, George I and George II could not speak or understand the English language. They were also not interested in English politics and government. The vast powers of the Crown were allowed by them to be exercised by the Whigs. They knew that they had succeeded to the English throne owing to the support of the Whigs and therefore in return for this support they showered favours upon them. The Whigs were appointed to all posts of importance in the Church and the State. The domestic and foreign policies were now decided by the Whigs. They exercised control over the Parliament. This is why the period from 1714 to 1760 is known as the 'Golden Period of the Whigs', or the period of "Whig Ascendancy or "Whig Supremacy. This period is also known as the period of "Whig Oligarchy" or "Whig Aristocracy because ultimately the power in this period rested with about seventy big families of the Whigs.

The royal prerogative of patronage in the spheres of Church and State was now exercised by the Whigs. In the words of Trevelyan: "...the first two Hanoverians abandoned to the Whig leaders certain prerogatives of the Crown which William III and even Anne would never have let out of their own hands." The Tories had become unpopular on account of their association with Jacobite Risings. The nation did not want 'the despotism and popery of the Stuarts and therefore the people refused to support the Tories. prerogative of patronage in the spheres of Church and State was now exercised by

the Whigs. In the words of Trevelyan: "... the first two Hanoverians abandoned to the Whig leaders certain prerogatives of the Crown which William III and even Anne would never have let out of their own hands." The Tories had become unpopular on account of their association with Jacobite Risings. The nation did not want the despotism and papistry of the Stuarts and therefore the people refused to support the Tories.

#### ***2.2.4.3 Establishment of the Party System of Government***

It was under the Whig Oligarchy that the party system of government was fully established in England. All the ministers of the new King, i.e. George I, were selected by him from the Whig Party because the Tory Party had opposed his succession. Moreover, the Whig Party was in majority in the House of Lords and it also maintained its majority in the House of Commons by "corruption". The practice of choosing ministers from the majority party was initiated by William III and it was further strengthened by the first two Hanoverians. Ultimately, this practice became a convention of the English Constitution. We cannot disregard the fact that the present system of party government in England owes a great deal for its origin and development to the Hanoverian Succession.

#### ***2.2.4.4 Party system under George III***

With the accession of George III to the English throne in 1760 there occurred a great change in the political situation. He became determined to do away with the Party System and to break the monopoly of political power exercised by the Whigs. Inspired by Bolingbroke's ideas he thought that he could serve his purpose by establishing a non-party ornament. He wanted to become a real 'King'



and to choose his ministers without the considerations of any party majority. He knew that the ring of great Whig houses that had governed England during the last two reigns stood in the way of his exercising real royal powers. The failure of the Second Jacobite Rising of 1745 had made the Tories finally reconciled to the rule of the Hanoverian dynasty. They therefore transferred their loyalty to George III who was a staunch enemy of the Whigs. Moreover, the long rule of the Whigs had also given rise to factions in their own ranks. So, George III attempted to remove the Whigs from power. He removed Pitt the Elder and appointed Tory Ministers. Of course, he was compelled on some occasions to accept Whig ministers but he never liked them and took advantage of the earliest opportunity of dismissing them.

#### ***2.2.4.5 George III's own party***

George III took away all powers from the Whigs. He rallied the palace men around his own banner and organised his own political party- The King's Friends. The members of this party supported the King in the Parliament. However, The King's Friends could not make the political influence decisive. George III had to appoint one Whig Minister after another till, he appointed Lord North, a Tory, as his nominal Chief Minister in 1770. Lord North proved to be a staunch supporter mouthpiece of the royal policy. George III virtually became his own First Minister and thus he was successful in establishing his rule. His personal rule continued up to 1782 when it came to an end and with it also ended, the party of The 'King's Friends'. The party system was again restored in 1783 with the appointment of Pitt the Younger, Tory Leader, as the Prime Minister in whom the majority of the members of the Parliament had full confidence. Pitt the Younger

formed a Tory Ministry in 1783. George III had thought that he would be able to use Pitt the Younger also, like Lord North as the instrument of royal policy but in this expectation, he was mistaken. Pitt the Younger though a Tory, was in no case prepared to prefer the King's policy to his own. It became impossible for George III to dismiss Pitt the Younger because he was supported by the Parliament and moreover, his removal would have meant the return of the Whigs to power. Thus, the Party System was again restored and the King's system came to an end.

#### ***2.2.4.6 Rise of Radicals (1783 to 1832)***

As already stated with the appointment of Pitt the Younger as the Prime Minister, the Party System was again restored in England in 1783. The Tory Ministry of Pitt the Younger remained in power for seventeen years. During the personal rule of George III, a strong reaction had set in against his personal rule. A Radical Party was organised by men like Wilkes and others demanding constitutional reforms. After the failure of George III's personal rule in 1783 the old parties- Tories and Whigs-reappeared on the political scene. However, these parties were somewhat different from the early Tories and Whigs in their political aims. This is why they are sometimes given the names "New Tories" and "New Whigs". The political creed of the New Tory Party was the same as that of the old Whig Party of the early years. The chief leaders of this Party were Pitt the Younger and Burke who advocated the keeping of Hanoverians safe on the English throne and safeguarding the Kingdom from serious dangers like Roman Catholicism, Jacobitism and Trade Unionism. On the other hand, the chief advocates of the New Whigs were men like Fox and Sheridan who upheld the cause of Parliamentary Reforms and also advocated religious equality. Such



a complexion of the political parties continued up to the Reform Act of 1832.

#### ***2.2.4.7 New Nomenclature of the Political Parties***

After the passage of the First Reforms Act of 1832, the Whigs and Tories came to be designated as Liberals and Conservatives respectively. In other words, the labels “Whig” and “Tory” were discarded and in their place, as Munro said, the more designatory appellation of “Conservatives” and “Liberals” appeared. The First Reform Act of 1832 gave the right to vote to the business classes. The traders and merchants who now entered into the charmed circle of politics wanted freedom from State interference in the economic and allied sphere. They advocated the principle of Laissez-Faire (i.e. let alone) and joined the Whigs. With their admission into the Whig ranks the Whig Party came to be known as the Liberal Party or the Liberals. Although the Liberals advocated social and parliamentary reforms and the Conservatives were opposed to these reforms favouring Imperialism and aggressive wars yet under the leadership of Peel and Disraeli the programme of the Conservatives became more and more liberalised. In 1835 in his manifesto to the electors of Tamworth, Peel renamed the Tory Party as the “Conservative Party”. He asked his followers not to stick to their opposition to Parliamentary reform which was now an accomplished fact. The Conservative Party was in favour of the powers of the Crown, the Established Church, the House of Lords and British Imperialism. Peel also introduced the principle of Free Trade. When Peel repealed the Corn Laws in accordance with his policy of Free Trade Tory Party which had been able to capture powers in 1841 on account of its reorganisation on progressive lines incidentally came to be split up into two sections Peelites

who were in favour of Free Trade and Protectionists.

From 1846 to 1866 there was disintegration in political organisations. Members of one party frequently cross over to the other party. The cross-voting in Parliament exhibited no clear party position. The outstanding political personality during this period was Palmerston. Although he was a liberal, he did not allow Parliamentary reform to take place during his lifetime. On the whole, the programme of the Liberals was primarily concerned with domestic reforms and later on with the vital and vexatious Irish problem. In foreign affairs and colonial policy, the Liberals were not as enterprising and adventurous as their opponents.

The rivalry between the two parties reached its zenith in the time of Disraeli and Gladstone. They were the most striking and distinguished Prime Ministers of England succeeding each other after various intervals between 1868 and 1885. In fact, the acceptance of office by Gladstone, the leading Peelite, under Liberal Palmerston's Prime Ministership in 1859 was a prelude to the ultimate absorption of Free Trade Conservatives into the Liberal Party. The Second Reform Act of 1867 was passed by the Conservative Ministry of Derby-Disraeli. It is said that Derby and Disraeli dished the Whigs” in passing this Reform Act of their own. Derby the Conservative leader, retired from politics and his place was taken by Disraeli. Similarly, after his retirement in 1866 Russell on defeat of his Liberal Ministry which was formed after Palmerston's in 1865, Gladstone became the undisputed leader of the Liberal Party.

Both the Conservative and Liberal Parties had distinct and diametrically opposite programmes and policies. The





Conservatives advocated the maintenance of historical institutions like monarchy, House of Lords, National Church, etc. limited social and parliamentary reforms, maintenance of the British influence in the sphere of foreign affairs even by force, if the need arose, etc. On the other hand, the Liberals advocated Free Trade, social, parliamentary administrative and judicial reforms and peace, non-intervention and mutual cooperation in foreign affairs, etc.

In domestic affairs, Disraeli was essentially a protectionist whereas Gladstone was a staunch Free Trader. Disraeli brought about social reforms as a matter of expediency and necessity whereas Gladstone did so as a matter of principle. Disraeli favoured only limited parliamentary reforms but Gladstone wanted to extend the right to vote to all men and women. In Irish policy, Gladstone was in favour of showing concessions to Ireland but Disraeli was unsympathetic towards Ireland. Gladstone was in favour of Granting Home Rule to Ireland but Disraeli believed in the maintenance of the Union of Ireland and England. In Imperial policy, Gladstone believed in the policy of peace, non-intervention, cooperation and concessions regarding the colonies but Disraeli pursued a vigorous policy and brought the colonies closer to the mother country. In foreign policy Gladstone favoured the policy of peace, cooperation and non-intervention whereas Disraeli favoured active intervention even war, if the need arose, to safeguard the interests and prestige of England.

#### ***2.2.4.8 Fall of the Liberal and Rise of the Labour Party***

The coming of the twentieth century witnessed two parallel and steady developments in the political arena. On the one hand, the Liberal Party went on

declining and on the other hand a new party i.e. the Labour Party emerged and slowly grew in strength. The Tory Party remained in power from 1886 to 1905 with the help of some Liberals and Radicals who were in favour of maintaining a union between Ireland and England. This is why it was called the Union Party. In 1906 the Liberals entered Parliament as the majority party and their government remained in office till the outbreak of the First World War under the leadership and Prime Ministership of Campbell Bannerman up to 1908 and under Asquith after 1908. During the war, a coalition government was formed under the leadership of Asquith as the Liberal Prime Minister but gradually disruption took place within the party line. when David Lloyd George became Prime Minister at the end of 1916 with the help of Conservatives. But the Conservatives did not help him permanently and he had to seek a compromise with Asquith again but in vain. The Conservatives had strengthened themselves in the meantime and they formed governments in 1922 and 1924. Gradually the number of the Liberal members in the Parliament went on declining. The final decline and dismemberment of the Liberal Party began in 1931.

Late in the 19th century a great change came over the domestic politics of England. The working classes became increasingly conscious of their grievances. They also became conscious of their own powers and began to organise themselves into a Political Party which came to be known as the Labour Party. This party gradually became a potent factor in English politics. The question of forming an independent Labour Party was raised by James Keit Herdie in 1867 during the Trade Union Congress. In 1892 he was elected to Parliament as an independent Labour candidate. In 1900

a Labour Representation Committee was set up and many trade unions agreed to join it although many of them had been actively hostile to socialism until then. As a result of a resolution passed in the fourth annual conference of the Labour Representation Committee, the Labour Party itself came into being in the year 1903. After the General Elections of 1906 Labour Party entered the Parliament and it was an indication of its significant Victory. The Liberal Party gave its support to the Labour Party and elections of 1910 the Labour Party secured 40 and 42 seats. Some of the Labour leaders also joined the ministry in 1910. After 1918 Labour Party broke away from the Liberal Party. In the successive elections after 1918 the Labour Party secured parliamentary seats in increasing numbers. The first Labour Government was formed in 1924 under the leadership of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald with the support of the Liberals. However, the Liberals withdrew their support soon after the installation of the Labour Government. However, in 1929 again the Labour Party came out victorious as the majority party and consequently, the second Labour Ministry was formed in that year again under the leadership of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. The ministry again fell in 1931. Cracks appeared in the party unity in 1931 when Mr. Ramsay Macdonald formed a national government with the help of other principal parties without consulting his Labour cabinet. Consequently, his leadership was not recognised by most of the Labour members.

During the period between 1931 and 1939, the National Government remained in power. It was conducted by the Conservatives with the help of Liberals and some members. During this period,

the sharpness of party division was blurred on account of economic issues. However, during the Second World War, cracks in the Labour Party disappeared and all members of the Labour Party, except the Independent Labour Party, agreed to join the struggle against Fascism. Mr. Attlee, the leader of the Labour Party, supported Mr. Winston Churchill and, upon his invitation, joined his Conservative government in 1940. In 1945, Mr. Attlee formed his Labour government which continued until 1951. After the Second World War, the numerical strength of the Liberal Party further declined. Although many minor political groups had arisen in England, such as the Irish Nationalists, Communists, Independents, and National Labour, many of them failed to secure any seats in Parliament in successive elections after 1950. Consequently, England returned to the two-party system. Apart from the Liberals, who became insignificant after World War II, there are two major political parties in England now. Sometimes the Labour Party comes into power, while at other times the Conservative Party captures the government.

#### ***2.2.4.9 Nature of the Party System in England***

In England, there are at present three major political parties- the Labour Party, the Conservative Party, and the Liberal Party, which are again appearing on the national scene. Each party works in England inside the governmental system rather than outside it. It means that the machinery of the government is the same as that of the party. The leader of the majority party in the House of Commons, who heads the cabinet as the Prime Minister is also the executive head of the party organisation which is in power.

## Recap

1. Chartism was a mass movement that emerged in the political disappointments and economic difficulties of the later 1830s and was active until 1848
2. Chartism blamed political corruption and “class legislation” for working-class hardships
3. Grand National Consolidated Trades Union (GNCTU) of 1834, collapsed as a result of both its own internal weaknesses and government repression
4. O’Connor’s newspaper, the Northern Star, was first published in 1837
5. William Lovett - the founder of the National Association for Promoting the Political and Social Improvement of the People
6. Poor harvests starting in 1846 and a commercial crisis in 1847 provided the conditions for the last upsurge of Chartism
7. Owen, the greatest socialist, was no chartist, O’Connor the Chartist leader, was no socialist
8. The working of the cabinet system is closely connected with the existence of a well-organised party system
9. The party system in England received considerable strength under the first two Georges, namely George I & II
10. The period from 1714 to 1760 is known as the ‘Golden Period of the Whigs’, or the period of “Whig Ascendancy or “Whig Supremacy”
11. It was under the Whig Oligarchy that the party system of government was fully established in England
12. The Second Reform Act of 1867 was passed by the Conservative Ministry of Derby-Disraeli

## Objective Questions

1. In Which Year First Reform Bill passed?
2. Who initiated the Chartist Movement?
3. How many demands existed in the People’s Charter?
4. Who was Lovett?

5. When did the Hanoverian Succession take place in Britain?
6. Whose ministry passed the Second Reform Act of 1867?
7. Which period was called as Golden age of Whigs?
8. What was the importance of the period 1714 to 1760?
9. After which Reforms Act did the Whigs and Tories come to be designated as Liberals and Conservatives respectively?
10. Who led the second Labour Ministry in Britain?

## Answers

1. 1832
2. Robert Owen
3. Six
4. Secretary of the Chartist Association
5. 1714
6. Derby-Disraeli
7. 1714 to 1760
8. Whig Oligarchy
9. Reforms Act of 1832
10. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald

## Self Assessment Questions

1. Why were working-class people disappointed after the Reform Act of 1832?
2. What was the People's Charter?
3. How did Chartism combine economic grievances with political demands?
4. Why was universal manhood suffrage important to Chartists?



5. What was the significance of secret ballot in the Chartist programme?
6. How did Feargus O'Connor contribute to the Chartist movement?
7. Why did Parliament reject Chartist petitions?
8. What were the reasons for the decline of Chartism?
9. How did Chartism influence later democratic reforms in Britain?
10. How did the British party system develop from Whigs and Tories into modern political parties?

## Assignments

1. What were the main causes and origins of the Chartist movement? Discuss economic factors as well as political and social factors that contributed to the rise of Chartism.
2. What were the six main demands outlined in the People's Charter? Why were these demands seen as important by the Chartists? Discuss the significance of each demand.
3. Analyze three reasons why the Chartist movement ultimately failed to achieve any of its goals and demands. Consider issues like leadership, strategy and tactics, public support, etc.
4. Trace the development of the party system in England from the accession of George I in 1714 to the Reform Act of 1832. Discuss the shifts in power between Whigs and Tories during this period.
5. Compare and contrast the domestic and foreign policies of Disraeli and Gladstone. How did their contrasting programs and ideologies shape the rivalry between the Conservative and Liberal parties in the late 19th century?



## Suggested Reading

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5. Sartori, G. *Parties and Party Systems*, vol. 1, Cambridge University Press, 1976.
6. Thomas, P. C. *History of England (1485-1945)*, Har-Anand Publications, 1996, New Delhi.
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## UNIT

# Laissez-Faire, Methodism, Gladstone and Disraeli

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the meaning of laissez-faire and its connection with classical economics
- ◆ describe the growth of free trade in nineteenth-century Britain
- ◆ discuss the importance of the repeal of the Corn Laws and the decline of protectionism
- ◆ explain the religious and social significance of Methodism
- ◆ compare the political ideas, domestic policies and foreign policies of Gladstone and Disraeli

### Prerequisite

This unit brings together economic ideas, religious reform and political leadership in nineteenth-century Britain. Laissez-faire means allowing individuals and markets to operate with minimum government interference. In Britain, this idea gained strength through classical economics and the influence of thinkers such as Adam Smith. It supported free trade, reduced tariffs and the removal of old restrictions on commerce. The repeal of the Corn Laws became a major turning point in Britain's movement towards free trade.

At the same time, religion also shaped society. Methodism, associated with John Wesley, encouraged discipline, moral seriousness, prayer, service to the poor and reform of personal life. It influenced working-class culture and social responsibility. The later part of the unit studies two major political leaders: William Ewart Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli. Gladstone is associated with free trade, reform and moral politics, while Disraeli is remembered for Conservatism, social

legislation and imperial foreign policy. Together, they represent two contrasting visions of Victorian Britain.

## Keywords

Free Trade, Economy, Church, Evangelical, Parliament, Social legislation, Judiciary

## Discussion

### 2.3.1 Laissez-Faire

Laissez-faire is an economic philosophy of free-market capitalism that opposes government intervention. The theory of laissez-faire was developed by the French Physiocrats who flourished in France from about 1756 to 1778. The term laissez-faire means, in French, “allow to do.” Laissez-faire advocates that economic success is inhibited when governments are involved in business and markets.

#### 2.3.1.1 Philosophical Background

The policy of laissez-faire received strong support in Classical Economics as it developed in Great Britain under the influence of inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations by the Scottish philosopher and economist Adam Smith.

#### 2.3.1.2 Factors in Freeing Trade

1. The first restriction to Free Trade was protection given to native manufacturers by tariffs and even by absolute prohibition. The purpose of the policy of protection was two-fold: (1) to give protection to the native industries from

foreign competition, and (2) to raise the revenue of the state. However, in the 19th century, this policy had become out-of-date, firstly because the British industries had crossed the stage of infancy and needed no more protection, and secondly, because the purpose of raising revenue was also lost because much expenditure was needed for the collection. The policy also further hampered the development of British industry. Therefore, protection for native manufacturers was to be abandoned.

#### 2.3.1.3 Various stages

1. The first step was taken by William Pitt in 1786 when he concluded a commercial treaty with France. But the cause of Free Trade was wrecked by the outbreak of the French Revolution.
  - a. In 1820, the London merchants presented to Parliament a petition that enunciated and urged the adoption of the principles of Free Trade and demanded the abolition of all restrictions on imports unless



these were required for revenue purposes. The petition made a deep impression.

- i. In 1824, export of the native wool was allowed.
- ii. In 1825, the duty on foreign goods was reduced from 50 to 15 percent.
- b. In the 1820s, the policy of Huskisson greatly contributed to the cause of Free Trade.

Though he was not a Free Trader in the technical sense of the word, the shift in his policy was to reduce duties and to do away with absolute prohibitions. Huskisson at the Board of Trade continued to reduce or eliminate some of the more irksome duties. But still, no fundamental change of principle was made.

- c. In 1840, a parliamentary committee suggested that duties should be levied only on a small number of articles, as the collection of customs and excise duties entailed heavy expenditures and little profit. These suggestions were carried out by Peel, who, in the Budget of 1842, proceeded on the following lines: the removal of prohibitions, the reduction of duties on manufactured articles to 20% of raw materials to 5% at the most. The budget of 1845 went beyond the reduction of duties by sweeping them away on several hundred imports as well as on exports.

In 1846, the duties on manufactured goods were lowered to 10% at the most.

- e. Gladstone continued this policy of reducing and abolishing duties. In 1860, duties on manufactured goods, with

only a few exceptions, were abolished altogether. This was achieved by the commercial treaty that was concluded with France.

Thus, the protection of native manufacturers was abandoned. Henceforth, the fiscal system was virtually reconstructed on the basis of raising revenue. The disappearance of protective tariffs meant the enunciation of the historic commercial policy of utilising the mechanism of the custom to promote industry, which had hitherto been discredited.

2. The second restriction to the Free Trade was the protection of shipping by Navigation Laws, which excluded all non-British shipping from carrying the trade between England and her overseas possessions and limited the import of foreign goods to ships of England or of the country from which the goods came. But the corollary of free commerce was a free carrying trade and therefore resulted in the abolition of the Navigation Laws.

- a. The first breach was caused by the secession of American colonies, and in 1815, ships belonging to England and the U.S.A. were accorded similar treatment.
- b. In 1822, the colonies were allowed to directly trade with foreign regions.
- c. In 1825, the government was empowered to conclude reciprocal commercial treaties with other countries.
- d. In 1849, the Navigation Laws were altogether repealed.

English ports were thrown open to foreign ships for trade.

- e. In 1854, the coasting trade was also thrown open. Thus, a further set of obstacles to Free Trade were removed.
3. The most memorable as well as dramatic episode in the history of Free Trade was the repeal of the Corn Laws, by which the policy of protection for agriculture was abandoned. Because the Corn Laws purported to protect agricultural interests and because they had proved themselves inefficient even for this purpose, they became the main target for the supporters of Free Trade. In 1838, the Anti-Corn Law League was founded in Manchester by representatives from all important sections of the manufacturing and commercial population, with the aim of removing the Corn Laws in particular and other obstacles to Free Trade in general. From this beginning, the most sustained and intensive campaign of popular agitation that the first half of the 19th century had known was launched. Throughout the country, large mass meetings were addressed by orators of the calibre of John Bright and Richard Cobden. The doctrines of Free Trade, not in their application to the Corn Laws but in their broadest philosophical implications for national prosperity, power, and peace, were disseminated.

#### ***2.3.1.4 Background of Anti-Corn Law Agitation***

The background to the Anti-Corn Law

agitation was a series of bread harvests before 1844 and an unprecedented trade depression from 1839 to 1843, commonly known as the “hungry forties.” It was intended to raise the price of food and the cost of living. By reducing purchasing power and discouraging the export of manufactured goods in exchange for imported corn, the corn laws were causing public distress and hamstringing foreign trade and home manufactures. Free Trade became, in the hands of Cobden and Bright, a gospel, a cure for all social ills, and the path to international peace. The outcome of all this agitation was that the repeal of corn laws was made inevitable. Even Peel was convinced that the Corn Laws must go. In the business budget in 1842, Peel lowered the duty on corn, but the climax came in 1845 when the potato crop in Ireland failed.

Famine became imminent, and there was a bad corn harvest in England. Sir Robert Peel, already moving towards the conviction that the Corn laws would have to go, succeeded after a rapid run of ministerial crises in repealing the Corn laws.

The Repeal Act levied very low duties, which were even subsequently suspended in January 1847 and remained suspended until March 1848; after 1849, the duty remained one shilling a quarter. However, the system of protection for agriculture was abandoned, and it registered a further victory for the cause of Free Trade

#### ***2.3.1.5 Shock to Old Colonial System***

The old colonial system was also rudely shocked by the secession of American colonies. Writers like Wakefield, J.S. Mill, and Seeley contended that the colonies were to be regarded not as subservient but as equal and integral parts of the Empire.





Thus, a new attitude towards the colonies was taken.

Thus, by 1860, England had become virtually a free-trade nation. The mercantilist nations were abandoned altogether, and new doctrines preached by economists like Adam Smith and others were adopted. Free Trade ultimately triumphed in England.

### 2.3.2 Methodism

Methodism was an 18th-century movement founded by John Wesley that sought to reform the Church of England from within. The movement, however, became separate from its parent body and developed into an autonomous church. John Wesley and his brother, along with a group of students, started a “Holy Club” and began to systematically live out a holy life. They were strictly devoted to prayer, Bible study, taking communion every week, fasting regularly, and abstaining from luxury. They regularly visited the sick, the poor, and the imprisoned. This methodical approach to living, seeking to reproduce the lifestyle of the earliest Christians, led to the pejorative name methodist. Club members were branded as “Methodists” for the way they used rules and methods to guide their lives. Methodism was very much a religion of the poor and had a great deal to do with a revolution in English religion that was as radical in its effect, in its way, as was the Industrial Revolution itself.

In 1735, at the invitation of the founder of the Colony of Georgia, the brothers came to America to minister to the colonists and to perform missionary work among the Native Americans. After a short period, the brothers returned to England, unsuccessful in their work and attributing it to an insufficiency of faith.

Soon after his evangelical experience, John began what would become a revival movement fueled by open-air preaching, reaching thousands of people at a time. Many of those who came to listen to him preach were not churchgoers and were disconnected from the Church of England, but as a clergyman of that church, he insisted that people attend services in addition to Methodist meetings. Wesley preached the message that people can be assured of their salvation and that the Holy Spirit enables people to attain perfect love for God. His brother, Charles, wrote over 6,000 hymns to express the message of God’s universal love, and many of his songs are recognisable today even by those who are not churchgoers. With growing responsibilities for preaching and pastoral care, John appointed lay preachers and leaders to assist with leadership. Preachers organised the new converts into groups called “societies” and then into smaller groups called “classes,” where groups were encouraged to confess their sins to each other, support each other, and share testimonies with each other.

Although the Methodists were seeking reform within the Church of England and were not seeking to separate, as the number of converts increased, tensions rose and rifts widened. In 1784, John responded to the shortage of priests in America due to the Revolutionary War by ordaining priests with the power to administer the sacraments. This event was a major reason for the split of Methodism from the Church of England after John Wesley’s death.

Over the next century and a half, differences of opinion caused a variety of groups to spin off and form other Methodist churches. In 1968, the United Brethren in Christ and the Methodist Church united to form the United Methodist Church. Since

then, no further union has taken place, and Methodism still exists in three main forms:

The Methodist Church.

The Wesleyan Reform Church.

The Independent Methodist Church.

The social and political impact that the movement exerted upon its main constituency was, however, rather ambiguous. Wesley, who advocated a strict, even brutal approach to rising children, was politically and socially conservative, and many Wesleyan leaders supported child labour and opposed the teaching of writing in Sunday Schools. On the other hand, other Methodists were much more openly democratic and concerned with working-class issues, taking an active role in the development of trade unions and in radical political activities. The movement remained officially within the Church of England, on however precarious a basis, until after John Wesley's death in 1791, after which it splintered into a number of factions of various sizes, which were not reintegrated until the United Methodist Church of Great Britain was established in 1932.

### **2.3.3 William Ewart Gladstone**

William Ewart Gladstone was borne on 29 December, 180 at Liverpool in a rich and influential family. After a academic career at Eton and Oxford he entered the Parliament as a Tory in 1832. He had great admiration for Peel and remained loyal to him. Gladstone preferred to be a Tory rather than a conservative liberal. However, on account of his loyalty to Peel he was not acceptable to the Conservatives led by Disraeli. Therefore, when he was invited by the Liberals to join them he responded favourably and agreed to serve under Palmerston in 1859. After the death of Palmerston in 1865 and Russell in

1868, Gladstone became the leader of the Liberal Party and earned the reputation of being the biggest Liberal statesman of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Gladstone served as Prime Minister four times. His first term lasted from 1868 to 1874. His second term lasted from 1880 to 1885. His third term lasted only from February 1886 to August 1886. His fourth term as Prime Minister lasted from 1892 to 1894.

#### **2.3.3.1 Domestic Policy**

At the outset, it may be pointed out that Gladstone achieved much more in the domestic sphere than in the field of foreign affairs. During his first term as Prime Minister itself he pushed through several constructive law and administrative reforms to redress the grievances of the people. His reforms may be conveniently studied under the following heads:

#### **2.3.3.2 Elementary Education**

In 1870, Gladstone directed his Education Minister Foster to prepare an education bill to provide good schools throughout the country where children below a particular age could get education. These schools were to supplement the existing voluntary schools. In 1870, the Foster Education Act was passed which divided England into School districts where School Boards were to be elected to run these schools. These schools were to be maintained by local levies and state grants, and were to be run on non-sectarian lines. The voluntary schools were also to receive grants, which were to be double the amount already received by them.

#### **2.3.3.3 General Reforms**

Gladstone's first ministry carried out several general reforms. In 1870, it issued Orders in Council and did away the



system of nomination to positions in Civil Services, except in the Foreign Office. All these positions were to be filled up through an open competitive examination.

In 1871, he passed the University Act, which abolished all religious tests in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and threw open the Universities to the Dissenters and Roman Catholics. In 1870, he also enacted the Trade Union Act which recognised the Trade Unions and the office bearers of the Trade Unions responsible for the use of their funds. Officials guilty of misusing these funds could be subjected to penalties. In 1872, he created a new department of government known as Local Government Board. This department was entrusted with the responsibility of looking after the administration of Poor Laws, organisation of measures for public health as well as the general activities of local authorities.

In 1872, through the Ballot Act, secret voting was introduced for the elections to House of Commons. This greatly reduced the chances of bribing the electors and eliminated the illegitimate influence of the landlords and employers. He sought to tackle the problem of excessive drinking through the Licensing Act of 1872 and effected systematic reduction in number of public houses. The Act provided the magistrates increased control over public houses and fixed the closing hours of the houses at twelve at London and eleven in the country.

#### **2.3.3.4 Army Reforms**

Gladstone with the help of his Secretary of State for War (Edward Cardwell) carried out radical changes in the existing British army to make it up-to-date. He divided the War office into three divisions viz. Commander-in-Chief, the Surveyor General of the Ordnance and the Financial

Secretary The Commander-in-Chief, who so far exercised independent authority was made subordinate to the Secretary of State for War. As a result of this change control over army was transferred from the Crown to the Parliament.

#### **2.3.3.5 Judicial Reforms**

Gladstone also paid attention to improvement of judicial administration by simplifying the judicial procedure. When Gladstone assumed office there existed as many as eight superior courts with each following different and enjoying overlapping jurisdiction. This resulted in loss of considerable amount of time and money. In 1873, Lord Selborne, the Chancellor, passed the Judicature Act which united the different superior law courts into a single High Court of Judicature and a Court of Appeal. The Act empowered all the judges to administer equity as well as law. As a result of these changes the administration of justice was consolidated and the practice of separate administration of law and equity was terminated. All this made the administration of justice, simple, cheap and quick.

#### **2.3.3.6 Irish Policy**

First of all he devoted himself to the religious question and passed the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Irish Church Act in 1869. As a result the Anglican Church ceased to be the official Church of Ireland. Further the property of the Irish Church was given as compensation to the incumbents and was to be used for relief of the poor. The Act also abolished the ecclesiastical courts in Ireland. Gladstone tried to end oppression of Catholic tenants by the English absentee landlords and proceeded to enact the First Irish Land Act in 1870. The Act assured the tenants compensation in case of ejection.

and also provided them the facilities to buy their holdings. However, the Irish were not satisfied with this measure and launched an agitation under Parnell. They demanded fixed tenure, freedom of and fair rent. Gladstone resisted these demands till 1881 when he enacted the Second Irish Land Act and conceded these demands.

### ***2.3.3.7 The Second Ministry***

The second Ministry of Gladstone which days to lasted from 1880 to 1885 was quite unsuccessful and he had to encounter lot of troubles both at home and abroad. These troubles were largely the result of the imperialist policy pursued by Disraeli. South Africa was on the brink of Boers revolt. In Afghanistan, the British had to vindicate their prestige. In Balkans region he had to enforce the Treaty of Berlin. The problems of Gladstone were made more difficult due to division within his ministry. Thus leaders like Joseph Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke continued to formulate their own policies despite protests of Gladstone. Further, he had to encounter strong attacks from the opposition, especially the Young Conservatives.

### ***2.3.3.8 Domestic Reforms***

Despite this he succeeded in passing a series of useful measures which sought to remove inequalities and improve the condition of the working classes (i) By the Burials Act he removed the grievance of the non-conformists and permitted them to bury their dead in parish churchyards without any religious service or with such service as selected by themselves (ii) In 1880, he passed the Games Act and allowed the tenant farmers to protect their crop from 'vermin and to play ground games on equal terms with their landlords, notwithstanding any agreement to the contrary. (iii) In 1881, he passed the

Education Act and made attendance for all children at schools compulsory. (iv) In 1880, he passed the Employer's Liability Act and provided the workmen a legal right to compensation from employer for injuries sustained from machinery in the course of their employment. (v) In 1882, he passed The Married Women's Property Act which placed married women on equal footing with men in respect to their private incomes, earnings or inheritance. Thereafter, the women were to be no more at the financial mercy of their husbands. (vi) In 1883, a Bankruptcy Act was passed which provided for the appointment of official receivers to control insolvent estates. (vii) In 1883, he also passed The Corrupt Practices Act which fixed the limit of expenditure which a candidate could legitimately incur on election. This limit was fixed in proportion to the number of voters. This was an important measure which sought to check bribery and corruption.

### ***2.3.3.9 Ireland***

During his second ministry, Gladstone made yet another attempt to tackle the agrarian problem of Ireland. In 1881, he passed the Irish Land Act and assured the Irish peasants a fixed tenure, fair and fixed rent and freedom of sale. A Land Court was established to fix fair rent, which once fixed could not be changed for next fifteen years. However, the Irish people were not happy with the bill and they continued to follow obstructionist policy under Parnell. There were also some incidents of violence. The government responded by resorting to repressive policy and placed the country under martial law. However, subsequently Gladstone modified his policy and released the Irish leaders.

### ***2.3.3.10 Foreign Policy***

During his second Ministry, Gladstone





reversed the aggressive policy of Disraeli and tried to reduce British involvement. In South Africa, the trouble between the Boers of Transval and Britain resulted in the battle of Majuba Hill in which the British forces were defeated. Though the Ministry sent reinforcements to strengthen British Policy During his second Ministry, Gladstone aversed the aggressive policy of Disraeli and med to reduced Erash involvement. In South Africa, the trouble between the Boers of Transval and Britain resulted in the battle of Majuba Hill in which the British forces were defeated. Though the Ministry sent reinforcements to strengthen British positions in Transval, but in the meanwhile Gladstone made peace and recognised Boer independence in Transval.

In Egypt also, where dual control of England and France over economy had been established, the Egyptian army under Arabs Pasha made a bid to expel the foreigners France decided to withdraw and Britain was left alone to deal with the situation The British forces, however, succeeded in inflicting a defeat on Arabi Pasha and occupied Sudan, the Southern province of Egypt. Subsequently. Gladstone decided to withdraw British troops from Sudan and sent Gordon to supervise the evacuation of the territories. However, Gordon was massacred by the fanatic inhabitants of Sudan The policy of caution and indecision followed by Gladstone with regard to Transval and Egypt greatly undermined the popularity of his government.

It has been asserted that Gladstone was a leading figure of not only Great Britain but also in the history of liberalism in the nineteenth century. It goes to his credit that he moulded the old institutions of the state according to the needs of democratic age but also introduced new institutions according to the needs of time. As noted

earlier he introduced important reforms in religious, educational and administrative field. His most outstanding contribution was the introduction of the system of recruitment of civil services on the basis of examination. He thus created Give a critical evaluation of Gladstone.administrative class impregnated with public spint and fully equipped to discharge the duties of a modern state. He also reformed and reorganized the army and laid the foundations of the modern military system. He is also credited with having introducing far reaching social reforms for the benefit of children, employees. women etc. Another notable contribution of Gladstone was enactment of Third Reform Act which enfranchised the agricultural labourers and all the householders in the towns. He also introduced the system of single member constituencies of approximately equal size. Apart from a great reformer, Gladstone was also a great Parliamentarian. He kept the Parliamentary institutions of his country in the forefront of all men's thought. He also maintained unique control over Parliamentary institutions.

### 2.3.4 Benjamin Disraeli

**Benjamin Disraeli**, one of the most remarkable statesmen of the nineteenth century, was born in December 1804 in a Jew family After distinguishing himself in his academic career at Cambridge he received education in Law After fluctuating for some time whether he should take to literature or politics, he ultimately decided to join politics in 1832. However, his path was not easy on account of his race and class. As he did not like either of the two great political parties, he decided to contest for Parliament as an independent However, his repeated defeats convinced him that only party men had place in public life Therefore,



he decided to become follower of Peel. In 1837, he was elected as member of House of Commons from Maidstone. However, in 1843, he turned against Peel because he had neglected him for all these years. and organised the Young England Group in opposition to Peel He strongly attacked Peel on account of his conversion to Free Trade and thus emerged as leader of the protectionists. He bitterly criticised Peel for repeal of Corn Laws, which led to the break-up of the Conservative Party. He led the Tories from 1849 to 1874 and organised the party on progressive lines.

#### **2.3.4.1 Individuality and Originality**

From the moment of Disraeli's entry into politics his individuality and originality were marked. Even as a youth it was for him to formulate policies not to accept them; to construct parties, not to join them. He presented himself to the electors as an Independent opponent of the Whigs-whether Tory or Radical or Nationalist to come to his aid. Though beaten at the polls he drew upon himself the attention of the whole country by the novelty of his exposition of Tory principles enumerated in 'A Vindication of the English Constitution'- one of the most serious, thoughtful and illuminating of all his political writings. He was a man who had original ideas about the problems which faced his country and knew how to solve them. Similarly he had a clear vision of his future England. Ramsay Muir has said "Disraeli was a mysterious sphinx-like, impassive figure, with a gift of sardonic phrases, a humorous detachment which enabled him to take large views, and an oriental delight in splendour." He loved his sovereign and wanted that to be link in his empire building programme and activities.

#### **2.3.4.2 Elected to Parliament (1837)**

The death of William IV and the consequent accession of Victoria in 1837, necessitated a general election. It was through this election that Disraeli last found a seat in the parliament as Tory candidate. The twelve years of this period (1837-49) during which he powers th as writer and debater reached their magnificent meridian and sufficed to establish him as the leader of the Tory party. We can distinguish four stages in his ascent from insignificance to supremacy during the twelve years under review.

Followed Peel For exactly one half of the time he was the faithful and loyal follower of Robert Peel (1837-43) The year 1843 saw a change in Disraeli's attitude towards his chief. became critical; he showed dissatisfaction with Peel's policy began to suspect that the great administrator lacked principles and ideas. The climax, however, was not reached until January, 15t when Peel seemed to justify all Disraeli's taunts and accusations by abandoning the case of the Corn Laws which he had been specially placed in power to defend, and by proclaiming himself a convert of Cobden. Disraeli, in denouncing Peel's treachery, found himself at least giving voice not merely to his own sentiments or to the opinions of a small young England' group but to the inarticulate emotions of the immense majority of the outraged gentlemen of England whom Peel had cajoled and betrayed. Disraeli attempted no economic defense of the Corn Laws.

#### **2.3.4.3 Social Legislation**

Three things in particular marked the dawn of a new era in British policy. First a large number of social measure were undertaken. Some fifteen Acts were passed relating to such matters as providing artisan



dwelling, friendly societies, trade unions, agricultural tenancies, merchant seamen, public health, factories, enclosures, river pollution and education. Secondly, much thought was given to the fostering and federation of the empire. Disraeli was especially concerned with the linking of Britain with the great dependency of India. He secured the communication between Europe and Asia by the purchase of the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal, flattered the pride and intensified the loyalty of the princes and people of India. He organised the visit of the Prince of Wales and to symbolize and celebrate the permanent union of Orient and Occident he conferred upon the Queen, the imperial crown of India. It was due to his reformatory policy that admission to Oxford and Cambridge universities was thrown open to the Roman Catholics. In the year 1871, he made a remarkable reform by abolishing the system of nomination in Civil Services and in their place introduced the system of recruitment through competitive examinations. By Ballot Act of 1872, he provided for secret balloting in all elections. A local Government Board was set up to look after the operation of Health and Poor Laws. Licensing Bill was introduced to check excessive drinking.

#### ***2.3.4.4 Revival of British Prestige***

The prestige of Britain was revived in the continent and to the right of Britain have her voice and vote in the determination of international concerns was vindicated in a manner unknown since Palmerston's days. The first sign of this new spirit was manifested when Disraeli in alliance with Russia, prevented a second invasion of France by Germany and succeeded in maintaining the status quo in Europe. A much more protracted and serious business was the Near Eastern crisis of 1876-78 which culminated in the Russo-Turkish War and the Treaty of Berlin. The outstanding

feature of the crisis as Disraeli saw it was Russia's resolve to disintegrate Turkey, secure Constantinople and establish a big Bulgaria completely under Russian control. He saw in this resolve a menace to British power in the Mediterranean and a peril to the British Empire in the East. He was therefore determined to frustrate Russia's designs by diplomatic means if possible, but if necessary even at the risk of war. Defying Gladstone, imposing his will upon his dissentient colleagues, resisting the importunities of the Queen; dominating the diplomats who wished to see Britain and Moscow embroiled: even holding his own with mighty Bismarck he moulded the Concert of Europe to his purpose, secured and controlled the Congress of Berlin and emerged from it having attained his ends and bringing back to England Peace Honour'. It was an amazing achievement. It gave Eastern Europe peace for thirty-six years; it stopped the menacing advance of Russia towards the Levant and safeguarded the communications of the British Empire; it prevented the formation of a new Holy Alliance of the autocratic empires hostile to the free peoples of the world. It is, however, universally believed that Disraeli brought neither peace nor honour to England from Berlin. As the subsequent events showed that an arrangement made by Disraeli miserably failed and ultimately culminated in the first World War.

**Foreign Policy.** As noted earlier, Disraeli is known for his spirited foreign policy. He abandoned the policy of non-intervention pursued by Gladstone and adopted a more spirited foreign policy. His foreign policy mainly rested on two principles. First, the British interests must be protected and her prestige increased. Secondly, England couldn't view with indifference the continental politics, even if it did not directly affect her.

In pursuance of the above principles in 1875 when the Christians of Bosnia and Herzegovina broke out in revolt against the Turkish rule and the Turkish rulers resorted repression, Britain sent a note proposing reforms to the Turkish Government. Though the note was accepted by Turkey it did practically nothing. On the other hand when the revolt spread Serbia and Bulgaria, the irregular Turkish troops massacred some 12,000 Christians. Though Gladstone wanted Disraeli take action against Turkey, he refused to do so. As Russia could not tolerate the extermination of the Bulgarians, she declared war against Turkey in 1877, Disraeli considered the Russian invasion of Turkey as a great danger to the British empire and declared that in case of infringement of the British interests war would be declared. Actually when Russia forced Turkey to sign the Treaty of San Stefano by which the map of Balkans was so drawn up that it was against the British interests, Disraeli effectively intervened. He threatened to order the Indian troops to proceed to Malta. He then forced Russia to submit the Treaty of San Stefano to revision at the Congress of Berlin convened by Bismarck.

The Berlin settlement was a 'political and personal triumph of Disraeli. By the Treaty of Berlin, big Bulgaria, which was placed under Russia under the Treaty of San Stefano, was broken up. While Bosnia and Herzegovina which were earlier under the Russian proteges-Serbia and Montenegro, were entrusted to Austria, the Straits were closed. Russia was allowed to retain Bessarbia, Batoum and Kars. Through a separate treaty Britain acquired the right to administer the island of Cyprus in return for a pledge to help Turkey in the event of an attack. Disraeli on his return to England told the applauding crowds that I have brought Peace with Honour. He claimed to have checked the designs of

Russia. Increased the prestige of England and preserved the peace of Europe' The Berlin settlement was a 'political and personal triumph of Disraeli. By the Treaty of Berlin, big Bulgaria, which was placed under Russia under the Treaty of San Stefano, was broken up. While Bosnia and Herzegovina which were earlier under the Russian proteges-Serbia and Montenegro, were entrusted to Austria, the Straits were closed. Russia was allowed to retain Bessarbia, Batoum and Kars. Through a separate treaty Britain acquired the right to administer the island of Cyprus in return for a pledge to help Turkey in the event of an attack. Disraeli on his return to England told the applauding crowds that I have brought Peace with Honour. He claimed to have checked the designs of Russia. Increased the prestige of England and preserved the peace of Europe'

In Afghanistan also Disraeli followed an aggressive policy. After the Treaty of Berlin, Russia entered into negotiations with the Amir of Afghanistan, which greatly alarmed Disraeli because this could pose a serious threat to the Indian Empire. He, therefore, encouraged Lord Lytton to follow forward policy in Afghanistan, which got the English involved in Second Afghan War. This proved quite disastrous for the British and greatly undermined the popularity of Disraeli's Ministry.

It is true that through his spirited foreign policy Disraeli succeeded in making England a dominant power in Europe and secured his Eastern Empire by acquiring Cyprus, but his foreign policy had serious consequences. In the first place the assertion of Disraeli that he had brought peace with honour.

Disraeli is regarded as one of the most striking statesmen of the nineteenth century, who by sheer brilliance and hardwork rose to the eminent position of Prime Minister.



## Recap

### Laissez-Faire

- ◆ Based on free market capitalism and non-intervention by government
- ◆ Influenced by Adam Smith and classical economics
- ◆ Key factors: end of trade protections, repeal of Corn Laws, abolition of Navigation Acts

### Methodism

- ◆ Christian movement founded by John Wesley in 18th century
- ◆ Sought reform within Church of England
- ◆ Emphasized methodical spiritual practices, evangelism, social work

### Gladstone

- ◆ Served 4 terms as Liberal Prime Minister between 1868-1894
- ◆ Known for reforms in education, civil service, judiciary
- ◆ Tried appeasing Ireland through land reform

### Disraeli

- ◆ Conservative Prime Minister between 1874-1880
- ◆ Passed social reforms but limited franchise expansion
- ◆ Pursued imperialist foreign policy to boost British prestige
- ◆ First ministry saw reforms like education act, ballott act
- ◆ Second ministry marred by failures abroad like Sudan
- ◆ Disraeli seen as brilliant politician though foreign policy had issues
- ◆ Contrasted with Gladstone's liberalism and restraint abroad
- ◆ Party rivalry defined late 19th century politics
- ◆ Move towards modern two party system

## Objective Questions

1. What does Laissez-Faire means?
2. Who was the greatest preacher of Methodist movement?
3. Which belief was adopted by George Whitefield?
4. Who took the first step of Free Trade?
5. How many Navigation Acts passed in Britain?
6. When did Gladstone first time Prime minister?
7. How many times did Gladstone elected as British Prime minister?
8. Whose ministry passed Ballet Act?
9. Disraeli belonged to Which Party?
10. What was the name of Disraeli's foreign policy?

## Answers

1. Free Trade
2. George Whitefield
3. Calvinistic
4. William Pitt
5. Five
6. 1868
7. Four
8. Gladstone
9. Tory Party
10. Spirited foreign policy



## Self Assessment Questions

1. What is meant by laissez-faire?
2. How did Adam Smith's economic ideas influence free trade?
3. Why did protectionist policies become less useful for industrial Britain?
4. What was the importance of the Anti-Corn Law agitation?
5. How did the repeal of the Corn Laws support free trade?
6. What were the main features of Methodism?
7. How did Methodism encourage moral and social discipline?
8. What were the main differences between Gladstone and Disraeli in domestic policy?
9. How did Disraeli's foreign policy differ from Gladstone's?
10. Why are Gladstone and Disraeli considered important figures in Victorian political history?

## Assignments

1. Discuss the main factors that led to the adoption of the laissez-faire economic policy in 19th century Britain. What were the key stages in the movement towards free trade?
2. What was the Methodist movement and what impact did it have on English society in the 18th and 19th centuries? Discuss its origins, beliefs, and long-term effects.
3. Compare and contrast the domestic policies of Gladstone and Disraeli. How did their approaches differ regarding issues like social reform, Ireland, etc.?
4. Analyze Disraeli's motivations behind his "spirited foreign policy." Did he achieve his goals of protecting British interests abroad and increasing prestige?
5. Evaluate Gladstone's record as a reformer on issues like education, civil service, the judiciary, etc. In what ways did his reforms help modernize the British government and society? Discuss both strengths and limitations.

## Suggested Reading

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**3**  
**BLOCK**

# Consolidation of British Empire



# UNIT

## Imperialism and Colonialism

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the meaning of imperialism and colonialism and distinguish between the two concepts
- ◆ identify the major political, economic, strategic and cultural motives behind imperial expansion
- ◆ describe different forms of colonialism, including settler colonialism, exploitative colonialism, surrogate colonialism, internal colonialism and neo-colonialism
- ◆ analyse the impact of imperialism on colonised societies, especially in relation to economy, culture, politics and resistance
- ◆ understand the long-term legacy of colonial rule in postcolonial societies

### Prerequisite

Think of a powerful country extending its authority over lands and people beyond its own borders. Sometimes this control was direct, through conquest and administration. At other times, it was indirect, through trade, military pressure, political agreements or cultural influence. This wider exercise of power is called imperialism. Colonialism is a more specific form of imperialism in which a foreign power occupies or controls another territory and uses it for political and economic purposes.

The British Empire became one of the most important examples of imperial expansion in modern history. Its growth was connected with trade, industry, military strength, naval power, missionary activity and ideas of cultural superiority. Colonial rule brought railways, administration and new institutions in some regions, but

it also caused exploitation, displacement, racial hierarchy, cultural disruption and resistance. This unit helps learners understand empire not only as a story of power, but also as a story of inequality, struggle and historical consequences.

## Keywords

Imperialism, Colonialism, Cultural and social impact, Neo-Colonialism, Resistance

## Discussion

### 3.1.1 Imperialism

Imperialism, state policy, practice, or advocacy of extending power and dominion, especially by direct territorial acquisition or by gaining political and economic control of other areas. Because it always involves the use of power, whether military or economic or some subtler forms, imperialism has often been considered morally reprehensible, and the term is frequently employed in international propaganda to denounce and discredit an opponent's foreign policy. Imperialism in ancient times is clear in the history of China and in the history of Western Asia and the Mediterranean—an unending succession of empires. The tyrannical empire of the Assyrians was replaced (6th–4th century BCE) by that of the Persians, in strong contrast to the Assyrian in its liberal treatment of subjected peoples, assuring it long duration. It eventually gave way to the imperialism of Greece. When Greek imperialism reached an apex under Alexander the Great (356–323 BCE), a union of the Eastern Mediterranean with Western Asia came true. But the Cosmopolis, in which all citizens of the world would live harmoniously together in equality, remained a dream of Alexander.

It was partially realised when the Romans built their empire from Britain to Egypt. In modern form, arguments about the causes and values of imperialism can be classified into four main groups. The first group contains economic arguments and often turn around the question of whether or not imperialism pays. Those who argue that it does point to the human and material resources and the outlets for goods, investment capital, and surplus population provided by an empire. Their Opponents—among them Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and J.A. Hobson—often assert that imperialism may benefit a small favoured group but never the nation as a whole. Marxist theoreticians interpret imperialism as a late stage of capitalism wherein the national capitalist economy has become monopolistic and is forced to conquer outlets for its overproduction and surplus capital in competition with other capitalist states. This was the view held, for instance, by Vladimir Lenin and N.I. Bukharin, for whom capitalism and imperialism were identical. The weakness in their view is that historical evidence does not support it and that it fails to explain pre-capitalist imperialism and communist Imperialism.

A second group of arguments relates imperialism to the nature of human beings



and human groups, such as the state. Such different personalities as Machiavelli, Sir Francis Bacon, and Ludwig Gumplowicz, reasoning on different grounds, nevertheless arrived at similar conclusions—which Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini also endorsed, though not for intellectual reasons. Imperialism for them is part of the natural struggle for survival. Those endowed with superior qualities are destined to rule all others. The third group of arguments has to do with strategy and security. Nations are urged, proponents of this viewpoint say, to obtain bases, strategic materials, buffer states, “natural” frontiers, and control of communication lines for reasons of security or to prevent other states from obtaining them. Those who deny the value of imperialism for these purposes point out that security is not thereby achieved. Expansion of a state’s control over territories and peoples beyond its borders is likely to lead to friction, hence insecurity, because the safety zones and spheres of influence of competing nations are bound to overlap sooner or later. Related to the security argument is the argument that nations are inevitably imperialistic in their natural search for power and prestige. The fourth group of arguments is based on moral grounds, sometimes with strong missionary implications. Imperialism is excused as the means of liberating peoples from tyrannical rule or of bringing them the blessings of a superior way of life. Imperialism results from a complex of causes in which varying degrees of economic pressures, human aggressiveness and greed, the search for security, the drive for power and prestige, nationalist emotions, humanitarianism, and many other factors are effective. This mixture of motivations makes it difficult to eliminate imperialism but also easy for states considering themselves potential victims to suspect it in policies not

intended to be imperialistic. Some states of the developing world have accused the former colonial powers and other Nations of neo-colonialism. Their fear is that the granting of aid or the supply of skilled personnel for economic and technical development might be an imperialist guise. Under international organisations, attempts have been made to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of nations and to contain their illegitimate ones by peaceful means. Measures for these purposes have been included in collective security arrangements, the mandate and the trusteeship system for dependent areas, the stimulation of cultural relations between nations, aid to developing countries, and the improvement of health and welfare everywhere.

### ***3.1.1.1 Features of Imperialism***

Imperialism is a complex historical phenomenon that involves the expansion of a nation’s power and influence over other regions through various means. Here we explore the key features of imperialism, its causes, consequences, and examples from history. Imperialism refers to the policy or practice of extending a nation’s authority by territorial acquisition or by establishing economic and political dominance over other nations. It was a significant aspect of the 19th and early 20th centuries when European powers, along with Japan and the United States, engaged in imperialistic endeavours. The following several key features characterise imperialism:

#### **1. Economic Motives**

One of the primary features of imperialism is the pursuit of economic gains. Imperialist nations sought to control resources such as raw materials, land, and labour in colonised regions to fuel their industrialisation and economic growth. This economic exploitation often resulted



in the under-development of colonised areas.

## **2. Political Control**

Imperialist powers established political control over their colonies through colonisation or indirect rule. They imposed their legal and administrative systems on colonised territories, often disregarding the local customs and traditions. This led to the erosion of indigenous governance structures.

## **3. Cultural and Social Impact**

Imperialism had profound cultural and social effects both on the imperialist and colonised societies. The dominant powers often imposed their language, religion, and cultural norms on the colonised people, leading to cultural assimilation and sometimes the loss of indigenous cultures.

## **4. Competition and Rivalries**

The scramble for colonies among European powers, known as the “Great Game” in the late 19th century, led to intense rivalries and conflicts. Competition for overseas territories and resources was a key driver of imperialism and contributed to tensions that culminated in World War I.

## **5. Resistance and Nationalism**

Colonised peoples often resisted imperial rule, leading to numerous conflicts and uprisings. These struggles for independence fuelled the growth of nationalist movements, eventually leading to decolonisation in the mid-20th century.

## **6. Human Rights Abuses**

Imperialism was often marked by human rights abuses, including forced labour, slavery, and violent suppression of dissent. These actions continue to shape

the legacy and memory of imperialism in many former colonies.

## **7. Imperialist Legacy and the Post-Imperialist Challenges**

The legacy of imperialism continues to impact the world today. Many former colonies face challenges related to political instability, economic inequality, and social divisions, often stemming from the historical legacies of imperialism.

In conclusion, imperialism is characterised by economic motives, political control, cultural and social impact, competition among imperialist powers, resistance and nationalism, human rights abuses, and a lasting legacy. It is a complex historical phenomenon that shaped the modern world and continues to influence global dynamics and relationships between nations. Understanding the features and consequences of imperialism is essential in comprehending the complexities of contemporary international relations.

### **3.1.2 Colonialism**

Colonialism is a complex and multifaceted historical phenomenon that has left a profound impact on the world. It refers to the practice where one nation or group of people extends its control over another territory, often involving the subjugation of the indigenous population. Colonialism has shaped the course of history, reshaped societies, and left a lasting legacy that continues to influence contemporary global dynamics. Colonialism, as we understand it today, emerged during the Age of Exploration in the 15<sup>th</sup> century when European powers embarked on maritime expeditions to discover and conquer new lands. The motivation for colonialism was primarily economic, driven by a desire for wealth, resources, and new trade routes. European nations, including Spain, Portugal,

Britain, France, and the Netherlands, established vast colonial empires that spanned the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. Modern studies of colonialism have often distinguished between various overlapping categories of colonialism, broadly classified into four types: settler colonialism, exploitation colonialism, surrogate colonialism, and internal colonialism.

### **3.1.2.1 Settler Colonialism**

Settler colonialism can be defined as a system of oppression based on genocide and colonialism, that aims to displace a population of a nation (oftentimes indigenous people) and replace it with a new settler population. Settler colonialism is an ongoing system of power that perpetuates the genocide and repression of Indigenous peoples and cultures. Essentially hegemonic in scope, settler colonialism normalises the continuous settler occupation, exploiting lands and resources to which indigenous peoples have genealogical relationships. Settler colonialism includes interlocking forms of oppression, including racism, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and capitalism. This is because settler colonists are Eurocentric and assume that European values with respect to ethnic, and therefore moral, superiority are inevitable and natural. However, these intersecting dimensions of settler colonialism coalesced around the dispossession of indigenous peoples' lands, resources, and cultures. The evolving field of settler colonialism studies arose from scholarship in Native American and indigenous studies that engages with postcolonial studies and critiques the "post" in "postcolonial" as inappropriate for understanding ongoing systems of domination in such places as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, where colonialism is not a thing of the past because the settlers have come

to stay, displacing the indigenous peoples and perpetuating systems that continue to erase native lives, cultures, and histories. Foundational theories in settler colonialism studies distinguish settler colonialism from classical colonialism through work that demonstrates that settler colonists destroy indigenous peoples and cultures in order to replace them and establish themselves as the new rightful inhabitants. In other words, settler colonizers do not merely exploit indigenous peoples and lands for labour and economic interests; they displace them through settlements. In his ground-breaking theory of the "logic of elimination," Patrick Wolfe shows that settler colonialism is a system, not a historical event, and that as such it perpetuates the erasure of native peoples as a precondition for settler expropriation of lands and resources, providing the necessary conditions for establishing the present-day ideology of multicultural neoliberalism. Settler colonialism can be distinguished from other forms of colonialism – including classical or metropole colonialism, and neo-colonialism – by a number of key features. First, settler colonisers "come to stay": unlike colonial agents such as traders, soldiers, or governors, settler collectives intend to occupy permanently and assert sovereignty over indigenous lands. Second, settler colonial invasion is a structure, not an event: settler colonialism persists in the ongoing elimination of indigenous populations, and the assertion of state sovereignty and juridical control over their lands. Despite notions of the post-coloniality, settler colonial societies do not stop being colonial when political allegiance to the the founding metropolis is severed. Third, settler colonialism seeks its own end: unlike other types of colonialism in which the goal is to maintain colonial structures and imbalances in power between the coloniser and colonised,



settler colonisation tends towards the ending of colonial difference in the form of a supreme and unchallenged settler state and people. However, this is not a drive to decolonise, but rather an attempt to eliminate the challenges posed to settler sovereignty by indigenous peoples' claims to land by eliminating indigenous peoples themselves and asserting false narratives and structures of settler belonging. Settler colonial societies around the globe tend to rely on remarkably similar spatial constructs, power-structures, and social narratives. Settler colonial studies has often focused on British colonies in North America, Australia, and Zealandia, which are close to the complete, prototypical form of settler colonialism, but is also applied to other cases including Kashmir, the Canary Islands, Latin America, Liberia, South Africa, Rhodesia, French Algeria.

### ***3.1.2.2 Exploitative Colonialism***

Exploitative colonialism is conceived as the use of force to control another country for purposes of exploiting its population as labour and its natural resources as raw materials. In undertaking exploitative colonialism, the colonial power sought only to increase its wealth by using the indigenous people as low-cost labour. An example of exploitative colonialism was Belgian King Leopold II's seizure of the Congo in the late 1800s. Exploitative colonialism, also known as extractive colonialism, is a form of colonialism where the primary focus of the colonising power is the extraction of valuable resources and wealth from the colonised territory. Unlike settler colonialism, which often involves the establishment of permanent settlements and cultural assimilation, exploitative colonialism is primarily driven by economic motives. Here are key characteristics of exploitative colonialism:

- 1. Resource Extraction:** The colonising power exploits the natural resources of the colony, which can include minerals, agricultural products, timber, precious metals, and other valuable commodities. These resources are often extracted with little regard for the long-term sustainability of the environment or the welfare of the local population.
- 2. Labour Exploitation:** To facilitate resource extraction, the colonial power may employ coercive or exploitative labour practices. This can involve forced labour, indentured servitude, or other forms of labour exploitation, often resulting in harsh working conditions and minimal compensation for the local workforce.
- 3. Economic Imbalance:** The wealth generated from resource extraction in the colony typically flows back to the colonising nation, leading to economic imbalances. The colony may remain economically under-developed while the coloniser benefits from the extracted resources.
- 4. Limited Investment in Infrastructure:** Exploitative colonialism often lacks a long-term commitment to developing infrastructure or improving the living conditions of the local population. Investments are primarily directed toward resource extraction and transportation.
- 5. Cultural and Social Disruption:** While cultural assimilation may not be the primary goal, exploitative colonialism can disrupt local



cultures and societies through displacement, social upheaval, and the introduction of new technologies and economic systems.

Historical examples of exploitative colonialism include the exploitation of rubber in the Belgian Congo during King Leopold II's rule, the extraction of diamonds and gold in various African colonies, and the exploitation of natural resources in parts of Southeast Asia. Exploitative colonialism has often left a legacy of economic disparities, social disruption, and environmental degradation in colonised regions. Understanding the dynamics of exploitative colonialism is essential for recognising the historical injustices that many post-colonial nations continue to grapple with, as well as the ongoing efforts to address economic disparities and environmental challenges in these regions.

### **3.1.2.3 Surrogate Colonialism**

The third one is Surrogate Colonialism, which is a term used most notably by anthropologist Scott Atran in his essay "The Surrogate Colonization of Palestine 1917–1939" to describe a type of colonisation project whereby a foreign power encourages and provides support for a settlement project of a non-native group over land occupied by indigenous people. For Atran, the mission of Ashkenazi Zionism in Palestine is a form of "surrogate colonialism" because it was forged based on a strategic consensus with the ruling British Empire. This surrogate colonialism, Atran further notes, is one of the major contributing factors to the Balfour Declaration, which made possible and legitimised Zionist settlement in Palestine. Sociologist Ran Greenstein claims both Zionist settlement in Palestine and White settlement in South Africa are

examples of surrogate colonisation, for in both, the majority of settlers did not come from the ranks of the principal colonising power of the time: the British Empire in the case of Israel/Palestine, and the Dutch Empire, later the British Empire, in the case of South Africa.

In other academic and non-academic settings, the term has been adopted more loosely, and used figuratively to describe different forms of indirect domination, especially in the post-colonial context. For One, it has been used to refer to the compliance of native rulers with the dominance of foreign power. Thus for example, Kiangsi uses it to describe African wars fought by African leaders but instigated by former colonial masters. In his analysis of Arab regimes in the Middle East, Dr. Mohammad Mansour Alam claims that even so-called "rejectionist" rulers who openly declared hostility to Western dominance, were in fact exemplifying "surrogate" or "internal" colonialism, for they have been silently compliant with the Western rule. Similarly, editor of the Indian Defence Review, Bharat Varma, blamed the Chinese government for treating Pakistan "as an extension of its war machine and a surrogate colony". "Surrogate Colonialism" has also been used to describe neo-colonialism.

### **3.1.2.4 Internal Colonialism**

The fourth one is Internal colonialism, it is the uneven effects of economic development on a regional basis, otherwise known as "uneven development" as a result of the exploitation of minority groups within a wider society which leads to political and economic inequalities between regions within a state. This is held to be similar to the relationship between a metropolis and a colony in colonialism proper. The phenomenon leads to the distinct separation of the dominant core



from the periphery in an empire. Robert Blauner is regarded as the developer of the theory of internal colonialism. The term was coined to highlight the “blurred” lines between geographically close locations that are clearly different in terms of culture. Some other factors that separate the core from the periphery are language, religion, physical appearance, types and levels of technology, and sexual behaviour’s cultural and integrative nature of internal colonialism. It is understood as a project of modernity and it has been explored by Robert Peckham in relation to the formation of a national modern Greek culture during the nineteenth century, when Greece gained its independence from the Ottoman Empire. Here are key characteristics and aspects of internal colonialism:

1. **Economic Exploitation:** In internal colonialism, one region or group tends to exploit the economic resources of another region. This can include the extraction of natural resources, unequal distribution of economic benefits, or policies that favour one region’s economic development at the expense of others.
2. **Political Dominance:** The dominant group or region often holds political power and influence over the marginalised group or region. Political decisions, resource allocation, and governance structures may be designed to maintain this power imbalance.
3. **Cultural and Social Marginalisation:** The dominant group may impose its cultural norms, language, and values on the marginalised group, leading to cultural assimilation or the suppression of local

cultures and identities. Social hierarchies can develop, with one group having more privileges and opportunities than the other.

4. **Geographic Disparities:** There are often significant geographic disparities in terms of infrastructure, access to education, healthcare, and other essential services between the dominant and marginalised regions. This can result in unequal development and living conditions.
5. **Resistance and Struggles:** Just as in traditional colonialism, marginalised groups within a nation may resist internal colonialism through social movements, political activism, and calls for greater autonomy or self-determination.
6. **Legacy of Inequality:** Internal colonialism can leave a lasting legacy of inequality, economic disparities, and social tensions within a country, which may persist even after formal legal equality is achieved.

Internal colonialism has been observed in various countries and regions around the world. Examples include the historical mistreatment of indigenous populations in many countries, such as Native Americans in the United States or Indigenous peoples in Canada. It can also be seen in situations where one ethnic, racial, or cultural group dominates and marginalises others within a nation. The concept of internal colonialism is often used to analyse and address social and political inequalities within a country and to advocate for policies and initiatives that promote greater equity, representation, and recognition of marginalised groups and regions.

### 3.1.2.5 Neo-Colonialism

Neo-colonialism is a concept that refers to the continued economic, political, and cultural influence that former colonial powers or other dominant nations exert over less developed or newly independent countries. Unlike traditional colonialism, which involved direct control and occupation of territories, neo-colonialism operates through more subtle and indirect means, often using economic, diplomatic, and cultural leverage to maintain dominance. Here are key aspects of neo-colonialism:

1. **Economic Influence:** Neo-colonialism often involves economic dominance, where powerful nations or multinational corporations from developed countries maintain control over the economies of less developed nations. This can occur through trade agreements, debt relationships, foreign investments, and the exploitation of natural resources.
2. **Political Influence:** Powerful nations may exert political influence over less developed countries by supporting political leaders, influencing international organisations, or intervening in the internal affairs of sovereign states. This influence can shape policies and decisions that align with the interests of the dominant nations.
3. **Cultural Influence:** Cultural imperialism is another aspect of neo-colonialism, where the dominant culture's values, media, and consumer products are promoted globally, often at the expense of local cultures.
4. **Debt and Dependency:** Many less developed countries accumulate significant debt owed to wealthier nations and international financial institutions. This debt can create a cycle of dependency and economic vulnerability, giving powerful nations leverage over the economic policies of debtor countries.
5. **Resource Exploitation:** Neo-colonialism often involves the exploitation of natural resources in less developed countries for the benefit of dominant nations or corporations. This can lead to environmental degradation and economic inequality within the exploited nations.
6. **Geopolitical Strategies:** Powerful nations may use neo-colonialism as part of their geopolitical strategies to maintain global influence and secure access to strategic resources.
7. **Resistance and Countermeasures:** Many nations and social movements in less developed regions resist neo-colonial influences through various means, such as demanding fair trade, advocating for debt relief, and promoting cultural preservation.

This can lead to the erosion of indigenous traditions and identities.

Neo-colonialism is often seen as a contemporary form of global inequality and exploitation, perpetuating a pattern of economic and political subjugation that mirrors aspects of traditional colonialism. Critics argue that it hinders

the development and self-determination of less developed countries while benefiting the dominant powers. Efforts to counter neo-colonialism include fair trade initiatives, debt relief programs, which calls for global economic reform, and the promotion of cultural diversity. The concept of neo-colonialism underscores the ongoing importance of addressing global inequalities and advocating for the sovereignty and self-determination of nations in the face of economic and political pressures from dominant powers.

### **3.1.2.6 Features of Colonialism**

Colonialism is a historical practice in which one nation or group of people extends their control over another territory, often distant and geographically separate. Colonialism has distinct features that define its nature and impact on both the colonisers and the colonised. Here are the key features of colonialism:

1. **Territorial Acquisition:** Colonialism involves the physical occupation and control of a foreign territory. Colonising powers establish settlements, forts, or administrative centers in the colonised region, effectively claiming ownership.
2. **Economic Exploitation:** Economic motives are central to colonialism. Colonising nations seek to extract resources from the colonised territory, including raw materials, agricultural products, and labour, to benefit their own economies.
3. **Political Domination:** Colonisers impose their political system and authority over the colonised territory. This often involves replacing or subjugating indigenous governance structures with colonial administrations.
4. **Cultural Assimilation:** Colonising powers frequently impose their culture, language, and religion on the indigenous population. This can lead to the erosion or suppression of the colonised culture and the imposition of the coloniser's norms.
5. **Social Stratification:** Colonial rule often results in social hierarchies, with colonisers on the top and indigenous populations relegated to lower social positions. Discrimination and segregation are common features of colonial societies.
6. **Violence and Coercion:** Colonisation often involves the use of force and violence to maintain control and suppress resistance. This can include military campaigns, punitive measures, and the suppression of uprisings.
7. **Resource Extraction:** The primary goal of many colonial endeavours is the extraction of valuable resources, such as minerals, spices, or agricultural products, to fuel the economic interests of the colonizing nation.
8. **Long-lasting Impact:** The effects of colonialism often persist long after the colonial powers have left. The colonised nations may continue to face economic, political, and social challenges resulting from their colonial history.
9. **Resistance and Nationalism:** Colonised populations frequently resist colonial rule through various means,

including protests, uprisings, and the formation of nationalist movements. These struggles for independence can shape the course of history.

governance, and development as they seek to overcome the historical effects of colonisation.

10. Legacy and Post-Colonial Issues: The legacy of colonialism continues to influence international relations and domestic politics in many parts of the world. Post-colonial nations often grapple with issues of identity,

Understanding these features of colonialism is crucial for comprehending its historical significance and the lasting impact it has had on societies around the world. The study of colonialism is essential for understanding contemporary global dynamics and addressing the challenges faced by formerly colonised nations.

## Recap

- ◆ Imperialism involves extending power through territorial acquisition or political and economic control.
- ◆ It is often criticized for moral reasons and has been a subject of international propaganda.
- ◆ Ancient imperialism is evident in the histories of China, Western Asia, and the Mediterranean.
- ◆ Successive empires, like the Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, exemplify historical imperialism.
- ◆ Economic arguments debate whether imperialism is beneficial, while Marxist theories link it to late-stage capitalism.
- ◆ Other debates involve human nature, security strategies, and moral justifications for imperialistic actions.
- ◆ Economic motives drive imperialism, with a focus on resources and outlets for goods.
- ◆ Political control, cultural impact, competition among nations, and lasting legacies characterize imperialistic endeavors.
- ◆ Imperialism's complex motivations make it challenging to eliminate.
- ◆ Post-colonial nations often face challenges related to political instability, economic inequality, and social divisions.

## Objective Questions

1. What is the policy or practice of extending power and dominion by a state?
2. Which empire succeeded the Assyrians in the 6th–4th century BCE with a more liberal treatment of subjected peoples?
3. Under whose leadership did Greek imperialism reach its apex in the 4th century BCE?
4. How many main groups can arguments about the causes and values of imperialism be classified into?
5. According to Marxist theoreticians, what is imperialism considered as a late stage of?
6. What key feature distinguishes settler colonialism from other forms of colonialism?
7. What is the term for the use of force to control another country for exploitation?
8. What does surrogate colonialism involve?
9. Who is regarded as the developer of the theory of internal colonialism?
10. What concept refers to the continued economic, political, and cultural influence of former colonial powers over less developed countries?
11. What involves the imposition of the colonizer's political system and authority over the colonized territory?
12. What often involves the use of force and violence to maintain control and suppress resistance in colonialism?
13. What term is used to describe the extraction of valuable resources and wealth from the colonized territory for economic benefit?
14. What aspect of colonialism involves the promotion of the dominant culture's values globally?
15. What do post-colonial nations often grapple with as they seek to overcome the historical effects of colonialism?
16. What is one of the main economic motivations cited by those who argue in favor of imperialism?
17. Who are some opponents of imperialism who argue that it benefits only a small favored group and not the nation as a whole?
18. What do Marxist theoreticians interpret imperialism as in relation to capitalism?



19. What is the weakness identified in the view of Marxist theoreticians regarding imperialism?
20. What is essential for understanding contemporary global dynamics according to the conclusion?

## Answers

1. Imperialism
2. Persians
3. Alexander
4. Four
5. Capitalism
6. Permanent occupation
7. Exploitative colonialism
8. Foreign support
9. Blauner
10. Neo-colonialism
11. Political domination
12. Coercion
13. Exploitation
14. Cultural imperialism
15. Identity
16. Resources
17. Hobson
18. Late stage
19. Historical evidence
20. Study

## Self Assessment Questions

1. How is imperialism different from colonialism?
2. What economic motives encouraged European imperial expansion?
3. Why did industrial nations search for colonies and overseas markets?
4. What is settler colonialism?
5. How does exploitative colonialism affect the resources of colonised regions?
6. What is meant by surrogate colonialism?
7. How is neo-colonialism different from direct colonial rule?
8. How did colonialism disturb local cultures and social systems?
9. Why did colonised people resist imperial control?
10. What problems did many postcolonial nations inherit from colonial rule?

## Assignments

1. Discuss how the pursuit of economic gains, including the control of resources, investment capital, and surplus population, played a significant role in shaping imperialistic endeavors.
2. Analyse the profound cultural and social effects of imperialism on both the imperialist powers and the colonized societies.
3. Evaluate the four main groups of arguments regarding imperialism: economic, human nature, strategy and security, and moral grounds.
4. Compare and contrast different types of colonialism, including settler colonialism, exploitative colonialism, surrogate colonialism, internal colonialism, and neo-colonialism.
5. Investigate the lasting legacy of imperialism on the world today. Discuss how former colonies continue to face challenges related to political instability, economic inequality, and social divisions stemming from their colonial history.

## Suggested Reading

1. Darwin, John. *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970*. Cambridge UP, 2009.
2. Chatterjee, Partha. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton UP, 1993.
3. Hobson, John A. *Imperialism: A Study*. Cosimo, 2006.
4. Nkrumah, Kwame. *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*. Panaf, 2002.
5. Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Vintage, 1979.

SGOU





## UNIT

# Orientalism

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain Orientalism as a Western way of studying, representing and interpreting the East
- ◆ identify the connection between Orientalist knowledge and European colonial power
- ◆ recognise stereotypes and simplified images of Eastern societies in Western writings and art
- ◆ discuss the contributions of figures such as Sir William Jones and Edward Said to the study and criticism of Orientalism
- ◆ develop a more critical and sensitive understanding of cultural representation

### Prerequisite

When one culture describes another, the description may not always be neutral. It may contain admiration, curiosity, misunderstanding, prejudice or a desire to control. Orientalism refers to the Western academic and cultural tradition that studied and represented the “Orient,” especially Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European scholars, artists and writers produced many accounts of Eastern languages, religions, customs and societies.

However, Orientalism was closely connected with colonialism. Knowledge about the East often helped colonial powers govern, classify and control colonised peoples. At the same time, the East was sometimes presented as mysterious, backward, exotic, sensual or inferior to the West. Edward Said later

criticised such representations, arguing that Orientalism created a distorted image of the East and supported Western power. This unit invites learners to read cultural descriptions critically and to recognise the difference between genuine study and stereotyped representation.

## Keywords

Orientalism, East, West, Stereotypes

## Discussion

### 3.2.1 Sir William Jones

William Jones was a British philologist, orientalist and a puisne judge on the Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William in Bengal, and a scholar of ancient India. He is particularly known for his proposition of the existence of a relationship among European and Indo-Aryan languages, which later came to be known as the Indo-European languages. Jones is also credited for establishing the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784. William Jones was born in London; his father William Jones (1675–1749) was a mathematician from Anglesey in Wales, noted for introducing the use of the symbol  $\pi$ . The young William Jones was a linguistic prodigy, who in addition to his native languages English and Welsh, learned Greek, Latin, Persian, Arabic, Hebrew and the basics of Chinese writing at an early age. By the end of his life he knew eight languages and was fluent in a further eight languages, with a dictionary at hand, and had a fair competence in another twelve. Jones's father died when he was aged three, and his mother Mary Nix Jones raised him.

Jones was sent to Harrow School in September 1753 and then went on to

University College, Oxford. He graduated there in 1768 and obtained post-graduation in 1773. Financially constrained, he took a position tutoring the seven-year-old Lord Althorn, son of Earl Spencer. For the next six years he worked as a tutor and translator. During this time, he published *Histoire de Nader Chah* (1770), a French translation of a work originally written in Persian by Mirza Mehdi Khan Astarabadi. This was done at the request of King Christian VII of Denmark. He had visited Jones, who by the age of 23 had already acquired a reputation as an orientalist, and as an appreciation of his work he was granted membership in the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters. This is the first among many works on Persia, Anatolia, and the Middle East in general. In 1770, Jones joined the Middle Temple and studied law for three years, a preliminary to his life-work in India. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society on 30 April 1772. In 1773, he was elected a member of The Club, and he became president of the same in 1780. He spent some while as a circuit judge in Wales, and then became involved in politics. He made an attempt to resolve the American Revolution in Concert with Benjamin Franklin in Paris, and ran for





the post of Member of Parliament from Oxford in the general election of 1780, but was unsuccessful. He was appointed puisne judge to the Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William in Calcutta, Bengal on 4th March 1783. In April 1783 he married Anna Maria Shipley, the eldest daughter of Dr. Jonathan Shipley, Bishop of Llandaff and Bishop of St Asaph. Anna Maria made use of her artistic skills to help Jones to document life in India. On 25th September, 1783, he arrived in Calcutta. In the subcontinent he was entranced by Indian culture, an untouched field in European Scholarship, and he founded the Asiatic Society in Calcutta on 15 January 1784.

He studied the Vedas with Rāmalocana, a pandit teaching at the Nadiya Hindu University, emerging a proficient Sanskritist. Jones kept up a ten-year correspondence on the topic of Jyotisa or Hindu astronomy with his fellow orientalist Samuel Davis. He learnt the ancient concept of Hindu laws from Pandit Jagannath Tarka Panchanan. He produced valuable works on India, shedding light on the modern study of the subcontinent so on. He also contributed his studies on the local laws, music, literature, botany, geography, and made English translations of several works of Indian literature. He died in 1794 in Calcutta.

### **3.2.1.1 Works of William Jones**

Sir William Jones made significant contributions to various fields, and his writings covered a wide range of topics.

#### **"The Third Anniversary Discourse"**

"The Third Anniversary Discourse" by Sir William Jones is a significant and influential piece of work delivered on February 2, 1786, at the Asiatic Society of Bengal, which he had founded in Calcutta

(now Kolkata), India. Jones introduced the concept of the Indo-European language family, although he didn't use that term explicitly. He proposed that Sanskrit, the ancient language of India, bore striking similarities to classical languages such as Greek and Latin. He pointed out that parallels in vocabulary, grammar, and syntax among these languages, suggest a common ancestry or linguistic relationship. Jones famously stated, "The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either." Jones provided lots of examples of words and grammatical structures in Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin to illustrate their similarities. He showed how the declension of nouns and conjugation verbs in these languages exhibited common patterns.

#### **Asiatic Research**

Sir William Jones played a pivotal role in advancing knowledge related to history, culture, language, and natural history of India and the surrounding regions during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. *Asiatic Researches*, published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal from 1788 onwards, represents a treasure trove of scholarly contributions that reshaped Western understanding of the Indian subcontinent. Sir William Jones, a polymath and linguist, founded the Asiatic Society and took on the responsibility of editing this publication. It became a pioneering platform for disseminating knowledge about India's diverse cultures, languages, and natural history. *Asiatic Researches* featured ground-breaking linguistic research. Jones, famous for his work in comparative linguistics, published several articles that highlighted linguistic connections between Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, as he had done in

“Third Anniversary Discourse.” These contributions revolutionised the study of linguistics.

### ***Commentaries on the Laws of England***

Sir William Jones was a polymath known for his contributions to various fields, including law. One of his notable works in the legal domain is his work *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1783). Jones is more famous for his contributions to linguistics and Oriental studies, and this legal treatise is a testament to his versatility and legal expertise. It is a significant legal work that provides insights into English law during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Although Jones is better known for his contributions to linguistics and his founding of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, this legal treatise reflects his keen intellect and dedication to the field of law. In this work, Jones offers a comprehensive commentary on the laws of England, covering various aspects of the legal system, including property law, contracts, criminal law, and civil procedure. He aimed to elucidate the legal principles and practices of his time. Sir William Jones's works were influential in promoting the study of Indian languages and cultures in the West, and his contributions to linguistics and legal scholarship continue to be recognised even today.

### ***Oriental Despotism***

*Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* is a book of political theory and comparative history by Karl August Wittfogel (1896–1988) published in 1957. The book offers an explanation for the despotic governments in “Oriental” societies, where control of water was necessary for irrigation and flood-control. Managing these projects required large-scale bureaucracies, which dominated the economy, society, and religious

life. This despotism differed from the Western experience, where power was distributed among contending groups. The book argues that this form of “hydraulic despotism” characterised ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, Hellenistic Greece and imperial Rome, the Abbasid Caliphate, imperial China, the Mughal empire, and Incan Peru. Wittfogel further argues that 20<sup>th</sup> century Marxist-Leninist regimes, such as the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China, though they were not themselves hydraulic societies, did not break away from their historical condition and remained systems of “total power” and “total terror” by Karl August Wittfogel's book was both welcomed as an historically grounded analysis of despotism that warned the West against the expansion of the Communist totalitarianism and criticised as a Cold War polemic. The materialist and ecological theories in *Oriental Despotism* influenced ecological anthropologists and global economic historians even though some of them found fault with its methodology and empirical basis and questioned Wittfogel's political motives.

Karl August Wittfogel (1896–1988) was a German-American historian and political scientist known for his work on the concept of “hydraulic civilization” and the controversial theory of “Oriental Despotism.” His most prominent work *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* was published in 1957. Wittfogel's theory argued that in certain ancient and non-Western societies, particularly in regions like China and Mesopotamia, the control of large-scale irrigation systems (hydraulic infrastructure) led to the development of authoritarian and centralised forms of government, which he referred to as “Oriental Despotism.” According to Wittfogel, the need for centralised control



of water resources in arid regions gave rise to despotic rule. His theory, however, has been widely criticised for its Eurocentric and simplistic view of non-Western societies. Many scholars have pointed out that it oversimplifies the complexity of these societies' political and economic systems and ignores the rich diversity of governance structures that existed.

Despite the controversy surrounding his theory, Wittfogel's work has had a lasting impact on discussions about the relationship between water management, power, and governance in historical context. His ideas continue to be studied and debated within the fields of history, political science, and anthropology. Karl August Wittfogel was born on September 6, 1896, in Woltersdorf, Germany. He grew up in a middle-class family and began his academic pursuits at the University of Frankfurt, where he studied economics and sociology. Wittfogel's early life and education were influenced by the tumultuous period of German history in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, including World War I and the aftermath of the German Revolution in 1918. His experiences during this time shaped his political and intellectual development.

During his academic career, Wittfogel became interested in the study of ancient and non-Western societies, particularly their irrigation systems and political structures. This interest eventually led to his most famous work, *Oriental Despotism*, in which he developed his theory about the relationship between hydraulic infrastructure and authoritarian rule. Wittfogel's career took him to various academic institutions in Europe and the United States, and he became a prominent figure in the fields of history and political science. Despite the controversies surrounding his theories, his contributions to the study of ancient and non-Western

civilizations have left a lasting impact on the academic world.

Karl August Wittfogel is renowned for his theory of "Oriental Despotism." The work suggests that in certain ancient and non-Western societies, particularly in regions with extensive irrigation systems like China and Mesopotamia, the control of water resources led to the development of authoritarian and centralised forms of government. Wittfogel argued that the need for large-scale irrigation systems in arid regions necessitated strong centralised authority to manage and control water resources. He believed that this control over water was the key factor in the development of "Oriental Despotism," characterised by rulers with absolute power and control over their subjects.

However, Wittfogel's theory has been widely criticised for its Eurocentrism and simplification of complex historical and cultural dynamics in non-Western societies. Many scholars argue that it oversimplifies the diversity of governance structures and economic systems in these regions and downplays the role of various social, political, and economic factors in the development of these societies. While Wittfogel's theory remains influential in discussions about the relationship between water management and governance, it is viewed as controversial and debated within academic circles. His work has spurred further research and critique in the fields of history, political science, and anthropology.

### 3.2.2 Karl Heinrich Marx

Karl Marx was a German philosopher, economist, historian, sociologist, political theorist, journalist, critic of political economy, and revolutionary socialist. His best-known works are the 1848 pamphlet *The Communist Manifesto* and the four-

volume *Das Capital* (1867–1883). Marx's political and philosophical thoughts had enormous influence on subsequent intellectual, economic, and political history. His name has been used as an adjective, a noun, and a school of social theory. Born in Trier, Germany, Marx studied law and philosophy at the universities of Bonn and Berlin. He married German theatre critic and political activist Jenny von Westphalia in 1843. Due to his political publications, Marx became stateless and lived in exile with his wife and children in London for decades, where he continued to develop his thought in collaboration with German philosopher Friedrich Engels and published his writings, researching in the British Museum reading room. Marx's critical theories about society, economics, and politics, collectively understood as Marxism, hold that human societies develop through class conflict. In the capitalist mode of production, this manifests itself in the conflict between the ruling classes, (known as the bourgeoisie) who control the means of production, and the working classes (known as the proletariat) that enable these means by selling their labour-power in return for wages. Employing a critical approach known as historical materialism, Marx predicted that capitalism produced internal tensions like previous socioeconomic systems and that these tensions would lead to its self-destruction and replacement by a new system known as the socialist mode of production. For Marx, class antagonisms under capitalism—owing in part to its instability and crisis-prone nature would eventuate the working class' development of class consciousness, leading to their conquest of political power and eventually the establishment of a classless, communist society constituted by a free association of producers. Marx actively pressed for its implementation, arguing that the working class should carry out

organised proletarian revolutionary action to topple capitalism and bring about socioeconomic emancipation. Marx has been described as one of the most influential figures in human history, and his work has been both lauded and criticised. His work in economics laid the basis for some current theories about labour and its relation to the capital. Many intellectuals, labour unions, artists, and political parties worldwide have been influenced by Marx's work, often modifying or adapting his ideas. Marx is typically cited as one of the principal architects of modern social science.

### 3.2.2.1 Early life

Karl Heinrich Marx was born on 5 May 1818 to Heinrich Marx (1777–1838) and Henriette Pressburg (1788–1863). He was born at Brückengasse 664 in Trier, an ancient city then part of the Kingdom of Prussia's province of the Lower Rhine. Marx's family was originally non-religious Jewish, but had converted formally to Christianity before his birth. His maternal grandfather was a Dutch rabbi, while his paternal line had supplied Trier's rabbis since 1723, a role taken by his grandfather Meier Halevy Marx. His father, as a child known as Herschel, was the first in the line to receive a secular education. He became a lawyer with a comfortably upper middle class income and the family owned a number of Moselle vineyards, in addition to his income as an attorney. Prior to his son's birth and after the abrogation of Jewish emancipation in the Rhineland, Herschel converted from Judaism to join the state Evangelical Church of Prussia, taking on the German forename Heinrich over the Yiddish Herschel. Marx's ideas have had a profound impact on world politics and intellectual thought, in particular in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution (1917). Followers of Marx have often debated among themselves





over how to interpret Marx's writings and apply his concepts to the modern world. The legacy of Marx's thought has become contested between numerous tendencies, each of which sees itself as Marx's most accurate interpreter. In the political realm, these tendencies include political theories such as Leninism, Marxism–Leninism, Trotskyism, Maoism, libertarian Marxism and Open Marxism. Various currents have also been developed in academic Marxism, often under the influence of other trends, resulting in structuralist Marxism, historical materialism, phenomenological Marxism, analytical Marxism, and Hegelian Marxism.

### 3.2.2.2 Major Works of Karl Marx

Karl Marx was a prominent philosopher, economist, and political theorist known for his writings on communism and socialism. Some of his most important writings include:

#### *The Communist Manifest*

*The Communist Manifesto* is a political pamphlet written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, first published in 1848. It is one of the most influential and widely read political documents in history. *The Communist Manifesto* was written during a period of significant social and political upheaval in Europe, marked by the spread of industrial capitalism, economic inequality, and widespread social unrest. The manifesto argues that society is divided into two primary classes: the bourgeoisie (capitalist class) and the proletariat (working class). It contends that the bourgeoisie exploit the proletariat for profit, resulting in economic inequality and class struggle. The primary goal of *The Communist Manifesto* is to call for the working class (proletariat) to rise up in revolution against the capitalist system. Marx and Engels envision a

classless society where private property is abolished, and the means production is collectively owned and controlled by the working class. Overall, *The Communist Manifesto* is a seminal work that laid the intellectual foundation for Marxist theory and has had a lasting influence on the course of history and political thought.

#### *Das Capital*

*Das Capital*, often referred to as "Capital," is a monumental work by Karl Marx, considered one of the most important texts in the fields of economics, philosophy, and political theory. *Das Capital* is a comprehensive analysis of capitalism. It delves deeply into the workings of the capitalist system, focusing on its economic, social, and political aspects. One of the central concepts in *Das Capital* is Marx's labour theory of value. He argues that the value of a commodity is determined by the amount of socially necessary labour time required to produce it. This theory underpins much of his critique of capitalism. While *Das Capital* is a dense and challenging work, it remains a cornerstone of Marxist theory and a critical text for those interested in the study of capitalism and its societal implications.

#### *"The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon"*

"The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon" is a political essay written by Karl Marx in 1852. The title refers to the date in the French Republican calendar when Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, staged a coup d'état to become the President of France in 1851. The essay examines the events leading up to and following Louis Napoleon's coup in France. It takes a critical look at the political situation in France during that period. Marx introduces



the concept of “Bonapartism” in this work. He argues that Louis Napoleon’s rule represented a specific form of bourgeois dictatorship, characterised by a populist appeal to various classes and the suppression of working-class movements. This work is significant for its historical analysis, its exploration of class struggle and political dynamics, and its contribution to the development of Marxist thought. It provides valuable insights into the complexities of political power and societal change during a turbulent period in French history.

### ***The German ideology***

*The German Ideology* is a significant work co-authored by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the mid-1840s, but it wasn’t published in its entirety during their lifetimes. *The German Ideology* was written during a period when Marx and Engels were heavily influenced by the Young Hegelians, a group of intellectuals who were critical of existing social and political structures in Germany. It was a time of intellectual ferment, and the work reflects the broader debates of the era.

### ***Theses on Feuerbach***

*Theses on Feuerbach* is a short, concise work written by Karl Marx in 1845, while he was in Brussels, Belgium. This work

consists of 11 short theses or propositions that encapsulate some of Marx’s fundamental ideas, especially regarding philosophy and the nature of human existence. Marx begins by emphasising the need to understand and interpret the world through materialism, focusing on concrete, objective reality rather than abstract ideas or concepts. This reflects Marx’s shift from idealist philosopher to a materialist thinker. Marx criticises previous philosophers, particularly the German philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach. He contends that while philosophers have sought to interpret the world, the real challenge is to change it, emphasising practical activity over abstract contemplation. *Theses on Feuerbach* is a relatively short and dense work, but it encapsulates some of Marx’s foundational ideas and shifts in his philosophical thinking towards a more practical and materialist approach. These theses have been influential not only in philosophy but also in the development of Marxist theory and revolutionary thought. These writings laid the theoretical groundwork for Marxism and had a profound influence on social and political thought. These continue to be studied and debated by scholars and activists around the world.

## **Recap**

- ◆ Western academic and cultural tradition from the 18th-19th centuries centered around Europe.
- ◆ Study, representation, and interpretation of cultures, societies, languages of the “Orient” (Asia, Middle East, North Africa).
- ◆ Eurocentric view leading to biases and stereotypes.



- ◆ Developed in the context of European colonialism, often serving colonial powers' interests.
- ◆ In literature, art, music, and academic scholarship.
- ◆ Ranges from romanticized depictions to negative stereotypes.
- ◆ Often eroticizes the East, reinforcing ideas of Western superiority
- ◆ Prominent figures include Edward Said and Sir William Jones.
- ◆ Sir William Jones is a British philologist, orientalist, and judge.
- ◆ Founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784.
- ◆ Multilingual prodigy, fluent in multiple languages.
- ◆ Made significant contributions to the study of Indian languages.
- ◆ Notable works include “The Third Anniversary Discourse” and Asiatic Researches.
- ◆ Wittfogel’s theory links despotic governments in “Oriental” societies to control of water for irrigation.
- ◆ Despotism characterized by large-scale bureaucracies dominating economy, society, and religious life.
- ◆ Influenced by hydraulic civilizations in ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, imperial China, etc.
- ◆ Criticized for Eurocentrism and oversimplification of non-Western societies.
- ◆ Karl Marx is a German philosopher, economist, and political theorist.
- ◆ Influential works include *The Communist Manifesto* and *Das Capital*.
- ◆ Marx’s political and philosophical thoughts focus on class conflict and the development of communism.
- ◆ His ideas have had a profound impact on social, economic, and political history.
- ◆ Various interpretations and applications, including Marxism, Leninism, Trotskyism, and others.

## Objective Questions

1. Who was Sir William Jones?
2. What is Sir William Jones known for proposing regarding language relationships?
3. When and where did he establish the Asiatic Society of Bengal?
4. How many languages did William Jones know by the end of his life?
5. In what fields did Jones contribute during his time in India?
6. What is “The Third Anniversary Discourse” by Sir William Jones about?
7. When and where was the Asiatic Researches published?
8. What is Sir William Jones’s notable work in the legal domain?
9. Who was Karl August Wittfogel, and what is his book *Oriental Despotism* about?
10. What are some criticisms of Wittfogel’s theory?
11. Who was Karl Marx?
12. What are some major works of Karl Marx?
13. What is the main idea presented in *The Communist Manifesto*?
14. How did Marx view class struggle under capitalism?
15. What is the significance of *Das Capital* in Marxist theory?

## Answers

1. British philologist, orientalist, and a puisne judge
2. Proposing the existence of a relationship among European and Indo-Aryan languages
3. The Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 in Calcutta.
4. Eight languages
5. Studied the Vedas, local laws, music, literature, botany, geography, and made English translations of several works of Indian literature.



6. The concept of the Indo-European language family, emphasising similarities between Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin.
7. Asiatic Researches was published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal from 1788 onwards.
8. *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1783).
9. Karl August Wittfogel was a German-American historian known for his book *Oriental Despotism*.
10. Wittfogel's theory has been criticized for its Eurocentrism
11. Karl Marx was a German philosopher, economist, and political theorist
12. *The Communist Manifesto*, *Das Capital*, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*, and *Theses on Feuerbach*.
13. Society is divided into two primary classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.
14. Marx viewed class struggle under capitalism as a conflict between the bourgeoisie, and the proletariat.
15. It inquires into its economic, social, and political aspects

## Self Assessment Questions

1. What is Orientalism?
2. Why did European interest in Eastern cultures increase during the colonial period?
3. How did Orientalist knowledge support colonial administration?
4. What kinds of stereotypes were often used to describe the East?
5. Why is Edward Said important in the study of Orientalism?
6. How did Sir William Jones contribute to Oriental studies in India?
7. What is meant by a Eurocentric view of the East?
8. How can literature and art reinforce Orientalist images?
9. Why should learners study Orientalism critically?
10. How can cultural sensitivity help us move beyond Orientalist stereotypes?

## Assignments

1. Write a short essay on Sir William Jones's contributions to the study of language relationships.
2. Prepare a presentation on the establishment and significance of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
3. Discuss the linguistic prodigy aspect of William Jones and its impact on his later contributions.
4. Works of William Jones
5. Analyse the impact of *The Third Anniversary Discourse* on linguistic studies.
6. Create a summary of Sir William Jones's contributions to legal scholarship.
7. Compare and contrast the criticisms and praises of Karl August Wittfogel's theory in *Oriental Despotism*.
8. Write an essay on the impact of *The Communist Manifesto* on historical events.
9. Analyze the labor theory of value as presented in *Das Capital*.
10. Discuss the relevance of Marx's concepts in understanding contemporary class struggles.

## Suggested Reading

1. King., Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and "The Mystic East"*. Routledge, 2001.
2. Little, Douglas. *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945*. U of North Carolina P, 2008.
3. Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Pantheon Books, 1978.







## UNIT

# Major Trends and Writings

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learners will be able to:

- ◆ identify major trends in writing during the British imperial period
- ◆ explain how colonial literature reflected exploration, empire, cultural contact and political power
- ◆ discuss Rudyard Kipling's contribution to fiction, poetry and children's literature
- ◆ analyse Kipling's treatment of imperialism, nationalism, duty, cultural encounter and colonial life
- ◆ evaluate the role of writers in both supporting and questioning imperial ideas

### Prerequisite

Writing does not develop in isolation. It changes with society, politics, travel, technology, war and empire. During the expansion of the British Empire, literature became closely connected with colonial experience. Writers described distant lands, new peoples, natural environments, administrative life, adventure, conflict and the moral questions raised by empire. Some writings strengthened imperial pride, while others exposed the tensions and injustices of colonial rule.

Rudyard Kipling is an important figure in this context. Born in Bombay and educated in England, Kipling wrote about India, empire, childhood, adventure, duty and cultural encounter. Works such as *The Jungle Book*, *Kim* and poems like "If—" and "The White Man's Burden" show his narrative power and his involvement with imperial themes. His works are admired for storytelling and language, but they are also debated for their racial and imperial attitudes. This unit helps learners understand literature as both artistic expression and historical document.

## Keywords

Kipling, British imperialism, Journalism

## Discussion

### 3.3.1 Exploring Major Trends in Writing

The British Empire, one of the largest and most influential empires in history, spanned over several centuries and covered vast territories across the globe. During the height of the British Empire, from the late 16th century to the mid-20th century, numerous trends and writings emerged that reflected the complex and dynamic nature of imperial rule.

One major trend during the British Empire was the rise of colonial literature. As British explorers and settlers ventured into new territories, they documented their experiences and encounters with unfamiliar cultures. Travel narratives, diaries, and accounts of colonial life became popular forms of literature. Writers like Daniel Defoe, with his novel *Robinson Crusoe*, and Rudyard Kipling, known for *The Jungle Book* and *Kim*, captured the imagination of readers by depicting the exotic landscapes and cultures of the colonies. These literary works often served to reinforce imperialist ideologies and justify the expansion of the empire.

Another significant trend was the exploration and classification of the natural world. The Age of Exploration prompted a surge in scientific curiosity, and explorers like James Cook and Charles Darwin conducted groundbreaking research during their voyages. Darwin's *On the Origin of*

*Species* revolutionised the understanding of biology, introducing the theory of evolution. The British Empire, with its diverse ecosystems and climates, provided a rich source of specimens for scientific inquiry, leading to the establishment of natural history museums and botanical gardens.

The theme of imperialism and its impact on both the colonisers and the colonised was a prevalent focus in many writings of the time. Imperialist ideologies, rooted in notions of racial superiority and the 'White Man's Burden,' were often perpetuated through literature. Works like Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India* explored the psychological and moral consequences of imperialism. These writings questioned the morality of empire-building and raised awareness about the social injustices perpetrated in the name of colonisation.

The British Empire also witnessed the emergence of political writings that advocated for self-governance and independence in the colonies. Figures such as Mahatma Gandhi in India and Kwame Nkrumah in Africa articulated the desire for national sovereignty and the end of imperial rule. Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience inspired movements for independence across the empire. These writings laid the groundwork for the eventual dismantling of the empire and the establishment of numerous independent nations.



The literature and trends during the British Empire reflected the multifaceted nature of imperial rule. From colonial literature and scientific exploration to critiques of imperialism and calls for independence, the writings of this era continue to shape our understanding of the complexities and consequences of empire-building. The legacy of the British Empire, both positive and negative, is embedded in the literary and historical records of this expansive period.

### 3.3.2 Rudyard Kipling

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) was a renowned English author and poet, best known for his works of fiction and poetry that often explored themes of imperialism, adventure, and the clash of cultures. Kipling was born on December 30, 1865, in Bombay, India. His parents were British, and he spent the first six years of his life in India. This early exposure to the Indian subcontinent greatly influenced his later writing. Kipling was sent to England for his education, where he attended the United Services College in Devon. His experiences there inspired some of his early works. Kipling began his writing career as a journalist and short-story writer. He gained recognition for his vivid descriptions and storytelling abilities. One of Kipling's most famous works is *The Jungle Book*, a collection of stories set in the Indian jungle, featuring beloved characters like Mowgli, Baloo the bear, and Bagheera the panther. These tales explore themes of wilderness, animal behaviour, and the relationships between humans and nature.

In 1907, Kipling became the first English-language author to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature. He was recognised for his “power of observation, originality of imagination, virility of ideas, and remarkable talent for narration.

“Kipling was also a prolific poet, known for poems such as “If—,” which imparts life lessons and remains widely quoted to this day. His poetry often celebrated British imperialism and the virtues of duty and responsibility. Kipling's works frequently addressed themes related to British imperialism, nationalism, and the complexities of colonial rule. His writings both celebrated the British Empire and critiqued its impact on indigenous cultures. Kipling's views on race and imperialism have been the subject of controversy and criticism. Some of his works have been accused of promoting a colonialist worldview. Kipling spent significant portions of his life in various parts of the British Empire, including India, South Africa, and the United States. He continued to write prolifically throughout his life. Rudyard Kipling's works have left a lasting legacy in English literature. His storytelling skills, ability to capture the essence of India, and exploration of themes related to identity and cultural clash continue to be studied and appreciated by readers and scholars. Rudyard Kipling passed away on January 18, 1936, in London, England. His literary contributions continue to be celebrated and analysed, even decades after his death.

#### 3.3.2.1 Rudyard Kipling and Major Trends and Writings

Rudyard Kipling's contributions to literature and his affiliation to major trends in writing can be explored through various realms. Kipling was known for his vivid and engaging storytelling. His use of narrative techniques, such as strong character development and compelling plotlines, serves as a timeless example of effective storytelling, which remains influential in modern writing. Kipling's works often inquire into the exploration of different cultures, particularly in the context of

British imperialism. This aligns with the modern trend of promoting diversity and inclusion in literature and acknowledging the importance of representing diverse voices. Kipling's writings often contained social and political commentary. His works addressed themes like nationalism, colonialism, and the complexities of cultural interaction. This aligns with the trend of writers engaging with pressing social issues in their work, contributing to critical discourse. Kipling's writings are rooted in the historical context of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Analysing his works allows readers to gain insights into the social, political, and cultural issues of that era, highlighting the historical aspect of writing trends. Kipling's mastery of language and his ability to craft vivid descriptions and evoke emotions in readers remain a valuable example of language use in writing. Writers today can draw inspiration from his linguistic skills. Kipling's works have faced criticism for their colonial and imperialist perspectives. Studying his work can lead to discussions about ethical considerations in writing and the need for writers to be aware of the impact of their work on society. Kipling's writings can be analysed in conjunction with other disciplines, such as history, sociology, and postcolonial studies, offering a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the major trends in writing during his time.

Kipling's influence on subsequent generations of writers. This demonstrates how influential authors can shape and respond to major literary trends. Kipling's ability to adapt his writing to different audiences and mediums, from poetry to short stories to children's literature, reflects the writer's adaptability—a skill valuable in navigating contemporary writing trends. Rudyard Kipling's work serves as a historical and literary bridge between

the past and present, offering valuable insights into narrative techniques, cultural exploration, and social commentary that continue to resonate with and influence modern writing trends. Studying Kipling's work within the context of contemporary writing trends allows for a deeper understanding of how writing evolves over time and responds to changing societal norms and expectations.

### 3.3.2.2 Contribution of Rudyard Kipling

Rudyard Kipling was a prolific writer known for his wide range of literary works, including novels, short stories, poetry, and essays.

*The Jungle Book* (1894): Perhaps Kipling's most famous work, *The Jungle Book* is a collection of stories set in the Indian jungle. It introduces readers to memorable characters like Mowgli, a young boy raised by wolves, and features tales of adventure, survival, and the relationships between humans and animals.

*Kim* (1901): This novel tells the story of Kimball O'Hara, an orphaned boy of British and Indian heritage, who becomes a spy in British-occupied India. *Kim* explores themes of identity, cultural diversity, and the Great Game, the political rivalry between Britain and Russia in Central Asia.

Poetry: Kipling was a renowned poet, known for works such as "If—," "Gunga Din," and "The White Man's Burden." His poems often conveyed themes of duty, honour, and the complexities of imperialism. "If—" is particularly famous for its inspirational and motivational message.

Short Stories: Kipling wrote numerous short stories that captured the essence of British colonial life in India and other parts

of the British Empire. Some of his short stories include “The Man Who Would Be King,” “The Phantom ‘Rickshaw,” and “The Maltese Cat.”

“Just So Stories” (1902): This collection of whimsical and imaginative tales provides humorous explanations for how certain animals acquired their unique characteristics. It includes stories like “How the Leopard Got His Spots” and “How the Elephant Got His Trunk.”

*Captains Courageous* (1897): This novel tells the story of a spoiled American boy who falls overboard from an ocean liner and is rescued by a Portuguese fisherman. Through his experiences on the fishing schooner, he learns valuable life lessons.

*The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1922): Kipling also ventured into the realm of mystery and suspense with this collection of detective stories featuring the character Horne Fisher, who has a knack for solving crimes involving political intrigue.

Essays and Journalism: Kipling was a prolific essayist and journalist, contributing pieces on a wide range of topics. His essays often reflected his views on politics, culture, and the British Empire.

Children’s Stories: In addition to *The Jungle Book* and *Just So Stories*, Kipling wrote various other children’s stories and fables, which continue to be popular among young readers.

Rudyard Kipling’s works are known for their vivid storytelling, rich descriptions, and exploration of complex themes, including the impact of imperialism, cultural diversity, and the human condition. While he is celebrated for his literary achievements, his writings have also been the subject of critical examination due to their sometimes controversial views on race and imperialism.

## Recap

- ◆ Writing reflects an evolving trajectory influenced by time, technology, culture, and creativity.
- ◆ It mirrors societal changes and offers a window into diverse minds and hearts.
- ◆ Colonial literature emerged during the British Empire, documenting experiences in new territories.
- ◆ Exploration and classification of the natural world became prominent during the Age of Exploration.
- ◆ Imperialist ideologies were perpetuated through literature, raising questions about morality.
- ◆ Political writings advocating for self-governance and independence played a crucial role.



- ◆ Kipling (1865-1936) was a renowned English author and poet born in Bombay, India.
- ◆ Early exposure to India greatly influenced his later writing.
- ◆ Education in England inspired some of his early works.
- ◆ Known for works like “The Jungle Book” and “Kim,” exploring imperialism, adventure, and cultural clash.
- ◆ Awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1907 for his power of observation and originality of imagination.
- ◆ Prolific poet with famous works such as “If—,” often celebrating British imperialism.
- ◆ Kipling’s storytelling techniques, character development, and plotlines serve as timeless examples.
- ◆ Exploration of different cultures aligns with the modern trend of promoting diversity in literature.
- ◆ Social and political commentary in Kipling’s works aligns with the trend of engaging with critical issues.
- ◆ Kipling’s works provide insights into the social, political, and cultural issues of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- ◆ Mastery of language and vivid descriptions offer valuable examples for contemporary writers.
- ◆ Kipling’s influence on subsequent generations demonstrates how authors shape and respond to literary trends.
- ◆ Adaptability in writing for different audiences and mediums reflects a valuable skill in navigating contemporary trends.

## Objective Questions

1. What major trends in writing emerged during the British Empire?
2. What is Rudyard Kipling known for in literature?
3. How did Kipling’s early life influence his writing?
4. What themes did Kipling’s works often address?
5. Why did Kipling receive the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1907?

## Answers

1. Colonial literature, exploration of the natural world, and political writings advocating for self-governance.
2. Kipling is known for his imperialist themes.
3. Kipling's early exposure to the Indian subcontinent greatly influenced the themes in his later works.
4. Kipling's works often addressed themes of imperialism, nationalism, and the complexities of colonial rule.
5. For his power of observation, originality of imagination, and remarkable talent for narration.

## Self Assessment Questions

1. How did the British Empire influence literary writing?
2. What is colonial literature?
3. Why did travel, exploration and empire become important themes in writing?
4. How did some writings support imperial ideology?
5. How did anti-colonial writings challenge imperial authority?
6. Why is Rudyard Kipling important in English literature?
7. How did Kipling's childhood in India influence his writing?
8. What imperial themes are found in Kim and The Jungle Book?
9. Why are Kipling's writings sometimes criticised from a postcolonial perspective?
10. How can literature help us understand the complexities of empire?

## Assignments

1. Explore the impact of colonial literature during the British Empire, focusing on its role in reinforcing imperialist ideologies.
2. Critically analyze Rudyard Kipling's poem "If—," examining its themes of duty, honor, and the complexities of imperialism.
3. Compare and contrast the narrative techniques of Kipling with another contemporary writer, highlighting their influence on modern storytelling.
4. Discuss the ethical considerations raised by Kipling's works in promoting colonialist viewpoints and the responsibility of writers in shaping societal perspectives.
5. Analyze Kipling's works in conjunction with historical, sociological, and postcolonial perspectives, exploring how they contribute to a multidisciplinary understanding of major trends in writing.

## Suggested Reading

1. Mallett, Phillip. *Rudyard Kipling: A Literary Life*. Palgrave, 2003.
2. Kipling, Rudyard. *Jungle Book*. Saddleback. 2001.
3. Kipling, Rudyard. *Kim*. Penguin Classics, 1987.



## UNIT

# Utilitarianism and Evangelicalism

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the basic principles of utilitarianism, especially the idea of the greatest happiness of the greatest number
- ◆ identify the contributions of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill to utilitarian thought
- ◆ discuss the importance of Mill's ideas on liberty, representative government and moral reasoning
- ◆ explain the major beliefs and social concerns of Evangelicalism
- ◆ compare utilitarian and evangelical approaches to morality, reform, freedom and social welfare

### Prerequisite

This unit introduces two influential ways of thinking that shaped nineteenth-century Britain: utilitarianism and evangelicalism. Utilitarianism is an ethical and political theory that judges actions by their consequences. It asks whether an action increases happiness and reduces suffering for the greatest number of people. Thinkers such as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill used this idea to discuss law, government, liberty, education and social reform.

Evangelicalism, on the other hand, was a Christian movement that gave importance to personal faith, the authority of the Bible, moral discipline and active service. Evangelicals supported preaching, conversion, charity, education and social reform. They played important roles in campaigns against slavery, poverty and social injustice. Though utilitarianism and evangelicalism came from different foundations—reasoned calculation in one case and religious faith

in the other—both influenced public life and reform movements. This unit helps learners compare moral philosophy and religious activism in British history.

## Keywords

Utilitarianism, Evangelicalism, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill

## Discussion

### 3.4.1 Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism is a consequentialist ethical theory that places emphasis on maximising overall happiness or well-being. Developed by philosophers such as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, this approach evaluates the morality of an action based on its consequences. In this unit, we will explore the key principles of utilitarianism and discuss its strengths and weaknesses. Utilitarianism holds that the morality of an action is determined by its ability to produce the greatest amount of happiness or utility for the greatest number of individuals. It seeks to create the most favourable outcomes by considering the overall consequences. Unlike other ethical theories that prioritise individual rights or duties, utilitarianism focuses on collective welfare. This approach is rooted in the belief that the ultimate goal of morality is to maximise well-being, creating more harmonious and prosperous society. One of the strengths of utilitarianism is its emphasis on impartiality. By prioritising overall happiness, utilitarianism promotes a fair and egalitarian approach to decision-making. It does not discriminate based on personal preferences or biases, but rather considers the interests of all individuals affected by an action. This principle can help guide policymakers, leaders, and individuals to make choices that benefit the

majority, ensuring the greatest good for the greatest number. However, utilitarianism is not without criticism. Critics argue that it can lead to the violation of individual rights and neglect the importance of justice. Since the focus is solely on outcomes, certain actions that may be morally questionable, such as sacrificing the well-being of a few for the benefit of many, can be justified under utilitarianism. Moreover, it can be challenging to measure and quantify happiness or utility accurately, which raises questions about the practical objectivity of this approach. Utilitarianism, with its core principle of maximising overall happiness, offers a valuable framework for ethical decision-making. While it promotes fairness and the collective well-being, it also faces challenges concerning individual rights and Justice. By understanding its strengths and limitations, we can engage in a critical evaluation of utilitarianism, utilising its principles to navigate complex moral dilemmas in the pursuit of the greatest good.

#### 3.4.1.1 Features of Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism is an ethical and moral theory that focuses on the principle of maximising overall happiness or well-being. Here are some key features of utilitarianism:





1. **Principle of Utility:** The central tenet of utilitarianism is the principle of utility, which states that actions are morally right if they promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. It prioritises the consequences of actions.
  2. **Consequentialist Ethics:** Utilitarianism is a consequentialist ethical theory, meaning that it judges the morality of an action solely by its outcomes or consequences. It doesn't focus on the intrinsic nature of the action itself.
  3. **Quantitative Hedonism:** Some forms of utilitarianism, such as classical utilitarianism, associate happiness with pleasure and the absence of pain. It often uses a quantitative approach, attempting to measure and compare the amount of pleasure and pain produced by different actions.
  4. **Maximization of Welfare:** Utilitarianism seeks to maximise overall welfare or well-being, which includes not only physical pleasure but also mental, emotional, and psychological well-being.
  5. **Universalism:** Utilitarianism is a universalist theory, meaning it applies the same moral principles to all individuals without discrimination. Everyone's happiness is considered equally important.
  6. **Calculative Aspect:** Utilitarianism can involve a calculative aspect, where individuals are encouraged to assess the potential consequences of their actions and choose the option that maximises overall happiness.
  7. **Act and Rule Utilitarianism:** There are different interpretations of utilitarianism, including act utilitarianism and rule utilitarianism. Act utilitarianism assesses each action individually based on its consequences, while rule utilitarianism emphasises following rules or principles that, when universally applied, maximise happiness.
  8. **Conflict Resolution :** Utilitarianism provides a framework for resolving moral dilemmas by comparing the expected outcomes of different choices and selecting the one that produces the greatest net benefit.
  9. **Flexibility :** Utilitarianism is flexible and adaptable, allowing for the consideration of various factors and the weighing competing interests in decision-making.
  10. **Critiques and Challenges:** Utilitarianism has faced criticism related to issues like justice, individual rights, and the difficulty of quantifying happiness. Critics argue that it may lead to morally questionable actions in some cases.
- Utilitarianism has been influential in ethics and philosophy, providing a utilitarian perspective on moral decision-making, public policy, and societal issues. However, it's important to note that there are different variations and interpretations of utilitarianism, each with its own nuances and approaches to maximising overall happiness.

### 3.4.2 John Stuart Mill

John Stuart Mill was born on May 20, 1806, in Bentonville, London, England, to James Mill and Harriet Burrow. His father, James Mill, was a philosopher, economist, and influential figure in the Utilitarian Movement. Mill's early life was characterised by a highly intellectual environment due to his father's involvement in political and philosophical circles. As a child, Mill received an exceptional education under the tutelage of his father. James Mill implemented a rigorous educational programme for his son, aimed at cultivating his intellectual abilities. Mill's education focused on a wide range of subjects, including classical literature, history, mathematics, philosophy, and economics. By the age

of three, Mill had started learning Greek, and he later mastered Latin and ancient Greek literature. Mill's education enabled him to have exposure to the works of prominent philosophers and thinkers of the time. Through his Father's teachings, he was introduced to Utilitarianism. This early exposure to Utilitarianism laid the foundation for Mill's later development of his own moral and political philosophies. Mill's upbringing was highly disciplined, emphasising intellectual pursuits over leisure or recreation. This intense educational environment, while intellectually stimulating, limited Mill's opportunities for social interaction and play during his childhood. John Stuart Mill made significant contributions to various fields, including ethics, political philosophy, economics, and logic. His works were influential in shaping modern liberal thought and continue to be widely studied and debated. Here are some of his important works and contributions:

#### 3.4.2.1 Utilitarianism

John Stuart Mill's famous work *Utilitarianism* is a philosophical treatise that serves as one of the most influential texts in the history of moral philosophy. Published in 1861, it elaborates on Mill's version of utilitarianism and provides a systematic defence of the ethical theory. Mill begins by explaining the fundamental principle of utilitarianism, often referred to as the "greatest happiness principle." He asserts that actions are right in proportion as they promote happiness, and wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. Happiness, in this context, is defined as the presence of pleasure and the absence of pain. Mill introduces the concept of qualitative differences in pleasures. He argues that not all pleasures are equal; some are of a higher quality and more valuable than others. Intellectual, moral, and aesthetic pleasures are considered higher pleasures, while physical or sensual pleasures are lower. Mill suggests that higher pleasures should be given greater weight in moral decision-making. Mill's work includes a strong defence of individual liberty.

*Utilitarianism* is a seminal work that not only presents Mill's refined version of utilitarianism but also addresses many of the criticisms and challenges that the theory has faced over time. It remains a significant text in the study of ethics and continues to shape contemporary discussions on morality and public policy.

#### 3.4.2.2 On Liberty

John Stuart Mill's famous work *On Liberty* is a foundational text in the field of political philosophy and remains one of the most influential treatises on the topic of individual freedom and liberty. Published in 1859, it articulates Mill's passionate defence of individual liberty and the



limitations of government intervention in the lives of individuals. Perhaps the most famous concept in *On Liberty* is Mill's articulation of the "harm principle." Mill argues that the only legitimate reason for society to interfere with an individual's freedom is to prevent harm to others. In other words, individuals should be free to act as they wish as long as their actions do not harm or infringe upon the rights of others. Mill places a strong emphasis on individual autonomy and self-determination. He argues that individuals are the best judges of their own interests and that they should have the freedom to make their own choices, even if those choices are unconventional or unpopular. Mill celebrates individuality and diversity. He believes that a society that encourages individuality and allows for different ways of life and opinions is richer and more vibrant than one that enforces conformity.

Mill's *On Liberty* remains a cornerstone of liberal political philosophy and has had a profound and enduring impact on discussions of individual rights, freedom of expression, and the role of government in a democratic society. His defence of liberty as a fundamental principle of a just and flourishing society continues to be widely studied and debated today.

### ***The Subjection of Women***

*The Subjection of Women* is another significant work by John Stuart Mill, published in 1869. It is a feminist text that argues for the equality of women and challenges the prevailing views and legal structures that subjugated women during the Victorian era. Mill's central argument in this work is that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men. He contends that the subordination of women to men is a form of injustice and that women are entitled to equal political, social, and economic rights. Mill compares

the subjugation of women to slavery and argues that both are based on unjust power imbalances. He believes that the principles of liberty and equality should apply universally, including to women. Mill advocates for significant legal reforms to grant women equal rights, including the right to vote and to hold public office. He believes that these changes are essential for achieving gender equality. *The Subjection of Women* was ground-breaking in its time and contributed to the growing feminist movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It laid the groundwork for future generations of feminists and played a role in the eventual advancement of women's rights.

*The Subjection of Women* remains an important text in the history of feminist thought and the struggle for gender equality. It challenged deeply ingrained beliefs about the roles and status of women in society and advocated for their full participation in political, social, and economic life.

### ***3.4.2.3 Principle of Political Economy***

John Stuart Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* is a significant work in the field of economics, first published in 1848. It's an influential treatise that addresses various economic principles, theories, and policy considerations of his time. Mill's work in economics is closely tied to his utilitarian philosophy. He believed that economics should be used as a tool to promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. This utilitarian perspective informs much of his economic analysis. Mill discusses theories of value and exchange, particularly the labour theory of value associated with classical economists like David Ricardo and Adam Smith. He examines the relationship between labour, utility, and value in the production of goods and services. Mill explores the concepts of demand and supply and their

role in determining prices in the market. He discusses the factors that influence demand and supply, such as consumer preferences and technological advancements. Mill's work in "Principles of Political Economy" extends to discussions of economic policy, taxation, and government expenditure. He explores how economic policies can be designed to maximize overall well-being. Mill's economic ideas are influenced by his broader social and ethical philosophy. He believes that economics should serve the greater good and promote human happiness. "Principles of Political Economy" by John Stuart Mill was a significant contribution to economic thought during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It reflects both his commitment to utilitarian ethics and his belief in the potential of economics to improve human welfare. His work has had a lasting impact on economic theory and policy discussions, particularly in the areas of free trade, income distribution, and the role of government in the economy.

#### 3.4.2.4 A System of Logic

*A System of Logic, Ratiocinate and Inductive* is a comprehensive work on the philosophy of logic and reasoning written by John Stuart Mill, first published in 1843. This significant text is considered one of Mill's major philosophical contributions and has had a lasting impact on the fields of logic, epistemology, and philosophy of science. Mill's work is divided into two parts: the first part, "Of Names and Propositions," deals with formal logic and language, while the second part, "On Induction," focuses on the principles and methods of inductive reasoning. Mill's approach to logic is empirical and scientific. He argues that logic should be grounded in empirical observation and reflective of the actual processes of human reasoning. Mill is a nominalist, which means he believes that universals and abstract entities do not have independent

existence. He argues that general terms and concepts are simply names for collections of individual experiences. Mill's work on induction is particularly noteworthy. He discusses the methods by which we arrive at general principles and scientific knowledge based on specific observations. Mill provides a detailed analysis of inductive reasoning, causal inference, and scientific methodology. Mill's *System of Logic* faced criticisms and revisions over time, particularly regarding his views on induction. Philosophers and logicians have debated the validity and applicability of his methods and principles. Mill's work continues to be studied in the fields of logic, philosophy of science, and epistemology. It laid the groundwork for later developments in logic and the philosophy of science. This work represents a significant contribution to the study of logic and reasoning, emphasising the importance of empirical evidence and systematic methods of inquiry. It remains an important text in the history of philosophy and logic, influencing subsequent discussions on scientific methodology and the nature of knowledge.

#### 3.4.2.5 Consideration of Representative Government

*Considerations on Representative Government* is a political philosophy work by John Stuart Mill, published in 1861. In this book, Mill explores and defends the principles and practices of representative government, offering insightful arguments on topics related to democracy, political participation, and the structure of government. Mill firmly supports the idea of representative democracy. He argues that representative government is the best form of government for modern societies, emphasising its capacity to balance individual liberty with collective



decision-making. Mill discusses the importance of active political participation by citizens in a democracy. He believes that an engaged and informed citizenry is vital for the success of representative government. Mill is concerned about the potential for a “tyranny of the majority” in democratic systems, where the majority can use their power to oppress minority groups. He argues that safeguards should be in place to protect individual rights and liberties from such tyranny. Mill discusses the structure of government, including the role of elected representatives and the need for checks and balances within the government to prevent abuses of power. Mill’s ideas on representative government have had a lasting influence on democratic theory and the practice of politics. His emphasis on individual freedom, political participation, and the importance of minority rights continues to shape discussions on democracy and governance.

*Considerations on Representative Government* by John Stuart Mill is a significant contribution to political philosophy and democratic theory. It advances a nuanced and practical perspective on the principles and practices of representative democracy, highlighting the need for individual liberty, political competence, and safeguards against the potential excesses of majority rule.

#### 3.4.2.6 Autobiography

John Stuart Mill’s *Autobiography* is a classic autobiographical work published posthumously in 1873. It provides valuable insights into the life, thoughts, and intellectual development of one of the most influential philosophers and social thinkers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The book is a detailed and reflective account of Mill’s life, spanning from his

childhood to his adulthood. Mill wrote it for a specific purpose: to reveal the influences, experiences, and intellectual journey that shaped his philosophical and political views. Mill begins by describing his early years, including his upbringing under the guidance of his father, James Mill, who was a prominent philosopher and utilitarian thinker. Mill’s education was rigorous and aimed at grooming him as a philosopher from an early age. Mill recounts a period of “mental crisis” during his youth when he experienced deep emotional and intellectual struggles. This crisis was partly due to the pressure of living up to his father’s expectations and the utilitarian philosophy he was raised with.

Mill describes his intellectual development, his early writings, and the influence of various philosophers and thinkers on his thought, including Jeremy Bentham, Augustus Comte, and others. He also discusses his work in economics and logic. Mill was actively engaged in political and social issues throughout his life. He discusses his involvement in various reform movements, including his advocacy for universal suffrage, workers’ rights, and civil liberties. Mill’s *Autobiography* is not just a personal account but also a document of his times and the intellectual milieu of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It provides valuable insights into the development of his utilitarian philosophy and his contributions to various fields, including ethics, economics, and political theory. John Stuart Mill’s *Autobiography* is an important text for those interested in his life, philosophy, and the intellectual history of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It sheds light on the personal and intellectual struggles that shaped his thinking and his enduring commitment to individual liberty, social reform, and utilitarian ethics.



### 3.4.3 Evangelicalism

Evangelicalism is a vibrant and influential movement within Christianity that has made a significant impact on the religious landscape. With its roots tracing back to the Protestant Reformation, Evangelicals have emphasised the centrality of personal faith in Jesus Christ, the authority of the Bible, and the mandate to spread the gospel. In this essay, we will explore the history, key beliefs, and social impact of evangelicals, highlighting their lasting contributions to Christian theology and society.

#### 3.4.3.1 Historical Background

The origins of evangelicalism can be found in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Great Awakening, a revivalist movement characterised by fervent preaching, passionate worship, and an emphasis on personal conversion. Leaders like John Wesley, George Whitefield, and Jonathan Edwards played significant roles in shaping Evangelical theology and practice. As the movement grew, it spread across denominational lines, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries.

#### 3.4.3.2 Key Beliefs and Practices

Evangelicals place a strong emphasis on the authority and inspiration of the Bible. They believe it is the Word of God and the ultimate guide for faith and life. Personal faith in Jesus Christ as the only means of Salvation is a core tenet of evangelicalism. They emphasise the need for individuals to have a personal relationship with Jesus, accepting Him as their Lord and Saviour. Evangelicals often engage in evangelistic activities, seeking to share the message of salvation with others and inviting them to experience God's grace.

#### 3.4.3.3 Social Impact

Evangelicals have had a profound impact on various aspects of society. Their commitment to social Justice issues, including human rights, poverty alleviation, and combating injustice, has been significant. Evangelicals have been at the forefront of movements such as the abolition of slavery, civil rights, and the fight against human trafficking. They have established numerous charitable organisations, hospitals, and educational institutions, contributing to the welfare of communities worldwide. Evangelicals have also been actively engaged in politics, seeking to promote their values and influence public policy. They have advocated for religious freedom, pro-life initiatives, traditional family values, and the defence of marriage. Evangelical leaders have often played influential roles in shaping public opinion and participating in political discourse.

#### 3.4.3.4 Criticism and Challenges

Like any movement, evangelicalism has faced criticism and challenges. Some detractors argue that Evangelicals can be narrow-minded, dogmatic, or overly focused on converting others. They have been criticised for being resistant to certain social changes, particularly in the areas of gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights. Additionally, the political involvement of evangelicals has been a subject of debate, as some feel it blurs the line between church and state.

Evangelicals have undeniably left an indelible mark on Christianity and society as a whole. Their unwavering commitment to personal faith, biblical authority, and Evangelism has inspired countless individuals and transformed communities. Despite the challenges and

criticism they face, Evangelicals continue to shape the religious landscape through their philanthropy, social activism, and passionate pursuit of God's truth. As we move forward, it is essential to acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of Evangelicals in fostering spiritual renewal and social change. Evangelicals and the philosophy of John Stuart Mill may seem, at first glance, to be at odds with each other. Evangelicalism is rooted in a strong belief in the authority of the Bible and the importance of personal faith in Jesus Christ, while Mill's philosophy, known as Utilitarianism, emphasises individual freedom, rationality, and the pursuit of happiness. However, despite their apparent differences, there are areas of convergence and potential tensions between the two. One area where Evangelicals and Mill's philosophy intersect is the notion of religious freedom.

Evangelicals have historically championed the freedom to practice and express their religious beliefs without interference or persecution. Similarly, Mill advocated for individual liberty and the freedom of thought, including the freedom of religion. In his influential work, *On Liberty*, Mill argued that society should tolerate diverse beliefs and opinions, even those deemed as "false," as long as they do not harm others. However, tensions can arise when considering the limits of religious freedom. Evangelicals may find themselves at odds with Mill's principle of harm when their religious beliefs or practices come into conflict with the well-being or rights of others. For instance, debates surrounding issues like LGBTQ+ rights or reproductive rights can create tensions between Evangelicals' religious convictions and Mill's emphasis on individual autonomy and the avoidance of harm. Moreover, Mill's utilitarian framework, which promotes the greatest happiness for the greatest number of

people, can be perceived as incompatible with the Evangelical emphasis on absolute moral truths derived from the Bible.

Utilitarianism's consequentialist approach evaluates actions based on their outcomes, while evangelicalism often places moral weight on adherence to specific religious principles, regardless of their immediate consequences. Furthermore, evangelicals' focus on the spiritual realm and the eternal destiny of individuals can clash with Mill's emphasis on the here-and-now happiness and pleasure. Evangelicals prioritise the salvation of souls and adherence to moral codes that may require self-denial or sacrifice in this life for the sake of eternal rewards. Mill's utilitarianism, on the other hand, promotes the pursuit of individual happiness as the ultimate goal, often through the maximisation of pleasure and the minimisation of pain.

Despite these potential tensions, it is important to recognise that Evangelicals and the philosophy of John Stuart Mill are not irreconcilable. Both perspectives contribute to broader discussions about individual liberty, moral decision-making, and the pursuit of the common good. Dialogues and engagements between Evangelicals and Mill's philosophy can provide an opportunity for mutual understanding and the exploration of nuanced ethical considerations. In conclusion, while there are areas of convergence between Evangelicals and John Stuart Mill's philosophy, tensions can arise when considering issues such as religious freedom, moral absolutes, and the pursuit of happiness. Recognising and navigating these tensions is crucial for fostering meaningful dialogue and understanding between these two perspectives.

### 3.4.3.5 Features of Evangelicalism

Evangelicalism is a diverse and multifaceted Christian movement characterised by certain common features and beliefs. While there can be variations within Evangelicalism, here are some key features typically associated with Evangelical Christianity:

- 1. Biblical Authority:** Evangelicals place a strong emphasis on the authority of the Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God. They believe in the Bible's central role in matters of faith, doctrine, and practice.
- 2. Conversion Experience:** Evangelicals emphasise the importance of a personal conversion experience, often referred to as being "born again." This experience involves a conscious decision to accept Jesus Christ as one's Lord and Saviour.
- 3. Evangelism and Outreach:** Evangelicals are known for their commitment to Evangelism, the sharing of the Gospel message with others. They actively seek to spread the Christian faith and bring others to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- 4. Crucifixion and Resurrection:** Evangelicals hold to traditional Christian beliefs, including the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as central to the Christian faith. These events are seen as the means of salvation.
- 5. Emphasis on Grace:** Evangelicals emphasise salvation by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ, rather than by one's own works or merits. They believe that salvation is a gift from God.
- 6. Active Worship and Praise:** Evangelical worship often includes lively and expressive forms of praise, including contemporary music, singing, and enthusiastic worship services.
- 7. Community and Fellowship:** Evangelicals place value on Christian community and fellowship. They often gather for worship, Bible study, prayer, and mutual support within local churches and other Christian organisations.
- 8. Moral and Ethical Values:** Evangelicals typically adhere to traditional Christian moral and ethical values, which may include opposition to practices like abortion, same-sex marriage, and certain forms of entertainment.
- 9. Missionary Work:** Many Evangelical groups are involved in missionary work, both domestically and internationally. They send missionaries to share the Gospel and provide humanitarian aid in various parts of the world.
- 10. Diversity within Evangelicalism:** Evangelicalism is a diverse movement with a range of theological perspectives and practices. While some are conservative in theology and social beliefs, others may be more progressive.
- 11. Social Activism:** Some Evangelical groups are engaged in social and political



activism on issues such as poverty, human trafficking, and social justice. These activities can vary widely among Evangelical organisations.

**12. Missions and Evangelical Parachurch Organisations:** Evangelicals often support and participate in various parachurch organisations and missions agencies that focus on specific areas of ministry, such

as youth outreach, campus ministry, or disaster relief.

It's important to note that Evangelicalism is a broad and diverse movement, and not all individuals or groups within Evangelicalism may adhere to all of these features or beliefs. However, these features provide a general overview of the characteristics often associated with Evangelical Christianity.

## Recap

- ◆ Utilitarianism is a consequentialist ethical theory that evaluates the moral worth of an action based on its overall utility or happiness produced.
- ◆ Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill were influential philosophers in developing utilitarianism.
- ◆ The right action is the one that maximizes overall happiness or pleasure and minimizes suffering.
- ◆ Utilitarianism considers the consequences of actions on a broad scale, emphasizing the well-being of all affected individuals.
- ◆ Utilitarianism has impacted ethics, politics, and economics, guiding decisions to promote the greatest good for the greatest number.
- ◆ Evangelicalism is a Christian movement emphasizing personal conversion, the authority of the Bible, and active evangelistic outreach.
- ◆ Evangelicalism traces its origins to the 18th-century Great Awakening, marked by fervent preaching and a focus on personal faith.
- ◆ Evangelicals emphasize the Bible's authority, the need for personal conversion, and the centrality of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.
- ◆ Evangelicals have played a significant role in social justice issues, including abolition, civil rights, and combating human trafficking.
- ◆ Evangelicalism has faced criticism for perceived narrow-mindedness, dogmatism, and resistance to social changes, particularly in gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights.
- ◆ Mill, born in 1806, was heavily influenced by his father, James Mill, and received an intense education, introducing him to utilitarianism.

- ◆ Mill's influential works include *Utilitarianism*, *On Liberty*, *The Subjection of Women*, *Principles of Political Economy*, *A System of Logic*, and *Considerations on Representative Government*.
- ◆ Impartiality, promoting fairness, and a focus on overall happiness are strengths of utilitarianism.
- ◆ Critics argue that it may violate individual rights and neglect justice, and measuring happiness can be challenging.
- ◆ Intersection with Evangelicalism: Both utilitarianism and evangelicalism emphasize certain freedoms, but tensions may arise in areas like religious freedom and moral absolutes.

## Objective Questions

1. Who are the founders of utilitarianism?
2. What is the central focus of utilitarianism?
3. Which work by John Stuart Mill is considered a foundational text in political philosophy advocating for individual liberty?
4. What is the belief of Evangelicals regarding the authority of the Bible?
5. What is a core tenet of evangelicalism related to salvation?
6. What potential tensions are highlighted between Evangelicals and John Stuart Mill's philosophy?

## Answers

1. Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill
2. Overall happiness
3. *On Liberty*
4. Strong emphasis on the authority of the Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God
5. Faith in Jesus Christ as the only means of salvation.
6. Tensions arise in areas such as religious freedom, moral absolutes, and the pursuit of happiness.



## Self Assessment Questions

1. What is the central idea of utilitarianism?
2. Why is the phrase “greatest happiness of the greatest number” important?
3. How did Jeremy Bentham contribute to utilitarian thought?
4. How did John Stuart Mill modify and develop utilitarianism?
5. Why is Mill’s *On Liberty* important in political thought?
6. What are the main beliefs of Evangelicalism?
7. How did Evangelicalism encourage social reform?
8. In what ways did Evangelicals contribute to anti-slavery and humanitarian movements?
9. Where do utilitarianism and Evangelicalism agree on social improvement?
10. What tensions may arise between utilitarian reasoning and evangelical moral beliefs?

## Assignments

1. Compare and contrast the principles of utilitarianism and evangelicalism, highlighting areas of convergence and potential tensions.
2. Examine a contemporary social or political issue and analyze how a utilitarian and an evangelical might approach and respond to it. Discuss potential conflicts and areas of agreement.
3. Explore the role of evangelicalism in shaping social and political movements. Discuss instances where evangelical beliefs have influenced public discourse and policy decisions.
4. Critically analyse one of the works by John Stuart Mill mentioned in the passage (*On Liberty* or *Utilitarianism*). Discuss its relevance in today’s context and its impact on contemporary ethical discussions

## Suggested Reading

1. Balmer, Randall. *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism: Revised and Expanded*. Baylor UP, 2004.
2. Brandt, Richard B. *Morality, Utilitarianism, and Rights*, 1992.
3. Scarre, Geoffrey. *Utilitarianism*. Routledge, 1996.

SGOU





**BLOCK**

# The Victorian Age



# UNIT

## Victorian Society

### Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the major social and economic changes that shaped Victorian Britain
- ◆ describe the impact of the Industrial Revolution on population, employment, urban life and class structure
- ◆ identify the living and working conditions of the working class during the Victorian period
- ◆ discuss the rise of the middle class and its influence on values, education, morality and public life
- ◆ understand the role of religion, education and social reform in Victorian society

### Prerequisite

Imagine Britain during the long reign of Queen Victoria, a country filled with factories, railways, crowded towns, growing wealth and deep poverty. The Industrial Revolution changed the older rural world into a modern industrial society. People moved from villages to towns in search of work, and cities expanded rapidly. New occupations appeared, but workers often faced long hours, low wages, poor housing and unsafe factories.

Victorian society was also marked by class divisions. The aristocracy retained prestige, the middle class gained influence through business and education, and the working class struggled for dignity and rights. At the same time, religion, morality and reform became powerful forces in public life. Debates on education,

hygiene, factory laws, women's roles and poverty shaped the period. This unit helps learners understand the Victorian Age as a time of progress, contradiction and social transformation.

## Keywords

Industrial Revolution, Victorian Period, Nonconformist Conscience

## Discussion

### 4.1.1 The Industrial Revolution

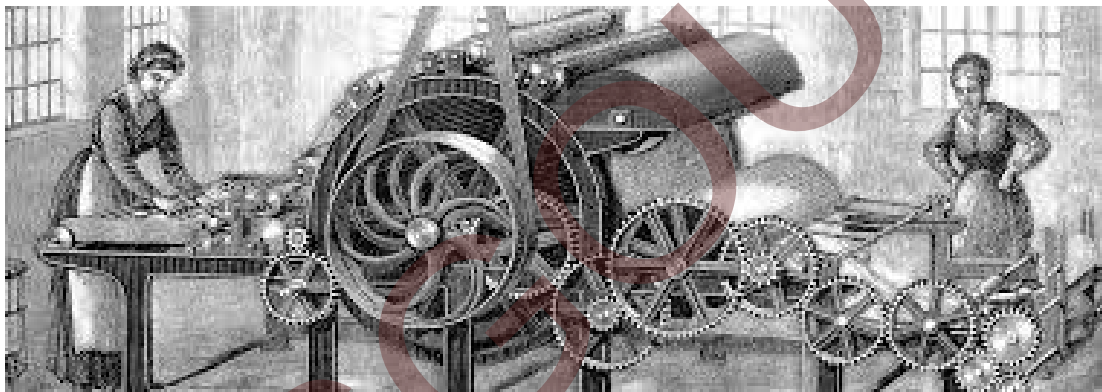


Fig. 4.1.1 Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution, originating in Britain in the 18th century, transformed society by transitioning from an agrarian economy to one dominated by industry and machine manufacturing. It introduced new ways of working and living, transforming society. The term has evolved to encompass a process of economic transformation, with some regions experiencing their first industrial revolutions later. It was characterised by technological, socioeconomic, and cultural changes. Technological advancements included the use of iron and steel, new energy sources, machines, the factory system, transportation and communication advancements, and the

application of science to industry. These changes enabled the increased use of natural resources and the mass production of manufactured goods. Non-industrial spheres saw agricultural improvements, economic changes, political changes, social changes, and cultural transformations. Workers acquired new skills, shifted from craftsmen to machine operators, and experienced psychological changes, such as increased confidence in resource use and nature mastery.

Britain was a rural nation, with 80% of the population living in the countryside until the 1820s. However, new machines and the Industrial Revolution led to a shift towards urban areas, with over 50% of



the population living in towns and cities by the mid-19th century. The Age of Steam and the Age of Steel also played significant roles in this transition. Despite the growth in wealth, many working people in Britain lived, worked, and died in poor conditions. Housing shortages led to people sharing rooms in other people's houses, with many factory owners building houses close together and lacking running water and toilets. Pollution and ill health were prevalent, with cholera outbreaks in 1832 and typhus, small pox, and dysentery resulting in over 31,000 deaths. The Public Health Act of 1875 banned open sewers, introduced rubbish collection, and provided public health inspectors to ensure sanitation and health. In 1853, the tax on soap was removed, allowing poor people to buy soap and become more hygienic.

The Industrial Revolution in England led to the migration of the population from rural areas to cities, resulting in the development of slums and cramped row housing. By 1900, 80% of the population lived in cities organised based on social class. The common working man faced brutal conditions, including daily labor without health benefits, inadequate septic systems, and poor living conditions. Overcrowded shanty homes were built near factories, and waste from houses was drained into sewers, leading to disease outbreaks. The Victorian Age was marked by rapid changes in medical, scientific, and technological knowledge, population growth, and location, causing uncertainty and doubt for the common man.

#### **4.1.2 Impacts of the Industrial Revolution**

The industrial revolution, demographic transition, and agricultural development led to an increase in population due to improved living standards and

economic opportunities. Fertility played a significant role in population growth, as people adopted technology and had better financial conditions. Younger people married early, had more children, and had a better upbringing, reducing child mortality rates. The Victorian era saw improvements in the environment and health, with signs of solutions to issues like child labour and illiteracy.

Industrialisation led to a growing middle class, affecting social strata like cultural norms, lifestyle, values, and morality. The middle class home became a distinct characteristic, with residential space often integrating into the work site. In the Victorian era, English family life became compartmentalised, with privacy becoming a hallmark. The English home closed up and darkened, with a cult of domesticity and privacy. Bourgeois existence was characterised by interior space, being wary of intrusion, and invitation-only viewing.

The reputation of the Victorian age in England has undergone many vicissitudes, but it is now higher than ever. In this important study, Richard D. Altick moves us toward an understanding of the social, intellectual, and theological crises that Carlyle and Dickens, Tennyson and Arnold were daily struggling to solve. And the issues were many: the revolution in class structure and class attitudes; the rise of utilitarianism and the evangelical spirit; the crisis in religion, including the Oxford movement and Darwinism; the democratisation of culture; the place of art and the artist in an industrial, bourgeois society; the effects of industrialism, especially on the way people live. Altick brings to the conclusion of these complicated questions the lively and sensitive intelligence that his many readers have come to expect. The year 1830 is generally placed at the beginning

of this period, but its limits are very indefinite. In general, we may think of it as covering the reign of Victoria (1837-1901). Historically, the age is remarkable for the growth of democracy following the Reform Bill of 1832, for the spread of education among all classes, for the rapid development of the arts and sciences, for important mechanical inventions, and for the enormous extension of the bounds of human knowledge by the discoveries of science.

In Victorian society, families were the most important part of society, with most having five or six children. Upper or middle class families had servants for household chores, and children were taught respect and good manners. Mothers often planned parties and did not do housework but did dressmaking and called friends. Middle or upper class children did not see their parents all day but were brought up by their ayah, who took care of them, taught them good manners, and taught them to read and write. As children grew older, boys took on jobs, while daughters stayed at home with their mothers. This social system and tradition highlighted the importance of servants in the family. Many children in poor families died of diseases like scarlet fever, measles, polio, and TB, which are curable today.

The Victorian era saw significant political changes, with Prime Ministers Gladstone and Disraeli playing pivotal roles. Disraeli, a Tory, was favored by the Queen, while Gladstone, a Liberal, oversaw law-making. The era also saw the rise of musical brass bands, with band stands serving as ornamental focal points and providing shelter. Musical recording was a novelty at the time, and formal funeral photographs were often taken to create lasting memories.

### 4.1.3 Society And Culture During Victorian Era

The Victorian era in the United Kingdom saw a growing middle class replace the aristocracy as the dominant class. This period saw a distinctive middle class lifestyle, emphasising family, private homes, and social reform. The evangelical movement and utilitarianism influenced values, with an alliance formed between these ideologies. The Church of England was disestablished, and legal discrimination was reduced. Religious views had to adapt to new scientific knowledge and criticism of the Bible. Access to education increased rapidly, with state-funded schools in England and Wales and compulsory pre-teenaged education for pre-teenaged children. Entertainment included brass bands, circuses, and seaside holidays. Sports like cricket, cycling, croquet, horse-riding, and water activities became popular, and leisure opportunities increased with restrictions on working hours and wages.

The rise of the middle class in the Victorian era significantly influenced social strata, including cultural norms, lifestyle, values, and morality. The middle-class home and lifestyle became compartmentalised, with private life and commerce overlapping. The concept of “privacy” became a hallmark of middle-class life. The English home closed up and darkened over the 1850s, with a cult of domesticity and privacy. Bourgeois existence was characterised by interior space, being wary of intrusion, and being open only to invitations. This period saw the rise of evangelicals, utilitarians, and reformers.

The family was a dominant feature for all classes during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, with middle-class

wives shielding their husbands from harsh domestic affairs. The nuclear family became both ideal and reality, and the notion that marriage should be based on romantic love and companionship grew in popularity during the Victorian period. Women were expected to dominate domestic life, focusing on the care of the family, husband, children, household, religion, and moral behavior. Religiosity was in the female sphere, and nonconformist churches offered new roles for women, such as teaching in Sunday schools, visiting the poor and sick, and supporting missionaries.

The 1854 poem “The Angel in the House” by Coventry Patmore exemplified the idealised Victorian woman who was angelically pure and devoted to her family and home. Legally, women had limited rights to their bodies, family property, or children. The home sphere grew dramatically, and women spent money on furniture, clothing, food, schooling, and outward appearance. However, some early feminists called for aspirations beyond the home, such as riding bicycles, wearing bloomers, signing petitions, supporting worldwide mission activities, and talking about the vote.

The Industrial Revolution incentivised people to think more scientifically and become more educated, leading to increased cognitive abilities and the need for formal education. This change echoed down to the twentieth century before leveling off in the early twenty-first century. Enrollment at Sunday schools increased from 10% of five to eighteen-year-olds in 1800 to approximately 55% in 1851. Various religious organisations established “voluntary” fulltime schools, and a growing number of private schools developed, including ones aimed at the working-classes.

In England and Wales, the government began providing state-funding to schools shortly before Victoria came to the throne, which increased during the early decades of her reign. The 1870 Elementary Education Act was intended to establish universal access to state-funded schools, and the state began to run schools directly for the first time through a system of local governance. Education became compulsory for five- to ten-year-olds in 1880, and fees were abolished in 1891. Compulsory education was expanded to deaf children, blind children, and children up to the age of twelve in the 1890s.

As a consequence of various education reforms, literacy rates steadily rose, reaching roughly 90% by the late nineteenth century. Literacy rates were generally higher in urban areas, as rising literacy and urbanisation provided an expanding market for printed materials. By 1900, only around 3% of people in England and Wales were illiterate, with a similar rate in Scotland. During the first half of the 19th century, formal schooling became the norm for boys from wealthier families, seen as necessary for future businessmen and increasingly professionals. Private schools were increasingly popular with middle-class parents, and expensive public schools became a model for gentlemen and public service. Girls from wealthier families were educated by governesses or at private schools, with a steady trend towards a more academic curriculum at private girls’ schools.

The 19th century publishing industry adapted to the changes brought forward by the Industrial Revolution, benefiting from advancements in electricity, rail transport, and telegraphy. The demand of the middle-classes for knowledge and entertainment led to increased book prices and free-to-use libraries. Authors sought ways to cut prices and increase sales,



such as serialisation in periodicals and commissioned illustrations. Children's literature, initially dominated by religious groups, saw growth, leading to the rise of Gothic fiction and William Shakespeare's works. Popular science titles, women's newspapers, and science fiction novels emerged, with technological progress inspiring more genres. Street literature, such as public notes and broadsides, became common before newspapers became available in the late 19th century.

Victorian Britain was a time of social change, with a strong interest in literature, theatre, and the arts. Popular forms of entertainment were varied by social class, with music, drama, and opera being widely attended. Melodrama, introduced in revolutionary France, was particularly influential during this period. Dining clubs, casinos, brass bands, and "The Bandstand" became popular during this time.

The Victorian era marked the golden age of the British circus, with Astley's Amphitheatre in Lambeth, London, and traveling circuses like Pablo Fanque dominating British provinces, Scotland, and Ireland. Natural history became an "amateur" activity, with amateur collectors and natural history entrepreneurs playing a significant role in building large collections.

Middle-class Victorians used train services to visit the seaside, turning quiet fishing villages into major tourist centers. The introduction and development of modern sports such as cricket, cycling, croquet, horse-riding, and water activities were also popular. Tennis, the world's oldest tennis tournament, originated in Birmingham between 1859 and 1865, and Britain was an active competitor in all Olympic Games starting in 1896.

High culture during the Victorian era

included Gothic Revival architecture, which led to the Battle of the Styles between Gothic and Classical ideals. The Great Exhibition of 1851 showcased the greatest innovations of the century, including the Crystal Palace, which was condemned by critic John Ruskin as the prototype of modern architecture. Various styles of painting were popular during the Victorian period, including Classicism, Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Impressionism, and Post-impressionism. The growing popularity of romantic love spilled over into literature and the fine arts.

Victorian-era politics focused on reform and improvement, involving the rise of the middle class, spiritual reform linked to evangelical Christianity, and the liberalism of philosophical utilitarians. The middle class was displacing the aristocracy's control, promoting respectability and moralistic values. The evangelical moralisers developed effective techniques to enhance moral sensibilities and reach the public through agitation and propaganda. Philosophical utilitarians, led by intellectuals like Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, and John Stuart Mill, promoted progress using scientific rationality and business-like efficiency. Social reforms focused on ending slavery, removing slavery-like burdens on women and children, reforming the police, lifting disabilities on nonconformists and Roman Catholics, and reforming Parliament and elections to introduce democracy. The long-term effect of these reform movements was to link the nonconformist element with the Liberal Party, with Protestant ministers rallying their congregations to the Liberal ticket.

During the 19th century, religion played a significant role in British intellectual history, with Non-conformists fighting against the Church of England's



status. Penalties for Roman Catholics were removed, and the Oxford movement attracted converts. Secularism and doubts about the Old Testament's accuracy led to the adoption of German idealism by Thomas Carlyle and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The North British school was religiously conservative and commercially engaged, while the South had Anglicanism, agnosticism, and atheism, with biologist Thomas Huxley promoting "scientific naturalism."

#### **4.1.3.1 Nonconformist Conscience**

It refers to the moral sensibility of nonconformist churches, which dissent from the established Church of England. These churches influenced British politics in the 19th and early 20th centuries, with "Old Dissenters" and "New Dissenters" being two categories. The Old group emphasised religious freedom, equality, and opposition to discrimination, while the New Dissenters focused on personal morality issues. The Old group supported Whigs and Liberals, while the New Dissenters mostly supported Conservatives. The merging of the two groups strengthened their political pressure, especially on schools and temperance.

Parliament imposed political disabilities on Nonconformists outside Scotland, such as not holding most public offices, paying local taxes, being married by Anglican ministers, and being denied attendance at Oxford or degrees at Cambridge. Dissenters demanded the removal of these restrictions, which were eventually abolished in 1868 by William Ewart Gladstone. The Marriage Act 1836 allowed local government registrars to handle marriages, and the Burial Laws Amendment Act 1880 allowed nonconformists to use traditional graveyards. Nonconformists played major

roles in founding new universities in the late 19th century, including Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Leeds.

**Social Reforms:** As a result of early campaigns by people such as Michael Sadler and the Earl of Shaftesbury, and reports by parliamentary commissions, legislation protecting child and adult workers began to be enforced. Important reforms included legislation on child labour, safety in mines and factories, public health, the end of slavery in the British Empire, and education (by 1880, education was compulsory for all children up to the age of 10). There was also prison reform and the establishment of the police.

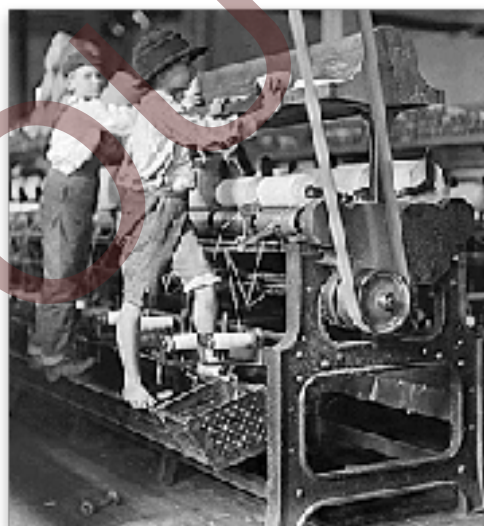


Fig. 4.1.2 Child Labour in Victorian England

In 1833, the Factory Act marked a significant milestone in labor regulations, specifically addressing the employment conditions of children in textile factories. The act prohibited children under the age of nine from working in such establishments. For those aged 9 to 13, the workweek was limited to 48 hours, with a daily cap of 9 hours. Meanwhile, 13 to 18 year olds faced a maximum workday of 12 hours and a weekly limit of 69 hours. Additionally, all children under the age of eleven were required to receive two



hours of education daily. To enforce these measures, Government Factory Inspectors were appointed.

Subsequent years saw further developments in labor legislation. The 1842 Mines and Collieries Act, for instance, prohibited women and children under 10 from working underground and set a minimum age of 15 for operating winding gear in mines. The 1844 Factory Act reduced the minimum age for factory work to 8 years old, established specific working hours for different age groups, and mandated safety guards on machines,

along with three hours of daily education for children.

The 1847 Fielder's Factory Act introduced a 10-hour workday for individuals under 18 and women. In 1864, the Factory Act extended these regulations beyond textiles and coalmines to other types of factories. Subsequently, the 1867 Factory Act broadened the legislation to include all workshops with more than 50 workers, reflecting a continued effort to improve labor conditions across various industries.

## Recap

- ◆ The Industrial Revolution significantly accelerated human life and led to the rise of new ideas in the cultural, intellectual, and social realms
- ◆ The Industrial Revolution, originating in Britain in the 18th century, transformed society by transitioning from an agrarian economy to one dominated by industry and machine manufacturing
- ◆ The Industrial Revolution in England led to the migration of the population from rural areas to cities, resulting in the development of slums and cramped row housing
- ◆ The revolution in class structure and class attitudes
- ◆ The rise of utilitarianism and the evangelical spirit
- ◆ The crisis in religion, including the Oxford movement and Darwinism
- ◆ The democratisation of culture
- ◆ The place of art and the artist in an industrial, bourgeois society
- ◆ The effects of industrialism, especially on the way people live
- ◆ This social system and tradition highlighted the importance of servants in the family
- ◆ The Victorian era saw significant political changes, with Prime Ministers Gladstone and Disraeli playing pivotal roles
- ◆ The rise of the middle class in the Victorian era significantly influenced social strata, including cultural norms, lifestyle, values, and morality

- ◆ Women were expected to dominate domestic life, focusing on the care of the family, husband, children, household, religion, and moral behavior
- ◆ Victorian Britain was a time of social change, with a strong interest in literature, theatre, and the arts
- ◆ High culture during the Victorian era included Gothic Revival architecture, which led to the Battle of the Styles between Gothic and Classical ideals
- ◆ Victorian-era politics focused on reform and improvement
- ◆ Religion played a significant role in British intellectual history, with Nonconformists fighting against the Church of England's status
- ◆ Nonconformist Conscience is the moral sensibility of nonconformist churches, which dissent from the established Church of England
- ◆ These churches influenced British politics in the 19th and early 20th centuries, with "Old Dissenters" and "New Dissenters"
- ◆ Nonconformists played major roles in founding new universities in the late 19th century, including Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Leeds
- ◆ Important reforms included legislation on child labour, safety in mines and factories, public health, the end of slavery in the British Empire, and education

## Objective Questions

1. What was the minimum age for children working in textile factories according to the 1833 Factory Act?
2. Under the 1842 Mines and Collieries Act, who were banned from working underground?
3. What change did the 1844 Factory Act bring regarding the minimum age for factory work?
4. What did the 1847 Fielder's Factory Act introduce in terms of working hours for individuals under 18 and women?
5. In which year did the Industrial Revolution in England lead to the migration of the population from rural areas to cities?
6. What did the Public Health Act of 1875 aim to address in Victorian Britain?

7. Which Prime Ministers played pivotal roles in the political changes during the Victorian era?
8. What did the Nonconformist Conscience refer to during the Victorian era?
9. What marked the golden age of the British circus during the Victorian era?
10. According to the recap, what were some of the effects of the Industrial Revolution on society?
11. What did the 1867 Factory Act extend the legislation to include?
12. How did the 1844 Factory Act contribute to workplace safety?
13. What significant change did the 1847 Fielder's Factory Act introduce for individuals under 18 and women?
14. How did the 1853 removal of the tax on soap impact Victorian society?
15. In the Victorian era, what role did the middle class play in influencing social strata?

## Answers

1. 9 years old
2. Women and children under 10
3. Reduced to 8 years old
4. 10-hour workday
5. 1850
6. Housing shortages
7. Gladstone and Disraeli
8. The moral sensibility of nonconformist churches
9. Astley's Amphitheatre
10. Accelerated human life and increased cognitive abilities
11. Workshops with more than 50 workers
12. Mandated safety guards on machines
13. Reduced working hours (10-hour workday)

14. Increased hygiene practices
15. Significantly influenced lifestyle, values, and morality

## Self Assessment Questions

1. How did the Industrial Revolution change the social structure of Britain?
2. Why did many people migrate from rural areas to towns during the Victorian period?
3. What were the major problems faced by working-class people in industrial towns?
4. How did factory life affect women and children?
5. Why did the middle class become influential in Victorian Britain?
6. What values were associated with the Victorian middle class?
7. How did education become important in Victorian society?
8. What role did religion play in shaping Victorian public morality?
9. Why were factory reforms necessary in nineteenth-century Britain?
10. How can Victorian society be described as both progressive and unequal?

## Assignments

1. How did the Industrial Revolution impact the demographic landscape of Britain during the 18th and 19th centuries?
2. Examine the social conditions of working-class individuals in Britain during the Industrial Revolution.
3. Explore the role of education during the Victorian era and its connection to the Industrial Revolution.
4. Analyse the societal and cultural changes brought about by the rise of the middle class during the Victorian era.



5. Examine the role of religion and the Nonconformist Conscience in shaping British politics during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

## Suggested Reading

1. Thompson, E. P. *The Making of the English Working Class*. Penguin, 1963.
2. Ashton, T. S. *The Industrial Revolution*. Oxford UP, 1997.
3. Dauntton, M. J. *Progress and Poverty: An Economic and Social History of Britain 1700-1850*. Oxford University Press, 1995.
4. Allen, Robert C. *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective*. Cambridge UP, 2009.
5. Engels, Friedrich. *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. Penguin, 2009.
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## UNIT

# Literary Developments

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to,

- ◆ identify the major literary features of the Victorian period
- ◆ explain how Victorian literature responded to industrialisation, poverty, class inequality, faith and social change
- ◆ discuss the contributions of John Ruskin, Cardinal Newman, John Clare, Alfred Tennyson, Robert Browning and Matthew Arnold
- ◆ recognise the importance of the Victorian novel and poetry in reflecting the anxieties of the age
- ◆ analyse how Victorian writers connected literature with morality, social criticism, religion and culture

### Prerequisite

Victorian literature grew out of a society that was changing quickly. Factories, railways, urban life, scientific discoveries, empire, education and political reform created new experiences and new anxieties. Writers did not remain silent observers. They used poems, novels, essays and criticism to respond to poverty, industrialisation, loss of faith, moral conflict and the changing relationship between tradition and modern life.

This unit introduces important Victorian literary figures. John Ruskin connected art with morality and criticised economic inequality. Cardinal Newman explored faith, doubt and spiritual experience. John Clare wrote about nature and rural life at a time when the countryside was changing. Tennyson gave poetic expression to grief, progress and uncertainty. Browning developed the dramatic monologue

and explored the psychology of human behaviour. Matthew Arnold reflected on culture, education and the crisis of belief. Together, these writers show how Victorian literature became a mirror of society and a voice of criticism.

## Keywords

Industrial Revolution, Social critique, Charles Dickens, Brontë sisters, Feminist discourse, Sensation novel, Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood

## Discussion

### 4.2.1 Literary Developments during the Victorian Period



Fig. 4.2.1 Queen Victoria

The Victorian period, spanning from 1837 to 1901, was a time of significant literary developments in Britain. Named after Queen Victoria, who reigned during this era, it witnessed a complex interplay

of social, political, and economic changes that greatly influenced literature. Several key literary movements emerged, reflecting the diverse perspectives and concerns of the time.

One of the defining characteristics of Victorian literature was its engagement with social issues. The Industrial Revolution brought about rapid urbanisation and social upheaval, leading writers to explore the impact of these changes on individuals and society. Novels became a powerful medium for social critique, with authors like Charles Dickens addressing issues such as poverty, child labor, and class inequality. In works like *Oliver Twist* and *Hard Times*, Dickens vividly portrayed the harsh realities of the time, advocating for social reform.

Parallel to the social realism of Dickens was the emergence of the Brontë sisters, particularly Charlotte and Emily. Their novels, including *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*, explored themes of passion, morality, and the role of women in society. Charlotte Brontë's depiction of the independent and strong-willed Jane Eyre challenged prevailing notions of femininity, contributing to the burgeoning feminist discourse.

The Victorian period also witnessed the rise of the “sensational novel,” a genre characterised by its focus on mystery, suspense, and psychological tension. Wilkie Collins, a pioneer of this genre, wrote *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone*, both of which featured intricate plots and unconventional narrative structures. These works captivated readers with their exploration of psychological states and moral ambiguity.

Moreover, the Victorian era saw a revival of interest in the medieval past and a fascination with the supernatural. This was evident in the works of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a group of artists and writers that included Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Christina Rossetti. Their poetry and art drew inspiration from medieval themes, mythology, and nature. Christina Rossetti’s collection *Goblin Market and Other Poems* showcased her exploration of female identity, sexuality, and spirituality.

Poetry played a crucial role in the literary landscape of the Victorian period. Alfred Lord Tennyson, the Poet Laureate of the time, crafted poems that reflected the uncertainty and upheaval of the era. His famous works like “The Charge of the Light Brigade” and “In Memoriam” grappled with themes of war, loss, and the changing nature of faith.

Additionally, the Victorian period witnessed the birth of the serial novel, with many authors publishing their works in installments in popular magazines. This format allowed for a more widespread readership and contributed to the serialised nature of novels such as Charles Dickens’ *Bleak House* and *Great Expectations*.

The Victorian period was a rich and dynamic era in literature, marked by a diverse range of voices and themes. Writers engaged with the social, political,

and cultural changes of the time, producing works that continue to be studied and appreciated for their insights into the human condition and the challenges of their age. The literary developments of the Victorian period laid the foundation for the modern novel and continue to influence literature to this day.

#### 4.2.2 John Ruskin

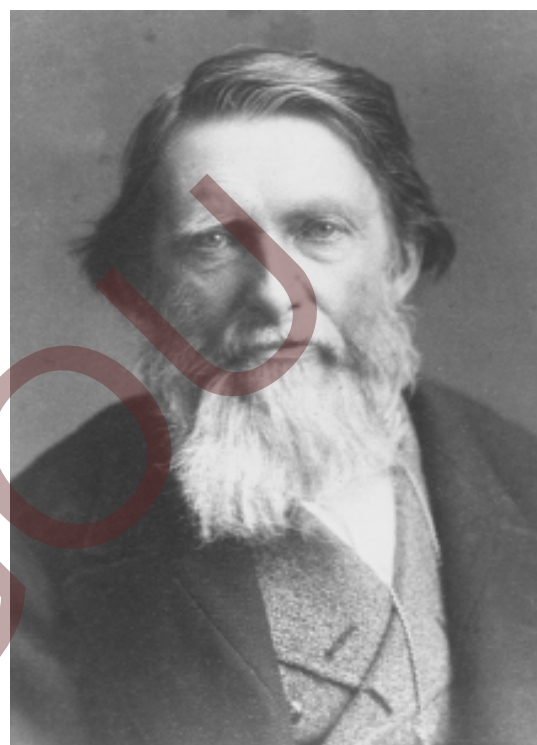


Fig. 4.2.2 John Ruskin

John Ruskin, a prominent Victorian writer, art critic, and social thinker, left an indelible mark on the cultural landscape of 19th-century England. Born in 1819, Ruskin’s literary contributions spanned various genres, but he is best remembered for his profound influence on Victorian art criticism and his impassioned social commentary.

Ruskin’s impact on Victorian literature is epitomised in his seminal works, *Modern Painters* and *The Stones of Venice*. In these influential texts, he seamlessly intertwined aesthetic appreciation with

keen social critique, establishing himself as a visionary force in the realms of both art and societal transformation. Through *Modern Painters*, Ruskin championed the notion that art should faithfully emulate the inherent beauty of nature. His eloquent prose celebrated the ethereal qualities of the natural world, urging artists to draw inspiration from the perfection found in the landscapes around them.

However, Ruskin's literary prowess extended beyond the realm of aesthetics. In *Unto This Last*, he fearlessly confronted the pressing issues of his time, exploring economic inequality and critiquing the dehumanising impacts of rampant industrialisation. Ruskin's call for a reconnection between artistic creation and moral values positioned him as a distinctive voice in an era undergoing profound societal transformation.

Furthermore, Ruskin's influence went beyond the written word. As a social reformer, he actively engaged in philanthropy and education, reflecting his commitment to translating his ideals into tangible change. His founding of the Guild of St. George, an organisation aimed at promoting social and economic justice, exemplified his dedication to addressing the societal fissures exacerbated by the Industrial Revolution.

Ruskin's literary legacy is a testament to the multifaceted nature of his contributions to Victorian thought. His writings not only shaped the discourse around art and aesthetics but also served as a catalyst for broader conversations on social justice and the human condition in an era of rapid change. Ruskin's ability to weave together art, morality, and social critique solidifies his status as a quintessential Victorian writer, leaving behind many ideas that continue to resonate with readers and scholars alike.

### 4.2.3 Cardinal Newman



Fig.4.2.3 Cardinal Newman

Cardinal John Henry Newman, a towering figure in Victorian literature and theology, made enduring contributions that transcended the confines of his religious and intellectual pursuits. Born in 1801, Newman's influence extended across various genres, from his early Anglican writings to his later Catholic works.

Newman's literary legacy is perhaps most encapsulated in his magnum opus, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (*A Defense of One's Life*). Published in the late 19th century, this spiritual autobiography chronicled Newman's intellectual and religious journey, providing a profound exploration of faith and doubt in the context of Victorian England. In the face of societal shifts marked by scientific advancements and philosophical inquiries, Newman fearlessly laid bare the contours of his religious convictions, meticulously detailing his conversion from Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism. The *Apologia* stands as a poignant narrative that



resonates with the collective struggles of the Victorian populace grappling with uncertainties brought about by progress.

Newman's writings epitomised the broader Victorian preoccupation with religious faith. His nuanced examination of the tensions between faith and reason reflected the intellectual ferment of the time. As the Oxford Movement sought to reinvigorate High Church Anglicanism, Newman's contributions, both in writing and as a leading figure in the movement, played a crucial role in shaping Victorian theological discourse.

Beyond his theological writings, Newman was a skilled prose stylist, evident in works such as *The Idea of a University*. In this series of lectures, he championed the idea of a broad and liberal education, emphasising the integration of diverse disciplines to foster a well-rounded intellectual and moral character. His vision of education reflected his commitment to intellectual excellence and the pursuit of truth.

Newman's enduring impact on Victorian literature lies in his ability to articulate the complexities of religious belief amid a backdrop of societal and intellectual upheaval. His writings, characterised by intellectual rigour and spiritual introspection, continue to resonate with readers, offering insights into the enduring human quest for faith and meaning in an era of profound transformation. Cardinal Newman stands not only as a Victorian writer of theological eminence but also as a voice that transcends religious boundaries, leaving an indelible mark on the broader cultural and intellectual landscape of the 19th century.

#### 4.2.4 John Clare



Fig.4.2.4 John Clare

John Clare, known as the “peasant poet,” occupies a unique place in Victorian literature, offering a poetic voice that beautifully encapsulates the pastoral simplicity of rural life amidst the complex and rapidly changing landscape of 19th-century England. Born in 1793, Clare's literary contributions extended into the Victorian era, providing a poignant commentary on the consequences of industrialisation and urbanisation.

In his verses, collected in works such as *Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery* and *The Shepherd's Calendar*, Clare artfully captured the idyllic beauty of the English countryside. His poetry served as a testament to his deep connection with nature, portraying rural life as a blend of simplicity, authenticity, and harmony with the natural world. Amidst the encroachment of industrialisation and the upheavals of Victorian progress, Clare's verses became a lyrical sanctuary, preserving the essence of rural life and lamenting its gradual erosion.



Clare's poetic gaze was distinctly anti-industrial, offering a counterbalance to the prevailing narrative of progress and mechanisation in Victorian England. His verses reflected a keen awareness of the environmental and human costs of rapid industrial expansion, expressing a heartfelt concern for vanishing landscapes and traditional ways of life.

Despite his innate talent and the recognition of contemporaries like John Keats, Clare faced personal challenges that mirrored the societal fractures of his time. Struggling with mental health issues and economic hardships, Clare's life echoed the dislocations and disorientations experienced by many in the face of societal changes.

While Clare's work was not widely appreciated during his lifetime, his poetry has since gained recognition for its depth, sensitivity, and capacity to evoke the beauty of the natural world. In the context of Victorian literature, Clare's contributions stand as a poignant reflection of a society in flux, providing a timeless reminder of the delicate balance between progress and the preservation of the authentic. His legacy endures as a testament to the enduring power of poetic expression in capturing the spirit of an era and the intricate layers of human experience.

#### 4.2.5 Alfred Lord Tennyson

Alfred Lord Tennyson, one of the most revered Victorian poets, left an indelible mark on the literary landscape of the 19th century. Born in 1809, Tennyson became Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom during the reign of Queen Victoria, and his poetry came to embody the spirit of the Victorian era.



Fig.4.2.5 Alfred Lord Tennyson

Tennyson's poetry is characterised by its emotional depth, lyrical beauty, and keen sensitivity to the nuances of the human experience. As the Poet Laureate, he became the voice of an age marked by profound societal and technological changes. His works, including *In Memoriam* and *The Idylls of the King*, reflect the emotional and intellectual currents of Victorian England.

*In Memoriam*, a reflective and elegiac poem, stands as a testament to Tennyson's exploration of themes such as grief, loss, and the transformative impact of scientific and technological progress on human spirituality. Written in response to the death of his close friend Arthur Hallam, the poem grapples with the profound sorrow and existential questions that arose in the face of personal tragedy. In the broader context of the Victorian era, marked by scientific discoveries that challenged traditional religious beliefs, *In Memoriam* became a poignant meditation on the tensions between faith and reason.

As Poet Laureate, Tennyson's verses also served to commemorate national events and articulate a collective sense of identity. His role extended beyond personal introspection to a broader engagement with the cultural and political currents of his time. Tennyson's poetry captured the emotional nuances of an age undergoing rapid transformation, balancing a reverence for tradition with a keen awareness of the challenges posed by progress.

Furthermore, Tennyson's contributions to the Arthurian legend in *The Idylls of the King* showcased his ability to infuse timeless myth with contemporary relevance. The retelling of these legends allowed Tennyson to explore themes of chivalry, honor, and the consequences of societal discord in the context of Victorian England.

Alfred Lord Tennyson, through his eloquent verses and thematic explorations, not only became a literary icon of the Victorian era but also a profound chronicler of the complex emotions and intellectual ferment characterising a society in the midst of unprecedented change. His poetry continues to resonate, inviting readers to explore the enduring human condition through the lens of Victorian sensibility.

#### 4.2.6 Robert Browning

Robert Browning, a prominent Victorian poet and playwright, stands as a literary luminary whose innovative works continue to shape the landscape of 19th-century literature. Born in 1812, Browning's impact was particularly profound in the latter half of the Victorian era, and his exploration of the complexities of human psychology and morality marked a departure from the literary conventions of his time.

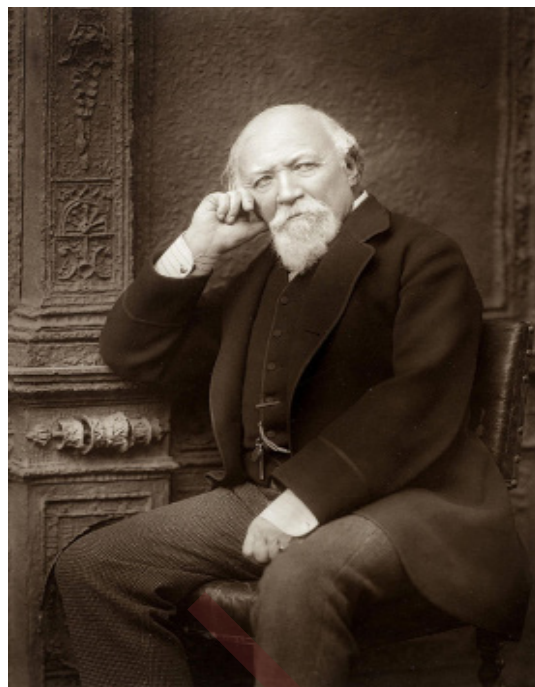


Fig. 4.2.6 Robert Browning

At the heart of Browning's contributions lies his mastery of the dramatic monologue, a form he elevated to new heights. Through works like "My Last Duchess" and the epic narrative poem "The Ring and the Book," Browning explored fearlessly into the intricate recesses of the human mind, offering readers a nuanced understanding of characters and their motivations. His ability to adopt diverse voices and perspectives showcased a psychological depth that anticipated the modernist emphasis on individual consciousness.

"My Last Duchess," one of Browning's most celebrated monologues, unveils the psychology of a Renaissance duke as he narrates the story of his deceased wife. Browning skillfully uses the form to reveal layers of power, jealousy, and control, exploring the moral ambiguities inherent in human relationships. Similarly, "The Ring and the Book" presents a multi-narrative exploration of a murder trial, challenging traditional notions of truth and justice through its complex, subjective storytelling.

Browning's work reflected the Victorian fascination with the human psyche, a preoccupation heightened by the societal and technological transformations of the Industrial Revolution. As Victorian society grappled with unprecedented changes, Browning's exploration of the moral dilemmas and psychological intricacies of his characters resonated with readers facing similar ethical complexities.

In addition to his literary innovations, Browning's marriage to the poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning further solidified his place in Victorian literary history. The couple's exchange of passionate and intellectually engaging letters, collected in *Sonnets from the Portuguese* and *The Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, added a layer of personal and collaborative richness to their collective legacy.

Robert Browning's enduring influence lies not only in his contributions to Victorian literature but also in his anticipation of modernist themes. His dramatic monologues and psychological insights continue to captivate readers, offering a timeless exploration of the multifaceted nature of human experience amidst the societal upheavals of the Victorian era.

#### 4.2.7 Matthew Arnold

Matthew Arnold, a distinguished Victorian writer and cultural critic, emerged as a pivotal figure in the 19th-century literary landscape, contributing significantly to both poetry and prose. Born in 1822, Arnold's works grappled with the palpable tensions between faith and doubt, tradition and progress, making him a distinctive voice in an era characterised by profound societal changes.



Fig. 4.2.7 Matthew Arnold

Arnold's poetry, notably exemplified in "Dover Beach" and other reflective verses, stands as a poignant expression of his disillusionment with the waning of religious faith and the erosion of traditional values. "Dover Beach," in particular, captures a sense of melancholy and loss in the face of a changing world, symbolising the broader Victorian struggle with shifting belief systems. Arnold's poetic exploration of the evolving spiritual landscape resonated deeply with a society grappling with the uncertainties brought about by scientific advancements and cultural flux.

In addition to his poetry, Arnold's role as a cultural critic is evident in works like *Culture and Anarchy*. In this seminal essay, he articulated a nuanced perspective on the societal challenges profound impact on the evolution of English literature. Arnold advocated for the pursuit of intellectual and artistic excellence as a remedy for the moral and social ills plaguing Victorian society. He believed that the cultivation

of the mind and an appreciation for high culture could serve as a unifying force, countering the divisive influences of the age.

Arnold's cultural critique showcased his commitment to mitigating the societal fractures emerging in the face of progress. His writings reflect a deep concern for the moral health of the nation, emphasising the importance of culture and education in fostering social cohesion.

As a Victorian writer, Arnold's legacy endures as both a reflection of his time

and a timeless exploration of the enduring human quest for meaning and cultural cohesion. His contributions to literature and cultural criticism resonate with readers today, offering profound insights into the challenges of an era in transition and the ongoing dialogue between tradition and modernity. Arnold's ability to articulate the complexities of Victorian society solidifies his status as a literary luminary whose impact extends beyond his immediate historical context.

## Recap

- ◆ The Victorian era was a period of profound societal transformations
- ◆ Literature during this time served both as a reflection and a catalyst for change
- ◆ John Ruskin addressed economic inequality and dehumanising effects of industrialisation
- ◆ He advocated for the integration of art and morality
- ◆ Cardinal Newman explored faith and doubt in the Oxford Movement
- ◆ He examined religious conversion and tensions between faith and reason
- ◆ John Clare focused on nature and the impact of industrialisation on rural life
- ◆ He celebrated the simplicity and authenticity of rural life
- ◆ He provided a counterbalance to the mechanised world of Victorian England
- ◆ Alfred Lord Tennyson explored themes of grief, loss, and the impact of progress
- ◆ Robert Browning was known for dramatic monologues and psychological realism
- ◆ He explored complexities of human nature and moral ambiguities
- ◆ Matthew Arnold explored tension between faith and doubt
- ◆ He addressed societal challenges and the erosion of traditional values



## Objective Questions

1. Who is considered a towering figure in Victorian art criticism and social thought?
2. In which work does John Ruskin emphasise the transformative power of aesthetic pursuits?
3. Which figure, associated with the Oxford Movement, explored matters of faith and doubt in *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*?
4. What term is John Clare often referred to as?
5. In “Dover Beach,” Matthew Arnold expresses disillusionment with the decline of which element?
6. Who served as the Poet Laureate for much of Queen Victoria’s reign?
7. What form of poetry did Robert Browning specialise in?
8. Which work by Robert Browning explores the psychology of a Renaissance duke?
9. In *Culture and Anarchy*, Matthew Arnold advocates for the pursuit of what?
10. Which poet celebrated the simplicity of rural life in the face of industrialisation?
11. What is the central theme of Tennyson’s *In Memoriam*?
12. What does Ruskin critique in *Unto This Last*?
13. Which figure explored the spiritual journey in *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*?
14. Who advocated for the integration of art and morality?
15. In which work does Matthew Arnold critique the erosion of traditional values?

## Answers

1. John Ruskin
2. *Modern Painters*
3. Cardinal Newman
4. Peasant Poet
5. Religious faith



6. Alfred Lord Tennyson
7. Dramatic monologues
8. “My Last Duchess”
9. Intellectual and artistic excellence
10. John Clare
11. Loss and grief
12. Economic inequality
13. Cardinal Newman
14. John Ruskin
15. “Dover Beach”

## Self Assessment Questions

1. How did industrialisation influence Victorian literary themes?
2. Why did Victorian writers often discuss poverty and class inequality?
3. How did John Ruskin connect art, morality and social criticism?
4. What religious concerns are reflected in Cardinal Newman’s writings?
5. Why is John Clare important as a poet of rural life?
6. How does Tennyson’s poetry express grief and uncertainty?
7. What is a dramatic monologue, and why is Browning important in its development?
8. How does Matthew Arnold present the crisis of faith in Victorian society?
9. Why did the novel become an important literary form in the Victorian period?
10. How did Victorian literature help readers understand social change?

## Assignments

1. How did the social and economic changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution influence the themes and narratives in Victorian literature?
2. Evaluate the contributions of John Ruskin to Victorian literature, considering his influence on art criticism and social commentary.
3. Examine the role of John Clare as the “peasant poet” in Victorian literature.
4. Explore the literary innovations of Robert Browning, particularly his use of the dramatic monologue.
5. How did Arnold’s reflections on the changing spiritual landscape resonate with the broader societal challenges of his time?

## Suggested Reading

1. Bevis, Matthew, Ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Victorian Poetry*. Oxford UP, 2013.
2. Bristow, Joseph, Ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Poetry*. Cambridge UP, 2000.
3. Hilton, Tim. *John Ruskin: The Later Years*. Yale UP, 2000.
4. Tennyson, Alfred Lord. *In Memoriam*. Dover, 1995.



## UNIT

# Oxford Movement - Liberalism, Charles Dickens

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to,

- ◆ explain the historical and religious background of the Oxford Movement
- ◆ identify the major aims and features of the Oxford Movement, including High Church Anglicanism, ritualism and sacramental theology
- ◆ describe Victorian liberalism and its emphasis on individual liberty, representative democracy and social reform
- ◆ discuss the contributions of John Henry Newman, John Keble, Edward Pusey, John Stuart Mill and Thomas Hill Green
- ◆ analyse Charles Dickens as a writer who criticised social injustice and reflected liberal reformist concerns

### Prerequisite

This unit takes us into the religious and political debates of Victorian Britain. The Oxford Movement began in the 1830s as a response to fears that the Church of England was losing its spiritual authority and traditional practices. Its leaders wanted to revive the Catholic elements within Anglicanism. They valued ritual, sacraments, church authority and continuity with older Christian traditions. The movement also influenced literature and art by encouraging symbolism, medievalism and religious seriousness.

At the same time, liberalism became a major force in Victorian public life. It supported individual freedom, legal equality, representative government, civil liberties and reform. Liberal thinkers questioned old privileges and supported changes in education, labour laws and public health. Charles Dickens responded

to these social and moral issues through fiction. His novels exposed poverty, child labour, selfish institutions, legal delay and the suffering of ordinary people. This unit therefore brings together religion, politics and literature in the Victorian Age.

## Keywords

Oxford Movement, Victorian Literature, Liberalism, Charles Dickens, John Henry Newman

## Discussion

### 4.3.1 Oxford Movement

To grasp the significance of the Oxford Movement, it is imperative to navigate through the early 19th-century religious climate in Britain. The aftermath of the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars had left Europe in a state of political and social flux. This uncertainty permeated into the religious sphere, where the Church of England faced challenges from both within and outside. The Enlightenment had ushered in an era of skepticism, questioning traditional institutions, including the Church, and fostering an atmosphere ripe for theological reevaluation.

Amidst this backdrop, the Oxford Movement, also known as the Tractarian Movement, emerged as a response to perceived threats of secularisation and the dilution of traditional Anglican practices. Originating at the University of Oxford in the 1830s, the movement found its roots in a series of publications known as the Tracts for the Times. These tracts, spearheaded by a group of scholars, sought to reaffirm the theological and liturgical richness of the Church of England and reestablish its connection to pre-Reformation traditions.

At its core, the Oxford Movement sought to revive High Church Anglicanism, emphasising the Catholic elements within the Anglican tradition. This included a commitment to sacramental worship, liturgical richness, and an elevated role for the clergy.

The movement articulated a strong critique of the secularisation permeating society, emphasising the need for a robust religious presence in public life. The Tractarians saw secular influences as diluting the spiritual essence of the Church.

Ritualism and sacramental theology became defining features of the Oxford Movement. The Tractarians believed that through a renewed emphasis on rituals and sacraments, the Church could offer a more profound spiritual experience, countering the perceived spiritual emptiness of contemporary Anglicanism.

The Oxford Movement had a profound impact on ecclesiastical structures within the Church of England. The rise of ritualism and a return to more elaborate liturgical practices sparked controversies and divisions within the Church. This led to the rise of the Anglo-Catholic

movement, a more radical offshoot of the Oxford Movement that sought to align the Anglican Church even more closely with Catholic traditions.

Beyond ecclesiastical circles, the Oxford Movement left an indelible mark on Victorian literature and art. The emphasis on symbolism, ritual, and a connection to medieval traditions influenced writers and artists seeking to evoke a sense of spiritual transcendence. The works of poets like Gerard Manley Hopkins and artists associated with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood reflected the influence of the Oxford Movement in their exploration of religious themes and symbolic imagery.

#### **4.3.1.1 Key Figures in the Oxford Movement**

##### **John Henry Newman**

Central to the Oxford Movement was John Henry Newman, an influential figure whose intellectual prowess and theological insights played a pivotal role. Newman, an Anglican clergyman and fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, became the movement's key ideologue. His contributions to the Tracts for the Times articulated the principles of the movement, emphasising the continuity of the Anglican Church with the early Christian Church.

##### **John Keble**

Another luminary of the Oxford Movement was John Keble, a revered poet and theologian. His sermon titled *National Apostasy* (1833) marked the movement's inauguration, calling for a return to religious orthodoxy and condemning the erosion of spiritual values in the face of political and societal changes.

##### **Edward Pusey**

Edward Pusey, a scholar and theologian, added scholarly weight to the movement.

His commitment to upholding Catholic traditions within the Anglican Church and his academic influence made him a prominent figure within the Tractarian circle.

#### **4.3.2 Liberalism**

The rise of liberalism in the Victorian era was intricately connected to the political and economic transformations of the time. The Industrial Revolution, which began in the late 18th century and continued into the Victorian era, brought about unprecedented economic changes. Industrialisation led to urbanisation, the growth of the middle class, and an increase in wealth and social mobility. These shifts, coupled with the advent of parliamentary democracy, paved the way for the articulation and propagation of liberal ideas.

Liberalism emerged as a response to the restrictive political structures of the past, advocating for representative democracy, limited government intervention in the economy, and the protection of individual liberties. The political and economic landscape of Victorian Britain created fertile ground for the dissemination of liberal ideals as new social classes sought political representation and economic freedom.

Victorian liberalism was not merely an economic or political philosophy; it also encompassed a commitment to social reforms and the protection of individual rights. The era saw an increasing awareness of social inequalities and injustices resulting from industrialisation. Liberal thinkers argued for reforms in education, labour laws, and public health, aiming to address the adverse effects of rapid urbanisation.

The emphasis on individual rights became a cornerstone of Victorian





liberalism. Concepts such as personal freedom, equality before the law, and the protection of property rights gained prominence. This focus on individualism would have far-reaching consequences, influencing not only political and economic policies but also shaping societal attitudes and cultural norms.

Victorian liberalism posed a direct challenge to traditional sources of authority, including the monarchy, aristocracy, and established religious institutions. The liberal emphasis on individual autonomy and rights contradicted hierarchical structures that had long dominated political and social life.

Religious authority, in particular, faced challenges from liberal thought. As liberal ideas gained traction, individuals began to question the rigid doctrines and ecclesiastical control that characterised traditional religious institutions. This questioning of authority extended beyond the realms of politics and economics to touch upon deeply ingrained cultural and religious beliefs.

The impact of liberalism on society was marked by the expansion of civil liberties. The push for political reforms, including the extension of voting rights and the broadening of political participation, reflected a commitment to individual freedoms. The Reform Acts of 1832, 1867, and 1884 expanded suffrage, gradually dismantling the exclusivity of political power.

Moreover, the liberal commitment to freedom of thought and expression contributed to a more open and diverse public discourse. The era saw the growth of newspapers, periodicals, and literary works that engaged with a wide array of social and political issues, fostering a culture of intellectual inquiry and public debate.

The rise of liberalism in the Victorian era created tensions with conservative values, which emphasised tradition, hierarchy, and a cautious approach to change. Conservatives were wary of the rapid social and economic transformations spurred by liberal ideas, viewing them as threats to established norms and stability.

Conflicts between liberals and conservatives manifested in debates over issues such as parliamentary reforms, the extension of voting rights, and the role of the state in regulating economic activities. These tensions underscored the broader ideological struggle between progressivism and the preservation of traditional values.

The influence of liberalism also manifested itself in conflicts with religious institutions. As liberal ideas gained popularity, challenges to religious authority and dogma became more pronounced. Traditional religious teachings were scrutinised through a liberal lens that emphasised reason, individual conscience, and personal interpretation of faith.

The Oxford Movement, a religious revival within the Anglican Church, emerged partly in response to the perceived threats posed by liberalism to traditional religious doctrines. John Henry Newman, an influential figure in the Oxford Movement, sought to reinvigorate High Church Anglicanism as a response to what he saw as the erosion of religious orthodoxy in the face of liberal ideals.

#### **4.3.2.1 Victorian Liberal Thinkers**

##### **John Stuart Mill**

Among the foremost Victorian liberal thinkers, John Stuart Mill played a great role in articulating liberal ideas that extended beyond the realm of politics and economics. His seminal work, *On Liberty*,

published in 1859, expounded on the importance of individual freedom. Mill argued that the state should only intervene to prevent harm to others, championing the idea that individuals should have the liberty to pursue their own interests, beliefs, and lifestyle choices.

Mill's advocacy for women's rights, free speech, and the rejection of paternalistic government reflected the evolving liberal ethos of the time. His writings contributed significantly to the development of liberal thought in the Victorian era, influencing subsequent generations of thinkers and policymakers.

### Thomas Hill Green

While John Stuart Mill's liberalism focused on individual freedom, Thomas Hill Green introduced a distinctive variant known as "liberal socialism" or "ethical socialism." Writing in the late 19th century, Green argued that individual freedom could only be fully realised in a society where economic and social conditions allowed for the development of each individual's capabilities.

Green advocated for state intervention to address social inequalities and ensure that individuals had the necessary conditions for self-realisation. His ideas marked a departure from classical liberalism and laid the groundwork for future discussions on the relationship between individual rights and social responsibility.

### 4.3.3 Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens, an unparalleled figure in Victorian literature, crafted novels that transcended mere storytelling, serving as profound reflections on the societal changes and moral complexities of his era.

Dickens' novels are imbued with a deep sympathy for the impoverished and marginalised members of society. His characters often emerge from the lower strata of Victorian society, and Dickens' portrayal of their struggles reflects a keen awareness of the social inequalities perpetuated by both economic and religious structures. In works like *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield*, Dickens presents protagonists who navigate a world where poverty is often intertwined with moral virtue, challenging the prevailing notions of social hierarchy.

The Oxford Movement, with its emphasis on ritual and sacraments, stood in stark contrast to the realities faced by Dickens' characters. While the Oxford Movement sought to revitalise High Church Anglicanism, Dickens' focus on the poor and downtrodden underscored the dissonance between religious dogma and the pressing issues of social justice.

Dickens' critique of religious institutions is evident in his scathing portrayal of hypocritical characters and corrupt institutions. Characters like Mr. Pecksniff in *Martin Chuzzlewit* and the exploitative boarding school system in *Nicholas Nickleby* embody the hypocrisy Dickens observed within certain elements of organised religion. The dichotomy between professed religious morality and actual behavior becomes a recurring theme, challenging the ethical foundations of Victorian society.

In juxtaposing the grandiosity of religious institutions with the squalor experienced by his characters, Dickens critiques the disconnection between religious rhetoric and lived reality. This critique resonates with the broader societal shifts and challenges to established

norms, as seen in the Oxford Movement's attempts to bring about a religious renewal that often clashed with Dickens' vision of a just and compassionate society.

Dickens' novels serve as powerful instruments of social critique, laying bare the injustices perpetrated against the working class and the disenfranchised. In *Hard Times*, Dickens exposes the dehumanising effects of industrialisation and advocates for humane treatment of workers. The juxtaposition of utilitarian philosophy with the plight of characters like Stephen Blackpool reveals his concern for the human cost of societal progress.

The Oxford Movement, emerging within the context of societal changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, often found itself entangled in debates about the role of the Church in addressing social issues. Dickens' social commentary, while not aligned with the Oxford Movement's religious aims, shared a common concern for the well-being of the impoverished.

Dickens' novels are not mere condemnations of social ills; they also serve as calls to action for societal reform. In *A Tale of Two Cities*, Dickens explores the consequences of systemic injustice, advocating for a more equitable society. Through characters like Sydney Carton, who sacrifices himself for the greater good, Dickens underscores the potential for redemption and transformation.

Dickens' advocacy for social reform aligns with liberal ideals, particularly the push for legislative and societal changes that would address the root causes of poverty and inequality. The liberal emphasis on individual rights and social progress finds resonance in Dickens' narrative, although with his distinctive blend of sentimentality and realism.

While the Oxford Movement sought to reinforce religious dogma and uphold traditional sacraments, Dickens' works often depict a skepticism toward institutionalised religion. In *Bleak House*, the character of Harold Skimpole, who exploits his supposedly religious nature for personal gain, serves as a critique of those who manipulate faith for self-interest. Dickens suggests that a rigid adherence to religious dogma can lead to moral blindness and ethical decay.

This critique aligns with the broader Victorian discussions about the role of religion in a rapidly changing society. Dickens, in his portrayal of characters entangled in webs of religious hypocrisy, questions the efficacy of religious dogma as a moral compass, contributing to the ongoing discourse initiated by the Oxford Movement.

Dickens' novels, in their exploration of moral values, engage with the shifting ethical landscape of Victorian society. As the Oxford Movement sought to reaffirm traditional moral values within the Church, Dickens' narratives often presented a more nuanced view. Characters like Ebenezer Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* undergo moral transformations that emphasise the potential for personal redemption and the importance of empathy and compassion.

Dickens' exploration of moral values reflects a dynamic response to the challenges posed by a rapidly evolving society. The tension between tradition and change, a central theme in the Oxford Movement, is mirrored in Dickens' narratives as characters grapple with their own moral compasses amid societal upheaval.

## Recap

- ◆ Oxford Movement originated in the 1830s at the University of Oxford
- ◆ Also known as the Tractarian Movement
- ◆ Revival of High Church Anglicanism with emphasis on Catholic elements
- ◆ Critique of secular influences seen as diluting the spiritual essence of the Church
- ◆ Rise of ritualism and controversies within the Church
- ◆ Inspired Victorian literature and art, emphasising symbolism, ritual, and medieval traditions
- ◆ Poets like Gerard Manley Hopkins and artists of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood reflected its influence
- ◆ Key Figures in the Oxford Movement: John Henry Newman, John Keble, Edward Pusey
- ◆ Victorian Liberalism was a response to Industrial Revolution, urbanisation, and growth of the middle class
- ◆ The Liberalists advocated representative democracy, limited government intervention, and protection of individual liberties
- ◆ They addressed social inequalities through reforms in education, labor laws, and public health
- ◆ Placed emphasis on personal freedom, equality before the law, and protection of property rights
- ◆ Challenged monarchy, aristocracy, and established religious institutions
- ◆ Questioned rigid doctrines and ecclesiastical control, impacting cultural and religious beliefs
- ◆ Political reforms, including voting rights extension, contributed to the dismantling of exclusivity in political power
- ◆ Growth of diverse public discourse, fostering intellectual inquiry and debate
- ◆ Tensions between progressivism and the preservation of traditional values
- ◆ Conflicts over parliamentary reforms, voting rights, and state regulation of the economy
- ◆ Key Liberal Thinkers: John Stuart Mill, Thomas Hill Green
- ◆ Charles Dickens and his response to Oxford Movement and Liberalism

## Objective Questions

1. What is another name for the Oxford Movement?
2. In which university did the Oxford Movement originate?
3. What were the publications spearheading the Oxford Movement called?
4. What did the Oxford Movement seek to revive within the Anglican Church?
5. What were the defining features of the Oxford Movement?
6. Who was the key ideologue of the Oxford Movement?
7. Which luminary of the Oxford Movement was a revered poet and theologian?
8. What did Edward Pusey contribute to the Oxford Movement?
9. What did the Oxford Movement critique in society?
10. What movement emerged as a more radical offshoot of the Oxford Movement?
11. How did the Oxford Movement influence Victorian literature and art?
12. Who wrote a sermon titled *National Apostasy* that marked the inauguration of the Oxford Movement?
13. What political and economic changes paved the way for the rise of liberalism in the Victorian era?
14. What did Victorian liberalism advocate for in politics?
15. What did Victorian liberalism emphasise in addition to political and economic ideals?
16. Who was a prominent Victorian liberal thinker known for advocating individual freedom?
17. What did Thomas Hill Green introduce as a variant of liberalism?
18. In which work did John Stuart Mill expound on the importance of individual freedom?
19. What marked the expansion of civil liberties in Victorian society?
20. What did the Reform Acts of 1832, 1867, and 1884 accomplish?
21. What did liberalism pose a challenge to Victorian society?
22. What did the rise of liberalism lead to in Victorian society?



23. What did the Oxford Movement emerge partly in response to?
24. Who played a pivotal role in articulating liberal ideas in addition to political and economic policies?
25. How did Charles Dickens respond to the Oxford Movement and liberalism in his novels?

## Answers

1. Tractarian Movement
2. Oxford University
3. Tracts for the Times
4. High Church Anglicanism
5. Commitment to ritualism and sacramental theology
6. John Henry Newman
7. John Keble
8. Scholarly weight and commitment to Catholic traditions
9. Secularisation and Liberalism
10. Anglo-Catholic Movement
11. Emphasis on symbolism, ritual, and medieval traditions
12. John Keble
13. Industrial Revolution and French Revolution
14. Limited government intervention
15. Social inequalities
16. John Stuart Mill
17. Liberal socialism or ethical socialism
18. *On Liberty*
19. The Reform Act
20. Expansion of suffrage
21. Traditional sources of authority

22. Conservative values
23. Liberalism
24. John Stuart Mill
25. Offered a nuanced critique of societal ills and advocated for social reform

## Self Assessment Questions

1. Why did the Oxford Movement emerge in nineteenth-century Britain?
2. What is meant by High Church Anglicanism?
3. Why were the Tracts for the Times important?
4. What role did John Henry Newman play in the Oxford Movement?
5. How did the Oxford Movement respond to secularisation?
6. What were the main ideas of Victorian liberalism?
7. How did liberalism challenge older sources of authority?
8. Why is John Stuart Mill important in the history of liberal thought?
9. How did Charles Dickens use fiction to criticise social injustice?
10. In what ways do the Oxford Movement and liberalism represent different responses to Victorian change?

## Assignments

1. How did the social and economic changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution pave the way for the emergence of the Oxford Movement in the early 19th century.
2. Discuss the key principles and goals of the Oxford Movement, emphasising its role in reaffirming traditional Anglican practices.
3. Explore the impact of the Oxford Movement on ecclesiastical structures within the Church of England.

4. Investigate the impact of the Oxford Movement on Victorian literature and art.
5. Examine the ways in which the Oxford Movement responded to challenges from liberalism.

## Suggested Reading

1. Ward, Bernard. *The Oxford Movement: Its Principles and Leaders*. Longmans, 1897.
2. Chadwick, Owen. *The Spirit of the Oxford Movement: Tractarian Essays*. Cambridge UP, 1990.
3. Cornish, F. W. *The Oxford Movement: Twelve Years, 1833-1845*. Longmans, 1920.
4. House, Humphry. *Dickens and the Twentieth Century*. Michigan UP, 1914.



## UNIT

# Late Victorian Literature – Thomas Hardy, Oscar Wilde and G.B.Shaw

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to,

- ◆ explain the major features of late Victorian literature
- ◆ identify the social, political, scientific and cultural changes reflected in late Victorian writing
- ◆ discuss the themes of industrialisation, class tension, gender, crisis of faith, imperialism and modernity
- ◆ analyse the contributions of Thomas Hardy, Oscar Wilde and G. B. Shaw
- ◆ understand how late Victorian literature forms a bridge between Victorian traditions and modern literary concerns

### Prerequisite

Late Victorian literature belongs to a period of transition. Britain was still powerful, but many writers had begun to question the confidence of earlier Victorian society. Industrialisation, urban growth, scientific ideas, changing gender roles, imperial expansion and religious doubt created new tensions. Literature became a space where these anxieties were explored in bold and experimental ways.

Thomas Hardy presented rural life, class restrictions, social conventions and human suffering with realism and often with pessimism. Oscar Wilde challenged conventional morality through wit, aestheticism and the idea of “art for art’s sake.” G. B. Shaw used drama as a tool for social criticism and reform, addressing issues such as poverty, war, prostitution, marriage and class hypocrisy. Late Victorian writing also included the Aesthetic Movement, Decadent Movement, New Woman fiction, Gothic elements and early modern concerns. This unit helps

learners see how literature at the end of the nineteenth century prepared the way for twentieth-century modernism.

## Keywords

Industrialisation, Social issues, Aesthetic Movement, Crisis of faith, Influential writers

## Discussion

### 4.4.1 Late Victorian Literature

The late Victorian era witnessed a literary landscape shaped by profound social, political, and technological transformations. This period, characterised by the reign of Queen Victoria, marked the zenith of the British Empire and the confluence of various cultural currents. Late Victorian literature reflects the complex interplay of traditional values and the burgeoning influence of modernity. This unit explores the key features, themes, and notable authors of late Victorian literature, shedding light on how this era's literary works encapsulate the tumultuous transitions of the time.

Late Victorian literature is a mirror reflecting the multifaceted social realities of its time. The Industrial Revolution, urbanisation, and scientific advancements ushered in unprecedented changes. Authors grappled with the impact of industrialisation on society, depicting the struggles of the working class and the widening gap between the rich and poor. Novels like Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854) and Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* (1855) laid the groundwork for this exploration but continued to resonate in the late Victorian period.

Moreover, the era was marked by a growing awareness of social issues, with literature serving as a platform for commentary and critique. Thomas Hardy, in works like *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895), explored the harsh realities of rural life, exploring themes of fate and societal constraints. The portrayal of the 'fallen woman' in literature, as seen in novels like George Gissing's *The Odd Women* (1893), reflected changing attitudes toward gender roles and morality.

The late Victorian period witnessed a flourishing of literary experimentation, challenging conventional narrative forms and exploring new stylistic avenues. The aesthetic movement, characterised by an emphasis on 'art for art's sake,' emerged as a reaction against the utilitarian ethos of the time. Oscar Wilde, a prominent figure in this movement, crafted works like *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890), exploring the consequences of indulgence and the pursuit of beauty.

Similarly, the rise of the New Woman in society found expression in literature. Authors like Sarah Grand and Mona Caird addressed issues of female emancipation and autonomy in novels such as *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) and *The Daughters*



of *Danaus* (1894). These works challenged traditional gender norms and advocated for women's rights, foreshadowing the feminist movements of the 20th century.

The aesthetic evolution of late Victorian literature also witnessed the emergence of the decadent movement, marked by a fascination with the morbid and the taboo. Works like Arthur Machen's *The Great God Pan* (1894) and Aubrey Beardsley's illustrations for Wilde's *Salome* (1893) exemplify the decadent aesthetic, pushing the boundaries of societal norms and artistic expression.

Late Victorian literature grappled with a myriad of themes, reflecting the anxieties and preoccupations of the time. The crisis of faith and the erosion of religious certainties found resonance in literature. Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* and George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* (1876) explored characters struggling with their beliefs in the face of societal and personal challenges.

Moreover, the exploration of the supernatural and the Gothic persisted in late Victorian literature. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) tapped into fears of the unknown and the lurking threats of the 'other.' The novella format, popularised by writers like Henry James with works such as *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), provided a canvas for exploring psychological ambiguity and the intricacies of human consciousness.

The theme of imperialism and its moral implications also permeated late Victorian literature, reflecting the era's geopolitical dynamics. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) explored the dark underbelly of colonialism, questioning the supposed civilising mission of European powers. Rudyard Kipling's poems and stories, such as "The White Man's Burden" (1899), provided a voice

for imperialist sentiments, illustrating the complex attitudes toward empire.

Late Victorian literature boasted a constellation of influential and enduring voices, each contributing to the richness of the era. Thomas Hardy, often regarded as a transitional figure between Victorian and modern literature, encapsulated the spirit of the time in his novels, combining social realism with a deep exploration of human psychology.

Oscar Wilde, a flamboyant figure known for his wit and aesthetic sensibilities, left an indelible mark on late Victorian literature. His plays, such as *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895), showcased a sophisticated comedic style while addressing societal hypocrisies.

George Eliot, though an earlier Victorian writer, continued to influence late Victorian literature with her insightful depictions of human nature. Her exploration of moral dilemmas and psychological depth in works like *Middlemarch* (1871-72) resonated with the changing intellectual currents of the late Victorian period.

The prolific H.G. Wells, a pioneer in science fiction, contributed significantly to the literary landscape of the time. *The War of the Worlds* (1898) and *The Time Machine* (1895) exemplify Wells' ability to use speculative fiction as a lens to examine contemporary concerns, including the anxieties surrounding technological progress.

The late Victorian literature stands as a cultural palimpsest, revealing the intricate layers of a society in flux. The social realities, literary experimentation, and thematic preoccupations of the era coalesce to form a nuanced and diverse literary landscape. From the harsh depictions of industrialisation to the exploration of new aesthetic frontiers,

late Victorian literature encompasses the tensions and transformations that marked the transition from the 19th to the 20th centuries. As a testament to the enduring relevance of these works, late Victorian literature continues to be a source of inspiration and contemplation in the modern literary canon.

#### 4.4.1.1 Thomas Hardy

Thomas Hardy (1840–1928) was known for his novels, poetry, and short stories. His works often reflected the social, economic, and cultural changes occurring during the late 19th century in England.

Hardy's novels are characterised by a strong sense of realism. He depicted the lives of ordinary people in rural settings, capturing the harsh realities of the time. Naturalism, another literary movement of the late 19th century, is also evident in Hardy's works. His novels often explore the influence of environment and heredity on characters, and they frequently depict the struggle of individuals against fate.

Hardy's novels often critique the social and moral conventions of his time. He was critical of the rigid class structure and the changing rural landscape due to industrialisation and urbanisation. Class tensions, societal expectations, and the impact of modernisation are recurring themes in his works. For example, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* explore issues of class, morality, and the limitations placed on individuals by society. Hardy is often associated with a sense of pessimism and fatalism in his works. His characters often face tragic outcomes, and their lives are shaped by forces beyond their control. The deterministic worldview prevalent in Hardy's novels aligns with the broader intellectual currents of the late 19th century, influenced by scientific

advancements and the growing awareness of the complexities of the natural world.

The rural landscape of Wessex, a fictionalised region based on Hardy's native Dorset, plays a significant role in his writings. The landscape serves not only as a backdrop but also as an active force shaping the lives and destinies of his characters. Hardy's descriptive and evocative depictions of the natural world contribute to the overall atmosphere and mood of his works.

Hardy's exploration of themes such as sexuality, marriage, and the limitations imposed by societal norms challenged the conventional Victorian morality of his time. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* faced controversy for their frank treatment of sexual and societal issues.

#### 4.4.1.2 Oscar Wilde



Fig. 4.4.1 Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde (1854–1900) was indeed a prominent late Victorian writer known for his wit, flamboyant style, and social commentary. He played a significant role in the aesthetic and decadent movements of the late 19th century.

Wilde was associated with the Aesthetic Movement, which emphasised “art for art's sake.” This movement rejected the notion that art should have a moral or utilitarian purpose and instead celebrated

beauty, form, and individual expression. Wilde's own writings often reflected these aesthetic principles.

Wilde was renowned for his sharp wit and clever use of satire. His plays and writings are filled with humorous dialogue and satirical commentary on the social norms and values of Victorian society. *The Importance of Being Earnest* is a prime example of his comedic and satirical style.

While Wilde's works are often entertaining, they also carry a deeper layer of social critique. He used satire to expose the hypocrisy and superficiality of the Victorian upper class. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is a novel that explores themes of morality, decadence, and the consequences of a hedonistic lifestyle.

Wilde's personal life and his writings reflected a certain degree of individualism and nonconformity. He challenged societal norms and expectations, both in his writing and in his own life. His flamboyant personality and open defiance of traditional values ultimately led to his downfall.

Wilde faced legal troubles towards the end of his life due to his homosexuality, which was criminalised in Victorian England. His imprisonment and subsequent decline in health and reputation marked a tragic end to his career. Nevertheless, his legacy endured, and he became a symbol of artistic and personal freedom.

Wilde was known for his memorable epigrams—short, witty, and often paradoxical statements. His ability to inculcate complex ideas in succinct and humorous phrases has contributed to his enduring popularity.

#### 4.4.1.3 George Bernard Shaw

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) was indeed a prominent figure in late Victorian

literature. Although he lived well into the 20th century, his formative years as a writer and his initial literary successes occurred during the late Victorian period, which roughly spanned from the 1870s to the early 1900s.

Shaw was a prolific playwright, critic, polemicist, and essayist. He is best known for his plays, many of which challenged the social norms and conventions of his time. Some of his notable works from the late Victorian era include *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1893), a play that addressed the controversial topic of prostitution, and *Arms and the Man* (1894), a satirical comedy that mocked romanticised notions of war.

Shaw's writing often reflected the societal changes and intellectual currents of the late Victorian period. The era was marked by debates on social issues, the rise of the women's suffrage movement, and the questioning of traditional values. Shaw, with his keen wit and penchant for satire, engaged with these issues through his plays and essays.

One of the characteristics of late Victorian literature was a shift from the romantic idealism of the earlier Victorian period to a more critical and realistic examination of society. Shaw was at the forefront of this shift, challenging conventional morality and exploring the complexities of human behavior and relationships in his works.

It is important to note that Shaw was associated with the Fabian Society, a socialist organisation that advocated for gradual social reform. His political and social views were often reflected in his writings, and he used his platform to critique the prevailing economic and political systems of his time.

## Recap

- ◆ Late Victorian literature reflects the societal, political, and technological changes of the late 19th century
- ◆ The era was marked by the British Empire's zenith, cultural shifts, and the confluence of various influences
- ◆ Authors grappled with the impact of industrialisation, social issues, and changing gender roles
- ◆ Literary experimentation, including the aesthetic and decadent movements, challenged conventional narrative forms
- ◆ Themes encompassed the crisis of faith, the supernatural, imperialism, and societal anxieties
- ◆ Thomas Hardy's novels focused on rural life and societal changes
- ◆ They explored class tensions, morality, and the impact of modernisation
- ◆ Oscar Wilde was associated with the Aesthetic Movement, emphasising "art for art's sake"
- ◆ His works were known for wit, satire, and social critique
- ◆ George Bernard Shaw challenged social norms
- ◆ He was associated with the Fabian Society, advocating for social reform
- ◆ He explored societal changes, human behavior, and relationships

## Objective Questions

1. What characterised the late Victorian era in terms of literary landscape?
2. Which societal changes influenced late Victorian literature?
3. Name a novel by Charles Dickens that laid the groundwork for exploring the impact of industrialisation on society.
4. Who explored the harsh realities of rural life in works like *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*?
5. Which literary movement emerged as a reaction against the utilitarian ethos of the time?

6. Who wrote *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, exploring the consequences of indulgence and the pursuit of beauty?
7. Which movement was marked by a fascination with the morbid and the taboo?
8. Name a late Victorian novel that addressed issues of female emancipation and autonomy.
9. What themes did late Victorian literature often grapple with?
10. Whose work tapped into fears of the unknown and the threats of the 'other' in late Victorian literature?
11. In which fictionalised region based on Hardy's native Dorset do his novels often take place?
12. What literary movement is evident in Hardy's works, exploring the influence of environment and heredity on characters?
13. Which novels by Thomas Hardy faced controversy for their frank treatment of sexual and societal issues?
14. What recurring themes are explored in Hardy's novels?
15. What literary movement was Oscar Wilde associated with?
16. Which of Wilde's novels explores themes of morality, decadence, and the consequences of a hedonistic lifestyle?
17. What play by Wilde showcases a sophisticated comedic style while addressing societal hypocrisies?
18. In which play by Shaw does he address the controversial topic of prostitution?
19. Which organisation was Shaw associated with, advocating for gradual social reform?
20. Name a satirical comedy by Shaw that mocked romanticised notions of war.

## Answers

1. Profound social, political, and technological transformations
2. The Industrial Revolution, urbanisation, and scientific advancements
3. *Hard Times* (1854)



4. Thomas Hardy
5. The Aesthetic Movement
6. Oscar Wilde
7. The Decadent Movement
8. *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) by Sarah Grand
9. Crisis of faith, the supernatural, imperialism, and societal anxieties
10. Bram Stoker, with *Dracula* (1897)
11. Wessex
12. Naturalism
13. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*
14. Class tensions, societal expectations, and the impact of modernisation
15. The Aesthetic Movement
16. The Picture of Dorian Gray
17. *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)
18. *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1893)
19. The Fabian Society
20. *Arms and the Man* (1894)

## Self Assessment Questions

1. What major social changes influenced late Victorian literature?
2. How did late Victorian writers respond to industrialisation and urbanisation?
3. Why is Thomas Hardy considered a realist and naturalist novelist?
4. What role does Wessex play in Hardy's fiction?
5. How do *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* criticise social conventions?
6. What is meant by the Aesthetic Movement?
7. How did Oscar Wilde challenge Victorian morality and utilitarian values?
8. Why is *The Importance of Being Earnest* considered a social comedy?

9. How did G. B. Shaw use drama for social reform?
10. How does late Victorian literature prepare the ground for modern literature?

## Assignments

1. Discuss the impact of industrialisation on late Victorian literature.
2. How did late Victorian literature serve as a platform for commentary on social issues?
3. Discuss how Oscar Wilde challenges utilitarian ethos through his emphasis on 'art for art's sake'?
4. Evaluate the contributions of key late Victorian writers.

## Suggested Reading

1. David, Deirdre, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Literature*. Cambridge UP, 2014.
2. Doe, Jane. "Thomas Hardy: A Realist in Late Victorian Literature." *Literature in Transition, 1870-1900*. Ed. Robert Brown, Cambridge UP, 2023, pp. 145-165.
3. John, Juliet, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Victorian Literary Culture*. Oxford UP, 2016.
4. Smith, Mary. "Oscar Wilde: Aestheticism and Satire." *Decadence and its Discontents*. Ed. David Johnson, Routledge, 2023, pp. 210-230.
5. Johnson, David. "George Bernard Shaw: Challenging Victorian Morality." *Voices of Social Criticism*. Ed. Sarah Davis, Palgrave, 2023, pp. 75-95.



# Socialist Movement and Post Modernism



# UNIT

## Ideology and Practice: Fabian Socialism and Labour Party

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the meaning of socialism in the British historical context
- ◆ describe the growth of British socialism from the nineteenth century onwards
- ◆ identify the role of Robert Owen, Christian Socialists, Chartists, William Morris, Fabian thinkers and labour activists in shaping socialist thought
- ◆ explain the aims and methods of Fabian Socialism
- ◆ trace the emergence of the Labour Representation Committee and the Labour Party
- ◆ evaluate the importance of democratic socialism in Britain

### Prerequisite

Think about the problems created by industrial capitalism: factory labour, low wages, class inequality, poverty, unemployment and unequal access to political power. Socialism developed as a response to such problems. It questioned whether wealth and production should remain under the control of a few individuals, and argued for greater social justice, collective welfare and protection of workers.

In Britain, socialism did not grow in only one form. Robert Owen tried to improve workers' lives through factory reform, education and cooperation. Christian Socialists linked religion with social responsibility. Chartists demanded political rights for working-class people. Later, the Fabian Society promoted gradual, peaceful and democratic methods of reform instead of violent revolution. The Labour Party grew from trade union demands, socialist groups

and the need for working-class representation in Parliament. This unit helps learners understand how socialism in Britain became connected with democracy, welfare and parliamentary politics.

## Keywords

Socialism, Chartist Movement, Fabianism, Labour Representation Committee, Labour Party

## Discussion

The making of British Socialism examines the creation of socialist projects in Victorian mass literacy and popular politics from 1880 to 1900. The Victorian context saw Enlightenment and romanticism transform early political thought, leading to a culture dominated by liberalism and evangelicalism. By the 1870s, people broke with evangelicalism and adopted ethical positivism and immanentist theologies. British socialism emerged as a response to these dilemmas, combining fellowship with calls for societal improvement. Marxists emphasized republican traditions and a popular democracy, while William Morris incorporated romanticism and Protestantism, seeking self-realization through naturalness and harmony.

The making of British Socialism examines the background, thought, and politics of early Marxists, including Morris's purism and James Bronterre O'Brien. These early members, followers of James Bronterre O'Brien, believed in political action to create a democratic state for social reforms. The republican inheritance of many Marxists led to a commitment to radical democracy, contributing to their marginal and oppositional role in British socialism. The Fabian Society, which broke away from the

Fellowship of the New Life and rejected Marxism and anarchism, reworked liberal radicalism to respond to the collapse of classical economics. Ethical socialism emerged in the late nineteenth century, focusing on personal transformation and communal utopianism. The intersections between this type of socialism and a new anarchism are explored.

This is an evaluation of the evolution and growth of the socialist movements in England as a whole. Let's now talk about the specifics of the socialist movements in England.

### 5.1.1 British Socialism

Socialism in the United Kingdom dates back to the 19th century, with roots in the aftermath of the English Civil War. The Reformation occurred later in Britain than in most of mainland Europe, with liberal thinkers like Thomas More becoming prominent. The emergence of radical Puritans, who wanted to reform both religion and the nation, led to the violent social revolution known as the English Civil War. During the war, several proto-socialist groups emerged, including the Levellers, who advocated electoral reform, universal trial by jury, progressive taxation, and the abolition of





the monarchy and aristocracy. However, these groups were strongly opposed by Oliver Cromwell's government.

The Industrial Revolution began in the UK over thirty years before the rest of the world, leading to the transition from a farming economy to an industrial one. Robert Owen, a Welsh radical, was credited with the birth of British Socialism by stopping employing children under the age of ten and improving working and living conditions for workers. Trade unions gradually developed from the medieval guild system, with attempts to set up national general unions in 1830.

Christian socialism played a significant role in the development of trade unions and British socialism. The rise of Non-Conformist religions, particularly Methodism, played a significant role in the development of trade unions and British socialism. The first group called the Christian Socialists formed in 1848, mainly consisting of Chartists. The Chartist movement of the 1830s and 1840s was the first mass revolutionary movement of the British working-class, demanding universal suffrage, secret ballots, property qualifications, salaries, electoral districts, and annual elected parliaments.

#### **5.1.1.1 Robert Owen**

Robert Owen, a Welsh textile manufacturer, philanthropist, and social reformer, founded utopian socialism and the co-operative movement. He aimed to improve factory working conditions, promote experimental socialistic communities, and seek a more collective approach to child-rearing, including government control of education. Owen gained wealth in the early 1800s from a textile mill in New Lanark, Scotland, and later moved to America to establish an experimental socialistic community

in New Harmony, Indiana. He continued to champion the working class, develop co-operatives, and support child labor legislation and free co-educational schools.

Robert Owen, a pioneer in factory reform, supported youth education and early child care, offering an alternative to authoritarian approaches. He believed that children raised under his system were more graceful, genial, and unconstrained. Owen's philosophy was influenced by Sir Isaac Newton's views on natural law and philosophers like Plato, Denis Diderot, and Claude Adrien Helvétius. He founded nursery schools and supported factory legislation, adopting new principles to improve goods production. Owen's work influenced British socialism and unionism, setting an example for others to change the status quo.

Owen aimed for a harmonious environment, promoting mutual respect, love, and moral values. He valued social and educational reforms for the middle class and rejected capitalist power. Owen funded schools, advocated for free education, equal rights, and freedom, and participated in legislation to improve laborers' wages and working conditions. Critics view Owen as a dictator and blasphemer of Christianity.

Owen began experimenting with communal living in the United States in 1825, with his most ambitious project being the New Harmony, Indiana, and experiment. He sought support from American thinkers, reformers, intellectuals, and public statesmen, and convinced William Maclure to join him at New Harmony. Maclure's involvement attracted scientists, educators, and artists, turning the New Harmony community into a center for educational reform, scientific research, and artistic expression.

However, his grand plan was never fully realized, and Owen returned to Britain to continue his work.

In 1828, Robert Owen became the center of his work in London, promoting industrial equality, free education, and living conditions in factory towns. He opened the National Equitable Labour Exchange system and briefly led the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union before its collapse in 1834. Owen's secular views gained influence among the working classes, but the Co-operative movement collapsed by 1846. In 1854, Owen converted to spiritualism, introducing it to England through Maria B. Hayden. His spirit dictated the "Seven Principles of Spiritualism," which were used by the National Union's religious philosophy. Owen's influence declined as he grew older and more radical.

#### **5.1.1.2 Chartist Movement**

Chartism was a working-class movement for political reform in the United Kingdom, originating from the People's Charter of 1838. It was a national protest movement with strongholds in Northern England, the East Midlands, the Staffordshire Potteries, the Black Country, and the South Wales Valleys. The movement was fiercely opposed by government authorities, who eventually suppressed it. It relied on constitutional methods to secure its aims, with some becoming involved in insurrectionary activities.

The People's Charter called for six reforms to make the political system more democratic: a vote for every man aged 21 years and above, secret ballot protection, no property qualification for MPs, payment of members, equal constituencies, and annual parliamentary elections. Chartism eventually adopted

the first five reforms. It attracted support beyond radical political groups for economic reasons, such as opposing wage cuts and unemployment. The movement's origins can be traced back to the founding of the London Working Men's Association in 1836 and the Carmarthen Working Men's Association in Wales in 1836.

Chartism emerged in the 1830s and 1840s, with periodicals like the Poor Man's Guardian, Northern Star, and Leeds General Advertiser serving as important sources of news and information. In 1837, six MPs and six working men, including William Lovett, formed a committee to publish the People's Charter, which set out the movement's six main aims: giving working men a say in lawmaking, allowing them to vote, being protected by a secret ballot, and standing for election to the House of Commons. Chartism was launched in 1838 through large-scale meetings in Birmingham, Glasgow, and the north of England. The movement organized a National Convention in London in 1839 to present the first petition, which was signed by 1.3 million working people. Several outbreaks of violence ensued, leading to arrests and trials. Chartists began organizing physical force, with secret cells set up and covert meetings held in the Chartist Caves at Llangynidr. The Newport Rising, led by John Frost, resulted in the movement's downfall, with the hotel occupied by armed soldiers.

In 1842, the Great Depression led to a wave of strikes in 14 English and 8 Scottish counties, primarily in the Midlands, Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, and the Strathclyde region of Scotland. The strikes were a subject of controversy, with some historians referring to them as "the Chartist Insurrection" and others as "the General Strike." The unrest began in the Potteries of Staffordshire and spread to



Cheshire, Lancashire, Scotland, and West Yorkshire. The government deployed soldiers to suppress violence, but the strikers eventually stopped working. The state faced resistance from the Chartist movement, leading to the arrest of several leaders, including O'Connor, George Julian Harney, and Thomas Cooper. The Pottery Riots resulted in hundreds of incarcerated individuals, with 116 men and women in prison. Chartist activity continued, with O'Connor suggesting land as the solution to workers' problems. The Chartist Co-operative Land Company, later called the National Land Company, was ordered to be shut down by Parliament.

### 5.1.2 Fabian Socialism

The Fabian Society is a British socialist organization that aims to advance social democracy and democratic socialism through gradualist and reformist efforts in democracies, rather than revolutionary overthrow. It was historically related to radicalism and has had a powerful influence on British politics. The Fabian Society was founded in 1884 in London as an offshoot of The Fellowship of the New Life, which had been a precursor to British Ethical and humanist movements. Early members included Victorian elite poets Edward Carpenter, John Davidson, sexologist Havelock Ellis, and early socialist Edward R. Pease. The Fabian Society advocated the renewal of Western European Renaissance ideas and their promulgation worldwide. The Society was dissolved in 1899, but it grew to become a leading academic society in the United Kingdom during the Edwardian era. The Fabian Society's logo, a tortoise, represented the group's preference for a slow, imperceptible transition to socialism, while its coat of arms, a 'wolf in sheep's clothing,' represented its preferred methodology for achieving its goal.

The Fabian Society was a left-wing thinker group that aimed to educate, agitate, and organize left-wing thinkers in the late Victorian era. The society played a significant role in the rise of socialist activity in Britain, with the publication of the landmark Fabian Essays in the 1880s. The early Fabians rejected violent upheaval as a method of change and preferred local government and trade unionism to transform society. The Fabian Society played a significant role in parliamentary politics, participating in the foundation of the Labour party in 1900. Beatrice and Sidney Webb were key figures in developing Fabian thinking and research methodology, particularly their 1909 Minority Report to the Commission of the Poor Law, which laid the foundation for the modern welfare state. Despite their radical views, the Fabians held racist prejudices and differed on the role of the British Empire.

The Fabian Society attracted prominent socialist figures like George Bernard Shaw, Annie Besant, Graham Wallas, Charles Marson, Sydney Olivier, Oliver Lodge, Ramsay MacDonald, and Emmeline Pankhurst. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, who wrote studies on industrial Britain, contributed to the formation of the Labour Representation Committee in 1900. The Fabian Society's membership tripled from 1903 to 1908, with half in London. In 1912, the University Socialist Federation (USF) was established, with over 500 members by World War I.

#### 5.1.2.1 Political Views

The early Fabians were advocated for social justice and reforming the British Empire's foreign policy. They lobbied for a minimum wage, universal healthcare, and the abolition of hereditary peerages. Fabian socialists also supported women's emancipation and suffrage movements in

Britain and internationally. They criticized Gladstonian liberalism for its individualism at home and internationalism abroad. The Society produced Fabianism and the Empire, the first statement of its views on foreign affairs, drafted by Bernard Shaw and incorporating the suggestions of 150 Fabian members.

The Second Generation of Fabians, including writers R. H. Tawney, G. D. H. Cole, and Harold Laski, continued to be a major influence on socialist thought. They believed that each man should have power according to his knowledge and capacity, and that a truly aristocratic Socialism, controlled by duty and wisdom, is the next step upwards in civilization.

Fabian thought was exposed to future leaders of the Third World, such as Jawaharlal Nehru, who framed economic policy for India on Fabian socialism lines. Nehru's Fabian ideas committed India to an economy in which the state owned, operated, and controlled means of production, particularly in key heavy industrial sectors. Private activity, property rights, and entrepreneurship were discouraged or regulated through permits, nationalization of economic activity and high taxes were encouraged, rationing, control of individual choices, and the Mahalanobis model considered by Nehru as a means to implement the Fabian Society version of socialism.

In the Middle East, the Fabian Society's intellectual movement inspired the Ba'athist vision, which led the state to control big industry, transport, banks, internal and external trade, and direct the course of economic development with the ultimate aim of providing a guaranteed minimum standard of living for all. Michel Aflaq, widely considered the founder of the Ba'athist movement, was a Fabian socialist, and his ideas, along with

those of Salah al-Din al-Bitar and Zaki al-Arsuzi, came to fruition in the Arab world in the form of dictatorial regimes in Iraq and Syria. In October 1940, the Fabian Society established the Fabian Colonial Bureau to facilitate research and debate British colonial policy. Fabian academics of the late 20th century included political scientist Sir Bernard Crick, economists Thomas Balogh and Nicholas Kaldor, and sociologist Peter Townsend. The Fabian Society has been influential in British politics since the 20th century. It has become a networking and discussion organization for younger activists.

#### **5.1.2.2 Political Thinkers**

Fabian theory pioneers Shaw and Sidney Webb advocated for permeation strategy, but differed on the most appropriate target. Webb believed unconscious socialism had already occurred through public control of services, while Shaw aimed to influence the mainstream Liberal Party. Despite Webb's intention to create a new party, Shaw pressed for it to inspire radicals and eventually merge with socialist activists in Great Britain to form a left-wing party. Some ideas, like David Ricardo's rent theory and Sidney Webb's pragmatism, became less prominent as Fabians shifted towards more coherent socialist or social-democratic thinking.

**Thomas Davidson and the Fabian Society:** Thomas Davidson, a Scottish naturalist and paleontologist, was an authority on lamp shells, a phylum of bottom-dwelling marine invertebrates. He was a master in several English schools and was instrumental in founding "The Fellowship of the New Life," which had branches in London and New York. Davidson's philosophy, apeirotheism, was a form of pluralistic idealism coupled with ethical rigorism. He argued that Aristotle's





Nous identified God with rational thought, and that God could not exist apart from the world. The Fabian Society, established in 1884, was a branch of Davidson's Fellowship of the New Life, named after Fabius Cunctator. Although Davidson shared no sympathies with Fabianism, the society was a significant contribution to the understanding of the world and the human soul.

**George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) and the Fabian Society:** George Bernard Shaw, an Irish playwright, critic, polemicist, and political activist, was a prominent figure in Western theatre, culture, and politics from the 1880s to his death. He wrote over sixty plays, including major works like *Man and Superman*, *Pygmalion*, and *Saint Joan*. Shaw was the leading dramatist of his generation and was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1925. Shaw's interest in economics and the Social Democratic Federation (SDF) led him to join the Fabian Society, where he published Fabian Tract No. 2. Shaw's political ideas changed, moving away from Marxism and becoming an apostle of gradualism. He rejected anarchism and permeation, arguing that socialism could best be achieved through infiltration of people and ideas into existing political parties. Despite its small size, the Fabian Society's message of moderation gained prominence in 1889 with the publication of *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, edited by Shaw. In 1890, Shaw produced Tract No. 13, *What Socialism Is*, which emphasized the constitutional nature of socialism through democratic institutions.

**Sidney James Webb:** He was a British socialist, economist, and reformer who co-founded the London School of Economics. He was an early member of the Fabian Society and contributed to its development. Webb wrote the pro-nationalisation Clause IV for the British

Labour Party and was appointed Professor of Public Administration in 1912. The Webbs, known for their Fabian Socialism, significantly influenced British radical thought and institutions in the first half of the 20th century. Their influence is debated due to their uninterest in directing institutions and their ideas being taken up by others. Their complementary gifts, such as Sidney's mastery of facts and publications and Beatrice's insight, contributed to their effectiveness as a partnership. Their contentment with each other and their chosen life pattern was significant, but their ability and record of disinterested public service were unquestioned.

**Graham Wallas,** a British educator, public official and political scientist, was a prominent figure in the development of an empirical approach to studying human behavior. He studied at Oxford and joined the Fabian Society in 1886. Wallas resigned from the executive committee in 1895 and from the society in 1904. He served as a university extension lecturer and later became a university professor of political science at the University of London in 1914. His writings reflected optimism and skepticism towards social problems, and he critiqued contemporary social science for not being sufficiently scientific.

The early Fabians, led by Webb, sought a new party, but a minority, led by Besant, focused on Liberal politicians. The Fabians agreed on a single strategy at the local level and went their separate ways at the national level. In the early 1890s, socialism expanded rapidly, with the Fabians attracting large numbers of new recruits. The London Fabian Society grew from a hundred and seventy-three members in 1890 to six hundred and forty members in 1893. The new Fabians formed local organisations that constituted



the nucleus of the future I.L.P. Support for a new party reached new levels within the Society.

Webb opposed such a party, while Shaw continued to support the idea of such a party, insisting on certain conditions only because he saw them as essential if such a party were to prove workable. Shaw sympathised with the desire of the new Fabians for an independent party and believed that the permeation game had played out, turning Radicals away from the Liberal leaders. However, Shaw warned that there was still a difficulty of political organization, as there were few constituencies in which the Working Classes were politically organized enough to take the overwhelming lead in politics.

The Fabians adopted Shaw's proposals as their manifesto for the general election of 1892. They supported Tillett as a labour candidate in Bradford because they believed he had a chance of victory, but they backed Morley against a labour candidate in Newcastle because they thought the latter wrong to stand as his cause was hopeless and he would split the progressive vote. Shaw defined permeation as much in terms of local flexibility as in terms of agitation within the Liberal Party to attract the Radicals.

As the Bradford Conference of January 1893 approached, Shaw felt some trepidation as a new party might undermine local flexibility. His main concern was the fourth clause of the independent labour group in Manchester, which pledged members not to vote for any candidate associated with the Liberals, Liberal Unionists, or Conservatives. He also feared that a Tory plot lay behind the Bradford Conference, as Burns had become a respected Liberal and played on Shaw's suspicions.

The revisionist critique of the Fabians

assumes that all Fabians believed like Webb, but the beliefs and actions of Fabians like Shaw undermine this claim. They did not remain absorbed in high politics, and their politics did not focus on an elite. They were not wedded to the Liberal Party and hostile to the I.L.P., as they saw permeation as a way to lure Radicals away from Liberal politicians. The oversimplification of the revisionists' analysis of the Fabians' political strategy suggests an oversimplification in the dichotomy between nineteenth-century and twentieth-century politics. Fabians like Shaw saw Radicalism as a diluted form of socialism that expressed the interests of workers in their fight with monopolists. They also identified socialism with both their upbringing Radicalism and the interests of the workers. This suggests that many British socialists did not break with the Radical tradition but rather draw on it for their understanding of the working-class, their interests, political strategy, and the socialist ideal itself.

### 5.1.3 Labour Party

A coalition of social democrats, democratic socialists, and labour activists has been referred to as the Labour Party, a political party in the United Kingdom. Political and economic democracy is supported by socialism's social, political, and economic philosophy known as social democracy. With a focus on economic democracy, workplace democracy, and employees' self-management within a market socialist economy or an alternative form of a decentralised planned socialist economy, democratic socialism is a left-wing political philosophy that favours political democracy and some form of a socially owned economy. On the political spectrum, the Labour Party is situated in the center-left. Since 1922, Labour has either been in power or served as

the Official Opposition in every general election.

The party was established in 1900, emerging from the 19th-century socialist and trade union movements. It formed two minority governments under Ramsay MacDonald in the 1920s and the early 1930s, surpassing the Liberal Party to become the main opposition to the Conservative Party. The National Health Service and the welfare state were established by Clement Attlee's Labour government from 1945 to 1951 after Labour participated in the wartime coalition from 1940 to 1945. From 1964 to 1970 and 1974 to 1979, Labour once more held power under Harold Wilson and James Callaghan.

#### **5.1.3.1 Background**

The Labour Party originated in the late 19th century, with the urban proletariat increasing and the franchise being extended to working-class males. Trade union members sought political representation, and the Liberal Party supported trade-union candidates. Small socialist groups, such as the Independent Labour Party, the Fabian Society, the Social Democratic Federation, and the Scottish Labour Party, linked the movement to political policies. British socialism made headway in local government, with the Progressive Party controlling London County Council in 1889. The Women's Labour League established a child welfare clinic in Kensington before World War I. Fred Jowett, a member of the Independent Labour Party, became the first socialist to be elected to Bradford City Council in 1892. He passed important reforms, such as providing free school meals and improving the quality of food in Bradford Workhouse. In 1898, West Ham borough became the first Labour council, enlarging the municipal workforce and introducing

minimum wage, workday, and annual holiday. The Independent Labour Party faced a narrow majority in the 1895 General Election, with Keir Hardie arguing that joining other left-wing groups was necessary for success in parliamentary elections.

#### **5.1.3.2 Labour Representation Committee**

In 1899, Thomas R. Steels, a member of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, proposed a conference to form a Labour group in Parliament. The conference was held on 26 and 27 February 1900, attended by a broad spectrum of working-class and left-wing organisations. The 129 delegates passed Hardie's motion to establish a distinct Labour group in Parliament, creating the Labour Representation Committee (LRC). The LRC had no single leader, and in the absence of one, Independent Labour Party nominee Ramsay MacDonald was elected as Secretary.

The 1901 Taff Vale Case, a dispute between strikers and a railway company, boosted support for the LRC. The Conservative Government of Arthur Balfour's apparent acquiescence to industrial and business interests intensified support for the LRC against a government that appeared to have little concern for the industrial proletariat and its problems. In the 1906 election, the LRC won 29 seats, thanks to a secret 1903 pact between Ramsay MacDonald and Liberal Chief Whip Herbert Gladstone.

In 1906, the Labour Party adopted the name "The Labour Party" formally, with Keir Hardie as Chairman. The Independent Labour Party (ILP) provided much of its activist base, and the Fabian Society provided intellectual stimulus for the party. Labour's influence in the passage of Liberal welfare reforms was

the result of an informal Labour-Liberal alliance established in the run-up to the general election of 1906. Labour helped pass Britain's first national pension law in 1908 and the National Insurance Act 1911, providing National Insurance for both health and unemployment.

The Labour Party emerged from the union movement after 1890 and formed an alliance with the Liberal Party, allowing cross-support in elections and a small labour contingent in Parliament. This arrangement was temporary until the 1920s, when the Labour Party was strong enough to act independently. Social factors such as secularized elementary education, "New Unionism," and new leisure-time activities attracted young voters, while the 1918 electoral reforms and passing of older Liberal-oriented age cohorts allowed Labour to supplant the Liberals. The 1910 election saw 42 Labour MPs elected to the House of Commons, a significant victory due to the Osborne judgment ruling that Trades Unions could no longer donate money to fund election campaigns and wages. By 1913, the Liberal government passed the Trade Disputes Act, allowing Trade Unions to fund Labour MPs once more. By 1914, there were around 420 Labour representatives sitting on municipal councils, focusing on education, work for the unemployed, the eight-hour workday, the Fair Wages Clause, and fair wages and conditions for local authority employees. House-building became a main plank in the Labour municipal platform.

#### **5.1.3.3 "Labour and the New Social Order"**

Henderson adopted Sidney Webb's "Labour and the New Social Order" policy, promoting a socialist party with a minimum living standard, nationalization of industry, and heavy taxation. In 1918, Clause IV was adopted, committing Labour

to common ownership of production, distribution, and exchange. The Labour Party should consider the problem of reconstruction after the war and critique the current government's preparations. Their detailed proposals follow firmly held principles, ensuring a comprehensive approach to the reconstruction process.

The Labour Party believes that the reconstruction after the war should focus on Britain's society itself, rather than individual workers or statesmen. Count Okuma, a Japanese statesman, views the conflict as the death of European civilization. The Labour Party acknowledges that the present world catastrophe is the culmination and collapse of a distinctive industrial civilization, which workers will not seek to reconstruct. The war is consuming not only the security, homes, livelihood, and lives of millions of innocent families but also the very basis of the peculiar social order in which it has arisen. The individualist system of capitalist production, based on private ownership and competitive administration of land and capital, may have received a death blow, with its greed, profiteering, wage-slavery, and inequality.

The Labour Party's policy focuses on a systematic and comprehensive plan for social rebuilding, based on the Democratic control of society in all its activities. The four Pillars of the House are: (a) The Universal Enforcement of the National Minimum; (b) The Democratic Control of Industry; (c) The Revolution in National Finance; and (d) The Surplus Wealth for the Common Good. The Labour Party's primary principle is securing all requisites of healthy life and worthy citizenship for every member of the community, regardless of their circumstances. The Labour Party also stands for the universal application of the Policy of the National Minimum, which has gained support from



enlightened statesmen and economists. The party insists that the government's obligation to find suitable employment for all men and women is to find suitable work at Standard Rates. The government can arrange public works and orders of National Departments and Local Authorities to maintain the aggregate demand for labor in the whole kingdom at a uniform level from year to year.

The Labour Party argues that the government must provide adequate maintenance to workers in the interest of the community, regardless of their age, health, or previous occupation. They advocate for democracy in industry and government, demanding the progressive elimination of private capitalist control and setting free all who work for the community. The Labour Party opposes the abandonment of British industry to private employers focused on profiteering. They advocate for a scientific reorganization of the nation's industry, based on the Common Ownership of the Means of Production and the equitable sharing of resources among all participants.

The Labour Party also supports immediate nationalisation of railways, mines, and electrical power production. They believe that the key to temperance reform is removing the manufacture and retailing of alcoholic drinks from the hands of those who profit from promoting consumption. The Labour Party opposes centralization and bureaucracy and aims to give the fullest possible scope to democratically elected local governing bodies in all branches of social reconstruction. They also advocate for the extension of municipal and county councils' enterprises in housing, planning, parks, libraries, music, and recreation. The most important function of local authorities is the administration of

education, with a genuine nationalisation of education being the first step to social reconstruction.

The Labour Party is advocating for a revolution in national finance, focusing on a system that will generate all necessary revenue for the government without compromising the minimum standard of life for any family. They reject proposals for a Protective Tariff, which would burden consumers with unnecessarily enhanced prices. Instead, they propose direct taxation of incomes above the necessary cost of family maintenance and the direct taxation of private fortunes both during life and at death. The Income Tax and Super-tax should be reformed in assessment and collection, allowances, and differentiation to make the real sacrifice of all taxpayers as nearly as possible equal.

The Labour Party also proposes a "Conscription of Wealth" – a special Capital Levy to pay off a substantial part of the entire National Debt. This capital levy should be chargeable like the Death Duties on all property, but with exemptions for small-est savings. The Surplus for the Common Good is the main Pillar of the House, which will be used to find new capital for the perpetual improvement and increase of various enterprises, without relying on usury-exempting financiers.

The Labour Party's vision for the future is to repudiate imperialism and non-interventionism, focusing on local autonomy, home rule, respect for the rights of each people, and friendly cooperation among all peoples of the world. They believe that the British Empire should be maintained and developed on the lines of Local Autonomy and Home Rule All Round, respecting the rights of each people, and fostering cooperation among all members of the British Alliance.



### 5.1.4 Democratic Socialism in England

Parliamentary structures were created in England, which helped socialism advance. England adapted to the times and achieved a compromise between socialism and democracy. Socialism was permitted to develop without the need for a violent uprising. Democracy accepted the emergence of social values.

In Britain, there was no need for widespread worker uprisings against the government because the government was already acting to advance their interests. In contrast to Russia and China, where the governments neglected the needs of the poor and sought to repress them, British soil was conducive to the development of democratic socialism. Due to the rise of revolutionary socialism, the government was overthrown.

Democratic socialism lacks a high priest, Marx, or Lenin, and its influence is attributed to influential thinkers like Robert Owen, Sidney Webb, and Harold Laski. The philosophy remains undefined, as it is a broad framework that varies across countries based on political background

and cultural heritage. However, certain broad principles of democratic socialism can be identified.

Democratic Socialism emphasizes the importance of society's larger interests over individual interests, promoting cooperation and community welfare. It opposes individualism and laissez-faire, promoting economic equality and equitable opportunities for all. It advocates for common ownership of production for common good and grants full civil, political, and economic rights. Democratic socialism extends democracy beyond politics and economic fields, allowing individuals to lead their own way without external intervention. It opposes private property, which can be exploited for exploitation, and allows small plots of land and houses for limited purposes. Unlike anti-capitalism, democratic socialism does not involve exploitation, injustice, or denial of opportunities. It has been successful in eliminating communism from British politics and providing an alternative to extremes like communism and capitalism in developing countries.

## Recap

- ◆ The making of British Socialism
- ◆ Development of socialist projects from 1880 to 1900
- ◆ Enlightenment and romanticism transformed early political thought
- ◆ Culture dominated by liberalism and evangelicalism
- ◆ 1870s - people adopted ethical positivism and immanentist theologies
- ◆ British socialism as response to these dilemmas





- ◆ Incorporates Marxists, Marxists, and William Morris
- ◆ The Industrial Revolution in the UK
- ◆ Birth of British Socialism - Robert Owen and Christian socialism in trade unions.
- ◆ Chartism & The Fabian Society
- ◆ The Labour Party emerged in late 19th century
- ◆ Coalition of social democrats, democratic socialists, and labour activists

## Objective Questions

1. When were the Christian Socialists formed?
2. Who were the pioneers of Fabian Theory?
3. Who proposed the formation of the Labour Representation Committee?
4. What is the Fabian society?
5. When was the Labour Party established?
6. Which Labour Party leader formed two minority governments?
7. What is the main pillar of the house according to the Labour Party?
8. What did the People's Charter of 1838 call for?

## Answers

1. 1848
2. Shaw and Webb
3. Thomas R. Steels
4. The Fabian Society was a left-wing thinker group that aimed to educate, agitate, and organize left-wing thinkers in the late Victorian era.
5. 1900
6. Ramsay MacDonald

7. The Surplus for the Common Good
8. The People's Charter called for six reforms to make the political system more democratic

## Self Assessment Questions

1. Why did industrial capitalism encourage socialist ideas in Britain?
2. How did Robert Owen contribute to early British socialism?
3. What was the connection between Christian Socialism and workers' welfare?
4. How did Chartism prepare the ground for working-class political action?
5. What made Fabian Socialism different from revolutionary socialism?
6. Why did Fabian thinkers support gradual reform?
7. How did Sidney Webb and Beatrice Webb contribute to Fabian thought?
8. Why was the Labour Representation Committee formed?
9. How did trade unions influence the rise of the Labour Party?
10. Why is British socialism often described as democratic socialism?

## Assignments

1. Write a short note on democratic socialism in England.
2. Detail the history of Fabianism in England.
3. Examine the growth of the Labour Party in England.
4. Explain Chartism.
5. Analyse the contributions of Robert Owen as a political activist.



## Suggested Reading

1. Arthur Rosenberg, *Democracy and Socialism*, London, G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1939
2. Francis. W Coker, *Recent Political Thought*, New York, 1934
3. R.N. Berki: *Socialism*, New York
4. *Socialism: The First 100 Years*; Analyst: The Center for Labour and Social Studies Inc., Italy

SGOU



## UNIT

# Decolonization and Major Thinkers

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the meaning and historical importance of decolonization
- ◆ describe the major stages and types of decolonization
- ◆ identify the impact of anti-colonial struggles in Asia, Africa, Ireland and other regions
- ◆ discuss the views of Bertrand Russell, E. M. Forster, Arnold Toynbee and W. B. Yeats on colonialism and decolonization
- ◆ analyse decolonization as a political, cultural, psychological and literary process

### Prerequisite

Decolonization means more than the transfer of political power from an empire to a newly independent nation. It also involves the recovery of history, language, culture, identity and self-respect. Colonised people had to challenge not only foreign rule but also the belief that colonial powers were superior. The twentieth century witnessed powerful independence movements in Asia, Africa and other parts of the world, especially after the World Wars weakened European empires.

This unit introduces decolonization as a layered historical process. It includes rediscovery, mourning, dreaming, commitment and action. Some countries gained self-government; some became formally independent; some continued to face economic or political control through neo-colonialism. Thinkers and writers responded to these changes in different ways. Bertrand Russell criticised imperial domination, E. M. Forster explored colonial relationships in *A Passage to India*, Arnold Toynbee studied the civilizational and psychological effects of colonial

encounters, and W. B. Yeats connected Irish cultural revival with anti-colonial identity. This unit helps learners see decolonization as both political freedom and cultural renewal.

## Keywords

Colonialism, Decolonization, Types, History, World Politics

## Discussion

Throughout history, powerful kingdoms have ruled regions outside their borders. Some have taken over uninhabited lands encountered during exploratory journeys, such as the Portuguese settlement of the island of Madeira (1419-20). Others have attacked and conquered territories using the might of their militaries, as can be seen in the case of the Spanish colonisation of South America. There have been instances where other forms of control such as state policy, economic strategies, or political deals have been used for acquiring foreign territories. In all these cases, the end goal is to extend the power and dominion of a nation-state or bloc of nations over other areas, often by gaining direct territorial or political control over them. The practice or advocacy of the same is termed imperialism. This is closely connected to colonialism, which is the policy or practice of achieving full or partial political control over another country with the intention of occupying and economically exploiting it.

Imperialism has evoked various responses due to its wielding of power, either militaristic, economic, or other forms. On one hand, it is seen as a morally condemnable activity that enforces the control and superiority of a nation or region over another; the element of economic exploitation and socio-cultural domination

adds to this. Those nations that practice colonialism and imperialism condone it as a necessary process for maintaining their border security and economic interests. Some nations validate these activities on the basis of morality, arguing that it paves the way for liberation from tyrannical rule or for 'civilizing' the colonial population. There have been cases where nations claim a historical or mythological right to certain territories outside their boundaries.

Though imperialism and colonialism continued to shape world politics from as early as 8-6 BCE, the modern era witnessed a highwater mark in the creation of empires from around the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the later parts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was only with the advent of the Second World War that colonial world dominance began to wane. By the time WWII broke out, it is estimated that a large portion of the Earth's population lived under colonial rule, with Europeans being a major contributor to colonialism. This could be seen in territories in Africa where British, French, Portuguese, Belgian, Italian and Spanish forces were dominant. Even South Africa, which was freed in 1910 and granted a League of Nations mandate to the former German colony of South-West Africa, continued to be governed by white settlers. The United Kingdom and France



were in control of several territories in the Middle East. Large portions of Asia were ruled by foreign powers that included Britain, France, Portugal, and Denmark.

### 5.2.1 Stages of Decolonization

The breaking up of various empires occurred as a series of acts through which a society or a country was liberated from the dominion or rule of some other powerful nation or group. It reflected a change in status from colonial territory to postcolonial entity. Hayden Burgess (also known as Poka Laenui), a Hawaiian anti-colonial activist, identifies five stages of decolonization. They are: ("Processes of Decolonization")

#### 1. Rediscovery and Recovery

During the first stage of decolonization, those who have been colonized and have suffered the consequence of colonialism begin to question their status as inferior or subjugated to the colonial culture and power. The rediscovery and recovery of indigenous history, language, customs, and traditions becomes a characteristic of this stage. The colonial power and their propagating of cultural superiority starts to be viewed as a threat to that society. This phase sets the foundation for the eventual decolonization of the society.

#### 2. Mourning

In the second stage, the colonized population starts to lament their victimization. The losses and victimization that they have endured as part of colonialism is mourned and memorialised. This provides an outlet for grieving and anger, as well as for expressing frustration and protesting the injustice of colonial rule.

#### 3. Dreaming

Dreaming, the third stage, is the most

vital act in the process of decolonization. The possibilities for the future are considered and debated as the basis for creating a new social order. The existing power structures and social institutions of colonialism are reassessed.

#### 4. Commitment

The fourth stage of decolonization involves the capacity of the colonized to commit to their dreams and make them a reality. In this stage, there is a collective recognition of the need for liberation and a unit of people and their desire for independence. There is a consensus on which issues must take the forefront in the struggle for decolonization.

#### 5. Action

The fifth and final stage is the culmination of the previous stages; in this phase, the call for attaining independence is realised with action in the form of movements, violence, and other methods. The set, unified goal of this stage is independence and the colonised society works towards the fulfilment of the same.

#### 5.2.1.1 Types of Decolonization

Throughout history, four types of decolonization has been observed:

1. Self-government for white settler colonies, of which Canada and Australia are examples.
2. Formal end to empire followed by independent rule, as illustrated by Vietnam and India.
3. Formal empire replaced by informal empire or neo-colonialism, as can be witnessed in the case of Latin America.
4. Mere change of imperial

masters, as featured in the case of Indo-China where the United States took over after French colonial rule.

### ***5.2.1.2 Timeline of Decolonization***

The advent of the WWI amplified the exploitation of colonies for resources, labour, and taxes to support the war effort in the West. This provoked questioning among nationalists about why the burden of the war should fall on the colonies. By 1919, as Europe was witnessing a new order of power, the burgeoning nationalist movements in the colonies began to shift towards mass mobilization. As more and more colonial powers (Great Britain, Russia, France) went into economic and political decline, the process of colonial emancipation and decolonization gained momentum. Colonial territories underwent revolutionary changes. The Great Depression of 1929 fuelled even further anti-colonial activity in places like Egypt, India, and Ireland. In many places there was a shift towards local production which fostered independent economic activity in the colonies and further loosened their links with the colonial centre.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, the invulnerability and superiority of these colonial powers became severely undermined. Many of these countries were unable to defend their territories against German and Japanese invasions. In the aftermath of the devastating conflict, they generally did not have the wealth or political support for maintaining control of faraway territories. Further, having witnessed the fall of Germany and Japan, many colonies began to question the legitimacy of imperialism. A strong sense of nationhood was also emerging within many of these territories. They started to agitate for independence and broke away from the empire. By 1948, the United

Nations Organization had ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, recognising that all people were equal and had the right to decide their future. Both the United States and Russia, which emerged as the superpowers of the period, also took stances against colonization. All these different factors led to the decline of the colonial empires in this era.

A succession of nations gained their independence in the first wave of decolonization from 1945 to 1955. The centre of these decolonization movements was Asia, where Japan's capitulation allowed Korea, Taiwan and China to obtain sovereignty. The United States withdrew from its administration of the Philippines in 1946. Most colonial nations gave up their Asian possessions during this period.

After a prolonged freedom struggle, India became independent in 1947. While most British colonial holdings became part of the liberated nation that was formed, many princely states and territories of other colonial powers would have to be enjoined into the union through negotiations and military force. During this period, East and West Pakistan, created along religious lines, also came into existence. In turn, East Pakistan would secede from the union to form Bangladesh (1971). Along with the United Kingdoms, France and Netherlands too would soon give up most of their Asian conquests. In the Middle East, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Transjordan, and Libya became independent nations.

The second wave of decolonization occurred from 1956 to 1966 with independence being obtained in several African territories. All British-held African possessions, French colonial holdings in North African and Sub-Saharan regions, as well as Belgian and Italian colonies

in Africa attained sovereignty. In Asia, Malaysia and Northern Borneo too became part of this global pattern, as did the Mediterranean islands of Cyprus and Malta.

From 1966, a third wave of decolonization was underway, with the last of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of Namibia, Djibouti, Mozambique, and Angola declaring their independent status. The Middle Eastern territories of the Gulf Emirates, Oman, and Aden overcame British rule. In the East, Australia ended its protectorate for Papua New Guinea, and Portugal was ousted from East Timor. On the American continents, both British and Dutch Guyana and Belize followed suite. The islands and archipelagos of New Hebrides, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Comoros also successfully negotiated their independence.

## 5.2.2 Thinkers

### 5.2.2.1 *Bertrand Russell*

Bertrand Russell, one of the most influential intellectuals of the twentieth century, is a towering figure in the domains of philosophy, mathematics, and social activism. His life spanned a turbulent era marked by two World Wars, widespread social and political changes, and great strides in various fields. During his time at Cambridge, he became associated with the Bloomsbury Group, a collection of influential writers, intellectuals, and artists. It was through his early philosophical works such as “A Free Man’s Worship” and “Principia Mathematica” that he became established as a formidable thinker of his times. Russell’s exploration of the questions of knowledge, truth, and the nature of reality in a clear, engaging prose style played a great role in his appeal as a public intellectual. Russell was also known as a

vocal advocate for social justice, pacifism, and civil liberties. In response to periods of global unrest and conflict, such as during the two World Wars and the Vietnam War, he called for pacifism. In 1950, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature for his championing of humanitarian ideals and his contributions to philosophy. The scope of his influence extends from the philosophy of language to the principles of modern human rights.

Bertrand Russell’s efforts to promote ethical considerations in a conflict-ridden and war-torn world is of particular importance to us. He has raised critiques of colonialism rooted in the ideals of justice and human rights. His opposition to imperialistic practices and anti-colonial sentiments extended beyond theory and manifested in his activism, writings, and public pronouncements.

Russell emphasises the dangers of the economic exploitation associated with colonial rule wherein the resources of the colonies are extracted to enrich the colonizer, at the expense of indigenous populations. He argues that these economic injustices perpetuate inequality and contribute to the impoverishment of colonized nations. Further, he calls for every nation, regardless of size or global standing, to possess the right to self-determination and self-government. Colonialism denies this fundamental right to the colonized populations and takes away their autonomy. In his writings and speeches, he has underscored the importance of respecting the sovereignty of nations.

Through his prolific writings and speeches, Russell draws attention to the cultural aspect of colonialism as well. The imposition of Western values, norms, and cultural practices on indigenous populations often undermined the

richness and diversity of indigenous populations. He publicly condemned the excesses of British colonial rule in India, calling for an end to British imperialism in the subcontinent. This was part of his broader stance in support of pacifism and anti-authoritarianism, grounded in an understanding of ethics and reason.

In the essay, “The Story of Colonization”, Russell suggests that trade exchanges, military conquest, and missionary endeavours were vital in fostering the advancement of civilization. Greek colonies played a crucial role in these processes; Greek colonies are maritime communities, which were politically independent, but kept close connections to their home cities. They exported their social and cultural institutions to those parts of the world they visited for the expansion of their commercial interests. Even though such colonies maintained mercenary armies, they did not aim to conquer and administer these lands. In contrast to this, Alexander the Great set out with his troops in the aim of world conquest and dissemination of Hellenic culture. Russell suggests that instead of using conventional colonization strategies in the future, humanity may need to opt for a civilized way of life.

It must, however, be noted that Russell’s engagement with colonialism is not without complexities or contradictions. In the essay, “The Ethics of War” (1915), he argues that wars of colonization are justifiable when there is a great difference between the civilization of the colonizers and the indigenous population. In other words, he seems to suggest that the cultural superiority of the colonizers would justify their dominion over foreign lands. His views evolved towards anti-imperialism by 1919, with his work “Socialism and Liberal Ideals” dismissing “the exploitation of inferior

racess” and “modern imperialism” as the negative consequences of capitalism and nationalism. By 1938, he called for the subduing of arbitrary rulership in his treatise *Power: A New Social Analysis*. Bertrand Russell’s stance against colonialism stands as a testament to the transformative power of ideas, and their role in promoting equality and the inherent dignity of all individuals.

#### 5.2.2.2 E.M. Forster

The acclaimed English novelist, E.M. Forster (born Edward Morgan Forster) is known for his insightful exploration of human relationships, social class, and the impact of British colonialism. He has produced classics that stand out due to their contemporary relevance and keen understanding of the human condition. His works emphasise personal connections and the complexities of social structures and norms. A keen observer and critic of colonialism in the early twentieth century, Forster is able to present the significant effects of imperialism on people, relationships, and society. We can say that colonialism becomes a canvas on which he explores the issues of identity, prejudice, and the collision of cultures. Through an empathetic portrayal of the colonizers and colonized, he lays bare the moral complexities and cultural tensions inherent in colonial spaces.

Through his novel *A Passage to India* (1926), Forster examines the power of colonialism, the duality between spirituality and morality, and the inevitability of evil. He wrote the novel after a journey to India in 1912. The narrative revolves around the experiences of Dr. Aziz, an Indian Muslim, and his interactions with English visitors. Mrs. Moore and Adela Quested are travelling to India to visit Mrs. Moore’s son, who works there. The English women have



expectations of encountering the real 'India'. Dr. Aziz, although frustrated by the mistreatment he endures at the hands of the English, befriends them.

During a visit to the Marabar Caves, Adela suffers a traumatic incident which leads her to accuse Aziz of assaulting her. This leads to a highly publicised trial which triggers racial tensions, but also exposes the prejudices and hypocrisies in the colonial relationship. As the story progresses, Adela recants her accusation and Aziz is released. This leads Aziz to distance himself from all Englishmen, causing a rupture in the friendship between Aziz and Cyril Fielding, the protagonist of the novel. Indeed, the trial and its aftermath reveals the racial and cultural complexities that are present in the backdrop of British India. It provokes discussions of the themes of racism, stereotyping, and the dehumanizing impact of colonialism, challenging the assumptions and attitudes of the British towards the indigenous population.

Recent critical readings on *A Passage to India*, however, also highlight the ways in which the novel is complicit in colonialism and imperialism. Many critics such as Harish Trivedi question the fact that the novel is not politically overt. It does not outright condemn imperialism, and appears to denote certain colonizers as benevolent or sympathetic. Edward Said, a postcolonial critic, points out that the narrative is soft on British colonialism and does not seem to support Indian independence. On the surface, the novel appears to project a humanism that overrides all racial differences. However, such universalised depictions privileges European/Western notions and disregards unique perspectives of the colonial subject's reality. This textual attitude sustains European colonialism and the alleged superiority of the West.

The novel delves into the colonial struggle over questions of identity, power dynamics, and the limitations of human connection across cultural divides, concluding with a sense of disillusionment. It does not provide a resolution of gulf between the British colonizers and the colonized Indian population. Rather, it provides a provocative exploration of the contact between the two worlds, thus illustrating the intricacies and injustices of the colonial enterprise.

### 5.2.2.3 Arnold Toynbee

Arnold Toynbee, an iconic figure in the field of historical studies, is renowned for his comprehensive analysis of world civilizations in "A Study of History." Published in multiple volumes, the work explores the rise and fall of civilizations throughout human history. In it, Toynbee proposed a cyclical pattern of growth, challenge, and response as a central theme. Herein, the role of creative minorities in shaping the destiny of societies becomes evident. Toynbee's approach innovated beyond the methodologies of traditional historiography, encompassing cultural, religious, and spiritual aspects. The lasting legacy of the work is that it shaped scholarship on the interconnectedness of cultures and civilizations.

Beyond academia, Toynbee's work could be said to contribute to broader debates on historical progress and the challenges facing modern societies. One dimension of this understanding is Toynbee's nuanced perspectives on colonialism. Indeed, a central preoccupation in the *Study of History* was the evolution of empire and the consequences of imperialism. His wider examination of civilizations, tracing patterns of the rise and fall of empires, added to the understanding of colonial encounters. Since colonialism represented



a confluence of different civilizations, each with its own separate history, culture, and worldview, it involved the formation of new relationships. The interactions between the colonized and the colonizer were not to be seen as one-sided, but rather as a reciprocal venture. Toynbee highlighted the mutual exchanges that occurred in colonial encounters. For instance, in his analysis of Turkish militarism in the First World War, he notes that the atrocities against the Armenians and the conflict with Anatolian Greeks were a response to Western Imperialism.

As with Russell, Toynbee was a proponent of anti-war rhetoric, submitting that war was a symptom of decline and disintegration in civilizations. He contended that civilizations must discard their attachment to certain beliefs, practices, and institutions if they are to progress and improve. Aggressive and imperialistic wars signified that the civilization had lost its creativity. So, instead of viewing empires as the highest achievement of any civilization, Toynbee regarded them as a sign of decline. Further, he reflected on the dangers of the modern nation-state and nationalism in this context.

In the 1940s and 50s, Arnold Toynbee controversially warned the West of dire consequences if it did not acknowledge and atone for its political and spiritual “sins”. In these works, *Civilization on Trial* (1948) and *The World and the West* (1953), he condemned imperialism as the greatest crime of the contemporary era. He also discusses the undeniable dimension of economic exploitation which is a hallmark of colonial relationships. The extraction of resources, labour, and wealth from the colonies deepens the economic disparity between the colonizers and the colonized, further entrapping the territories under imperial dominion.

One of Toynbee’s most significant contributions was his exploration of the psychological impact of colonialism. He delved into how the encounter with imperial powers affected the psyche of both colonizers and the colonized. In a critical chapter in *The World and the West* titled “The Psychology of Encounters,” Toynbee observed that civilizations rarely accepted each other’s beliefs and technology. Rather only certain elements of the cultural whole are transferred from one to the other. Indeed, the psychological consequences of wielding power over other populations and cultures point to moral and ethical dilemmas in imperial rule. At the same time, the colonized now had to deal with the trauma of cultural assimilation, resistance, and identity erasure in response to colonialism.

The complex historical phenomenon of colonialism is explored in a multidimensional way in Toynbee’s works. Rather than examining colonialism as an imposition of power alone, he recognises the reciprocal influences, psychological dimensions and broad historical contexts through which we can form a deeper understanding of civilization.

#### 5.2.2.4 W.B. Yeats

British rule in Ireland is a complex phenomenon spanning several centuries, marked by colonization and conflicts. Beginning in the 12th century and continuing well into the twenty first century, British involvement in Irish soil has been a point of political contention. Ireland was formally integrated into the United Kingdom in 1801, paving the way for economic exploitation, discriminatory policies, and a stifling of Irish identity. With the Great Famine devastating Irish populations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, anti-British sentiments soon ran high. There was a surge in Irish nationalism which was expressed

through protest movements such as the Home Rule Campaign. The Easter Rising of 1916, where Irish republicans organised an anti-British rebellion and was brutally suppressed by the British forces, marked a turning point. The Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 established a Free Irish State in the South while leaving Northern Ireland as a territory of the United Kingdom. The tensions born out of this arrangement led to the Irish Civil War. Ireland's complex landscape continues to be shaped by these political forces.

One of the most acclaimed poets of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, W. B. Yeats was also shaped by the conflict. Born in Dublin in 1865, he is an iconic figure in Irish literature and a key contributor to the Irish Literary Revival. In his works, Yeats explores the rich tapestry of Irish history, folklore, and mysticism to create literature that is grounded in his cultural heritage Irish nationalism, Celtic mythology, and the turbulent socio-political landscape of his time are part of the scope of his writings. As a literary figure, Yeats had a crucial hand in the cultural renaissance of Ireland, co-founding the Abbey Theatre. His poetry explores themes of national identity, mysticism, and Irish history. Awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1923, Yeats was able to capture the spirit of Ireland and its enduring cultural legacy.

W. B. Yeats has been widely recognised as an anti-colonial revolutionary and a 'nation-building' poet. Edward Said categorized him as a decolonizing poet based on Yeats's attempt to forge the boundaries of Irish cultural nationalism in the face of a colonizing "offshore power". He emerges as a serious figure in Irish literary and cultural consciousness, the making of which challenged the influence of the empire. Yeats attempted to construct a distinctively Irish character and identity, both of which had been deliberately erased

by British imperialism. His writings are from the point of view of the colonized as can be seen in the poem "The Ghost of Roger Casement" (1938), where the English imperialist is mocked as "John Bull": "John Bull has gone to India/And all must pay him heed."

The Irish Revival, in which Yeats played a crucial role, can be seen as an act of decolonization. This becomes even more important as the British colonizers had systematically attempted to erase Irish culture, literature and identity. So, the reclamation of Irish literary and cultural elements served to mobilize popular support towards the cause of Irish liberation. Through the establishment of the Abbey Theatre, Yeats wrote many plays that rallied the masses for Irish independence. Many of his dramas presented ideals such as self-sacrifice and revolutionary zeal, and comprised of characters who symbolised the Irish condition. Irish political heroes such as the rebels and martyrs of the Easter 1916 rebellion are referenced throughout his works.

In a way, Yeats's whole career was dedicated to bringing about a social and national consciousness that would deliver Ireland out of British colonialism. His resistance of imperialism, apart from his political activism, is based on building a new narrative for his people through his writings. His revival of Irish literature, culture and Celtic myths birthed a new Irish identity, which Yeats had hoped would be free from internal differences and conflicts. Perhaps this is why he argued for Irish to replace English as the national language. He rightly identifies that linguistic imperialism, through English, may delimit the resurgence of Irish culture and nationalism. On the other hand, the only factors that would aid in the creation of a united Irish identity and a decolonized

Irish state would be: cultural education and necessary sacrifice. Thus, Yeats, as one of the modern era's earliest decolonizing poets, challenges colonialism's strategy of erasing the colonized's history, culture, and traditional knowledge.

## Recap

- ◆ Long history of imperialism
- ◆ Extension of power and dominion of a nation-state or bloc of nations over other areas
- ◆ Morally condemnable due to use of power, enforcing of one nation's control and superiority over another
- ◆ Colonialist countries justify imperialist activities in terms of border security, economic interests, morality, historical or mythological right
- ◆ Highwater mark of imperialism and colonialism from 15<sup>th</sup> century to late 20<sup>th</sup> century
- ◆ Different territories around the world under colonial dominance by WWII
- ◆ Decline of colonial empires due to various factors
- ◆ Five stages of decolonization
- ◆ Four types of decolonization
- ◆ First wave of decolonization in Asia and Middle East (1945-55)
- ◆ Second wave of decolonization in Africa (1956-66)
- ◆ Third wave of decolonization from 1966
- ◆ Bertrand Russell – pacifist, stance against colonialism
- ◆ Two models of colonialism
- ◆ Changing engagement with colonialism
- ◆ E.M. Forster – *A Passage to India*
- ◆ Theme of colonialism, relationship between colonized and colonizer
- ◆ Critics see the novel as both anti-colonial and supporting colonialism in different ways
- ◆ Toynbee – study of civilizations
- ◆ Colonialism as civilizational imperative – challenge and response

- ◆ Against western imperialism – economic and psychological consequences
- ◆ W.B. Yeats – Irish poet
- ◆ British colonialism in Ireland
- ◆ Irish revival and the contributions of Yeats
- ◆ Cultural Education and necessary self-sacrifice as anticolonial activity

## Objective Questions

1. What is imperialism?
2. Why is imperialism morally condemnable?
3. Which period was the highwater mark of colonial empires?
4. What was ratified in 1948 by the United Nations Organisation?
5. Why is Dreaming a vital stage in the decolonization process?
6. Which continents were the focus of the first and second waves of decolonization?
7. What kind of decolonization is illustrated by Vietnam and India?
8. Which are the two models of colonization suggested by Bertrand Russell in “The Story of Colonization”?
9. When are wars of colonialization justifiable, according to Bertrand Russell?
10. What are the common themes of the works *Civilization on Trial* (1948) and *The World and the West* (1953)?
11. Which novel by E.M. Forster deals with relationship between the colonised and the colonizer?
12. Why does Edward Said consider universalised depictions in literature to be supportive of colonialism?

## Answers

1. The practice or advocacy of extending the power and dominion of a nation-state or bloc of nations over other areas, often by gaining direct territorial or political control over them, is called imperialism.
2. It enforces the control and superiority of a nation or region over another.
3. 15<sup>th</sup> century to late 20<sup>th</sup> century
4. Universal Declaration of Human Rights
5. The possibilities for the future are considered and debated as the basis for creating a new social order.
6. Asia and Africa
7. Formal end to empire followed by independent rule
8. 'Greek colonies' model and 'Alexander the Great' model
9. When there is a great difference between the civilization of the colonizers and the indigenous population
10. Anticolonialism and demand for the western colonial powers to atone
11. *A Passage to India*
12. Universalised depictions privileges European/Western notions and disregards unique perspectives of the colonial subject's reality.

## Self Assessment Questions

1. What is meant by decolonization?
2. Why did colonial empires weaken after the World Wars?
3. How is political independence different from complete decolonization?
4. What are the five stages of decolonization described in the unit?
5. Why is rediscovery of language and culture important in decolonization?
6. What is neo-colonialism?
7. How did Bertrand Russell criticise colonialism?
8. How does *A Passage to India* present the relationship between coloniser and colonised?



9. How did Arnold Toynbee explain the psychological impact of colonialism?
10. Why is W. B. Yeats important in the context of Irish cultural nationalism?

## Assignments

1. What is Imperialism? Detail some of the arguments used to condemn and justify imperialism.
2. Present a brief timeline of decolonization in the post WWII period.
3. Detail the various stages of the decolonization process as presented by Hayden Burgess (also known as Poka Laenui).
4. Which are the different types of decolonization?
5. Assess Arnold Toynbee's perspectives on colonialism as a reciprocal venture.
6. Review Bertrand Russell's views on colonialism.
7. Examine the theme of colonialism as depicted in *A Passage To India*.
8. Discuss your perspectives on decolonization in the Indian context.

## Suggested Reading

1. Jansen, Jan C. and Jurgen Osterhammel. *Decolonization: A Short History*. Princeton UP, 2017.
2. Rothermund, Dietmar. *The Routledge Companion to Decolonization*. Routledge, 2006.
3. Potter, D.S. and Mattingly, D.J. "*Life, Death, and Entertainment in the Roman Empire*"," Ann Arbor, 1999



## UNIT

# Modernism, Postmodernism- D. H. Lawrence, W. H. Auden, T. S. Elliot and George Orwell

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ define Modernism and Postmodernism in relation to twentieth-century literature
- ◆ identify the historical background of Modernism, especially war, industrial modernity, loss of faith and social change
- ◆ explain major features of Modernist writing such as fragmentation, subjectivity, experimentation and stream of consciousness
- ◆ distinguish broad differences between Modernist and Postmodernist attitudes
- ◆ discuss the contributions of D. H. Lawrence, W. H. Auden, T. S. Eliot and George Orwell

### Prerequisite

The early twentieth century was marked by uncertainty. The First World War exposed violence, destruction and the fragility of older values. Scientific discoveries, industrial life, urbanisation, psychology, Marxism and the decline of religious certainty changed how people understood society and the self. Literature also changed. Writers no longer felt satisfied with conventional plots, fixed moral lessons or simple representations of reality.

Modernist writers experimented with form, language and point of view. They often presented broken experiences, inner thoughts, alienation, doubt and the confusion of modern life. D. H. Lawrence explored human relationships, sexuality and the conflict between natural life and industrial society. W. H. Auden wrote about the anxieties of the 1930s and modern urban experience. T. S. Eliot

became a central voice of Modernism through poems such as *The Waste Land*. George Orwell used fiction and essays to examine politics, power, language and totalitarianism. Postmodernism later questioned grand narratives, fixed meanings and stable identities. This unit introduces learners to these important literary shifts.

## Keywords

Modernism, Postmodernism, Features, Writers, Works

## Discussion

### 5.3.1 Modernism and Postmodernism

Across the early decades of the twentieth century, in the backdrop of the first World War (1914-1918), the structure of English society underwent great transformations. Traditional social values and institutions such as marriage, family, and religion lost their prominence, while established practices, customs, and rituals were being opened to scrutiny. In a sense, the war had exposed the darker, brutal aspects of human nature; the prevailing mood of the era was one of alienation and despair. The machine, a symbol associated with contemporariness, captured the materialism, boredom, and repetitiveness of modern life. Its operations excluded emotions, feelings, and other humane considerations, providing another perceived parallel with the modern way of existence.

Of course, the seeds of this change had been laid in the preceding eras. By the mid-to-late nineteenth century, there had been serious challenges to accepted dogma and popular beliefs. The hold of religion over the minds of the common population

had been challenged by the publication of *The Origin of Species* (1859) by Charles Darwin. In the following years, Karl Marx's critique of social organization by class in his *Das Kapital* (1864), would provoke a rethinking of class privilege and wealth distribution in society. By the turn of the twentieth century, Sigmund Freud would argue that the human behaviour and mental activity has an unconscious dimension in the work *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1901). With this, religion, social structure, and self-identity which were the foundational elements of the 'individual' became questionable.

The literature of the era, as with other literatures in different time periods, bore the hallmarks of these changes. This was reflected in Modern English literature as a contestation of the existing conventions and attitudes of literature, many of which were practiced by the Victorian writers who came before them. Where the Victorians assumed a complacent attitude towards authority, the literature of the modern period was characterized by a spirit of rebellion; it seemed to question everything that was once considered sacred or certain. The tenet of modernism was to deliberately break with tradition.



Even before modernism gathered force as a movement in the sphere of English literature, several writers seemed to demonstrate some of its characteristics. These early traces of modernism could be found in the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, Henri Bergson, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Walt Whitman, and Henry James. However, it was in the year 1922, with the publication of three seminal modernist works, that the movement became significant. These were T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land," James Joyce's "Ulysses," and Virginia Woolf's "Jacob's Room." These texts carried some of the quintessential features that would later be used to classify modernism.

Much of modernist techniques in literature had close interlinkages to art and avant-garde movements of the age. For instance, just as painters who used impressionism techniques focused on perspectives or viewpoints, modernist writers explored the individual's point of view and emotions. In fact, many modernist writers used a narrative style known as 'Stream of Consciousness'. Herein, the individual's point of view is portrayed as an internal monologue or as a third-person narrative of the character's internal state. Thus, there was a move away from objectivity towards subjectivity. Yet, modernist literature continued to present elements of realism, offering frank, dark depictions of the world.

A few common features of modernism in English literature are as follows:

1. Disruption of tradition
2. Focus on subjectivity
3. Move away from objectivity
4. Borrowing of features from different literary genres
5. Sense of fragmentation conveyed through form and themes

6. Reflexivity and meta-narrativity

7. Spirit of experimentation.

These commonalities could be seen in the fiction, poetry, and drama of the time. More than other genres, it was the modern novel that underwent great changes. Modernist novels no longer followed linearity, using perspectives and impressions to capture the fragmented condition of modern life. The endings were not conclusive, highlighting the complexity of modern experience. Themes such as plurality of reality and experience, loss of meaning and identity, the crumbling of religious faith and social values, and futility of life were dominant.

The challenge of classifying postmodernism as a literary movement lies in its tendency to reject patterns and labels. This is why many critics try to explore the movement through its differences from modernism. After all, 'postmodernism' refers to a condition or state *after* modernism. It takes forward several features of modernism, such as experimentation, parody, irony, fragmentation, and ambiguity. Yet, unlike modernism, which contained many different sub-movements (symbolism, imagism, absurdism), postmodernism does not demarcate boundaries. Both modernism and postmodernism rejected the idea that there could be universal meanings. While modernism stressed the role of subjective experience in shaping meaning, postmodernism considered meanings to be connected to form and structure.

Throughout modernist literature, there is a lamentation for the loss of faith and the fall of social order. Postmodernism, however, celebrates the liberation from such structures. It calls for plurality, discontinuity, and fragmentation. This is

why postmodern literature often projects an incompleteness of form and content whereas modernist texts pay attention to styling. Postmodernism also breaks down the distinction between “high”, “elite” art and “low”, “popular” art, borrowing themes and techniques from each other. Interestingly, postmodernism seeks to depict the meaningless and dehumanising aspects of life. Individuals and their actions are shown losing their own characteristics to become stereotypical or powerless.

The defining characteristics of postmodernism are as follows:

1. Rejection of authority
2. Fragmentation
3. Randomness
4. Postmodern playfulness
5. Intertextual linkages
6. Use of pastiches
7. Metafiction
8. Openness to multiple interpretations

### 5.3.2 D.H. Lawrence

As we survey the literature of the Modern age, D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930) emerges as an influential name. Having produced over 40 novels, short-stories, poetry, plays, treatises and essays in the years before the rise of modernism, he is one of the earliest to show modernist tendencies in his themes. He is most famous for the bold, frank treatment of human relationships and sex in his novels. The direct portrayal of the sexual act caused great controversy in the decorous and rigid Victorian society of Lawrence’s time. His works were considered to be so immoral and shocking that it led to censorship and a highly publicized trial for obscenity.

His novels, which include the likes of *The Rainbow*, *Sons and Lovers*, *Women in*

*Love*, and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, revolve around the experience of individuals and their complex emotional dynamics. His writings presented love and sex as significant human experiences that were to be explored, and not hidden away as shameful or taboo. His uninhibited use of language coupled with a deeply emotional presentation proved to influence many writers who would later be associated with modernist movement. Lawrence also frequently took up the theme of naturalism and primitivism as an opposition to the mechanical, modern life. The materialistic and industrialised nature of life in the modern age came to be criticised in many of his works. He called for a return to nature as a solution to the same.

### 5.3.3 W.H. Auden

W.H. Auden’s poetry has displayed an awareness of the modern experience, representing the 1930s in England. His works carried the discontents as well as the guilt and frustration that was prevalent among the English upper and middle classes after WWI. In *City Without Walls*, Auden attacked the decay of English society. In order to fully capture the scope of his poetic explorations, Auden used a wide range of poetic styles and techniques. He employed parodies, songs, ballads, and operas, among other formal methods, and experimented with rhyme and stanza-patterns.

Auden’s poetry is known for its unusual diction or choice of words. As a member of the ‘Pylon’ poets, his imagery draws from the world of science and industry. Images ranging from a “ramshackle engine” and “unbuilt bridges”, to “the private nocturnal terror” and the “eye of the camera” are plenty in his works. There is a focus towards urban and industrial images that tie into the modern experience. As with



other modernist poets, Auden's language is dense and obscure, often being labelled as difficult to follow. In the spirit of modernist experimentation, he has coined new words and often reused archaic and unfamiliar words to suit his purpose. He has personified abstract nouns, providing readers with additional layers of meaning.

### 5.3.4 T.S. Eliot

The name T.S. Eliot (1888-1965) is synonymous with the concept of modernism. His writings have been representative of the modern age in a way that few others have managed. In true modernist fashion, his poetry incorporates the conflicting characteristics of tradition and innovation to great effect. Though he has argued that order is of primary relevance in literature, his experimentations with order has produced some of the best poetry of the modern era. Searching for a poetic language that could meet the challenges of his times, he continued to innovate in form and theme. Eliot's poetic language borrowed from common speech and classical literature, allowing both inappropriate, everyday utterances and classical literary references to exist within his poetry.

The publication of his *The Waste Land*, a modernist epic that captures the despair of modern civilization, signals the advent of modernism in English literature. Apart from this, he has also composed "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", "The Hollow Men", and the Four Quartets, consisting of "Burnt Norton", "East Coker", "The Dry Salvages", and "Little Gidding", all of which bear features of modernism in their forms, themes, and styles.

### 5.3.5 George Orwell

As the modernist movement was beginning to give way to postmodernist tendencies in the middle parts of the

twentieth century, George Orwell (1903-1950) was producing renowned fiction. Most famous for his dystopian allegories, *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell's re-imagination of reality is a crucial forbear to postmodernism. He wrote in a terse journalistic style, forgoing long descriptive passages. Instead the language of Orwell's fiction has always been direct and precise, without the use of extended metaphors or imagery.

Orwell's fiction reflects the fragmented modern mind, often highlighting the conflict between humanitarian impulses and the desire for conformity. Another aspect of Orwellian writing that is connected to modernism is his illustration of the psychology of individuals. Through his works, he unravels the way in which power is wielded over the majority, conditioning them to obedience instead of encouraging enlightenment. Orwell's coining of neologisms or newly created words have had a tremendous effect on the English language. The vocabulary of his novels, used to describe imaginary situations or objects in his story, have entered into everyday language. These include:

- ◆ Newspeak (Nineteen Eighty-Four): Language that is designed to make independent thought impossible
- ◆ Doublethink (Nineteen Eighty-Four): Holding two conflicting beliefs at the same time
- ◆ Thought police (Nineteen Eighty-Four): Politically unorthodox views held by a person

George Orwell could be viewed as a writer whose works show the early tendencies of postmodernism such as the rejection of a singular truth and metanarratives, melding them with modernist themes.

## Recap

- ◆ 20<sup>th</sup> century – rise of modernism
- ◆ Socio-political and historical backdrop
- ◆ Features of modernism
- ◆ Differences between modernism and postmodernism
- ◆ Features of postmodernism
- ◆ D.H. Lawrence – fiction with modern
- ◆ Open depiction of sex and emotional life
- ◆ Uninhibited language and psychological
- ◆ W.H. Auden – modernist poetry, Pylon poet
- ◆ Modern themes, imagery from urban, industrial settings, experimentation
- ◆ T.S. Eliot - Representative poet of the modern era
- ◆ George Orwell - reflects the fragmented modern mind
- ◆ Early tendencies of postmodernism

## Objective Questions

1. Which literary movement emerged in the early twentieth century in English literature?
2. Whose work provoked a rethinking of social organization by class?
3. Who wrote the work “The Origin of Species”?
4. Which year is significant in terms of modernist literature?
5. Which three works were published in 1922?
6. What is ‘Stream of Consciousness’ technique?
7. Why did D.H. Lawrence face a highly publicized trial?
8. Which collection of W.H. Auden’s poetry attacks the decay in society?
9. Who wrote “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”?
10. What is the term used to refer to newly coined words?

## Answers

1. Modernism
2. Karl Marx
3. Charles Darwin
4. 1922
5. T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land," James Joyce's "Ulysses," and Virginia Woolf's "Jacob's Room."
6. The individual's point of view is portrayed as an internal monologue or as a third-person narrative of the character's internal state
7. Due to the obscene and shocking content of his works
8. *City Without Walls*
9. T.S. Eliot
10. Neologisms

## Self Assessment Questions

1. What historical conditions helped Modernism emerge?
2. How did the First World War influence modern literature?
3. What is meant by fragmentation in Modernist writing?
4. Why did Modernist writers give importance to subjectivity?
5. What is stream of consciousness technique?
6. How did D. H. Lawrence challenge Victorian moral attitudes?
7. What modern concerns are reflected in W. H. Auden's poetry?
8. Why is T. S. Eliot considered a representative Modernist poet?
9. How did George Orwell use literature to criticise political power?
10. How does Postmodernism question fixed meanings and universal truths?

## Assignments

1. Compare and contrast the similarities and differences between modernism and postmodernism.
2. Explore the historical background in which the modernist movement emerged.
3. Examine D.H. Lawrence as an early proponent of modernism.
4. Consider W.H. Auden and George Orwell as modernist writers.
5. Why is T.S. Eliot considered to be a representative point of the modern era?

## Suggested Reading

1. Brooker, Peter. *Modernism/Postmodernism*. Taylor and Francis, 2014.





## UNIT

# Contemporary Cultures – Globalization, Terrorism, Feminism and Gender

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the meaning of globalization and its major forms
- ◆ describe how technology, trade, migration and communication shape contemporary culture
- ◆ define terrorism and identify its broad classifications
- ◆ explain feminism as a movement for equal rights, representation and social justice
- ◆ understand gender as a social and cultural concept
- ◆ analyse how globalization, terrorism, feminism and gender debates influence literature, media and everyday life

### Prerequisite

The contemporary world is highly interconnected. Goods, ideas, images, languages, technologies, people and cultural practices move across national borders faster than ever before. This process is called globalization. It creates economic opportunities, cultural exchange and global awareness, but it can also produce inequality, cultural homogenisation and dependence on powerful institutions and nations.

At the same time, contemporary society faces serious conflicts and debates. Terrorism uses violence and fear to influence political or social situations. Feminism questions unequal power relations between men and women and demands equal rights, dignity and representation. Gender studies help us understand how society shapes ideas of masculinity, femininity and identity. Movements such as #MeToo



show how digital spaces can become platforms for feminist activism. This unit helps learners connect contemporary culture with global politics, social justice and changing human identities.

## Keywords

Contemporary life, Globalisation, Terrorism, Feminism, Gender

## Discussion

### 5.4.1 Globalisation

Globalization is a key phenomenon that has shaped the world around us. It is a multifaceted and intricate process that is marked by an increasing interconnected and interdependence between economies, nations, societies, and cultures on a global scale. Though it has a history that can be traced back to earlier centuries, its contemporary form can be said to be the result of factors associated with favourable political and historical conditions, technological progress, and economic growth.

There have been time periods in human history where trade and cultural contact accelerated cross-border sharing of goods and ideas, as seen in exploratory voyages, colonial missions, and other forms of engagement. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, there was an expansion of trade routes, contact between continents, and the evolution of empires with territories in every part of the world. For instance, Christopher Columbus facilitated a large-scale transfer of natural resources, goods, flora and fauna, and cultures between the Old World (Afro-Eurasia) and the New World (the Americas). This event known

as the Columbian Exchange marks an early example of globalization. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Industrial Revolution increased the interconnection and engagement between various global economies. There was a flow of goods and wealth between different nations and colonies. With the advent of mechanized production of goods, steam power, and a capitalist production system, trade increased, and multinational corporations emerged.

In the latter half of the 20th century, globalization took on its modern form. In the aftermath of WWII, several international institutions were created with the aim of encouraging global cooperation and economic stability. The formation of International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) was aimed at reducing trade barriers and promoting global economic integration. These developments further helped globalization.

In the political scene, the end of the Cold War further helped globalization by doing away with the ideological barriers (between communist Russia and capitalist USA) for international cooperation.



The collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the opening of China to the global marketplace also drove the globalization process. Soon, in economic spheres around the world, the principles of the free-market, economic deregulation, and privatization were promoted. The key ideology behind this transformation is that unrestricted trade and capital flows would lead to increased prosperity. Often referred to as the Washington Consensus, this principle influenced worldwide economic policies and contributed to the globalization of markets.

The rapid advancements of transport and communications technology in the twenty-first century are an important factor in considering globalization. If earlier, time and space were barriers to global interactions, today, the internet provides the opportunity to be virtually present anywhere in the world. It also allows the possibility for instantaneous communication and the exchange of information across borders.

#### **5.4.1.1 Types of globalization**

Globalization may be classified into the following types:

**Economic globalization:** This refers to the increasing interdependence and interconnection between different world economies as seen in trade, investment, and the movement of capital. The growth of international trade and investment, as well as the integration of financial markets may be seen here.

**Political globalization:** This refers to the increasing interconnectedness of the world's political systems, often facilitated by the emergence and functioning of international organizations and international law. It is noticeable in terms of the increased influence of international powers on national politics.

**Cultural globalization:** This refers to the expansion of cultural influences, values, and practices across the world. It involves the growth of global media and communication networks as platforms for the exchange of ideas, art, music, and other cultural expressions.

**Social globalization:** This refers to the increasing interconnectedness of the world's societies, drive by the growth of international migration and social networks. Here, there is the exchange of people, ideas, and practices across international borders.

**Environmental globalization:** This refers to the increasing interconnectedness of the world's environmental systems. The development of global environmental laws and the recognition that environmental issues are of a global nature are implicated here.

#### **5.4.1.2 Impacts**

Globalization continues to have a diverse range of impacts on the world's economies, societies, and cultures. Some its positive consequences are as follows:

**Increased economic growth and development:** Globalization has led to an increase in international trade and the use of technologies by businesses, which has encouraged economic growth and development in many countries.

**Reduction of poverty:** Globalization has contributed to the reduction of poverty by allowing developing countries to participate in the global economy, increasing incomes and living standards for many people.

**Cultural exchange:** Globalization has allowed people to learn about and appreciate different cultures, and thereby contributing to greater understanding and tolerance among different groups.

However, globalization has also had negative impacts all over the world:

**Income inequality:** Globalization has led to the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, creating income inequality.

**Environmental degradation:** Globalization has often involved the expansion of industries that consume natural resources, spread pollution, and manage waste ineffectively. This has adversely affected the environment.

**Cultural homogenization:** Globalization has promoted the spread of Western culture and values, often resulting in the erosion of cultural diversity and the loss of traditional ways of life.

**Loss of jobs:** Globalization has led to the relocation of many jobs to developing countries, where labor is cheaper. This has led to job losses and declining wages in developed countries, and has contributed to the growth of economic inequality.

Thus, the significance of globalization in the contemporary world is multifold. It has shaped economic, cultural, political, social, and environmental transformations, much of which has completely transformed the everyday lives of people all over the globe. Even as we are affected by the challenges and opportunities presented by this complex phenomenon, it remains a defining feature of our contemporary era.

### 5.4.2 Terrorism

Terrorism may be defined as the calculated use of violence to create a general climate of fear in a population, to achieve a certain political goal. It has been practiced by political organizations with nationalist and religious agendas, by revolutionary groups, and even by government forces such as the military and police. Since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the

term has been used to refer to violence aimed, either directly or indirectly, at governments in a bid to influence policy decisions or to destabilize the regime.

The principal goal of a terrorist act is to use violence and the threat of danger to create fear amongst a wide audience, including its direct victims. Usually, terrorism is used when direct military victory is not possible. Terrorists seek to attract and maintain publicity by engaging in increasingly violent and high-profile attacks. Such activity includes hijackings, hostage takings, kidnappings, mass shootings, car bombings, and suicide bombings. The end goal is to maintain an atmosphere of fear and thus force political decisions that are favourable to their objectives. The victims and locations of terrorist attacks are often carefully chosen to destroy the public's sense of security.

Terrorist activity has a long history, reaching to ancient Greek times as when the historian Xenophon (c. 431– c. 350 BCE) wrote of the effectiveness of psychological warfare against enemy populations. The Sicarii (Jewish Zealots), Robespierre's reign in France, the Spanish Inquisition, and the Klu Klux Klan are examples of the employment of terrorism. In many instances, a number of kings, presidents, prime ministers, and other government officials were killed by anarchists' guns or bombs. In totalitarian governments such as in Nazi Germany and Stalinist Soviet Union, terrorism was an official policy to create a climate of fear and force obedience to national ideology. It has also been used in anticolonial struggles, as modelled in the struggles between Ireland and the United Kingdom, between Algeria and France, and between Vietnam and France and the United States.

By the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, terrorist organizations based

on fundamentalist religious ideology emerged. Some groups such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Hamas, Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and ISIL adopted the tactic of suicide bombing. The era witnessed great changes in the way terrorism is practiced, with the growth of technology, automatic weaponry, biological and chemical weapons, remote controlled explosives, and air travel providing terrorists with new methods and opportunities.

Though terrorist campaigns have varied political contexts, aims, members, beliefs, and resources, they may be divided into three main categories:

### **1. Revolutionary terrorism**

The practitioners of this form of terrorism often seek to completely abolish a political system and replace it with new structures. Some examples include the Italian Red Brigades, the Peruvian Sendero Luminoso, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

### **2. Subrevolutionary terrorism**

The practitioners of this form of terrorism aim to modify an existing sociopolitical structure, and such an aim is often accomplished through the threat of deposing the existing regime. An instance of the same may be found in African National Congress (ANC) and its efforts to end apartheid in South Africa.

### **3. Establishment terrorism**

Establishment terrorism, also known as state or state-sponsored terrorism, is employed by governments against their own citizens, against other groups within the government, or against foreign governments. In this type of terrorist activity, government support or resources are offered secretly in order to protect their national interests and political goals.

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have unfortunately witnessed several devastating terrorist attacks that have had a profound impact on societies worldwide. Among the most significant terrorist attacks in this era was the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in the United States. Carried out by the extremist group Al-Qaeda, these attacks resulted in the loss of thousands of lives. It also triggered significant geopolitical reactions, including the launch of the 'War on Terror' by USA.

Another unfortunate event is the 2008 Mumbai attacks carried out by Lashkar-e-Taiba, an Islamist militant organization. It was an assault on multiple locations in Mumbai, India, which resulted in many casualties. The 2015 Paris attacks by ISIS, which included coordinated shootings and bombings across the city, shocked the world. Recently, Hamas carried out a campaign of terror on Israeli in October 2023, which led to a massive death toll. Consequently, Israel declared war on Hamas and Gaza, leading to an escalated military conflict in the region. These events collectively highlight the need for international cooperation and underscore the persistent threat posed by terrorism in the contemporary era.

## **5.4.3 Feminism and Gender**

Feminism in contemporary culture is a dynamic and evolving movement that seeks to address gender-based inequalities, empower women, and challenge societal norms. Historically, 'Feminism' is a word used to define a movement that aims to establish equal rights and legal protections for women, in a political, cultural, or economic backdrop. It involves the employment of theories and philosophies alongside activism for gender equality.



The history of feminism may be divided into three waves:

The first wave focuses mainly on the women's suffrage movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, where the primary goal was concerned with women's right to vote. In this period, the promotion of equal contract and property rights for women and the opposition to the ownership of married women by their husbands was widely discussed. Soon, the movement turned towards gaining political power, particularly the right of women's suffrage (voting rights). Certain debates about slavery were also taken up by the women's rights activists of the age. Feminists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony belonged to this period.

The second wave, which began in the 1960's, refers to the ideas and actions associated with the women's liberation movement and the campaign for legal and social rights for women. The second wave was largely concerned with other issues of equality, raising the slogan: "The Personal is Political". They viewed women's cultural and political inequalities as interlinked and encouraged women to critique the patriarchy in all spheres of their life. Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* are important texts of second-wave feminism. African-American feminists such as Gloria Jean Watkins (pseudonym "bell hooks") argued that the movement's failure to include race and class would ultimately render its philosophy ineffective.

The third wave is a continuation of certain political and theoretical aspects of second-wave feminism. However, it also includes a reaction to the perceived failures of second-wave feminism. It challenges earlier feminist ideas about identity, race,

and class in its pursuit of gender equality. It centralizes alternative voices from racial, ethnic, social, and sexual minorities. "Post-colonial" and "Third World" feminisms have also been proposed since Western feminism does not fully capture the issues and lived experiences of women from other locations. Feminists such as Gloria Anzaldua and Chandra Talpade Mohanty are prominent in this context. With the arrival of social media, there has been a resurgence of feminist activism. Digital platforms have increased awareness of gender issues and propagated the call for equality. The #MeToo movement is an illustration of a global feminist conversation where survivors of sexual harassment and assault shared their experiences. The digital feminist activism of Tarana Burke is significant here.

Another important dimension of feminism is women's writings, which have played a crucial role in shaping literary landscapes around the world. Women have provided unique perspectives, voices, and narratives that have often been marginalized or underrepresented. From the earliest works of Sappho and Aphra Behn to more contemporary writers such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Roxane Gay, the written word has offered a powerful tool for self-expression, activism, and cultural critique for women. They have been able to capture the complexities of female existence, addressing identity, gender inequality, relationships, and rights among a plethora of issues. The literary canon of women's writing encompasses a diverse array of genres, styles, and themes through which varying multiracial, postcolonial, and queer perspectives of women have been presented. Women's writings emphasise the power of literature as way of decentralising patriarchal power and illuminating the experiences of those who have been overlooked because of their gender.





Contemporary feminists raise diverse issues such as reproductive rights, equal pay, representation in various fields, and the dismantling of patriarchal structures. The need for intersectionality within feminism, recognizing that factors like race, class, sexuality, and more can

affect women's experiences, has also been prominent. Contemporary culture continues to be shaped by feminism; it attempts to foster a more inclusive and equitable society where the values and rights of all individuals, regardless of gender, are safeguarded.

## Recap

- ◆ Globalization shapes the world
- ◆ Increasing interconnection and interdependence on a global scale
- ◆ Factors - favourable historical conditions, technological progress, economic growth, and political scenario
- ◆ History of globalization – 15<sup>th</sup> century colonial and exploratory journeys
- ◆ Columbian exchange
- ◆ Industrial revolution – 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century increased trade, flow of goods and wealth
- ◆ Mechanical production of goods, steam power, capitalist production system
- ◆ Latter half of 20<sup>th</sup> century - aftermath of WWII
- ◆ Creation of IMF, World Bank, WTO helped the development of Globalization
- ◆ Political developments – End of cold war, collapse of communist regimes
- ◆ Increased economic deregulation and trade – Washington Consensus
- ◆ Advancements in transport and communications technology
- ◆ Types of globalization – Economic, cultural, political, social, environmental
- ◆ Impacts of globalization – both positive and negative consequences
- ◆ Defining feature of contemporary era
- ◆ Terrorism - calculated use of violence to create a general climate of fear in a population
- ◆ Practiced by political organizations, revolutionary groups, and government forces

- ◆ Maintain atmosphere of fear and destroy public's sense of security
- ◆ History of terrorism from ancient Greece to the Sicarii (Jewish Zealots), Robespierre's reign in France, the Spanish Inquisition, the Klu Klux Klan, twentieth century totalitarian governments, and anticolonial struggles
- ◆ Types of terrorism: revolutionary, subrevolutionary, establishment
- ◆ Key terrorist attacks
- ◆ Definition of feminism - a movement that aims to establish equal rights and legal protections for women, in a political, cultural, or economic backdrop
- ◆ Three Waves of Feminism
- ◆ Political rights, socio-cultural and legal rights, inclusion of alternative voices into feminism
- ◆ Women's writings as an important dimension of feminism
- ◆ Digital feminist activism - #MeToo movement
- ◆ Contemporary culture shaped by feminism and need for gender equality

## Objective Questions

1. What is Globalization?
2. Which factors aided the emergence of the contemporary form of Globalization?
3. What is the Columbian Exchange?
4. What key event that occurred in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century increased the interconnection and engagement between various global economies?
5. Which organizations were created with the aim of reducing trade barriers and increasing global economic integration?
6. What is the Washington Consensus?
7. What is Economic Globalization?
8. Why is there an increased influence of international powers on national politics?
9. What are the positive advantages of globalization?

10. Why does globalization cause an erosion of cultural diversity?
11. What is terrorism?
12. What are the different types of terrorism?
13. What is feminism?
14. Which works written by Simone de Beauvoir and Betty Friedan are significant texts of second-wave feminism?
15. What is the #MeToo movement?

## Answers

1. A multifaceted and intricate process that is marked by an increasing interconnected and interdependence between economies, nations, societies and cultures on a global scale.
2. Favourable historical conditions, technological progress, economic growth, and political scenario
3. The large-scale transfer of natural resources, goods, flora and fauna, and cultures between the Old World (Afro-Eurasia) and the New World (the Americas) facilitated by Christopher Columbus
4. The Industrial Revolution
5. International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and World Trade Organization (WTO)
6. The ideology that unrestricted trade and capital flows would lead to increased prosperity
7. The increasing interdependence and interconnection between different world economies as seen in trade, investment, and the movement of capital.
8. Due to political globalization
9. Increased economic growth and development, Reduction of poverty, Cultural exchanges
10. Due to its promotion of cultural homogenization
11. Calculated use of violence to create a general climate of fear in a population
12. Revolutionary, Subrevolutionary, and Establishment terrorism

13. A movement that aims to establish equal rights and legal protections for women, in a political, cultural, or economic backdrop.
14. *The Second Sex* and *The Feminine Mystique*
15. A digital feminist movement which gave voice to survivors of sexual assault

## Self Assessment Questions

1. What is globalization?
2. How did technology accelerate global interconnection?
3. What are the major types of globalization?
4. How can globalization encourage both cultural exchange and cultural homogenisation?
5. What is terrorism?
6. How does terrorism affect everyday life and public culture?
7. What is feminism?
8. What are the major concerns of the different waves of feminism?
9. How is gender different from biological sex?
10. Why is digital feminist activism important in contemporary culture?

## Assignments

1. In your opinion, how has globalization influenced contemporary culture? Provide examples.
2. Write a short note on the different types of globalization.
3. Discuss the impact of terrorism in contemporary life.
4. What is the significance of feminism in contemporary culture?
5. Provide your perspective on the various phenomena that have shaped contemporary culture.

## Suggested Reading

1. Ghauri, Pervez and Sarah Powell. *Globalisation*. Dorling Kindersley Limited, 2008.
2. Walthers, Margaret. *Feminism: A Very Short Introduction*. OUP, 2005.
3. Whittaker, David J. *The Terrorism Reader*. Routledge, 2012.

SGOU





**BLOCK**

# English Language & Indian English Writers



# UNIT

## Introduction of Western Education in India

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, learners will be able to:

- ◆ describe the major features of indigenous education in pre-colonial India
- ◆ explain the role of Gurukulas, Patashalas, Madrasas, Makhtabs and Tols in traditional education
- ◆ identify the major stages in the introduction of Western education under British rule
- ◆ explain the importance of the Charter Act of 1813, Macaulay's Minute, Bentinck's Resolution, Wood's Despatch and Hunter Commission
- ◆ analyse the colonial motives behind English education in India
- ◆ evaluate different perspectives on colonial education, including Orientalist, Anglicist, evangelical, official, nationalist and neo-colonial perspectives

### Prerequisite

India had its own systems of education long before the British introduced Western education. Different communities used different institutions. Gurukulas, Patashalas and Tols served many Hindu learners, while Madrasas and Makhtabs served many Muslim learners. The focus was largely on classical languages, religious learning, moral instruction, literature and traditional knowledge. Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and regional languages played important roles in learning and employment.

The arrival of British rule changed the educational landscape. At first, the East India Company did not interfere deeply in education. Later, education became part of colonial policy. Missionaries, Orientalists, Anglicists, liberals and utilitarians debated whether Indians should be educated through traditional languages or

through English. The Charter Act of 1813, Macaulay's Minute of 1835, Lord William Bentinck's decision, Wood's Despatch of 1854 and later commissions shaped modern education in India. English education created new opportunities, but it also produced cultural distance, inequality and debates about identity. This unit helps learners understand education as both a tool of knowledge and a tool of colonial power.

## Key concepts

- ♦ **Gurukula System:** The Gurukula education system was a residential education system where students lived in a Gurukula, the teacher's home, and learned from their gurus. The relationship between students and teachers was sacred, often without formal payments. Originating in ancient Vedic times, this system focused on skill-based learning rooted in *Vedas*, *Puranas*, and holy texts.
- ♦ **Colonial System of Education:** The British aimed to educate Indians as clerks for the East India Company, reducing costs. During colonial rule, modern education began with the Charter Act of 1813, focusing on English for land administration and local work. Calcutta Madrasa was established in 1781 to teach Muslim laws. However, the British education system did not prioritise science and technology knowledge.
- ♦ **Anglicists:** The company officials who were in favour of promoting western education in India.
- ♦ **Evangelicals:** In England, there was a group of Protestants who believed in Christ's supremacy and individual initiative. They saw human progress as only possible through faith in Christ and Christian culture.

## Discussion

Pre-colonial India had an indigenous education system, with Gurukulas and Patashalas for Hindus and Madrasas and Makhtabs for Muslims. This emphasis was on language scholarship rather than science and technology. By the time the British arrived, Persian was the court language, and both Hindus and Muslims learned Persian to obtain jobs. The British did not interfere in the educational field until 1813, when they introduced the western system of education with the cooperation

of a limited number of Indians. The British, known as 'Orientalists' and 'Anglicists', debated the type of education needed by the Indians, leading to the introduction of the western system.

### 6.1.1 Indigenous Education

The indigenous education system in late 18th and early 19th century India consisted of 'Madrasas' and 'Makhtabs' for Muslims and 'Tols' and 'Patshalas' for Hindus. These institutions ranged



from higher learning centers in Arabic and Sanskrit to lower levels for schooling people in Persian and Vernacular languages. The curriculum emphasised classical languages like Sanskrit, Arabic, or Persian, and subjects of classical Hindu or Islamic tradition. Non-upper castes and scheduled castes are also represented in lower-level schools. Women were generally excluded from the formal education system. The state had little or no role in school education, but kings would patronise pupils famous for their learning.

The establishment of British territorial control over India resulted in changes in many aspects of life. With the passing of power to the British, many changes occurred in the field of education. The education system that existed in India until the early nineteenth century had both advantages and disadvantages. The elementary schools offered basic education to rural residents, and their curriculum was secular in nature and responsive to practical needs. Perhaps too much emphasis on niceties of grammar, philosophy, and religion in higher centres of learning (Tols and Madrasas) narrowed the scope of secular and scientific knowledge expansion. The colonial rulers abolished the indigenous educational system and replaced it with their own. The indigenous system's potential as a means of mass education was destroyed. They established a formal educational system in India to meet their needs.

### 6.1.2 Colonial Education

Understanding the dynamics of the relationship between education and colonialism is critical for understanding the development of education under colonial rule. Economic and political control over the colonial country is required for colonial rule to survive, and education is used to achieve this goal. An attempt is made

through education to develop a new set of values and justify colonial rule. As a result, education loses its autonomy and becomes subordinate to political power. Colonial education, without a doubt, affects cultural transformation in a colonial country. New ideas and experiments, without a doubt, add to existing knowledge. However, the colonial country must pay a high price for it. The true beneficiaries of colonial education are a select few who benefited from it.

After gaining political power in 1765, the company's educational programme changed significantly, creating schools of higher learning and educating sons of powerful Indians for higher positions. The Orientalist School of Educational Policy began with Calcutta Madrasas and Banaras Sanskrit College. The Court of Directors aimed to preserve these institutions. Christian missionaries in India played a crucial role in converting people to Christianity. They managed schools for the converted population, primarily from Hindu society's lowest strata. Missionaries developed schools in various parts of India, including Madras and Bengal. They were responsible for educating people and making them capable of comprehending and appreciating the Scriptures.

Charles Grant, the father of modern education in India, advocated for missionary education to address India's illiteracy and need for a proper religion. He believed that education first and then conversion to Christianity would be the best way to improve the situation. Grant's recommendations for English instruction for Indians were significant in history, as he predicted the future development of Indian education in 1792.

The Charter Act of 1813 was a significant moment in Indian education, as it established the responsibility for

education between the Company and missionaries. The Act, influenced by financial motives, allowed the Company to set aside a sum of one lac annually to revive and improve literature, encourage learned Indians, and introduce science knowledge among British India inhabitants. This campaign, lasting twenty years, marked a watershed moment in Indian education.

In the early 19th century, India experimented with mass education, English medium of instruction, and mother tongue education. The Bengal Presidency's General Committee of Public Instruction, led by H.T. Prinsep and H.H. Wilson, spent a grant of one lac on Indian education, re-organising Calcutta Madrasas, establishing a Sanskrit College, printing and publishing Sanskrit and Arabic books, and employing Oriental scholars.

The British were eager to introduce the English language to India. They did so for a variety of reasons. Educating Indians in English was part of their strategy. The Indians would be willing to work as clerks for low wages, whereas the British would demand much higher wages for the same work. Administrative costs would be reduced as a result. It was also expected to produce a class of Indians who were loyal

to the British and could not relate to other Indians. In addition, they would contribute to raising the value of British goods. They sought to increase the country's political influence and the strength of their policy through education. They believed that a small group of educated Indians would spread English culture among the general population and would enable them to rule. The British only hired Indians who could speak English, forcing many Indians to pursue an education in the language. Education quickly became the exclusive domain of the wealthy and urban residents.

### **6.1.2.1 Debate over Colonial Policy of Education**

The English East India Company, a commercial corporation, initially focused on trade and profit before acquiring territorial power in the second half of the 18th century. However, with the British occupation, there was a growing debate about its role in promoting education in India. Initially, the company aimed to maintain neutrality in the sphere of religion and culture, fearing opposition from locals. However, pressure from various groups, including missionaries, liberals, Orientalists, and utilitarians, forced the company to take responsibility for promoting learning. The company

#### **Extracts from the Diary of H.T. Prinsep Concerning the Dispute between Orientalists Anglicists:**

When the subject came under consideration in Council, there was a very hot argument between myself and Mr. Macaulay. The issue was the resolution that was published not abolishing 'existing colleges, but requiring them "to teach English as well as native literature and making the former obligatory, also giving some encouragement to vernacular studies. But declaring that all Government pecuniary aid in future should be given exclusively to promote the study of European science through the medium of English language. Lord W. Bentinck would not even allow my memorandum to be placed on record. He said it was quite an abuse that Secretariat should take upon themselves to



write memorandums: that it was enough for the Court of Directors to see what the Members of Council chose to plan on record. Thus ended this matter for the time. The Resolution passed on this occasion was modified afterwards and made a little more favourable for the old native institutions by Lord Auckland. But English has ever since been the study preferentially encouraged by Government in connection with vernacular literature. The study of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian is, in consequence, less cultivated than heretofore, but none of the old institutions have been altogether abolished” (emphasis added).

also had a divided opinion on whether to promote western or oriental learning. Some Englishmen supported oriental learning, while others argued against Western knowledge.

The Council debated the resolution to abolish existing colleges, requiring them to teach English and regional literature, making the former obligatory and encouraging vernacular studies. The resolution declared that future government financial aid should be exclusively for European science study through English. Lord W. Bentinck deemed it abusive to record the memorandum, but the resolution was later modified to favour old native institutions. English has been encouraged by the government for Arabic literature, but no institutions have been entirely abolished.

#### ***6.1.2.2 Extracts from the Minute of T. B. Macaulay, dated the 21, February 1835***

The government has a fund for intellectual improvement in India, but the question remains: which language should be used? The common dialects among the people lack literary and scientific information and are poor and rude. The committee suggests English, while the other half strongly recommends Arabic and Sanskrit. The author has no knowledge of either language but has read

translations and conversed with proficient Eastern speakers. They believe that a single shed of a good English library is worth the national literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic splendor of Western literature is fully appreciated by those supporting the oriental plan of education.

The above mentioned portion from British official comments demonstrates the colonial attitude of the British towards the Indian educational system and their true intentions to bring about the English-language education system in India at that time.

#### ***6.1.2.3 Evangelical Perspective***

The Evangelicals in England, who embraced western culture and ideas, believed that Western education was the solution to India’s backwardness. They supported the idea that education could filter down from elites to the masses, developing new cultural values and knowledge. Thomas Babinton Macaulay, a prominent advocate of utilitarianism in India, advocated for Western learning through English language education. James Mill, a key advocate of Utilitarianism in India, emphasised the importance of legislative and administrative reforms. Missionaries, on the other hand, supported the introduction of education in India to spread new cultural values and convert people to Christianity.

#### **6.1.2.4 Official Perspective**

The British sought to strengthen their political authority in India through modern education. However, the traditional Indian system of education withered due to lack of official support and the announcement in 1844 that applicants for government employment should possess English knowledge. This led to a neglect of mass education, resulting in a 94% illiteracy rate in 1921. The emphasis on English as the medium of instruction also hindered the spread of education to the masses, creating a linguistic and cultural gap. Education was costly and a virtual monopoly of the richer classes and city-dwellers. A major weakness in early educational policy was the neglect of girls' education, with no funds allocated. The Company's administration also neglected scientific and technical education, with only three medical colleges and one good engineering college. The government's financial constraints contributed to these weaknesses.

#### **6.1.2.5 Nationalist Perspective**

The British aimed to educate Indians as clerks for the East India Company, reducing costs. The colonial education system in India introduced modern education but also divided Indians into educated and uneducated groups, influenced the Indian independence struggle, and weakened the roots of the freedom struggle. It was specific to gender, class, and caste, and did not appeal to the masses.

#### **6.1.2.6 Neo-Colonial Perspective**

The British education system aims to prepare students for personal, social, and professional success. Its specific objectives include accessibility and inclusivity, educational excellence, holistic development, life preparation,

social cohesion, cultural awareness, higher education and careers, well-being and mental health, and assessment and accountability. These aims reflect the broader goals of education in the United Kingdom and aim to create well-rounded individuals capable of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. The system also promotes social cohesion, cultural awareness, and global citizenship. The system encompasses different stages of education, each with its own specific aims and objectives. The system ensures fair and effective assessment methods to measure student progress and outcomes.

#### **6.1.3 Assessment of the Process of Education during the British Period**

The Education Despatch of 1854 and the Indian Education Commission of 1882-83 laid the foundations for the comprehensive education policy for British India in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Despatch emphasised the importance of imparting useful knowledge to natives of India, focusing on European arts, science, philosophy, and literature. It also emphasised the necessity for universities to encourage a regular and liberal course of education, conferring academic degrees and adding honorary marks for those who wish to complete a dictionary. The Despatch also emphasised the urgent need to establish vocational colleges and schools of industry, and the urgency of spreading education among women. Following the recommendation, Lord Canning passed the Acts of Incorporation in 1857, which provided for the establishment of universities in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras on the model of the University of London. The number of affiliated colleges and students increased significantly, while secondary schools in all five provinces also experienced growth.



In 1882, Lord Ripon appointed the first Indian Education Commission to investigate the progress of primary education in India. The commission was appointed due to agitations alleging neglect in education and the establishment of a national compulsory elementary education system in England. The commission's recommendations included freeing the government from mass education responsibilities and suggesting a gradual transfer of government colleges and secondary schools to private bodies. However, the missionary hope of dominating the field of education was lost, as the British education system was raising discontented subjects and posing a threat to British rule in India. Post-Hunter Commission years, secondary and higher education showed considerable progress, with the number of secondary schools and students increasing. The colonial education policy failed to create a national system of education in India, as the British viewed India as a recruiting ground for Christianity and a field of commerce and profit.

The British educational policy during the 19th century in India was ineffective in promoting national solidarity and fostering communal and religious harmony. The policy allowed the education of Hindus and Muslims to grow in isolation, while the economic aspects of British rule were inadequate for educational progress. The British administration focused on English models and imposed them without considering the socio-economic backgrounds of the colonised Indians. This led to the division of Indian society into two distinct groups: a small minority of urban and upper-class educated aristocracy and a large majority of illiterate people from rural areas. The British higher education system in India did little to promote analytical capacity or creative thinking, and left graduates Westernised enough to

alienate them from their Indian cultural roots. The English educated man became a hybrid, as their English masters were obsessed with turning them into plaster Englishmen. Homi Bhabha's "Signs Taken for Wonders" addresses the problems of colonial representation of authority and the hybridization of power and discourse, empowering the colonised subjects to resist the oppression of imperial power through hybridization strategies.

The colonial education system failed to create a national system of education, leading to an inappropriate synthesis of two cultures. Professor Brown's attitude towards his students in Narayan's *The Bachelor of Arts* is a stark example of this. He is a custodian of British prestige, but does not serve Indians with sincere heart. Narayan, a strong critic of the colonial education system, criticises the attitude of Indian professors educated in the system. He believes that the country needs a clarified, purified Indian History. Narayan's novels often depict young people abandoning formal education to pursue their own goals, expressing his apathy towards the joyless, overburdened learning. He sympathises with the young minds overburdened by the educational system and calls for a new system where students have adequate time to play, dream, and imagine.

The British introduced a new education system in India, supported by Thomas Macaulay, which aimed to spread Western culture and introduce European literature to the Indian curriculum. The British believed that Indian art, literature, and science were inferior and favoured the English language. Lord William Bentinck accepted these resolutions and policies, which became the basis of the Indian education system. The British also introduced a filter theory of education, aiming to make the elite Indian classes

their followers. The government lacked funds to educate all classes of Indians, and educated classes were expected to educate the masses.

Indigenous systems of education were studied in parts of Bihar, Bengal, and Punjab, with no separate buildings for schools and lower fees. The learning age for students was between 6 and 14 years, and students were given hard punishments by teachers. English became a medium of government employment, and the

curriculum and textbooks emphasised European arts, literature, and science.

The growth of national education in India was divided into several phases, with the first phase emphasising the introduction of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction. The main characteristics of the national education system included national character, vocational education, and Indian languages, as well as scientific and professional education.

## Recap

- ◆ Pre-colonial India had an indigenous education system, with Gurukulas and Patashalas for Hindus and Madarasas and Maktabas for Muslims. The emphasis was on language scholarship rather than science and technology.
- ◆ By the time the British arrived, Persian was the court language, and both Hindus and Muslims learned Persian to obtain jobs.
- ◆ The British did not interfere in the educational field until 1813, when they introduced the western system of education with the cooperation of a limited number of Indians.
- ◆ The indigenous education system consisted of 'Madrasas' and 'Maktabas' for Muslims and 'Tols' and 'Patshalas' for the Indians.
- ◆ The curriculum emphasised classical language like Sanskrit, Arabic, or Persian, and subjects of classical Hindu or Islamic tradition.
- ◆ The establishment of British territorial control over India resulted in changes in many aspects of life, including the introduction of the western system of education.
- ◆ Understanding the dynamics of the relationship between education and colonialism is critical for understanding the development of education under colonial rule.
- ◆ Economic and political control is required for colonial rule to survive, and education is used to develop a new set of values and justify colonial rule.
- ◆ The Charter Act of 1813 established the responsibility for education between the Company and missionaries, marking a watershed moment in Indian education.

- ◆ The British introduced a new education system in India, supported by Thomas Macaulay, to strengthen their political authority.
- ◆ The emphasis on English as the medium of instruction also hindered the spread of education to the masses, creating a linguistic and cultural gap.
- ◆ The British education system aimed to prepare students for personal, social, and professional success.
- ◆ The Education Despatch of 1854 and the Indian Education Commission of 1882-83 laid the foundations for the comprehensive education policy.
- ◆ The colonial education policy failed to create a national system of education in India, as the British viewed India as a recruiting ground for Christianity and a field of commerce and profit.
- ◆ The British administration focused on English models without considering the socio-economic backgrounds of the colonised Indians, leading to the division of Indian society.
- ◆ The British introduced a new education system in India, supported by Thomas Macaulay, which aimed to spread Western culture and introduce European literature to the Indian curriculum.

## Objective Questions

1. What were the main components of the indigenous education system in late 18th and early 19th century India?
2. What language was emphasised in the indigenous education system before the British arrived?
3. In which year did the British first interfere in the educational field in India?
4. Who were the two groups among the British known for debating the type of education needed for Indians?
5. Who is considered the father of modern education in India and advocated for missionary education?
6. What was the significance of the Charter Act of 1813 in Indian education?
7. Which language did the British aim to introduce to India for various strategic reasons?



8. What was the major outcome of the resolution debated between Orientalists and Anglicists regarding the language of instruction in existing colleges?
9. According to Thomas Babinton Macaulay, which language was suggested for intellectual improvement in India?
10. Which educational policy laid the foundations for comprehensive education in British India in the mid-19th century?
11. Who initiated the Indian Education Commission of 1882-83?
12. Who advocated for Western learning through English language education in India from the Evangelical perspective?
13. In what year was the Acts of Incorporation passed, leading to the establishment of universities in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras?
14. According to Homi Bhabha's "Signs Taken for Wonders," what empowered colonized subjects to resist imperial oppression?
15. Which perspective criticizes the British education system for creating an inappropriate synthesis of two cultures?

## Answers

1. Gurukulas, Patashalas, Madrasas, Makhtabs, Tols, and Patshalas.
2. Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, and Vernacular languages.
3. 1813.
4. Orientalists and Anglicists.
5. Charles Grant.
6. It established responsibility for education between the Company and missionaries.
7. English.
8. English was preferentially encouraged.
9. English.
10. The Education Despatch of 1854.
11. Lord Ripon.
12. Thomas Babinton Macaulay.

13. 1857.
14. Hybridization strategies.
15. Neo-Colonial Perspective.

## Self Assessment Questions

1. What were the main features of indigenous education in pre-colonial India?
2. How did Gurukulas and Patashalas differ from Madrasas and Maktabas?
3. Why were Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and vernacular languages important in traditional education?
4. Why did the East India Company initially avoid direct intervention in Indian education?
5. What was the importance of the Charter Act of 1813 in Indian education?
6. What was the central issue in the Orientalist-Anglicist debate?
7. How did Macaulay's Minute support English education in India?
8. Why did the British believe English education would help colonial administration?
9. How did colonial education create a gap between educated elites and the masses?
10. What were the major limitations of British educational policy in India?

## Assignments

1. Discuss the characteristics of the indigenous education system in pre-colonial India, demonstrating the role of Gurukulas, Patashalas, Madrasas, and Maktabas. How did this system emphasise language scholarship rather than science and technology?
2. Examine the impact of British colonialism on the education system in India. How did the British, initially divided between Orientalists and Anglicists, eventually introduce the western system of education?

Discuss the Charter Act of 1813 and its significance in shaping Indian education under colonial rule.

3. Explore the perspectives and debates within the English East India Company regarding its role in promoting education in India. How did pressure from various groups, including missionaries, liberals, Orientalists, and utilitarians, influence the company's stance on promoting Western or oriental learning?
4. Analyse the motives behind the British efforts to introduce the English language in Indian education. How did the British envision the role of English education in shaping the socio-political landscape, and what were the intended consequences of this language policy on Indian society?
5. Examine the different perspectives on colonial education in India, including the Evangelical perspective, official perspective, nationalist perspective, and neo-colonial perspective. How did these perspectives shape the development of the education system, and what were the consequences for different segments of the Indian population, including gender, class, and caste?

## Suggested Reading

1. Omvedt, Gail. *Cultural Revolt in a Colonial Society: The Non Brahman Movement in Western*
2. *India, 1873 to 1930*. Scientific Socialist Education Trust, 1976.
3. Seth, Sanjay. *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India*. Duke UP, 2007.





## UNIT

# Indian Writing in English

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explain the historical growth of Indian Writing in English from the colonial period onwards
- ◆ identify the major themes of Indian English literature, including culture, tradition, nationalism, identity, social reform, gender, caste and modernity
- ◆ discuss the contributions of Toru Dutt, R. C. Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Kamala Das, A. K. Ramanujan and U. R. Ananda Murthy
- ◆ analyse how Indian writers used English to express Indian experiences and cultural realities
- ◆ recognise the role of Indian English literature in world literature
- ◆ evaluate Indian Writing in English as a product of colonial contact, cultural negotiation and creative self-expression

### Prerequisite

Indian Writing in English grew from a complex historical situation. English came to India through colonial power, but Indian writers gradually transformed it into a medium for expressing Indian life, memory, culture and resistance. The result was not simple imitation of British literature. Indian writers used English to narrate Indian myths, social problems, spiritual questions, nationalist aspirations, everyday life and modern conflicts.

The writers discussed in this unit represent different phases and concerns. Toru Dutt used English and French literary forms to retell Indian myths and legends.

R. C. Dutt wrote history, economics and literary works that criticised colonial economic exploitation. Rabindranath Tagore brought Indian spirituality, humanism and lyricism to world literature. Mulk Raj Anand exposed caste oppression and social injustice. R. K. Narayan created Malgudi and portrayed ordinary Indian life with humour and irony. Kamala Das gave a bold feminist voice to women's emotions and body-consciousness. A. K. Ramanujan blended Indian and Western sensibilities in poetry and translation. U. R. Ananda Murthy explored caste, tradition, modernity and existential conflict. This unit helps learners see Indian English writing as a powerful literary tradition shaped by history, language and identity.

## Key concepts

- ◆ **Indian Literature in English:** Indian English literature is the work of Indian writers who write in English, whose native or co-native language may be one of the numerous Indian languages. Early contributors include Rabindranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo.
- ◆ **The Nobel Prize in Literature,** established by Alfred Nobel's 1895 will, is awarded annually by the Swedish Academy to authors for outstanding contributions in literature.

## Discussion

The English language has been widely accepted in India since the 17th century, with its introduction by the East India Company for official use in government bodies. The language evolved and adapted over time, starting with the establishment of the printing press and the publication of the first newspaper, *Hickey's Bengal Gazette*. Sake Dean Mahomet's travel narrative in 1793 A.D. was another significant breakthrough in making the English language known to the people. Lord William Bentinck in 1835 made English mandatory for subjects like literature and science, leading to changes in education and the creation of the first generation of English speakers.

The period between 1850 and 1900 was characterised by romanticism in Indian literature, while 1900-1947 saw

the fusion of early twentieth-century romanticism with British and decadent romanticism, ultimately leading to political freedom in 1947. In the second generation period, Indian writers began to develop a Romantic spirit, with poets like Sarojini Naidu, Tagore, Aurobindo Ghosh, and Harindranath Chattopadhyay being dominant figures. Their poetic output was filled with nationalism, spirituality, and mysticism, different from English Romanticism. Rabindranath Tagore, renowned Bengali poet, was considered a Leonardo Da Vinci of India.

The late seventies saw the significant development of English in India, with the rise of elite writers like Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Amitav Ghosh, and Dominique Lieperre. Writers like Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai won





the Man Booker Prize in 1997 and 2006 respectively. New authors like Pankaj Mishra, Chetan Bhagat, Jhumpa Lahiri, William Dalrymple, and Hari Kenzura also contributed to the literature world. Jhumpa Lahiri's works expressed the emotions of people who had migrated to other countries and left their past in their native land.

In India, where women are often negatively portrayed and victims of patriarchy and domestic violence, literature has provided them with an outlet to express them. Indian English literature has produced numerous talented women novelists, addressing gender issues and marginalisation. The growth of Indian English literary works has increased, making it a leading global language. The translations of regional texts in English have also gained acclaim, making the English language a valuable literary personality and a unique recognition for the nation. Women's contributions to English literature have transcended geographical boundaries and continue to influence contemporary Indian literature.

Even though Indian Writing in English gained prominence in the last century, it is a controversial topic since there arise regional as well as global criticism. Salman Rushdie and Amit Chaudhuri's books highlight the debate, with Rushdie arguing that India's best writing since independence may have been done in the language of the departed imperialists. Chaudhuri believes that Indo-Angelical writing uses magical realism, bagginess, non-linear narrative, and hybrid language to represent Indian conditions. He also believes that Indianness is a theme constructed only in Indo-Angelical writing and does not articulate itself in vernacular literatures. Some argue that categorising Indo-Angelical writing as Indian Writing in English or under post-colonial literature

is limiting, with Amitav Ghosh refusing to accept the Eurasian Commonwealth Writers Prize for his book *The Glass Palace*.

### 6.2.1 Toru Dutt

Toru Dutt was a prominent Indian poet, novelist, essayist, translator, and polyglot. Born in 1856 to the wealthy Dutt family in Rambagan, Calcutta, she was the youngest of three children. The Dutt family was renowned for its aristocracy, Westernised outlook, and literary leanings. Toru's uncles and cousins were also prolific writers of prose and poetry in English. Toru's family's happiness was shattered when her eldest son, Abju, died at the age of 14. To address this, her father, Govin Chunder Dutt, and his wife left for Europe in 1869. They sailed to France, where they studied French and later moved to England. In Cambridge, they attended the "Lectures for Ladies" series and met Mary E Martin.

Upon returning to Calcutta, the Dutt family tried to write but were left alone after the death of their elder sister, Aru. Toru produced an impressive collection of poetry and prose, contributing regularly to *The Bengal Magazine* and *The Calcutta Review*. She translated political speeches by Victor Hugo and M Adolphe Thiers and aimed to translate Clarisse Bader's book *Les Femmes dans L'Inde Antique* into English. However, her ailing health prevented her from completing these projects. Toru died on August 30, 1877, suffering from tuberculosis. Her only work during her lifetime was *A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields* (1876), a collection of English translations of French poetry. She also left her only English novel, *Bianca*, unfinished. Her French novel *Le Journal de Mademoiselle d'Arvers* was published posthumously in France in 1879. Her original poems and poetic adaptations

from Sanskrit literature and Bengali tales were published posthumously in London in 1882.

Toru Dutt's poetics are characterised by her anxiety for the presentation and interpretation of Hindu myths and legends, expounding the multi-dimensionality of the Hindu view of life. Despite being a Christian by faith and soaked in French and English cultures, she was a true Indian who had heard the stories of Hindu epics and puranas from her parents. Her *Ancient Ballads and Legends at Hindustan* hold a mirror to the soul of India and breathe "vedic solemnity and simplicity of temper." The stories of Savitri, Lakshman, Buttoo, and Prahlad are instinctive and possess great moral values.

Toru Dutt's ballads and legends are significant not only as cultural and philosophical anthropology but also as a political, religious, or moral instrument. The ballads are interspersed with serious observations that suggest profound thought and familiarity with the best expositions of Hindu philosophy. The poet has used Indian myths and fables to illustrate certain moral laws which give final beauty to human life.

Toru Dutt's treatment of Indian myths and legends is imaginative and governed by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty. She is a great lover of nature and takes us to an almost Katesian world where beauty and truth become each other's revelation. She is an accomplished verse-builder with a delicate talent and some outbreaks of genius, and her craftsmanship in verse is beautifully brought out in *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan*.

### 6.2.2 Romesh Chunder Dutt

R C Dutt was a prominent Indian economist and historian who left for Britain in 1868 and studied at University

College in London. He became the first Indian to be appointed district magistrate and divisional commissioner in Bengal, and was elected President of the Bengali literary association Bangiya Sahitya Parishad in 1894. Dutt's classic diagnosis of the Indian economic problem under colonial rule emphasised the 'drainage of wealth' from India, the lack of protection for Indian industries, and the negative implications of constructive efforts like railways.

Dutt was educated in various Bengali District schools and Hare School, Calcutta. He passed the First Arts examination in 1866 and qualified for the Indian Civil Service in 1869, taking the third place. Dutt served as an assistant magistrate of Alipur and was the first Indian to attain the rank of divisional commissioner in 1895. Post-retirement, Dutt retired from the Indian Civil Service in 1897 and returned to England as a lecturer in Indian History at University College, London. He returned to India as dewan of Baroda State and served as the president of the Indian National Congress in 1899.

His book, *The Literature of Bengal*, presented a connected story of literary and intellectual progress in Bengal over eight centuries. Dutt was highly popular in Baroda, where the king, Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III, called him 'Babu Dewan'. He was also the 19th-century economic historian who emphasised the de-industrialization of India under British rule. He argued that Indian manufacturing and agriculture were crucial for Asian and European markets. However, the East India Company and British Parliament discouraged Indian manufactures, leading to millions of Indian artisans losing their earnings. He also highlighted internal differentiation, urban-rural polarization, and recurring famines.



**Political Career:** Dutt was appointed a lecturer in Indian History at the University of London shortly after his retirement from the Civil Service. In 1899, he was elected President of the Indian National Congress, and the expanding politically aware educated populace viewed him as one of their most effective spokespersons. R.C Dutt gained a reputation as an excellent orator and a man who was not hesitant to speak his own opinions even as a Civil Servant. His viewpoints on the reasons for poverty in India and administrative issues, such as the contentious Ilbert Bill, were not always in line with official thought. In 1904 he served as Revenue Minister for the State of Baroda for three years, while he was still at the University of London, and he returned again in 1908 as a member of the Decentralization Commission.

**Major Works:** *England and India* (1897), *Maha-Bharata: The Epic of Ancient India, Condensed into English Verse by Romesh Dutt*, (1899), *The Civilization of India* (1900), *Famines and Land Assessments in India* (1900), *A School History of Modern and Ancient India* (1900), *Land Problems in India* (1903), *Civilization in the Buddhist Age, B.C. 320 to A.D. 500* (1908), *The Slave Girl of Agra: An Indian Historical Romance* (1909), *A History of Civilization in Ancient India, Based on Sanscrit Literature* (Vol. 1889-90), *The Economic History of British India : A Record of Agriculture and Land Settlements, Trade and Manufacturing Industries, Finance and Administration, from the Rise of the British Power in 1757 to the Accession of Queen Victoria in 1837* (1902), *The Literature of Bengal* (1877), *Lays of Ancient India: Selections from Indian Poetry Rendered into English Verse, Trubner's Oriental Series* (1894), *Rambles in India: During Twenty-Four Years, 1871 to 1895* (1895), *Reminiscences of a Workman's Life* (1896), *India in the*

*Victorian Age* (1904), *Open Letters to Lord Curzon & Speeches and Papers* (1904), *A Brief History of Ancient and Modern Bengal* (1904), *Indian Poetry, Temple Classics* (1905), and *Economic History of India under Early English Rule* (1906), *Peasantry of Bengal* (1980).

### 6.2.3 Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore was a prominent Indian writer and poet who was educated at home and later sent to England for formal schooling. Tagore participated in the Indian nationalist movement and was knighted by the British Government in 1915. He became a voice of India's spiritual heritage and a great living institution in Bengal. He wrote in various literary genres, including poetry, plays, short stories, novels, musical dramas, dance dramas, essays, travel diaries, and two autobiographies. Tagore also left numerous drawings, paintings, and songs, for which he wrote the music himself. He was knighted by the British Government in 1915 but resigned as a protest against British policies in India.

Rabindranath Tagore was born on May 6, 1861, in Calcutta, India. He was influenced by the Upanishads and mystical Indian poets. Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for his book of poetry, *Gitanjali* in 1913. He established a school, Shantiniketan, in Bengal, which later became a college and university under the name "Visva-Bharati". Tagore also introduced a new form of art, painting, and composed many patriotic songs and articles, including the National Anthem, "Jana Gana Mana". Tagore died on August 7, 1941, in Calcutta, leaving behind a legacy of world-class literature. He was a great poet, philosopher, social reformer, mystic, and a great human being. Tagore's birthday is celebrated as

Rabindra Jayanti in West Bengal, and his contributions continue to inspire noble thoughts and great ideas for humanity.

His short stories are highly regarded, credited with originating the Bengali-language version of the genre. His non-fiction focused on history, linguistics, and spirituality, and he wrote autobiographies. Tagore's experiences with drama began at sixteen, with his first original piece, *Valmiki Pratibha*, written at twenty. His later works used more philosophical and allegorical themes, such as *Dak Ghar*, *Chandalika*, and *Raktakarabi*.

Tagore's career in short stories began in 1877 with "Bhikharini," which effectively invented the Bengali-language short story genre. His "Sadhana" period, from 1891 to 1895, was among his most fecund, yielding more than half the stories contained in the three-volume *Galpaguchchha*. These stories usually showcase Tagore's reflections upon his surroundings, modern ideas, and interesting mind puzzles. His early stories were associated with vitality and spontaneity, connected to his life in common villages. Many of the other *Galpaguchchha* stories were written during his *Sabuj Patra* period from 1914 to 1917.

Tagore wrote eight novels and four novellas, including *Ghare Baire*, which explores Indian nationalism, terrorism, and religious zeal in the Swadeshi movement. *Ghare Baire* raises controversial questions about Indian identity, self-identity, personal freedom, and religion in the context of a family story and love triangle. In *Jogajog*, the heroine Kumudini is torn between her pity for her progressive elder brother's sinking fortunes and her foil. Tagore flaunts his feminist leanings and pathos depicts the plight and ultimate demise of women trapped by pregnancy, duty, and family honour. *Shesher Kobita*,

his most lyrical novel, contains elements of satire and postmodernism and features stock characters that gleefully attack the reputation of an old, outmoded, oppressively renowned poet. Though his novels remain among the least-appreciated, they have been given renewed attention via film adaptations, such as *Chokher Bali* and *Ghare Baire*.

*Gitanjali*, the Nobel Prize in Literature for Rabindranath Tagore, is his best-known collection of poetry. He was the first non-European to receive a Nobel Prize in Literature and second non-European to receive a Nobel Prize after Theodore Roosevelt. Tagore's poetic style, which follows a lineage established by 15th and 16th century Vaishnava poets, ranges from classical formalism to the comic, visionary, and ecstatic. His most innovative and mature poetry embodies his exposure to Bengali rural folk music, including mystic Baul ballads such as those of the bard Lalou.

Tagore absorbed new poetic concepts, allowing him to further develop a unique identity. He was a prolific composer with around 2,230 songs, known as 'rabindrasangeet' ("Tagore Song"), which merges fluidly into his literature. Influenced by the *thumri* style of Hindustani music, they ran the gamut of human emotion, ranging from early dirge-like Brahmo devotional hymns to quasi-erotic compositions.

*Amar Shonar Bangla*, the national anthem of Bangladesh, was written in 1971 to protest the 1905 Partition of Bengal along communal lines. Tagore saw the partition as a cunning plan to stop the independence movement and aimed to rekindle Bengali unity and tar communalism. Tagore also took up drawing and painting at sixty, exhibiting his many works throughout Europe.





He was likely red, green colour-blind, resulting in works that exhibited strange colour schemes and off-beat aesthetics. Tagore's artist's eye for handwriting was revealed in the simple artistic and rhythmic leitmotifs embellishing his manuscripts.

**Nationalism:** Tagore was a true nationalist who inspired generations of intellectuals and empathetic minds. His unconventional, integrated views on Indian nationalism focused on the true spirit of nationalism as a broad humanistic concern rather than constrained political strategy. Tagore aimed to dissociate himself from the general belief of nationalism and associate it with ideas such as peace, harmony, and welfare. He believed that humanity does not require a narrow sense of nationalism and should be formulated through various means of life.

Tagore argues that India's real problem is not political but social, contrasting it with western countries. Europeans had racial unity from the beginning, but natural resources were insufficient, leading to political and commercial aggressiveness. India has faced the race problem since the earliest times, and nationalists often overlook the lack of a basis for nationalism. India has tried to address the caste issue through saints preaching one God to all races, but the system has become too rigid. Tagore compares India's situation with that of America, comparing the two countries' attitudes towards different races. Europe has lost faith in humanity and become distrustful, while America is not pessimistic or unconcerned. Tagore believes that America is destined to justify Western civilization to the East, and its history has been disinterested in helping Japan and China in their lessons in Western civilization. America must be fully conscious of its future and have a strong faith in humanity with the strength of youth.

Tagore believed that the true spirit of nationalism lies in its broad humanistic concern rather than constrained political strategy. He believed that only those peoples with a spirit of cooperation have survived and achieved civilization. He also believed that political freedom is not the ultimate destination in the freedom movement, and that the history of man is just a chapter in the larger one.

He opposed imperialism and supported Indian nationalists. Tagore argued for India's right to independence without denying the importance of learning from abroad. He urged the masses to seek self-help and education, and saw British administration as a political symptom of the social disease. Tagore's views enraged many, leading to his escape from assassination. He wrote songs lionizing the Indian independence movement and played a key role in resolving a Gandhi-Ambedkar dispute, mooted Gandhi's fasts (Poona Pact).

His contributions to literature, arts, history, and politics were valuable. He co-founded Dartington Hall School, influenced Nobel laureate Yasunari Kawabata in Japan, and was a guide for radical writer Nguyen An Ninh in colonial Vietnam. Tagore's works were translated into various European languages, and his lecturing circuits in the United States were widely attended and acclaimed. However, controversies involving Tagore tarnished his popularity. Tagore was criticised for being overrated and having subpar English offerings, which reduced his trans-national appeal. Despite this, Tagore's poems remain a source of inspiration for many, including poets like William Radice and E.M. Forster.

#### 6.2.4 Mulk Raj Anand

Mulk Raj Anand, an Indian writer,



was a pioneer in Indo-Anglian fiction and a pioneer of modern Indian English literature. Born in 1905 in Peshawar, he was known for his realistic fiction, which provided insight into the lives of the oppressed and depicted poverty, exploitation, and misery. He moved to England and attended University College London, where he worked in a restaurant. In 1929, he completed his Ph.D. in philosophy at Cambridge University. Anand began his literary career in England, writing short reviews in T.S. Eliot's magazine, *Criterion*. He actively participated in politics and wrote his first novel, *Untouchable*, in 1935, which exposed the untouchable caste system in India. He founded the Progressive Writers' Association and joined the International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War. Anand lectured in literature and philosophy at London County Council Adult Education Schools and the Workers' Educational Association. He worked as a scriptwriter and broadcaster during World War II. Anand returned to India in 1947 and taught at various universities, including the University of Punjab and Lalit Kala Akademi. He also became president of Lokayata Trust.

He was active in the Indian independence movement and supported Left causes worldwide. He wrote propaganda for the Indian cause in London and worked as a scriptwriter for the BBC in London. Anand returned to India in 1947 and continued his literary output, including poetry, essays, autobiographies, novels, and short stories. His most important works in India include *The Village* (1939), *Across the Black Waters* (1939), *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942), *Coolie* (1936), and *The Private Life of an Indian Prince* (1953). He founded a literary magazine, *Marg*, and taught in various universities. Anand worked with the International

Progress Organization (IPO) in the 1970s on cultural self-awareness among nations and delivered lectures on eminent Indians. His 1953 novel, *The Private Life of an Indian Prince*, is autobiographical. His 1964 novel *Death of a Hero* was based on Maqbool Sherwani's life and was adapted as *Maqbool Ki Vaapsi on Doora Darshan Kashir*.

He is often criticised for his propaganda writing, which is dominated by the author's ulterior purpose. Critics argue that Anand's novels, like *Untouchable*, cannot rank among the great works of literature due to their extra-literary intentions and proletarian sympathies. However, Anand maintains that his novels have been rewarded by being translated into many languages, despite their exposure of many shams, hypocrisies, and orthodoxies of India.

Anand's early writings cannot be fully appreciated without studying the movement of the 19th-thirties in Western Europe. He was shaped by the problems of the private-public problem in the 1930s and found it difficult to maintain aloofness from politics in post-World War Europe. Anand stayed in London for over two decades, influenced by the Progressive Movement in literature and the influence of literary, political, and social influences. He was an overt nationalist and championed the socialist cause in his fiction. The early decades of the century in Europe and elsewhere put great pressure on writers to sympathise with the social cause. The General Strike of 1926 in Great Britain made people aware of the class war between haves and have-nots in modern civilization.

The General Strike aimed to secure specific rights for mine workers, a proletarian challenge to the English government's capitalist bias. Anand and

his colleagues sided with the workers, feeling disillusioned by the fallacy of the strike and the reactionary nature of the English State. The economic depression and cynical mood after World War II led to the rise of fascism in Italy and Nazi Germany, reflecting the paralysis of Western democracies. The intellectuals of the day sought a commitment to restore order and save their world from chaos. In 1935, intellectuals like Maxim Gorky, Romain Rolland, Thomas Mann, and E.M. Forster assembled in Paris to raise the voice of liberty for writers. They urged them to be courageous and sensitive, arousing the people to act and struggle for creating a just and humane society. Inspired by these ideas, Indian students studying in England formed the Progressive Writers Association, which was finalised by Anand and Sajjad Zaheer.

**Untouchable:** Untouchable was written in 1930. He began writing the first draft, *Bakha*, during a long weekend in Dublin. Later, he came across a poem about a sweeper-boy named Uka by Mahatma Gandhi in *Young India*. Anand wrote to the Mahatma and was allowed to meet him in three months. In April 1929, Anand showed the novel to Gandhiji in the Sabari Ashram in Gujarat. Gandhiji opposed the novel depicting the love-affair of a boy and girl, but Anand explained that it was about Bakha, an untouchable.

Anand revised the entire novel during his three-month stay in the ashram, which led to the approval of the revised version. However, the book failed to attract publishers for more than two years. Anand felt disheartened by the lack of interest from publishers, who rejected the novel due to its squalor and dirt depicted. E.M. Forster, a leading literary figure, found the novel interesting and encouraged Anand to make the sweeper sympathetic while avoiding making him

a hero or martyr. By September 1934, the novel had been rejected by as many as nineteen publishers, but was accepted by British poet Oswell Blakeston. The book was published on May 1, 1935, and has since been translated into thirty-six languages. Anand now lives in Khandala and is actively involved in life-writing, attending seminars, conferences, meeting people, and doing social work.

### 6.2.5 R. K. Narayan

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanaswami, also known as R.K. Narayan, was an Indian writer and novelist known for his work set in the fictional South Indian town of Malgudi. He was a leading author of early Indian literature in English, with his mentor Graham Greene helping him get publishers for his first four books. Narayan's work, compared to William Faulkner and Guy de Maupassant, focused on the social context and everyday life of his characters.

R.K. Narayan creates imaginary towns that felt more real than the places they lived. He was introduced to English by Graham Greene and became his first major publisher. Narayan's work, including over 10 novels and six collections of short stories, made him one of the most respected writers in the British Commonwealth. His first novel, *Swami and Friends*, was hailed as "a book in ten thousand." Narayan wrote chiefly about the Indian middle class, as he was a part of it and understood it best. His passing brings a sense of personal growth and the ability to take failure with success.

During the Gandhian Age (1920-1947), the Indian resurgence experienced significant upheaval in political, social, and economic spheres. The freedom struggle reached its peak, leading to an unprecedented awakening among sections of society, including women, youth, and the down-trodden.

**Contributions:** Narayan's first three books explore socially accepted practices, such as caning in the classroom, horoscope-matching in Hindu marriages, and the emotional toll on brides and grooms. His wife's antics and attitudes were also addressed. After Rajam's death in 1939, Narayan experienced depression and never remarried. His next novel, *The English Teacher*, was inspired by his own experiences. Narayan started Indian Thought, a journal, but it ceased publication due to his inability to manage it. He published short stories and started his own publishing company, Indian Thought Publications, which is still active. His books gained a readership from New York to Moscow, and he built his own house in Mysore in 1948.

Narayan's writing style evolved after *The English Teacher*, with his masterpieces like *The Financial Expert* and *Waiting for the Mahatma*. In 1953, his work was published in the United States, and he traveled extensively, writing at least 1500 words a day. His book, *The Guide* won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1960. Narayan published his first mythological work, *Gods, Demons and Others*, in 1964, followed by *The Vendor of Sweets* in 1967. He received his first honorary doctorate from the University of Leeds in 1972 and continued writing for magazines and newspapers. Narayan's writing was descriptive, capturing the demands of society and individuality well. He died in 2001 at the age of 94. He received numerous awards and honours, including the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Narayan was commissioned by the Karnataka government to write a book to promote tourism in the state. The book was republished as *The Emerald Route*, which contained his personal perspective on the local history and heritage. Narayan was elected as an honorary member of the

American Academy of Arts and Letters and won the AC Benson Medal from the Royal Society of Literature. He also published several novels, including *A Tiger for Malgudi*, *Talkative Man*, and *A Writer's Nightmare*.

Narayan developed an interest in agriculture and was nominated to the Rajya Sabha in 1980 for his contributions to literature. He focused on the plight of school children and the negative effect of the heavy load of school books on a child's creativity. In 1990, he published *The World of Nagaraj*, set in Malgudi. Narayan fell ill and moved to Madras to be close to his daughter's family. In 1994, his daughter died of cancer, and his granddaughter Bhuvaneswari took care of him. He published his final book, *Grandmother's Tale*, an autobiographical novella about his great-grandmother.

His writing style was unpretentious and humorous, focusing on ordinary people and their relationships. He was able to write about the intricacies of Indian society without changing his simplicity to conform to trends in fiction writing. Narayan used nuanced dialogic prose with gentle Tamil overtones, making him more similar to Indian Chekhov. His short stories, often less than ten pages long, provide a complete insight into the lives of his characters, making them a part of the pantheon of short-story geniuses. Critics have compared Narayan's writing to William Faulkner, as both portrayed the humour and energy of ordinary life while displaying compassionate humanism. However, Narayan's writing style was simple and realistic, capturing elements of both genres.

**Malgudi:** Malgudi is a fictional urban town in southern India created by Narayan in 1930. It has an impeccable historical record dating back to the Ramayana days



and is a reference point for the future. Dr. James M. Fennelly created a map of Malgudi based on fictional descriptors from various books and stories. The town evolved with the changing political landscape of India, such as the removal of Frederick Lawley's statue in the 1980s due to nationalistic fervor. Malgudi is compared to Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County.

***An Astrologer's Day:*** An Astrologer's Day, published in 1943, is a collection of short stories by Narayan, which explores mankind's troubles such as marriage, money, caste, poverty, and a religious mentality. The story is structured in a way that makes sense and is authentic, with a well-thought-out arrangement of incidents and situations. Narayan's eye for detail creates an atmosphere of a perfect workplace for an astrologer, with his professional equipment and the surrounding environment. The story introduces only the astrologer, who has the basic intelligence to know how to go about his profession. His attire, including sacred ash and vermillion, attracts people and he knows what his clients want to hear. He never opens for at least ten minutes, providing enough information for "a dozen answers and advices." The astrologer's knowledge of astrology is not mentioned, but he says things that please and astonish everyone. This portrayal of an astrologer is perfect for readers who often come across them in their marketplaces and townships, and feel tempted to consult them to know what the future holds for them.

In the story "Narayan," the protagonist, an astrologer, is forced to leave his village without any prior plans and cover a distance of at least a couple of hundred miles before he can pause and recollect himself. His past has broken his ancestral cycle, forcing him to leave suddenly and stealthily. The story follows

the protagonist as he prepares to call it a day, encountering a man who offers him a chance to talk about his concerns. The astrologer, unaware of the client's specific queries, refuses to let the opportunity slip by.

The atmosphere becomes significant as the nut vendor leaves and the astrologer doesn't have lights. The astrologer feels uncomfortable and tries to wriggle out of the situation, but the stranger refuses to let go. The astrologer's response, "A challenge is a challenge," takes him and the reader by surprise. The astrologer's name, Guru Nayak, is revealed, and the story ends with the protagonist being left for dead, pushed into a well, and given the correct name.

Narayan's early works were not commercial successes, but other authors, such as Somerset Maugham and E. M. Forster began to notice him. In the United States, Michigan State University Press began publishing his books, and John Updike compared him to Charles Dickens. His writings have been praised for their charm, harmlessness, and benign nature. However, critics have also criticised his writings for having a pedestrian style with shallow vocabulary and a narrow vision. His writings are often viewed as simple and lacking interest in politics, but his artful and deceptive technique allows the words to play in the reader's mind.

In the West, Narayan's simplicity of writing was well-received, with biographers describing his narrative as comedic art with an inclusive vision informed by the transience and illusion of human action. His works provide the first works in English to be infused with an eastern and Hindu existential perspective, and Edmund Wilson's assessment of Walt Whitman applies equally to Narayan.

He won numerous awards, including



the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1960 for *The Guide*, the Filmfare Award in 1964, the AC Benson Medal in 1980, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1982. Narayan was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature multiple times but never won the honor. He was also nominated to the upper house of the Indian Parliament for a six-year term in 1989. In 2000, he was awarded India's second-highest civilian honor, the Padma Vibhushan. Narayan's former home in Mysore was converted to a museum in his honor in 2016, and his book *Swami and Friends* was chosen as one of BBC's 100 Novels That Shaped Our World in 2019.

### 6.2.6 Kamala Das

Kamala Das, a prominent Indian poet, is deeply connected to Indian feminism and is considered the country's first and most significant feminist movement. Her works often depict contentious aspects of Indian culture, particularly the challenges faced by women. Das's personal life narrative is intricately entwined with her work, as she experienced the tragedies of family life firsthand. Her poetry defies established standards and ideals, showcasing feminine sensibility and defiance of traditional norms. Her poems, such as *Jaisurya* and *The White Flowers*, express the emotions of a mother and the importance of the human body. Her poetry is emotional, sensual, and sensitive, combining feisty female protest with endearing feminine feelings. Her writings can be classified as protest poetry, aiming at the injustices and oppression women have historically experienced in India. In *The Conflagration*, she criticizes Indian women for believing their sole purpose is to lie under a man to express their passion.

Kamala Das is a vocalist with a feminine sensibility who rejects traditional social norms and customs that undervalue

women in a predominantly male society. Her poetry is driven by her feminine sensibility, which is ravenous for a real lover or love of emotions. Her poems express her feelings of rejection and longing for love, particularly when she is rejected. Her poems, such as "The Old Playhouse" and "Jaisurya," highlight her husband's treatment and behavior, which infuriates her feminine sensibility.

Das's love poetry exemplifies her feminine intuition, particularly in the poem "Jaisurya," which expresses the emotions a mother experiences before and after giving birth to a child. Her poetry is an authentic expression of her jerky power, as she writes openly about her body, instincts, belongings, and lust for her men. Her poetry is a testament to her feminine sensibility and her ability to stand out in a predominantly male-dominated society.

Her poems explore the silence of Indian women and critique patriarchal rule. She uses sex and desire as a means of resistance, expressing her resentment and fury towards the societal structure. She is considered a passionate and ardent feminist, advocating for women's rights and freeing them from the bonds of domestic servitude to males. Her confessional work, *My Story*, outlines the social and emotional aspects of women's jail, focusing on the difficulties women face in finding love in the "system of arranged marriage" in India. Her poetry also examines the dynamics between men and women and how men use a woman's body for their own purposes.

**Writing Style:** Being a remarkable English poet, she uses colloquial simplicity and clarity to express her emotions and experiences. Her poetic style is personal, capturing her emotions and focusing on the intensity of her feelings. Her autobiographical poem,





“The Old Playhouse and other Poems: The Old Playhouse,” is a feminist poem that addresses her unhappy conjugal life and the misery she experiences in her husband. It also serves as a confessional poem, expressing her desire for freedom and the right of women to assert them.

Women’s literature is different from feminist literature, which expresses the shared experiences of women’s oppression. Feminist literature emphasizes the ideology rather than the literariness of the text, while women’s literature focuses on the female body and the female self. Women’s literature also emphasizes the importance of the female body and the desire for freedom, including the freedom to rebel. Kamala Das experienced the bitterness of sexism as a child, with her father being an autocrat and her mother being vague and indifferent. Her parents considered her a burden and responsibility, forcing her to become a premature wife and mother.

Image in poetry is a powerful tool for making life vivid and lifelike. It involves the use of metaphors, similes, contrasts, and concretization of emotions. Her diction is simple and clear, expressing her emotions as one human being to another. Her images are drawn from the familiar and commonplace, increasing the expressive range of her language. The dominant images in her poetry are the human body, with the male body being a source of corruption and exploitation, and the female body being a storehouse of beauty and chastity. In her poem “The freaks,” the female body is represented as repulsive and destructive, symbolizing her revolt against the male ego and the male-dominated world. She is conscious of the beauty and glory of human anatomy but also of the disease and decay it carries.

She was known for her outspoken

and controversial writing, including her autobiographical book, *My Story*, which was translated into 15 languages. Born into a literary family, Das began writing after her early marriage to cope with emotional strain. She has published numerous novels and short stories in English and Malayalam, including *The Alphabet of Lust*, *Padmavati*, *Harlot and Other Stories*, *Summer in Calcutta*, *The Descendants*, *The Old Playhouse and Other Poems*, *The Namalai Poems*, *Only the Soul Knows How to Sing*, and her autobiography, *My Story*. She lived alone with feelings of loneliness but maintained her tradition of studying life and its objectivity in a realistic way. She is considered one of the most formative influences on Indian English poetry and is known for her controversial writings, which openly discuss the restrictions imposed on women and her rebellious nature against patriarchal conventions. Her last book, *The Kept Woman and Other Stories*, was published posthumously.

### 6.2.7 A. K. Ramanujan

A.K. Ramanujan is a master of English literature in Indo-Anglican poetry, known for his delicate and complex writing style. His poetry is characterized by excellence, epigrammatic brevity, austerity, and classical simplicity. Ramanujan’s poetry is widely read in India and the West, with his Western influence prominent in modern Indian poetry. His poetry is family-oriented, with a Hindu outlook and psychological realism. Ramanujan’s rhyming and use of Indian ethos in his poems reflect the universal search for personal identity. His poetry is characterized by a blend of ancient Kannada and Tamil poetry.

His poetry is a blend of modernity and conservatism, with a strong emphasis on his Hindu heritage. He has roots in Hinduism, an ancient religion, and his fustiness

acquired through prolonged contact with American culture has made him inversely apprehensive of the excrescencies and faults of that ancient religion. His poetry derives its depth and viscosity from this mingling in his mind of western fustiness and oriental fallacy. The family occupies a prominent place in Ramanujan's poetry, as both pleasant and unpleasant memories are stored in his mind. He uses the family as background or some of his experiences in the context of his family for the education of an idea. Ramanujan's poetry is rooted in the family, as he constantly reminisces with various members of his family and objects from his earlier life during his stay in India.

Psychological realism is one of the main features of Ramanujan's poetry. The main features of his poetry are its psychological realism, which is absent in other poets like Kamala Das and Nissim Ezekiel. Ramanujan's poems depict child-psychology and adult-psychology, with sexual instincts being an active force in both a child and an older individual. In his poems, Ramanujan's personality is evident, as he expresses the thoughts and reactions of his relatives and himself.

Ramanujan is known for his craftsmanship, colloquial brevity, and sharp images. He is a master of the English language and has shown rare originality in his use of words and phrase-building. His poetry is tightly constructed, using words and phrases to express themes and motifs. His imagery is distinctive, being image-oriented and realistic, often evoking visual and auditory sensations simultaneously. His imagery is not only visual but also auditory and kinetic, as seen in his poem 'Snake'. His poetry is structural, with the organization of his poetry being studied in terms of patterns of images. His use of repetition and rhyming, as well as his use of sound and meaning, sets him apart from

other poets. His unique style and imagery make him a significant figure in the Indo-Anglican poetry scene.

Another remarkable feature is the irony, which he uses to emphasize sadness, pessimism, and the dusk. He uses irony in almost every poem he writes, except for some grave poems like 'Breaded Fish'. In 'Looking for a cousin on a Swing', he uses irony to convey the fact that there was and are now commodity erogenous about the girl's experience on the swing with her cousin. Ramanujan uses irony not only for ridiculous goods but also to aggravate the torture he wishes to express in his poems. For example, in a River, Ramanujan speaks ironically about the Tamil Poets who find a deluge in the river to be a fit subject for writing poems about, but do not notice the tragedies it causes in mortal life. In 'History', Ramanujan exposes the rapacity of his cousins and heightens the feeling of torture he aims to convey. The woeful effect is enhanced by the use of irony in the poem 'The Hindoo', where the Hindu reads his Gita and thinks he can remain calm at all events, when in reality, a thoughtful man would see signs of ancient malignancy and pre-historic wrong on a little boy's face.

### 6.2.8 U. R. Ananda Murthy

Udupi Rajagopalacharya Ananthamurthy was an Indian contemporary writer and critic in Kannada, born in Thirthahalli Taluk. He was a pioneer of the Navya movement and was the sixth Kannada writer to receive the Jnanpith Award in 1994. Ananthamurthy was the vice-chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi University in Kerala and was a finalist for the Man Booker International Prize in 2013. He was a fervent critic of nationalistic political parties until his death from kidney failure and cardiac arrest in 2014.



Ananthamurthy also served as the first Chancellor of Central University of Karnataka and was a key figure in the establishment of the Humanities department at Manipal University. He has participated in numerous seminars and visited countries like the Soviet Union, Hungary, France, and West Germany. Ananthamurthy's literary works, including "*Prashne*", "*Aakash Mattu Bekku*", *Samskara*, *Bhava*, *Bharathipura*, and *Avasthe*, have been translated into multiple languages and won literary prizes. His novels often focus on psychological aspects of people in various situations, times, and circumstances, analyzing challenges faced by Brahmin families and bureaucrats dealing with politics. Some of his novels have been made into films, such as *Samskara*, *Bara*, *Avaste*, *Mouni*, *Sookha*, *Ghatashraddha*, and *Diksha*.

He subtly dealt with the existential theme of tension between the individual and society, caste conflicts, and social problems like illiteracy and poverty. His works were heavily influenced by the political situation and cultural ideology of his time, as well as his stay in Europe. His masterpiece, *Samskara*, was born during his stay in Birmingham, focusing on Brahmanical hegemony and caste conflict.

The novel's protagonist, Praneshacharya, is an epitome of Brahmanical values, highlighting the importance of choices and choices in shaping one's life. The novel also mirrors the changing social scenario of post-modern India. Ananthamurthy's next novel, *Bharathipur*, follows the same path, with Praneshacharya leaving his Agradhara and facing an uncertain future. The novel ends with Praneshacharya questioning what makes life meaningful and the world outside his agradhara.

In *Bharathipur*, the protagonist, Jagannatha, is a London educated idealist

who aims to eradicate untouchability from society. However, he realizes that his efforts are futile due to his inability to connect with the low caste people and his shallow personality. Both Praneshacharya and Jagannatha are existential heroes created by Ananthamurthy, both falling into existential dilemmas. Praneshacharya is stronger, as he realizes his weaknesses and understands his situation, while Jagannatha tries to ignore his own weaknesses and leads a shallow life with the illusion of following lofty ideologies.

Ananthamurthy's fictions often deal with the tension between tradition and modernity. Despite his stance on modernity, critics argue that neither tradition nor modernity wins. In his work, *Sooryana Kudure and Other Stories*, he challenges existing political, social, and cultural beliefs. One such story is "Clip Joint," where Keshava contemplates suicide, realizing that his anxiety is not solely due to his sexual depravity or unsatisfied sexual desire. The story also highlights the failure of tradition and the ambiguity and double denial that Ananthamurthy offers.

Another novel, *Bhava*, explores the spiritual element of humanity and the psychological journey of becoming. The protagonist, Shastri, encounters a young man named Dinakara, who wears a Srichakra amulet, which belonged to his first wife. Both characters struggle with their existential situations and the question of accepting their existential situation. The author aims to provide insight into the inner workings of the human mind, the demons and worries that plague them, and the slow resolution and acceptance of life. The superficial search for relationships ends in establishing humane and more meaningful relationships, reflecting the path from doubts of the self to acceptance, surrender, reconciliation, and holding

peace with what we finally can come near as answers.

Indian Writing in English has evolved significantly since British rule in India, with writers like Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, R.K. Narayan, and Raja Rao contributing significantly to world literature. These writers reflect Indian culture, tradition, social values, history, and modern experiences. Critics and commentators in England and America appreciate Indian English novels, with Prof. M. K. Naik stating that prose fiction is a notable gift of English education to India. Tagore, a

multi-talented artist, won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913 for his poem Gitanjali. R. K. Narayan, a renowned Indian writer, uses irony, humor, and moral concern in his stories, characterized by realism, poetic myth, sadness, perception, and gaiety. Kamala Das, a feminist author, expresses women's aspirations and frustrations through her feminist voice. Ramanujan, a renowned Indian poet in English, blends Indian and Western artistic paradigms in his poetry, incorporating skepticism, irony, and moment-to-moment evoking warmth, conflict, and surprise.

## Recap

- ◆ Indian Writing in English, a form of Indian culture and voice, has grown significantly since the British rule in India.
- ◆ Writers like Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, R.K. Narayan, and Raja Rao have contributed significantly to world literature, showcasing a wide range of themes.
- ◆ Indian Writing in English continues to reflect Indian culture, tradition, social values, and history, while also expressing the Indian experience of modern predicaments.
- ◆ Rabindranath Tagore, a celebrated Indian writer in English, was born in 1861 and died in 1941.
- ◆ R. K. Narayan, a renowned Indian writer, is known for his use of irony, humor, and moral concern in his stories.
- ◆ His works are characterized by a pure melancholy and mockery of self and others, making them both entertaining and enlightening.
- ◆ Kamala Das is a modern Indian author who expresses the aspirations and frustrations of women through her feminist voice.
- ◆ Das' stance against women's exploitation and marginalization, as well as the social and cultural construction of gender, is evident in her works.
- ◆ Ramanujan, a renowned poet, has significantly influenced Indo-Anglican poetry by blending Indian and Western artistic paradigms.
- ◆ His writings incorporate skepticism, irony, and a sense of moment-to-moment in an ever-changing world.

- ◆ Ramanujan evokes warmth, conflict, and surprise, while also highlighting the fantasy of glorification of Tamil artistic heritage.
- ◆ Udupi Rajagopalacharya Ananthamurthy was an Indian contemporary writer and critic, known for his novels and essays.
- ◆ Ananthamurthy's works, including "Prashne", "Aakashamattu Bekku", Samskara, Bhava, Bharathipura, and Avasthe, have been translated into multiple languages and won literary prizes.
- ◆ His novels often deal with existential themes, such as tension between individual and society, caste conflicts, and social problems like illiteracy and poverty.
- ◆ His works, such as "Samskara" and "Bharathipur," reflect the changing social scenario of post-modern India and the struggle between tradition and modernity.

## Objective Questions

1. When did the English language become widely accepted in India for official use?
2. Who introduced the English language for official use in India?
3. Which significant breakthrough contributed to making the English language known to the people in India in 1793 A.D.?
4. In which year did Lord William Bentinck make English mandatory for subjects like literature and science?
5. Who were the dominant figures in the second generation period of Indian literature, known for developing a Romantic spirit?
6. Which period saw the significant development of English in India with the rise of elite writers like Salman Rushdie and Vikram Seth?
7. Who won the Man Booker Prize in 1997?
8. Which Indian author's works express the emotions of people who migrated to other countries and left their past in their native land?
9. According to Amit Chaudhuri, what elements does Indo-Anglican writing use to represent Indian conditions?
10. Who refused to accept the Eurasian Commonwealth Writers Prize for the book *The Glass Palace*?



## Answers

1. 17th century.
2. East India Company.
3. Sake Dean Mahomet's travel narrative.
4. 1835.
5. Sarojini Naidu, Tagore, Aurobindo Ghosh, Harindranath Chattopadhyay.
6. The late seventies.
7. Arundhati Roy.
8. Jhumpa Lahiri.
9. Magical realism, bagginess, non-linear narrative, hybrid language.
10. Amitav Ghosh.

## Self Assessment Questions

1. How did English become an important literary language in India?
2. Why is Indian Writing in English considered both colonial and postcolonial?
3. How did Toru Dutt use Indian myths and legends in her poetry?
4. What economic criticism of British rule is associated with R. C. Dutt?
5. Why is Rabindranath Tagore important in Indian and world literature?
6. How does Mulk Raj Anand's Untouchable present caste oppression?
7. What makes R. K. Narayan's Malgudi an important fictional world?
8. How does Kamala Das express women's experiences and feminist protest?
9. How does A. K. Ramanujan combine Indian tradition with modern poetic technique ?
10. How does U. R. Ananda Murthy explore the conflict between tradition and modernity?



## Assignments

1. Write a brief biography of Toru Dutt, highlighting her contributions to literature.
2. Explain Toru Dutt's treatment of Indian myths and legends in her works, emphasising the cultural, philosophical, and moral aspects.
3. Discuss Rabindranath Tagore's impact on Indian literature, his various literary genres, and his role in the nationalist movement.
4. Write a critical evaluation of Mulk Raj Anand's literary contributions, considering both his strengths and criticisms.
5. Discuss the themes and social context explored by R.K. Narayan in his novels, with a focus on his representation of the Indian middle class.
6. Examine the contributions of Indian literature during the Gandhian Age (1920-1947), highlighting its impact on political, social, and economic spheres.

## Suggested Reading

1. Jackson, Elizabeth. *Feminism and Contemporary Indian Women's Writing*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
2. Sen, Krishna and Rituparna Roy. *Writing India anew: Indian English fiction 2000-2010*. Amsterdam UP, 2014.
3. Verma, K. D. *The Indian Imagination: Critical Essays on Indian Writing in English*. Palgrave Macmillan US, 2000.



# SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE: .....

Reg. No : .....

Name: .....

FYUG BA ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE  
END-SEMESTER EXAMINATION - FIFTH SEMESTER  
MINOR DISCIPLINE COURSE - SGB24HS202MI

## HISTORY OF BRITAIN II

2024-25 - Admission Onwards

### MODEL QUESTIONPAPER - SET A

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

#### SECTION A

*Answer any eight of the following questions in one word or sentence .*

**(8 X1 = 8 Marks)**

1. What slogan expressed the American colonists' objection to British taxation?
2. Who wrote Rights of Man as a defence of the French Revolution?
3. Name the social reformer associated with New Lanark and early trade union ideas.
4. Which working-class political movement presented the People's Charter in Britain?
5. What term refers to the Western study and representation of the East?
6. Name the writer associated with imperial writings such as The White Man's Burden.
7. Who was the major religious and literary figure associated with the Oxford Movement?
8. Who wrote In Memoriam?
9. Which society is closely associated with Fabian Socialism?
10. Who was the Indian English writer who won international recognition for Gitanjali?



## SECTION B

*Answer any six of the following questions in one or two sentences*

**(6x2 =12 Marks)**

11. Why is Romanticism considered a reaction against eighteenth-century rationalism?
12. What is meant by laissez-faire in nineteenth-century economic thought?
13. Distinguish briefly between colonialism and imperialism.
14. What is meant by the term Victorian compromise?
15. What does decolonization mean in the context of the British Empire?
16. Mention any two features of Modernism as reflected in twentieth-century British literature.
17. Why is Macaulay's Minute important in the history of Western education in India?
18. Mention one major contribution of R. K. Narayan to Indian Writing in English.

## SECTION C

*Answer any six of the following questions in one paragraph*

**(6X5= 30 Marks)**

19. Explain the main features of the Agrarian Revolution in Britain.
20. Discuss the social and moral significance of Methodism in nineteenth-century Britain.
21. Write a note on Utilitarianism and the contribution of J. S. Mill.
22. Examine Charles Dickens as a critic of Victorian industrial society.
23. Discuss the growth of the Labour Party in relation to socialist movements in Britain.
24. Explain the major differences between Modernism and Postmodernism.
25. Write a note on the impact of Western education on Indian society and literature.
26. Discuss the contribution of Kamala Das or A. K. Ramanujan to Indian English literature.

## SECTION D

*Answer any two of the following questions in 300 words each*

**(2X10 =20 Marks)**

27. Discuss the impact of the American and French Revolutions on British political thought and English literary culture.
28. Examine the rise of Chartism and its importance in the development of the British party system.
29. Analyse how colonialism, Orientalism and utilitarian ideas helped in the consolidation of the British Empire.
30. Discuss the major social and literary features of the Victorian Age.

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FYUG BA ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE  
END-SEMESTER EXAMINATION - FIFTH SEMESTER  
MINOR DISCIPLINE COURSE - SGB24HS202MI

## HISTORY OF BRITAIN II

2024-25 - Admission Onwards

### MODEL QUESTIONPAPER - SET B

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

#### SECTION A

*Answer any eight of the following questions in one word or sentence .*

**(8 X1 = 8 Marks)**

1. Which protest event involved throwing tea into Boston harbour in 1773?
2. Who wrote Reflections on the Revolution in France?
3. Which economic doctrine favoured minimum government interference in trade and industry?
4. Which religious movement in Britain is associated with John Wesley?
5. What phrase summarizes the utilitarian principle of Jeremy Bentham?
6. Who wrote On Liberty?
7. Who wrote Tess of the d'Urbervilles?
8. Who is the author of Pippa Passes and Men and Women?
9. Name the Indian English writer of Untouchable.
10. Which Indian English writer created the fictional town of Malgudi?

#### SECTION B

*Answer any six of the following questions in one or two sentences*

**(6x2=12 Marks)**

11. How did the French Revolution strengthen the spirit of Romantic Revival?
12. How did the factory system create the need for trade unionism?



13. State any two motives behind British imperial expansion.
14. How did Victorian literature respond to the conflict between faith and doubt?
15. What were the basic aims of Fabian Socialism?
16. How did George Orwell use literature for political criticism?
17. Mention the significance of Toru Dutt in Indian Writing in English.
18. How does Indian English literature reflect both colonial and postcolonial experiences?

### SECTION C

*Answer any six of the following questions in one paragraph*

**(6X5= 30 Marks)**

19. Discuss William Blake's Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience as Romantic works.
20. Explain Robert Owen's role in improving the condition of industrial workers.
21. Examine Rudyard Kipling as a representative writer of British imperial culture.
22. Write a paragraph on the main features of late Victorian literature with reference to Hardy, Wilde or Shaw.
23. Discuss the historical importance of decolonization with reference to major British thinkers and writers.
24. Explain how globalization, feminism and gender issues shape contemporary culture.
25. Write a note on Toru Dutt and R. C. Dutt as early Indian English writers.
26. Discuss Rabindranath Tagore's place in the growth of Indian Writing in English.

### SECTION D

*Answer any two of the following questions in 300 words each*

**(2X10 =20 Marks)**

27. Examine how the agrarian, industrial and commercial revolutions transformed British society and economy.
28. Discuss the major aspects of new economic ideology in Britain with reference to trade unionism, Chartism, laissez-faire and Methodism.
29. Evaluate the role of imperialism, Orientalism, Evangelicalism and Utilitarianism in the expansion of British power.
30. Discuss the important Victorian literary developments with reference to Ruskin, Newman, Clare, Tennyson, Browning, Arnold and Dickens.



സർവ്വകലാശാലാഗീതം

വിദ്യായാൽ സ്വതന്ത്രരാകണം  
വിശ്വപൗരരായി മാറണം  
ഗ്രഹപ്രസാദമായ് വിളങ്ങണം  
ഗുരുപ്രകാശമേ നയിക്കണേ

കുതിരുട്ടിൽ നിന്നു ഞങ്ങളെ  
സൂര്യവീഥിയിൽ തെളിക്കണം  
സ്നേഹദീപ്തിയായ് വിളങ്ങണം  
നീതിവൈജയന്തി പാറണം

ശാസ്ത്രവ്യാപ്തിയെന്നുമേകണം  
ജാതിഭേദമാകെ മാറണം  
ബോധരശ്മിയിൽ തിളങ്ങുവാൻ  
ജ്ഞാനകേന്ദ്രമേ ജ്വലിക്കണേ

കുരിപ്പുഴ ശ്രീകുമാർ

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Visit UGC Website i.e. [www.ugc.Ac.in](http://www.ugc.Ac.in) & [www.antiragging.in](http://www.antiragging.in) to UGC Anti Ragging regulations.



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DRUGS**

**LOVE YOURSELF  
AND ALWAYS BE  
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# HISTORY OF BRITAIN II

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