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## UNIT-1 ARMS OF THE COLONIAL STATE: ARMY, POLICE, LAW

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### 1.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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After reading this Unit, you will learn about

- The development of the formal military structure and organization in India.
- The colonial state's policy of divide and rule in army recruitment and treatment of Indian soldiers etc.
- The organization of the police system, the network of police stations, the hierarchical arrangement of officers and the divestment of Zamindars of their police power.
- The pre-colonial legal structure and the pre-colonial centres of power and the colonial laws and regulations.

- The evolution of the modern legal system, the Courts, the codification of Indian laws, the process of documentation, evidence and scientific classification of proofs etc.

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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The Army, Police and the Judiciary formed the three main pillars of British imperialism in India. The army helped the British to contain the external attacks as well as internal disturbances. The police assisted in maintaining law and order, disciplining the colonial subjects as well as in the smooth collection of revenue. The judiciary on the other hand established an elaborate legal structure invading all aspects of native life to secure the British legitimacy over India. These three administrative arms of the colonial state aided in the emergence of a new surveillance state transgressing the pre-colonial state structure and society in India.

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## 1.2 THE COLONIAL INDIAN ARMY: A PEEP INTO HISTORY

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The Indian army was the strongest pillar of British colonialism in Asia. It played a crucial role in protecting colonialism and helped in imperial expansion and colonial consolidation. It helped the British to win many wars in Burma, Afghanistan, the Middle East and the Himalayas. The British stationed the Indian army divisions in North Africa, Italy which was crucial to the success of allied powers in the two world wars. The history of the colonial army can be divided into three distinct phases. The first phase covered the period between the Battle of Plassey (1757) to the Great Mutiny (1857). It consisted of the Sepoy armies of the Bengal, Bombay and Madras Presidency. The second phase comprised the period 1857 to 1914. During this period the army was reorganized in the light of 1857 mutiny and the recommendations of the Peel Commission of 1859. The military reforms during this phase were dominated by the Martial Races Theory. The third phase began after 1914 and lasted till 1947 under the changing circumstances of national activities, popular protests, global wars, financial pressure as well as the question of independence and partition of India.

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## 1.3 THE FIRST PHASE (1757-1857)

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In the mid-18th century, three distinct Sepoy armies developed in Bengal, Madras and Bombay Presidency under separate commanders. The largest among them was the Bengal army. The Commander-in-Chief of the Bengal army was recognized as the nominal head of the military forces in India. Each Presidency army consisted of three elements, viz., Indian troops, European troops of the Company and the Royal Regiments or the Queen's army who were the serving troops on duty in India. The army was reorganized in 1785 following the Pitt's India Act of 1784, which "brought the Sepoy

armies in all three presidencies within a uniform command structure.” In 1796, the Sepoy battalions were brought into the regimental system of organization. Each regiment was

comprised of small fighting units called battalions. After 1858, the Company and the Royal Regiments were amalgamated. This resulted in a protest of the Company’s troops which is famously known in Indian history as the ‘White Mutiny’. The British assuaged the troops by announcing various concessions.

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## 1.4 THE SECOND PHASE

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The revolt of 1857 compelled the British to restructure its army to minimize the capacity of Indian soldiers. It adopted the principle of **‘Counterpoise of native against native’** articulated by the Peel Commission in 1859. It was primarily designed to prevent a repeat of 1857. Indians were divided into ‘martial’ and ‘non-martial races. Soldiers from Awadh, South India, Bihar and Central India who had participated in the Revolt were declared as ‘non-martial races and the Punjabis, Gurkhas were described as ‘martial’ races. There was an increase in recruitment of Punjabis, Gurkhas, Pathans who had assisted the East Indian Company in suppressing the revolt of 1857.

The domination of the European branch of the army was established by raising the proportions of Europeans to Indians. It was fixed at ‘one to two in the Bengal army and ‘two to five in the Madras and Bombay armies. The key geographical and military positions were put under the control of the European armies. The crucial technologically sophisticated arms and weapons were exclusively put under the control of the Europeans. The organization of the Indian army was based on the policy of ‘balance and counterpoise or ‘divide and rule’ to rule out any possibility of unity among them. It was made a mixture of various castes and social groups to balance each other. Caste, regional and religious loyalties were encouraged to stifle any growth of nationalism among them. Discrimination based on caste, religion and region was also practised in the recruitment of Indian soldiers. Indian soldiers were denied promotions to higher military posts. Till 1914, an Indian soldier could only get promoted to the post of Subedar. Strict regulations were made to prevent the access of soldiers to newspapers, journals and magazines.

In 1895, the control over the army was centralized under the Commander-in-Chief and was divided into four territorial units of Bengal (East), Bombay (West), Madras (South), and Punjab (North) and dominated by the so-called martial races. Each of these territorial units was placed under a Lieutenant-General answerable to the Commander-in-Chief, an important member of the Viceroy’s Executive Council. In 1902 Lord Kitchner became the Commander-in-chief of the British Indian army and strived to enhance its professional capability. Until now the army was controlled both by the

military member of the Viceroy's council and the Commander-in-chief. This dual control over the army was abolished by Lord Kitchner. In 1904, Lord Kitchner reorganized the Indian military forces into three army commands and nine divisions. This system was abolished in 1907 and the Indian army then was divided into two sections, the Northern and the Southern.

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## 1.5 THE THIRD PHASE

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The First World War exposed the drawbacks of the military organization in India which necessitated reforms after the War. The Indians were now given promotions to higher official ranks. Indian cadets were sent to the Royal Military College at Sandhurst for training. There were two main categories of officers in the Indian army viz., those holding King's Commission and those holding Viceroy's Commission. The latter were all Indians having a limited status and power of command. These were the Subedars, Jamadars, Havildars and Naiks who led the Sepoy unit link between the Sepoys and all the European officers. Indians were eligible for King's Commission since 1918 and got full authority over British troops

The Indian Territory was divided into four commands, subdivided into 14 districts. Each district contained a certain number of brigade commands. However, the Western command was abolished in 1938. The Indian Military Academy was established at Dehradun in 1932 following the recommendation of the military committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Philip Chetwode. It then functioned as a premier institution for the training of Indian officers. In 1939 the defence forces of India consisted of the Regular army (including units from the British army, the Auxiliary force membership of which was limited to Europeans, British subjects, the Territorial Force, composed of three main categories, provincial battalions, urban units and the University Training Corps Units, and the Royal Air Force from 1932. There was also the Indian State Forces, formerly the Imperial Service Troops, raised and maintained by the rulers of the States at their own cost and for State Service.

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## 1.6 THE POLICE

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The second pillar of British imperialism in India was the police established through the 'Mai-Baap' myth which helped the British imperialism to build a 'cultural hegemony. A two-tier police administration system existed in India under the Mughal rule. The Nazim or the Governor at the provincial level and the Faujdar at the district level were looking after the police administration during the Mughal period. It is called the 'Proto-Police' system under the Mughal rule. This system intended primarily to look after the land revenue collection and maintain law and order. After the decline of the central authority

of the Mughals, this system largely moved into the hands of the Zamindars and the local landlords in the area and became more or less their private force.

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## 1.7 FOUNDATION OF THE POLICE SYSTEM IN INDIA

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The private police system of India was struck off and the Zamindars were divested of their local responsibility by disbanding their militia. Lord Cornwallis replaced this pre-colonial system by introducing the Daroga system in 1792. Under this system, Circles or Thanas headed by Darogas were established. The Daroga became a direct instrument of Government operating directly under the control of the British Magistrate. The village watchmen were now brought under the control of the Daroga and made the servants of the Government. In the big cities, the old office of Kotwal was continued and a Daroga was appointed to each of the wards of a city.

In 1808, a separate civilian superintendent of police was appointed for the divisions of Calcutta, Dacca and Murshidabad and in 1810 for Patna, Benaras and Bareilly. He was to act as a coordinating agency to exercise control over a group of Magistrates. This function was later transferred to the Divisional Commissioners who were appointed under Regulation 1 of 1829.

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## 1.8 REFORMS AFTER 1857

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The Revolt of 1857 exposed the loopholes in the British police system. The British officials were searching for a general system of police based on two main considerations, efficiency and economy. A commission was appointed in the year 1860. The Commission recommended

- (a) The abolition of the military police as a separate organization and the constitution of the single homogenous force of city police.
- (b) The discipline and internal management of the police force were to be vested with an Inspector General of Police.
- (c) He was to be assisted by a District Superintendent of Police in each district.
- (d) The subordinate force below them was to consist of Inspector, Head Constables, sergeants and constables. The head constable will remain in charge of a police station and the Inspector of a group of police stations.
- (e) The village police were to remain an official apparatus.
- (f) No Magistrate of rank lower than the District Magistrate should exercise any police function.
- (g) The draft bill of the Commission was submitted on the pattern of the Madras Police Act (1853). This was passed into Act V of 1861.

The importance of the traditional cooperation of the community was thus completely discontinued and the responsibility of all police work was entrusted on regular police

officers. Further, the Indians were excluded from all superior posts. The police were highly unsympathetic to the native population. They were not meant for the restoration of law and order to promote Indian interests. They wanted to restore law and order for the unending process of colonial exploitation and to superimpose the civilizational superiority of the British.

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## 1.9 THE RURAL POLICE

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The self-perception of a civilized government involved the question of authority, which needed to be reinforced by effective means of control. Such a step appeared to be more necessary because the steady growth of ‘crime’ and the breakdown of ‘law and order’ directly interrupted the collection of revenue. An essential component of this emerging structure of control was the colonial police. After establishing a complete governmental monopoly over legitimate instruments of coercion, the colonial government established Thanas (police stations) headed by Darogahs. While this constituted the formal apparatus of control, other informal instruments were pressed into service as well. Although the Zamindars had already been di-militarised, they were still considered compellingly relevant to the needs of rural control. The government sought to use them to ensure a smooth collection of revenue at minimum administrative cost and maintenance of law and order to the extent necessary for the public safety of the Company.

Through the setting up of the Thanas, directly controlled by the authority, the countryside was linked up with the apex of the administration in a single chain of command. This was a decisive step towards the penetration of colonial authority in the interior. In exercising their authority within their jurisdiction, Darogahs had to take cognizance of the authority of Zamindars. Before the setting up of the Thanas, the Zamindars were the real local units of police administration in the countryside. But successive phases of demilitarisation, culminating in Cornwallis’ Police Regulations, divested Zamindars of their military and police duties.

By Section XIII of Regulation XXII of 1799, village watchmen called the Chowkidars, were declared subject to the orders of police Darogahs. But upon the death or removal of any of them, the landholders were entrusted with the task of filling up subsequent vacancies. The landholders were required to communicate the names of the persons whom they may appoint as Chowkidars to the Darogah of the jurisdiction. Therefore, the Chowkidars were under dual control. On the one hand, section XIV of the aforesaid regulation spelt out the functions which they were required to perform as subordinate officers of police under the direction and control of the Darogahs. On the other hand, the Zamindars made them perform many unwritten services. Such services included helping the Zamindars in the collection of rent, disciplining refractory subjects, guarding the

crop when gathered and stored, and carrying letters and so on. Consequently, the authority which the Darogahs invested over them became secondary and almost trivial. Statutory power over the tenants and vestigial authority over the Chaukidars gave the Zamindars some means of coercive control in the rural society.

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### **1.10 THE PRE-COLONIAL LEGAL MACHINERY**

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The Mughal system of judicial administration was built on the twin pillars of the Faujdar and the Zamindari. It was the responsibility of the Zamindar to maintain law and order, administer justice, and collect land revenue in the rural areas. In urban centres, the Kazi's Kachcheri was the place for seeking justice where the Shariat law was followed in the trial and punishment of offences. The Nazim was to choose the cases which were to be transferred to the Kazi, and the Kazi was expected to obey the orders of the Nazim. The Kotwali Chabutra was the place where people were bringing complaints of theft, assault and homicide. Kotwal exercised the primary judicial function and decided the cases which will be tried by him and which will be sent to the Kazi. Under the Mughal administration, maintenance of public order generally meant to contain its officials from ambitious forays outside their jurisdiction. It was designed to keep the various power centres within their limits. The process of dispensing justice was often arbitrary and the Mughal agencies adopted a punitive approach.

The foreign travellers during the 17th century have noted the various administrative abuses that the Mughal provincial governors were exercising. At the onset of the political anarchy and disintegration of Mughal sovereignty, the Mughal provincial governors attained autonomy and exercised their unregulated power. The establishment of British rule over Bengal and subsequently over India brought drastic changes in the process of judicial administration.

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### **1.11 THE NEW LEGAL MACHINERY UNDER THE COLONIAL STATE**

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The colonial discourse of 'the rule of law' brought with it a new language of the social and the institutional. The new institutional form of law and its form of legal discourse remained deeply entrenched within a wide variety of highly visible organizational and socio-linguistic insignia of hierarchy, status, power and wealth, blatantly apparent within a colonial context of governance. Earlier there were multiple units with coercive power and moral authority to solve dacoity and other crimes. Lawlessness was not a major yardstick to measure the efficiency of the central rule. In contrast, the British strived to launch centralized anti-dacoit police forces and viewed their inefficiency as a measure of Raj's impotence. Thus the failure of the law and order was directly connected to the inefficiency of the State control, unlike the earlier practice. There was the necessity to evolve a new kind of state control, i.e. the prisons and penal measures and courts as the institutions of colonial control.

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## **1.12 REFORMS UNDER WARREN HASTINGS (1772-1785)**

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Warren Hastings laid the foundation of judicial reforms in India. The Civil and Criminal cases were separated. The District Diwani Adalats were established in districts to try civil disputes. These Adalats were placed under the Collector. The Hindus were tried as per Hindu Law and the Islamic Law was applied for Muslims in these Adalats. The appeal from District Diwani Adalats lay to the Sadar Diwani Adalat. The Sadar Diwani Adalat functioned under a President and two members of the Supreme Council. The District Faujdari Adalats were set up to try criminal cases. They were placed under an Indian officer assisted by Qazis and Muftis. These Adalats were under the general supervision of the Collector. Muslim law was administered in Fauzdari Adalats, appeals from District Fauzdari Adalat lay in Sadar Nizamat Adalat headed by a Deputy Nizam assisted by chief Qazi and chief Mufti. Under the Regulating Act of 1773, a Supreme Court was established at Calcutta. It was to try all British subjects within Calcutta and the subordinate factories. It had original and appellate jurisdictions.

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## **1.13 REFORMS UNDER LORD CORNWALLIS (1786-1793)**

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In his Minute Cornwallis wrote: “The multitude of criminals with which the jails in every district are now crowded, the numerous murders, robberies and burglaries daily committed and the general security of person and property which prevails in the interior parts of the country, are melancholy proofs of their having long and too generally existed. Having experience, therefore, the inefficacy resulting from all the criminal courts and their proceedings being left dependent on....we, ought not, I think, to leave the future control of so important branch of government to the sole discretion of any native, or indeed any single person whomsoever”.

The judicial reforms introduced by Lord Cornwallis are famously known as the Cornwallis Code. Under this Code, the revenue and judicial administration were separated. It brought the European subjects under jurisdiction. It made the Government subjects answerable to the civil courts for actions done in their official capacity. It established the principle of equality and sovereignty of the rule of law. Under Lord Cornwallis, the District Fauzdari Adalats were abolished. In its place, circuit courts were established at Calcutta, Dacca, Murshidabad and Patna. The Circuit courts had European judges and were to act as courts of appeal for both civil and criminal cases. The Sadar Nizamat Adalat was transferred to Calcutta and was put under the Governor-General and members of the supreme council assisted by chief Qazi and the Chief Mufti. The District Diwani Adalat was now designated as the District Court and placed under a district judge. The Collector was now responsible only for the revenue administration

with no magisterial functions. A gradation of civil courts was established in the following manner:

Munsif Courts under Indian officers  
Registrar's Court under a European Judge  
District Court under the District Judge  
Four Circuit Courts as Provincial Courts of appeal  
Sadar Diwani Adalat at Calcutta  
King-in-Council for appeals of 5000 pounds and above

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#### **1.14 REFORMS UNDER WILLIAM BENTICK (1828-1833)**

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Under Lord William Bentick, the four Circuit Courts were abolished and their functions were transferred to Collectors. The Collectors were placed under the supervision of the Commissioners of revenue and circuit. Sadar Diwani Adalat and Sadar Nizamat Adalat were set up at Allahabad for the convenience of the people of Upper Provinces. So far Persian was the official language in courts. Now vernacular languages were also allowed to be used and in the Supreme Court, the English language replaced Persian. He appointed the Indian judges in lower courts. In 1834, a Law Commission was set up under Macaulay for the codification of Indian laws. As a result, a Civil Procedure Code (1859), an Indian Penal Code (1860) and a Criminal Procedure Code (1861) were prepared.

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#### **1.15 LATER DEVELOPMENTS**

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The Revolt of 1857, forced the British to give a fresh look to the legal system of the State. A separate organization was created at this period to deal with thuggish and dacoity which had become rampant. The Army came in more intimately in Police work after the revolt of 1857. A Police Commission was appointed by the Government of India in 1860 to inquire about the entire gamut of Police Administration and based on their recommendation; the Indian Police Act was framed. Under this Act, the administration of

Police were placed in charge of a European Superintendent under the general control and direction of the District Magistrate. Under the 1853 Charter Act, the East India Company appointed a commission to plan for the creation of High Courts in India. The Indian High Courts Acts was passed in 1861 and High Courts were established in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. The Sadar Diwani Adalat and the Sadar Fouzdari Adalat were abolished. The appeal from the High Court's lay before the judicial committees of the Privy Council situated in London.

The Criminal administration was reorganized in the post-1857 era. The various criminal laws including the Criminal Procedure Code (1882), Indian Penal Code (1860), Indian Evidence Act (1872) and the Indian Arms Act (1878) were promulgated. Thus a uniform legal system transgressing caste, creed and religion was established in India and the Islamic system of justice was abandoned. In 1860 it was decided that the Europeans can claim no special privileges except in criminal cases and no judge of Indian origin could try them. In 1883 Lord Ripon, the then Viceroy of India proposed a bill to allow the Indian magistrates to try the British subjects. This bill was known as the Ilbert Bill which received severe criticism in the official circle. The controversy over the Bill strained the relationship between the British government and the Indian people. The Indian middle class strictly voiced its concern and demanded the complete separation of the judiciary and the executive which was one of the goals of the Indian National Congress established in 1885. In 1911, three more High Courts were established at Patna, Lahore and Rangoon. The Government of India Act of 1935 provided for the establishment of a Federal Court which was set up on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1937. It consisted of one chief justice and 6 judges to be appointed by the Crown. It was to settle disputes between governments and could hear appeals from High Courts. Sir Maurice Gwyer became the first Chief Justice of India. The final appellate authority of the Privy Council was kept intact.

The British legal system established the rule of law machinery in India. It codified the laws which replaced the religious and personal laws of the native Indian rulers. It also brought the European subjects under the jurisdiction and made the Government servants answerable to the civil courts. However, the judicial system became more and more complicated and expensive. It had many loopholes which could be manipulated by the rich or the people in power. There was ample scope for false evidence and deceit. The judicial process was lengthy which delayed justice. Courts became overburdened as litigations increased. The European judges were not familiar with the Indian usages and traditions which further complicated the process.

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## 1.16 CONCLUSION

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The reorganization of the army, police and legal system in India under the British Raj marked a pronounced departure from the pre-colonial setup. The police gradually succeeded in curbing criminal activities such as robbery, dacoit as well as suppressing the national movement. The military was organized on modern lines which helped to safeguard the British Empire in India as well as checked the growth of nationalist feelings among soldiers. The judicial system supplemented the army and police and established the superiority of the western judicial jurisprudence. Together they succeeded in legitimizing British rule and strengthening British imperialism over India.

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## 1.17 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. What was the Cornwallis Code?
2. What was the Martial Race Theory?
3. Who were the Martial Races as per the British Raj?
4. What was the ‘White Mutiny’?

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## 1.18 LET US SUM UP

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- The army, police and the judiciary served as three important components to lay the foundation of British Imperialism over India on a firm footing.
- The British government followed the divide and rule policy in army recruitment and intentionally kept the Indians divided based on caste, religion and region.
- The colonial state organised the police system in a chain of command and connected the interior parts to the central power, thus establishing order from top to down.
- The legal machinery of the British Raj supplemented the army and the police in developing a surveillance society and securing absolute power of the British over the Indians.
- All these three components were organised and systematized to ensure the smooth collection of land revenue as well as the maintenance of law and order crucial to the sustenance of British imperialism over India.

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## 1.19 KEYWORDS

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**Shariat:** Islamic law based on Koran and the teachings of the Prophet

**Qazi:** A judge in Islamic law

**Mufti:** A legal professional in Islamic law

**Subedar:** An Indian officer in the British Military forces in India.

**Nazim:** Provincial governor under the Mughal rule

**Kachheri:** a place for public business, a court, an office.

**Diwan:** Officer in charge of revenue collection and maintenance of law and order in Mughal India.

**Thana:** Police Stations

**Faujdar:** an officer maintaining law and order in Mughal India

**Kotwal:** responsible for maintenance of law and order in cities.

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## 1.20 SUGGESTED READINGS

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2. B.S. Cohn, “Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India”, 1996, Princeton University Press.
3. Michael, Foucault, “Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972- 1977”, 1980, Pantheon Books, New York.
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5. Sumit Sarkar, “Modern India, 1885-1947”, 2008, MacMillan.

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## UNIT-2 IMPERIAL IDEOLOGY: ORIENTALISM AND UTILITARIANISM

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### Structure

- 2.1 Learning objectives
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Imperial ideology
- 2.4 The Early Image of Britishers towards India
- 2.5 Orientalist approach of Warren Hastings
- 2.6 Sir William Jones
- 2.7 Institutionalising Orientalism
- 2.8 Trend of Evangelicalism
- 2.9 The Idea of Improvement
- 2.10 The Utilitarianism
- 2.11 Question on Law
- 2.12 Question on Land Revenue
- 2.13 Progressive vision for India
- 2.14 Conclusion
- 2.15 Summary/ Points to remember
- 2.16 Check your Progress
- 2.17 Model Questions
- 2.18 Suggested reading

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### 2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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After going through this Unit, you will be able to know-

- Explain the ways in which the British perception of India was being shaped.
- Understand how the British perception about India changed over the years.
- Describe the changes brought out by Warren Hastings and other Governor General.
- Know regarding the institutions set up for the spreading Indian culture.
- Understand the application of utilitarian ideas in India by James Mill.

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### 2.2 INTRODUCTION

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The attitudes of British attitudes towards India were never static and they differed both in times and in place. Their ideas also differed from individual to individual in different point of time. As British sought to terms with the existence of their new dominion, British drew upon a range of ideas that had for a long time shaped their views of themselves. The expansion British Empire in India brought the company official into

contact with a number of Indian people. It informed the European rulers of the customs and laws of the land for the purpose of assimilating them into the subject society for more efficient administration. In due course of the time they sought to understand the thoughts, ideas and culture of this land and develop a British Indian thought.

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### **2.3 IMPERIAL IDEOLOGY**

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It was in first part of 19<sup>th</sup> century the feeling of patriotism developed among the Britishers. Their love for nation was reflected in the form of glories of having territorial possessions. Often they defined themselves much civilized and started a civilizing mission in all their colonies. They adopted rational ideas and exercised it in the colonies they possessed to have their imperial vision. So far the ideology of Britishers towards India is concerned; they wanted certain reforms in the existing socio- political trends being inspired by the intellectual and political cross current of European nations. Since the time of Robert Clive civil affairs of India was under the control of English East India Company. Hence a number of company officials were actively engaged in administration. So to say there was Anglicization of the administrative structure in India. This Anglicization structure and their rule India brought a radical change in administrative mechanism. Indian society also experienced a qualitative structural transformation during British rule under the influences of contemporary European polity-economical and philosophical ideas carried away through colonial network, led it on a new and different path of development. British rule initiated some of the basic changes in social physiognomy of Indian society, though to sub serve its own interest.

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### **2.4 THE EARLY IMAGES**

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The very early images of India in the British mind were in terms of their own Western experience and their travels in the great voyages of discovery. The early travelers to India, Edward Terry and John Ovington described the Mughal rule in 1689 'yet another example of Muslim despotism'. The early British, who had read about the Ottoman and Persian empires in the great traveler Bernier's writings, seem to have felt that a closer study of the Mughals would tell them very little that they did not know. It was believed by people like Sir William Temple in the classical age, that Lycurgus and Pythagoras had been taught by the Indians. However this impression of India in 17<sup>th</sup> century did not continue and Britishers noticed the degeneration of Indian culture in the second half of 18<sup>th</sup> century. When they came into contact with various communities of west coast of India, they detected various evil matters prevailing in the society. Thus many British intellectual and scholars took keen interest to study the glorious past. The scholar like Sir William Jones Preferred to know Indian culture and tradition and worked for the revival of the glorious past.

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## 2.5 ORIENTALIST APPROACH OF WARREN HASTINGS

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The British perception of decayed system had made an impression that the culture and tradition had degenerated in 18<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time the early British authority were well acquainted with vibrant cultural past of India. It was realized that to run the administration in India smoothly a thorough knowledge of India's past highly essential. So the then governor general Warren Hastings made a sincere effort to study the past glory of this nation as well as communicate this in the western countries. To materialize his ideas, he recruited a band of staunch and dedicated administrators from Britain. He took some initiatives to work towards setting up of institution of learning which would acquire the knowledge of India's glory and then convey it to those who would be involved in the project of administering India. Such approach of Warren Hastings was called as Orientalist approach. The policy of Orientalism adopted by Hastings was reflected in his administration. The cardinal principle he adopted was that the conquered people should be ruled by their own laws. Keeping this principle in view, Warren Hastings adopted reverse acculturation and assimilating Indian thoughts, custom, and laws in the administration. Besides, he asked the British administrator to acquaint them with knowledge of India's society, culture, tradition and laws. Hastings had also a unique political vision. Therefore, he set up institutions to acquaint the company servants with Indian tradition. The intention behind the Orientalist approach into the administration was to bring a rhetoric love towards colonial rule among the Indians. Hastings was never in favor of implementing English way of administration in India. He wanted to reconcile British rule with the Indian institutions. Subsequently, an in depth analysis of literature and laws of Indians were made. In addition to this, intensive investigation of Dharmashastra was carried out by British scholars to draw up a list of religious and customary laws. One of the Lieutenants of Warren Hastings name Halhed had compiled a set of religious law called "Gentoo laws" from different religious texts of our country. It was expected that application of this Gentoo law would bring political stability in the country and would help in reconciliation with native Indians.

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## 2.6 SIR WILLIAM JONES

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The Orientalism vision was not only confined to Warren Hastings alone. Sir William Jones, an English jurist was also in favor of Orientalism. He took keen interest to rediscover the past glory of India. He not only understood the language and customs of Indians but also made scientific study on the Indian antiquities. After studying India's antiquity he compared it with Classical west. He also studied Indian languages to restore to the Indians their own forgotten culture and legal system. He also tried to establish a linguistic similarity between Sanskrit, Greek and Latin claiming the origin of these language form Indo-European family. He glorified the Indian culture and also set

himself the task of making India more intelligible to British. He was well aware that Britishers alone cannot run the administration in India perfectly without understanding the custom and tradition of Indians. Jones had taken initiative to set up an institution to have a scientific study of India's past and established the Asiatic society of Bengal in 1784 A, D. The Society was formed for the purpose of unearthing knowledge about Asia and outside Asia. This society employed many dedicated individual who carried out the oriental research. Some of the notable members of this institution were Charles Wilkins and Alexander Hamilton. The then governor General Warren Hastings's idea and William Jones idea coincided. As a result this society received full blessing of Hastings to uplift itself. A sincere study on socio-political, religious, and linguistic study of India was made by Asiatic society of Bengal. Scholars from this society got many Indian classics translated into English and these translations introduced Indian culture to the western world. William Jones himself translated Manusmriti, Abhijanana-sakuntalam and many Sanskrit works into English. He was the first person to declare Sanskrit as the scientific knowledge to the western world. Sir Charles Wilkins also translated Bhagvat gita into English in 1785 and Hitopadesa in 1787 A.D. thus Asiatic society contributed in a major way for spreading Indian culture by translating Persian and Sanskrit works as well as the puranas. The members of the society deeply studied Indian society, culture and religion and published numerous articles in European nations glorifying India's past.



**Fig-1 Warren Hastings**



**Fig-2 sir William Jones**

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## 2.7 INSTITUTIONALISING ORIENTALISM

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The desire of rediscovering the glorious past of India gradually subsume to the practical needs of the British rule. To achieve the administrative goals, Warren Hastings took several measures. Firstly, he set up many institutions for inculcating Indian thoughts among the Britishers. During his time institution like Calcutta Madrasa and Asiatic society of Bengal were set in 1781 and 1784 A.D respectively. Later on in 1794 the Sanskrit college in Banaras was established by British government. All the institutions were set up for promoting the study of Indian languages and scriptures. Subsequently, another governor general lord Richard Wellesley had also set up a college called Fort William College at Calcutta in 1800 A.D. It was set for the purpose of studythe Indian language so that the future administrator could take on the task familiarising themselves with the vernacular of the common people. The students' were taught Persian language as well as the Indian languages. Persian language was taught to them because it was used as a language for maintaining official record and running day to day business. In different parts of the country Indian native rulers used this Persian language as their court language too. The courtiers of the regional rulers were well versed in this language and cultural life style of their court. The British officer after being trained with Indian language and culture, tried to establish good rapport with the courtiers of regional rulers. British officials also imitated certain cultural habits of Indian people. They adopted Indian dresses and etiquette while visiting to the courts of Indian rulers. Having seen hookah tradition of Indian people, some of the British officers had also adopted it. This way the orientalist approach of the Britishers had strengthened the company administration in India. They could easily got the favor of the Indian people which helped them for reaching their administrative goal.

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## 2.8 TREND OF EVANGELICALISM

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The policy of Warren Hastings was gradually abandoned by Lord Cornwallis, who went for greater Anglicisation of the administration and the imposition of the Whig Principles of the British government. Later on Lord Richard Wellesley also supported these moves. The aim of these Governor General was to limit government interference by abandoning the supposedly despotic aspects of Indian political tradition. The process of Anglicisation and the regulative administration under Cornwallis and Wellesley thus reflected a conservative regime in India. Due to rise of some new intellectual current in Britain, the idea of conservatism was criticized as it rarely gave the scope of improvement. By that time the Industrial Revolution in Britain too created the necessity to develop and integrate the Indian markets for manufactured goods and ensure a secured supply of raw materials. To achieve this economic goal, a more effective administration was necessary in India. Thus the Britishers were eager to tying up of the colony to the economy of the mother country. Being inspired by the new intellectual

trend like Evangelicalism, the English people preached the idea of improvement and brought a significant reform in India. While the pressure of the free trade lobby at home worked towards the abolition of the Company's monopoly over Indian trade, at that time the Evangelicalist brought about a fundamental change in the nature of the Company's administration in India. The Evangelist asserted that the conquest of India had been by acts of sin or crime; but instead of advocating the abolition of this sinful or criminal rule, they clamoured for its reform, so that Indians could get the benefit of good government in keeping with the "best ideas of their age". They advocated the permanence of British rule in India with a mission to change the whole administrative mechanism. In India the spokespersons of this idea were the missionaries located at Srirampur near Calcutta; but at home its chief exponent was Charles Grant. The principal problem of India, he argued in 1792, was the religious ideas that perpetuated the ignorance of Indian people. This could be effectively changed through the dissemination of Christian light, and in this lay the noble mission of British rule in India. Bringing a Christian zeal into his mission Charles Grant propagated the policy of assimilation of India into great civilizing mission of Britain. Evangelical opinion coincided with that of the free traders. By then, the evangelicals had witnessed some years of attempted improvement and social reforms in India through the British English Education. Paradoxical thought it may appear, evangelicals and the liberals such as Macaulay still wished to restrict government interference in the everyday life of the people of India. The evangelicals believed that society could not be reformed by legislation, but only by a change in individual morality. They intended a campaign to free the Indian mind from the tyranny of evil superstition, sort of Indian counterpart of the European Reformation. The diffusion of the message of a superior civilization was the heart of imperialism. Christianity was the source and life of this civilization. So the propagation of the Christian message had to go hand with the extension of empire. This was also the age of British liberalism. Thomas Macaulay's liberal vision that the British administrators' task was to civilize rather than conquer, set a liberal agenda for the emancipation of India through active governance. A Law Commission was appointed in 1833 under Lord Macaulay and it drew up an Indian Penal Code in 1835 on the Benthamite model. He was also instrumental in introducing English system of education in India. Thus the Evangelicalism and liberalism ideas go hand in hand. In such a situation Charles Grant as an Evangelicalist saw a complementarity between the civilizing\process and material prosperity.

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## **2.9 THE IDEA OF IMPROVEMENT**

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Two distinct trends were gradually emerging in the Indian administration of the East India company, although they were not totally unrelated. So, dilemmas in imperial attitudes towards India persisted in the first half of the nineteenth century. There was, on the one hand, the Cornwallis system, centered in Bengal, and based primarily on the Permanent Settlement. Lord Cornwallis introduced Permanent Settlement with the hope

that the rule of law and private property rights would liberate individual enterprise from the shackles of custom and tradition, and would bring in modernisation to the economy and society. But Thomas Munro in Madras, and his disciples in western and northern India, such as Mountstuart Elphinstone, John Malcolm and Charles Metcalfe, thought that the Cornwallis system did not pay heed to Indian tradition and experience. Not that they were averse to the rule of law or separation of powers; but such reforms, they thought, had to be modified to suit the Indian context. Some elements of the Indian tradition of personal government needed to be maintained, they believed; the role of the Company's government would be protective, rather than intrusive, regulative or innovative. So Munro went on to introduce his Ryotwari Settlement, with the intention of preserving India's village communities. It was soon discovered that imperial authoritarianism could function well in conjunction with the local elites of Indian rural society like the zamindars in Bengal and the mirasidars in Madras, whose power was therefore buttressed by both the Cornwallis system and the Munro system, both of which sought to define and protect private property. By that time an ardent follower of Mill, he abolished sati and child infanticide through legislation. But at the same time, he retained his faith in Indian traditions and nurtured a desire to give back to the Indians their true religion. The Indian Penal Code drafted in 1835 could not become an act until 1860. The dilemmas definitely persisted the mid nineteenth century, in spite of Lord Dalhousie's determination to take forward Mill's vision of aggressive advancement of Britain's mission in India.

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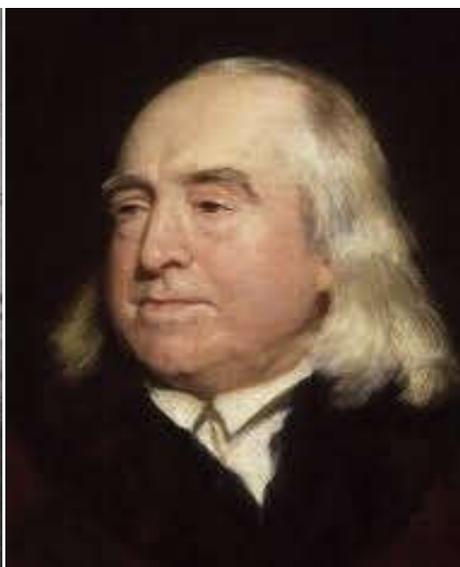
## 2.10 THE UTILITARIANISM

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According to utilitarianism, utility is the only intrinsic good. Actions are judged right or wrong in proportion to their propensity to produce the maximum happiness. It received its classical form in the hands of Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), the founder of the British Utilitarian School of philosophy and the two Mills, viz. James Mill (1773-1836), and his worthy son John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). Jeremy Bentham preached that the ideal of human civilisation was to achieve the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Good laws, efficient and enlightened administration, he argued, were the most effective agents of change; and the idea of rule of law was a necessary precondition for improvement. With the coming of the Utilitarian James Mill to the East India Company's London office, India policies came to be guided by such doctrines. Mill, as it has been contended, was responsible for transforming Utilitarianism into a "militant faith". In *The History of British India*, published in 1817, he first exploded the myth of India's economic and cultural riches, perpetuated by the "susceptible imagination" of men like Sir William Jones.



**Fig-3 James Mill**



**Fig-4 Jeremy Bentham**

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### **2.11 QUESTION ON LAW**

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The Utilitarians believed that good laws and efficient administration was most effective agent of change. The ideas of rule can only be the basis of improvement. James mill being the ardent follower of Bentham's ideology he adopted it to mould the British attitude in India. His Utilitarian approach became the ideological foundation of a reform in administration and institutions. He made an effort to combat the Orientalist, Cornwallis and Munroe heritage. Mill had conviction that Indian needed enlightenment and progress. Thus he adopted progressive theory to justify the British regime in our country. It was due to his sincere effort a law commission was set up in 1833 headed by Lord Macaulay and he was also instrumental in drawing up the penal code in 1835.

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### **2.12 QUESTIONS ON LAND REVENUE**

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James Mill was in favor of restructuring the revenue policy implemented in different provinces of British India. He applied the utilitarian economics in agriculture and trade. The Munro's Ryotwari system was the reflection of this idea. In this system the intermediary between ryot and British government were eliminated. The taxation on agriculture was made in such a way that landlord or zamindars could enjoy the undue benefit from agriculture. The profit was enjoyed by ryots or landholders and tax was directly paid to the company. This doctrine of rent was sought to be put into practice by officers like Pringle in Bombay. Elaborate survey methods were used to calculate the 'net produce' from land. Then tax rates were assessed. However, in practice the revenue demand often went very high, sometimes as much as fifty to sixty percent of the produce. This led gradually to the abandonment of complex calculations based on the

rent doctrine. From 1840s purely pragmatic and empirical methods derived from the tradition of taxation in respective areas were beginning to be adopted.

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### **2.13 PROGRESSIVE VISION FOR INDIA**

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Utilitarianism in India despite being born in the tradition of liberalism could never accept a democratic government in India. James Mill consistently opposed any form of representative government in India. The consolidation of the empire under Dalhousie was to take the paradoxes of the various kinds of perceptions of British India still more forward. Dalhousie took forward Mill's vision of belligerent advancement of Britain's mission, in his policy towards the native Indian States. As a result “all India departments” concept came when the postal service, telegraph service and the public work department were set up with a single head. At the same time Dalhousie was prepared to take a liberal stance in some respects. For example, he was to encourage the development of his legislative council into a forum for the representation of non-official opinion. He also provided it with elaborate rules of procedure taken from the English Parliament. He even favored the admission of Indian members into the legislative council. He agreed with the Macaulay's view of diffusion of English education and along with his colleague Thomason encouraged a system of vernacular education at mass level. However this impulse to link the, task of changing the Indian society to the tasks of law, landed property or education gradually declined. With the consolidation of law codes, revenue administration and education and the all India Empire, the focus shifted to efficiency of governance. Pragmatism with rationality and efficiency now dominated the British administration. Utilitarian arguments were still used for governance, for example in the change of law codes under Macaulay. But the overall spirit of reform declined. The later British administrators of our period were to emphasise that the British rule had always been governed by law. However, it was argued then, for efficient Administration force had to be used and there was no need to justify it by consideration of political change or reform. The utilitarian task of transforming India then was subsumed under the principle of an efficient and good government held up by the 'steel frame' of British administration.

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### **2.14 CONCLUSION**

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In the second half of the 18th and the first half of the 19th century, theories of empire often justified British Rule in India by reference to enlightenment ideas about stage of civilization. The European ideas like, Orientalism, Evangelicalism and Utilitarianism were simultaneously manipulated for both the notions of imperial colony-construction and social reform mission towards India. When the East India Company began to grasp its responsibilities as a ruling power on the Indian subcontinent, it donned the mantle of a reforming mission which incorporated numerous social issues such as Sati, Kulinism, Widowhood, Infanticide, Child marriage, Slavery and so on. The Company's governors

and officials like Bentinck, Metcalf, and Dalhousie, influenced by utilitarian-liberal ideology, took several steps to refresh Indian Society and passed several legislations for the purpose of elevating social obscurantism. In a nutshell, the Imperial Western Ideologies were represented as a symbol of improvement, progress and modernity which ultimately led to enhance the legitimacy of the Raj in Indian Territory.

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## 2.15 SUMMARY/ POINTS TO REMEMBER

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- Orientalist tradition that led to the founding of institutions like the Calcutta Madrassa in 1781, the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 and the Sanskrit College in Banaras in 1794.
- Fort William College at Calcutta was established in 1800 to train civil servants in Indian languages and tradition.
- Sir William Jones had taken initiative to set up an institution to have a scientific study of India's past and established the Asiatic society of Bengal.
- A Law Commission was appointed in 1833 under Lord Macaulay and it drew up an Indian Penal Code in 1835.
- Jeremy Bentham was the founder of the British Utilitarian School.
- Munro introduced his Ryotwari Settlement, with the intention of preserving India's village communities.

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## 2.16 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. Discuss the land settlement system introduced during British rule.
2. Write a note Trend of Evangelicalism.
3. Briefly discuss the role Warren Hastings in bring reform in Administration.
4. Discuss the major changes brought during the time of William Bentick.
5. Write a note on contribution of Asiatic society of Bengal.

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## 2.17 SUGGESTED READING

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1. Bipan Chandra: History of Modern India
2. Satish Chandra: History of Modern India
3. R.C. Majumdar (ed.) : British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, Vol.IX, Part-I, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (Publication)
4. Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar. From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2004

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## UNIT-3 EDUCATION: INDIGENOUS & MODERN

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### Structures

- 3.0 Learning Objectives
- 3.1. Introduction
- 3.2. The Indigenous System of Education
- 3.3. Origin and growth of modern education system: initial efforts
- 3.4. The Turning point
- 3.5. Orientalists-Anglicist Controversy
- 3.6. Efforts of Thomson
- 3.7. The Magna Carta of Indian education
- 3.8. The Indian education commission of 1882
- 3.9. The Period of Transition
- 3.10. The Indian Universities Act of 1904
- 3.11. The Concept of National Education
- 3.12. The Saddler Commission Of 1917
- 3.13. The Hartog Committee
- 3.14 Educations under Congress Ministry
- 3.15. Wardha Scheme of Basic Education
- 3.16. The Sergeant Report Of 1944
- 3.17. The Radhakrishna Commission Of 1948
- 3.18 Conclusion
- 3.19 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.20 Key Words
- 3.21 Check Your Progress
- 3.22 Suggested Reading:

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### 3.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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After reading this Unit, you will know about

- The indigenous system of education in India before the arrival of the Colonizers,
- Chronology of the development of the modern education system in India
- Ideology behind the modern education system
- The various schools of thought: Orientalists, Utilitarians, Anglicists, Evangelicalists etc.
- Features of various Acts and regulations of the colonial government regarding education in India
- Growth and nature of English education system.
- The development of the national education system in India.

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### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

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The modern education system came into being by replacing the traditional system of education in India. The British stressed upon educating Indians on western lines to fulfill their imperial objectives of establishing racial superiority and get cheaper clerks for colonial administrative establishment. But western education proved to be very useful for the Indians. Through it Indians studied the literature of Rousseau, Thomas Paine, James Mill, Edmund Burke, Herbert Spencer etc. and they adopted modern, rational, secular, democratic and national political view point. Bipan Chandra holds the opinion, “western education system did not give birth to national movement but it was the result of the clash of British and Indian interests. Western education system helped the Indians to acquire thought, so that they might give a lead to national movement and give it a democratic and modernized direction.”

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### **3.2. THE INDIGENOUS SYSTEM OF EDUCATION**

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A traditional indigenous system of education prevailed in India, which worked mostly through philanthropy on the eve of colonial conquest. The indigenous educational institutions during the 19th century were divided into two main types as viz; Schools of Learning and Elementary Schools. The Schools of Learning consisted of Pathshalas of the Hindus and Madrassahs of the Muslims. Persian Schools and schools of teaching through the modern Indian languages combined the Elementary Schools. The Hindu and Islamic institutions used to receive financial assistance from people of power, authority and passion. In both the institutions, classical language was used as the medium of instruction (Sanskrit in case of Hindus and Arabic and Persian in case of Muslims). The teachers were remunerated by grants of lands and payment in the form of food, clothes etc. The schools were largely held in the local temple or mosque and in the house of local magnate or patron.

The Brahmins exclusively conducted the Hindu schools of learning. Majority of the students attending the Hindu institutions were also Brahmins. Education of women and lower castes were not allowed under the social and cultural hierarchy prevalent in the society. In the Persian and Arabic schools, Hindu teachers were also teaching alongside Muslims. Since Persian was then the Court language, many Hindus were attending Persian schools. One of the advantages of the indigenous system of elementary schools was their adaptability to local environment. However, the indigenous system of education was slowly decaying under the political confusion and anarchy and growing poverty of the people under British rule.

There is a debate among scholars regarding the potentialities of the indigenous education system to develop into a National System of Education. There are two schools of thought regarding this question. One group of scholars agreed that the indigenous system of education had these potentialities since in most of the educationally

progressive countries the national system of education was constructed on the fundamentals of the traditional system. For example in England, the mass education was spread by gradual expansion and improvement of the existing voluntary schools. Some British officers and workers also supported this view. Lord Adam advocated for the development of a national system of education in India on nitty-gritties of the indigenous schools. Several colonial administrators and educationists such as Munro, Elphinstone, Thomason, Leitner suggested various plans for the development of the indigenous institutions. The other group had strong inhibitions regarding the potentialities of the indigenous education system transforming itself into a national system of education. The Anglicists, Utilitarians and the Evangelicalists come under this group. They proposed the substitution of the indigenous education with the modern western education.

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### **3.3. ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF MODERN EDUCATION SYSTEM: INITIAL EFFORTS**

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During the period between 1600-1675, the East India Company was a trading and profit making agency and did not take any educational activities. However as pointed out by N. N. Law, during this period the Company took initiatives in converting and educating the people in the territories under its possessions. This observation is supported by the fact that as early as 1600, steps were taken to recruit Indians and educate them to spread Christianity among the natives, mostly Anglo-Indians. In 1659, the Court of Directors declared that their primary objective in India is to spread Christianity and the missionaries were allowed to come to India and spread their gospel. The Charter of 1698 supported the missionary's activities in India and directed the Company to maintain schools in all their territories. This Charter Act made provision for the appointment of Chaplains in all the three Presidency towns who regarded it their duty to educate the Christian children. Some of the officials of the Company also established charity schools which were meant for poor children. Some scholars argued that these proselytizing activities of the Company formed the foundation of the Company's educational enterprise in India. However the modern movement in education began with the Charter Act of 1813.

In 1765, the East India Company acquired political power over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The British officials such as Warren Hastings, William Jones, N. Halhed, H.T. Colebrook took interest in the promotion of education. They emphasized upon Oriental systems of learning to understand the Indian society, culture and its history. According to them a regular supply of qualified Indians was a requirement to help in the administration of law and political correspondence within the Indian states. Further they focused on educating the influential Indians and won the support of the upper classes to consolidate its rule in India. During this period the Company established some institutions of higher learning. Among these, the most important were the Calcutta Madrassah and the Banaras Sanskrit College. The Calcutta Madrassah was founded by

Warren Hastings to educate the sons of Mahommadan gentlemen in order to produce competent persons for the newly established judicial department. The Banaras Sanskrit College was established by Jonathan Duncan in 1791.

The Oriental school promoted Classical learning in Sanskrit and Arabic on traditional lines and was reluctant to introduce western knowledge suddenly. They advised the Company to withdraw support to the proselytization activities of the missionaries. However, this school's views were based on political considerations and the necessity to maintain religious neutrality in a society such as India. The Orientalist views were accepted by the Court of Directors of the East India Company. Between 1765 and 1813, the Company encouraged traditional Oriental learning in Sanskrit and Arabic. Side by side the missionaries were also conducting educational activities with the foremost objective to convert the people into Christianity. The early converts to Christianity were the low caste people in India who were mostly illiterate and socio-economically backward. The missionaries translated Bible into various Indian languages and also introduced the printing press. They also had to start vocational schools to secure government employment for the converts in order to enhance their standard of living and status in society.

The adoption of the Orientalist policy in education between 1781 and 1791 deprived the mission schools of the sympathy and support of the Company. The missionaries started an intensive agitation in England and demanded necessary freedom and assistance to missionaries. Charles Grant, the leader of the Evangelical school in his "Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to morals; and the means of improving it" detailed out the immoral and wretched condition of Indian society dominated by ignorance and superstitions. According to Grant, there were two causes for the miserable condition of Indian people: ignorance and want of a proper religion. He argued that the situation could only be improved if Indians were first educated and finally converted to Christianity. He suggested that English language should be the medium of instruction to deliver the western knowledge to the Indian people and special emphasis should be placed on the teaching of natural sciences to break down the superstitious beliefs of Indian society. He argued that it was the moral duty of England to educate Indians with modern knowledge system that will help in building good relationship between the ruler and the ruled and secure legitimacy to the British rule. However, some members of the Court of Directors revolted against Grant's scheme.

In the backdrop of the missionaries' resistance to Company's educational policy and the British officials' promotion of Oriental education in India, the Charter Act of 1813 was passed in the British Parliament. The Charter mainly dealt with the question of sanctioning permission to the missionaries for their educational activities and accepting the responsibility of the education of Indians. The missionaries were victorious and were allowed to carry on their activities freely. But as far as the responsibility of educating

Indians was concerned, the Court of Director was hesitant to take up any such responsibility in India. It is because, at that time education was not a state responsibility in England.

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### **3.4. THE TURNING POINT**

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The Charter Act of 1813 forms a turning point in the history of Indian education. With this the agitation of the missionaries came to an end and they were allowed to carry on their proselytizing activities in India. The Company also accepted its duty to educate the Indian people by granting one lakh rupees annually for educational activities. The Charter incorporated the principle of encouraging learned Indians and promoting knowledge of modern sciences in the country. The missionaries came in large numbers and established many English schools, thereby laying the foundation of the modern education system.

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### **3.5. ORIENTALISTS-ANGLICIST CONTROVERSY**

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There arose controversies around four main issues i.e. ‘Object’ of the Education policy, ‘Medium’ of Instruction, ‘The Agencies’ for organizing educational institutions, and the ‘Methods’ to be adopted to spread education among the masses. The General Committee of Public Instruction consisted of 10 members who were divided into two groups i.e. Orientalists and Anglicists. Orientalists led by H.T. Prinsep insisted on teaching through the vernacular languages while Anglicists led by T.B. Macaulay insisted that all instructions should be given through English. Lord William Bentick in the Resolution of March 7, 1835 accepted the view point of T. B. Macaulay. The Resolution declared that the objective of the British government is to promote European literature and science among the Indian masses through English. The practice of supporting Oriental learning centers was to be discontinued. It made clear that the funds of the British government were to be spent on imparting English literature and science.

The period also witnessed a three- fold battle among the Orientalists, Evangelicals and the Utilitarians. The battle was won by the Utilitarians who now proposed an educational policy under Lord Macaulay, the Law member in the executive council of Lord William Bentick. Macaulay interpreted the word ‘literature’ mentioned in section 43 of the Charter Act of 1813 as English literature. A learned native of India could apply to a person versed in the philosophy of Locke or the poetry of Milton. The object of promoting Western knowledge could only be accomplished by the adoption of English as the medium of instruction. According to him the institutions of Oriental learning should be closed as they did not serve any useful purpose. He gave his opinion that “a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia”. These arguments advocated by Macaulay were immediately accepted by Lord William Bentick which led to the end of Anglicist-Orientalist controversy.

The objectives of educational Policy during this period can be both cultural and political. Culturally there were broadly three view-points. The first view was represented by Hastings, H.H.Wilson, Prinsep and other Orientalists. This emphasized the importance of ancient literatures of the Hindus and Muslims and the utility of the careful study of these literatures by Western scholars. However, these scholars did not oppose the spread of western knowledge. The second view was held by missionaries and by men like Charles Grant who believed in the substitution of Oriental culture by Western knowledge. T.B. Macaulay talked of creating a class of persons who would be “Indians in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect”. The third view followed a middle path. It advocated neither restrict Indians from the study of Oriental literature, nor substitute Oriental learning by Western learning. Rather support the synthesis of the two cultures, preserving all that is good in both the Oriental and the western system. This view finds good exponents among enlightened Indians like Raja Rammohan Roy. However, it was not acceptable to the contemporary educational administrators.

From the political point of view, the spread of education among the Indians was advocated mainly on two grounds. First, to win the loyalty of the upper classes of society who had lost their political power and authority under British rule. These upper classes would be educated first who would act as interpreters between the government and the masses. They would enrich the vernaculars by which knowledge of western sciences and literature would reach the masses. This is popularly known as the Downward Filtration Theory, which kept education enslaved during the colonial period. Secondly to recruit employees of subordinate ranks to government service at a lesser cost. A third view propounded the theory of civilizational duty of the English to educate the people of India. This view was influenced by the fact that the British Parliament in 1833 accepted the responsibility for education. It was also by some liberal- minded Englishmen and often echoed in the writings of Macaulay, Metcalfe, and Grant who believed that the only moral justification for the British conquest of India would be to initiate the cultural improvement of the people as a whole.

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### **3.6. EFFORTS OF THOMSON**

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James Thomson, lieutenant-governor of North Western Provinces (1843-53) developed a comprehensive scheme of village education through the medium of vernacular languages. In these village schools, useful subjects such as mensuration and agriculture sciences were taught. The purpose was to train personnel for the newly set up Revenue and Public Works Department.

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### 3.7. THE MAGNA CARTA OF INDIAN EDUCATION

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The Woods Despatch of 1854 prepared by Sir Charles Wood is regarded as the Magna Carta of Indian Education system. It appreciated the advantages of the study of classical languages of India. The recommendations of the Despatch were as follows:

- (a) The aim of Government's education policy was to impart western education.
- (b) It proposed the setting of up of primary schools (vernacular languages at lowest level, High Schools in Anglo Vernacular and Colleges (English medium) at district level.
- (c) Establishment of institutions for training of teachers on English Model.
- (d) Universities were proposed for Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras.
- (e) More attention was to be given to elementary education.
- (f) The system of grants-in-aid was recommended to private enterprise. The grants were conditional based on the principle of religious neutrality.
- (g) Comprehensive system of scholarship was recommended.
- (h) Female education to be encouraged by the Government.
- (i) Director of Public Instruction was to be appointed in every province.
- (j) For higher education it recommended English language as the medium of instruction.

The period between 1813 and 1854 was a period of continuous warfare. The political order was marred by frequent uprisings, thus challenging the legal order and the institutions of colonial governance. The abolition of the East India Company's rule and the establishment of the formal colonial state also brought influenced policy making in the field of education. There was an agitation in England following the rebellion of 1857 to adopt a policy of strict religious neutrality in India. The Queen's proclamation of 1858 supported the policy of religious neutrality and the educational policy of the colonial government followed an indifferent attitude towards mission schools.

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### 3.8. THE INDIAN EDUCATION COMMISSION OF 1882

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The Indian Education Commission or the Hunter Commission of 1882 reviewed the progress of education in the country since the Despatch of 1854. It recommended a secondary place to the missionary educational enterprises in India. It mostly confined its recommendations to primary and secondary education. It provided the following recommendation:

- (a) Transfer of the control of primary education to the newly set up District and Municipal Boards.
- (b) Provisions for ordinary and special grants for colleges.
- (c) New regulations regarding scholarships were to be framed.
- (d) Special measures for the encouragement of education among the Mohammadans.
- (e) Emphasis on physical and mental education.

- (f) Recommended the spread of female education outside the presidency towns.
- (g) Government to withdraw as early as possible from the direct management of secondary and college education.

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### **3.9. THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION**

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The state played only a minor role in education in India till 1902. However the doctrine of State withdrawal was officially abandoned under the leadership of Lord Curzon. The Balfour Act of 1902 that allowed the British parliament to control private enterprises in elementary education in order to improve the quality of education in England made the officials to introduce such a policy in India. Further the growing political consciousness among the educated people went against the government intentions of providing modern education to Indians. The British had hoped that the English educated Indians would remain loyal to British rule for its modernizing initiatives in India. However there was the rise of discontent against the British rule led by the English educated middle class. Therefore, the colonial ruling machinery thought of targeting and controlling the educational institutions to discipline the students.

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### **3.10. THE INDIAN UNIVERSITIES ACT OF 1904**

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Lord Curzon appointed a Commission under the Presidentship of Sir Thomas Raleigh in 1902, for improving the constitution and working of the universities. Its recommendations were:

- (a) All universities should be recognised as teaching bodies.
- (b) The legal powers of the older universities should be enlarged.
- (c) The Senate, faculties and Syndicate should be reorganized to be more representative bodies.
- (d) Recommended for properly constituted governing body for each school.
- (e) No institutions should be admitted to affiliation without full information and once admitted should not be allowed to fall below standards.
- (f) Attention should be paid to the discipline and residence of students.

The recommendations of the Raleigh Commission was accepted by Lord Curzon and embodied in the Universities Act of 1904. The Act made the following provisions:

- (a) The Act reconstituted the governing bodies of the Universities. The Senate was to have not less than 20 and not more than 100 Fellows each one of them holding the office for a period of 6 years.
- (b) The number of elected fellows was fixed at 20 for Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras and 15 for other universities.
- (c) The Government got the right to veto the regulations passed by the University Senate and was empowered to make alterations or additions.

- (d) Statutory recognition was given to the Syndicates with adequate representation of university teachers on them.
- (e) The Act increased university control over private colleges.
- (f) It emphasized on the promotion of study and research.
- (g) The territorial limits of the University were to be decided by the Governor General.

On 21<sup>st</sup> February 1913, the British Government introduced another Resolution on Education Policy which refused to recognize the principle of compulsory education although it accepted the policy of removal of illiteracy. It urged the provincial governments to work in the direction of providing free elementary education. Private efforts in this direction were encouraged. New teaching and residential universities were to be established within every province. It also recommended for the establishment of universities in Dacca, Benaras and Aligarh. New affiliated universities were to be established at Rangoon, Patna and Nagpur. Teaching activities of the universities should be encouraged.

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### **3.11. THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION**

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The second half of nineteenth century witnessed educated Indians making efforts to educate the people. There was a gradual spurt of private educational initiatives and many Indians with patriotic motives organised schools and colleges for the education of Indians. The social, religious, and political reforms along with the development of transport and communication networks in India marked the beginning of a renaissance that brought many leaders into a single public platform to discuss the idea of nation building. They realized that a new nation based on their ideals could not be built unless the youth of the Country are educated. It was this urge that led to a movement all over India leading to the foundation of institutions such as the Mahommadan Anglo- Oriental College at Aligarh and the Deccan Education Society of Poona. The 20 years between 1880 and 1900 saw a great development of private schools and colleges conducted by Indians and becoming most important agency for spreading western education among Indian people.

The Indian intelligentsia professed to have a national outlook in education during this period. They emphasized upon introducing modern Indian languages as medium of instruction and remove the supremacy of English. The national education prioritized vocational education for the economic development of the country. The efforts to start national schools fall into two distinct periods. The first period began soon after the partition of Bengal and during the course of the Swadeshi movement. The Government prohibition on participation of students in political activities compelled several students to boycott schools and colleges. This led the nationalist leaders to think of a system of national education and to open schools and colleges on national lines to educate the youths of India. The second period occurred in the course of Non-cooperation

movement when Gandhi started preaching the idea of boycotting government schools and colleges. The Nagpur session of Indian National Congress that passed the Non-Cooperation Resolution advised the “gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by government, and in place of such schools and colleges, the establishment of national schools and colleges in the various provinces”. The movement for the development of a national system of education received a quantitative set-back after the withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation movement in 1922.

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### **3.12. THE SADDLER COMMISSION OF 1917**

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During Lord Chelmsford period a commission was appointed to study and report on the problems of Calcutta University under the Chairmanship of Dr. M.E. Sadler in 1917. It was the first commission to review from school education to university. Its recommendations were as follows:

- (a) A 12 year school course was recommended.
- (b) The intermediate classes of the university were to be transferred to secondary education and the stage of admission to the university was passing Intermediate examinations.
- (c) Secondary and Intermediate education to be controlled by a Board of Secondary Education.
- (d) The duration of degree course should be limited to three years.
- (e) The old type of universities to be replaced by centralized unitary residential teaching autonomous universities.
- (f) Special attention was to be paid to the female education and Board was to be created for that purpose.
- (g) It also recommended setting up the Departments of Education at Calcutta and Dacca universities to provide facilities for training teachers.
- (h) To start courses in applied science and technology in the universities.
- (i) The medium of instruction up to High school stage was mostly to be vernacular but for later stages it was to be English.
- (j) To provide facilities for training of personnel for vocational and professional colleges.
- (k) To encourage Muslim students and to safeguard their interests.

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### **3.13. THE HARTOG COMMITTEE**

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The period between 1921 and 1937, saw an unprecedented increase in the number of schools. It is because of the fact that, the social and political awakening that took place during this period led to the expansion of educational activities across India. But the official opinion held that the educational standards had deteriorated. The Hartog Committee constituted in the year 1929 to deal with the financial difficulties due to

World Economic Depression also voiced this concern. It condemned the policy of hasty expansion of education and emphasized on the importance of primary education for the development of nation. It recommended a selective system of admission for higher education and emphasized on diversified courses after matriculation leading to industrial and commercial careers. It aimed at improving quality rather than to expand the education.

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### **3.14 EDUCATION UNDER CONGRESS MINISTRY**

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The new system of governance created by the Government of India Act 1935 led the Congress Party, the principal political organization of the country, to form government in seven provinces out of eleven. A lot was expected from the new Provincial Governments under the Congress Party as far as the educational reconstruction of India was concerned. The epoch- making event of this period was the scheme of Basic education enunciated by Mahatma Gandhi. By the time the Congress Ministries assumed power in seven provinces, there was a strong popular demand for the introduction of universal, free and compulsory primary education.

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### **3.15. WARDHA SCHEME OF BASIC EDUCATION**

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Mahatma Gandhi proposed universal compulsory and free primary education of seven years for every child by developing self-supporting schooling system through a useful and productive craft. He placed his proposals before the public through a series of articles in the Harijan written in 1937. Gandhi thought that the western education had created a gulf between the educated few and the masses. His proposal later on developed into the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education and the Zakir Hussain Committee formulated a detailed national scheme for Basic Education. The scheme had the following provisions:

- (a) Inclusion of a basic handicraft in the syllabus.
- (b) Seven years free and compulsory education.
- (c) Emphasis on community contact around schools
- (d) Teaching to be in the mother tongue of the child.

The system rather than a methodology for education was an expression of an idea for a new life and new society. There was not much development of this idea, because of the start of the Second World War and the resignation of the Congress ministries in the year 1939.

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### **3.16. THE SERGEANT REPORT OF 1944**

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The Sergeant Report of 1944 set a very idealistic target of achieving the educational standard of the contemporary England in a period of not less than 40 years. It made the following provisions:

- (a) To introduce universal, free and compulsory education for boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 14.
- (b) The scheme was estimated to cost 200 crores a year.
- (c) A school course was provided for children between the ages of 11 and 17.
- (d) The High schools were classified into three groups: academic, technical and vocational.
- (e) It recommended the abolition of intermediate classes.
- (f) The plan envisaged the establishment of Elementary and High schools.
- (g) A national youth movement was started to teach and build their bodies.

The financial conditions at that time were also not suitable for such a scheme. However the scheme merely described the ideal to be reached and does not give a detailed programme of development. Further the English model emulated by the Report could not very well serve as a model to India, because the social, political and economic conditions in the two countries are immensely different.

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### **3.17. THE RADHAKRISHNA COMMISSION OF 1948**

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The Radhakrishna Commission was appointed in 1948 to report on university education in the country and to suggest improvements. Its recommendations were as follows:

- (a) Higher salaries and better service conditions.
- (b) Pre-university should be of 12 years duration.
- (c) No college should admit more than 1000 students.
- (d) Working days should not be less than 180 (exclusive of examination days).
- (e) University education should be put in the concurrent list.
- (f) Three objectives were fixed for higher education: 1. General education, 2. Liberal Education and 3. Occupational Education.
- (g) It laid emphasis on refresher courses.
- (h) Extra focus on the subjects like agriculture, economics, education, commerce, engineering and technology.
- (i) University degree should not be considered as essential for the administrative services.
- (j) Examinations should be held subject wise at different stages as far as possible.
- (k) Provisions for the establishment of rural universities.
- (l) The salary of the teachers should be raised.
- (m) Setting up of a University Grants Commission to look after University Education in India.

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### 3.18 CONCLUSION

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The modern education system, one of the main contributions of colonialism originated and developed in India through various educational policies of the British government. But all these policies were not actually developed for the welfare of Indian people, but to satisfy their own interests. Almost all educational policies and controversies under the British rule had political biases. It always attempted to impose the schemes and ideas that evolved in England which were undesirable in India. The huge socio economic and political differences between the metropolis and the colony made England a poor model for India. The adoption of the Downward Filtration Theory gave a temporary setback to mass education and the universal use of English as the medium of instruction and the consequent neglect of modern Indian languages stood in the path of progress of education in India. Women's education, scientific and technical education were largely neglected. Traditional system of learning gradually declined for want of support. The English education created a wide linguistic and cultural gulf between the educated few and the vast illiterate masses. It established the monopoly of upper and rich classes over education. The British used the tool of modern education to strengthen the foundations of their political authority in India and secure legitimacy for the colonial government.

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### 3.19 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit the survey of the growth of modern education system in India highlights

1. The prevailing system of education in India before the arrival of the British, its private nature, institutions of learning, medium of instruction and the knowledge system.
2. The institutionalisation of the modern education system under the colonial state control, initiatives and efforts to promote western learning in India.
3. The imperialistic goals of the British and the imposition of the racial and cultural superiority of the British officials over native Indians through modern education.
4. The impact of the modern education system in India and the development of the new social groups such as the new educated middle class, their understanding of the colonial rule and their protest for the right to self-determination.
5. The journey towards a national system of education.

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### 3.20 KEY WORDS

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**Orientalists:** The Western scholarly discipline of the 18th and 19th centuries that encompassed the study of the languages, literatures, religions, philosophies, histories, art, and laws of Asian societies, especially ancient ones. The Orientalists in India emphasized on the study of ancient Indian literature and culture to understand India and its people.

**Evangelicalists:** A group of Protestant Christianity preachers led by Charles Grant who fought for introducing English system of education in India in order to convert the native Indians into Christianity.

**Anglicists:** They forcefully advocated the introduction of English as the only medium of instruction for the modern education system to be developed by the British in India.

**Utilitarians:** The preachers of Utilitarianism believed in ‘the greatest amount of good for the greatest number’. The preachers of this thought such as Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and J.S. Mill believed that only English education can develop the traditional and superstitious societies such as India.

**Downward Filtration Theory:** This theory was proposed by Lord Macaulay in his report called *Macaulay’s Minutes*. In the report he proposed to educate only the higher classes of the Indian society, who would in turn lead to educate the grass root sections of the society.

**Magna Carta:** Magna Carta, charter of English liberties granted by King John on June 15, 1215. It declared the sovereign to be subject to the rule of law and documented the liberties held by “free men”. It laid the foundation for individual rights in English jurisprudence. Similarly the Woods Despatch of 1854 laid the foundation of the modern education system in India and recognised the rights of Indians to education.

**Vernacular Education:** It is a system of education where the medium of education is a local or native language. Vernacular schools are focused on teaching mother tongue.

**National Education:** A system of education relating the nation as a whole irrespective of caste, class, religion, region and other diversified attributes.

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### 3.21 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. Discuss the provisions of the Charter Act of 1813.
2. What was Orientalists and Anglicists Controversy in India regarding education?
3. Mention the main recommendations of Woods Despatch ?
4. What were the main effects of Indian University Commission on Indian education system?
5. Discuss the main provisions of the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education proposed by Mahatma Gandhi

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### 3.22 SUGGESTED READING:

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