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## BTE-C-102

## EDUCATION IN INDIAN SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

### Unit II

### Aspirations of Indian Society

Major Areas of Aspirations, Social Order as Area of Aspiration, Social Justice as Area of Aspiration, Universalism as Area of Aspiration, Concept Meaning of Nationalism, Concept Meaning of Socialism, Concept Meaning of Secularism, Concept Meaning of Democracy, Education for Development of Nationalism, Education for Development of Socialism, Education for Development of Secularism, Education for Development of Democracy

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**Unit II****Introduction:**

**Social Order:** Explanations of social order, of how and why societies cohere, are the central concern of sociology. The 'Hobbesian problem of order', for example, preoccupied those classical sociologists faced directly with the apparent consequences of industrialization and urbanization: the demise of community, disruption of primary social relationships, loss of authority on the part of traditional agencies of social control, and general instability associated with rapid social change in the nineteenth century.

There are essentially two types of explanation of social order, which can be linked with the names of Émile Durkheim on the one hand, and Karl Marx on the other. The former, associated also with Talcott Parsons and the functionalist school of thought, focuses on the role of shared norms and values in maintaining cohesion in society. For Durkheim, this emphasis arose out of his critique of utilitarian social thought, popular especially among social and political theorists such as Herbert Spencer in Britain, who focused on mutual self-interest and contractual agreements as the basis of social order in increasingly complex industrial societies. For Durkheim, by comparison, questions of morality were central to the explanation of social integration. In his view, the 'mechanical solidarity' of pre-industrial societies rested on shared beliefs and values, located primarily in the *conscience collective*. However, the advent of industrial society sees the emergence of a new form of 'organic solidarity', based on interdependence arising out of socialization and differentiation. Moral restraints on egoism arise out of association and form the basis of social cohesion. While Durkheim did not deny the existence of conflict and the use of force, especially in periods of rapid social change, Parsons underlined the importance of a prior moral consensus as a necessary precondition for social order. He saw organic solidarity as a modified form of the *conscience collective* and argued that the acceptance of values by the internalization of norms is the

basis of integration and social order in modern societies. Because of the importance which he attached to a shared body of norms and values, Parsons was persistently criticized for over-emphasizing consensus, and for neglecting conflict and change in his sociological analyses.

The second explanation of social order derives from the Marxist tradition within the discipline and offers a materialist rather than a cultural account of cohesion. Marx emphasized inequalities in material wealth and political power in capitalist societies. The distribution of material and political resources is the source of conflict between different collectivities—social classes—who want a greater share of those resources than they may already enjoy. Conflict implies there is no moral consensus and social order is always precariously maintained. It is the product of the balance of power between competing groups, whereby the powerful constrain weaker groups, and cohesion is sustained through economic compulsion, political and legal coercion, and bureaucratic routine. While many Marxists have increasingly embraced cultural accounts of social order, for example by explaining working-class incorporation through a dominant ideology, others have noted that economic and political coercion has proved a remarkably effective source of stability, especially where power is legitimated as authority. Nevertheless, persistent conflict implies tension and change, rather than enduring stability.

In the most original recent contribution to the theoretical debate about social order, David Lockwood (*Solidarity and Schism*, 1992) has demonstrated that neither Marxian nor Durkheimian theory satisfactorily resolves the issues, since each approach is forced to employ residual categories which turn out to be the central analytic elements of the other. In Durkheim's work, the concept of moral classification is the key to social structure, whereas for Marx it is production relations. That is, one theory emphasizes the socially integrative structure of status, the other the socially divisive structure of class. However, Durkheim cannot explain how anomie (disorder) occurs or is structured (schismatic) without introducing concepts of power and material interests into his schema, whereas Marx cannot explain the persistence of capitalist societies without recourse to a generalized category of ideology which introduces the (unanalysed) conceptual problem of the nature and variability of consensus.

2.2 Social Justice:- Social justice is the fair and just relation between the individual and society. This is measured by the explicit and tacit terms for the distribution of wealth, opportunities for personal activity and social privileges. In Western as well as in older Asian cultures, the concept of social justice has often referred to the process of ensuring that individuals fulfill their societal roles and receive what was their due from society. In the current global grassroots movements for social justice, the emphasis has been on the breaking of unspoken barriers for social mobility, the creation of safety nets and economic justice.

Social justice assigns rights and duties in the institutions of society, which enables people to receive the basic benefits and burdens of cooperation. The relevant institutions often include taxation, social insurance, public health, public school, public services, labour law and regulation of markets, to ensure fair distribution of wealth, equal opportunity and equality of outcome.

Interpretations that relate justice to a reciprocal relationship to society are mediated by differences in cultural traditions, some of which emphasize the individual responsibility toward society and others the equilibrium between access to power and its responsible use. Thence, social justice is invoked today while reinterpreting historical figures such as Bartolomé de las Casas, in philosophical debates about differences among human beings, in efforts for gender, racial and social equality, for advocating justice for migrants, prisoners, the environment, and the physically and mentally disabled.

While the concept of social justice can be traced through the theology of Augustine of Hippo and the philosophy of Thomas Paine, the term "social justice" became used explicitly from the 1840s. A Jesuit priest named Luigi Taparelli is typically credited with coining the term, and it spread during the revolutions of 1848 with the work of Antonio Rosmini-Serbati. In the late industrial revolution, progressive American legal scholars began to use the term more, particularly Louis Brandeis and Roscoe Pound. From the early 20th century it was also embedded in international law and institutions; the preamble to establish the International Labour Organization recalled that "universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice." In the later 20th century, social justice was made central to the philosophy of

the social contract, primarily by John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* (1971). In 1993, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action treats social justice as a purpose of the human rights education.

The different concepts of justice, as discussed in ancient Western philosophy, were typically centered upon the community. Plato wrote in *The Republic* that it would be an ideal state that "every member of the community must be assigned to the class for which he finds himself best fitted." Aristotle believed rights existed only between free people, and the law should take "account in the first instance of relations of inequality in which individuals are treated in proportion to their worth and only secondarily of relations of equality." Reflecting this time when slavery and subjugation of women was typical, ancient views of justice tended to reflect the rigid class systems that still prevailed. On the other hand, for the privileged groups, strong concepts of fairness and the community existed. Distributive justice was said by Aristotle to require that people were distributed goods and assets according to their merit. Socrates (through Plato's dialogue *Crito*) is attributed with developing the idea of a social contract, whereby people ought to follow the rules of a society, and accept its burdens because they have accepted its benefits. During the Middle Ages, religious scholars particularly, such as Thomas Aquinas continued discussion of justice in various ways, but ultimately connected being a good citizen to the purpose of serving God.

After the Renaissance and Reformation, the modern concept of social justice, as developing human potential, began to emerge through the work of a series of authors. Baruch Spinoza in *On the Improvement of the Understanding* (1677) contended that the one true aim of life should be to acquire "a human character much more stable than [one's] own", and to achieve this "pitch of perfection... The chief good is that he should arrive, together with other individuals if possible, at the possession of the aforesaid character." During the enlightenment and responding to the French and American Revolutions, Thomas Paine similarly wrote in *The Rights of Man* (1792) society should give "genius a fair and universal chance" and so "the construction of government ought to be such as to bring forward... all that extent of capacity which never fails to appear in revolutions."

The first modern usage of the specific term "social justice" is typically attributed to Catholic thinkers from the 1840s, including the Jesuit Luigi Taparelli in *Civiltà Cattolica*, based on the work of St. Thomas Aquinas. He argued that rival capitalist and socialist theories, based on subjective Cartesian thinking, undermined the unity of society present in Thomistic metaphysics as neither were sufficiently concerned with moral philosophy. Writing in 1861, the influential British philosopher and economist, John Stuart Mill stated in *Utilitarianism* his view that "Society should treat all equally well who have deserved equally well of it, that is, who have deserved equally well absolutely. This is the highest abstract standard of social and distributive justice; towards which all institutions, and the efforts of all virtuous citizens, should be made in the utmost degree to converge."

In the later 19th and early 20th century, social justice became an important theme in American political and legal philosophy, particularly in the work of John Dewey, Roscoe Pound and Louis Brandeis. One of the prime concerns was the *Lochner era* decisions of the US Supreme Court to strike down legislation passed by state governments and the Federal government for social and economic improvement, such as the eight hour day or the right to join a trade union. After the First World War, the founding document of the International Labour Organization took up the same terminology in its preamble, stating that "peace can be established only if it is based on social justice". From this point, the discussion of social justice entered into mainstream legal and academic discourse. In the late 20th century, a number of liberal and conservative thinkers, notably Friedrich von Hayek rejected the concept by stating that it did not mean anything, or meant too many things. However the concept remained highly influential, particularly with its promotion by philosophers such as John Rawls.

### **Criticism:**

Many authors criticize the idea that there exists an objective standard of social justice. Moral relativists deny that there is any kind of objective standard for justice in general. Non-cognitivists, moral skeptics, moral nihilists, and most logical positivists deny the epistemic possibility of objective notions of justice. Political realists believe that any ideal of social justice is ultimately a mere justification for the status quo.

Many other people accept some of the basic principles of social justice, such as the idea that all human beings have a basic level of value, but disagree with the elaborate conclusions that may or may not follow from this. One example is the statement by H. G. Wells that all people are "equally entitled to the respect of their fellowmen."

On the other hand, some scholars reject the very idea of social justice as meaningless, religious, self-contradictory, and ideological, believing that to realize any degree of social justice is unfeasible, and that the attempt to do so must destroy all liberty. Perhaps the most complete rejection of the concept of social justice comes from Friedrich Hayek of the Austrian School of economics:

There can be no test by which we can discover what is 'socially unjust' because there is no subject by which such an injustice can be committed, and there are no rules of individual conduct the observance of which in the market order would secure to the individuals and groups the position which as such (as distinguished from the procedure by which it is determined) would appear just to us. [Social justice] does not belong to the category of error but to that of nonsense, like the term 'a moral stone'.

### **Universalism:**

Universalism is the theological view arguing that all persons will ultimately be saved. Some also teach that there is no such thing as a literal hell or eternal punishment. Universalism has been asserted at various times in different contexts throughout the history of the Christian church.

### **Background:**

"Belief in universal salvation is at least as old as Christianity itself and may be associated with early Gnostic teachers. The first clearly universalist writings, however, date from the Greek church fathers, most notably Clement of Alexandria, his student Origen, and Gregory of Nyssa. Of these, the teachings of Origen, who believed that even the devil might eventually be saved, were the most influential. Numerous supporters of final salvation were to be found in the postapostolic church, although it was strongly opposed by Augustine of Hippo. Origen's theology was at length declared heretical at the fifth ecumenical council in 553."

## **Unitarian Universalism:**

"As an organized religious movement, universalism dates from the late 1700s in America, where its early leaders were Hosea Ballou, John Murray, and Elhanan Winchester. As a form of religious liberalism, it has had close contacts with Unitarianism throughout its history. The Universalist Church of America and the American Unitarian Association merged in 1961 to form a single denomination - the Unitarian Universalist Association."

Unitarians, denying the Trinity, stressed the unity of God and nature, the humanity of Jesus, and the inherent goodness in humanity. Universalists, by comparison, agreed with the humanity of Jesus but had a strong focus on the concept of universal salvation, and a benevolent God who offers hope to all. Both of these approaches, merged in Unitarian Universalism, are in direct opposition to the trinitarian nature of God and the doctrine of original sin.

## **Universal Reconciliation**

"Universal reconciliation" is the position that all of mankind will ultimately be saved through Christ whether or not faith is professed in him in this life. While most proponents may adhere to many tenets of traditional Christianity, they uniformly claim that God's qualities of love, goodness, and sovereignty require that all people will ultimately be saved and that eternal punishment is a false doctrine. Salvation is not from hell, but from sin. Advocates of this view take verses such as 1 Timothy 2:6 and 1 John 2:2 literally, explaining that Christ took away sins of the "whole" world such that there remains no basis for condemnation. This is also based on the belief that a loving God would not submit any person, regardless of their sins, to everlasting torment, but would instead reform them. This is a belief held by some protestant denominations. An extension of this, called "strong universalism", holds that no person, even the greatest sinner, is sent to Hell, and therefore Hell does not need to exist.

Some proponents do believe that there is a physical, literal Hell in existence, but that Hell is only for the reformation of the sinners. Hell, though real, "will be remedial and corrective rather than just punishment for punishment's sake."

**Nationalism:** Nationalism is a shared group feeling in the significance of a geographical and sometimes demographic region seeking independence for its culture and/or ethnicity that holds that group together. This can be expressed as a belief or political ideology that involves an individual identifying with or becoming attached to one's nation. Nationalism involves national identity, by contrast with the related concept of patriotism, which involves the social conditioning and personal behaviors that support a state's decisions and actions.

From a political or sociological perspective, there are two main perspectives on the origins and basis of nationalism. One is the primordialist perspective that describes nationalism as a reflection of the ancient and perceived evolutionary tendency of humans to organize into distinct groupings based on an affinity of birth. The other is the modernist perspective that describes nationalism as a recent phenomenon that requires the structural conditions of modern society in order to exist.

An alternative perspective to both of these lineages comes out of Engaged theory, and argues that while the form of nationalism is modern, the content and subjective reach of nationalism depends upon 'primordial' sentiments.

There are various definitions for what constitutes a nation, however, which leads to several different strands of nationalism. It can be a belief that citizenship in a state should be limited to one ethnic, cultural, religious, or identity group, or that multinationality in a single state should necessarily comprise the right to express and exercise national identity even by minorities. The adoption of national identity in terms of historical development has commonly been the result of a response by influential groups unsatisfied with traditional identities due to inconsistency between their defined social order and the experience of that social order by its members, resulting in a situation of anomie that nationalists seek to resolve.<sup>[5]</sup> This anomie results in a society or societies reinterpreting identity, retaining elements that are deemed acceptable and removing elements deemed unacceptable, in order to create a unified community. This development may be the result of internal structural issues or the result of resentment by an existing group or groups towards other communities, especially foreign powers that are or are deemed to be controlling them.

National flags, national anthems and other symbols of national identity are commonly considered highly important symbols of the national community.

With the emergence of a national public sphere and an integrated, country-wide economy in 18th-century England, English people began to identify with the country at large, rather than the smaller units of their family, town or province. The early emergence of a popular patriotic nationalism took place in the mid-18th century, and was actively promoted by the British government and by the writers and intellectuals of the time. National symbols, anthems, myths, flags and narratives were assiduously constructed and adopted. The Union Flag was adopted as a national one; Thomas Arne composed the patriotic song "Rule, Britannia!" in 1740, and the cartoonist John Arbuthnot invented the character of John Bull as the personification of the English national spirit in 1712.

Two major bodies of thought address the causes of nationalism:

the modernist perspective describes nationalism as a recent phenomenon that requires the structural conditions of modern society in order to exist

the primordialist perspective describes nationalism as a reflection of the ancient evolutionary tendency of humans to organize into distinct groupings based on an affinity of birth

Roger Masters in *The Nature of Politics* (1989) says that both the primordialist and modernist conceptions of nationalism involve an acceptance of three levels of common interest of individuals or groups in national identity

at an inter-group level, humans respond to competition or conflict by organizing into groups to either attack other groups or defend their group from hostile groups

at the intragroup level, individuals gain advantage through cooperation with others in securing collective goods that are not accessible through individual effort alone

on the individual level, self-interested concerns over personal fitness by individuals either consciously or subconsciously motivate the creation of group formation as a means of security.

The behaviour of leadership groups or élites that involves efforts to advance their own fitness when they are involved in the mobilization of an ethnic or national group is crucial in the development of the culture of that group.

### **Modernist Interpretation:**

The modernist interpretation of nationalism and nation-building perceives that nationalism arises and flourishes in modern societies described as being associated with having: an industrial economy capable of self-sustainability of the society, a central supreme authority capable of maintaining authority and unity, and a centralized language or small group of centralized languages understood by a community of people. Modernist theorists note that this is only possible in modern societies, while traditional societies typically: lack a modern industrial self-sustainable economy, have divided authorities, have multiple languages resulting in many people being unable to communicate with each other.

Karl Marx wrote about the creation of nations as requiring a bourgeois revolution and an industrial economy. Marx applied the modern versus traditional parallel to British colonial rule in India that Marx saw in positive terms as he claimed that British colonial rule was developing India, bringing India out of the "rural idiocy" of its "feudalism".<sup>[35]</sup> However Marx's theories at the time of his writing had little impact on academic thinking on the development of nation states.

Prominent theorists who developed the modernist interpretation of nations and nationalism include: Carlton Joseph Huntley Hayes, Henry Maine, Ferdinand Tönnies, Rabindranath Tagore, Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Arnold Joseph Toynbee and Talcott Parsons.

Nationalism is inherently divisive because it highlights perceived differences between people, emphasizing an individual's identification with their own nation. The idea is also potentially oppressive because it submerges individual identity within a national whole, and gives elites or political leaders potential opportunities to manipulate or control the masses. Much of the early opposition to nationalism was related to its geopolitical ideal of a separate state for every nation. The classic nationalist movements of the 19th century rejected the very existence of the multi-ethnic empires

in Europe. Even in that early stage, however, there was an ideological critique of nationalism. That has developed into several forms of anti-nationalism in the western world. The Islamic revival of the 20th century also produced an Islamic critique of the nation-state.

At the end of the 19th century, Marxists and other socialists (such as Rosa Luxemburg) produced political analysis that were critical of the nationalist movements then active in central and eastern Europe (though a variety of other contemporary socialists and communists, from Lenin (a communist) to Józef Piłsudski (a socialist), were more sympathetic to national self-determination).

In his classic essay on the topic George Orwell distinguishes nationalism from patriotism, which he defines as devotion to a particular place. Nationalism, more abstractly, is "power-hunger tempered by self-deception."

For Orwell, the nationalist is more likely than not dominated by irrational negative impulses:

There are, for example, Trotskyists who have become simply enemies of the U.S.S.R. without developing a corresponding loyalty to any other unit. When one grasps the implications of this, the nature of what I mean by nationalism becomes a good deal clearer. A nationalist is one who thinks solely, or mainly, in terms of competitive prestige. He may be a positive or a negative nationalist—that is, he may use his mental energy either in boosting or in denigrating—but at any rate his thoughts always turn on victories, defeats, triumphs and humiliations. He sees history, especially contemporary history, as the endless rise and decline of great power units and every event that happens seems to him a demonstration that his own side is on the upgrade and some hated rival is on the downgrade. But finally, it is important not to confuse nationalism with mere worship of success. The nationalist does not go on the principle of simply ganging up with the strongest side. On the contrary, having picked his side, he persuades himself that it is the strongest and is able to stick to his belief even when the facts are overwhelmingly against him.

**Socialism:**

Central to the meaning of socialism is common ownership. This means the resources of the world being owned in common by the entire global population.

But does it really make sense for everybody to own everything in common? Of course, some goods tend to be for personal consumption, rather than to share—clothes, for example. People 'owning' certain personal possessions does not contradict the principle of a society based upon common ownership.

In practice, common ownership will mean everybody having the right to participate in decisions on how global resources will be used. It means nobody being able to take personal control of resources, beyond their own personal possessions.

Democratic control is therefore also essential to the meaning of socialism. Socialism will be a society in which everybody will have the right to participate in the social decisions that affect them. These decisions could be on a wide range of issues—one of the most important kinds of decision, for example, would be how to organise the production of goods and services.

Production under socialism would be directly and solely for use. With the natural and technical resources of the world held in common and controlled democratically, the sole object of production would be to meet human needs. This would entail an end to buying, selling and money. Instead, we would take freely what we had communally produced. The old slogan of "from each according to ability, to each according to needs" would apply.

So how would we decide what human needs are? This question takes us back to the concept of democracy, for the choices of society will reflect their needs. These needs will, of course, vary among different cultures and with individual preferences—but the democratic system could easily be designed to provide for this variety.

We cannot, of course, predict the exact form that would be taken by this future global democracy. The democratic system will itself be the outcome of future democratic decisions. We can however say that it is likely that decisions will need to be taken at a number of different levels—from local to global. This would help to streamline the democratic participation of every individual towards the issues that concern them.

In socialism, everybody would have free access to the goods and services designed to directly meet their needs and there need be no system of payment for the work that each individual contributes to producing them. All work would be on a voluntary basis. Producing for needs means that people would engage in work that has a direct usefulness. The satisfaction that this would provide, along with the increased opportunity to shape working patterns and conditions, would bring about new attitudes to work.

Socialism is a range of economic and social systems characterised by social ownership and democratic control of the means of production; as well as the political ideologies, theories, and movements that aim at their establishment. Social ownership may refer to forms of public, cooperative, or collective ownership; to citizen ownership of equity; or to any combination of these. Although there are many varieties of socialism and there is no single definition encapsulating all of them, social ownership is the common element shared by its various forms.

Socialism can be divided into both non-market and market forms. Non-market socialism involves the substitution of an economic mechanism based on engineering and technical criteria centered around calculation performed in-kind for factor markets, money and the accumulation of capital; therefore functioning according to different economic laws than those of capitalism. Non-market socialism aims to circumvent the inefficiencies and crises traditionally associated with the profit system. By contrast, market socialism retains the use of monetary prices and factor markets for the allocation of capital goods between socially-owned enterprises and, in some cases, the profit motive with respect to their operation. Profits would either accrue to society at large in the form of a social dividend or directly to the workforce of each firm. The feasibility and exact methods of resource allocation and calculation for a socialist system are the subjects of the socialist calculation debate.

The socialist political movement includes a diverse array of political philosophies that originated amid the revolutionary movements of the mid-to-late 1700s out of general concern for the social problems that were associated with capitalism. In addition to the debate over markets and planning, the varieties of socialism differ in their form of social ownership, how management is to be organized within productive institutions,

and the role of the state in constructing socialism. Core dichotomies associated with these concerns include reformism versus revolutionary socialism, and state socialism versus libertarian socialism. Socialist politics has been both centralist and decentralized; internationalist and nationalist in orientation; organized through political parties and opposed to party politics; at times overlapping with trade unions and at other times independent of, and critical of, unions; and present in both industrialized and developing countries. While all tendencies of socialism consider themselves democratic, the term "democratic socialism" is often used to highlight its advocates' high value for democratic processes and political systems and usually to draw contrast to other socialist tendencies they may perceive to be undemocratic in their approach.

By the late 19th century after further articulation and advancement by Karl Marx and his collaborator Friedrich Engels as the culmination of technological development outstripping the economic dynamics of capitalism, "socialism" had come to signify opposition to capitalism and advocacy for a post-capitalist system based on some form of social ownership of the means of production. By the 1920s, social democracy and communism became the two dominant political tendencies within the international socialist movement. During the 20th century, socialism emerged as the most influential secular political-economic worldview. While the emergence of the Soviet Union as the world's first nominally socialist state led to socialism's widespread association with the Soviet economic model, many economists and intellectuals have argued that in practice the model functioned as a form of dictatorship, state capitalism or a non-planned administrative or command economy. Socialist parties and ideas remain a political force with varying degrees of power and influence in all continents, heading national governments in many countries around the world. Today, some socialists have also adopted the causes of other social movements, such as environmentalism, feminism and liberalism.

Democratic socialism is an international movement for freedom, social justice, and solidarity. Its goal is to achieve a peaceful world where these basic values can be enhanced and where each individual can live a meaningful life with the full development of his or her personality and talents, and with the guarantee of human and civil rights in a democratic framework of society.

The fundamental objective of socialism is to attain an advanced level of material production and therefore greater productivity, efficiency and rationality as compared to capitalism and all previous systems, under the view that an expansion of human productive capability is the basis for the extension of freedom and equality in society. Many forms of socialist theory hold that human behaviour is largely shaped by the social environment. In particular, socialism holds that social mores, values, cultural traits and economic practices are social creations and not the result of an immutable natural law. The object of their critique is thus not human avarice or human consciousness, but the material conditions and man-made social systems (i.e.: the economic structure of society) that gives rise to observed social problems and inefficiencies. Bertrand Russell, often considered to be the father of analytic philosophy, identified as a socialist. Bertrand Russell opposed the class struggle aspects of Marxism, viewing socialism solely as an adjustment of economic relations to accommodate modern machine production to benefit all of humanity through the progressive reduction of necessary work time. Socialists view creativity as an essential aspect of human nature, and define freedom as a state of being where individuals are able to express their creativity unhindered by constraints of both material scarcity and coercive social institutions. The socialist concept of individuality is thus intertwined with the concept of individual creative expression. Karl Marx believed that expansion of the productive forces and technology was the basis for the expansion of human freedom, and that socialism, being a system that is consistent with modern developments in technology, would enable the flourishing of "free individualities" through the progressive reduction of necessary labour time. The reduction of necessary labour time to a minimum would grant individuals the opportunity to pursue the development of their true individuality and creativity.

Modern democratic socialism is a broad political movement that seeks to promote the ideals of socialism within the context of a democratic system. Some Democratic socialists support social democracy as a temporary measure to reform the current system, while others reject reformism in favour of more revolutionary methods. Modern social democracy emphasises a program of gradual legislative modification of capitalism in order to make it more equitable and humane, while the theoretical end goal of building a socialist society is either completely forgotten or

redefined in a pro-capitalist way. The two movements are widely similar both in terminology and in ideology, although there are a few key differences.

The major difference between social democracy and democratic socialism is the object of their politics: contemporary social democrats support a welfare state and unemployment insurance as a means to "humanise" capitalism, whereas democratic socialists seek to replace capitalism with a socialist economic system, arguing that any attempt to "humanise" capitalism through regulations and welfare policies would distort the market and create economic contradictions.

Democratic socialism generally refers to any political movement that seeks to establish an economy based on economic democracy by and for the working class. Democratic socialism is difficult to define, and groups of scholars have radically different definitions for the term. Some definitions simply refer to all forms of socialism that follow an electoral, reformist or evolutionary path to socialism, rather than a revolutionary one.

**Secularism:** It is the principle of the separation of government institutions and persons mandated to represent the state from religious institutions and religious dignitaries. One manifestation of secularism is asserting the right to be free from religious rule and teachings, or, in a state declared to be neutral on matters of belief, from the imposition by government of religion or religious practices upon its people. Another manifestation of secularism is the view that public activities and decisions, especially political ones, should be uninfluenced by religious beliefs and/or practices.

Secularism draws its intellectual roots from Greek and Roman philosophers such as Epicurus and Marcus Aurelius; from Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke, Denis Diderot, Voltaire, Baruch Spinoza, James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, and Thomas Paine; and from more recent freethinkers and atheists such as Robert Ingersoll and Bertrand Russell.

The purposes and arguments in support of secularism vary widely. In European laicism, it has been argued that secularism is a movement toward modernization, and away from traditional religious values (also known

as secularization). This type of secularism, on a social or philosophical level, has often occurred while maintaining an official state church or other state support of religion. In the United States, some argue that state secularism has served to a greater extent to protect religion and the religious from governmental interference, while secularism on a social level is less prevalent. Within countries as well, differing political movements support secularism for varying reasons.

The term "secularism" was first used by the British writer George Jacob Holyoake in 1851. Although the term was new, the general notions of freethought on which it was based had existed throughout history.

Holyoake invented the term "secularism" to describe his views of promoting a social order separate from religion, without actively dismissing or criticizing religious belief. An agnostic himself, Holyoake argued that "Secularism is not an argument against Christianity, it is one independent of it. It does not question the pretensions of Christianity; it advances others. Secularism does not say there is no light or guidance elsewhere, but maintains that there is light and guidance in secular truth, whose conditions and sanctions exist independently, and act forever. Secular knowledge is manifestly that kind of knowledge which is founded in this life, which relates to the conduct of this life, conduces to the welfare of this life, and is capable of being tested by the experience of this life."

Barry Kosmin of the Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture breaks modern secularism into two types: hard and soft secularism. According to Kosmin, "the hard secularist considers religious propositions to be epistemologically illegitimate, warranted by neither reason nor experience." However, in the view of soft secularism, "the attainment of absolute truth was impossible and therefore skepticism and tolerance should be the principle and overriding values in the discussion of science and religion."

In political terms, secularism is a movement towards the separation of religion and government (often termed the separation of church and state). This can refer to reducing ties between a government and a state religion, replacing laws based on scripture (such as Halakha and Sharia law) with civil laws, and eliminating

discrimination on the basis of religion. This is said to add to democracy by protecting the rights of religious minorities.

Other scholars, such as Jacques Berlinerblau of the Program for Jewish Civilization at Georgetown University, have argued separation of church and state is but one possible strategy to be deployed by secular governments. What all secular governments, from the democratic to the authoritarian, share is a concern about relations between church and state. Each secular government may find its own unique policy prescriptions for dealing with that concern (separation being but one of those possible policies. French models in which the state carefully monitors and regulates the church being another)

Maharaja Ranjeet Singh of the Sikh empire of the first half 19th century successfully established a secular rule in the Punjab. This secular rule allowed members of all races and religions to be respected and to participate without discrimination in Ranjeet Singhdarbar and he had Sikh, a Muslim and a Hindu representatives heading the darbar. Ranjit Singh also extensively funded education, religion, and arts of various different religions and languages.<sup>[11]</sup>

Secularism is often associated with the Age of Enlightenment in Europe and plays a major role in Western society. The principles, but not necessarily practices, of separation of church and state in the United States and *Laïcité* in France draw heavily on secularism. Secular states also existed in the Islamic world during the Middle Ages.

Due in part to the belief in the separation of church and state, secularists tend to prefer that politicians make decisions for secular rather than religious reasons. In this respect, policy decisions pertaining to topics like abortion, contraception, embryonic stem cell research, same-sex marriage, and sex education are prominently focused upon by American secularist organizations such as the Center for Inquiry.

Most major religions accept the primacy of the rules of secular, democratic society but may still seek to influence political decisions or achieve specific privileges or influence through church-state agreements such as a concordat. Many Christians support a secular state, and may acknowledge that the conception has support in Biblical teachings, particularly the statement of Jesus in the Book of Luke: "Then give to Caesar

what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.". However, some Christian fundamentalists (notably in the United States) oppose secularism, often claiming that there is a "radical secularist" ideology being adopted in current days and see secularism as a threat to "Christian rights" and national security. The most significant forces of religious fundamentalism in the contemporary world are Fundamentalist Christianity and Fundamentalist Islam. At the same time, one significant stream of secularism has come from religious minorities who see governmental and political secularism as integral to preserving equal rights.

Some of the well known states that are often considered "constitutionally secular" are USA, France, Mexico, South Korea, and Turkey although none of these nations have identical forms of governance.

In studies of religion, modern democracies are generally recognized as secular. This is due to the near-complete freedom of religion (beliefs on religion generally are not subject to legal or social sanctions), and the lack of authority of religious leaders over political decisions. Nevertheless, religious beliefs are widely considered a relevant part of the political discourse in many of these countries. This contrasts with other Western countries where religious references are generally considered out-of-place in mainstream politics.

The aspirations of a secular society could characterize a secular society as one which:

Refuses to commit itself as a whole to any one view of the nature of the universe and the role of man in it.

Is not homogeneous, but is pluralistic.

Is tolerant. It widens the sphere of private decision-making.

While every society must have some common aims, which implies there must be agreed on methods of problem-solving, and a common framework of law; in a secular society these are as limited as possible.

Problem solving is approached rationally, through examination of the facts. While the secular society does not set any overall aim, it helps its members realize their aims.

Is a society without any official images. Nor is there a common ideal type of behavior with universal application.

Positive Ideals behind the secular society:

Deep respect for individuals and the small groups of which they are a part.

Equality of all people.

Each person should be helped to realize their particular excellence.

Breaking down of the barriers of class and caste.<sup>[22]</sup>

Modern sociology has, since Max Weber, often been preoccupied with the problem of authority in secularized societies and with secularization as a sociological or historical process. Twentieth-century scholars whose work has contributed to the understanding of these matters include Carl L. Becker, Karl Löwith, Hans Blumenberg, M. H. Abrams, Peter L. Berger, Paul Bénichou and D. L. Munby, among others.

Some societies become increasingly secular as the result of social processes, rather than through the actions of a dedicated secular movement; this process is known as secularization.

George Holyoake's 1896 publication *English Secularism* defines secularism as:

Secularism is a code of duty pertaining to this life, founded on considerations purely human, and intended mainly for those who find theology indefinite or inadequate, unreliable or unbelievable. Its essential principles are three: (1) The improvement of this life by material means. (2) That science is the available Providence of man. (3) That it is good to do good. Whether there be other good or not, the good of the present life is good, and it is good to seek that good.

Holyoake held that secularism and secular ethics should take no interest at all in religious questions (as they were irrelevant), and was thus to be distinguished from strongfreethought and atheism. In this he disagreed with Charles Bradlaugh, and the

disagreement split the secularist movement between those who argued that anti-religious movements and activism was not necessary or desirable and those who argued that it was.

Contemporary ethical debate is often described as "secular", with the work of Derek Parfit and Peter Singer, and even the whole field of contemporary bioethics, having been described or self-described as explicitly secular or non-religious.

It has been argued that the definition of secularism has frequently been misinterpreted. In a 2012 Huffington Post article titled *Secularism Is Not Atheism*, Jacques Berlinerblau, Director of the Program for Jewish Civilization at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, wrote that "Secularism must be the most misunderstood and mangled ism in the American political lexicon. Commentators on the right and the left routinely equate it with Stalinism, Nazism and Socialism, among other dreaded isms. In the United States, of late, another false equation has emerged. That would be the groundless association of secularism with atheism. The religious right has profitably promulgated this misconception at least since the 1970s."

Secularist website Concordat Watch also backed the notion that secularism has at times been mistaken as a word that reflects one's personal religious views, stating that "Some opponents of church-state separation redefine "secularism" as "state neutrality" to allow their group, among others, to get state funding. Others try to discredit it by conflating "secularism" with "atheism". But it's a political, rather than a religious doctrine and its purpose is to help level the playing field in order to give a better chance for human rights."

Secularism is one of the most important movements in the history of the modern West, helping differentiate the West not only from the Middle Ages and more ancient eras, but also from other cultural regions around the world. The modern West is what it is largely because of secularism; for some, that is a reason to cheer, but for others it is a reason to mourn. A better understanding of the history and nature of secularism will help people understand its role and influence in society today. Why did a secular vision of society develop in Western culture but not so much elsewhere in the world.

Despite its importance, there isn't always a great deal of agreement on just what secularism really is. Part of the problem lies in the fact that the concept of "secular" can be used in a couple of ways which, while closely related, are nevertheless different enough to make it difficult to know for sure what people might mean. The word secular means "of this world" in Latin and is the opposite of religious. As a doctrine, secularism is usually used to describe any philosophy which forms its ethics without reference to religious dogmas and which promotes the development of human art and science.

### **Secularism is Not a Religion**

Calling secularism (the insistence on separation of church and state) a religion should be instantly recognized as an oxymoron, analogous to claiming that bachelors can be married. Sadly this is not the case, and it has become far too common for critics of secularism to claim that it's a religion which is being improperly supported by the government. Examining the characteristics which define religions as distinct from other types of belief systems reveals just how wrong such claims are.

### **Religious Origins of Secularism**

Because the concept of the secular is normally conceived as standing in opposition to religion many people may not realize that it originally developed within a religious context. This may also come as quite a surprise to religious fundamentalists who decry the growth of secularism in the modern world. Rather than an atheistic conspiracy to undermine Christian civilization, secularism was originally developed within a Christian context and for the sake of preserving peace among Christians.

### **Secularism as a Humanistic, Atheistic Philosophy**

Although secularism can certainly be understood as simply the absence of religion, it is also often treated as a philosophical system with personal, political, cultural, and social implications. Secularism as a philosophy must be treated a bit differently than secularism as a mere idea, but just what sort of philosophy can secularism be? For those who treated secularism as a philosophy, it was a humanistic and even atheistic philosophy that sought the good of humanity in this life.

## **Secularism as a Political & Social Movement**

Secularism is used in a restricted sense today, but it retains a philosophical aspect in political and social situations. Secularism has always carried a strong connotation of the desire to establish an autonomous political and social sphere which is naturalistic and materialistic, as opposed to a religious realm where the supernatural and faith take precedence.

## **Secularism vs. Secularization**

Although secularism and secularization are closely related, they nevertheless differ because they do not necessarily offer the same answer to the question of the role of religion in society. Secularism argues generally for a sphere of knowledge, values, and action that is independent of religious authority, but it does not necessarily exclude religion from having any authority over political and social affairs. Secularization, however, is a process which does involve such an exclusion.

## **Secularism & Secularization are Vital for Liberty and Democracy**

Supporters of secularism and secularization can best rebut attacks from religious critics by emphasizing how the two are vital for democracy, personal liberty, and even religious freedom. Secularism prescribes state neutrality in religious matters, but they are not morally or politically neutral. They are positive goods which must be defended as foundations of liberal democracy. This is why they are opposed by authoritarian religious institutions and authoritarian religious leaders. Secularism and secularization enhance the broad distribution of power and oppose the concentration of power in the hands of a few.

## **Does Secular Fundamentalism Exist? Do Secular Fundamentalists Exist?**

Some Christians say they are in conflict with "secular fundamentalism," but what is this and does it even exist? The most basic characteristics of Christian fundamentalism can't apply to secularism of any sort: virgin birth & deity of Jesus, substitutionary death & physical resurrection of Jesus, and a literal heaven/hell. These aren't the limits of the

concept, since the label applies to other religions, but even the characteristics which apply most broadly can't be applied to secularism. More »

### **Religion in a Secular Society**

If secularism opposes the public support of religion or the presence of ecclesiastical authorities simultaneously exercising public authority, what role is left for religion in a secular society? Is religion doomed to a slow decline and attrition? Is it relegated to a web of quaint but unimportant cultural traditions? Such are the fears of opponents to secularism and secularization who argue that religion is too important to be eliminated in such a manner and blame atheists for their woes.

### **Critiques of Secularism**

Secularism had not always been regarded as a universal good. There are many who fail to find secularism and the process of secularization to be beneficial. They argue that it and atheism are the sources of all society's ills. According to them, abandoning atheistic secularism in favor of an explicitly theistic and religious basis for politics and culture would produce a more stable, more moral, and ultimately better social order. Are their critiques of secularism reasonable and accurate.

### **Democracy:**

Compared to dictatorships, oligarchies, monarchies and aristocracies, in which the people have little or no say in who is elected and how the government is run, a democracy is often said to be the most challenging form of government, as input from those representing citizens determines the direction of the country. The basic definition of democracy in its purest form comes from the Greek language: The term means "rule by the people." But democracy is defined in many ways — a fact that has caused much disagreement among those leading various democracies as to how best to run one.

The Greeks and Romans established the precursors to today's modern democracy. The three main branches of Athenian democracy were the Assembly of the Demos, the

Council of 500 and the People's Court. Assembly and the Council were responsible for legislation, along with ad hoc boards of "lawmakers."

Democracy also has roots in the Magna Carta, England's "Great Charter" of 1215 that was the first document to challenge the authority of the king, subjecting him to the rule of the law and protecting his people from feudal abuse.

Democracy as we know it today was not truly defined until the Age of Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries, during which time the U.S. Declaration of Independence was penned, followed by the U.S. Constitution (which borrowed heavily from the Magna Carta). The term evolved to mean a government structured with a separation of powers, provided basic civil rights, religious freedom and separation of church and state.

### **Types of Democracies**

Parliamentary democracy, a democratic form of government in which the party, or coalition of parties, with the largest representation in the legislature (parliament), was originated in Britain. There are two styles of parliamentary government. The bicameral system consists of a "lower" house, which is elected, and an "upper" house can be elected or appointed.

In a parliamentary democracy, the leader of the leading party becomes the prime minister or chancellor and leads the country. Once the leading party falls out of favor, the party that takes control installs its leader as prime minister or chancellor.

In the 1790s to 1820s, Jeffersonian democracy was one of two philosophies of governing to dominate the U.S. political scene. The term typically refers to the ideology of the Democratic-Republican party, which Thomas Jefferson formed to oppose Alexander Hamilton's Federalist party, which was the first American political party. The Jeffersonian outlook believed in equality of political opportunity for all male citizens, while Federalists political platform emphasized fiscal responsibility in government.

Jacksonian democracy, led by Andrew Jackson, was a political movement that emphasized the needs of the common man rather than the elite and educated favored by the Jeffersonian style of government.

This period from the mid 1830s to 1854, is also referred to as the Second Party System. The Democratic-Republican Party of the Jeffersonians became factionalized in the 1820s. Jackson's supporters formed the modern Democratic Party. Adams and Anti-Jacksonian factions soon emerged as the Whigs. This era gave rise to partisan newspapers, political rallies and fervent party loyalty.

Democracies can be classified as liberal and social. Liberal democracies, also known as constitutional democracies, are built on the principles of free and fair elections, a competitive political process and universal suffrage. Liberal democracies can take on the form of constitutional republics, such as France, India, Germany, Italy and the United States, or a constitutional monarchy such as Japan, Spain or the U.K.

Social democracy, which emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, advocates universal access to education, health care, workers' compensation, and other services such as child care and care for the elderly. Unlike others on the left, such as Marxists, who sought to challenge the capitalist system more fundamentally, social democrats aimed to reform capitalism with state regulation.

The U.S. political system today is primarily a two-party system, dominated by Democrats and Republicans. The country has been a two-party system for more than a century, although independents such as Ralph Nader and Ross Perot have sought to challenge the two-party system in recent years.

There are three branches of government: the executive branch (president); legislative branch (Congress); and judicial branch (Supreme Court). These branches provide checks and balances to, in theory, prevent abuses of power. Control of Congress can be in the hands of one party or split, depending on which party is in the majority in the Senate and, separately, the House of Representatives.

Democracy, or democratic government, is "a system of government in which all the people of a state or polity ... are involved in making decisions about its affairs, typically

by voting to elect representatives to a parliament or similar assembly," as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary. Democracy is further defined as (a:) "government by the people; especially : rule of the majority (b:) " a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections."

According to political scientist Larry Diamond, it consists of four key elements: (a) A political system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections; (b) The active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and civic life; (c) Protection of the human rights of all citizens, and (d) A rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens.

The term originates from the Greek δημοκρατία (*dēmokratía*) "rule of the people", which was found from δῆμος (*dêmos*) "people" and κράτος (*krátos*) "power" or "rule", in the 5th century BC to denote the political systems then existing in Greek city-states, notably Athens; the term is an antonym to ἀριστοκρατία (*aristokratía*) "rule of an elite". While theoretically these definitions are in opposition, in practice the distinction has been blurred historically. The political system of Classical Athens, for example, granted democratic citizenship to an elite class of free men and excluded slaves and women from political participation. In virtually all democratic governments throughout ancient and modern history, democratic citizenship consisted of an elite class until full enfranchisement was won for all adult citizens in most modern democracies through the suffrage movements of the 19th and 20th centuries. The English word dates to the 16th century, from the older Middle French and Middle Latin equivalents.

Democracy contrasts with forms of government where power is either held by an individual, as in an absolute monarchy, or where power is held by a small number of individuals, as in an oligarchy. Nevertheless, these oppositions, inherited from Greek philosophy, are now ambiguous because contemporary governments have mixed democratic, oligarchic, and monarchic elements. Karl Popper defined democracy in contrast to dictatorship or tyranny, thus focusing on opportunities for the people to control their leaders and to oust them without the need for a revolution.

One theory holds that democracy requires three fundamental principles: (1) upward control, i.e. sovereignty residing at the lowest levels of authority, (2) political equality, and (3) social norms by which individuals and institutions only consider acceptable acts that reflect the first two principles of upward control and political equality.

The term "democracy" is sometimes used as shorthand for liberal democracy, which is a variant of representative democracy that may include elements such as political pluralism; equality before the law; the right to petition elected officials for redress of grievances; due process; civil liberties; human rights; and elements of civil society outside the government. Roger Scruton argues that democracy alone cannot provide personal and political freedom unless the institutions of civil society are also present.

In some countries, notably in the United Kingdom which originated the Westminster system, the dominant principle is that of parliamentary sovereignty, while maintaining judicial independence. In the United States, separation of powers is often cited as a central attribute. In India parliamentary sovereignty is subject to a Constitution which includes judicial review. Other uses of "democracy" include that of direct democracy. Though the term "democracy" is typically used in the context of a political state, the principles also are applicable to private organisations.

Majority rule is often listed as a characteristic of democracy. Hence, democracy allows for political minorities to be oppressed by the "tyranny of the majority" in the absence of legal protections of individual or group rights. An essential part of an "ideal" representative democracy is competitive elections that are fair both substantively and procedurally. Furthermore, freedom of political expression, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press are considered to be essential rights that allow eligible citizens to be adequately informed and able to vote according to their own interests.

It has also been suggested that a basic feature of democracy is the capacity of all voters to participate freely and fully in the life of their society. With its emphasis on notions of social contract and the collective will of all the voters, democracy can also be characterised as a form of political collectivism because it is defined as a form of government in which all eligible citizens have an equal say in lawmaking.

While representative democracy is sometimes equated with the republican form of government, the term "republic" classically has encompassed both democracies and aristocracies. Many democracies are constitutional monarchies, such as the United Kingdom.

In the 1920s democracy flourished and women's suffrage advanced, but the Great Depression brought disenchantment and most of the countries of Europe, Latin America, and Asia turned to strong-man rule or dictatorships. Fascism and dictatorships flourished in Nazi Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal, as well as non-democratic regimes in the Baltics, the Balkans, Brazil, Cuba, China, and Japan, among others.

World War II brought a definitive reversal of this trend in western Europe. The democratisation of the American, British, and French sectors of occupied Germany (disputed, Austria, Italy, and the occupied Japan served as a model for the later theory of regime change. However, most of Eastern Europe, including the Soviet sector of Germany fell into the non-democratic Soviet bloc.

The war was followed by decolonisation, and again most of the new independent states had nominally democratic constitutions. India emerged as the world's largest democracy and continues to be so. Countries that were once part of the British Empire often adopted the British Westminster system.

By 1960, the vast majority of country-states were nominally democracies, although most of the world's populations lived in nations that experienced sham elections, and other forms of subterfuge (particularly in Communist nations and the former colonies.)

A subsequent wave of democratisation brought substantial gains toward true liberal democracy for many nations. Spain, Portugal (1974), and several of the military dictatorships in South America returned to civilian rule in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Argentina in 1983, Bolivia, Uruguay in 1984, Brazil in 1985, and Chile in the early 1990s). This was followed by nations in East and South Asia by the mid-to-late 1980s.

In a liberal democracy, it is possible for some large-scale decisions to emerge from the many individual decisions that citizens are free to make. In other words, citizens can "vote with their feet" or "vote with their dollars", resulting in significant informal government-by-the-masses that exercises many "powers" associated with formal government elsewhere.

Socialist thought has several different views on democracy. Social democracy, democratic socialism, and the dictatorship of the proletariat (usually exercised through Soviet democracy) are some examples. Many democratic socialists and social democrats believe in a form of participatory, industrial, economic and/or workplace democracy combined with a representative democracy.

Within Marxist orthodoxy there is a hostility to what is commonly called "liberal democracy", which they simply refer to as parliamentary democracy because of its often centralised nature. Because of their desire to eliminate the political elitism they see in capitalism, Marxists, Leninists and Trotskyists believe in direct democracy implemented through a system of communes (which are sometimes called soviets). This system ultimately manifests itself as council democracy and begins with workplace democracy. (See Democracy in Marxism.)

Democracy cannot consist solely of elections that are nearly always fictitious and managed by rich landowners and professional politicians.