
UNIT 5 CIVILIZATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT: CREATING A NEW SOCIAL ORDER

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5.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- know about the quest and efforts of some of the Japanese intellectuals about the Western ideas,
- learn how Western ideas came to Japan and the reactions of conservatives towards them,
- familiarise yourself with the processes through which the Western ideas were utilised for Japan's development into a modern nation-state, and
- understand the various reform measures adopted in the field of education.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This Unit discusses the modernization process in the field of ideas and ideologies in Japan. The transformation of Meiji Japan involved not only the creation of new political and economic institutions to create a centralized state. Also, the people at Japan had to come to terms with the new ideas which entered from Western nations. The ideas, which covered a wide range of positions, came from a number of countries — principally England, France, Germany and the United States. The Unit takes into account how the Meiji intellectuals understood and used these new ideas as well as the counter reaction these Western ideas provoked.

During this period there emerged an influential and important trend i.e. the return to native sources for organizing Japanese life.

The debates related to the need and degree of westernization necessary for a modern society were also reflected in the educational system and the experiments which were carried out to reform and transform it to serve new needs. Along with the educational system, many of the Meiji intellectuals and leaders were concerned with creating a sense of citizenship among the people.

5.2 JAPAN AND THE WESTERN WORLD

In this Section we discuss the relations between Japan and the Western World during the Tokugawa and Meiji period.

5.2.1 The Tokugawa Period

Japan had not been strictly isolated from foreign contact even during the Tokugawa period. Japan had allowed limited rights of residence to Dutch traders at the man-made island of Deshima off Nagasaki. It is important to note that during the Tokugawa period two of the most important sources of knowledge were from outside Japan i.e. China and Holland. This experience of Western knowledge provided a basis with which the Meiji intellectuals could learn from the West.

Through translations the Japanese had access to a vast amount of information about not only these countries but about foreign affairs in general. Books were imported and the Dutch had to give regular reports on the world situation. Because of their heritage of learning from Chinese books the Japanese rapidly learnt from the Dutch works and by the middle of the nineteenth century there was a strong and active tradition of scholars who were aware of the world. These scholars were now increasingly desirous of actually seeing the world and once Perry's Black ships appeared they were eager to go and study the sources of Western strength.

The loyalist teacher Yoshida Shoin (1830-59) exercised a deep influence on many of the Meiji leaders. He was a fiercely nationalistic person and was executed for his extremist ideas under the Tokugawa rule. He tried to smuggle himself on to Perry's ship but was thwarted in his attempt. Later another intellectual Nijima Jo (1843-1890) managed to smuggle himself abroad. He was helped by various people who were impressed by the intensity of his desire to see the world. He studied in the United States and later became a respected figure in Japan by founding a university. Both of these men had very different ideas, but they saw the West as a source of strength from which they could learn and this learning was to be used to build the foundations of the state.

Though individual contacts and trips gradually increased the Bakufu also sent official missions. In 1860 a mission was selected to go to the United States. One of the officials, Oguri Tadamasa (1827-1868), played an important role in building the Yokohama and Yokosuka foundry and shipyard with French help. The first Japanese ship to cross the Pacific Ocean was the Kanrin Maru and on board was Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901).

Fukuzawa Yukichi became the most famous of the westernizers. His books describing the West were written in easy Japanese to follow unlike the literary

style then favoured and they became best sellers. Other Bakufu missions went to Europe and though they travelled on specific diplomatic duties they also gathered knowledge about the West and many of them systematically investigated Western institutions and practices. Thus, they would study the school system or the functioning of politics and reports were written. Fukuzawa, for instance, wrote extensively on what he saw and he assiduously investigated not only the functioning of Western gadgets but also the social and political organization. His book *Conditions of the West* (Seiyo iijo) published between 1866-69 is a mine of information but it also provided a model of what Japanese society could be transformed into. Japanese visitors to other countries wrote their books but many others translated Western works. One of the most popular translations was by Nakamura Masanao of Samuel Smiles' *Self Help*.

5.2.2 The Meiji Period

After the Meiji Restoration travel became easier and was actively encouraged. The new government, in spite of the problems with which it was faced, sent the Iwakura Mission which included many important leaders of the new government. Their members included veteran diplomats and the purpose of this mission was to carefully study the West in all its aspects. The members concentrated on certain areas. For example, Okubo Toshimichi (1830-1878) studied industry and the economic systems by touring factories as well as the slums where the workers lived.

The Japanese sought for knowledge from around the world. As their understanding increased they began to rank nations; For example :

- England served as a model for industrial development,
- Prussia for the military,
- France for the police and educational system, and
- America for agricultural development.

Another important way that the Japanese learnt from the West was by employing foreign employees for teaching them. Initially the Japanese had learnt from the Dutch but later they were replaced by the English and the French. In the Meiji period by 1875 there were 520 foreign employees in the Japanese government. This number gradually declined, but the number of foreigners employed by private companies increased. In 1897 there were 760 such individuals. These employees were in a wide range of professions like education, engineering, and there were many technicians. It is interesting to note that the Japanese government spent lavishly to buy the best expertise available. Foreigners salaries amounted to one-third of the Ministry of Industries regular budget and one-third of the allocations for Tokyo Imperial University: This indicates the financial burden the government was willing to bear to gain access to the knowledge they thought necessary. At the same time the high cost probably led them to learn rapidly and this was continuously emphasised upon. For example Ito Hirobumi said in a lecture in 1873 :

“It is imperative that we seize this opportunity to train and educate ourselves fully then as a matter of course we will be able to do without foreigners ...

Therefore let all ambitious youths throughout the land proceed vigorously with their studies.”

However, the desire to learn and copy the West also reached absurd levels. For example the craze for Western things is best symbolized by the “hall of the Deer Pavillion” where the Meiji elite dressed in Western formal attire, complete with top hats, and held ballroom dances. However, this was not the only side of westernization and though there were excesses there was a deep and serious desire to learn the new knowledge.

5.2.3 Role of Intellectuals

The Japanese phrase ‘bunmei kaika’ or civilization and enlightenment which was popular at this time indicates the trend of the times. On February 1, 1874 thirty-three intellectuals formed a society, the Meirokusha, to promote civilization and enlightenment. This society included many of the prominent members of the Meiji elite. Its first president Mori Arinori (1847-1889) was Japan’s first envoy to the United States and served in various capacities in the government including Minister of Education. He had conceived the idea of the society because he was interested in education and was looking for ways to further it in Japan.

The members of the society also included a wide range of intellectuals. There were Confucian humanists like, Nishimura Shigeki (1828-1902) who argued that the key to Western success was in morality. Nakamura Keiu (1832-1891) also stressed individual morality and self reliance and because of this he translated J. S. Mill’s *On Liberty* and Samuel Smiles’ *Self Help*.

Intellectuals like Kato Hiroyuki (1836-1916) and Tsuda Masamichi (1829-1903) and Nishi Amane (1829-1897) talked of the organic nature of society. They argued that Western strength lay in the fact that its society was rationally constructed and operated. But their positions were quite different. Kato, for instance, stressed the importance of the Imperial institution while Tsuda argued for developing enlightened legal and bureaucratic institutions.

Fukuzawa Yukichi who was also a member was the only one who consciously remained outside the government and operated as an independent intellectual. He helped to establish the Keio University. He argued that the people had yet to develop the sense of independence and because of this the government still remained despotic for the “people are still powerless, ignorant”. He was quite contemptuous of government saying that it was “simply a place where many people of intelligence gather to work like one stupid person”.

Mori Arinori on the other hand was insistent that all capable people must work for the government and help the nation advance. He was also instrumental in setting up the Commercial Institute which later developed into the Hitotsubashi University.

The search for enlightenment and civilization was a quest to imbibe Western values and ideas. The ideals were expressed in the Charter Oath of 1868 in which it was written :

‘Evil customs of the past shall be abandoned and everything shall be based on the just laws of Nature. Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world so as to strengthen the foundations of Imperial rule.’

The period of ‘civilisation and enlightenment’ introduced the whole range of Western liberal ideas and this was carried on by the peoples’ rights intellectuals like Ueki Emori and Nakae Chomin (1847-1901). However, these views were dominated by a dismissive attitude to Japanese culture and values. The laws governing civilization were seen as universal and Japan had merely to learn them to advance as the Western societies had done. All civilized people would become one in their humanity was the message these intellectuals learnt.

The intellectuals were also engrossed in the idea of learning science and technology subjects which were modern and would develop the nation. Their ideas also were premised on the equality of men. Fukuzawa began his book *The Advancement of Learning* with the words : “Heaven did not create men above men, nor set men below men.” It was from this vision of self-reliant individuals that these writers were critical of the persistence of feudal practices which inculcated blind obedience and slavish imitation. The continuation of these values was through the family system. The ‘civilisation and enlightenment’ intellectuals were for an open democratic society where talent would be rewarded and where internationalism would be the order of the day. National differences would gradually be reduced. Taguchi Ukichi (1855-1905) could write that then an Englishman living in Tokyo would be a Tokyoite as much as a Kagoshima man living in Tokyo.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Write what you know about Fukuzawa Yukichi.

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- 2) What were the reasons behind the quest of Japanese intellectuals about Western ideas? How did they learnt from the West?

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5.3 EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Meiji Japan inherited a number of systems of education from the Tokugawa period but above all it inherited an attitude to education which saw its importance and necessity. During the Tokugawa period there were spread over the country temple schools (terakoya) where reading, writing and arithmetic were taught. These schools were meant to give a basic knowledge which would enable the students to function effectively in society.

Thus they used books like *A Primer on Business*. There were schools run by the han and largely attended by samurai where the education was more literary than practical. The Bakufu also established the Shoheiko where law, the Chinese classics and mathematics was taught. The Kaiseijo (School of Foreign Learning) established by the Bakufu became a source of knowledge about the west and illustrates the concern that the ruling powers had with studying the outside world.

By the middle of the nineteenth century there were 250 han schools. The Dutch influence led to establishment of schools of Western learning. Unlike the modern system the Tokugawa schools were decentralized and often run at the home of the teacher. The pupil went to study to the teachers he selected rather than go to a school with a set curriculum. This allowed for a great deal of variety but the quality also varied.

5.3.1 Initial Efforts

It is interesting to note that with the Meiji Restoration and even as the country was caught up in the confusion of civil war and revolution the government opened these schools to “cultivate our human resources”. In 1869 a university was established in Tokyo and in 1871 a Ministry of Education was set up. In 1872 the government issued an Education Act which divided the country into eight university districts and these were sub-divided into thirty-two middle school districts. The middle school districts were further divided into two hundred and ten elementary school districts. Outside this system the government also set up specialized schools and universities such as an Agricultural College and a Centre for Commercial Studies.

The Meiji programme was ambitious in scale but it faced financial difficulties. There was also further adjustments and changes in the system as they learnt from other countries. Much of the educational budget was spent in sending students abroad to study. For example in 1873 out of a total of 800,000 yen, 100,000 yen were for study abroad .

The system established by the 1872 Act was modeled on the French system but it was different in important ways. In Japan it was a single track system and elementary education was free while in France it was a dual track with the Church controlling elementary education till 1833. However, there were riots against this system. The people had to bear a large part of the cost of establishing and running the schools and they found this burden excessive. In 1873 the government assistance to schools was only 12 per cent of the total budget.

The financial burden of the new educational system was a cause for opposition. The materials and teachers for running this new system also proved inadequate. There were few textbooks and the teachers did not really know how to use the

ones that were there. In 1876 only 1/6 of the 52,000 teachers had been trained in the new system.

Finally, the westernization of education, as of other aspects of life also provoked a critical reaction. The riots were directed against not only the financial burden, but also against the imposition of the Gregorian calendar as well as against conscription.

In 1879 an Educational Ordinance, under the influence of ideas from the United States instituted some changes which led to a greater degree of decentralization and local autonomy. These reforms had been instituted during a period when the Peoples' Rights Movement was becoming stronger and also as the tide against westernization was increasing with ideologues demanding a greater stress on traditional values. The reforms failed to tackle these problems and were a failure.

5.3.2 Reforms under the Cabinet

In 1885 the Cabinet system was started and Mori Arinori became the first Minister of Education. Mori, influenced by the Prussian methods, had always been concerned with education. He saw education as firmly linked to the development of the nation. He wrote : "In the administration of all schools, it must be kept in mind, what is to be done is not for the sake of the pupils, but for the sake of the country." Thus, the pupil should be obedient as well as trained. Mori recognized the need to have well-trained people but he also saw that the critical spirit could also be directed against the state and pose a threat to the governments order. To fulfil both these objectives Mori's reforms established a dual structure :

- School education was subordinated to political objectives and the inculcation of loyalty and patriotism was emphasised upon.
- University education, on the other hand, was relatively free and advanced research as well as graduate training was encouraged.

Tokyo University had been established in 1877 but in 1886 a system of Imperial Universities was established and Tokyo University became Tokyo Imperial University. The state placed great importance on creating an appropriate system. The Diet could exercise very little control over education as it was placed in the administrative structure of the state. This meant that education also came under the control of the Emperor. In 1899 when Yamagata Arikotomo had been Prime Minister he issued an ordinance which made it necessary to have the approval of the Privet Council before there could be any changes in the basic educational law. Finally, by 1913 the state had the exclusive right to produce text books.

5.4 CONSERVATIVES AND THE EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

The educational reforms were part and parcel of the Meiji state's creation of a centralized political structure and reflected a desire to mould a pliant and obedient citizenry. On this question of values which were to be stressed a debate arose and it marked the assertion by conservatives and traditionalists of indigenous values and beliefs. The rampant westernization provoked a reaction and many who had supported the Meiji reforms now questioned the direction and manner of change.

5.4.1 The Imperial Rescript

In 1890 an Imperial Rescript on Education was issued. This document laid the conservative and traditionalist argument with great clarity.

The Rescript had been drafted by Motooda Eifu, a Confucian tutor to the Emperor and Nishimura Shigeki, also a Confucianist. These two articulated the conservative position which resembled the earlier view of combining Western techniques with an eastern ethic. Motooda as tutor to the Emperor had been campaigning against the replacement of Confucian teaching by American and French moral books. Motooda also used the Emperor to back his argument saying that the Emperor was deeply troubled. In *The Great Principles of Education* (Kyogaku taisbi), an Imperial rescript of 1879, he had argued that the westernizers “take into themselves a foreign civilization whose only values are fact gathering and technique, thus violating the rules of good manners and bringing harm to our customary ways.” Japan, he felt, must reassert the primacy of its values which are based on loyalty and filial piety.

It was after this statement that centralization of education increased and pupils and teachers were forbidden to attend political meeting. Motooda’s view was not fully supported within the ruling oligarchy. Ito Hirobumi represented a constitutional monarchist position and he was opposed to Motooda’s argument for direct imperial rule.

Nishimura Shigeki who had initially been in the Meirokusha and supported the introduction of “civilization and enlightenment” now began to publish Confucian ideas modified by Western ideas. In a book called *Discourse on Japanese Morality* published in 1886 he had called for reviving the fundamental Confucian values integral to Japan and using Western ideas selectively to support and “strengthen this Confucian framework.

In 1889 Mori was assassinated and Motooda and Nishimura were able to have the Emperor issue a “sacred rescript” which was issued before the first Diet opened. The Imperial Rescript proclaimed :

“Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein lies the source of Our Education.”

It went on to encourage the people to “advance public good and promote common interests”, respect the constitution, offer their lives to the state and “thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth.”

This document became the crucial expression of conservative ideas. It was also treated in the schools and in society at large as a sacred scripture. Gradually as Imperial ceremonies, which had been private court ceremonies, became national ceremonies the Rescript on Education began to be treated with reverence. In 1891 the Regulations for Elementary School Ceremonies on Festivals and Holidays. required that students and staff bow before the Imperial photograph, read the Rescript and sing the national anthem. The Emperor was the link binding the people into loyal citizens.

5.4.2 The Conservatives' Arguments

Among the conservatives a number of arguments were advanced to uphold traditional values. The philosopher Inoue Tetsujirō (1855-1944), tried to defend tradition by showing that it was rational and necessary but others objected to such arguments. Kuga Katsunan (1857-1907) the editor of a newspaper called *Nihon* (Japan) argued against accepting the idea that Japan must develop as the West has developed. He was critical of the argument that there were universal laws of development and argued that advocates of this position did not understand that each society developed according to its own history and traditions. Each nation had a living culture which was reflected in the way its people lived and thought. For Kuga accepting filial piety or loyalty to the Emperor required no rational justification or academic defense but was justified because these were the historic customs of Japan.

Kuga Katsunan further went on to argue for the importance and necessity of preserving the cultural traditions of a country. A nation's traditions provided the basis on which its people could be united; these values knitted society and gave strength to the nation. Force was not the only way that a nation could be defeated for if it lost its historical tradition it would also lose its independence. This was a strong and persuasive argument given by Kuga.

At the time the Rescript was issued a Christian philosopher Uchimura Kanzo (1861-1930) refused to bow to the document and wrote an essay about the clash between religion and education. Uchimura argued that as a Christian he could not reconcile his belief in the universal brotherhood of man with the idea that the Emperor was a divine being. But Kuga argued that if Christianity was indigenized and became part of Japanese tradition just as Buddhism had become then there should be no conflict. He objected to Christianity because of its foreign trappings.

The argument between the Westernisers and the conservatives was not conducted in a political vacuum but was taking place even as Japan was attempting to achieve equality in its relations with the foreign powers. The unequal treaties imposed during the Bakufu were still in force and foreigners enjoyed legal and economic privileges. The Meiji government was also greatly concerned about negotiating an end to these treaties and for this it set about creating a modern nation so that it could claim that they were equal to the Western countries.

In this context these thinkers were attempting to answer the fundamental question of what social progress meant. Most accepted the idea that progress was necessary but whether this meant that all societies would become the same or that each would preserve its essence were the questions debated. Of course, it can be argued what the essence of a society is or whether this too develops and changes over time.

Miyake Setsurei (1860-1945), leader of a society called the Seikyosha and editor of a journal *Nihonjin* (The Japanese) sought to preserve the national essence. In his most influential book *The Japanese: Truth, Goodness and Beauty* (written in 1891) he argued that world civilization advanced through competition and each nation had its characteristic talents. The West might be the most advanced today but the world would progress only if other cultures and values flourished. For Miyake promoting one's own cultural values was essentially to be working for world progress.

Miyake defined the ultimate goals of world civilization as truth, beauty and goodness. Here the Japanese could :

- contribute to the spread of truth by projecting knowledge about Asia in which Europe was deficient,
- propagate goodness by defending Asia against Western imperialism, and
- finally, because of their unique sense of beauty, which was different from the Western conception, contribute to world civilization.

5.4.3 Conservatives' Impact

The conservative position was influential among the wider public and its effect on policy was also considerable. For instance the government was in the process of revising the civil codes and conservative opposition delayed not only the Civil Code (1898) but the Commercial Code (1899) as well.

The search for Japanese tradition and the importance of preserving indigenous values was not confined to the intellectual and political world but was also pursued in the arts. Okakura Tenshin (1862-1913) helped to revive an interest in Japanese art with the help of Ernest Fenellosa (1853-1908). Okakura was also instrumental in setting up the Fine Arts University and collecting and studying Asian art. His famous statement "Asia is one" inspired many to work for Asian unity. Okakura and Fenellosa helped to stem the wholesale fascination with Western painting and divert the eyes of their contemporaries to see the beauty and strength of their art as well as appreciate the richness of their aesthetic values.

The conservative adherence to the values enshrined in the Imperial institution was reinforced by the Meiji government's political policies of using "the Imperial household as the cornerstone of the nation", in the words of Ito Hirobumi. The Meiji leaders after the crisis of 1881 when Okuma had been expelled were concerned about the political demands for democracy voiced by the Peoples' Rights Movement and they sought to balance the need to develop and industrialize while at the same time preserving social order. Ito himself toured Europe and found inspiration in conservative European thinkers. The Motooda groups of conservatives had a mystical vision of the Emperor and this was developed by Hozumi Nobushige (1855-1926) who linked ancestor worship and loyalty through the Imperial House.

In society as well there was a growing intolerance of criticism against the Emperor and a scholar Kume Kunitake (1839-1931) was expelled from Tokyo University for describing Shinto as a primitive form of worship. In schools a host of textbooks glorified the Emperor and from 1903 the Ministry of Education compiled ethical books so that it could keep a control on the content of the books.

5.4.4 The Socialist Views

The disillusionment with the Western ideas of 'civilisation and enlightenment' brought about the widespread interest in traditional values but gradually as these ideas became excuses for preventing reform and change many conservatives as well as liberals were disillusioned. The end of the 1880's with the progress of industrial development saw the rise of trade unions and labour organizations and the building up of a socialist movement. Matsuzawa Koyo, a Japanese historian has argued that the first socialists in Meiji Japan were influenced by their

experiences of socialism in the United States. The subsequent socialists like Kinoshita Naoe (1869-1937) were influenced by the ideas of the Peoples' Rights Movement and many of them worked as journalists. The final group of Meiji socialism, those born in the 1880, like Osugi Sakae (1885-1923) had first experienced the influence of regional movements.

These socialists were influenced by the tensions of development and the problems of poverty that were created. They sought to find ways to reduce the differences between the rich and poor. They were largely agreed that the Meiji Restoration had been a progressive revolution which had overthrown feudalism and established freedom and equality. In 1903 Kotoku Shusui (1871-1911) wrote a book on the essence of socialism as did the other famous Meiji socialist Katayama Sen (1859-1933). Both socialists were concerned with establishing an economic system which would eliminate economic inequality. For this they argued for public ownership of production facilities and equal distribution. They also felt that this could be brought about by peaceful means and so they supported a universal suffrage law and worked to increase general education. Finally the socialists were also influenced by Social Darwinism which saw history as a process of continuous growth and development. However, their weakness was that they were addressing only the small section i.e. the middle class and failed to develop organizations to bring about social change. Just as the 'civilisation and enlightenment' advocates could not offer arguments to the conservatives the socialists, Christians and pacifist groups also failed to spread their ideas. Once Japan had won its victory against China in the Sino-Japanese war (1894-95), the nationalist ideas spread with greater intensity.

5.4.5 Pan-Asianism

The fight against Western imperialists, both to preserve the political as well as the cultural independence of Japan, led some thinkers to think of an Asian alliance against the West. Thinkers like Okawa Shumei (1886-1957) and Kita Ikki (1883-1937), argued that Japan must work with other Asian countries to liberate Asia. They felt that only in this way would Japan be able to protect itself. Japan was part of Asia and it shared common values and a cultural tradition with other Asian countries. Many of them worked with Koreans and Chinese to advance the cause of revolution in these countries. Miyazaki Totten (1871-1922) met Sun Yatsen (1866-1925) and went with him to China to work for the Chinese revolution of 1911. Sun himself saw the Meiji Restoration as the first step and the 1911 Revolution as the second step in the regeneration of China.

The idea of the pan-Asianists, as these people were called because they advocated Asian unity, was very easily subverted and used by the militarists to advance the cause of Japanese expansionism. In their thinking there was a great deal of ambiguity and when they talked of an Asian alliance, for many it really meant with Japan as the leader.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Which of the following statements are right or wrong? Mark (✓) or (×).
 - i) Mori Arinori, was against linking education with development.
 - ii) The Conservatives were opposed to following the Western ideas.

- iii) The idea of having an alliance of Asians against Westerners was used to further Japan's interests.
- iv) Kuga Katsunan argued that Japan must develop in the same manner as the West.
- v) By 1880s socialist ideas were propagated in Japan.

2) Why did the Meiji Government spent more on education?

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3) Discuss the basic arguments of the Conservatives.

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5.5 LET US SUM UP

Meiji Japan saw the development of a range of ideas and ideologies but many of them could not go beyond the official orthodoxy. It saw the creation of a sense of nationhood. In the 1870's Fukuzawa Yukichi had written that "In Japan there was a government but no nation" for he argued that "just birth does not make one a citizen for that a sense of nation must be cultivated." The Meiji oligarchy linked the idea of patriotism and nation to the Imperial House and bound the people to the state through the ties of loyalty and filial piety to the Emperor.

The Peoples' Rights Movement ideologues like Nakae Chomin and Ueki Emori wanted to create a sense of nation by involving the people in a democratic political system. They argued that the real strength of Japan to defend itself lay not in a strong army or a vibrant economy alone but in the strength of its people and their commitment to the nation.

The socialists emphasised the need to end economic inequality to complete the political equality that had been brought about by the Meiji Restoration. They felt that as long as social problems divided society democratic development would not be possible.

Historians have evaluated the performance of the Meiji Oligarchy with varying degrees of sympathy. E. H. Norman argued that it was the speed with which the reforms were carried out that involved a neglect of democratic and liberal reform but later he was to be more critical. On the other hand George Akita describes the Meiji oligarchy as enlightened leaders who carried out liberal reforms even though the climate was not forcing them to do this.

5.6 KEY WORDS

Bunmei kaika: Civilization and Enlightenment : advocated as a slogan by those who were inspired by Western ideals to search for universal truths and spread science and rationality.

Rescript: Edicts issued in the name of the Emperor.

5.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Read Sub-sec 5.2.1 to write your answer.
- 2) Base your answer on Sub-secs. 5.2.1 and 5.2.3.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) i) X ii) ✓ iii) ✓ iv) ✓ v) ✓
- 2) The government realised that investment in education was necessary for Japan's modernization. See Sub-sec 5.3.1.
- 3) Base your answer on Sub-sec 5.4.2.

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