CHAPTER TWO

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There are two senses of freedom, dialectically linked with one another that Russell explores in his treatises on freedom and organisation. One is freedom in the sense of freedom to do and to have certain things, freedom in the sense of doing and having. The other is freedom in the sense of freedom from constraints. Man’s freedom to do and to have is circumscribed by external constraints, physical and social. Man’s history of freedom is one of gradual overcoming of physical constraints on the one hand and an increase in what he can do and have on the other. The more physical constraints are overcome, the freer men became. It is possible to overcome the physical constraints to freedom partly through the developments in science and technology. The history of unfoldment of man’s freedom in this sense is also an unfoldment of the history of science and technology. But overcoming of physical constraints must of necessity be based on some of form of social organisation, because man lives in society. Now social organisations while freeing man from physical constraints may bring in new forms of constraints. The need therefore arises to overcome not only the physical constraints but also those constraints arising from social organisations. A needless social constraint that unduly hampers man’s freedom can be removed by having better social organisations. Thus one can easily see that freedom to do and to have what is rightfully human is inseparably bound with what one can be free from. As freedom from social constraints is linked with the change and betterment of social organisation, man’s freedom has always been linked dialectically with the dynamics of
social organisation. All social philosophers worth their salt have investigated this underlying tension between freedom and organisation. Russell, who advocates the fundamental tenets of individual freedom with social goals of distributive justice and unity of mankind under the aegis of a World Government is not an exception. The present researcher intends to discuss Russell’s formulation of the genesis of this dialectical tension and his proposed solution in the present work.

To begin with, let us further analyse the two senses of freedom as propounded by Russell.

2.1 TWO SENSES OF FREEDOM

According to Russell, freedom to do something, to have something, is an active mode of striving. What is this striving and wherefrom does it arise? To explain this active mode of striving, Russell looks at human nature. In other words, he looks at the springs of human action on the one hand and human faculties on the other.

There are two sources of human action inherent in human nature. One is desire, the other, impulse. Desire and impulse together constitute springs of human action. Impulses give rise to spontaneous actions which are pursued for their sake. Children running, shouting, playing; Wordsworth enjoying the beauty of daffodils with inward eye, a thinker wondering at the mystery of the Universe etc. are some of the examples of impulsive acts. Desire on the other hand, gives rise to activities directed to some ends other than the activities themselves. A worker working in a factory
for a wage and doing mechanical monotonous work he does not like is an example of an act performed for an external desire only. A man desires what he does not have e.g. money or a material thing or even such non-material things like name, fame and goodwill etc. It may take him a long time to procure his object of desire and he may have to undertake painful acts. The time interval needed for the satisfaction of his desire may be very long, the object desired may be something outside his own life and may not be achievable even after his own death. Here the will as the directing force lends support in following desires for distant objects and endures the pains involved in the acts. Political economy assumes that man set distant goals, that it is rational to desire distant ends and that he can rationally organise the world towards achieving these ends.

But actions originating from desire constitute only a small part of the sum total of human activities. They constitute the more conscious, explicit and civilized part. Apart from these desire inspired ends, our impulses also give rise to a number of activities which are spontaneously pursued for their sake. Most of our instinctive actions like eating, drinking loving quarrelling, boasting etc. are dominated by impulses. Actions driven by impulses are generally pursued for their sake, apart from the agreeableness or for that matter disagreeableness of their results. Russell gives the example of boasting. A man given to boasting may indulge in the habit knowing fully well that, in all likelihood, he would be despised for it. The general tendency in men is to unconsciously conceal that they are acting from impulse, when their impulsive actions are contrary to normal and rationally desirable results. In such cases men tend to rationalise their impulses. They try to show that what they desire is only for certain kind of consequences. But in fact these consequences are desired simply because in them is the
opportunity to indulge in the impulse that has given rise to the rationalisation. For example, human beings might be having a built-in cruelty mechanism and Nazi advocacy of anti-Semitism as a philosophy may be a rationalization for indulging in the impulse of cruelty. Thought in the form of rationalization therefore is burdened with extraneous impulses. It becomes pure thought only when it springs out of curiosity, which is an intellectual impulse by itself and not inspired by preconceived ends to other impulses. Here Russell rightly observes that thought inspired by some non-intellectual impulse is merely a way of persuading ourselves that indulgence in the originating impulse is justified. Impulses, therefore are by themselves without any extraneous ends. They are at the basis of human activity, but don’t aim at anything outside the act.

According to Russell, what is to be desired is not the weakening of impulse as such, but directing it towards life and growth rather than towards death and decay. Man engages in material production out of the need for survival. His participation in material production is guided by distant, extraneous purposes and desires. In such a case man’s impulses may be completely subjected to will. Now, a life shorn of impulse, governed by purposes and desires geared to the needs of industrial production and organisation robs individuals and nations their vitality. Repression of fresh, original life giving impulses for reasons of material production under modern industrial culture leads to new but oppressive impulses of cruelty and destruction or otherwise to a complete loss of vitality. Impulses are not fixed by a men’s native dispositions but they are profoundly modified by circumstances and his way of life. The interaction of human impulses with social and political institutions is a point, which will be taken care of at a later stage.
As stated earlier, our impulse may be sometimes in accordance with reason or contrary to reason. Take the example of war, which grows out of the impulse of aggression and the impulse of resistance to aggression. In many cases both the impulses operate in a manner contrary to reason. Both the impulses produce a host of attendant beliefs. The white men’s burden in Asia and Africa justifying the European aggression is a classic case in point. Similarly the impulse to resistance produces the attendant belief in the peculiar wickedness of those whose aggression is feared and in the immense value of national customs which they might suppress if they were victorious. However, in spite of the fact that the dynamics of impulses lead to destructiveness and war, Russell opines that impulse is still expression of life and hope. Lack of impulse is lack of life. Even such genuine movements as pacifism must be and can only driven by anti war impulses.

According to Russell, there are impulses that make for life and impulses that make for death. The impulses towards art, science, love, instinct for constructiveness, adventure of thought, joy of life are examples of the former. The impulses towards war and destruction are examples of the latter. According to Russell, the natural flow of our impulses for life are checked by the conditions under which men live, institutions that rest on injustice and authority, conventional conception of success as money making, an economic system that uses men as means to carry out other’s purposes rather than their own. This is at the basis of the conflict of impulses and social organisation.

According to Russell, every individual human being has a principal striving towards a certain direction working as a principle of integration of his impulses and desires. He calls this the central principle of growth unique
to each and every individual. One individual may have striving towards exploration of beauty in Nature and also creation of beautiful object. Then he becomes a poet or an artist. All his impulses and desires are then integrated towards the unfoldment of the poet or the artist in him. Another individual may be given to pure contemplation of Nature and adventure of ideas. Then all his impulses and possibilities are integrated to unfold the philosopher in him which is the principal striving here. Yet another individual may strive for a participation in the affairs of men in shaping human destiny. Thus, his central principle of growth is that of unfoldment of the statesman in him.

Russell rightly observes that this central principle of growth determines for each man the type of excellence he or she is capable; a poet, a philosopher or a statesman. All men cannot be moulded according to a set pattern. What we can do is to let him grow free and vigorous without forcing to a set pattern. Here Russell treats each individual as an irreducible surd, each growing according to his central principle of growth in an unique process. The role of social and political institutions in the growth of the individuals is to create the conditions for their growth, not to hinder their growth, rather to see that their growth is not hampered. The important point here is to realise that social and political institutions cannot force individuals to grow, but can only create condition of growth. Impulses and desires, which do not grow out of this central principle of growth and have become harmful enough have to be checked by self discipline. Again, impulses even if they grow out of the central principle of growth in the individual, may at times become injurious to others. They also need to be checked in the interest of others. Otherwise, men’s impulses should not be thwarted, as they may lead to a fundamental disaster following from distortions.
Here freedom in the positive sense is allowing the impulses their natural and spontaneous movement in accordance with a central principle of growth.

Political, social organisations may either help or hamper this individual growth. Therefore, freedom also negatively means, freedom from oppression in the sense of absence of constraints following from social and political organisations. Man must attain to the full stature he is capable of, the full growth he is destined to. A subtle and complex interaction of many factors constitute the condition of his growth. It includes the physical environment, beliefs and affections, opportunities for action, the whole life of the community. The more developed a man is, the more elaborate are the conditions of his growth; the more dependent they are upon the general state of the society in which he lives. His direction of growth transcends his personal life, goes to the identification with successes and failures of his community and even goes beyond that. Allowing free play of impulses in accordance with a principle of growth needs change in the structure of social organisation. But every progress in social organisation, conquest of physical nature, advance in thought and knowledge give rises to new impulses. These in turn demand new changes in social structure. Hence there is always a tension and dialectical relation between the working of man's impulses and social organisation. When science and technology and technique of social engineering have opened up new possibilities for every member in the society to release their creative impulses, such a freedom cannot be denied because of the structures imposed by antiquated institutions. Here it is the social institutions that must change. Mankind is at the threshold of a new mode of existence where possibilities released by new mastery of Nature, technology, skill and technique of social
engineering can be no longer be confined to a privileged few simply because of the strictures imposed by antiquated institutions. Man need not only material goods, but more freedom, more self direction, more outlet for creativeness, more opportunity for the joy of life, more voluntary co-operation, less involuntary subservience to purposes not their own.

If impulse is the main spring of action, the creative impulse giving rise to creative activity as an end in itself is what is freedom. His favourite example, that of intellectual and theoretical creation through sheer love of mental adventure. The freedom to enquire, admire, appreciate and wonder at the mystery that is our world is an unique human freedom.

Russell, therefore, says:

"The world in which we live is various and astonishing: some of the things that seem plainest grow more and more difficult the more they are considered; other things, which might have been thought quite impossible to discover, have nevertheless been laid bare by genius and industry. The powers of thought, the vast regions which it can master, the much more vast regions which it can only dimly suggest to imagination, give to those whose minds have travelled beyond the daily round an amazing richness of material, an escape from the triviality and wearisomeness of familiar routine, by which the whole of life is filled with interest, and the prison walls of the commonplace are broken down. The same love of adventure which takes men to the South Pole, the same passion for a conclusive trial of strength which leads some men to welcome war, can find in creative thought an outlet which is neither wasteful nor cruel, but increases the dignity of man by incarnating in life some of that shining splendour which
the human spirit is bringing down out of the unknown. To give this joy, in a greater or less measure, to all who are capable of it, is the supreme end for which the education of the mind is to be valued." *

This freedom and joy of mental adventure, according to Russell, should have been the birth right of every individual, but for the fear of emancipation that free thought brings with it to men.

Men fear thought as they fear nothing else on earth - more than ruin, more even than death. Thought is subversive and revolutionary, destructive and terrible; thought is merciless to privilege, established institutions, and comfortable habits; thought is anarchic and lawless, indifferent to authority, careless of the well-tried wisdom of the ages. Thought looks into the pit of hell and is not afraid. It sees men, a feeble speck, surrounded by unfathomable depths of silence; yet it bears itself proudly, as unmoved as if it were lord of the universe. Thought is great and swift and free, the light of the world, and the chief glory of man.**

These examples show how the impulse of creative thought gives rise to free inquiry and mental adventure as activities which are pursued as an end in themselves. Engagement in such activities pursued for their own sake, is the unique human freedom, the freedom to do, to create, and to have.


** Ibid., p. 115
Impulses are the springs or drives of human action. But not only the
drives but the faculties also participate in the making of human action.
Impulses as well as faculties are constitutive of human nature. Unfoldment
of what is best in the individual by way of integration of impulses and
desires towards a central direction is through the exercise of faculties. This
is the instrumental aspect of human faculties. But over and above the
instrumental aspect, the faculties are intrinsically valuable in themselves
also. Their cultivations are valuable in themselves. Russell emphasizes
that cultivation of the faculties through their creative exercise is essential
to the unfoldment of the total man. He mentions three such faculties;
instinct, mind and spirit.

The faculty of instinct is responsible for the kind of human activity
concerned with self-preservation and reproduction. So of vanity, love of
possession, love of family and even love of country. Instinctive activities
express the animal nature of man and his position among a world of
competitors.

Pursuit of knowledge from mere childish curiosity upto the greatest
efforts of thought belongs to the faculty of the mind. Curiosity in human
beings passes beyond the investigation of particular objects to the
investigation of the most fundamental and underlying principle at the basis
of mystery that is our Universe. Curiosity is the primary impulse out of
which the whole edifice of scientific knowledge has grown. Direct love of
knowledge and dislike of error, acquisition of knowledge as an delightful
experience in itself, apart from the instrumental value of knowledge so
acquired, is what Russell calls the life of the mind. The mind can concern
itself with objects on their own account apart from instrumental
considerations and hence thought coming from the mind may be wholly or partially impersonal.

The faculty of the spirit makes us capable of impersonal feeling as the faculty of the mind of impersonal thought. Feeling apart from thought flows rather from the heart, not from the head, not ratiocinative but intuitive, identifiable mostly by the flow of sympathies and empathies, love and transcendence. It is a matter of susceptibility, sensibility. Impersonal feeling extends to human relations, to other human beings whom one does not personally know, to the destiny of all mankind and the development of the Universe without a thought that one is personally involved. Russell cites the examples of art and religion as things belonging to the life of spirit. Beginning from sensuous experience intimately bound up with the life of instinct, art soars to embrace the whole emotive life of man. Religion develops reverence and worship, the sense of an obligation to mankind, the feeling of imperativeness and acting under orders. Russell puts the point succinctly:

And deeper than all these lies the sense of a mystery half revealed, of a hidden wisdom and glory, of a transfiguring vision in which common things lose their solid importance and become a thin veil behind which the ultimate truth of the world is dimly seen. It is such feelings that are the source of religion, and if they were to die most of what is best would vanish out of life.*

* Ibid, p.144
In the making of an individual, it is possible to develop each of these faculties at the expense of others. Among the primitive people instinct is very developed and rules over the remaining faculties, but mind and spirit are hardly developed. Among the educated men mind is developed at the expense of both instinct and spirit, producing a curious inhumanity and lifelessness, a paucity of both personal and impersonal desires, which leads to cynicism and intellectual destructiveness. Among ascetics and saints, the life of the spirit has been developed at the expense of instinct and mind, producing an outlook which is impossible to those who have a healthy animal life and to those who have a love of active thought. When the faculties, instinct, mind and spirit are at war with each other, individuals direct much of their energy inwards instead of being able to expend it all in objective activities. A precarious peace achieved at the expense of any of the faculties makes a man fragmented. What is necessary is to achieve the total man in whom there is a reconciliation of instinct, mind and spirit. Russell means to say that each of the faculties should be given a free play in their own sphere in harmony with the free play of the others.

Instinct unites the life of the individual with the life of the race and is at the basis of an individual’s profound sense of union with others of his own species, the means by which the collective life nourishes the life of separate units. But we cannot depend on instinct only as instinct keeps us in bondage to unthinking impulse, rendering us powerless to control the forces of Nature either in ourselves or in our physical environment. Only the mind’s power of impersonal thought can liberate man from this bondage by a theoretical distancing and judging critically instinct’s confining us to purely biological purposes. But in so criticising the instinct for its blind tendencies the critical activity of the mind is destructive of the emotion
springing from instinct which could have been positively channelised and thus generate cynicism about our instinctive emotional life. When the spirit universalises the emotions that spring from instinct, they can survive the critical scrutiny of the mind. The mind guided by the principle of universalization which the spirit alone is capable, no longer censures and promotes the death of instinct, but purifies it from mechanical biological contingent insistence and repetitiveness. The instinct gives the drive, the force to our actions. The mind gives the means of directing the force to the desired end by a rational casual organisation of the world. The spirit universalizes the force by impersonalising and universalising the emotion originating out of the impulses in a manner that endures the assault of mental criticism.

Russell, therefore, says;

Instinct, mind, and spirit are each a help to the others when their development is free and unvitiated; but when corruption comes into any one of the three, not only does that one fail, but the others also become poisoned. All three must grow together. And if they are to grow to their full stature in any one man or woman, that man or woman must not be isolated, but must be one of a society where growth is not thwarted and made crooked.*

* Ibid., pp.145-46
Here Russell is clearly emphasizing the need for placement of the individual in society for unfoldment of his impulses and faculties towards the realization of the total man. The life of instinct must not be interrupted nor confined to narrow repetitive blind cycles. Rather, the cycle must be completed in an enlarged and universalized form with the critical purifying help from the mind and universalising help from the spirit. Let us take the example of sexual relationship. Suppose the desire is confined to an isolated separate momentary pleasure. In this case, the desire will fall short of the love of man and woman, which is more human, enduring and wider in scope. Even this relationship of love of man and woman is to be supplemented by a love of children which springs out of this relationship. Love of children unites one to the species and hence to love of mankind as a whole, transcending it in an universalising movement to embrace the Universe as a whole. Or take for example, the impulse to create something. Every individual has an innate desire to create something, great or small according to one's capacities. But the opportunity to create is available to a few fortunate men. Thus only a few fortunate individuals can create a science, a poem, or a picture. Perhaps the men of science have the maximum opportunity for expressing their creativity, thus deriving full satisfaction of mind and spirit as well as of the instinct of creation. Russell even remarks that in a life of scientific creation, a life of creative knowledge, we may have glimpses of a new way of life and the happiness arising out of pure contemplation for curiosity's sake as the happiness to which all mankind will be entitled in future. As is presently the case, the majority of mankind are thwarted from giving outlet to their creative impulse, thus lacking the freedom to create. For those whose creative impulse have been thwarted, the impulse to destroy the creativeness of more fortunate men get an upper hand.
Instinctive life is the bond that unites, in individual relationship as well as in fusion of individuals into a collective by a sharp emotion, like nationalism, patriotism. Where such emotion is absent men develops instinctive hostility towards his fellow beings. Therefore instinctive cycles should not be interrupted nor confined to isolated pleasure seeking movement, but must be completed. Thought alone cannot give health to the life of instinct because it is impersonal, detached and too much separated from instinct. Hence it needs the universalising help of the spirit. Man cannot lead the life of instinct alone sans mind and the spirit. For, Russell says, “It is thought and spirit that raise man above the level of brutes. By discarding them we may lose the proper excellence of men, but cannot acquire the excellence of animals. Thought must achieve its full growth before a reconciliation with instinct is attempted”. *

Russell’s insistence, therefore, is that thought should not be sacrificed in any case, for “thought is in itself God-like”. ** In case, the opposition between thought and instinct is irreconcilable, it would be thought that ought to conquer. But the opposition according to Russell is not irreconcilable. Thought and instinct can be reconciled if both are informed by the life of the spirit. Here the Russellian scheme of reconciliation is; instinctive impulses giving vigour to life, thought providing the rational direction and spirit universalizing the instinctive impulses and desires. The unity of mankind and the completion of the individual human being demand some impersonal and universal principle over and above the principle of

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* Ibid., p.148  
** Ibid., p.149
individual growth. The Russellian principle of the development of man is that nothing is good in the life of a human being except the very best that his nature can achieve. The life of instinct, mind and spirit opens up possibilities a human being is entitled to at various levels of development. If a man confines himself to the life of instinct only he merely serves the ends of Nature, making himself a slave to the life of the species, unable to minister to the impersonal ends which he sees to be good. Thought however will not surrender to become unconscious partner to Nature's end. Human thought distances itself from Nature, looks at her critically and never surrenders the freedom to think truly. According to Russell, the religion of thought is "Better the world should perish than that I or any other human being should believe a lie". *

The creative destructiveness of thought in whose scorching flames the dross of the world is being burnt away, must be allowed to culminate from where the spirit shall have to take over if integration of human life is to be complete.

It may not be out of place to compare Russell’s views on freedom with Marx, so that through resemblance and contrast, Russell’s own position is appreciated further. To Russell, human nature consists of both creative as well as destructive anarchic impulses that make for death. Although freedom is creativity there is no guarantee that man will necessarily release the creative potential in him with the removal of social constraints. For example, leisure time is a necessary condition for engagement is creative activities, which are pursued for their own sake in realisation of human

* Ibid., p 152
freedom. But a man having free leisure may also put it to perverse uses like following blind anarchic impulse of aggression, war, destruction, jealousy and so on. As contrasted with this Marx shares the renaissance vision of man as essentially creative and all conquering whose creativity will be released the moment material and social fetters are torn asunder. Marx regards man as a being whose essence is free conscious activity. And consciousness for Marx is "the capacity to raise a structure is imagination before erecting it in reality" * Man has a capacity for creative conscious activity and a corresponding need to realise this in reality. Marx visualized two forms of activity in which human freedom is realised, material production and artistic creation. Material production is a form of activity having extraneous ends, i.e., production of a material thing. But even here man can realise his creative freedom in a limited way. He can overcome physical constraints to the extent science and technology makes it possible. Constraints to human creativity inherent in the organisation of production can be overcome by changing the social organisation of production, putting an end to the exploitation of man by man in the process. An irreducible surd of necessity may remain in the form of natural laws to be observed in overcoming physical constraints and minimum organisational rules to be followed in social production. Here freedom consists in appreciation and integration of necessity in creative human action. According to Marx, this is the kind of freedom human beings can achieve within the realm of necessity. As contrasted with this, man realises his untrammelled freedom

in artistic and theoretical activities which are pursued for their own sake where both the form and content of creative activity is set and generated by man. Artistic and aesthetic activities are not directed to extraneous end, but are in themselves joyful. In artistic creation, man gives the law of creation to himself and transmutes his own material of creation. This is the freedom man have in the kingdom of freedom. Without material production, there cannot be this higher freedom. And without the higher freedom, material production *per se* is monstrous and loses all human significance.

Both Russell and Marx identify freedom with creativity. Both thinkers hold freedom is an active mode of striving, doing of actions for their own sake propelled by drives as rooted in human nature. For Russell impulses are drives to human action, creative as well as destructive. For Marx, man is essentially a free conscious being and the need to realise his human essence is what drives man to creative activity. Marx has a vision of the total man, so does Russell so far integration of human faculties are concerned. *For Marx, unity of sense and intellect must be at the basis of the total man.* Similarly for Russell instinct, intellect and spirit must be integrated for man to realise himself in full. Russell was led, perhaps by the discoveries of psychoanalysis to conceive of drives of action as essentially blind impulses. Marx on the other hand has a renaissance view of human nature which regards man as essentially creative. Russell's approach was empirical and psychological while Marx's was ontological and dialectical. Subsequent development in socialist movement confirmed the seriousness of the question mark Russell put on the too optimistic view of human nature propounded by Marx.

So far we have discussed Russell's concept of freedom in the positive sense, as an active mode of striving. But there is also a negative sense of freedom, in which freedom means the absence of external control over the acts of individual or groups. Here Russell hastens to make the point that negative freedom, i.e., freedom from constraints alone will not confer any high value on an individual or community unless there is positive freedom as the active mode of striving. Russell gives the example of Eskimos. They can dispense with many constraints like Government, compulsory education, traffic regulations and the incredible complications of company law. Negatively speaking, their life has a very high degree of freedom, but the positive elements of freedom we have discussed already are lacking. Negative freedom by itself does not imply presence of positive freedom but merely clears the space for positive freedom, i.e., active striving coming from the impulses, desires and beliefs. Here Russell illustrates this point by an example. Great poets confer lustre upon a community, but one cannot be sure that a community will produce great poetry merely because there is no law against it. Here Russell opines that although absence of constraints by itself does not guarantee positive enjoyment of freedom, thereby constituting the total of social goods, it is a necessary condition often so unwisely curtailed that one can hardly exaggerate its importance. Proceeding from his analysis of the two senses of freedom, namely, freedom to and freedom from, Russell further introduces two different forms of classification of freedom. Freedom may be classified according as who enjoys freedom. And freedom may also be classified according to the kind of activities constraints to which are removed.

Thus freedom may be enjoyed by a nation, a group within a nation or an individual. Depending on who enjoys freedom, we have national
freedom, freedom of the group and individual freedom. Again, the activities constraints to which are removed may be political, economic, mental or personal. From this standpoint, freedom may be classified into political freedom, economic freedom, mental freedom and personal freedom. In what follows we present the Russellian exposition of these freedoms.

2.2 NATIONAL FREEDOM

National freedom means according to Russell, freedom for a national group from the constraints or obligation to be under the orders of foreigners. Here it is the sense of freedom from external control that matters. A nation may have national freedom from foreign domination, but may lack other freedoms, e.g., the freedom of expression. Ironically, forms of freedom available under earlier foreign domination may be curtailed under newly found national freedom. An example will make this clear. Many nationalities together formed the erstwhile Soviet Union. The minority nationalities within the Union felt that they were dominated by white Russians and that their national freedom were constrained by the hegemony of white Russians whom they look upon as foreigners. Hence they demanded the right to self-determination in the name of national freedom. Here protagonists of freedom may argue that the nationalities have a case. Truly so. But it is also a fact that a large State system like the erstwhile Soviet Union is more capable of providing other forms of freedom like economic freedom, democratic freedom, freedom from unemployment, freedom from aggression etc. Once the Union is disintegrated, the smaller States may have to fend for their own survival and may lose many of the freedoms they enjoyed earlier under the Soviet State, in the process of fighting for
self preservation against external forces. Similarly, many of the small nationalities that to-day are crying for right to self-determination even to the extent of using extreme terrorist methods, may in the event of gaining so called national independence find that their real freedom of the people is circumscribed by non-viability in the face of external forces in the new world order. Nevertheless, Russell opines that national freedom will be energetically sought wherever it does not exist. He cites as examples the national liberation movement going on in Asia and Africa. Given this vehement desire, any attempt by one nation to govern another nation will always lead to dangerous unrest. However, even where national independence is viable, the principle of national sovereignty or absolute freedom from constraints for nations that a nation shall be subject to no control whatever, will lead to international anarchy. For where nations are subject to no control, force is the only arbiter in international relations.

According to Russell, just as individual persons form a national community, so also nations form an international community. Just as individuals need the rule of law, so also nations need rule of law to form a viable international community. Russell's life long struggle for a rule of law and control of nations through an international body, more specifically a World Government is based on his view that international anarchy will lead to extinction of mankind. International anarchy is inconsistent with mankind's survival. Russell hastens to add that international control through a World Government should not be interpreted as imperialism. Imperialism and international control are as different from one another as slavery and the control of the criminal law. Here two tendencies are identifiable. On the one hand nations newly emancipated from colonial yoke tend to make a claim for complete independence of all control, while great powers tend to favour an international authority only so long as they feel sure of dominating
it, thus making it appear as merely a disguised prolongation of the old imperialism. And this makes the situation more complicated. Russell’s views on this tension between national freedom and international authority will be explored at length as the work progresses.

### 2.3 FREEDOM OF THE GROUP

If social groups within a Nation-State are co-terminus with a geographical area, the problem of ensuring their freedom can be dealt with by devolution of power within a federal authority. Where the group is scattered throughout, this solution is not possible. Freedom of religious communities, trade unions, monopolies, trusts etc. are examples. Do the capitalists and wage earners have a right to combine? In Western democracies, group freedom has been generally recognised. The freedom to form such groups as trade unions and to permit them a wide range of collective activities is an essential part of freedom.

The paradox of group freedom, however, is do we tolerate the freedom for groups whose avowed end is to destroy freedom?

Russell’s questions are;

Should democracy tolerate attempts to replace it by despotism?

Should toleration extend to those who advocate intolerance?
Should freedom of the press extend to those who think a free press an abomination.

Should a nation permit the formation of powerful groups which aim at subjecting it to foreign domination?

While admitting that there is no clear principle by which such questions can be decided, Russell maintains that the greater the danger from such subversive groups, the more justification there is for interfering with their activities. Here the only danger is, suppression being carried much farther than is necessary in the interest of security. Russell opines that Britain has to a great extent avoided this danger.

2.4 INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

According to Russell individual freedom is in a sense, much more important than freedom for organisation. The best that mankind has, like, large scale ideologies and religions, Buddhism, Christianity and Marxism etc. owe their origin to exceptional individuals, who might not have been tolerated in a modern totalitarian State commanding a vast State apparatus reaching out to every aspect of life. Earlier States and organisations ill treated and persecuted individuals. Socrates, Gallileo and Marx are cases in point. But they did not have neither the will nor the efficiency to stifle individual differences, genius and eccentricities. Socrates was offered Hemlock, but after having taught the world everything that he wanted to. Gallileo was ill treated by the Inquisition, but half heartedly as compared to modern methods. He was not put to death, his books were not burned
and his followers were not liquidated. With modern States persecution have become scientific and effective.

Every progress whether moral or intellectual is due to creative unusual individuals whose views are at first considered shocking. Intolerance and persecution of their views will make society stereotyped and unprogressive. A society derives its strength from the discoveries and inventions of its creative individuals.

Many of our radical views on marriage, morals, politics etc. are shocking, but they pave the way to progress. Radical views considered heresies, paved the way to progress and happiness of mankind. If individual freedom responsible for their discovery is curtailed, mankind will be deprived of the benefits of their discovery. Open societies by allowing individual freedom to its members, perpetuate itself through the discoveries and inventions of individual genius and creativity. Thus open society is its own strength.

2.5 POLITICAL FREEDOM

Russell conceives of political freedom in terms of assent and dissent. Political freedom must have a corresponding mechanism of assent and dissent. Where a decision is to be taken that affects all the members of the society, the decision of the majority must prevail. This reminds us the utilitarian principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. Where such a common decision is not necessary and avoidable, there should be every readiness to avoid such a common decision. This means that the freedom to dissent must be an inalienable ingredient of free society.
According to Russell, conformity must not be insisted upon where it serves no social purpose. The school boy psychology of demanding conformity as the price of group membership persists in most of the grown up adults. Civilised people gradually grow out of this blind impulse towards enforced uniformity. But many never become civilised and retain throughout the crude persecuting instinct of the school boy. This instinctive feeling must not be embodied in legislation, if there is to be political liberty.

2.6 ECONOMIC FREEDOM

According to Russell, economic liberty rightly conceived does not consist in allowing anybody to do anything he likes in the economic sphere. Laissez faire doctrine or allowing the producers or capitalists to do whatever they like ensures the freedom of those who accumulates, but not of those who works. Laissez faire is like extreme anarchist advocating freedom for murderers and thieves where it is obvious that citizens will have far less freedom if criminals are is no way restrained. The horrors of early industrialism in England including unrestricted child labour convinced everybody that laissez faire meant only the freedom of the few to exploit all, especially the weak and the unprotected. Similarly, unless the workers unite and are free to form trade unions their liberty consisted only in being free to choose between the employer's terms and starvation. And Russell sardonically remarks, "This form of liberty, oddly enough, was not greatly valued by those who enjoyed it".*

* Russell, Bertrand, Fact and Fiction (First paperback edition; London: Routledge, 1994) p.56
Economic freedom, therefore, must consist in freeing a man from economic compulsion so long as his behaviour does not flagrantly disregard the public interest. A law abiding man willing to work must not be allowed to starve. In Russell’s opinion, neither laissez faire nor socialism in the Russian form can secure this result. In the former, capitalists kill the freedom of the wage earners, while in the later the State can deprive the freedom of the worker in a manner not possible even in capitalism. Russell opines that in England, only those forms of socialism have been adopted which tend to increase the economic freedom of the wage earners. This ought to be welcomed in spite of the lessened freedom of the capitalists. “For the capitalists, like the burglars, are a minority, and are restrained for the sake of the freedom of the majority”.* Russell however concedes that the problem of economic freedom has not yet been fully solved either in Britain or elsewhere.

2.7 MENTAL FREEDOM

According to Russell, mental freedom branch out in two dimensions, on the one hand, mental freedom means that a man should not suffer or be persecuted for holding or proclaiming opinions other than those of the Government. On the other hand a man must be capable of thinking his own thought and his capacity for original thought must not be destroyed through an education that indoctrinates official viewpoint rather than train the mind for original thought. A man must be free to create his own philosophical

* Ibid., p.57
system or scientific theory without any intervention from the State. In Stalin's Russia, even on such a politically neutral subject like genetics, scientists were persecuted for not toeing the official line on hereditary as sponsored by Lysenko.

Mental freedom therefore, means (i) freedom to hold and express opinions, (ii) freedom to develop the capacity to think for oneself and, (iii) once this capacity is developed, freedom to create one's philosophical system or scientific theory. A whole population may be subjected to indoctrination through official education and propaganda, and after generations of such indoctrination individuals may be rendered completely incapable of free thought. Then there will be no need to punish new ideas, because there will be no new ideas to punish. A nation so enslaved may have monolithic strength for some time, but will soon be outstripped by the nations that have intellectual initiative and a capacity for scientific progress provided of course such nations remain. Thus an open society perpetuates itself through sheer force of its creativity.

But mental freedom is to be advocated not merely as a means to success but as an end in itself. Mental freedom is the source of all that is good in art, literature and science, and much of what is best in individual personality. It is the source of creative contest that makes life interesting and worth living. A world without it would be tame and dull and scarcely more interesting than an ant heap.

Russell wrote in 1961, only on December 25, 1991 the collapse of communist regime proved him right.
2.8 PERSONAL LIBERTY

The essence of personal liberty according to Russell is that the individual should be able to do what he thinks important and if his work is of a public nature, he should be able to obtain publicity for it. Provided he is allowed to work and reach the people his work is meant for, reward and punishment, persecution and even personal fate hardly matter. Socrates was offered Hemlock but long after he has completed his work. The manner of his death became a living testament to his ideas and helped in their propagation throughout the world. Similarly the crucifixion of Christ become the living symbol of the Word that the world received from Him. States in the past have tolerated long enough great individuals either through indifference or inefficiency for their works to be known, much to the benefit of the world. But modern States, with its higher level of organisation and repressive organs may prevent great individuals from doing important things and also prevent their ideas from reaching the people. Since the State may see to it that their ideas do not reach the people, the martyrdom that is associated with the persecution or execution of great man may lost its meaning or halo. Turgenev, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky could work and reach their people under the Czarist Russia although they were in conflict with the Government. Russell opined that nothing of the sort was possible in Stalin’s Russia. If any Russian literary man in Stalin’s day has expressed any human feelings against the oppression of inmates in the concentration camp, his writings would not have been published. He himself would have been in the concentration camp. And so Russian literature formerly supreme was nonexistent. Here of course, Russell is in the wrong. Indomitable human spirit triumphs over even the most oppressive totalitarian regime. Pasternak and Alexander Solzhenitsyn could survive Stalin and make their work
known not only in Russia but to the world at large. But we agree with Russell’s main contention that,

Never before in human history has it been possible to impose such complete mental slavery as is to be found in modern totalitarian States.*

This is true not only of the so-called totalitarian States, but also in the many so-called open societies whose very openness is in question. Especially in the post-modern era the subtle use of entertainment media as a means of enslavement of mind leading to death of meditation (as Russell says in another context) has added new dimensions to the aggression on personal freedom in western democracies.

Russell rightly observes that nations glorious in history have always in fact allowed great liberty to individuals either by accident or by design. This was the case with many ancient Greek city States, which allowed its thinkers large personal liberty either through democracy or if autocratic through inadvertence or through smallness of size. But when the Roman Empire established order in the ancient world, great individuals soon disappeared.

Similarly the Italian Renaissance, which politically resembled ancient Greek in that it consisted of a large number of petty States in perpetual conflict with each other, and thus through non-governance allowed freedom to individuals, produced great individuals. As soon as the Spaniards

* Ibid. p 60
achieved supremacy and established uniformity and order, the age of great Italians came to an end.

According to Russell, liberty is to be valued not only for great works that men creates under conditions of liberty, but also for what it makes of man himself. Liberty "makes it possible for a man to retain his self-respect, to stand upright and to do what his own conscience tells him that he ought to do".*

But in the modern world of big organisations a man not to starve must work under compelling circumstances that compromises his liberty. Perhaps a humanist may have to work for some great corporation which has sinister purposes. A socialist journalist may have to work for a reactionary newspaper. A pacifist steelworker may have to work for armaments. This compromise of liberty against one's own conscience disintegrates the personality and makes man schizophrenic.

To sum up, the following strands of the Russellian doctrine of freedom may be noted.

Firstly, the Russellian exploration of human freedom begins with an analysis of the two senses of freedom, namely; freedom to and freedom from. That is to say, freedom in the sense of freedom to do, to have, freedom as the active mode of striving; and freedom in the sense of freedom from constraints.

* Ibid., p. 61
Secondly, consequent to the two senses, the Russellian doctrine of freedom centres on the individual. Freedom is meaningful both as a condition of the individual growth and as an end intrinsically valuable to the individual. All that is best in life come from within the individual - "they are such things as creative art, and love, and thought. Such things can be helped or hindered by political conditions, but not actually produced by them; and freedom is, both in itself and in its relation to these other goods, the best thing that political and economic conditions can secure". *

Thirdly, the Russellian doctrine of freedom is founded on a comprehensive view of human nature. According to Russell, freedom in the form of doing and having, in other words, freedom as the active mode of striving is rooted in human nature. Impulses, desires and faculties constitute the fabric of human nature. Of these, impulses and desires are the springs of human action; they are what 'drives' man to do, to have and to strive. The faculties are the means by which man commits himself in Nature. Impulses give rise to spontaneous activities which are pursued as an end in themselves and therefore do not have extraneous ends. Thus freedom means engagements in activities which are a joy in themselves, driven by impulse and not by any other extraneous ends. But not all the activities inspired by impulse are free creative acts. Corresponding to the Freudian *Eros and Thanatos*, there are impulses that make for life and impulses that make for death. The former is creative while the latter is destructive. Creative impulse give rise to human freedom by being the fountainhead of creative pursuits of truth in science, beauty in arts and Nature, love in human relations.

* Russell, Bertrand, *Roads to Freedom* (First publication of the Tenth Impression; London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1966) p.82
Fourthly, Russell uses the central principle of growth as the integrative principle of impulses and desires. Human nature unfolds only when it is guided by a moving direction that determines the peculiar excellence an individual is uniquely capable of, e.g., a poet, a philosopher, a scientist or a statesman.

Fifthly, to this Russell adds the principle of integration of faculties inherent in men for the realisation of the total man. Not only impulses and desires, but also faculties are constitutive of human nature. Faculties are those by using which men’s impulses and desires are nourished. That is their instrumental value. The cultivation of faculties by themselves is a necessary condition for realisation of the best in human nature. Human striving is possible because three faculties, namely, instinct, mind and spirit are constitutive of human nature. Russell’s unique contribution to the understanding of human nature and freedom is his insight on human faculties given as follows:

Each of the faculties cannot be cultivated or developed in isolation, any one of the faculties needs to be supplemented by the remaining two faculties for a full development.

When any one of the faculties is impaired or stunted, degeneration sets in the remaining other faculties.

When each of the faculties is emancipated from its narrow confine and integrated by the remaining other faculties leading to universalisation in the spirit, the unity of the faculties is realised through this principle of integration and this unity is a necessary condition for realisation of the best in man.
Thus healthy instinctive animal life is at the basis of all that a man can become; self reproduction, self preservation, unity with fellow beings, community life etc. But if an individual human being confines himself to instinctive activities only, he loses his human excellence without achieving the excellence of the animal either. His suppressed potential rebels against this confinement. Only when the mind which is capable of pure and universal contemplation, purifies the instinctive emotion of their dross, can they be emancipated from their narrow and repetitive cycle. But the mind divested of feelings and emotions become cynical and destructive of emotions. Only when the mind is nourished by the universalising feeling emanating from the life of spirit can thought become friendly to life, emotion and also be universal in its scope. Love of mankind, reverence for the Universe and its mystery, a feeling of transcendence that goes beyond the Universe - all emanating from the life of spirit emancipates the instinct and enriches the intellect.

The integration of impulses and desires as well as the harmonious integration of the faculties for the realisation of the total man need favourable circumstances. Hence individual freedom is to be located in society. Constraints to individual freedom are physical and social; i.e., constraints from physical Nature and constraints coming from men’s own fellow beings. Science and technology is to conquer the former while social reorganisation takes care of the latter. Positive freedom charted out above needs a space for its exercise. Hence positive freedom or creative striving as the making of man must of necessity be dialectically linked to freedom as the absence of constraints. Positive freedom is more basic and fundamental because fullness of creative striving needs clearance of space leading to struggle against constraints and subsequent absence of constraints. Russell’s examples as follows.
The freedom for a national group from the constraints or obligation to be under the orders of foreigners as embodied in the doctrine of the right to self-determination, which must, according to Russell, be subject to international rule of law under the aegis of a World Government.

The freedom of social and religious groups from the constraints of the State and other groups, for the pursuit of their legitimate interest. Russell’s proviso is that such freedom should not turn into enemies of freedom.

The freedom of the individual for material, moral and intellectual creation. Russell’s emphasis is on the creative freedom of the individual as the clan for the progress and renewal of a society. A community is redeemed by the individual freedom of its members, which is the same as saying that open society is its own strength.

Political freedom, which is not merely one of majority carrying the vote, but rather taking decision according to the utilitarian principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. Russell’s limiting condition to political freedom is, conformity should not be insisted upon where it serves no social purpose.

Economic freedom as freedom from economic compulsion and constraints so long as a man’s behaviour does not flagrantly disregard public interest. Here Russell opines that an inalienable component of economic freedom is a corresponding opportunity to work such that a law abiding citizen willing to work is not allowed to starve.
Mental freedom is freedom from persecution for opinions held. It also means freedom from State intervention so that one is left free to create one's own philosophical system or scientific theory. There must also be freedom from the mental constraints engendered by indoctrination and an individual must be left free to think in his own way.

Considering the alarming control modern States have over the individuals and the efficiency with which they can pervert or stop works of individual genius from reaching the public, the importance of personal liberty both as an end in itself and as a means to progress can never be overemphasized. But such freedom is to be located within a social organisation. In his search for the meaning of human freedom, Russell further proceeds to enquire into the nature of social organisation. We will follow the Russellian enquiry into social organisation in the next chapter.