

UNIT 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE EAST ASIA REGION

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit is a general historical introduction to the East Asia region. It is intended to provide you with a background in understanding the politics of modern East Asia. After reading this unit, you should be in a position to:

- recognise early civilizational characteristics of the East Asia Region.
- discuss its socio-cultural traits.
- explain the political traditions.
- analyze the varied responses to the West by China, Japan and Korea.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The region, we now call East Asia was, for a long time, known as the "Far East". The European travellers who had to undertake long and arduous journey to reach Cathay, Japan and the Indies gave this general name to these distant regions. "East Asia" is now the more acceptable term, it is both geographically correct and does not imply the outdated notion that Europe is the center of the world. At the time when the term "Far East" came into use, it referred to all the countries which lay beyond India. It included all those lands which have felt, in some measure, the influence of Chinese civilization, even though some of them may have also been strongly affected by competing influences from India. However, when we say "East Asia" we specifically limit ourselves to the regions of China, Japan and Korea.

Like ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome, and like India, the East Asian region has been one of the main areas of cultural development, an independent source of ideas and institutions. The center of the East Asian world was China, whose cultural influence dominated and pervaded the whole area. Until modern times, the East Asian region

maintained its cultural identity and this was not so because it developed in isolation. There were contacts with other civilizations. Buddhism became a formative influence in these as well as other adjoining areas, though it almost disappeared from India, the land of its birth. While one stream of Islam spread through India to Malaya and Indonesia, another moved through Inner Asia to China itself. Other religions, including early Christianity and Judaism, also reached China. In the past, commercial relationship between East Asia and other Asian and European peoples had existed continuously. Caravan routes through Central Asia and sea routes to the Middle East linked this region to the rest of the known world. Roman coins have been found in China, and Chinese silks are known to have been worn by women in Rome. Commerce continued to flow along the same routes at various times during the Middle Ages. In the thirteenth century Marco Polo, an Italian merchant, was for many years serving the Yuan (Mongol) dynasty in China. A more direct contact between Europe and the East Asian region was established in the sixteenth century when the Portuguese rounded the Cape of Good Hope and the Spanish crossed the Pacific from the Americas. By the sea routes came soldiers, missionaries and traders to all parts of East Asia. At this time the Spanish and the Dutch established their colonial empires in the Philippines and the East Indies. While some of the weaker and smaller countries of South East Asia became direct colonies of European powers, China, the center of the East Asian world, struggled to maintain its political sovereignty. By mid-nineteenth century China began to lose its economic independence. We will discuss this in some detail later in the unit.

1.2 THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The notable aspect of East Asian civilization has been its relative isolation from other great civilizations. Growing up at the eastern extremity of the so-called Old World and separated from the other major centres of early civilization by great distances and formidable mountain ranges and deserts, it developed distinctive cultural patterns which have been retained to a great extent up to this day. For instance the writing system in the rest of the world has been alphabetic whereas the East Asian writing system—the Chinese — is pictographic.

Mesopotamian, Greek and Egyptian civilization developed around the Mediterranean and were closely connected. The Indus Valley civilization, the other great center of early civilization had relatively easy land and coastal communication with the whole zone of western civilization. Alexander's invasion of India in 327 B.C. is a proof of close contact between the Indian civilization and the ancient West. The early East Asian civilization in North China remained largely isolated. On one side was the seemingly unending Pacific and on the other, the massive Himalayas and the Tibetan Plateau which up to now are uncrossable barriers. North of these lie vast deserts and steppes of Central Asia — cold and inhospitable. South of these are rugged mountains and jungles of South-west China and South-east Asia. This tremendous barrier of terrain and climate stretching from Siberia to Malaya was the greatest single obstacle to the free movement of people.

Climatic differences between East Asia and the other early centres of settled life also contributed to its cultural distinctiveness. The main areas of East Asian civilization have the more invigorating climate of temperate zone, with cold winters and hot summers. The climate of East Asia, like that of India, is largely determined by the great land mass of Asia. The northern regions are very cold in winter and very hot in summer. Most of East Asia gets ample rainfall during the best growing months due to monsoon winds. Abundant water supply and plenty of hot sunshine permit intensive cultivation of the soil and in many areas two crops a year are possible. Rice, which grows in flooded fields, is well-adapted to the hot and wet summers of this area. Producing a much larger yield per hectare than wheat, it supports a heavier population on the land than most of Europe or West Asia can maintain. However, we must bear in mind that a vast area like East Asia does not have uniform climate. Even within China there is a great difference between the cold, arid north-west and the humid, subtropical south coast. Most of Japan, Korea and China have a well-watered temperate region.

1.3 THE PEOPLE

The area from the great Asia barrier eastward is for the most part the domain of the Mongoloid man, while the other areas of planet earth comprise of Caucasoid man and the Negroid man. These are the three major racial types who occupy most of the earth. The most interesting of the predecessors of homosapiens in East Asia is called *Sinanthropus pekinensis*, or Peking man, discovered in 1927 in a cave at a place about fifty kilometers south-west of China's capital, Beijing. This Peking man may have lived around 400,000 B.C. and was already in possession of fire. He had certain features, notably shovel-shaped incisor teeth, that are more characteristic of Mongoloid man than of the other races. On the basis of this it is believed that the Mongoloid race derives in part from this early inhabitant of North China. Short limbs, flashy, narrow eyelids, straight, coarse, black hair, relatively flat faces and dark eyes are the distinctive features of the Mongoloid man. Their skin colour ranges from very light to dark brown. In the East Asian region, however, the most interesting racial survivals are the Ainu, at present restricted to Japan's extreme north. Like some of the Australian aborigines, the Ainu show certain traces of the Caucasoid man. For example, they have considerable facial and body hair, a feature notably lacking in most East Asians. The Ainu and Australian aborigines represent primitive, undifferentiated types of homosapiens, stemming from a time before the modern races had fully evolved.

1.4 THE LANGUAGES

Within East Asia, the major human divisions are primarily linguistic. In other words, language rather than other attributes usually marks off the culturally and politically significant sub-units. The largest linguistic division in East Asia is the Sinitic (or Sino-Tibetan) family of languages. This family of languages occupies a very solid block in the centre of East Asia, covering all of China proper, Tibet, Vietnam, Siam, Laos and most of Burma. Excepting Tibetans, all the members of this language group have been farmers since the Neolithic period. There is every evidence that for a very long time they have been settled occupants of their part of the world, contrasting with the early Indo-Europeans, who often were nomadic, herding people and, therefore, wandered far afield.

Within the Sinitic group, Chinese is by far the largest and historically the most important linguistic subdivision. Since the earliest recorded times, Chinese speaking people have been in possession of North China, the original home of the East Asian civilization. In the course of history they have spread by emigration and also by the assimilation of culturally and linguistically allied groups. In time they came to occupy almost the whole of China proper and more recently Manchuria, much of Inner Mongolia, most of Taiwan, parts of Sinkiang, as well as Chinese sectors in urban South-east Asia.

In the course of this expansion the Chinese language was divided into several mutually unintelligible languages. Mandarin Chinese or kuo-yu ("the national language") is spoken as a mother-tongue by more people than any other language in the world. Its various dialects cover all North China. In the South Central provinces, the dialects are called Hsiang and Kan. From Shanghai along the coast to the border of Vietnam, the dialects spoken are Wu, Min, Hakkar and Cantonese. Some of these dialects are the languages of parts of Taiwan and Chinese communities living outside of China.

In addition to Chinese languages, there are many other groups of Sinitic tongue spoken by people who inhabit the region. They include the Miao-yao group and the Tibeto-Burmese group.

North of the Sinitic bloc live a large group of Mongoloid peoples who speak languages of a family very distinct from the sinitic tongues. Called the Altaic language group, they include Turkish, Mongolian and Tungusic. Korean and Japanese show close structural resemblances to the Altaic languages.

Check Your Progress 1

Note : 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of this unit.

- 1) How do we know that the Mongoloid race originated in North China.

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- 2) is spoken as a mother tongue by the largest number of people in the world.

1.5 SOCIO-CULTURAL TRAITS

East Asian civilization was born and developed most of its features in China. It is, therefore, necessary to examine some of the fundamental characteristics of the society that grew up there. A notable feature in China is the crowding of people upon the land and in tight-walled villages and this is not new in China's history. The Han Empire, which was contemporary with the Roman Empire, had a population of sixty million people, mostly concentrated in North China. Throughout their history the Chinese have lived close-packed in their social and family relationships.

1.5.1 The Family Pattern

Since ancient times the family, rather than the individual, state, community or religious organisation has formed the most significant unit in Chinese society in particular and East Asian society in general. For each individual, the family was the chief source of economic sustenance, security, education, social contract and recreation. This trait is strikingly similar to that of Indians and different from Westerners. In China, the family was also the foundation for political organisation. Through the system of mutual responsibility (called the pao-chia system) individuals were responsible for each other's actions within each household, and families were responsible for one another within a community.

1.5.2 Confucianism

The reigning ideology of East Asia was Confucianism. Other schools of thought also emerged and developed but when it came to social norms, the Confucian teachings appear to have the deepest influence. Confucius was a sage-philosopher who lived around sixth century B.C. is recognised in East Asia as the greatest of all teachers and philosophers. His thoughts, further enriched by those of his disciples over a long period of time, were also political and taught a certain kind of morality to individuals.

In Confucian philosophy social harmony could be maintained by five kinds of basic relationship in society. They were between ruler and subject, father and son, elder brother and younger brother, husband and wife and among friends. Of these the first four were necessarily superior-subordinate relationships and maintaining it that way guaranteed harmony and stability in society. The status of each person in family as well as in society was pre-fixed. By its very nature the family system was hierarchic and authoritarian. Age was respected as a thing worthy in itself and as a source of wisdom.

Confucian ideology upheld the subordination of women to men. Women had to obey their fathers, husbands and sons in the three stages of their lives. They had no property rights. Girls were generally married off during childhood and had to live with their husbands' family in subordinate and inferior status. Only with age and after becoming a

mother-in-law could a woman reach a position of dominance and often behave autocratically.

In Chinese life the personal virtues of probity and loyalty, sincerity and benevolence, inculcated by the family system, provided the norms for social conduct and this was true of most of the East Asian region. Law was a convenient tool of administration, but personal morality was the foundation of society. East Asian society was firmly knit together by Confucianism. This was a great ethical institution which was both law and religion to the people and it produced strong social cohesion and extraordinary equilibrium.

In the political realm, a striking feature of Confucianism was the right of the subjects to rebel against a bad ruler. A ruler must be a virtuous person and abide strictly by all norms and regulations of society. The rulers' morality is his source of authority. He rules over his subjects with a 'mandate of heaven'. If and when, the ruler deviates from upholding morality, he loses the 'mandate of heaven'. In that situation rebellion is not only desirable but an act of morality. In China whenever a ruling dynasty degenerated or lost out to another, it was claimed that heaven has withdrawn its mandate. Sanctioned by Confucianism, rebellion has been a tradition in China since the early times.

1.6 POLITICAL TRADITION IN EAST ASIA

East Asia cannot really be fully understood if we study its political institutions in a general way. Here we have to see the similarities and differences between China, Japan and Korea. One of the difficulties in the study of East Asia is the comprehensive extent of China and the consequent paucity of significant variants from the Chinese pattern within East Asian civilisation. To the east, Chinese civilisation encountered neither climatic nor cultural barriers. Korea and Japan were suitable for an agriculture civilization, and specifically for intensive rice culture. The ancient inhabitants of these areas were linguistically and culturally very different from the early Chinese, but they remained untouched by any other higher civilisation, except as Buddhism from India and other elements of the civilizations of South and West Asia were transmitted through China itself. As a result, they were completely absorbed into the East Asian civilization, becoming its two most interesting variants. For more than a thousand years the higher cultures of Korea resembled that of China so closely that in many respects they seemed virtually identical with it.

Japan's heavy cultural debt to China, and Korea's even closer cultural similarity with its great neighbour can hardly be overemphasized. But there has never been any great danger that Korea or Japan would be entirely absorbed into the Chinese political unit, as were the Yangtze valley and South China. They have always, for various reasons, remained clearly separate. In comparison with peoples from other zones of civilization, the Chinese, the Koreans and the Japanese are all unmistakably East Asian in temperament. Yet they have developed sharply contrasting national personalities, which probably explains the variance in their political cultures. The Koreans seem somewhat volatile in contrast to the relaxed but persistent Chinese and the more tensely controlled Japanese.

Not much is known about the social and political organisation of the early Korean tribes but like most other North Asian peoples, they seemed to have been ruled by aristocratic hereditary leaders and the Japanese may originally have been a matriarchy.

1.6.1 Korea

Around the fourth century B.C. Korea's pre-agricultural, tribal culture was upset by new waves of influence from China. By the third century the state of the Yen in north-east China had begun to exert its direct political and cultural influence over north-western Korea. It was here that the first true state took shape by third century B.C. It was called Choson. Chinese influence was intensified in the later period. Several Chinese colonies

were set up in Korea and they lasted for more than four centuries despite several changes in dynasty within China. Although the later kingdoms of Korea were not the direct political heirs of these foreign colonies, they derived much of their culture from contact with the outposts of the Chinese civilisation. This may be one of the chief reasons why the Koreans were able to create a well-organised and unified national state bearing resemblance to the Chinese state system.

Korea's close cultural connections with early Japan are also quite evident but Chinese culture and ideas, over the centuries, gradually penetrated even to remote areas of Korea. It was possibly under Chinese influence that by the fifth century A.D. leadership became dynastic and a number of reforms in early sixth century were clearly inspired by China. Chinese type legal codes and Chinese calendar system were also adopted. As is well-known, Buddhism too entered Korea via China. In the seventh century A.D. the Tang emperors of China attempted to colonize Korea but failed to do so. The Chinese had to accept it as a tributary with autonomous status. Borrowing from the Chinese political and cultural traditions persisted for a very long time.

1.6.2 Japan

Pre-modern Japan had been a feudal state for a very long time. Life was characterised by emphasis on class and heredity and in the provinces (as opposed to townships) centered around private agricultural estates or manors. The people connected with each estate usually fell into three or four distinct social levels determined by their functional relationship to the estate. At the lowest level were the cultivators, who were themselves divided into various sub-categories with hired hands at the bottom. Above the cultivators were the managers of estates. Above the managers were the owners—powerful local families, court aristocrats and influential religious institutions. If the owner himself was not strong enough to protect his estate from the tax collector, then above him would be still another category, that of the legal protectors.

A remarkable characteristic of traditional Japan was the emergence of a rural military aristocracy. Every time the power of the central government declined, the local leaders, descended from off-shoots of the imperial family and the court nobility as well as the aristocracy, took over actual control of their respective regions. As early as the eleventh century, leaders in rural Japan had become clearly a warrior aristocracy. Warrior cliques then began to emerge all over Japan. As one clique grew strong, it would try to take over the territory of another clique through warfare. Through wars of this sort the more successful warrior bands gained prestige throughout the country and greatly increased their following. A tribal spirit and a vigorous martial tradition account for the politico-military tradition of Japan.

In the thirteenth century Japan was threatened by the Mongol invasion. Kublai Khan, the Mongol conqueror demanded that the Japanese enter into a tributary relationship with him. Though they were terrified yet they refused to bow to the Mongols. Twice the Mongols attempted a naval-military expedition to subjugate Japan but on both occasions they found the Japanese prepared to defend themselves. Later in history too, we see Japan very capable to face the onslaught of other powers. Unfortunately, the international politics of the nineteenth century almost forced Japan to become a colonizer after it had successfully evaded becoming a colony itself.

By mid-sixteenth century, Japanese feudalism began to show signs of disintegration. There was expansion of domestic and foreign trade, the rise of commercial towns, the breakdown of old class-structure as the functional distinction between warrior-aristocrats and commoners became blurred, and there appeared religious and commercial groupings of commoners who could challenge the military power and political authority of the feudal lords. Unlike Europe, Japan underwent no radical reshaping of political and social institutions when feudalism was threatened. They found a simpler solution to the problems posed by new stimuli from abroad and the need to bring effective unity to a feudal society. They built upon the old feudal order, instead of sweeping it away, and they eliminated most of the foreign stimuli, instead of continuing their overseas commercial expansion. Thus Japan, rather than developing into a modern national state in commercial and military competition with the other countries of the world entered into the final phase of its feudal development—a phase characterised by political unity

and national isolation. For the next two centuries the so-called Tokugawa period saw stability for Japan but it completely inhibited further development of economic, political and social institutions. Fear of the foreigners made Japan isolated and united. Subsequently, it was this unity which probably saved Japan from becoming a colony of Western Powers in the nineteenth century. The military and naval skills of the European powers and the teachings of European missionaries did pose a definite threat to Japan that called for a unified response. The trade with the Portuguese and the technological advances they introduced probably had a more immediate effect on Japanese society and government than did Christianity. Trade stimulated general economic growth and thus helped intensify the conditions that were leading to the breakdown of the old feudal system. The Japanese were much interested in the mechanical wares of the Europeans and found the Portuguese themselves fascinating. There was a veritable craze for everything Portuguese. With their strong military concern, the Japanese were particularly interested in the firearms and techniques of warfare that the Portuguese brought with them from Europe. Within a couple of decades, guns had become a major weapon in Japanese warfare. This had immediate military repercussions. The richer local lord (Daimyo) who could afford new weapons became more dominant over his poorer rivals. Thus European innovations helped to accelerate the centralization of military and political power, which had anyway started due to the threat posed by the arrival of the Europeans.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) In traditional East Asia the family was important throughout one's life. Why?

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2) Mention at least two key political features of the Confucian system.

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1.7 RESPONSE TO THE WEST

By the beginning of the nineteenth century inroads had been made by the Dutch and Spanish colonizers too in the East Asian region, but there was still an independent East Asia civilization accepted and respected by the West. Certainly China and Japan were strong enough to deal with other countries on their own terms and on the basis of their own view of the world. But the industrial revolution in the West transformed the relationship between the West and East Asia in the 19th century. The western powers for their own commercial interest, forced the civilization of East Asia into their world system and ended their long period of independent growth and tradition.

During the second half of the 19th century the Western powers extended their influence over the whole of the East Asian region. Some countries became direct colonies while others adopted western forms of organisation and maintained their independence. China, the heart of the Confucian world, resisted the longest and suffered the most, the pressure from the West coincided with a deep cultural and political crisis within.

Western rationalism and pragmatism weakened the age old moral and political Confucian system but it failed to provide any adequate substitute. The once dominant empire of China became a political and ideological battle ground. And then the Chinese finally ended. In 1911 it was marked by a decline in Chinese political thought. The collapse of Confucianism in China, Korea etc. stands out in contrast to the endurance of corresponding systems of belief like Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Shintoism and Christianity in surrounding regions. The adjustments of East Asian societies to the world system of international and economic relations which the West imposed were complicated by a struggle between the imperial powers in which these countries participated. Japan, in particular, played an independent role and herself emerged as an independent power. The whole of East Asia was eventually drawn into the European struggle of World War I.

However, one cannot but be struck by the great differences among the various countries of East Asia in the speed and nature of their responses to the West particularly in the last century. Manifold changes have brought a considerable degree of modernization to all these countries, but at decidedly different rates and in strikingly different ways. The variations in response must be attributed mainly to the differences in the traditional societies of the countries of East Asia. John K. Fairbank a Sinologist has made a comparison between China and Japan regarding their response to the West. The following is a gist of the same.

Dynastic decline and western imperialism both have played important roles in China's history during the past century; but on comparing China with Japan we see that these are secondary issues. Japan, which in the same period was undergoing comparable dynastic decline and suffering from similar imperialist pressures, reacted entirely differently, and with spectacular success. The contrast between the Chinese and Japanese responses lay not in the dynastic cycle or in foreign stimuli but in the basic institutional and cultural differences.

Perhaps the greatest difference between China and Japan during the early nineteenth century lay in the rate of internal evolutionary change. Probably many more changes were taking place in China than has been generally recognized. Nevertheless, the rate of internal change seems to have been much greater in Japan. Despite all the efforts of the Tokugawa and orthodox intellectual leaders, rapid changes were occurring in almost everything except the formal structure of government and the official ideology. Japan, an already mobile society, could easily be diverted into new directions of motion by the external impact, whereas China was characterized by inertia, which had first to be overcome. In other words, the structure of society and government in Japan had already been seriously undermined, and, therefore, it crumbled rapidly under foreign pressures, making way for a largely new edifice. But in China the social and political structure was so solidly based that it took many decades of heavy external blows before the old structure was sufficiently demolished to permit significant structural modification. Ironically, it may have been the basic solidity rather than the weakness, of the Chinese order under the last (Ching) dynasty that made it unprepared to meet the Western challenge.

Another great difference between the Chinese and the Japanese lay in their contrasting world-views. To the Chinese, China was the central kingdom (Chung-kuo, the Chinese word for China literally means that) and other nations or peoples were 'barbarians', subordinate to the Chinese empire and emperor. This view of the world made it difficult for the Chinese to accept the multi-state international system which had emerged in Europe. It was even more difficult for them to accept that there were things they could learn from Europe and adapt it to their conditions. On the other hand, the Japanese, despite an awareness of having derived much of their own higher culture from China, felt a strong national distinctiveness from the Chinese. Therefore, they could grasp much more quickly the European concept of equal but independent political units and also see with much greater clarity that there was much to be borrowed and learned from the West.

Another contrast was that of size and centralization. China, the large country, was politically so centralized that no one except those in authority in the capital could make meaningful innovations. These officials were too busy running the huge government

machinery and too isolated from external realities by the red tape of a complex administrative system to be able to think of basic changes. Moreover, the vastness of the Chinese state kept foreign stimuli only in the cities, on the coast or on the major inland waterways.

Although Japan was geographically much smaller than China, her potential leadership, because of feudal political institutions, was much more widespread not only among the autonomous areas but even among the various social groups with their differing functions in society. If one geographical area or society failed to respond adequately to the crisis created by western pressures, another one would; in fact, this is what happened.

Korea in the nineteenth century resembled China more than Japan on its failure to respond with success to the external challenge. Other important factors may be found in Korea's social, cultural and intellectual conditions, which, on the whole, were similar to those of China. The acceptance of the Chinese view of the world made it as difficult for the Koreans to understand the western international order or accept the possibility of learning from the West. In any case Korea's initial response to the Western challenge proved largely ineffective. Lacking the protection of great size that China had, Korea was swallowed completely into the Japanese Empire.

In yet one more aspect, Japan possessed one other important advantage over China and Korea. Japanese society was not only already in motion; it seems to have been moving in the same general direction in which the western pressures impelled it. Probably because Japan's feudal experience had been similar to that of Europe, the nation was already evolving a long course not very different from the one Europe had taken as it moved from feudalism to what we now call "modern society". As in Europe, the class structure was breaking down, the feudal economy was also crumbling and it was giving way to rudimentary forms of the capitalist system. The Japanese showed a keener appreciation than the Chinese and Koreans towards trade as an important feature in the development of the national economy. More importantly, they had developed a strong national consciousness and when faced by foreign challenge they met it as one national unit, easily adopting the characteristics of national organisation already developed in the West. The motion within Japanese society was a decided help to its subsequent modernization, not a hindrance. The Chinese and Koreans, by contrast, were standing relatively immobile; indeed they were facing a different direction entirely from that in which the Western impact pushed them.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: 1) Use the space below for your answer.

2) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) According to Fairbank, the response of China and Japan to the onslaught of the West differed because.....
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1.8 LET US SUM UP

Comprising of China, Japan and Korea, the region called East Asia is a distinct civilizational entity dominated by China. The people of this region belong to the Mongoloid race and speak either a Sinitic or an Altaic language. In these countries the family rather than the individual or community which has been the most significant

ideology in the East Asian region for more than two thousand years. According to Confucius Social harmony can be achieved only in a hierarchically based society. He also said that a ruler rules with the mandate of heaven and if and when his rule degenerates heaven withdraws its mandate, in that situation rebellion is perfectly justified. Despite striking similarities the political history of China, Japan and Korea have been very different. Whereas China has had an emperor system and dynastic rule up to 1911, pre-modern Japan could be called a feudal state and Korea emerged from a tribal culture to a Chinese-influenced, and at times colonized state. In the modern age with the advent of the West into East Asia, the three nations reacted in three different ways. While China was reduced to a status of a semi-colony, Japan quickly sensed the danger and internally changed itself only to be a coloniser and Korea got absorbed into the Japanese empire. China's rigidity and stability, Japan's flexibility and instability and Korea's weakness were the causes of the different outcome.

1.9 KEY WORDS

Aborigines	:	Original inhabitants
Patriarchal	:	Father/male dominated
Probity	:	Goodness and honesty
Sinologist	:	An expert on Chinese affairs

1.10 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

1. Edwin O. Reischauer and John K. Fairbank, *East Asia: The Great Tradition* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960)
2. John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer, and Albert H. Craig, *East Asia: The Modern Transformation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965)

1.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The remains of the earliest man, the Peking man, who inhabited the north China region (near Beijing) around 4,00,000 B.C. were discovered in 1927. Since the Peking man has several features of the Mongoloid man, the origin of Mongoloid race is traced to the north China region the place where the Peking man was found.
- 2) Mandarin Chinese.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) For every individual, the family was the chief source of economic sustenance, security, education and recreation. It was also the foundation for political organisation.
- 2) Morality was the foundation of society. A ruler was expected to be a virtuous person for his morality was the source of authority. The right to rebel was another political feature. The subject had a right to rebel against a ruler who deviates from upholding morality.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Japanese society moved in the same general direction in which the Western pressure impelled it; China by contrast, due to its rigidity and strength was facing the

UNIT 2 INTRODUCTION TO THE SOUTH-EAST ASIAN REGION

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
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 - 2.2.3 Malaysia
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 - 2.2.7 The Philippines
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 - 2.2.9 Laos
 - 2.2.10 Cambodia
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2.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit is intended to serve as a general introduction to the South-east Asian region. After going through this unit you would be able to:

- identify the mainland and island states of South-east Asia,
- explain the main features of the states of South-east Asia.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The region of South-east Asia has both mainland and island countries — Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, Philippines, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia—with varying influence of Indian and Chinese culture and civilization. While Chinese influence is predominant in Vietnam, in the rest of the region, India exerted as much influence as China. However, since the 18th century, Western imperial powers supplanted both China and India and brought the whole region under their direct control. During the Second World War, the region came under the Japanese military administration while strengthened nationalism process in the region. In the post-war period, the region became a major scene of Cold War rivalry between the USA and the erstwhile USSR. This disturbed the stability and peace of the region. The end of the Cold War in the late 80s has already released the political environment and thereby creating conditions for the fuller development of the people of South-east Asia. Before we study the political structures and process in the states of South-east Asian region, let us get acquainted with the countries of this region.

2.2 COUNTRIES OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA

part of Asia from the Japanese control. Since then, all the states that lie to the south of China and east of India are known as South-east Asian states.

If we look at the map of Asia, we find that in the south-east of this large continent a big part is spread from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. This entire region is known as South-east Asia. It comprises of ten countries — Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

Geographically, these states can be divided into two groups — the mainland states and the island states. The states that are a part of the Asian mainland can be called Mainland States, namely, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Malaysia. And the states that are spread in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean are island countries. These are — Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, and the Philippines.

In order to get a clear idea of the South-east Asian region, let us move through these ten states one by one.

2.2.1 Myanmar

Myanmar (earlier known as Burma) is surrounded by India and China in the north, Bangladesh in the west and Thailand in the east. Its area is 6,71,000 sq. kms. The estimated population of Myanmar is about 40 million. Of these, 68 per cent are Burmese and Indians. More than 85 per cent of the people are Buddhists. It is said that Myanmar is a land of temples and pagodas.

Waves of Buddhism came to Myanmar from India and gradually it replaced the earlier Vaishnavite and Shaiv cultures. The period of King Anurudha between 1044 and 1057, is known as the golden age of the country's history.

In the nineteenth century, after three consecutive invasions, Britain took over all of Burma. The British mercilessly exploited the country. During the Second World War, the country fell to the Japanese. The national movement led by Aung San, succeeded and ultimately Burma got freedom in 1948.

The capital of Myanmar is Rangoon. Another important city is Mandalay. It was in this city that Lokmanya Tilak and Subhas Chandra Bose were kept imprisoned by the British.

After independence Myanmar took to the road of socialism and non-alignment under the leadership of U Nu. That government was overthrown in 1962. Since then the country has been under the control of military regime.

Myanmar's economy rests on the export of rice and teakwood. It also produces oil, sugarcane, metal ores, and precious stones.

Myanmar today is struggling hard to get political and economic emancipation.

2.2.2 Thailand

Thailand is the only country in South-east Asia which did not come under the western imperialist yoke. It successfully maintained its independence, even when all the other countries of Asia were run over by one European power or the other.

Thailand lies to the south of Myanmar and Laos. Its eastern boundaries touch those of Cambodia. Malaysia lies in the south.

Thailand has an area of 5,17,000 sq. kms. Its population is more than 5 million. Racially, about 75 per cent population is Thai and 14 per cent Chinese. Besides, there are local tribes in the north and Malay in the south. Then, there are a large number of refugees from Laos and Cambodia.

Thailand is a Buddhist country. A small minority consists of Muslims and Christians.

Thailand has been influenced by many countries and cultures, but the impact of India on Thailand is profound. Hindu thought and way of life in the early period, and Buddhist religion and philosophy in the later period shaped Thai ethos and culture. Wherever one goes in Thailand, saffron robes and Buddha statues are a common sight. Thailand's earlier name was Siam. Its capital was Ayuthaya, a name derived from the Ramayana. All its kings in the Chakri dynasty were known as Rama. During the nineteenth century King Mongkut was known as Rama IV and King Chulalongkorn was known as Rama V. This, Rama dynasty, by cleverly playing one European power off against another managed to remain independent while the rest of South-east Asia was being colonised by the French, the Dutch and the British.

In 1932, a coup converted the monarchical system into a constitutional monarchy and the name of Siam was changed to Thailand. Since then, limited monarchy, with a democratic form of government, has prevailed in Thailand. Military, however, plays a prominent role in the political system. Another dominant factor in Thai political process is Buddhist monastery.

After the Second World War, Thailand remained non-aligned only in name but it openly leaned towards the United States. It was an active member of the ASEAN group.

Like most other South-east Asian states, Thailand is an agricultural country. Rice, corn, and sugarcane are the main crops. Besides, tin, rubber, natural gas, and fisheries products are the main export items. Thailand is also considered to be a Newly Industrialised Country (NIC). Textile, agricultural processing, and timber industries have taken a strong foothold.

Bangkok the capital of Thailand is one of the biggest tourist attractions in South-east Asia.

2.2.3 Malaysia

Malaysia is situated at the southern end of Thailand. It also stretches to Sarawak and Sabah in North Borneo. Actually, in 1963, Malaya, Sarawak, Sabah and Singapore joined together and formed a federation — Malaysia. Two years later, Singapore withdrew. At present Malaysia is a federation of 13 states. Its area is about 3,30,000 sq. kms.

The population of Malaysia is more than 16 million. About 60 per cent of the population is Malay and some other indigenous groups and 32 per cent Chinese. Indians constitute nine per cent of the entire stock. Malaysia has a Muslim majority, and, as such, it is a Muslim state. Though it is a liberal state, yet fundamentalists are becoming stronger day by day. Apart from Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, Confucians and Taoists also colour the religious scenario.

The ancient history of Malaysia is the history of Indian religious and cultural influences. Waves of Hindu and Buddhist political and religious forces from India and Thailand came and overshadowed the Malay peninsula. Then came Islam. By the later part of the fifteenth century the Islamic empire was established there.

In 1511, the Portuguese took over Malacca, but they did not stay long, for they were defeated by the Dutch in 1641. Finally, in 1795, the British took control. For more than a century and a half, Malaya remained a British colony. It got independence in 1957.

Malaysia is one of those few states of South-east Asia which have a democratic form of government. Malaysia has also followed the policy of non-alignment.

Malaysia's economy rests on agriculture and forestry. Apart from producing rice, cocoa and pepper, Malaysia is also rich in rubber, timber, and palm oil. It is coming up steadily in the field of industrialisation. Textiles, elementary electrical products, rubber products, automobile parts and assembly are some of the distinct industrialised areas. Export of petrol and natural gas have provided a strong base to Malaysia's economy.

Malaysia's capital, Kuala Lumpur, is one of the most modernised capitals of South-east Asia.

2.2.4 Singapore

Singapore, in the earlier times, was SINGH-PUR a lion city. It is a small island city with an area of about 616 sq. kms. Situated at the top of the Malaysian peninsula, Singapore is the biggest trade and tourist centre in South-east Asia.

Singapore has a population of about three million, which mainly consists of the Chinese, the Malay and the Indians. However, people from all parts of the world can be seen here. There are Buddhists, Christians—people belonging to all the religions and faiths, intermixing in Singapore. This city is a great example of unity in diversity.

Singapore was a British colony. During the Second World War it fell to the Japanese. It became independent in 1965. Since then Singapore has been governed by a democratic system of government.

Apart from being rich in trade and tourism, Singapore, one of the cleanest cities in the world, is strong in light industries. It is said, that Singapore is one of the booming 'four tigers' of Asia, the other three being Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea.

2.2.5 Indonesia

Indonesia is an archipelago. It comprises about 13,700 islands spread over 4,75,000 sq. kms. Of these islands, six are big and main—Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Bali, Kalimantan and West Irian. More than half of the population lives in Java alone.

Indonesia is the biggest Muslim country in the World. Its population is over 170 million. More than ninety per cent population is Muslim. Bali is Hindu. There are Christians in Timore and Flores. Ethnically, the people of Indonesia belong to different groups. They are Javanese, Sumatrans, Sundanese, Bataks, Chinese and Indians.

Wave after wave of religious and cultural influences came to Indonesia. First of all came Hinduism from India. Temples of Hindu gods and goddesses were built. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata were adopted in the folk music, folk dances and even in everyday rituals in Indonesia. All this can still be seen in Bali. Then came Buddhism. Great Buddhist temples were erected and monasteries established. Borobudur temple reminds one of Ellora, where huge sculptures of Buddha and other Hindu gods even today stand as the immortal monuments of Indonesia's great cultural heritage. Srivijay Empire in the fourth century and Shailendra Empire in the ninth century form the golden chapters of Indonesian history. Then came Islam. Traders from West Asia brought it in the form of a new mysticism. People started adopting it. By the end of the 15th century Indonesia became Muslim, though Bali remained Hindu. From the 14th to the 16th century, Majapahit Empire, with Muslim religion and Hindu culture formed another golden chapter in Indonesian history. In 1511, the Portuguese naval captain Alfansa de Albukark reached Indonesia. After a fierce struggle with Indonesians he captured Mallaca. Thus began the story of colonisation in Indonesia. Before Portugal could capture the entire archipelago, the war between Holland and Portugal broke out in Europe. In 1602, the Dutch defeated the Portuguese and took over the entire Indonesian archipelago.

The twentieth century saw the dawn of nationalism in Asia. Sukarno and Hatta led the nationalist movement in Indonesia. During the Second World War, the Dutch were defeated and Japan ran over entire Indonesia. However, the war brought Japan to its knees and the Dutch tried to regain their lost empire. Indonesians resisted this and proclaimed independence in 1946, when Indonesia became a sovereign independent state.

After independence, Indonesia experimented with democracy, which was overthrown. Since 1965, a military regime, under the garb of guided democracy has been ruling Indonesia. Its leader is General Suharto.

On the economic front, Indonesia is rich in rice, rubber, coffee, palm oil, sugarcane etc. A good number of industries have come up in the field of cement, textiles, fertiliser, light machinery, food processing etc. Export of oil, natural gas, tin, tea, coffee, and wood has strengthened the economy.

Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, has wide roads, huge buildings, and at the same time, dirty slums. Affluences and poverty can be seen together.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: 1) Give your answer in the space given below.

2) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) One of the following is not a mainland state in South-east Asia.

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| a) Myanmar | b) Thailand |
| c) Vietnam | d) Indonesia |

2) is the only country of South-east Asia which did not come under Western imperialist yoke.

3) Buddhism is the dominant religion in

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------|
| a) Thailand | b) Indonesia |
| c) Burma | d) the Philippines |
| e) Vietnam | |

2.2.6 Brunei

Brunei is a small part of the big Borneo island. It is a little country with only 22 lakh people. But, it is the richest country in the entire region.

Brunei is strictly a Muslim country. Racially, the main population is Malay, though there are Chinese and Indians too.

Brunei remained a British colony for about two centuries. It was only in 1984 that Brunei got independence.

Brunei is a monarchy. Its Sultan is the richest person on earth. Oil export is the biggest source of revenue. There is no income tax. Everyone gets pension. With huge buildings, wide roads, and glittering lights Brunei has the highest per capita income in South-east Asia.

2.2.7 The Philippines

The Philippines, like Indonesia, is also an archipelago comprising more than seven thousand islands. This group of islands lie in south Pacific, the north of Indonesia. Its area is about 2,99,000 sq. kms.

The population of the Philippines is more than 60 million. Most of the people are ethnically Malay, but their religion is Christianity. There are people of Chinese descent too. In the southern Island of Sulawesi, most of the people are Muslims. And, occasionally, they demand separation and independence.

In 1521, the Spanish Naval Captain, Fernondo Mananel, discovered and captured the Philippines. Since then, for more than, three centuries, the Philippines remained under the brutal Spanish control. Spaniards ruthlessly eradicated everything 'pagan' and converted the people to Christianity. Named after King Philip II of Spain, the Philippines came under the American control in the early period of the twentieth century. Spain had already Christianised the colony. Whatever was left was completed by the Americans. The US. Naval Admiral, Dewey, after capturing Manila, sent message to the US President, "Have captured Philippines, what shall we do with them?" President McKinley replied "Christianise them."

The American colonial period ended after the Second World War. The Philippines was granted independence in 1946. After independence the Philippines adopted the Presidential type of democracy.

The Philippines is rich in sugarcane, rice, coconut, corn, pineapples and bananas. It has enormous natural resources like timber, copper, nickel, iron, cobalt, silver, gold and petroleum. It has made impressive strides in the fields of textiles, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, wood products, food processing, electronic assembly etc.

Manila, the capital city has a number of moderate restaurants, folk music clubs and pubs.

2.2.8 Vietnam

Three countries form the former Indo-China. They are — Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Of these Vietnam has a distinct place in modern history, for it gave heroic resistance to US imperialism in the post-War period.

Situated just across the southern borderline of China, Vietnam has an area of 3,29,566 sq. kms. Its population is more than 68 million. 85 per cent of the population is Vietnamese. Chinese, Muong, Thai, Meo, Kumer, Mau and Cham, are the minority ethnic groups. Most of the people follow Buddhism, though there are Christians and Muslims too in Vietnam.

The history of Vietnam dates back to second millennium B.C. when civilisation existed in the red River area, near the present day Hanoi. However, from time to time there were repeated attacks and occupations by the Chinese. These attacks were resisted by the Vietnamese people, yet for more than one thousand years Vietnam remained under the Chinese control. There was considerable Chinese cultural influence on Vietnam, but the Vietnamese loved to maintain their political independence and cultural identity. In the 19th century, there came the French traders and missionaries. And by the later part of the 19th century, the entire Vietnam became a French colony. In the twentieth century, a nationalist movement arose under the dynamic leadership of Ho Chi Minh. During the Second World War, the French were defeated and Vietnam was occupied by Japan. After the defeat of Japan, France tried to reoccupy Vietnam. The Vietnamese people, under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh, fought a determined guerilla warfare against the French. In 1954, the struggle ceased on the basis of the Geneva Agreement that divided Vietnam into the two zones — North and South. North Vietnam became independent and Communist, and the South became an American ally. Even in the South, the Vietnamese people did not surrender and a fierce battle against the US continued. Ultimately in 1973, America decided to withdraw and Vietnam was united again.

Vietnam for more than fifty years had been at war, against the French, the Japanese and the Americans. The wars ruined its economy. After 1973, Vietnam was put back on the roads to recovery and reconstruction. A gigantic task still ahead. Vietnam, like most of the other countries of South-east Asia, is basically an agricultural country, rice, corn, sugarcane, and coffee being the main crops. New industries are coming up in the field of textiles, electrical goods, cement, food processing etc.

Hanoi is not rich, but it is a proud city to be the capital of a great nation Vietnam.

2.2.9 Laos

Laos is surrounded by China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Myanmar. It has no direct access to the sea. The country has an area of about 2,36,0000 sq. kms. and a population of nearly five million people. Most of the people are Lao and tribals. There are Chinese and Vietnamese too. Laos is basically a Buddhist country.

Since Laos has been surrounded by more powerful countries, it has been attacked and occupied by them again and again. China, Vietnam and Thailand — all had been the masters of Laos at one time or the other. However, Fa Ngoum established a strong empire there in the 14th century and Laos prospered. In the early 19th century, Laos fell

a prey to Thailand and in 1893, it came under the French rule. During the Second World War, Laos was also occupied by Japan, but after the War, the French tried to reoccupy it. After the Geneva Agreement of 1954, Laos was granted independence. Even after the independence, the road to progress was not smooth. The conflict between the Communist and the non-Communist forces continued for a long time. With the decisive victory of Communism in Vietnam, Laos too was overcome by the Communist forces. In December 1975, the Lao People's Democratic Republic was proclaimed.

On the economic front, Laos is a least developed country. It produces rice, tobacco, cotton etc. It is pretty rich in tin, lead, zinc, but Laos is hardly industrialised, and, therefore, poverty prevails, particularly in the remote areas.

Vientiane, the capital, is less glamorous in comparison to the capitals of the other South-east Asian states.

2.2.10 Cambodia

The ancient Indian name for Cambodia was Kamboj. Even in the mid-nineteenth century, when the French occupied the territory, they also called it Cambodge. Its English variant became Cambodia. Cambodia is a small country surrounded by Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. Its area is about 1,81,035 sq. kms. The population of Cambodia is about 8 million. Most of the people are Khmer. The Chinese and the Thais too live here. Most of the people are Buddhists. The impact of the ancient Indian cultural and religious tradition can be seen in Cambodia even today. The mighty monuments of Angkor Wat are the most eloquent evidence of the ancient Indo-Cambodia glory.

The golden period of Cambodian history is that of the Khmer Empire. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it was the most powerful empire in the entire Indo-China region. Cambodian emperors were inspired by Indian thought and culture and they were exalted as God-Kings. That golden period, however, did not last long. Cambodia was overrun by Thailand in 1432 and later by Vietnam. In the nineteenth century, French troops occupied Cambodia and continued to rule over the State. In the third decade of the twentieth century, a strong nationalist movement emerged, but before it could overthrow the imperialist, the Second World War broke out and Cambodia was occupied by Japanese troops. After the War, the French tried to reoccupy Cambodia, but Prince Sihanouk declared its independence. The declaration was later affirmed by the Geneva Agreement of 1954. After independence, Cambodia fell a prey to cold war and factional politics, which resulted in the prolonged civil war in which lakhs of people were killed and the entire economy broke down.

On the economic front, therefore, Cambodia's condition is pretty bad. Rice is the main crop. Cattle rearing and fishing are also done. Iron, copper, manganese and gold are also found. The forests are still rich in timber. But political instability has hampered the growth of industrialisation.

The capital, Phnom Penh, gives a sad look.

Check Your Progress 2

Note : 1) Give the answer in the space provided below.

2) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) Match the following two columns:

- | | |
|--------------------|------------|
| 1) Vietnam | a) Britain |
| 2) Indonesia | b) Spain |
| 3) The Philippines | c) Holland |
| 4) Malaysia | d) France |

2) Islam is the dominant religion in

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| a) Indonesia | b) Brunei |
| c) Malaysia | d) Thailand |

2.3 LET US SUM UP

From the above description of the countries of the South-east Asian region, it is obvious that the entire region has many socio-economic problems and political constraints. But for Singapore and Brunei, the entire region economically has yet to take off. Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines are moving in the right direction. Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia have to work very hard.

The entire region has tremendous potentialities. A determined leadership and dedicated people can perform any miracle.

2.4 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

- 1) Manzoor Alam S. and G.Ram Reddy (Ed) (1978), *Social Development of South and South-east Asia*, New Delhi.
- 2) Butwell Richard (1975), *South-east Asia— A Political Introduction*, Praeger, New York.
- 3) Singh L.P. (1979), *Power Politics and South-east Asia*, Ravidant, New Delhi.

2.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) d
- 2) Thailand
- 3) a, b, and c

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) 1) (d)
2) (c)
3) (b)
4) (a)
- 2) a, b and c.

UNIT 3 INDIANS IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Origins of Emigration, Historical Background
 - 3.2.1 The cultural base of emigration
- 3.3 Emigration of Indians in Modern Times
 - 3.3.1 Composition of Indian population and their Occupational patterns
- 3.4 Indians in South-east Asia: A Contemporary Profile
 - 3.4.1 Burma
 - 3.4.2 Malaysia
 - 3.4.3 Singapore
 - 3.4.4 The Philippines
 - 3.4.5 Indonesia
 - 3.4.6 Thailand
 - 3.4.7 The States of Indochina
- 3.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.6 Some Useful Books
- 3.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit is intended to acquaint the student with the historical background of emigration of the people of Indian origin to the region of South-east Asia. The Students Would also get an idea about the composition, Occupational patterns and geographical distribution of Indian immigrants and their problems.

After going through this unit you should be able to

- explain the factors responsible for the emigration of Indians to the countries of South-east Asia in pre-colonial and colonial phases of Asian history.
- explain the composition and occupational pattern of the Indians settled in the South-east Asia, and
- identify the problems and challenges faced by the Indian emigrants in contemporary South-east Asia.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

An important feature of contemporary south-east Asia is the presence of Indian minorities in every country of this region. The total population of the people of Indian origin is estimated to be around two million. The establishments of early commercial and economic ties between India and the countries of South-east Asia led to the initial settlement of Indians in the region. Geographical proximity, strategic location of the region from trade and commerce viewpoint, availability of commodities like spices, were a few factors which attracted Indian culture in the form of Hinduism and Buddhism travelled to this region. The Indian culture had great influence on the people (except in Vietnam where Chinese cultural influence was more pronounced), art, literature and architecture without supplanting the indigenous cultural values.

However, the emigration of the Indians to this region on a large scale took place in the nineteenth century when the British who had colonised the Malay Peninsula and Burma along with the Indian subcontinent, took the Indians to this region on a large scale. The

resources of the region and they also bolstered their army and served on lower posts in their administrative set up.

The post World War II period saw the end of colonial system and the emergence of independent states in the region. This threw various challenges before the Indian immigrants who had to redefine their social, economic and political roles and positions. Specially in Malaysia and Burma, the pluralistic character of the society has thrown formidable challenges before the people of the Indian origin.

3.2 ORIGINS OF EMIGRATION, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Reference to early Indian settlements in South-east Asia appears in Indian literature as early as the Sixth century B.C. The great Indian epic, the Ramayana refers to Suvarna dvipa and Yava dvipa, dvipa being the Sanskrit for "land with water on two sides", i.e. peninsula or island, while Suvarna means gold and Yava barley. Another epic Purana mentions Malaya-dvipa and Yava-dvipa. Though it is difficult to know about the exact location of such place-names, we can be certain that they refer to parts of South-east Asia which attracted Indian traders on the Peninsular mainland and in the islands in search of gold.

Among the sea-faring people of the east coast of India, the countries of Lower Burma and the Malay Peninsula were known as lands of gold, and it seems certain that from at least the sixth century B.C. onwards Indian traders were sailing to those lands and down through the islands, in search of gold and tin. In the third century B.C. Emperor Asoka sent Buddhist missionaries to Suvarnabhumi, 'land of gold' — perhaps the present lower Burma. The Jatakas or birth stories of the Buddha, which enshrine folk tales of early India, often tell of voyages to Suvarnabhumi.

Moreover, a statement in Kautilya's Arthashastra, recommending a king to people of an old or a new country by seizing the territory of another or deporting the surplus population of his own has been taken to indicate an early wave of Indian immigrants to South-east Asia before the Christian era.

In the late nineteenth century, when European scholars studying of the antiquities of South-east Asia started realising the extent of the influence of Sanskrit culture upon the religion, art and architecture of the area, they tended to regard these things as the results of a movement of Indian expansion eastwards.

3.2.1 The Cultural base of emigration

The renowned historian Coedes attributed the phenomenon of early emigration of Indians and the spread of Indian influence in South-east Asia to an intensification of Indian trade with South-east Asia early in the Christian era. He, however, does not support the theory of a mass emigration of refugees and 'fugitives' from India but sees Indian trading settlements arising in South-east Asian ports, which facilitated the arrival of more cultivated elements — priests and literati — who were able to disseminate and spread Indian culture.

Another historian Brian Harrison in his famous work "South-east Asia: A Short History", also opines that "Indian influence in South-east Asia was in origin commercial influence Indian culture took root in various parts of the region because of the comparative wealth and prestige of Indian traders".

More direct evidence of Indian influence and the arrival of Buddhist monks during the first four centuries is found in the images of Buddha, belonging to about second and third centuries, which have been discovered in Siam (Thailand), Champa (Cambodia), Sumatra, Java and Celebes (Indonesia). Evidence of this kind gives a picture of the spread of Indian culture throughout South-east Asia and the establishment of Indian

Though Van Leur rejected the notion that trade and the trader were disseminators of culture as most traders belonged to the lower social groups and thus could not have been 'administrators of ritual, magical consecration and disseminators of rationalistic, bureaucratic written scholarship and wisdom' as that was the work of Brahmins. Nevertheless, it was through the operation of trade that the vital contacts were made generally at court level, which in due course spread out in the society.

To the peoples of South-east Asia, particularly the rulers, Indian influence meant the introduction of a developed culture based upon the art of writing, the Sanskrit language and literature, the cults of Brahmanism and Buddhism, Hindu mythology, and distinctive artistic styles and techniques, also Hindu conception of monarchy, codes of law and methods of administration.

The introduction and spread of this culture, however, was slow and gradual. For a long time, apart from the royal courts and a small minority of Indianised officials, the peoples of South-east Asia must have remained essentially unaffected by the new and alien culture holding to their ancient ways of thought like practice of animism, ancestor worship and their own agricultural rituals. Brahmanism, in the particular aspect of the cult of a divine kingship, was essentially an aristocratic religion.

Thus, commerce and culture were two main factors responsible for early contacts between the peoples of India and South-east Asia and also for an early emigration of Indians to the South-east Asian region.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the model answers given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Which factors, you think, were responsible for early emigration of Indians to the region of South-east Asia?

.....

.....

.....

- 2) Do you think that trade and commerce led to the spread of Hinduism in the region? If so, why?

.....

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.....

3.3 EMIGRATION OF INDIANS IN MODERN TIMES

The beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed the initiation of the process of mass migration of Indians to South-east Asian countries under the British colonial dictates. Manpower was required by the colonial power for (a) the exploitation of natural resources abundantly found in the countries of South-east Asia like Malaysia, Burma etc. and (b) to work for the cultivation and production of plantation crops like rubber, tea, coffee, coconut, sugarcane and spices. As the indigenous people of South-east Asia were already engaged in traditional farming and were reluctant to shift to plantations, the colonial powers turned to India which had a large reservoir of cheap labour force.

The colonial economic policy of the British in 19th century had already created conditions for the mass exodus of Indians overseas. The exploitative colonial policy led to the destruction of the local, indigenous economy, which occurred in two phases. First, there was a "drain of wealth" which resulted in "dislocation of trade and industry" and "recession in agriculture". In the second phase, Indian handicrafts industry, which was the main source of livelihood to the people of India particularly the artisans, weavers, craftsmen etc. declined due to the invasion of machine made products from the West.

As a result of these factors, a large number of Indian population was rendered unemployed. Many preferred going abroad to facing famine and starvation in their own country.

3.3.1 Composition of Indian Population and their Occupational Patterns

Whatever may be the reasons for the migration of the Indians to South-east Asia during the colonial period, there is, however, no doubt that those who came were landless or very poor people. And, the Indian immigrants were viewed from a totally selfish point of view i.e. as tools for the advancement of British commercial interests.

Indians in Malaysia

The Indian labourers who came to Malaysia were mostly Tamils from Madras. The British brought them from India under the indenture system i.e. on contract basis. They worked as slaves on the plantations for growing commercial crops like tea, coffee, rubber, sugarcane and spices which were of great source of revenue for the British colonial power. Besides these, there were many others who worked in the railways and public works department. Later clerks, traders, doctors, teachers, lawyers and other professionals came to Malay Peninsula in search of employment and higher wages.

As a result of the emigration of the Indians, Malaysia which at the beginning of the 19th century had mainly a Malay population had become at the time of independence an ethnically mixed society. This completely transformed the racial, ethnic and cultural character of Malay peninsula making it the most diversified and plural society in South-east Asia. Today Malaysia has three distinct ethnic groups — the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians.

Indians in Burma

Indians went in a large number to Burma during the British colonial rule. The British annexation of lower Burma in 1852 conditioned the great influx of Indians into this delta area of Burma. Indians were required in large number not only to serve in administration and army but also as labour force in agriculture and emerging industries. In 1886, the entire Burma came under the British colonial rule which extended the area of British administrative system in Burma thus requiring more and more labourers from India, who were cheap and readily available, to work as clerks and peons in the office.

Thus the Indian immigrants in Burma were composed of both agriculturalist and non-agricultural class. The majority of them were agricultural labourers. They comprised of a large number of low caste labourers from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and eastern U.P. The non-agriculturalist class comprised of industrial labourers, professionals like teachers, lawyers, doctors and moneylenders. There were also a good number of military and police recruits. Kayasthas and Brahmins manned the provincial government. Rajputs and Sikhs were predominant in Indian regiments of the British army and police force. The moneylenders were Tamil Chettiyars, who lent money at a very high rate of interest. The Brahmins dominated the professional occupations while Dobis and Kahars provided domestic services of various kinds.

However, the size of Indian population in Burma began to decline after 1931. Several factors were responsible for this. The economic depression of 1930s, the separation of Burma from India in 1937, the increasing atrocities by the local Burmese population against the Indian immigrants and the various chauvinistic policies of the Burmese government during 1939-41 "served as sufficient notices of termination of the Indian

interests in Burma". The Second World War and the Japanese occupation of Burma further resulted in nearly 500,000 Indians leaving Burma.

Indians in Indochina

The migration of Indians to the states of Indochina was not on a large scale unlike in the cases of Malay peninsula and neighbouring Burma. Indian immigrants accounted for only one per cent of the total population. Indians in search of business trade and employment migrated mainly from the parts of India which were under the French colonial control viz; Pondicherry, Karaikal and Mahe. The French also brought the Indians from Malaysia and Singapore. Most of them spoke French and were Muslims. There were also migrants from Tamil speaking areas of South India, Gujaratis and Sindhis. The Indians resided in the capital cities and principal towns such as Saigon and Hanoi in Vietnam, Phnom Penh and Siamreap in Cambodia and Vientiane and Luang Prabang in Laos. Their main occupation was textile trade. Some of them were also engaged in running moneylending business, small shops, hotels and theatres.

However, the people of Indian origin were engaged in selective business enterprises and thus did not enjoy a very significant place in trade and commerce. Besides, while their counterparts enjoyed rights of immigration and travel in Indochina as the French, the Indians were deprived of these benefits. The withdrawal of the French from the states of Indochina following the Geneva Agreement of 1954 and the outbreak of the First Indochina War rendered the position of the Indian residents quite untenable. This uncertain and volatile situation in Indochina forced a number of Indians to wind up their business and trade and leave these states.

Indians in Singapore

The main bulk of the Indian immigrants came to Singapore in the wake of the establishment of the British colonial rule being fully established over the whole Malay Peninsula and the Island of Singapore. The British took Indians in good number to perform multifarious functions such as to construct roads, railways and ports to promote the colonial interests. The Indians also worked on plantations particularly on rubber estates. The Indian immigrants also formed the trading class. The Indian traders came mainly to meet the needs of the working class population and also to channel and regulate the imports of spices from India. The striking growth of Singapore in the later half of the 19th century brought in North Indian businessmen such as Parsis, Sindhis, Marwaris and Gujaratis. They specialised in general merchandise, particularly textiles. Besides labourers and traders, there were also Indian professionals such as lawyers, doctors and moneylenders.

Indians in the Philippines

The first batch of Indian immigrants who moved into the Philippines were those who constituted the British expeditionary force that captured Manila from the Spanish in 1762. The expeditionary force constituted a contingent of over 600 Indian sepoys and nearly 1400 labourers. They were mostly Tamils from the Arcot District of Madras. They were a mixture of 'mercenaries' and 'indentured' labourers. A considerable number of sepoys and labourers did not return to India when the British sailed out of Manila in 1764. The second wave of migration from India to the Philippines began after the British occupation of Sindh and Punjab. They were mainly traders who brought up a chain of retail shops in the Philippines, Hongkong and elsewhere. Seeing good and lucrative business and employment opportunities, the Punjabis from Jullunder, Ferozpur and Ludhiana districts of Punjab came and settled down in the Philippines.

Indians in Indonesia

In the precolonial period, the Indian merchants and traders served as a link between the Europeans, the Arabs and the spice growing islands of the Indonesian Archipelago. As we have seen earlier, these Indian merchants and traders were followed by political adventurers and religious missionaries comprising of Brahman priests, Buddhist monks etc. They largely influenced the Indonesian art, architecture, cultural values and legal and political ethos and norms. The second phase of migration of the Indians to

Introduction

Indonesia took place in the colonial time when a small number of traders and plantation workers went to Indonesia through Penang. These Indians mainly came on British ships as part of the labour force. Subsequently, they discovered a potential market and lucrative business. Most of them were Sindhis, Punjabis and those from South.

Thus, the early emigration and settlement of Indians in both insular and mainland countries of South-east Asia were a result of cultural and commercial interactions with the people of the region; the second phase characterised by a large movement of Indians to the region under the colonial dictates from the beginning of the 19th century till the middle of the present century. The immigrants largely comprised of indentured labourers who helped their colonial masters in the economic and commercial exploitation of the resources of the region. They did not enjoy any significant position in economic, political and civil administration in the colonies where they served and settled. Apart from labourers, professional classes consisting of traders, businessmen, intellectuals, doctors, lawyers, and moneylenders also went to these countries and survived and thrived in the social, economic and political milieu largely conditioned by the colonial empires for their own benefits. We have seen that a large scale migration from India to South-east Asia took place in Malay Peninsula and Burma which happened to be the prized colonies of the British empire. The countries which were not under the British colonial system attracted less number of Indian immigrants. As such in Indonesia and the Philippines, which were the Dutch and the Spanish and later on the American colonies respectively, we do not find any sizeable number of Indians to these countries. The immigrants to the Indochinese states, the French colonies, came from those parts of India which were under the French colonial control.

Moreover, during the colonial periods the Indian immigrants did not face the problems of cultural, social, economic and political assimilation and integration in these countries on a large scale. This may be because both the immigrants and local population did not enjoy freedom and had to work under their colonial masters having similar subservient status. But discontent and disenchantment between the immigrants and the native population was simmering underneath which was largely the making of exploitative and opportunistic politics of the colonial rulers.

Check Your Progress 2

Note : 1) Use the space given below for your answers.

2) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) Why did the Indians migrate to the South-east Asian region during the colonial period?

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- 2) Underline briefly the demographic and occupational patterns of Indian immigrants in Malaysia and Burma.

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- 3) Which European power did colonised Malaysia, Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines, and the states of Indochina?

3.4 INDIANS IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA : A CONTEMPORARY PROFILE

The post World War II period witnessed the end of the colonial system and the emergence of sovereign, independent states in South and South-east Asia. It posed considerable challenges and problems to the Indian immigrants who had settled down during the pre-colonial and the colonial period in the region. The Second World War itself had brought about remarkable change in their role and conditions in the region. The Japanese occupation of the region added to the agony of the Indian immigrants. For example, it led to a great exodus of a large number of Indians from Burma. Moreover, the partition of Indian subcontinent had its impact on Indians in the region as some of them were identified with Pakistan. In the post-colonial period, the people of the Indian origin had to search for a new social, economic and political role. The problem was compounded as the Indian immigrants were identified as the arms of British imperialism for exploiting and dominating the region — economically, politically and culturally.

The foremost problem which they had to face was related to the question of citizenship of the countries where they were brought by their colonial masters. Most of the Indians particularly in Burma were denied citizenship under the new dispensation and were forcibly evicted. Under the new constitution and economic and political framework, the Indians were relegated to the position of second class citizen — socially, economically and politically. The look for help and guidance to their mother country India, which too was newly born and had to confront formidable social, economic and political problems in the path of nation building. The Indian leaders, however, had advised them to identify themselves with the local people and carve out their own destiny. A sizeable number of Indians in South-east Asia were never seriously considered as a factor in building India's relations with the region in the post independence period.

3.4.1 Burma

In the post independent period, the Indian community in Burma had to encounter many hardships. The government of Burma imposed strict control over immigration, foreign trades and foreign exchange remittances. All major sectors of the economy, including transport and communications, civil supplies, industrial mining and agricultural production were brought under the government. The Burmanisation of the public services led to the elimination of Indian employees in these services. Land came under state ownership. The Chettiyars, who were pioneers in moneylending business, were virtually eliminated from agriculture and credit financing. The Indian shops, commercial Indian institutions, Indian teachers and doctors received notice of dismissal from the services and Indians were ordered to leave Burma. As a result, there was a steady movement and migration of Indians from Burma to India throughout the 1950s. Today there are about 400,000 people of Indian origin in Burma. There has been a tremendous decline in the economic, social and political conditions of Indians in Burma today. Those who have remained and settled down in Burma after its independence in 1948 are those people who found no place in India and who could still

Muslims, Arakanese of Indian origin, Manipuris, gorkhas etc. Besides, today these groups of people are no longer a flourishing community and have been relegated to the secondary position in social, economic and political fields. They have also been the victims of civil wars and racial riots.

3.4.2 Malaysia

The Indian immigrants constitute the third largest ethnic group (11 per cent) in Malaysia today after the native Malays (49 per cent) and the overseas Chinese (33 per cent). The rest of the population comprises of other indigenous groups like Dayaks, Kadazans etc. The Malaysian Indians are not a homogenous group and are divided on the basis of caste, language, religion and place of origin. The majority of them are Tamils who number around 80 per cent of the total Indian immigrants. They are followed by Malayalis (4.7%), Telugus (3.4%), and North Indians. While 81.2 per cent of Indian immigrants are Hindus, 8.4% are Christians and 6.7 per cent of them are Muslims. The above facts clearly show that the Malay society is in true sense of the term a plural society comprising of varied ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural groups. The communal tensions which have regularly erupted in the form of communal riots are the result of this heterogenous character of Malaysian society.

The statistics published by the Malaysian government during the recent years clearly indicate that compared to their Malay and Chinese counterparts, the Indian ethnic community is the most economically disadvantaged group in Malaysia today. Most of them (nearly 47 per cent) are engaged in agriculture, mainly in plantation, 24.8 per cent in services, 10.6 per cent in trade and commerce while as large as 32.3 per cent work in the areas of public utilities. Only six per cent of the Indians are found in administrative, professional and managerial categories. Their share in national income and wealth compared to the Chinese, the Malays and other foreign groups is quite insignificant. In Malaysian national politics also Indian community's participation has not been commensurate with its numerical strength. The Malaysian Indian Congress is the largest and the most broadbased representative organisation of the Indian community.

3.4.3 Singapore

Singapore is also a multi-racial society with pre-dominant Chinese population followed by the Malays and the Indians. Among the Indians in Singapore, about 65 per cent are Tamils and the rest are Malayalis, Punjabis, Sikhs, Bengalis, Gujaratis, Sindhis, Telugus and Pathans. So far the occupational pattern of the Indians in Singapore is concerned, the immigrants from North India are mainly merchants engaged in textiles and spices. Tamil workers are engaged primarily in port and municipal services. Some of them are also clerks in government offices, small shopkeepers and the professional elite. Many Indians have also distinguished themselves in Civil Services, labour unions, journalism, law and medical professionals. As a minority they do enjoy all privileges equally with other races but they have lagged behind their Chinese counterparts in business, commerce, trade and politics.

3.4.4 The Philippines

The Philippines today has about 4,000 people of Indian origin, comprising mainly of Sindhis and Punjabis. Most of them are of middle and lower middle class origin in India. Since Manila is the capital city and the principal business centre of the country, nearly eighty five per cent of the Indians live in this metropolitan city and in the surrounding towns. Unlike the economically well established Chinese, the Indians are a marginal community and thus play a comparatively small role in the economic life of the country. The Punjabis specialises in the retail trade of dry fruits, textile, garments, household appliances and jewellery. Some of them have also started moneylending business. The Sindhis, slightly larger in number than the Punjabis, are much more ahead in business.

International Labour Organisation (

Research Institute (IRRI), etc. Indian businessmen are also working with joint industrial business ventures in the country. This small group has added variety to the societal dimensions and to the regional composition of the local community.

3.4.5 Indonesia

Numbering about 35,000, the Indians in Indonesia constitute a very small minority in the country's total population of about 140 million people. The people of Indian origin are Muslims from Tamil Nadu, Malabar and South Kanara district, Bohras from Bombay and Gujarat, and Muslims of Arab extraction from Hyderabad. There are Hindus and Muslims from Gujarat and Muslims from Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bengal and Gwalior (M.P.) and Kashmir. There are also Sikhs from Punjab and Sindhi Hindus who migrated to Indonesia during the First World War and majority of them after partition of India in 1947. The majority of the Indian immigrants are mainly concentrated in Sumatra and Jakarta. Most of the people settled in Sumatra are engaged in petty jobs and are daily wage earners. The Indian settlers in Jakarta are engaged in trading sector and other flourishing businesses like textiles, sports goods, distribution of films, musical instruments etc. Besides, some of the Indians have also established medium scale joint venture industries, mainly in collaboration with the Indian industrial houses. There are also a few short term residents in the form of experts working in the U.N. and allied organisations.

3.4.6 Thailand

In Thailand the Indian community is estimated to be of 30,000 people. But of them 27,000 are local nationals and 3,000 Indian nationals. Most of them are Punjabis and Gujaratis while some of them are from Uttar Pradesh. They are a well-knit group engaged in local trade, industry and commerce. Very few Indians are now in service. Some Indians are prosperous and some have become very rich as industrial wholesalers, property owners and international traders. Outside Bangkok, there are Punjabi shopkeepers in many provincial cities. They are generally prosperous and socially prominent. In addition to the Punjabis, there is a very prosperous Sindhi community in Bangkok which deals in textiles and tailoring and have lately taken to establishing industrial ventures. However, the success story in recent years has been that of joint ventures. Birlas and Thapars have had the most spectacular successes. In Thailand, Indians have not faced the problem of social and cultural assimilation and integration. The Thais have also made a sincere effort to assimilate all immigrants. Moreover, every year, tens of thousands of Buddhist monks visit Bodh Gaya in Bihar and several other Buddhist centres in India. It has further increased goodwill between the people of two communities — Thais Indians.

3.4.7 The States of Indochina

At present there are a very few Indian immigrants in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam who form the states of Indochina. With the outbreak of the Vietnam War, a sizeable number of Indians left these states as they realised that there was no future for them in the war-ravaged countries and also because of threat to their life and property. In the Socialist states of Indochina, the Indians did not foresee any future for them. Since Indians are at present in a very negligible number they do not have to face the kinds of problems which their brethren had to face in other countries of South-east Asia.

What emerges from the above study of social, cultural, economic and political dimensions of the Indians in contemporary South-east Asia is that, first in most of the states of the region today, Indians have been relegated to the position of second class citizen in social, economic, commercial and political fields. Second, the Indians have also been victims of acute racial, economic and political discriminations in the countries which they had and have been nurturing so hard with their sweat and blood for long years. Third, on several occasions racial riots have erupted taking a heavy toll of life and property of the Indian immigrants. However, there is no denying the fact that the presence of the Indian immigrants has affected the social, economic, ethnic and cultural fabrics of these countries which has resulted in creation of socio-cultural divide and

tensions particularly in Malaysia where they account for 11 per cent of the total population. Today the need of the hour is to have more and better interaction between the people of the Indian origin in this region and Indian government and administration so that India's economic and commercial interests are promoted in the region in the changed domestic, regional and global political and economic scenario.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

2) Check your answer with the model answer given at the end of the unit.

- 1) Enlist three factors responsible for racial and economic discrimination against Indians in contemporary South-east Asia.

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3.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have seen that the commercial and cultural links between India and the countries of the South-east Asia are traceable to early Christian era, if not earlier. Brahmin priests and Buddhist monks who accompanied the Indian merchants found favour from the ruling classes of the South-east Asia region. As a result there was a gradual spread of Indian culture in many parts of this region. It was during the colonial phase of Asian history, that there was a large scale emigration of Indians to the countries of this region. British economic policies converted India into a huge reservoir of cheap labour to man the lower levels of army and administration and to serve as labour force on plantations and fields. We also saw that a large scale migration from India to South-east Asia took place in Malay peninsula and Burma which were also British colonies. The countries which were not under British Colonial system attracted less number of Indian immigrants. The immigrants to Indo-Chinese states which were colonies came from those parts of India under French control. In this unit we also saw that Indian immigrants in South-east Asia did not face much problem in assimilation and integration. This was because both the immigrants and local population were subjugated by Colonialism and did not enjoy any freedom. But discontent seems to have been simmering underneath among the indigenous people. Once decolonisation began in the mid 50's Indian immigrants began facing the challenge of assimilation and integration especially in those countries where they are in considerable strength.

3.6 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

- 1) Arsaratnam, S. 1970, *Indians in Malaysia and Singapore*, London.
- 2) Chakravarty, N. R. 1971, *The Indian Minority in Burma*, Oxford University Press, London.
- 3) Hall, D. G. E. 1955, *A History of South-east Asia*, Macmillan, London.
- 4) Pluvier, Jan. 1974, *South-east Asia from Colonialism to Independence*, Kuala Lumpur.
- 5) Sardesai, D.R. 1981, *South-east Asia: Past and Present*, Vikas, New Delhi.
- 6) Singh, Uma Shankar, 1978, *Burma and India, 1948-62*, Jaipur.
- 7) Tinker, Hugh, 1977, *The Banyan Tree*, London.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) See Sub-section 3.2.1
- 2) See Sub-section 3.2.2

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) See Section 3.3
- 2) See Sub-sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) See Sub-section 3.4.1

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Chinese Immigration in the 19th Century
- 4.3 Rise of Nationalism
- 4.4 Under Japanese Subjugation
- 4.5 The Post-War Years: Early Phase
- 4.6 The People's Republic And South-east Asian Chinese
- 4.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.8 Key Words
- 4.9 Some Useful Books
- 4.10 Answers To Check Your Progress

4.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit concerns itself with the history of Chinese immigrants in South-east Asia. After reading it you should be able to:

- describe how extensive were the early contacts between the China and South-east Asians.
- explain why after 1860 there was a spurt in Chinese immigration.
- show the impact of nationalism, Japanese subjugation and policies of the Chinese government on Chinese immigrants in South-east Asia.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

China's links with lands to her South were established in distant antiquity. As Chinese culture spread in the last millennium before Christ from its birth place on the banks of the Yellow River, it encountered cultures indigenous of South-east Asian region. The Thai, Lao and Vietnamese peoples, for example all have their remote roots in regions which for long have been under the Chinese politically. As the frontier of Chinese settlement was advanced, enclaves of peoples destined to become ethnic minorities were bypassed. Other people in Southern and Western China were absorbed by the Chinese in a process which probably continues even today.

Below the line of Chinese settlement, South-east Asian societies have grown. Since China's imperial unification by the Chin dynasty in the third century B.C., the cultural and political lines of demarcation between China and South-east Asia have been sharpened. Only in Vietnam did Chinese colonial rule cause Chinese influence to achieve paramountary for more than ten centuries. Although freedom from Chinese political control was won by the Vietnamese a thousand years ago, China's cultural supremacy survived. South-east Asia was historically divided into three spheres: Vietnam, where Chinese culture dominated; the arc of lands running South-east from Burma to Indonesia, where Indian currents were powerful; and the relatively remote Philippines, where weaker influences from both China and India were felt. Islam became a strong tide in the region about five hundred years ago, and spread mainly to the maritime lands, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Southern Philippines.

A Survey of more than twenty centuries shows that Chinese ties formed with South-east Asia were at first tenuous and later substantial. Dynastic records show that diplomatic and commercial exchange existed almost from the beginning of China's long imperial history. Tribute missions from South-east Asia were frequent bearers of respect for the Chinese emperor and exotic goods for the Chinese market. By the end of the thirteenth century, the Mongol emperor of China was able to dispatch an armada to the Indonesian archipelago. Although the invasion was a failure, it may have left behind deserters and stragglers, who may have become the first permanent Chinese settlers in the area.

During the fifteenth century, the Ming dynasty of China sponsored a series of great naval expeditions to South-east Asia and far beyond. The Chinese court, however, not driven by crusading zeal, international rivalry and fiscal hunger to build an empire upon maritime foundations abandoned exploration; but a private Chinese commercial empire was already taking shape overseas. When the first Portuguese came to South-east Asia in the beginning of the sixteenth century, Chinese traders were there to greet them.

Western colonialism in South-east Asia began with the Portuguese capture of Malacca in 1511. Since then the Chinese in the region sought to accommodate themselves to the changing order in South-east Asia. Sometimes tolerated and on occasion savagely attacked, the overseas Chinese learned to live under Western rule. For three and a half centuries, the Chinese population of the region grew at a moderate pace; there were simply not enough opportunities in a slowly developing economy to attract multitudes of immigrants.

4.2 CHINESE IMMIGRATION IN THE 19TH CENTURY

About the middle of the nineteenth century, South-east Asia entered a period of quickened transformation. The decline of mercantilism had heralded the death of the Dutch and British Company rule, conditions hospitable to free trade appeared. Corresponding with the opening of greatly expanded opportunities for private investment was a growing demand for South-east Asian products to feed Western industrialisation. The whole process of development was speeded by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, possibly the most significant date in South-east Asian economic history. Tin, Tobacco, and later, rubber production doubled and redoubled. So rapid was economic expansion that chronic labour shortages appeared. Peasants belonging to that region were, by and large, reluctant to have their villages to work under the disciplined and often harsh conditions of large-scale mining and estate agriculture. Labour had to be recruited outside the region. Many came from India but many more were sent from China.

The story of the first great waves of nineteenth century Chinese immigration is horrifying. The 'Coolie trade' as it came to be known is described briefly below. Typically villagers were recruited by agents, known as Coolie Crimps. Sometimes false promises lured men to sign away their freedom. Other men in effect sold themselves to pay off their debts. The recruits were assembled in ports and lodged in barracoons. (This has striking similarities with the slave trade between Africa and Europe.) Packed aboard vessels, the coolies sailed for new lands. Many, of course, died on the voyage. Upon arrival, say at Singapore, the semi-slaves were normally kept on board their ships until brokers serving either Chinese or European enterprises, contracted for their labour in a process colloquially referred to by the Chinese as "buying pigs". The healthy and the skilled commanded the highest prices; the sickly were unwanted. Once ashore the men worked out the years of their contracts; and if they made the grade and lived, they became free settlers or sought to return home.

As the nineteenth century advanced the voyages from China grew smoother; crude vessels and junks were replaced by steamships. Victorian humanitarianism and the Peking court's growing concern for its emigrant sons brought an end to the coolie traffic. Migration and settlement abroad no longer meant humiliation and hazard.

Three characteristics were common to the millions of Chinese who arrived in South-east Asian countries during the flood-tide of immigration roughly between 1860-1930. One was that almost all of them were poor and the other that very few of them were women. These two characteristics are common to many other immigrant communities. But the characteristic that set the Chinese immigrants apart from most others who had left their homes for newer lands was their enduring nostalgia for the homeland. China was more than the old country. It was the only country worthy of respect and capable of being understood. The rest of the world was worse than alien. Success abroad could be measured by the strength of a man's ties to China. Sending money back to relatives in the old village was an obligation borne by all except the destitute. Prosperity permitted a man to bring a wife from China. Those who became wealthy would decorate their houses like rich native Chinese. Ideally, hard work and thrift abroad were rewarded by retirement and repatriation, or less ideally, by shipment back to China for burial. There have been men who sailed from China never expecting to return, but there was none who cheerfully hoped for permanent repatriation. Uprooted immigrant herds could not be controlled by the thin ranks of colonial bureaucracies. Colonial administration of earlier periods had hit upon schemes for the supervision of the Chinese through the medium of various headmen, often assigned quasimilitary titles. In return for the prestige and perquisites of his office, they served as intermediaries between the Europeans and the Chinese. The system worked as long as the Chinese communities were fairly stable in size and placid in conduct. Before the huge influx of immigrants, the Chinese quarters of the cities and towns were not trouble spots. The Europeans and the Chinese normally complemented one another in their economic endeavours; both groups appeared content with the system of headmen.

The old serenity was shattered by the flood of immigrants. The members of rootless, restless, men were too great to fit into a pattern of administration resting upon the headmen's control through business connections, kinship and patronage. The enormously expanded Chinese population, especially in mining and estate areas of rapid development, had to fend for themselves in improving a political order of sorts. The tradition of the secret society provided the techniques required.

Secret societies have deep roots in Chinese history. Starting as heretical expressions, these societies inevitably assumed a politically subversive character, for in imperial China charismatic emperor enjoyed divine ordination i.e. he ruled with the mandate of heaven. To challenge any part of the harmonious order was to threaten the whole. The clandestine brotherhoods imported into South-east Asia displayed the religious orientation of their forerunners, and voiced rebellious slogans like: "Overthrow the Manchus, Restore the Ming".

In effect, secret societies had to give protection and order to the immigrants. Membership brought a man into a circle of brothers who could assist in the process of survival abroad. Companionship, employment, relief and defence were all supposed to be had within the order. The brotherhoods thus sought to substitute for families left in China. Acknowledging no law but their own, the secret societies turned to crime; but lawlessness was not their fundamental purpose. The profits of crime were in the nature of revenues for the underground governments of the immigrants. As other form of organisation gained strength in the nineteenth century the secret societies lost vitality and prestige. Today the brotherhoods have deteriorated into gangster mobs; but for a time, a century or so ago, the societies played a positive role in the resettlement of immigrants.

Operating in the open were other kinds of organisations to serve the settlers. The so-called territorial associations recruited members on the basis of place of origin or language. Kinship associations served those sharing the same surnames and thus claiming descent from common ancestors. The blood tie might be more imagined than real, but the feeling of kinship among members was likely to be genuine enough. Trade and craft associations, later joined by chamber of commerce and labour unions, brought together men of like occupations and economic aims. All these open organisations were actively supported. As the administration of south-east Asia sought means of supervising and communicating with the Chinese, the open associations often received semi-official recognition. The chambers of commerce in particular tended to be regarded as agencies to transmit Chinese desires to the government and to broadcast and interpret official

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Chinese increased not only in numbers but in economic power. The process leading to Chinese domination of the bulk of south-east Asia's commerce presumably began at some unknown date far back in history when the first Chinese immigrant trader opened for business. The development from the time of mass immigration was thus new in degree but not in kind. From about the middle of the previous century, Chinese moved toward economic mastery with greater speed and in larger numbers than ever before. As western capital stimulated the production of primary products for export, there was more for the Chinese intermediary trader to do. As relative prosperity came to some areas, there were more customers for the Chinese retailer. As pacification and direct administration of hinterlands progressed, the Chinese merchants ranged farther afield. There remains, however, the perplexing question of why the Chinese rather than some other people saw and seized the new economic opportunities.

Except in Burma, where the Indians enjoyed ascendancy in business, and in Cambodia and remote Laos, where the Vietnamese approached similar success, the Chinese were little challenged in their economic rise. Industry and thrift have already been known as priceless, hard to explain, Chinese gifts. Organisational ability and communication systems also served the Chinese settlers. Further more, it is true that the immigrants reached the right place at the right time.

The very fact of immigration was perhaps more decisive. Torn away from traditional pursuits and ancient restraints, the overseas settlers could move into activities rarely accessible to their kin folk in the home villages. Heavily peasant in background; the immigrants did not normally seek to farm in South-east Asia. Laws against land alienation, the scarcity of capital for investment in farm steads, and the near absence of wives and children to help work in family farms, all were obstacles to the establishment of Chinese peasants in the region. More important, it seems, was the fact that the Chinese migration was more than an international transplanting of people. It was in the pattern of movement from the farms to the cities that has been a feature of all modern economic growth. The Chinese left not only the country but the countryside as well. Working as miners or estate labourers for a time after reaching the tropics, most overseas Chinese gravitated toward urban areas and city occupations. The indigenous peoples living within social structures of only two levels, peasant and noble, for the most part remained rooted to their traditions and were unprepared for economic adventure.

Engaged in occupation alien to the indigenous peasants, performing tasks beneath the Westerners and the South-east Asian nobility, the Chinese occupied middle rung on the economic ladder. Thousands of them worked in light industrial and service jobs, but vastly more vital were those involved in trade. The internal commerce of most countries was in Chinese hands, by and large. The great Western trading firms could not have reached the means of indigenous producers and consumers without the Chinese intermediaries nor could local goods flow between rural and urban areas have attained much volume in their absence. Virtually no transaction was too petty for the immigrant trader; and, as time went, few endeavours were too large to be attempted by the Chinese management and capital.

4.3 RISE OF NATIONALISM

Near the end of the nineteenth century, there began an overseas Chinese political awakening that has continued through decades of change to the present. The start of the process is usually referred to as the birth of nationalism among the Chinese abroad. The reasons for the shift in attitude from a comparatively passive sentimental attachment to the land and culture of China to a dynamic, sometimes even aggressive, identification with the Chinese nation are many and complex. Here it is appropriate simply to record the fact that for nearly seventy years the Chinese abroad, like their compatriots at home,

have been caught up in the nationalist side of the present era. China came to be viewed not merely with cultural home sickness, the Chinese nation, including its overseas members, was believed to be the entity through which individual and collective hopes were to be realised.

Recognition of the Chinese as a national struggling among other nations rather than as the sole civilised people in a global sea of barbarism came swiftly. The change was first prompted by those dynastic officials who sought to revitalize China. The dispatch of imperial missions to foreign lands and the establishment of consulates and legations abroad generated an awareness in Peking of overseas Chinese problems and strength. The revenue producing potential of the settlers abroad was especially impressive to the Manchu court. Close on the heels of the court nobility came conservative reformers to enlist the overseas people in the cause of national salvation through modernization. Shortly, the revolutionaries under Sun Yat-sen appeared and assumed leadership.

As overseas Chinese nationalism was ardently directed toward pulling China out of her backwardness, Sun Yat-sen's vaguely phrased programme for social and economic advance appealed to the Chinese. Money went into revolutionary treasury and cells of the revolutionary party were founded throughout South-east Asia. It would not be wrong to argue that without the support of the Chinese abroad, the destruction of the dynasty would have been achieved later and possibly under different auspices. The 1911 revolution, quite unlike that of 1949, was in great measure an expression of nationalism of the overseas Chinese. Until World War II, Sun Yat-sen's party, now called the Kuomintang, was the focus of overseas Chinese loyalty.

Two twentieth century developments, one the result of another, were instrumental in the emergence of revolutionary nationalism among the overseas Chinese. The modernised school system, dating from the beginning of the present century, and the growing use of Mandarin Chinese as an immigrant lingua franca have been the cradle and vehicle of nationalism. Nothing has been more central to the nationalist mobilization of the South-east Asian Chinese than the political recruitment conducted in the classrooms. Boycotts, demonstrations and even violence have originated in the schools; and the language of overseas Chinese nationalism has been the mandarin learned there. The Chinese have been most forceful politically in those places in South-east Asia, such as Malaysia, where their schools have flourished.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: 1) Give answers in the space given below.

2) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) In which South-east Asian country did Chinese colonial rule last for very long?
 - a) Indonesia
 - b) Thailand
 - c) Vietnam
 - d) Cambodia
- 2) Western Colonialism began in South-east Asia with the Portuguese capture of
 - a) Singapore
 - b) Malacca
 - c) Movocco
 - d) Penang
- 3) Describe in brief the effect of Coolie trade on Chinese immigrants.

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4.4 UNDER JAPANESE SUBJUGATION

Since most Chinese in South-east Asia had direct and daily contact with western colonial rule, semi-colonialism in the ancestral land was particularly offensive. As expatriates hoping to obtain dignity and protection from a reborn China, the overseas people were especially alarmed by the Japanese menace. Men looked to the Kuomintang to rescue the nation through combat with imperialism and defence against Japan.

For some Chinese in South-east Asia, intense hostility toward imperialism and alarm over Japanese expansion led to receptiveness to communism. The recruitment of Communist cadres among the virulently nationalist overseas Chinese youth, especially in Singapore and Malaya, progressed and there were efforts to use the developing strength of the labour movement for Communist ends.

Japan's conquest and rule of South-east Asia struck cruel blows against the Chinese. The colonial order under which the immigrants had advanced and the world trade upon which they ultimately depended for their livelihoods were destroyed. Wartime isolation stagnated the economy of the region. The Japanese military administration was inept, and, worse, its actions were unpredictable. Bad government and economic deterioration were not the only disasters to affect the Chinese in South-east Asia during the war. The Japanese singled out the Chinese settlers for markedly harsh treatment. Thousands of Chinese were massacred by the Japanese. Money was forcefully taken from rich Chinese. Persons suspected of underground occupation were rounded up, tortured and murdered. Chinese guerrilla bands, like their Filipino allies, were pursued and fought. The occupation brought suffering to all and death to many. Chinese collaboration with the Japanese was generally uncommon because the settlers were for the most part committed to the cause of Chinese national salvation and because the Japanese had little need for and less faith in the Chinese.

Japanese mistrust of the overseas Chinese was far from unfounded. The settlers had contributed enormous sums to the Chinese war chest against Japan. No other Chinese population was more dedicated to national defence as those in South-east Asia. Until late in the war, the Chinese and the Filipinos were only peoples in South-east Asia to offer major resistance to the Japanese. In Malaya where the proportion and nationalism of the Chinese was the greatest, the fight against Japan began as the invaders moved down the peninsula and continued throughout the years of occupation. The most effective guerrillas were organised and led by a tightly-knit Chinese Communist minority of a few thousand. Veterans of that force returned to the jungle to fight the colonial power in 1948 and attempted to dislodge Malayan authority after 1957.

The ability of the Communists in Malay to mobilise military threats for nearly two decades is a measure of their resourcefulness and discipline rather than of their numbers. Presumably pre-war year of clandestine operation had equipped the communists with the communication and intelligence techniques needed to support guerrilla forces. It is believed that funds and supplies were obtained in part through intimidation, from urban Chinese. Food, local intelligence, and sometimes shelter were available from Chinese peasants on the edges of the jungle. The economic decay of the occupation period had driven many to subsistence farming on unclaimed land away from urban centres. Known as squatters, because of their unlawful occupancy of farms, they were invaluable to the Communists during the war against Japan and later against British colonial and Malayan authorities. By relocating the squatters to deny food and information to the guerrillas, the British and Malayan authorities could defeat them.

4.5 THE POST-WAR YEARS: EARLY PHASE

Victory over Japan brought new uncertainties to the overseas Chinese. The revolutionary bursting of South-east Asian nationalism, touched off by the war, endangered many and dictated readjustment for all. Antipathy toward the Chinese in their midst had long

smoldered among many indigenous South-east Asians. Colonial administration had been largely content and relieved in the pre-war plural societies to have Chinese settlers serve as immediate targets of native vexation. The Japanese consciously exacerbated intercommunal ill-will. Strife between the Chinese and their neighbours was never more severe than in the period of anarchy between Japanese collapse and the re-establishment of law-enforcement. In Malaya and Indonesia, the Chinese suffered most acutely.

South-east Asia's nationalist revolutionaries called for both liberation from colonialism and economic advance, while they held the Chinese to be the agents of Western exploitation and obstacles to material progress for native South-east Asians. Vengeance against the Chinese was most brutal in Indonesia, and in other areas repression was less violent. In all the colonies, it was hoped that end of Western rule would help loosen the commercial grasp of the Chinese. It has been seen that indigenously economic nationalism in some form plays a role in all the political programmes of independent South-east Asia; and throughout the entire region, the Chinese experience disabilities ranging from legislated discrimination, usually in transparent disguise, to pre-emptory confiscation of property and denial of opportunity.

Post-colonial South-east Asia brought to the Chinese a new situation requiring them to make readjustments in meeting adversity and in mastering the unprecedented. The independent governments uniformly sought to promote indigenous entrepreneurship. To the bulk of the Chinese community perplexity rather than opportunity developed. For some years the commerce of South-east Asia remained largely in Chinese hands. However, in this as in all other areas of overseas Chinese life, there are differences among the countries of the region.

4.6 THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC AND SOUTH-EAST ASIAN CHINESE

In the early years of its coming into being the government of the People's Republic of China, like the Kuomintang government, tried to generate support among the settlers abroad. Student and visitors were urged to go to China; ancient culture was respected, overseas capital was attracted; strong support for the overseas Chinese in their difficulties with host governments was promised. In Communist publications designed for overseas consumption, Peking laid heavy stress on appeals to Chinese nationalism among expatriates and also on China's growing economic and political strength. The claim that the Communists had liberated China from imperialism got more prominence than the fact that China was liberated from feudalism. This was so because landlordism was not a source of grief to the Chinese in South-east Asia. In fact it was traditional for Chinese expatriates to dream of an old age made serene and dignified through ownership of land in the native village. The Peking government was at first careful not to antagonize the overseas Chinese by redistributing their land holdings but eventually it had to follow a uniform land re-distribution policy making its intentions amply clear to the Chinese settlers abroad.

In the later years other methods have been used by the Chinese government to reach out to Chinese people in other lands. Radio programmes broadcasted to South-east Asia were introduced. News, commentary and music were broadcast and in addition lessons in Mandarin Chinese for those ignorant in the language were given through radio. Similarly China's achievements in various areas, in particular science and technology, have been given prominent coverage. In other words, the Chinese government had made an all out effort to see to it that Chinese expatriates continue to love their homeland.

During the Cultural Revolution when China was going through an unprecedented political upheaval, the Chinese regime openly began to support insurgence and rebellions in other developing countries. Prominent among these were the South-east Asian countries where existence of large Chinese populations made the task easier. The Chinese regime in Peking not only exported the ideology of Maoism but expressed complete support for Maoist organisations attempting to wreck the existing governments

in these countries. This not only strained relations between the governments of China and these countries but made the expatriate Chinese community suspect in the eyes of native South-east Asians; they came to be viewed as agents of the Chinese government. This further aggravated the ethnic tensions for quite some time. The Chinese within themselves were also divided over the issue of support or opposition to Communist ideology and the Communist government in Mainland China.

In the period of reforms in China i.e. since 1978, the Peking government has taken a moderate attitude towards overseas Chinese all over the world. From prospering business communities in South-east Asia particularly the ethnic Chinese the PRC government expects collaboration in the form of investments, technology transfer etc. Now that China seems to be in a rush to modernise its industry and management system, among other things, the support from overseas Chinese is more than welcome.

With prosperity and democratic reforms in most South-east Asian countries, ethnic tensions are gradually receding. This will obviously help the Chinese populations do better. With their economic strength and a sense of political security they should be in a better position to play a significant role in the development of their native land.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note : 1) Use the space given below for Your answer.
 2) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) In what ways did nationalism actuate the overseas Chinese?

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2) What was the main thrust of the Chinese government policy towards the overseas Chinese?

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4.7 LET US SUM UP

Since very ancient times China has influenced the region called South-east Asia. Except for Vietnam which experienced Chinese rule for many centuries, all countries of the region had a wide ranging commercial contacts with China. Chinese in small numbers, mostly among the merchant class, were found in South-east Asia when the Portuguese arrived there in the beginning of the sixteenth century. As South-east Asia entered a period of transformation in the nineteenth century, the demand for labour increased. Chinese in large numbers started coming to this region and between the years 1860 to 1930 there was large-scale Chinese immigration. They faced very difficult and often inhuman situations. Poverty and threat of starvation at home attracted the Chinese peasantry to do jobs in other lands. What was common among the Chinese immigrants was the attachment for the homeland. They formed their own organisations and sent money home to help poor relatives. Through sheer hard work the Chinese economic power increased and they began to dominate South-east Asia's commerce. The rise of nationalism in China awakened the overseas Chinese politically and they became a

major source of support to the anti-imperialist, anti-Manchu forces operating within China. Both the Kuomintang (the Nationalists) and the communism received support from them. When South-east Asia came under the Japanese occupation, the Chinese were selected for special inhuman treatment. After the end of the Second World War colonialism faded away in South-east Asia and the Chinese had to readjust to a new situation. Ethnic strife in some of these countries hurt the Chinese. Policies of the Chinese government have also caused problems for them. However, with gradual democratisation and economic prosperity of the region, it seems that Chinese will continue to play a meaningful role in South-east Asia.

4.8 KEY WORDS

Millennium	:	a period of thousand years
Archipelago	:	group of many islands
Barracoons	:	tiny, unhealthy dwellings
Victorian	:	showing respectability as was characteristic
Heretical	:	opinion opposed to established views

4.9 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

1. Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in South-east Asia* (London: Oxford University Press) 1965.
2. Lea E. Williams, *The Future of Overseas Chinese in South-east Asia* (New York: Mcbrow Hill Book Co.) 1966.

4.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) c
- 2) b
- 3) See second para of section 4.2.
 - 1) Rural Chinese dominated among the immigrant Chinese.
 - 2) Coolies were nothing but slaves.
 - 3) Many of the Chinese, settled in South-east Asia, are descendants of the coolies.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Summing of section 4.5.
 - 1) Native vexation
 - 2) Japanese fuelled communal ill-will
 - 3) Rise of nationalism in the states of South-east Asia
 - 4) Post-war independent Governments' policies of indigenisation
 - 5) Immigrants are looked down upon as the flag bearers of imperialism.
- 2) See section 4.6.
 - 1) Chinese government supports the overseas Chinese mainly for economic reasons.
 - 2) Maoist China attempts to sell Maoism through overseas Chinese.
 - 3) Chinese government through media tried to integrate overseas Chinese with the culture and tradition of mainland Chinese.

UNIT 5 REVOLUTION AND IDEOLOGY

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Background to the Chinese Revolution
 - 5.2.1 Reform Movement
 - 5.2.2 Counter Revolutionary Yuan Shikai
- 5.3 May Fourth Movement
 - 5.3.1 Impact of the 1917 Russian Revolution
 - 5.3.2 Chinese Communist Party (CCP)
- 5.4 First Revolutionary Civil War: Sun Yet-Sen's Cooperation with CCP
 - 5.4.1 May 30th Movement
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- 5.5 Second Revolutionary Civil War: Establishment of the Communist (Red) Army
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 - 5.6.3 Expansion of the Democratic United Front
 - 5.6.4 Liberation of the Mainland
 - 5.6.5 Foundation of the People's Republic of China
- 5.7 Materialist Trend in Chinese Philosophy
 - 5.7.1 Coming of Marxism to China
 - 5.7.2 Emergence of Mao's Thought
 - 5.7.3 Mao Zedong's Thought
- 5.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.9 Key Words
- 5.10 Some Useful Books
- 5.11 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

5.0 OBJECTIVES

This Unit deals with the circumstances leading to the revolution in China and its ideological foundation. Once you know the subject, you would be able to:

- trace the modern history of China.
- understand how the imperialist powers exploited China.
- discuss the successive peasant rebellions in 19th century China.
- evaluate the contributions of the reform movements to awaken the Chinese people.
- assess the contribution of Sun Yat-Sen to the Chinese revolution.

- analyse the causes of the Chinese revolution.
- follow the proceedings of the revolutionary civil war.
- comment upon the role of Chiang Kai-Shek in the resistance war against Japan.
- acquaint with the ideological context of the revolution.
- grasp the Mao thought in the period of the revolution.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The expansive area situated in the north of the Himalayas, is called China. The country, representing one of the earliest civilizations in the world, has a recorded history of about 3600 years. During the long period of historical development, the people of China created a great civilization and made vast contributions to all fields of human knowledge and culture. In course of its onward movement, several dynasties ruled over the land; the Manchus being the last. The country in the period of about hundred years since the middle of the 19th century passed through repeated foreign aggressions, recurring internal economic crisis, frequent rebellions, consistent reform movements and protracted revolutionary civil wars which resulted in the foundation of the People's Republic of China.

In this unit we would first discuss the foreign aggressions and how they ruined China and infuriated the people. Then we study the movements leading to the downfall of the Manchu dynasty. Next we shall assess the strength of the nationalist democratic forces. Then we focus on the rise of the communists and trace the proceedings of revolutionary civil wars. We shall conclude with an analysis of the ideology which inspired the people to participate in the revolutionary civil war.

5.2 BACKGROUND TO THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

The Manchus, a small nation of Jurchid origin, inhabiting the northern part of Liaodong Peninsula, captured Beijing (Peking) and installed the Manchu dynasty on the Chinese throne in 1644.

The Manchu rule lasted for about 268 years. The period witnessed great achievement in science and culture. Under Manchus China enjoyed a long period of peace and economic prosperity. However, trouble started brewing with the arrival of the foreign powers from the beginning of 19th century. Repeated foreign aggressions were coincided with prolonged economic crisis on account of stagnancy in the agricultural economy. The situation was further worsened due to ascensions of successive incapable rulers, palace intrigues and the hostilities of the conservative forces headed by Cixi, the dowager Empress towards the reform movements.

The Opium war (1840) marked the beginning of foreign penetration of China. China and Britain fought the war over the issue of illegal opium trade which was being carried on for years by Britain in the Chinese territories. China lost the war and was forced to sign in August 1841 the humiliating treaty by which China opened five ports for trade, ceded Hongkong to the British and agreed to pay a huge indemnity. In the wake of British success other foreign powers followed suit. In 1844 the United States of America (USA) and France forced China to concede to them also such benefits which were granted to the British. Subsequently Tsarist Russia and Japan joined the scramble for penetration of China. Undue demands from the foreign powers did not end with the signing of one or two unequal treaties. Their scramble for China's "pound of flesh" continued unabated which occasionally sparked off wars between the foreign powers (either singly or collectively) and China.

Towards the end of the 19th century the USA proposed the 'open door' policy which the other great powers quickly accepted. China was, thus partitioned into spheres of influence of the great powers in terms of the open door policy.

The pressures exerted on China by Britain and other great powers created many internal problems which were again intensified due to the growing economic crisis. The stagnancy in agriculture and the increasing pressure of population on the land led to a fall in the peasant's standard of living and an increase in his consciousness of misery. The floods and famines during the successive years from 1846 to 1848 further deteriorated the economic situation leading to frequent but dispersed local uprisings. These uprisings culminated into a gigantic nationwide rebellion which has come to be known in history as the Taiping (great Peace) Rebellion. The Rebellion raised strong contingents of troops, captured cities and towns, set up its own government and ruled vast areas of the country for years since 1851. The rebels attacked both the foreigners and the internal exploiting forces. They sought to become independent and also professed the distribution of the national wealth among the common people.

The rebellion was crushed by the joint forces of the foreign powers and the ruling Manchu king. The fortune of the rebels deteriorated also due to the sharp cleavages and internecine struggles within their rank and leadership. Nevertheless, the movement of the Taiping lasted for a decade or so, it left strong imprint on the Chinese society by arousing and strengthening the zeal for revolutionary activities.

5.2.1 Reform Movement

Western intervention in China by the late 19th century contributed to the growth of modern industries in several parts of the country. This had led to the emergence of a small entrepreneurial class as well as the working class. From this section a large number of reformers arose, being imbibed with liberal ideas. The intellectuals of 19th century China got easily influenced by the liberal democratic ideologies and demanded reformation of the old moribund political and economic systems.

The reformers sought to transform China into an effective modern state. The Emperor acting under the influence of a group of intellectual leaders, issued a series of reform edicts which touched everything from the system of government to the development of science. The reform movement, however, infuriated the conservative forces. The dowager Empress who headed these forces thereupon staged a coup in September 1889, imprisoned the Emperor, rescinded the reform edicts, and imprisoned the reformers. Since the duration of the reform was hundred days, the movement has come to be known in the history as the Hundred Days Reform.

The failure of the reform movement of 1897-98, the oppressive hold of the great powers in China and the role of Christian missionaries who indulged in conversion to Christianity in the rural areas infuriated the Chinese. People's anger exploded during the closing years of the century in the form of the Yihetuan movement or Boxer Rebellion. Despite severe repression the movement very soon transformed into a nation-wide 'anti-foreigner' movement. Thereupon all the foreign powers formed an alliance and with the help of the Manchu armies crushed the Boxer rebellion.

Chinese were forced to a humiliating treaty—the Boxer Protocol 1901. By signing this treaty the Qing (Manchu) government became almost an agent of the imperialists. Continuing imperialist aggression coupled with the growing apathy in the Qing (Manchu) dynasty to fight imperialism created the objective conditions for revolution in China. The Chinese intellectuals availed the opportunity and devoted their full energy to make subjective preparations for a revolution. Sun Yet-Sen (1865-1925) emerged as the ideologue and leader of the revolutionary movement. In 1894, he had set up the China revival society. Several other organisations emerged subsequently to propagate liberal democratic values. These organisations aimed at overthrowing the Qing (Manchu) dynasty and to establish a democratic system of government. Sun Yet-Sen soon became the rallying point of all liberals who in July 1905 founded the China Revolutionary League under the chairmanship of Sun Yet-Sen. The League stood for repulsion of the Manchu (Qing) dynasty, restoration of China from the clutches of the foreigners, establishment of a republic, and equal ownership of land. The League gradually spread its organizational activities throughout China and founded its organ known as "People's Journal". In the very first issue of the journal Sun Yet-Sen developed

his famous 'Three People's Principles', namely, the principle of Nationalism, the principle of Democracy, and the principle of Livelihood, which together formed the ideological guide for the Chinese Revolution in the early decades of the 20th century. It led many armed uprisings to achieve its goal. Despite many setbacks at the early stages and severe repression by the ruling dynasty, the League won many battles in October 1911. Being encouraged by these victories, many provinces went out of the control of the Qing (Manchu) regime. In the Christmas week of 1911 the leaders of the liberated provinces gathered in Nanjing to organize a provisional central government. Sun Yet-Sen was elected the president of the new government. Dr. Sun Yet-Sen after swearing in on New Year's Day of 1912 promulgated a liberal democratic constitution for China.

5.2.2 Counter Revolutionary Yuan Shikai

The establishment of a provisional government dealt a severe blow to the Qing (Manchu) regime and its cohorts. Yuan Shikai, head of the Qing regime's army, schemed to grab power. He joined the League along with his supporters. Being blessed by the imperialists he forced the last Qing (Manchu) emperor to abdicate. By this act he became popular. With the backing of the Northern warlords he made the Nanjing government to hand over power to him. He then managed to get himself elected as president of the central government and Sun Yet-Sen was forced to resign. Yuan by granting additional benefits to the imperialist powers, purchased their support. Yuan soon lost popular support and died in despair in 1916. Duan Qiwi succeeded Yuan.

Duan became an autocrat from the beginning. He abolished both the constitution and the parliament. Sun Yet-Sen however did not remain idle. He organized anti-Duan movements but due to the machinations of the warlords and the foreign powers Sun could not achieve success immediately.

5.3 MAY FOURTH MOVEMENT

The first world war (1914-18) ended with the crashing defeat of Germany. The victorious states including China held in January 1919 a peace conference in Paris. The conference turned down the Chinese demand for ending the special privileges of foreign countries in China and transferred the Germany's special rights and privileges to Japan. The decision of the Paris conference infuriated the people throughout China. On May 4, 1919, thousands of Beijing students assembled in Tiananmen square to protest against the outrageous decision of the peace conference. The gathering asked the Chinese government not to sign the Versailles Treaty and demanded suitable punishment of those Chinese leaders who supported Japan. The government resorted to repression. Many students were tortured to death and many others were arrested. The repressive acts angered the people outside the student community. Consequently the movement which was primarily a students' movement transformed into democratic movement against imperialism and Chinese warlordism. Under the pressure of the movement the government withdrew from the Paris peace conference and refused to endorse the Versailles Treaty. The arrested students were also released. The movement which came to be known as May Fourth Movement has left a deep imprint upon Chinese society and culture.

5.3.1 Impact of the 1917 Russian Revolution

In November 1917, the Bolsheviks under the leadership of Lenin captured power and established a revolutionary socialist government in Russia. Before the success of the 1917 November revolution Marxism had made little or no impression on Chinese thought and politics. After the revolution the impact of Marxism became remarkably visible upon the intellectuals and the political activists. They undertook the task of spreading Marxism-Leninism to imbibe the people with revolutionary ideology. Many journals started appearing. Among them Mao Zedong edited "Xiangjiang Review" and Zhou Enlai's "Bulletin of the Tianjin Students' Federation" are significant. Marxist study groups appeared in different parts of the country. Chen Duxin emerged as the prominent Marxist leader in the Peking (Beijing). Marxian Study was founded in Peking (Beijing). Mao Zedong (Mao

se-tung) and Zhou Enlai (Chou Enlai), founded the New People Study Society and Awakening Society in Changsha and Tianjin respectively. Communist Manifesto and many other works of Karl Marx were translated into Chinese. P'eng Pai, another intellectual, devoted his life to organize the peasants for spreading communism in the rural areas.

5.3.2 Chinese Communist Party (CCP)

The revolution in Russia and the victory of the May Fourth Movement coupled with the emergence of working class in China, created the conditions for the rise of the Communist Party. In 1920, representatives of various groups assembled in Shanghai. In July 1921 they formed the communist party. It was the first National Congress of the Chinese communists. The first constitution of the party drafted at Shanghai provided for an elected central committee. Chen Duxiu was elected as the Secretary General of the party. The second Party Congress in July 1922 formulated the party programme and announced that the basic task of the party was "to eliminate civil strife, overthrow the warlords, and establish domestic peace; to cast off the yoke of oppression by international imperialism so that the Chinese nation can become truly independent; and to unify China into a genuine democratic republic." The Congress also directed the leadership of the party to apply for membership of the communist international.

Immediately after its foundation, the party devoted its full energy to organize the trade unions. Chinese Trade Union Secretariat was formed as the centre for directing the working class movement. Under the leadership of the communists, workers went on strike for several times during 1922 and 1923. However the establishment took serious note of it and crushed the movement.

This slowed down the movement temporarily.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space provided below each question to give your answer.
ii) Check your answer given at the end of this unit.

- 1) What were the circumstances leading to the emergence of the Chinese Communist Party?

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5.4 FIRST REVOLUTIONARY CIVIL WAR: SUN YET-SEN'S COOPERATION WITH CCP

The failure of 1911 revolution made Sun Yet-Sen a more resolute fighter for the just cause. Sun Yet-Sen had great appreciation of the communist leader in China as well as Russia.

As per the advice of Russia he renamed his party as Kuomintang and reorganized it as a monolithic party duly imbued with the ideology of democracy and nationalism. He opened the door of the party for the communists. Soon Kuomintang emerged as a democratic alliance of the workers, peasants and other progressive and anti-imperialist sections of the Chinese people.

In June 1923 the Chinese Communist Party held its third Party Congress which endorsed the policy of alliance and cooperation with the Kuomintang. Kuomintang organized its first National Conference in January 1924. The conference also supported the inclusion of the communists as individual members of the party.

Now the Kuomintang's cardinal policies became "allying with Russia, allying with the communist party, and assisting the peasants and workers." In May 1924 Sun Yet-Sen founded in Guangzhou the Huangpu Military Academy with the aid and support of Russia and the Chinese Communist Party. Zhou Enlai was appointed as the director of the academy's political department and some other communists were included as instructors. Chiang Kai-Shek was made the director of the academy. Sun Yet-Sen was the precursor of the Chinese revolution. Even while he was sick he had drafted programmes to abolish the warlords and for ending the unequal treaties with foreign powers. Sun Yet-Sen however, died in early 1925. In his will, he pointed out that to win freedom and equality for China among the nations, "we must bring about a thorough awakening of our own people and ally ourselves in a common struggle with those people of the world who treat us on the basis of equality."

5.4.1 May 30th Movement

After the formation of the alliance with the Kuomintang the trade union movement and the peasant movement made much progress under the leadership of the communists. In 1925 there had been strikes in the factories and workshops owned by the foreigners (Japan, Britain etc.) for days and months. Students and people from other walks of life came out on the streets to support the striking workers. British police opened fire in many places to terrorize the people. On May 30, 11 of the strikers were killed in police firing. The day henceforth is observed as the day of "30th Massacre". The intervention by the foreign police in the Movement transformed the strikes from being a mere trade union movement into an anti-imperialist political movement. This helped the communists to consolidate their support bases in different areas. The consolidation prepared the ground for launching of the Northern Expedition. During the period the peasant movement too made rapid progress. Under the leadership of the CCP peasant organizations were formed in many parts of China. Total membership of the peasant organizations reached above one million. The peasant association in Guangdong alone had a membership of 620,000. Guangdong association also had a self-defence corps, consisting of 30,000 soldiers. Guangdong soon emerged as a strong communist base.

The communists soon wiped out the warlords of Guangdong (Canton) province and unified the whole province under the National Government which came into existence in Guangzhou from July 1, 1925. The national government raised army regiments with the help of the student soldiers of the Huangpu Military Academy. Zhou Enlai was appointed as director of the political department of the military. Each army unit had a party representative and a political department. Party men were appointed to direct the political work of each army unit.

5.4.2 Rise of Chiang Kai-Shek

Following the death of Sun Yet-Sen, Kuomintang started suffering from intra-party cleavages, which culminated in the emergence of two rival factions, known as left and right factions. The leftists along with the communists continued to propagate Sun Yet-Sen's three cardinal principles. The rightists who were believed to represent the interests of the big landlords and the compradore bourgeoisie, though talked always in radical tongues, showed little interest in implementing Sun Yet-Sen's nationalist principles. The rightists however captured the leadership of the party. Chiang Kai-Shek was the leader of the group. Consequently he became the head of the national government and the commander-in-chief of the National Revolutionary Army.

5.4.3 Northern Expedition

The national government had a plan to attack the northern warlords. The government, therefore launched from July, 1926 expedition against them. The expedition was in fact launched by the Communists much earlier. Their armies of approximately 100,000, left Guangzhou on three separate routes and within a few months overthrew the biggest Northern warlords and captured about half of China. The headquarters of the national government and the Kuomintang moved from Guangzhou to Wuhan.

The victory of the Northern Expedition further strengthened the peasant movement. Mao Zedong led the struggle in Hunan. Hunan ultimately became the core of the peasant movement in the whole of China. The peasant movement spread quickly all over China. The membership of the peasant organizations exceeded 10 million. Workers movement also developed rapidly in the wake of the Northern Expedition. Workers led by Liu Shaoqi in Wuhan forced the British to withdraw their special rights in the city. Shanghai was liberated by the workers in March 1927 after 30 hours of bloody battle under the leadership of the Zhou Enlai.

5.4.4 Chiang Kai-Shek's Operation against the CCP

The victory of the Northern Expedition and the progress in the peasant and workers movements frightened the imperialist powers. The warships of Britain, the USA, France, Japan and Italy anchored in different sea ports of China, bombarded with artillery fire and killed and wounded many Chinese in liberated cities like Nanjing, Shanghai etc. They also established contact with Chiang Kai-Shek, Chiang, favourably responding to the imperialists' call, embarked upon fighting and victimizing the communists. Chiang Kai-Shek's assault on the CCP-led trade unions in Shanghai, virtually terminated CCP's participation in his regime.

When victimisation and repression of the communists were going on, a controversy arose within the communist party. CCP leader Chen Duxiu (who was latter condemned as rightist) in pursuance of the United Front policy of the party continued alliance with the Wang Jingwei faction of the Kuomintang in Wuhan. Chen Duxiu's policies were criticised by a big section of the CCP which on this issue reached a breaking point. Emboldened by the internal crisis in the CCP, Wang convened in July 1927 at Wuhan a conference of the Kuomintang and managed to get the party freed from the communists. Many communists and other radicals were persecuted and some were even killed. After the conference both the factions of the Kuomintang (the Wang faction and the Chiang faction) got united. The Northern Expedition came to an end with the crashing defeat of the communists and the negotiated unification of China under Chiang Kai-Shek who was now firmly saddled in power.

5.5 SECOND REVOLUTIONARY CIVIL WAR: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMUNIST (RED) ARMY

North Expedition aimed to overthrow the warlords but ended with the establishment of Chiang Kai-Shek's rule. Chiang Kai-Shek had support among the landlords and the compradores. He defeated the communists but could not wipe them out. Soon the Communists regrouped themselves and staged an armed uprising in Nanchang in August 1927. The uprising was led by Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, He Long and others. The Nanchang uprising was the first armed struggle, exclusively planned, led and conducted by the communists. The uprising gave birth to the Communist (Red) Army led by Zhu De and Mao Zedong.

5.5.1 Autumn Harvest Uprising

The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in 1927 relieved Chen Duxiu from party leadership. A new politburo was elected. The meeting formulated the policy of agrarian revolution and of struggle against the Kuomintang rule. It also drew a plan for autumn harvest war in Hunan, Hubei, Jiangxi and Guangdong provinces. The new central committee of the party authorised Mao Zedong to lead the Autumn Harvest war. The war broke out on September 9. The people's liberation army consisting of peasants and workers faced defeat in the urban areas where the Kuomintang had assembled much superior forces. The successive defeats led Mao Zedong to change the tactics of fighting the Kuomintang. He began to concentrate in the countryside where Chiang Kai-Shek's position was weak.

In December 1927 the communists staged another uprising in Guangzhou. After an initial victory the uprising was crushed by the government forces. The Nanchang

uprising, Autumn Harvest war and the Guangzhou uprising were crushed but they nevertheless dealt a severe blow at the Kuomintang led National government. The Chinese Communist Party entered subsequently into a new period during which the Red Army was created.

5.5.2 Rural Revolutionary Bases

Mao Zedong, with his followers consisting of workers and peasants, arrived in October 1927 at the Jinggang Mountains where he established a workers and peasants regime, raised a local armed force, organized party units, introduced agrarian reforms and also trained masses in guerrilla warfare. In this way Mao Zedong raised his first rural base in the Jinggang Mountains. In April 1928 Zhu De and Chen Yi reached the Jinggang Mountains with the surviving participants of the Nanchang and Hunan uprisings respectively. Now the three forces were amalgamated and reorganized into the New Fourth Army of the Chinese workers and peasants army. Zhu De became the commander. Mao and Chen Yi became the party head and political director of the army respectively. Mao Zedong in order to defend the base developed his guerrilla tactics which was summarized as: "the enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass, the enemy tires, we attack, the enemy retreats we pursue."

From the Jinggang Mountain base the army under the leadership of Mao and Zhu De extended the rural communist bases in different areas of China. Within a few years CCP established its control over Southern Jiangxi, Western Fujian, Ruijin, and many other places. The strength of army grew to 60,000 in 1930 from only 10,000 in 1927. Wherever the CCP established rural bases, the agrarian system was restructured. Age old landlordism was abolished and land was distributed among the peasants. These actions popularized the party and encouraged the people there to join the CCP. The spread of communist bases in the rural areas frightened Chiang Kai-Shek who thereupon adopted a policy of encirclement and suppression of the growing communist bases. But his successive raids in 1930-31 failed to crush the communist power. On the contrary communists extended their bases and the army increased its rank and file.

During the period from 1927 to 1930 Mao Zedong developed his thesis of encircling the city. In two essays entitled "Why is it that Red political power can exist in China?" (1928) and "A single spark can start a Prairie Fire" (1930) Mao elaborated his thesis of encirclement. He pointed out that China, a semi-colonial country indirectly controlled by the imperialists was extremely uneven in its political and economic developments. "...A localized agricultural economy (not a unified capitalist economy) and the imperialist policy of marking off spheres of influence in order to divide and exploit" and the resultant "prolonged splits and wars within the White regime" combined to weaken the reactionary rule in remote countryside and enabled the base areas to emerge, persist and develop amidst the encirclement of the "White regime". Mao Zedong further pointed out that the establishment of revolutionary bases and political power in rural areas, the thorough implementation of the agrarian revolution, and the development of armed struggle—all these were prerequisites to the strategy of marching to the countryside, building the revolutionary forces there and encircling the cities from the villages for the final nationwide victory of the revolutionary cause.

5.5.3 Japanese Aggression

In September 1931 Japan intensified aggression against China. Japan attacked Shenyang. Later Shanghai in 1932. Chiang Kai-Shek's army, stationed in Shanghai fought against Japan heroically, but due to lack of proper support of the Kuomintang government the resistance soon collapsed. At this juncture an anti-Japanese democratic movement, led by the CCP spread in many parts of the country. In course of time a big army was raised under the leadership of the communists. The army was named as the Allied Anti-Japanese Army of the northeast region. In 1931 the Allied Army brought under its control almost half of the north eastern region and forced the Japanese to give up its plan to attack China proper. The communist led Allied Army inflicted blows after blows upon the Japanese forces.

5.5.4 Chiang Kai-Shek's Attack on the Communists

Chiang Kai-Shek from the very beginning had been hostile towards the communists. He desired to wipe out CCP mass bases, in the countryside of the nation. In 1930-31 he conducted three campaigns against the CCP bases but failed. In February 1933 Chiang again without paying attention to the repeated Japanese attacks upon China, mobilized a huge army against the communists. At this time also he was badly defeated.

5.5.5 Long March

As a result of repeated defeats of Chiang Kai-Shek in 1931 the power and support bases of the communists increased across China. The CCP established people's government in more than 300 counties (A county is almost equivalent to a district in India). Ruijin was chosen as the headquarters of the communists. The Chinese Communist Party however failed to withstand the repeated attacks of Chiang Kai-Shek. In October 1934 the core sections of the peasant army built by Mao Zedong and Zu De left the base areas and began its march towards the north. The army suffered from heavy losses and was reduced to less than 50 per cent of its original strength. This Long March brought great glory to the communists.

Earlier in January 1931 the leadership of the Chinese communist party had changed. Wang Ming emerged as the leader. He was an advocate of a political line diametrically opposite to Mao's strategy. Wang insisted on the seizing of big cities and capturing power by armed forces. He set forth as the first task of the army to capture major urban centres and ordered the workers and students in the Kuomintang strongholds to go on strike and paralyse the official machineries. As a consequence of these strategies the party units in the Kuomintang areas were wiped out. Wang also persecuted the party members who expressed reservations against his policies. Mao Zedong was thrown out from the leadership of the Army. When the Army, however, suffered from heavy losses in the hands of the Chiang's army, the central committee of the CCP convened a meeting of its Political Bureau (PB) in January 1935. The PB, severely criticised Wang's policy, restored Mao's "policy of encirclement", and the leadership structure of the CCP was also reorganized. Mao was placed at the helm of the CCP affairs. The decision probably reinvigorated the Army which swiftly entered north western Sichuan. Mao Zedong, ordered the Red Army to march towards north. After heavy casualties and sufferings the Red Army reached northern Shanxi in October 1935 where it joined the communists soldiers stationed there. Thus an unprecedented Long March of 12,500 kilometers ended. In October 1936 other groups of communist army led by He Long and others arrived and joined the central army.

5.5.6 Anti-Japanese United Front

In 1935 Japan formulated policy of converting north China as Japanese colony. The students in Beijing (Peking) rose in revolt against the Kuomintang's policy of "selling out north China" to Japan. The students led by the CCP, demanded among others the immediate cease fire with the communists, and all out unity against foreign aggression. Students in thousands organized demonstration and went to the factories and rural areas to organize masses in support of their demands. The CCP also felt and concluded that the contradiction between the Chinese nation and Japanese imperialism at this juncture was the principal contradiction. It therefore resolved to untie with all forces that could be united with and adopted the policy of a national united front against Japanese aggression.

The movement against Japanese imperialism spread in many parts of China like wild fire. Even within the Kuomintang army squabble started. The Northeastern and Northwestern armies which were sent to fight the communists, refused to fire on them. Chiang Kai-Shek came down to Xian for commanding the army personally against the communists. But he was arrested by the revolting army on December 12, 1936. The army commanders thereupon sent messages throughout China, requesting cessation of the civil war and the promotion of alliance with

the CCP to fight against Japan. He Yingqin meanwhile in order to satisfy his ambition of capturing power, sought aid from Japan and decided to continue the civil war against the CCP. He sent troops to attack Tongguan, east of Xian. At this juncture the CCP offered a proposal for peace to Chiang Kai-Shek.

Japan attacked Lugouqiao in July, 1937. The attack was repulsed, but the aggression marked the beginning of China's war of Resistance against Japan. The CCP called upon the people to join the war of resistance. The party also sent Zhou Enlai to talk with Chiang Kai-Shek who was still hesitating to take part in the war against Japan. Japanese forces attacked Shanghai and threatened Nanjing. Chiang Kai-Shek now started feeling shaky. The western powers also felt disturbed. Chiang Kai-Shek's Kuomintang government now decided to formally participate in the war against Japan and signed an agreement with CCP on joint resistance. As per the terms of the agreement the peasant army was renamed as the Eighth Route Army of the National Revolutionary Army. Later, guerrilla forces were reorganized as the New Fourth Army under the command of Ye Ting. The Kuomintang accorded legal status to the CCP and publicly committed to a Kuomintang-Communist co-operation. Thus the Anti-Japanese National United Front formally came into existence and the CCP got legal status to function.

5.5.7 Collapse of the Kuomintang Front Against Japan

Kuomintang probably did not want to resist Japan, but circumstances might have forced it to adopt such posture. It still was suffering from communist phobia. Kuomintang was afraid to mobilize the people lest the communists should be more popular. It did not even mobilize its total military strength to resist the Japanese aggression. In order to preserve its strength big contingents of the army were sent to southwest and northwest China. The Kuomintang perhaps desired that the communists fight and in the process get annihilated. What happened actually was just the opposite. Kuomintang forces were defeated by Japan in all the encounters in 1937-38. Japan captured Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Wuhan and the whole of north China by March 1938. Kuomintang government was forced to transfer its capital to Chongqing in Sichuan province. Japanese invaders inflicted heavy loss upon China. The cities and towns, were destroyed, lakhs of people were killed, houses and business centres were pillaged and burnt down. According to an estimate in Nanjing alone about 300,000 people were killed and one third of city's houses were pillaged and burnt down.

5.5.8 CCP'S Anti-Japanese Bases

Kuomintang's repeated defeats however did not deter the CCP from mobilizing the people in the war of resistance. The CCP led Eighth Route Army reached at the front of north China after crossing the mighty Huangho river. Chinese under the leadership of the CCP won their first victory against Japan in September 1938. The victory heartened the whole of China. After the victory the Eighth Route Army carrying on the guerrilla warfare founded anti-Japanese bases in many Japanese occupied territories in north China. In south China also their bases were established by the New Fourth Army in different areas. Towards the end of 1938 Eighth Route Army from the north and the New Fourth Army from the south trapped nearly half of the Japanese forces stationed in China. In these anti-Japanese bases the CCP established civil governments which considered the popular demands and carried out reforms like the reduction of rent and interest. These measures popularized the CCP and led the people to join them in the resistance war against Japan. Yanan where the headquarters of the CCP were situated, emerged as the nerve-centre of the country wide anti-Japanese war. It was difficult to defeat the superior Japanese divisions in a swift and straight war. Realizing this the CCP followed the policy of protracted guerrilla war. Mao in a pamphlet entitled "On Protracted War" in May 1938, emphasized that China would surely win the war had she been in a position to prolong the war and to transform it into a people's war. He wrote that "the army and the people are the foundation of victory" and that "the richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people."

The growing Red bases inside China and the outbreak of the second world war

led Japan to adopt new tactics—the policy of “stick and carrot”. By following the policy Japan won over a faction of the Kuomintang, led by Wang Jingwei who with Japanese support set up a regime, headed by him in Nanjing. The Chiang Kai-Shek faction though had been with the Anglo-American bloc, attached more importance to fighting communists rather than Japan. Chiang Kai-Shek attacked the communists three times during the period from 1939 to 1943. The CCP smashed all such attacks. Its attitude towards the United Front was that of unity and struggle. In fighting battles it followed the principle of self-defence: “we will not attack unless we are attacked; if we are attacked, we will certainly counter attack”.

5.5.9 Problems of the Liberated Areas

In 1941-42 Japan concentrated major portion of her armed forces in China. Japanese forces coupled with their Chinese collaborators launched “mopping up operations” against the Red bases. The Kuomintang forces led by Chiang Kai-Shek also at this time intensified their attacks against the communists. The problems created by these attacks were further augmented due to the successive droughts in north China. In order to overcome the difficulties the entire party including the leaders were mobilized. They devoted full energy in raising the production to meet the demands for the essentials of life. After tremendous hard work the problem of basic needs was almost solved. The party had also launched at this time inner party ideological struggle against any deviation. Classes were opened to teach the cadres Marxism-Leninism. By employing the party for three-pronged struggles (the struggle against the anti-communist forces, struggle for raising material production and the inner party struggle) the problems of the Red bases were solved by the beginning of 1943.

5.5.10 Victory over Japan

In 1944 the communist led Liberated Areas started counter offensive against Japan and won significant victories. With the beginning of 1945 more areas were liberated and the strength of the people's armed forces increased unprecedentedly. According to an estimate there were more than nine lakh regular army and more than two million irregulars. Japanese invaders fled from the countryside and took shelter in the big cities, surrounded by the liberated Areas. When the second world war was fast coming to an end Soviet Union attacked Japanese aggressors in China's north eastern provinces, which further helped and encouraged the communists to attack Japan on a grand scale. Japan by this time lost the war and signed the instrument of surrender on September 2, 1945. The Chinese people after eight years of bitter struggle, finally won victory in the anti-Japanese war.

5.5.11 Seventh Congress of CCP

The Seventh Congress of the CCP was convened at a juncture when the victory over Japan was a matter of days and the Chinese revolution was about to enter into a new phase. The congress met in Yanan between April 23 and June 11, 1945. The membership of the party rose to 1.21 million spread over the country. 752 delegates, duly elected by the members attended the Congress. The Congress decided to mobilize the people for defeating the Japanese aggressors and for building a new China. A fresh party constitution was framed and a new central committee headed by Mao Zedong was elected:

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space below each question to give your answer.
ii) Check your answer with the answer given at the end.

- 1) What were the circumstances leading to the formation of anti-Japanese united front.

2) Write short notes on:

(a) Autumn Harvest War

(b) Long March

5.6 THIRD (FINAL) REVOLUTIONARY CIVIL WAR: POST-WORLD WAR II CHINA

Following the victory over Japan it was expected that China would become an independent, democratic and self-reliant country. But Chiang Kai-Shek aspired to continue in power without introducing any reform to develop China. China was still a semi-feudal semi-colonial state. After World War II the USA emerged as the neo-colonial power. The USA desired to convert China into a pro-US state, Chiang Kai-Shek had already become a trusted friend of the USA. But the CCP while fighting the Japanese, liberated large areas and established in these areas people's government backed by a huge army and vast following in the masses. Chiang Kai-Shek who wanted to remain unchallenged leader of the Chinese, however realized that it was beyond his capacity to smash the communists immediately. He therefore in order to gain time volunteered to negotiate peace with the CCP. Peace talks opened on August 28, 1945 and continued for about one and half months. Talks ended with the signing of the "Double Tenth Agreement" which declared that "civil war must be avoided at all costs, and an independent, free, prosperous, and strong new China be created." Time, provided by the peace negotiation helped the Kuomintang to regain its strength. Chiang Kai-Shek now without giving the peace agreement a fair trial, ordered a huge army to attack the Liberated Areas. The CCP had little faith upon the Kuomintang. It always kept itself ready for any eventuality. Its army launched a counter attack and dealt a severe blow to Chiang's army. Chiang Kai-Shek again signed on January 10, 1946 a truce agreement with the CCP. But the agreement could not stop Chiang's army from continuing its aggression against the Liberated Areas. The attacks at times on a massive scale continued against the Liberated Areas. An important political development took place during the period. A political consultative conference was held in Changging under the auspices of the CCP and other democratic parties. The conference passed resolutions supporting peace and democracy. The Kuomintang agent attacked the delegates who came to attend the conference and also killed a few democratic leaders. After these incidents at the second plenary session of the Kuomintang's sixth Central Executive Committee, Chiang Kai-Shek refused to abide by the decision of the political consultative conference and tore into pieces the resolutions of the conference. In June 1946 Chiang Kai-Shek unilaterally abrogated the truce agreement and declared an all out war against the communists.

On June 26, 1946 Kuomintang troops started to attacking the Liberated Areas on all fronts, thus a full-scale war between the CCP forces and the Kuomintang broke out.

5.6.1 Defeat of Chiang Kai-Shek

had an army consisting of more than four million men. It had within its administrative jurisdiction vast areas, most of the big cities, industrial areas, railways and other lines of communication and transportation. There were more than three hundred million people in the Kuomintang controlled areas. The Kuomintang had captured the armaments surrendered by the Japanese troops. The Kuomintang had also the military and financial backing of the USA. On the other hand, the CCP had only an army of one million men, equipped with old weapon. It enjoyed only a token assistance from the war torn erstwhile Soviet Union. The areas under its control were mostly villages, with only one fourth of the total population of China. In comparison, therefore, the Kuomintang was far superior and stronger than the CCP. The superior strength might have led the Kuomintang to go for a full scale war against the CCP controlled Liberated Areas.

The CCP in order to face the superior force without upsetting the seizing of city or holding of areas as its main objective decided to strive for forming people's united front against the US imperialism and the misrule of Chiang Kai-Shek. The plan clicked. Popular support increased. The Communist army was welcomed wherever it entered. This army consisting of the Eighth Route Army, the New Fourth Army and other CCP led armed units, was designated from now on as the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

The PLA within a few months from the date of the outbreak of the civil war between the CCP and the Kuomintang defeated the enemy several times which lost by about seven lakh troops. In March 1947 Kuomintang concentrated its attack on the Liberated Areas in Shandong and Northern Shaanxi. The PLA repulsed the attacks.

During the period 1945-1947 there had been protest movements in several parts of China. In December 1946 lakhs of students across the country went on strikes and organized demonstrations against American misbehaviour with the Chinese people in general and women in particular. Students of more than 60 cities rose against the economic hardships caused by the war. In the industrial cities workers went on strikes in support of their demands and that of the students' movement. In 1947 the peasant movement spread to many new areas. In many places the peasants rose in arms against the Kuomintang. In Taiwan there had been a massive armed uprising in February 1947. In this way the non-communist democratic movements in the Kuomintang held areas opened almost the second war front for Chiang's forces.

5.6.2 Land Reforms in the Liberated Areas

The CCP led governments in the liberated areas reduced the rent and interest on land during the period of anti-Japanese war. In May 1946 the CCP formulated a comprehensive land reform policy and implemented it as swiftly as possible. The party published in September 1947 the "Outline of the Agrarian Law of China." The law envisaged the confiscation of land from the landlord class and its distribution among the peasants. The law stipulated that the landlordism was to be abolished. The slogan of "land to the tillers" was incorporated in the law. All rights of the landlords over land were abolished and land was confiscated from the feudal land holders and it was distributed equitably among the rural population. Through the land reform measures over a hundred million peasants in the liberated areas got land. These peasants now became the recruiting ground for the PLA. The CCP thus strengthened its support base in the rural areas.

5.6.3 Expansion of the Democratic United Front

In October 1947 the CCP in cooperation with the PLA called upon the people to "overthrow Chiang Kai-Shek and liberate all China." The CCP gave a call: "unite workers, peasants, soldiers, intellectuals and businessmen, all oppressed classes, all people's organizations, democratic parties, minority nationalities, overseas Chinese and other patriots form a national united front; overthrow the dictatorial Chiang Kai-Shek government; and establish a democratic coalition government." In December the CCP declared its economic policy which put forward three key points: "(1) confiscate land from the feudal landlords and

redistribute it among the peasants; (2) confiscate monopoly capital, headed by the four big families of Chiang Kai-Shek, Sang Ziwen, Kong Xiangxi and Chen Lifa, and turn it over to the new democratic state and (3) protect the industry and commerce of the national bourgeoisie." The policy was formulated to elicit wide support from the masses across the country. Most of the democratic forces responded favourably. In cooperation with these democratic forces the CCP formed the wider people's democratic front.

5.6.4 Liberation of the Mainland

By the end of 1947 the PLA shifted the main battlefield from the Liberated Areas to the heartland of Kuomintang's territory. It captured many cities and destroyed much of the enemy's effective strength. In 1948 the PLA conducted three campaigns which ended with the liberation of northeast PLA conducted north China and the east and central Chinese areas. Chiang's troops were wiped out.

On January 1, 1949 Kuomintang again clamoured for peace. Mao Zedong proposed eight conditions for securing peace which included among others the punishment of war criminals. Chiang Kai-Shek "retired" from the presidency, the vice-president Li Zongren assumed the reigns of the government. Peace talks began on April 1 and after fifteen days deliberation peace agreement was agreed upon on the basis of the eight conditions. But Li Zongren refused to accept the agreement. The last attempt for peace thus ended.

Thereupon one million men strong PLA began to cross the Yangtze river and to march southward. Soon it captured Nanjing the centre of Kuomintang regime. It captured one after another, the stronghold of the Kuomintang. All of China excluding Tibet, Taiwan and some coastal islands, was liberated within a short period. The Revolution thus ended with the victory of the Communists. Chiang Kai-Shek fled to Taiwan on December 7, 1949.

5.6.5 Foundation of the People's Republic of China

On the eve of the final victory the CCP held the second plenary session of the Seventh Central Committee at a village in Hebei province in March 1949. The meeting decided upon the basic policies for the speedy achievement of final victory and for the rebuilding of war-torn China. After the session the CCP and the PLA shifted their headquarters to Beijing. The democratic parties and personnel also reached Beijing.

Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference called its First Plenary Session in Beijing on September 22, 1949. 662 delegates representing the various anti-Kuomintang political forces, the CCP, minor nationalities and overseas Chinese, attended the session. The session performed the functions and exercised the power of the National People's Congress, the highest political institution of China. The conference passed "The Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference." The Programme served as the provisional constitution. It founded the People's Republic of China (PRC)—a people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class and based upon the alliance between the workers and the peasants. Beijing (Peking) was chosen as the capital of the PRC. Mao Zedong was elected as the Chairman of the Central People's Government and Zhou Enlai was appointed as the Prime Minister of China.

On October 1, 1949 lakhs of people assembled at the Tiananmen Square, Beijing to attend the ceremony that marked the formal beginning of the PRC. Mao Zedong inaugurated the new state, one fourth of the humanity rejoiced with Mao Zedong, and China entered into a new period.

The proclamation of the People's Republic of China was an event opening a new chapter in China's history. The victory of the Chinese revolution was facilitated by the defeat of Japanese militarism in the East, liberation of China from the Kuomintang forces that were backed by the United States.

Note: i) Use the space below each question to give your answer.

ii) Check your answer with the answer given at the end.

1) How do you account for the defeat of the Kuomintang?

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2) Write notes on:

- 1) Land Reform in the Liberated Areas.
- 2) Democratic united front.
- 3) CCP's response to Kuomintang's offer for peace.

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5.7 MATERIALIST TREND IN CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

The ideology of Chinese revolution was extracted from materialism which is a philosophical trend, opposed to idealism. The origin of materialism in China may be traced to the formative phase of Chinese philosophy. Ancient Chinese philosophy continued to develop from the 5th to 3rd century B.C. It was in this period that the main Chinese philosophical schools, Taoism, Confucianism etc, emerged. Many ancient Chinese thinkers sought to solve the problem of the relationship between the concept and reality. Mo Tze, Xun Zu and others held that concepts are reflections of objective phenomena and things. Since then successive generations of philosophers went on enriching the materialistic trend of philosophy. During the period of neo Confucianism there had been a strong section of philosophers who argued in favour of materialism. The question of the relationship between the concept and reality was further developed in the 17th and 18th centuries; it was resolved materialistically by Tai Chen. With the beginning of foreign penetration of China in the mid 19th century, the Chinese people reacted to the oppression of the feudal lords and foreign aggression by a powerful peasant rebellion, the Taiping movement, in which utopian ideas on the social reconstruction of society played a significant role. As a result of western education, liberal and socialist ideas started penetrating in the late 19th century. The scientific socialism (i.e. Marxism) began spreading in China in the wake of the May 4, 1919 movement under the influence of the 1917 Russian revolution.

5.7.1 Coming of Marxism to China

Chinese intellectuals though vaguely acquainted with Marxism since the turn of the century, remained impervious to its ideological attraction. Socialism or social revolutionary thinking had been familiar to Chinese intellectuals, nearly twenty years before the Russian revolution. The ideas were stimulated by the twin trends of "social policy", socialism and anarchism. The former was espoused by Sun Yet-Sen's Kuomintang (Guomintang) and by Jiang Kanghu, founder of the Chinese socialist party in 1911. Their socialism "sought to control capitalism in order to achieve a peaceful and egalitarian social development under government supervision." Anarchism also emerged as the most popular form of socialism in China on the eve of the 1917 Russian revolution. Anarchists, however did not

undertake organized activity except independent and isolated cultural and propaganda work. In the wake of the May Fourth movement of 1919 the radical intelligentsia felt frustrated by the activities of the various radical student associations as well as by the absence of a concrete and immediate programme of action. The Russian revolution provided them a paradigm for a successful revolutionary transformation, especially in the context of industrial expansion during and after World War I, resulting in the emergence of capital and labour in major Chinese cities. The Russian revolution engineered by Lenin, in fact, sensitized the Chinese radicals to the revolutionary potential of Marxism and prompted them to undertake a study of Marxism. Anarchism and non-Marxian socialism faced gradual decline. By 1922 being a communist in China meant accepting Marxism and the political agenda of Marxist party. The ideological shift of Chinese radicals culminated in the foundation of the communist movement under the banner of the Chinese Communist Party.

5.7.2 Emergence of Mao's Thought

Marxism is a system of philosophical, economic and socio-political views, created by Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Fredrick Engels (1820-1895). V. I. Lenin (1870-1924) creatively developed it in new conditins. Chinese Communist Party under the leadership of Mao Zedong (Mao Tse Tung) also enriched it in the light of Chinese conditions and it was named as Marxism-Leninism Mao's (Maoism) thought. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism provided ideological guide of the Chinese revolution.

The theoretical basis, policies and activities of the CCP during the period of the revolution were defined and governed by the particular experiences accumulated, and strategic thoughts developed in a series of revolutionary struggles as well as by the perceptions of reality and principles of conduct widely shared by the party activists and leaders. Mao's ideas were defined as "the guiding principles of all (its) work" in the party constitution adopted during the CCP's seventh congress in 1945 at Yanan. While speaking at the Congress Liu Shaoqi defined "Mao's thought as an ideology that united the theory of Marxism-Leninism and the practice of the Chinese revolution..." Mao's thought should not be regarded as exclusively his personal intellectual property. It represents broadly the collective wisdom and shared experiences of all Marxist intellectuals of the age. The experiences and ideas which the CCP had learned while waging protracted struggles were summed up as Mao's Thought.

5.7.3 Mao Zedong's Thought

"Mao Zedong Thought" was developed over the years from the experiences of Mao Zedong and his other comrades in the prolonged and recurring struggles. Mao Zedong was sent to Hunan in 1925 to organize the peasants. While working with the peasants, he developed his understanding of them. His Hunan impressions led him to formulate the thesis on peasantry. He published his "Report on an investigation of the peasant movement in Hunan" in 1927. Highlighting the importance of peasants in the revolution he wrote: "In a very short time, in China's central, southern, and northern provinces, several hundred million peasants will rise like a tornado or tempest, a force so extraordinarily swift and violent that no power, however great, will be able to suppress it. They will break all trammels that now bind them and rush forward along the road to liberation. They will send all imperialists, warlords, corrupt officials, local bullies, and bad gentry to their graves. All revolutionary parties and all revolutionary comrades will stand before them to be tested, and to be accepted or rejected as they decide." Mao Zedong allotted the peasants seven out ten points in the accomplishments of the democratic revolution. He developed his thesis in the context of the then China. The country was primarily agrarian. Land was the main basis of the people's livelihood, and by the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century it could no longer keep them alive without radical changes. This truth was realized by Mao Zedong and his comrades alone. In the midst of struggle both against foreign aggression and the domestic reactionary class he raised a Peoples' Army from among mainly the peasantry and built up a disciplined party organization.

Struggles in the 1930's convinced Mao on the efficacy of united front politics. He elaborated his theory in the booklet "On New Democracy" which was published in 1940. He advocated the idea of the alliance of all people who were willing to fight Japanese imperialism and to devote for building China into a new democratic state. Following the Marxist-Leninist principles he further developed the concept of democratic centralism. He showed how the people, through free discussion and exercising suffrage freely, could participate effectively in the decision making process. Dealing on the economic policy of the new democracy he said that private and public enterprises could exist side by side. "All big banks, big industries, and big commercial enterprises shall be state owned—the state will not confiscate other forms of private property or forbid the development of capitalist production so long as it is taken for granted that it does not dominate the people's livelihood."

Mao Zedong's philosophical views were outlined in the essay named "On Contradiction". Following Marxist theory of dialectics he writes that conflict is inherent to human relations, it also governed politics. He points out that there are two types of contradictions—antagonistic and non-antagonistic. Contradictions that exist between hostile classes and hostile social systems, such as between landlords and tenants, between capitalism and socialism are antagonistic. Non-antagonistic contradictions are the contradictions between the interests of the nation as a whole and those of the individuals, the contradictions of democracy and centralism, the contradictions between leaders and led, between the government and the people. Mao Zedong mentioned that—"it is of paramount importance for us to understand concretely the law of contradictions in things and that on the basis of such analysis we may find out the methods of solving these contradictions." For Mao Zedong the antagonistic contradictions require struggle for resolution and the nonantagonistic contradictions would be resolved through persuasion, friendly discussion and such other nonviolent methods. He mentioned that "contradictions are universal, absolute, existing in all processes of the development of things, and running through all processes from beginning to end."

Elaborating his theory of knowledge he said that party members must not divorce self-cultivation from revolutionary practice or from the actual revolutionary movements of the labouring masses. He wrote, "Discover the truth through practice and again through practice verify and develop the truth. Start from perceptual knowledge and actively develop it into rational knowledge; then start from rational knowledge and actively guide revolutionary practice to change both the subjective and the objective world. Practice, knowledge, again practice and again knowledge. This form repeats itself in endless cycles, and with each cycle the content of practice and knowledge rises to a higher level. Such is the whole of the dialectical materialism theory of knowledge, and such is the dialectical materialistic theory of unity of knowing and doing."

He asked the party cadre to rise above personal interest and said that, "At no time and in no circumstances should a communist place his personal interests first; he should subordinate them to the interests of the nation and of the masses to the people. Hence, selfishness, slacking, corruption, striving for the limelight, etc. are most contemptible, while selflessness, working with all one's energy, wholehearted devotion to public duty, and quiet hard work are the qualities that command respect..."

Mao Zedong prescribed "Three Main Rules of Discipline" and the "Eight Points of Attention" for revolutionary party.

The Three Main Rules of Discipline are:

- 1) Obey orders in all your actions.
- 2) Don't take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses.
- 3) Turn in everything captured.

The Eight Points of Attention are:

- 1) Speak politely.
- 2) Pay fairly for what you buy.

- 3) Return everything you borrow.
- 4) Pay for anything you damage.
- 5) Don't hit or swear at people.
- 6) Don't damage crops.
- 7) Don't take liberties with women.
- 8) Don't ill-treat captives.

These were the principles on the basis of which both the army and the communist party were built up and they fought the revolutionary struggles to build a new China.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: i) Use the space provided below each question to give your answer.
ii) Check your answer with the answer given at the end of the unit.

- 1) What are the sources of the ideology of the Chinese revolution?

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- 2) Discuss the main contributions of Mao Zedong to Marxism.

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5.8 LET US SUM UP

Revolution occurs when a given society is prepared both objectively and subjectively for a radical change. The objective conditions are created by economic and political crisis and the possibilities of social revolution in a given social system. The mere existence of the objective conditions is not enough to ensure victory of a social revolution. Besides the objective conditions, there must also be subjective factors which arise out of the readiness of the suffering mass to fight bravely and selflessly and party which can offer correct strategy and tactical guidance. China during the last hundred years prior to the revolution had been a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country, which contributed to create a socio-economic crisis in the society. The Chinese Communist Party availed the opportunity to carry on revolution by offering leadership, strategy and tactical guidance to the people.

Foreign penetration was not confined to economic exploitation alone. It penetrated in the cultural and intellectual domains also. Chinese intelligentsia came to know of the progress that the advanced countries of Europe had achieved in the fields of science, technology and in the system of government. The intelligentsia immediately started demanding the rebuilding of China on Western lines like that of neighbouring Japan. But the rulers comprising the Manchu kings, court officials, feudal landlords and other traditional and conservative elements suppressed the emerging reform movements. Though the democratic nationalists put an end to the Manchu rule in 1911, they were trapped by the conservative reactionary elements who even did not hesitate to invoke foreign powers for the maintenance of their power and privileges. The Chinese radicals following the path of Russian Communists founded the Chinese Communist Party. The Chinese Communist Party organized the people, formulated the strategy and tactical line to fight the foreign power, and the internal forces of reaction. It had to fight a protracted civil war to ensure the victory of the revolution.

5.9 KEY WORDS

Celestial Kingdom: Heavenly kingdom. In olden days Chinese called their land as celestial (Heavenly) kingdom.

Revolution: A radical, qualitative transformation of society, making the transition, from one socio-economic formation to another, from the absolute to the progressive system.

War Lords: Autonomous powerful military leaders in possession of land of China passed under the control of the autonomous powerful military commanders during the early decades of 20th century.

White Regime: A government opposed to the communist power. Chiang Kai-Shek regime was called as white regime.

5.10 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

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Chun-tu Hsueh, 1962. *The Chinese Communist Movement, 1937-1949*, Hoover Institution, Stanford.

George F. Botjer, 1979. *A Short History of Nationalist China: 1919-1949*, New York; Putman's.

A. Doak Barnett, 1963. *China on the Eve of the Communist Takeover*, New York; Praeger.

5.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Emergence of working class due to industrialization.
May 4 Movement radicalized the politics.
1917 Russian Revolution.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Frequent Japanese attack and repression created an anti-Japanese sentiment throughout China. The CCP encashed the sentiment to raise an Anti-Japanese United Front.
- 2) a) Autumn Harvest War was fought against the Kuomintang forces in September 1927. The experiences in the war led Mao Zedong to evolve his thesis of developing rural bases.
b) Chiang Kai-Shek's repeated attacks forced the CCP and its army to undertake the Long March of about 12,500 kilometers from south to north in 1934-35.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Kuomintang's inability to lead the national liberation movement, started by Sun Yet-Sen, into its logical conclusion is mainly responsible for its defeat. Sun Yet-Sen planned to build an anti-imperialist democratic platform under the banner of KMT, but Chiang Kai-Shek transformed it into an anti-communist, pro-conservative pro-imperialist political party. The CCP exploited this weakness and inflicted defeat upon the KMT.

- 2) 1) Confiscation of land from the landlords and distribution of the confiscated land among the real peasants.
- 2) In response to the call of the CCP for defeating the US backed Chiang Kai-Shek's reactionary army and to build China a new look the non-communist democratic forces made alliance with the CCP to form democratic united front.
- 3) CCP always responded positively to KMT's offer for peace.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) 1) Materialist tradition of Chinese philosophy.
- 2) Marxism-Leninism.
- 3) CCP's experiences.
- 2) 1) Importance of peasantry in the social revolution.
- 2) New Democracy.
- 3) Materialist theory to knowledge.
- 4) Process of resolution of the contradictions.
- 5) Rules and disciplines for the revolutionary cadres.