Qubilai Khan and Chabi in camp.

Exercises

ANSWER IN BRIEF

1. Why was trade so significant to the Mongols?
2. Why did Genghis Khan feel the need to fragment the Mongol tribes into new social and military groupings?
3. How do later Mongol reflections on the *yasa* bring out the uneasy relationship they had with the memory of Genghis Khan.
4. 'If history relies upon written records produced by city-based literati, nomadic societies will always receive a hostile representation.' Would you agree with this statement? Does it explain the reason why Persian chronicles produced such inflated figures of casualties resulting from Mongol campaigns?

ANSWER IN A SHORT ESSAY

5. Keeping the nomadic element of the Mongol and Bedouin societies in mind, how, in your opinion, did their respective historical experiences differ? What explanations would you suggest account for these differences?
6. How does the following account enlarge upon the character of the Pax Mongolica created by the Mongols by the middle of the thirteenth century?

   The Franciscan monk, William of Rubruck, was sent by Louis IX of France on an embassy to the great Khan Mongke's court. He reached Karakorum, the capital of Mongke, in 1254 and came upon a woman from Lorraine (in France) called Paquette, who had been brought from Hungary and was in the service of one of the prince's wives who was a Nestorian Christian. At the court he came across a Parisian goldsmith named Guillaume Boucher, 'whose brother dwelt on the Grand Pont in Paris'. This man was first employed by the Queen Sorghaqtani and then by Mongke's younger brother. Rubruck found that at the great court festivals the Nestorian priests were admitted first, with their regalia, to bless the Grand Khan's cup, and were followed by the Muslim clergy and Buddhist and Taoist monks…

III

CHANGING TRADITIONS

The Three Orders

Changing Cultural Traditions

Confrontation of Cultures

CHANGING TRADITIONS

WE have seen how, by the ninth century, large parts of Asia and America witnessed the growth and expansion of great empires – some nomadic, some based on well-developed cities and trading networks that centred on them. The difference between the Macedonian, Roman and Arab empires and the ones that preceded them (the Egyptian, Assyrian, Chinese, Mauryan) was that they covered greater areas of territory, and were continental or transcontinental in nature. The Mongol empire was similar.

Different cultural encounters were crucial to what took place. The arrival of empires was almost always sudden, but they were almost always the result of changes that had been taking place over a long time in the core of what would become an empire.

Traditions in world history could change in different ways. In western Europe during the period from the ninth to the seventeenth centuries, much that we connect with modern times evolved slowly – the development of scientific knowledge based on experiment rather than religious belief, serious thought about the organisation of government, with attention to the creation of civil services, parliaments and different codes of law, improvements in technology that was used in industry and agriculture. The consequences of these changes could be felt with great force outside Europe.

As we have seen, by the fifth century CE, the Roman Empire in the west had disintegrated. In western and central Europe, the remains of the Roman Empire were slowly adapted to the administrative requirements and needs of tribes that had established kingdoms there. However, urban centres were smaller in western Europe than further east.

By the ninth century, the commercial and urban centres – Aix, London, Rome, Sienna – though small, could not be dismissed. From the ninth to the eleventh centuries, there were major developments in the countryside in western Europe. The Church and royal government developed a combination of Roman institutions with the customary

rules of tribes. The finest example was the empire of Charlemagne in western and central Europe at the beginning of the ninth century. Even after its rapid collapse, urban centres and trading networks persisted, albeit under heavy attack from Hungarians, Vikings and others.

What happened was called 'feudalism'. Feudalism was marked by agricultural production around castles and 'manor houses', where lords of the manor possessed land that was cultivated by peasants (serfs) who pledged them loyalty, goods and services. These lords in turn pledged their loyalty to greater lords who were 'vassals' of kings. The Catholic Church (centred on the papacy) supported this state of affairs and itself possessed land. In a world where uncertainties of life, poor sense of medicine and low life expectancy were common, the Church showed people how to behave so that life after death at least would be tolerable. Monasteries were created where God-fearing people could devote themselves to the service of God in the way Catholic churchmen thought fit. Equally, churches were part of a network of scholarship that ran from the Muslim states of Spain to Byzantium, and they provided the petty kings of Europe with a sense of the opulence of the eastern Mediterranean and beyond.

The influence of commerce and towns in the feudal order came to evolve and change encouraged by Mediterranean entrepreneurs in Venice and Genoa (from the twelfth century). Their ships carried on a growing trade with Muslim states and the remains of the Roman Empire in the east. Attracted by the lure of wealth in these areas, and inspired by the idea of freeing 'holy places' associated with Christ from Muslims, European kings reinforced links across the Mediterranean during the 'crusades'. Trade within Europe improved (centred on fairs and the port cities of the Baltic Sea and the North Sea and stimulated by a growing population).

The Palace of the Popes, in Avignon, a fourteenth-century town in south France.

The Palace of the Doge, in Venice, fifteenth century.

Opportunities for commercial expansion coincided with changing attitudes concerning the value of life. Respect for human beings and living things that marked much of Islamic art and literature, and the example of Greek art and ideas that came to Europe from Byzantine trade encouraged Europeans to take a new look at the world. And from the fourteenth century (in what is called the 'Renaissance'), especially in north Italian towns, the wealthy became less concerned with life after death and more with the wonders of life itself. Sculptors, painters and writers became interested in humanity and the discovery of the world.

By the end of the fifteenth century, this state of affairs encouraged travel and discovery as never before. Voyages of discovery took place. Spaniards and Portuguese, who had traded with northern Africa, pushed further down the coast of western Africa, finally leading to journeys around the Cape of Good Hope to India – which had a great reputation in Europe as a source of spices that were in great demand. Columbus attempted to find a western route to India and in 1492 reached the islands which the Europeans called the West Indies. Other explorers tried to find a northern route to India and China via the Arctic.

European travellers encountered a range of different peoples in the course of their journeys. In part, they were interested in learning from them. The papacy encouraged the work of the North African geographer and traveller Hasan al-Wazzan (later known in Europe as Leo Africanus), who wrote the first geography of Africa in the early sixteenth century for Pope Leo X. Jesuit churchmen observed and wrote on Japan in the sixteenth century. An Englishman, Will Adams, became a friend and

counsellor of the Japanese Shogun, Tokugawa Ieyasu, in the early seventeenth century. As in the case of Hasan al-Wazzan, peoples that the Europeans encountered in the Americas often took a great interest in them and sometimes worked for them. For example an Aztec woman – later known as Dona Marina – befriended the Spanish conqueror of Mexico, Cortes, and interpreted and negotiated for him.

In their encounters, Europeans were sometimes cautious, self-effacing and observant, even as they frequently attempted to establish trade monopolies and enforce their authority by force of arms as the Portuguese attempted to do in the Indian Ocean after Vasco da Gama's arrival in Calicut (present-day Kozhikode) in 1498. In other cases, they were overbearing, aggressive and cruel and adopted an attitude of superiority to those they met, considering such people ignorant. The Catholic Church encouraged both attitudes. The Church was the centre for the study of other cultures and languages, but encouraged attacks on people it saw as 'un-Christian'.

From the point of view of non-Europeans, the encounter with Europe varied. For much of the Islamic lands and India and China, though, Europeans remained a curiosity until the end of the seventeenth century. They were perceived as hardy traders and seamen who had little to contribute to their sense of the larger world. The Japanese learnt some of the advantages of European technology quickly – for instance, they had begun large-scale production of muskets by the late sixteenth century. In the Americas, enemies of the Aztec empire sometimes used Europeans to challenge the power of the Aztecs. At the same time the diseases the Europeans brought devastated the populations, leading to the death of over 90 per cent of the people in some areas by the end of the sixteenth century.

TIMELINE III

(c. 1300 to 1700)

The period under consideration witnessed several major developments in Europe, including changes in agriculture and the lives of peasants. It was also marked by a range of cultural developments. This timeline draws attention to contacts between continents, stimulated in many instances by the growth of trade. The impact of these contacts was varied – while ideas, inventions and goods were shared across continents, there was also constant warfare between kingdoms to control land, resources and access to trade routes. As a result, men and women were often displaced and enslaved, if not exterminated. In many ways, the lives of people were transformed beyond recognition.

DATES	AFRICA	EUROPE
1300-25		Alhambra and Granada emerge as important cultural centres in Spain
1325-50	Plague* in Egypt (1348-55)	Hundred Years War between England and France (1337-1453); Black Death (a form of plague) spreads throughout Europe (1348)
1350-75	Ibn Batuta explores the Sahara	French peasants protest against high taxes (1358)
1375-1400		Peasant revolt in Britain (1381); Geoffrey Chaucer writes *The Canterbury Tales*, one of the earliest compositions in English (1388)
1400-25		
1425-50	Portuguese begin slave trading (1442)	
1450-75	Songhai empire in West Africa established based on trading networks across the Sahara; Portuguese expeditions and settlements along the west coast of Africa (1471 onwards)	First printed book appears in Europe; Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), painter, architect, inventor in Italy
1475-1500	Portuguese convert the king of Bokongo to Christianity	Establishment of the Tudor dynasty in England (1485)
1500-25	African slaves taken to work on sugar plantations in America (1510); Ottoman Turks conquer Egypt (1517)	Coffee from South America is drunk in Europe for the first time (1517) and tobacco, chocolate, tomatoes and turkey are also introduced; Martin Luther attempts to reform the Catholic Church (1517)
1525-50		Copernicus propounds theory about solar system (1543)
1550-75		William Shakespeare (1564-1616), dramatist in England
1575-1600		Zacharias Janssen invents the microscope (1590s)
1600-25	Oyo kingdom of Nigeria at the height of its power, centres for metal-working*	One of the first novels, *Don Quixote*, written in Spanish (1605)
1625-50		William Harvey demonstrates that blood is pumped through the body by the heart (1628)
1650-75	Portuguese destroy the Kongo kingdom (1662)	Louis XIV, king of France (1638-1715)
1675-1700		Peter the Great (1682-1725) attempts to modernise Russia

DATES	ASIA	SOUTH ASIA
1300-25		
1325-1350		Establishment of the Vijayanagara empire* (1336)
1350-75	Ming dynasty* in China (1368 onwards)	
1375-1400		
1400-25		Emergence of regional sultanates
1425-50		
1450-75	Ottoman Turks capture Constantinople (1453)	
1475-1500		Vasco da Gama reaches India (1498)
1500-25	Portuguese entry into China opposed, driven out to Macao (1522)	
1525-50		Babur establishes Mughal control over north India, first battle of Panipat (1526)
1550-75		Akbar (1556-1605) consolidates Mughal rule
1575-1600	First Kabuki play staged in Japan (1586); Shah Abbas (1587-1629) of Persia introduces European methods of military training	
1600-25	Tokugawa Shogunate established in Japan (1603)	Establishment of the British East India Company (1600)
1625-50	All European traders with the exception of the Dutch forbidden to trade with Japan (1637); Manchu rule in China, (1644 onwards) which lasts for nearly 300 years; growing demand in Europe for Chinese tea and silk	Construction of the Taj Mahal (1632-53)
1650-75		
1675-1700		

DATES	AMERICAS	AUSTRALIA/PACIFIC ISLANDS
1300-25	Aztec capital at Tenochtitlan, Mexico (1325), building temples, development of irrigation systems and accounting system (quipu)*	
1325-50		
1350-75		
1375-1400		
1400-25		
1425-50		
1450-75	Incas establish control over Peru (1465)	
1475-1500	Columbus reaches the West Indies (1492)	
1500-25	Spanish conquest of Mexico (1521)	Magellan, a Spanish navigator, reaches the Pacific Ocean (1519)
1525-50	French explorers reach Canada (1534)	
1550-75	Spanish conquest of Peru (1572)	
1575-1600		Dutch sailors reach Australia by accident
1600-25	England sets up its first colonies in North America (1607); the first slaves are brought from West Africa to Virginia (1619)	Spanish sailors reach Tahiti (1606)
1625-50	Dutch found New Amsterdam, now called New York (1626); first printing press is set up in Massachusetts (1635)	Dutch navigator Abel Tasman sails around Australia without realising it. He then lands on Van Diemen's land, later called Tasmania. He also reaches New Zealand, but thinks it is part of a huge landmass!
1650-75	First sugar plantations are established in the West Indies (1654)	
1675-1700	French colonise the Mississippi basin, naming it Louisiana after King Louis XIV (1682)	

ACTIVITY

You may have noticed that the column on Australia/Pacific Islands has very few recorded dates. This is because the peoples in these areas often used other forms of recording, including paintings such as the one shown above*. List at least one event/process from each of the preceding five columns which an Australian painter may have found worth recording. List another five which may have seemed irrelevant to her/him.

THEME 6

THE THREE ORDERS

IN this chapter, we shall learn about the socio-economic and political changes which occurred in western Europe between the ninth and sixteenth centuries. After the fall of the Roman Empire, many groups of Germanic people from eastern and central Europe occupied regions of Italy, Spain and France.

In the absence of any unifying political force, military conflict was frequent, and the need to gather resources to protect one's land became very important. Social organisation was therefore centred on the control of land. Its features were derived from both imperial Roman traditions and German customs. Christianity, the official religion of the Roman Empire from the fourth century, survived the collapse of Rome, and gradually spread to central and northern Europe. The Church also became a major landholder and political power in Europe.

The 'three orders', the focus of this chapter, are three social categories: Christian priests, landowning nobles and peasants. The changing relationships between these three groups was an important factor in shaping European history for several centuries.

Over the last 100 years, European historians have done detailed work on the histories of regions, even of individual villages. This was possible because, from the medieval period, there is a lot of material in the form of documents, details of landownership, prices and legal cases: for example, churches kept records of births, marriages and deaths, which have made it possible to understand the structure of families and of population. The inscriptions in churches give information about traders' associations, and songs and stories give a sense of festivals and community activities.

All these can be used by historians to understand economic and social life, and changes over a long period (like increase in population) or over a short period (like peasant revolts).

Of the many scholars in France who have worked on feudalism, one of the earliest was Bloch. Marc Bloch (1886–1944) was one of a group of scholars who argued that history consisted of much more than just political history, international relations and the lives of great people. He emphasised the importance of geography in shaping human

history, and the need to understand the collective behaviour or attitudes of groups of people.

Bloch's *Feudal Society* is about European, particularly French, society between 900 and 1300, describing in remarkable detail social relations and hierarchies, land management and the popular culture of the period.

His career was cut short tragically when he was shot by the Nazis in the Second World War.

An Introduction to Feudalism

The term 'feudalism' has been used by historians to describe the economic, legal, political and social relationships that existed in Europe in the medieval era. Derived from the German word 'feud', which

The term 'medieval era' refers to the period in European history between the fifth and the fifteenth centuries.

MAP 1: Western Europe

means 'a piece of land', it refers to the kind of society that developed in medieval France, and later in England and in southern Italy.

In an economic sense, feudalism refers to a kind of agricultural production which is based on the relationship between lords and peasants. The latter cultivated their own land as well as that of the lord. The peasants performed labour services for the lords, who in exchange provided military protection. They also had extensive judicial control over peasants. Thus, feudalism went beyond the economic to cover the social and political aspects of life as well.

Although its roots have been traced to practices that existed in the Roman Empire and during the age of the French king Charlemagne (742-814), feudalism as an established way of life in large parts of Europe may be said to have emerged later, in the eleventh century.

France and England

Gaul, a province of the Roman Empire, had two extensive coastlines, mountain ranges, long rivers, forests and large tracts of plains suited to agriculture.

The Franks, a Germanic tribe, gave their name to Gaul, making it 'France'. From the sixth century, this region was a kingdom ruled by Frankish/French kings, who were Christian. The French had very strong links with the Church, which were further strengthened when in 800 the Pope gave King Charlemagne the title of 'Holy Roman Emperor', to ensure his support*.

*The head of the Eastern Church, in Constantinople, had a similar relationship with the Byzantine emperor.

Across a narrow channel lay the island of England–Scotland, which in the eleventh century was conquered by a duke from the French province of Normandy.

Early History of France

481	*Clovis becomes king of the Franks*
486	*Clovis and the Franks begin the conquest of northern Gaul*
496	*Clovis and the Franks convert to Christianity*
714	*Charles Martel becomes mayor of the palace*
751	*Martel's son Pepin deposes the Frankish ruler, becomes king and establishes a dynasty. Wars of conquest double the size of his kingdom*
768	*Pepin succeeded by his son Charlemagne/Charles the Great*
800	*Pope Leo III crowns Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor*
840 ONWARDS	*Raids by Vikings from Norway*

The Three Orders

French priests believed in the concept that people were members of one of the three 'orders', depending on their work. A bishop stated, 'Here below, some pray, others fight, still others work...' Thus, the three orders of society were broadly the clergy, the nobility and the peasantry.

In the twelfth century, Abbess Hildegard of Bingen wrote: 'Who would think of herding his entire cattle in one stable – cows, donkeys, sheep, goats, without difference? Therefore it is necessary to establish difference among human beings, so that they do not destroy each other ... God makes distinctions among his flock, in heaven as on earth. All are loved by him, yet there is no equality among them.'

'Abbey' is derived from the Syriac abba, meaning father. An abbey was governed by an abbot or an abbess.

The Second Order: The Nobility

Priests placed themselves in the first order, and nobles in the second. The nobility had, in reality, a central role in social processes. This is because they controlled land. This control was the outcome of a practice called 'vassalage'.

The kings of France were linked to the people by 'vassalage', similar to the practice among the Germanic peoples, of whom the Franks were one. The big landowners – the nobles – were vassals of the king, and peasants were vassals of the landowners. A nobleman accepted the king as his *seigneur* (senior) and they made a mutual promise: the *seigneur*/lord ('lord' was derived from a word meaning one who provided bread) would protect the vassal, who would be loyal to him. This relationship involved elaborate rituals and exchange of vows taken on the Bible in a church. At this ceremony, the vassal received a written charter or a staff or even a clod of earth as a symbol of the land that was being given to him by his master.

French nobles starting for a hunt, fifteenth-century painting.

The noble enjoyed a privileged status. He had absolute control over his property, in perpetuity. He could raise troops called 'feudal levies'. The lord held his own courts of justice and could even coin his own money.

He was the lord of all the people settled on his land. He owned vast tracts of land which contained his own dwellings, his private fields and pastures and the homes and fields of his tenant-peasants. His house was called a manor. His private lands were cultivated by peasants, who were also expected to act as foot-soldiers in battle when required, in addition to working on their own farms.

The Manorial Estate

A lord had his own manor-house. He also controlled villages – some lords controlled hundreds of villages – where peasants lived. A small manorial estate could contain a dozen families, while larger estates might include fifty or sixty. Almost everything needed for daily life was found on the estate: grain was grown in the fields, blacksmiths and carpenters maintained the lord's implements and repaired his weapons, while stonemasons looked after his buildings. Women spun and wove fabric, and children worked in the lord's wine-presses. The estate had extensive woodlands and forests where the lords hunted. They contained

A manorial estate, England, thirteenth century.

pastures where his cattle and his horses grazed. There was a church on the estate and a castle for defence.

From the thirteenth century, some castles were made bigger for use as a residence for a knight's family. In fact, in England castles were practically unknown before the Norman Conquest, and developed as centres of political administration and military power under the feudal system.

The manor could not be completely self-sufficient because salt, millstones and metalware had to be obtained from outside sources. Those lords who wanted a luxurious lifestyle and were keen to buy rich furnishings, musical instruments and ornaments not locally produced, had to get these from other places.

ACTIVITY 1

Discuss social hierarchies based on different criteria: occupation, language, wealth, education. Compare medieval France with Mesopotamia and the Roman Empire.

The Knights

From the ninth century, there were frequent localised wars in Europe. The amateur peasant-soldiers were not sufficient, and good cavalry was needed. This led to the growing importance of a new section of people – the knights. They were linked to the lords, just as the latter were linked to the king. The lord gave the knight a piece of land (called 'fief') and promised to protect it. The fief could be inherited. It extended to anything between 1,000 and 2,000 acres or more, including a house for the knight and his family, a church and other establishments to house his dependants, besides a watermill and a wine-press. As in the feudal manor, the land of the fief was cultivated by peasants. In exchange, the knight paid his lord a regular fee and promised to fight for him in war. To keep up their skills, knights spent time each day fencing and practising tactics with dummies. A knight might serve more than one lord, but his foremost loyalty was to his own lord.

'If my dear lord
is slain, his fate
I'll share,
If he is hanged,
then hang me
by his side.
If to the stake he
goes, with him
I'll burn;
And if he's
drowned, then
let me drown
with him.'

– Doon de Mayence, a thirteenth-century French poem (to be sung) recounting the adventures of knights.

In France, from the twelfth century, minstrels travelled from manor to manor, singing songs which told stories – partly historical, partly invented – about brave kings and knights. In an age when not too many people could read and manuscripts were few, these travelling bards were very popular. Many manors had a narrow balcony above the large hall where the people of the manor gathered for meals. This was the minstrels' gallery, from where singers entertained nobles while they feasted.

The First Order: The Clergy

The Catholic Church had its own laws, owned lands given to it by rulers, and could levy taxes. It was thus a very powerful institution which did not depend on the king. At the head of the western Church was the Pope. He lived in Rome. The Christians in Europe were guided by bishops and clerics – who constituted the first 'order'. Most villages had their own church, where people assembled every Sunday to listen to the sermon by the priest and to pray together.

Everyone could not become a priest. Serfs were banned, as were the physically challenged. Women could not become priests. Men who became priests could not marry. Bishops were the religious nobility. Like lords who owned vast landed estates, the bishops also had the use of vast estates, and lived in grand palaces. The Church was entitled to a tenth share of whatever the peasants produced from their land over the course of the year, called a 'tithe'. Money also came in the form of endowments made by the rich for their own welfare and the welfare of their deceased relatives in the afterlife.

Some of the important ceremonies conducted by the Church copied formal customs of the feudal elite. The act of kneeling while praying, with hands clasped and head bowed, was an exact replica of the way in which a knight conducted himself while taking vows of loyalty to his lord. Similarly, the use of the term 'lord' for God was another example of feudal culture that found its way into the practices of the Church. Thus, the religious and the lay worlds of feudalism shared many customs and symbols.

ACTIVITY 2

Discuss examples of expected patterns of behaviour between people of different social levels, in a medieval manor, a palace and in a place of worship.

Monks

Apart from the Church, devout Christians had another kind of organisation. Some deeply religious people chose to live isolated lives, in contrast to clerics who lived amongst people in towns and villages. They lived in religious communities called abbeys or monasteries, often in places very far from human habitation. Two of the more well-known monasteries were those established by St Benedict in Italy in 529 and of Cluny in Burgundy in 910.

Monks took vows to remain in the abbey for the rest of their lives and to spend their time in prayer, study and manual labour, like farming. Unlike priesthood, this life was open to both men and women – men became monks and women nuns. Except in a few cases, all abbeys were single-sex communities, that is, there were separate abbeys for men and women. Like priests, monks and nuns did not marry.

The word 'monastery' is derived from the Greek word 'monos', meaning someone who lives alone.

From small communities of 10 or 20 men/women, monasteries grew to communities often of several hundred, with large buildings and landed estates, with attached schools or colleges and hospitals. They contributed to the development of the arts. Abbess Hildegard (see p.135) was a gifted musician, and did much to develop the practice of community singing of prayers in church. From the thirteenth century, some groups of monks – called friars – chose not to be based in a monastery but to move from place to place, preaching to the people and living on charity.

St Michael's Benedictine abbey in Farnborough, England.

In Benedictine monasteries, there was a manuscript with 73 chapters of rules which were followed by monks for many centuries. Here are some of the rules they had to follow:

Chapter 6: Permission to speak should rarely be granted to monks.

Chapter 7: Humility means obedience.

Chapter 33: No monk should own private property.

Chapter 47: Idleness is the enemy of the soul, so friars and sisters should be occupied at certain times in manual labour, and at fixed hours in sacred reading.

A Benedictine monk working on a manuscript, woodcut.

Chapter 48: The monastery should be laid out in such a way that all necessities be found within its bounds: water, mill, garden, workshops.

By the fourteenth century, there was a growing uncertainty about the value and purpose of monasticism. In England, Langland's poem, *Piers Plowman* (c.1360-70), contrasted the ease and luxury of the lives of some monks with the 'pure faith' of 'simple ploughmen and shepherds and poor common labourers.' Also in England, Chaucer wrote the *Canterbury Tales* (see box below) which had comic portraits of a nun, a monk and a friar.

The Church and Society

Though Europeans became Christian, they still held on to some of their old beliefs in magic and folk traditions. Christmas and Easter became important dates from the fourth century. Christ's birth, celebrated on 25 December, replaced an old pre-Roman festival, the date of which was calculated by the solar calendar. Easter marked the crucifixion of Christ and his rising from the dead. But its date was not a fixed one, because it replaced an older festival to celebrate the coming of spring after a long winter, dated by the lunar calendar. Traditionally, on that day, people of each village used to make a tour of their village lands. With the coming of Christianity, they continued to do this, but they called the village the 'parish' (the area under the supervision of one priest). Overworked peasants welcomed 'holy days'/holidays because they were not expected to work then. These days were meant for prayer, but people usually spent a good part of them having fun and feasting.

Pilgrimage was an important part of a Christian's life, and many people went on long journeys to shrines of martyrs or to big churches.

'When in April the sweet showers fall
And pierce the drought of March to the root
And the small birds are making melody
That sleep away the night with open eye…
(So Nature pricks them and their heart engages);
Then people long to go on pilgrimages,
And palmers long to seek the foreign shrines*
Of far-off saints, revered in various lands.
And especially from every shire
Of England, to Canterbury they make their journey.'

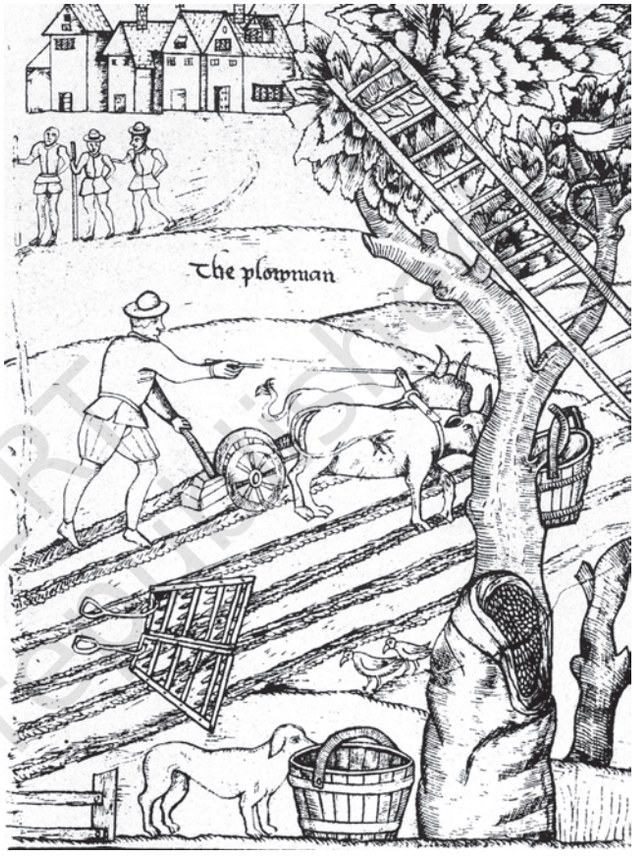
– Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1340–1400), The Canterbury Tales. This was written in Middle English, and the verse is a translation in modern English.

*A monk who travels to distant shrines.

The Third Order: Peasants, Free and Unfree

Let us now turn to the vast majority of people, namely, those who sustained the first two orders. Cultivators were of two kinds: free peasants and serfs (from the verb 'to serve').

Free peasants held their farms as tenants of the lord. The men had to render military service (at least forty days every year). Peasant families had to set aside certain days of the week, usually three but often more, when they would go to the lord's estate and work there. The output from such labour, called labour-rent, would go directly to the lord. In addition, they could be required to do other unpaid labour services, like digging ditches, gathering firewood, building fences and repairing roads and buildings. Besides helping in the fields, women and children had to do other tasks. They spun thread, wove cloth, made candles and pressed grapes to prepare wine for the lord's use. There was one direct tax called 'taille' that kings sometimes imposed on peasants (the clergy and nobles were exempted from paying this).



An English ploughman, sixteenth-century sketch.

Serfs cultivated plots of land, but these belonged to the lord. Much of the produce from this had to be given to the lord. They also had to work on the land which belonged *exclusively* to the lord. They received no wages and could not leave the estate without the lord's permission. The lord claimed a number of monopolies at the expense of his serfs. Serfs could use only their lord's mill to grind their flour, his oven to bake their bread, and his wine-presses to distil wine and beer. The lord could decide whom a serf should marry, or might give his blessing to the serf's choice, but on payment of a fee.

England

Feudalism developed in England from the eleventh century.

The Angles and Saxons, from central Europe, had settled in England in the sixth century. The country's name, England, is a variant of 'Angle-land'. In the eleventh century, William, the Duke of Normandy*, crossed the English Channel with an army and defeated the Saxon king of England. From this time, France and England were often at war because of disputes over territory and trade.

*The present Queen of England is descended from William I.

Hever Castle, England, thirteenth century.

William I had the land mapped, and distributed it in sections to 180 Norman nobles who had migrated with him. The lords became the chief tenants of the king, and were expected to give him military help. They were obliged to supply a certain number of knights to the king. They soon began to gift some of their own lands to knights who would serve them just as they in turn served the king. They could not, however, use their knights for private warfare, which was forbidden in England. Anglo-Saxon peasants became tenants of various levels of landholders.

Factors Affecting Social and Economic Relations

While members of the first two orders saw the social system as stable and unchanging, there were several processes which were transforming the system. Some of these, such as changes in the environment, were gradual and almost imperceptible. Others were more dramatic, like the changes in agricultural technology and land use. These in turn were shaped by and had an effect on the social and economic ties between lords and vassals. Let us examine these processes one by one.

The Environment

From the fifth to the tenth centuries, most of Europe was covered with vast forests. Thus the land available for agriculture was limited. Also, peasants dissatisfied with their conditions could flee from oppression and take refuge in the forest. Europe was undergoing an intensely cold climatic spell in this period. This led to severe and prolonged winters, a shortened growing season for crops, and reduced yields from agriculture.

From the eleventh century, Europe entered a warm phase. Average temperatures increased, which had a profound effect on agriculture. Peasants now had a longer growing season and the soil, now less subjected to frost, could be more easily ploughed. Environmental historians have noted that there was a significant receding of the forest line in many parts of Europe. This made expansion of the area under cultivation possible.

Land Use

Initially, agricultural technology was very primitive. The only mechanical aid available to the peasant was the wooden plough, drawn by a team of oxen. This plough could at best scratch the surface of the earth and was unable to fully draw out the natural productivity of the soil. Agriculture was therefore very labour intensive. Fields had to be

dug by hand, often once in four years, and enormous manual labour was required.

Also, an ineffective method of crop rotation was in use. The land was divided in half, one field was planted in autumn with winter wheat, while the other field was left fallow. Rye was planted on this piece of fallow land the next year while the other half was put to fallow. With this system, the soil slowly deteriorated, and famines were not uncommon. Chronic malnutrition alternated with devastating famines and life was difficult for the poor.

Despite these hardships, the lords were anxious to maximise their incomes. Since it was not possible to increase output from the land, the peasants were forced to bring under cultivation all the land in the manorial estate, and spend more time doing this than they were legally bound to do. The peasants did not bow quietly to oppression. Since they could not protest openly, they resorted to passive resistance. They spent more time cultivating their own fields, and kept much of the product of that labour for themselves. They also avoided performing unpaid extra services. They came into conflict with the lords over pasture and forest lands, and saw these lands as resources to be used by the whole community, while the lords treated these as their private property.

New Agricultural Technology

By the eleventh century, there is evidence of several technological changes.

Instead of the basic wooden ploughs, cultivators began using heavy iron-tipped ploughs and mould-boards. These ploughs could dig much deeper and the mould-boards turned the topsoil properly. With this the nutrients from the soil were better utilised.

The methods of harnessing animals to the plough improved. Instead of the neck-harness, the shoulder-harness came into use. This enabled animals to exert greater power. Horses were now better shod, with iron horseshoes, which prevented foot decay. There was increased use of wind and water energy for agriculture. More water-powered and wind-powered mills were set up all over Europe for purposes like milling corn and pressing grapes.

There were also changes in land use. The most revolutionary one was the switch from a two-field to a three-field system. In this, peasants could use a field two years out of three if they planted it with one crop in autumn and a different crop in spring a year and a half later. That meant that farmers could break their holdings into three fields. They could plant one with wheat or rye in autumn for human consumption. The second could be used in spring to raise peas, beans and lentils for human use, and oats and barley for the horses. The third field lay fallow. Each year they rotated the use among the three fields.

With these improvements, there was an almost immediate increase in the amount of food produced from each unit of land. Food availability

doubled. The greater use of plants like peas and beans meant more vegetable proteins in the diet of the average European and a better source of fodder for their animals. For cultivators, it meant better opportunities. They could now produce more food from less land. The average size of a peasant's farm shrank from about 100 acres to 20 to 30 acres by the thirteenth century. Holdings which were smaller could be more efficiently cultivated and reduced the amount of labour needed. This gave the peasants time for other activities.

Some of these technological changes cost a lot of money. Peasants did not have enough money to set up watermills and windmills. Therefore the initiative was taken by the lords. But peasants were able to take the initiative in many things, such as extending arable land. They also switched to the three-field rotation of crops, and set up small forges and smithies in the villages, where iron-tipped ploughs and horseshoes were made and repaired cheaply.

From the eleventh century, the personal bonds that had been the basis of feudalism were weakening, because economic transactions were becoming more and more money based. Lords found it convenient to ask for rent in cash, not services, and cultivators were selling their crops for money (instead of exchanging them for other goods) to traders, who would then take such goods to be sold in the towns. The increasing use of money began to influence prices, which became higher in times of poor harvests. In England, for instance, agricultural prices doubled between the 1270s and the 1320s.

A Fourth Order? New Towns and Townspeople

Expansion in agriculture was accompanied by growth in three related areas: population, trade and towns. From roughly 42 million in 1000, Europe's population stood at 62 million around 1200 and 73 million in 1300. Better food meant a longer lifespan. By the thirteenth century, an average European could expect to live 10 years longer than in the eighth century. Women and girls had shorter lifespans compared to men because the latter ate better food.

The towns of the Roman Empire had become deserted and ruined after its fall. But from the eleventh century, as agriculture increased and became able to sustain higher levels of population, towns began to grow again. Peasants who had surplus grain to sell needed a place where they could set up a selling centre and where they could buy tools and cloth. This led to the growth of periodic fairs and small marketing centres which gradually developed town-like features – a town square, a church, roads where merchants built shops and homes, an office where those who governed the town could meet. In other places, towns grew around large castles, bishops' estates, or large churches.

In towns, instead of services, people paid a tax to the lords who owned the land on which the town stood. Towns offered the prospect

Reims, French cathedral-town, seventeenth-century map.

ACTIVITY 3

Look carefully at this map and the drawing of a town. What would you notice as special features of medieval European towns? How were they different from towns in other places and other periods of time?

of paid work and freedom from the lord's control, for young people from peasant families.

'Town air makes free' was a popular saying. Many serfs craving to be free ran away and hid in towns. If a serf could stay for one year and one day without his lord discovering him, he would become a free man. Many people in towns were free peasants or escaped serfs who provided unskilled labour. Shopkeepers and merchants were numerous. Later there was need for individuals with specialised skills, like bankers and lawyers. The bigger towns had populations of about 30,000. They could be said to have formed a 'fourth' order.

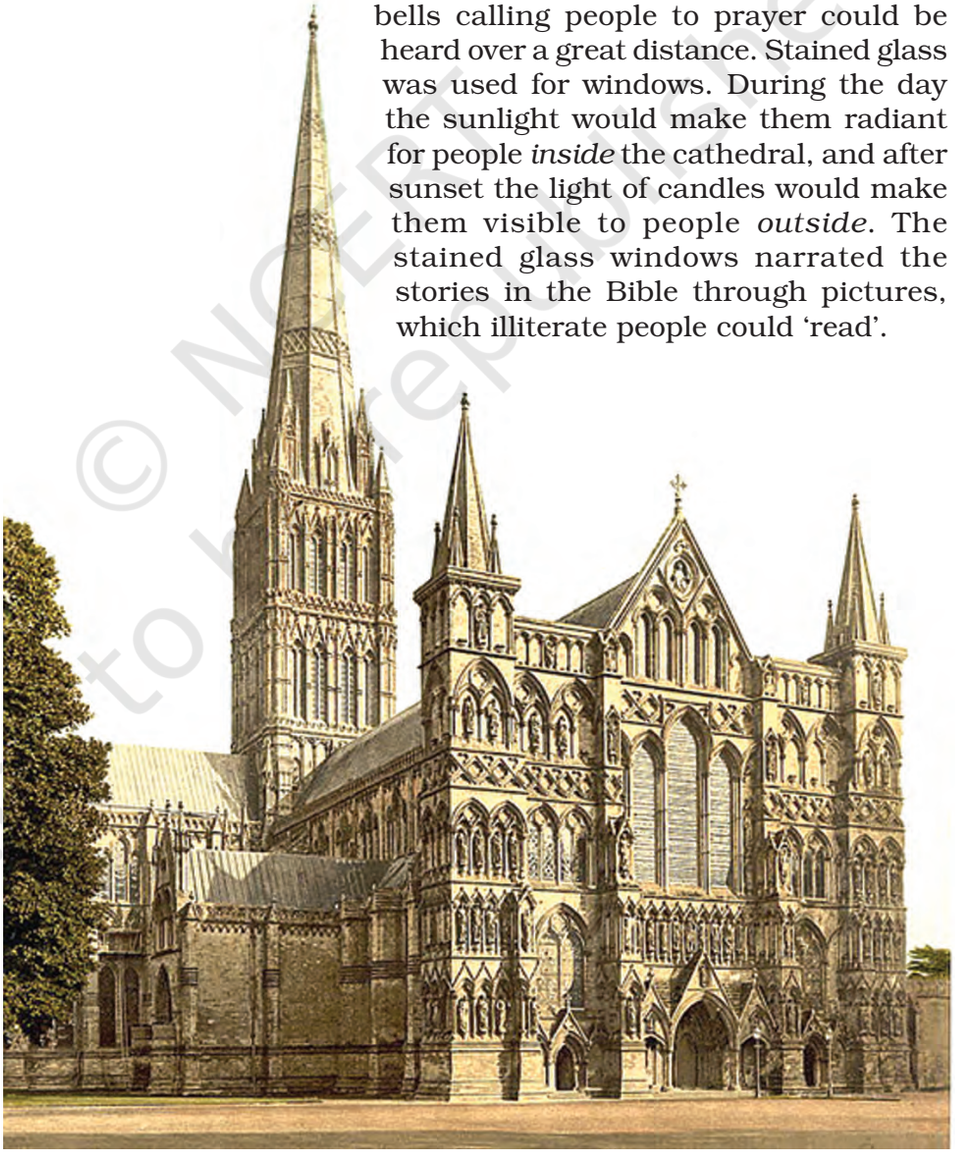
The basis of economic organisation was the guild. Each craft or industry was organised into a guild, an association which controlled the quality of the product, its price and its sale. The 'guild-hall' was a feature of every town; it was a building for ceremonial functions, and where the heads of all the guilds met formally. Guards patrolled the town walls and musicians were called to play at feasts and in civic processions, and innkeepers looked after travellers.

By the eleventh century, new trade routes with West Asia were developing (see Theme 5). Scandinavian merchants were sailing south from the North Sea to exchange furs and hunting-hawks for cloth; English traders came to sell tin. In France, by the twelfth century, commerce and crafts began to grow. Earlier, craftsmen used to travel from manor to manor; now they found it easier to settle in one place where goods could be produced and traded for food. As the number of towns grew and trade continued to expand, town merchants became rich and powerful, and rivalled the power of the nobility.

Cathedral-towns

One of the ways that rich merchants spent their money was by making donations to churches. From the twelfth century, large churches – called cathedrals – were being built in France. These belonged to monasteries, but different groups of people contributed to their construction with their own labour, materials or money. Cathedrals were built of stone, and took many years to complete. As they were being built, the area around the cathedrals became more populated, and when they were completed they became centres of pilgrimage. Thus, small towns developed around them.

Cathedrals were designed so that the priest's voice could be heard clearly within the hall where large numbers of people gathered, and so that the singing by monks could sound beautiful and the chiming bells calling people to prayer could be heard over a great distance. Stained glass was used for windows. During the day the sunlight would make them radiant for people *inside* the cathedral, and after sunset the light of candles would make them visible to people *outside*. The stained glass windows narrated the stories in the Bible through pictures, which illiterate people could 'read'.



Salisbury Cathedral, England.

'Because of the inadequacy which we often felt on feast days, for the narrowness of the place forced the women to run towards the altar upon the heads of the men with much anguish and noisy confusion, [we decided] to enlarge and amplify the noble church...

We also caused to be painted, by the exquisite hands of many masters from different regions, a splendid variety of new windows... Because these windows are very valuable on account of their wonderful execution and the profuse expenditure of painted glass and sapphire glass, we appointed an official master craftsman for their protection, and also a goldsmith...who would receive their allowances, namely, coins from the altar and flour from the common storehouse of the brethren, and who would never neglect their duty, to look after these [works of art].'

– Abbot Suger (1081-1151) about the Abbey of St Denis, near Paris.

Stained-glass window, Chartres cathedral, France, fifteenth century.

The Crisis of the Fourteenth Century

By the early fourteenth century, Europe's economic expansion slowed down. This was due to three factors.

In northern Europe, by the end of the thirteenth century the warm summers of the previous 300 years had given way to bitterly cold summers. Seasons for growing crops were reduced by a month and it became difficult to grow crops on higher ground. Storms and oceanic flooding destroyed many farmsteads, which resulted in less income in taxes for governments. The opportunities offered by favourable climatic conditions before the thirteenth century had led to large-scale reclamation of the land of forests and pastures for agriculture. But intensive ploughing had exhausted the soil despite the practice of the three-field rotation of crops, because clearance was not accompanied by proper soil conservation. The shortage of pasturage reduced the number of cattle. Population growth was outstripping resources, and the immediate result was famine. Severe famines hit Europe between 1315 and 1317, followed in the 1320s by massive cattle deaths.

In addition, trade was hit by a severe shortage of metal money because of a shortfall in the output of silver mines in Austria and Serbia. This forced governments to reduce the silver content of the currency, and to mix it with cheaper metals.

The worst was yet to come. As trade expanded in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, ships carrying goods from distant countries had started arriving in European ports. Along with the ships came rats – carrying the deadly bubonic plague infection (the 'Black Death'). Western Europe, relatively isolated in earlier centuries, was hit by the epidemic between 1347 and 1350. The modern estimate of mortality in that epidemic is that 20 per cent of the people of the whole of Europe died, with some places losing as much as 40 per cent of the population.

'How many valiant men, how many fair ladies, (had) breakfast with their kinfolk and the same night supped with their ancestors in the next world! The condition of the people was pitiable to behold. They sickened by the thousands daily, and died unattended and without help. Many died in the open street, others dying in their houses, made it known by the stench of their rotting bodies. Consecrated churchyards did not suffice for the burial of the vast multitude of bodies, which were heaped by the hundreds in vast trenches, like goods in a ships hold and covered with a little earth.'

– Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-75), Italian author.

As trade centres, cities were the hardest hit. In enclosed communities like monasteries and convents, when one individual contracted the plague, it was not long before everyone did. And in almost every case, none survived. The plague took its worst toll among infants, the young and the elderly. There were other relatively minor episodes of plague in the 1360s and 1370s. The population of Europe, 73 million in 1300, stood reduced to 45 million in 1400.

This catastrophe, combined with the economic crisis, caused immense social dislocation. Depopulation resulted in a major shortage of labour. Serious imbalances were created between agriculture and manufacture, because there were not enough people to engage in both equally. Prices of agricultural goods dropped as there were fewer people to buy. Wage rates increased because the demand for labour, particularly agricultural labour, rose in England by as much as 250 per cent in the aftermath of the Black Death. The surviving labour force could now demand twice their earlier wages.

Social Unrest

The income of lords was thus badly hit. It declined as agricultural prices came down and wages of labourers increased. In desperation, they tried to give up the money-contracts they had entered into and revive labour-services. This was violently opposed by peasants, particularly the better-educated and more prosperous ones. In 1323, peasants revolted in Flanders, in 1358 in France, and in 1381 in England.

Though these rebellions were ruthlessly crushed, it is significant that they occurred with the most violent intensity in those areas which had experienced the prosperity of the economic expansion – a sign that peasants were attempting to protect the gains they had made in previous centuries. Despite the severe repression, the sheer intensity of peasant opposition ensured that the old feudal relations could not be reimposed. The money economy was too far advanced to be reversed. Therefore, though the lords succeeded in crushing the revolts, the peasants ensured that the feudal privileges of earlier days could not be reinvented.

Eleventh to Fourteenth Centuries	
1066	*Normans defeat Anglo-Saxons and conquer England*
1100 ONWARDS	*Cathedrals being built in France*
1315–17	*Great famine in Europe*
1347–50	*Black Death*
1338–1461	*Hundred Years War between England and France*
1381	*Peasants' revolts*

ACTIVITY 4

Read through the events and processes listed with dates, and connect them into a narrative account.

Political Changes

Developments in the political sphere paralleled social processes. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, European kings strengthened their military and financial power. The powerful new states they created were as significant for Europe as the economic changes that were occurring. Historians have therefore called these kings 'the new monarchs'. Louis XI in France, Maximilian in Austria, Henry VII in England and Isabelle and Ferdinand in Spain were absolutist rulers, who started the process of organising standing armies, a permanent bureaucracy and national taxation and, in Spain and Portugal, began to play a role in Europe's expansion overseas (see Theme 8).

Queen Elizabeth I of England at a picnic, late sixteenth century.

The most important reason for the triumph of these monarchies was the social changes which had taken place in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The dissolution of the feudal system of lordship and vassalage, and the slow rate of economic growth had given the first opportunity to kings to increase their control over their powerful and not-so-powerful subjects. Rulers dispensed with the system of feudal levies for their armies and introduced professionally trained infantry equipped with guns and siege artillery (see Theme 5) directly under their control. The resistance of the aristocracies crumbled in the face of the firepower of the kings.

The New Monarchy

1461–1559	*New monarchs in France*
1474–1556	*New monarchs in Spain*
1485–1547	*New monarchs in England*

By increasing taxes, monarchs got enough revenues to support larger armies and thus defended and expanded their frontiers and overcame internal resistance to royal authority. Centralisation, however, did not occur without resistance from the aristocracy. A common thread running through all types of opposition to the monarchies was the question of taxation. In England, rebellions occurred and were put down in 1497, 1536, 1547, 1549 and 1553. In France, Louis XI (1461-83) had to wage a long struggle against dukes and princes. Lesser nobles, often members of local assemblies, resisted this royal usurpation of their powers. The 'religious' wars in France in the sixteenth century were in part a contest between royal privileges and regional liberties.

The nobility managed a tactical shift in order to ensure their survival. From being opponents to the new regimes, they quickly transformed themselves into loyalists. It is for this reason that royal absolutism has been called a modified form of feudalism. Precisely the same class of people who had been rulers in the feudal system – the lords – continued to dominate the political scene. They were given permanent positions in the administrative service. But the new regimes were different in some important ways.

Nemours Castle, France, fifteenth century.

The king was no longer at the apex of a pyramid where loyalty had been a matter of personal dependence and trust. He was now at the centre of an elaborate courtier society and a network of patron–client relationships. All monarchies, weak or powerful, needed the cooperation of those who could command authority. Patronage became the means of ensuring such cooperation. And patronage could be given or obtained by means of money. Therefore money became an important way in which non-aristocratic elements like merchants and bankers could gain access to the court. They lent money to the kings, who used it to pay the wages of soldiers. Rulers thus made space for non-feudal elements in the state system.

The later history of France and England was to be shaped by these changes in the power structures. In the reign of the child-king Louis XIII of France, in 1614, a meeting was held of the French consultative assembly, known as the Estates-General (with three houses to represent the three estates/orders – clergy, nobility, and the rest). After this, it

was not summoned again for nearly two centuries, till 1789, because the kings did not want to share power with the three orders.

What happened in England was very different. Even before the Norman Conquest, the Anglo-Saxons had a Great Council, which the king had to consult before imposing any tax. This developed into what was called the Parliament, which consisted of the House of Lords, the members of which were the lords and the clergy, and the House of Commons, representing towns and rural areas. King Charles I ruled for 11 years (1629–40) without calling Parliament. When he was forced to call it, because he needed money, a section of Parliament decided to go to war against him, and later executed him and established a republic. This did not last long, and monarchy was restored, but on the condition that Parliament would be called regularly.

Today, France has a republican form of government and England has a monarchy. This is because of the different directions that the histories of the two countries took after the seventeenth century.

Exercises

ANSWER IN BRIEF

1. *Describe two features of early feudal society in France.*
2. *How did long-term changes in population levels affect economy and society in Europe?*
3. *Why did knights become a distinct group, and when did they decline?*
4. *What was the function of medieval monasteries?*

ANSWER IN A SHORT ESSAY

5. *Imagine and describe a day in the life of a craftsman in a medieval French town.*
6. *Compare the conditions of life for a French serf and a Roman slave.*

THEME 7

CHANGING CULTURAL TRADITIONS

FROM the fourteenth to the end of the seventeenth century, towns were growing in many countries of Europe. A distinct 'urban culture' also developed. Townspeople began to think of themselves as more 'civilised' than rural people. Towns – particularly Florence, Venice and Rome – became centres of art and learning. Artists and writers were patronised by the rich and the aristocratic. The invention of printing at the same time made books and prints available to many people, including those living in distant towns or countries. A sense of history also developed in Europe, and people contrasted their 'modern' world with the 'ancient' one of the Greeks and Romans.

Religion came to be seen as something which each individual should choose for himself. The church's earth-centric belief was overturned by scientists who began to understand the solar system, and new geographical knowledge overturned the Europe-centric view that the Mediterranean Sea was the centre of the world (*see Theme 8*).

There is a vast amount of material on European history from the fourteenth century – documents, printed books, paintings, sculptures, buildings, textiles. Much of this has been carefully preserved in archives, art galleries and museums in Europe and America.

From the nineteenth century, historians used the term 'Renaissance' (literally, rebirth) to describe the cultural changes of this period. The historian who emphasised these most was a Swiss scholar – Jacob Burckhardt (1818–97) of the University of Basle in Switzerland. He was a student of the German historian Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886). Ranke had taught him that the primary concern of the historian was to write about states and politics using papers and files of government departments. Burckhardt was dissatisfied with these very limited goals that his master had set out for him. To him politics was not the be-all and end-all in history writing. History was as much concerned with culture as with politics.

In 1860, he wrote a book called *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy*, in which he called his readers' attention to literature, architecture and painting to tell the story of how a new 'humanist' culture had flowered in Italian towns from

the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. This culture, he wrote, was characterised by a new belief – that man, as an individual, was capable of making his own decisions and developing his skills. He was 'modern', in contrast to 'medieval' man whose thinking had been controlled by the church.

The Revival of Italian Cities

After the fall of the western Roman Empire, many of the towns that had been political and cultural centres in Italy fell into ruin. There was no unified government, and the Pope in Rome, who was sovereign in his own state, was not a strong political figure.

While western Europe was being reshaped by feudal bonds and unified under the Latin Church, and eastern Europe under the Byzantine Empire, and Islam was creating a common civilisation further west, Italy was weak and fragmented. However, it was these very developments that helped in the revival of Italian culture.

With the expansion of trade between the Byzantine Empire and the Islamic countries, the ports on the Italian coast revived. From the twelfth century, as the Mongols opened up trade with China via the Silk Route (see Theme 5) and as trade with western European countries

MAP 1: The Italian States

also increased, Italian towns played a central role. They no longer saw themselves as part of a powerful empire, but as independent city-states. Two of these – Florence and Venice – were republics, and many others were court-cities, ruled by princes.

One of the most vibrant cities was Venice, another was Genoa. They were different from other parts of Europe – the clergy were not politically dominant here, nor were there powerful feudal lords. Rich merchants and bankers actively participated in governing the city, and this helped the idea of citizenship to strike root. Even when these towns were ruled by military despots, the pride felt by the townspeople in being citizens did not weaken.

The City-State

Cardinal Gasparo Contarini (1483-1542) writes about the democratic government of his city-state in The Commonwealth and Government of Venice (1534).

'...to come to the institution of our Venetian commonwealth, the whole authority of the city...is in that council, into which all the gentlemen of the City being once past the age of 25 years are admitted...

Now first I am to yield you a reckoning how and with what wisdom it was ordained by our ancestors, that the common people should not be admitted into this company of citizens, in whose authority [lies] the whole power of the commonwealth... Because many troubles and popular tumults arise in those cities, whose government is swayed by the common people... many were of contrary opinion, deeming that it would do well, if this manner of governing the commonwealth should rather be defined by ability and abundance of riches. Contrariwise the honest citizens, and those that are liberally brought up, oftentimes fall to poverty... Therefore our wise and prudent ancestors... ordered that this definition of the public rule should go rather by the nobility of lineage, than by the estimation of wealth: yet with that temperature [proviso], that men of chief and supreme nobility should not have this rule alone (for that would rather have been the power of a few than a commonwealth) but also every other citizen whosoever not ignobly born: so that all which were noble by birth, or ennobled by virtue, did...obtain this right of government.'

G. Bellini's 'The Recovery of the Relic of the Holy Cross' was painted in 1500, to recall an event of 1370, and is set in fifteenth-century Venice.

The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries	
1300	*Humanism taught at Padua University in Italy*
1341	*Petrarch given title of 'Poet Laureate' in Rome*
1349	*University established in Florence*
1390	*Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales published*
1436	*Brunelleschi designs the Duomo in Florence*
1453	*Ottoman Turks defeat the Byzantine ruler of Constantinople*
1454	*Gutenberg prints the Bible with movable type*
1484	*Portuguese mathematicians calculate latitude by observing the sun*
1492	*Columbus reaches America*
1495	*Leonardo da Vinci paints The Last Supper*
1512	*Michelangelo paints the Sistine Chapel ceiling*

Universities and Humanism

The earliest universities in Europe had been set up in Italian towns. The universities of Padua and Bologna had been centres of legal studies from the eleventh century. Commerce being the chief activity in the city, there was an increasing demand for lawyers and notaries (a combination of solicitor and record-keeper) to write and interpret rules and written agreements without which trade on a large scale was not possible. Law was therefore a popular subject of study, but there was now a shift in emphasis. It was studied in the context of earlier Roman culture. Francesco Petrarch (1304-78) represented this change. To Petrarch, antiquity was a distinctive civilisation which could be best understood through the actual words of the ancient Greeks and Romans. He therefore stressed the importance of a close reading of ancient authors.

This educational programme implied that there was much to be learnt which religious teaching alone could not give. This was the culture which historians in the nineteenth century were to label 'humanism'. By the early fifteenth century, the term 'humanist' was used for masters who taught grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history and moral philosophy. The Latin word *humanitas*, from which 'humanities' was derived, had been used many centuries ago by the Roman lawyer and essayist Cicero (106-43 BCE), a contemporary of Julius Caesar, to mean culture. These subjects were not drawn from or connected with religion, and emphasised skills developed by individuals through discussion and debate.

ACTIVITY 1

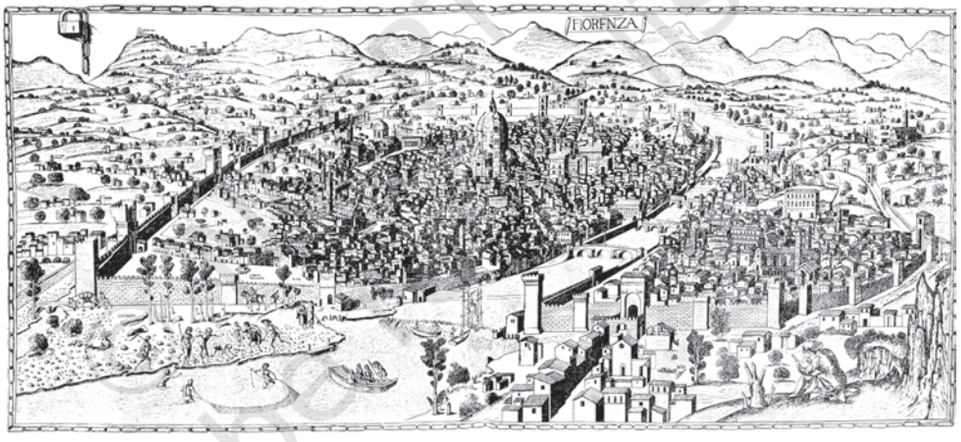
Locate Venice on the map of Italy, and look carefully at the painting on p. 154. How would you describe the city, and in what ways was it different from a cathedral-town?

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-94), a humanist of Florence, wrote on the importance of debate in On the Dignity of Man (1486).

'For [Plato and Aristotle] it was certain that, for the attainment of the knowledge of truth they were always seeking for themselves, nothing is better than to attend as often as possible the exercise of debate. For just as bodily energy is strengthened by gymnastic exercise, so beyond doubt in this wrestling-place of letters, as it were, energy of mind becomes far stronger and more vigorous.'

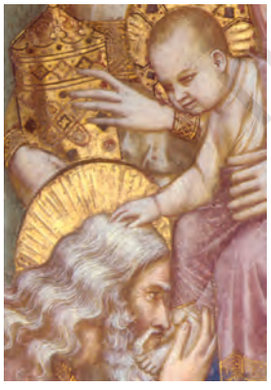
These revolutionary ideas attracted attention in many other universities, particularly in the newly established university in Petrarch's own home-town of Florence. Till the end of the thirteenth century, this city had not made a mark as a centre of trade or of learning, but things changed dramatically in the fifteenth century. A city is known by its great citizens as much as by its wealth, and Florence had come

Florence, a sketch made in 1470.



to be known because of Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), a layman who wrote on religious themes, and Giotto (1267-1337), an artist who painted lifelike portraits, very different from the stiff figures done by earlier artists. From then it developed as the most exciting intellectual city in Italy and as a centre of artistic creativity. The term 'Renaissance Man' is often used to describe a person with many interests and skills, because many of the individuals who became well known at this time were people of many parts. They were scholar-diplomat-theologian-artist combined in one.

Giotto's painting of the child Jesus, Assisi, Italy.



The Humanist View of History

Humanists thought that they were restoring 'true civilisation' after centuries of darkness, for they believed that a 'dark age' had set in after the collapse of the Roman Empire. Following them, later scholars unquestioningly assumed that a 'new age' had begun in Europe from the fourteenth century. The term 'Middle Ages'/'medieval period' was

used for the millennium (thousand years) after the fall of Rome. In the 'Middle Ages', they argued, the Church had had such complete control over men's minds that all the learning of the Greeks and Romans had been blotted out. The humanists used the word 'modern' for the period from the fifteenth century.

Periodisation used by humanists and by later scholars

5th–14th century	The Middle Ages
5th–9th century	The Dark Ages
9th–11th century	The Early Middle Ages
11th–14th century	The Late Middle Ages
15th century onwards	The Modern Age

Recently, historians have questioned this division. With more research being done and more being found out about Europe in this period, scholars are increasingly reluctant to make sharp divisions between centuries in terms of being culturally vibrant or otherwise. It seems unfair to label any period as the 'Dark Ages'.

Science and Philosophy: The Arabs' Contribution

Much of the writings of the Greeks and Romans had been familiar to monks and clergymen through the 'Middle Ages', but they had not made these widely known. In the fourteenth century, many scholars began to read translated works of Greek writers like Plato and Aristotle. For this they were indebted not to their own scholars but to Arab translators who had carefully preserved and translated ancient manuscripts (Plato was Aflatun, and Aristotle Aristu in Arabic).

While some European scholars read Greek in Arabic translation, the Greeks translated works of Arabic and Persian scholars for further transmission to other Europeans. These were works on natural science, mathematics, astronomy, medicine and chemistry. Ptolemy's *Almagest* (a work on astronomy, written in Greek before 140 CE and later translated into Arabic) carries the Arabic definite article 'al', which brings out the Arabic connection. Among the Muslim writers who were regarded as men of wisdom in the Italian world were Ibn Sina* ('Avicenna' in Latin, 980-1037), an Arab physician and philosopher of Bukhara in Central Asia, and al-Razi ('Rhazes'), author of a medical encyclopaedia. Ibn Rushd ('Averroes' in Latin, 1126-98), an Arab philosopher of Spain, tried to resolve the tension between philosophical knowledge (*faylasuf*) and religious beliefs. His method was adopted by Christian thinkers.

Humanists reached out to people in a variety of ways. Though the curricula in universities continued to be dominated by law, medicine and theology, humanist subjects slowly began to be introduced in schools, not just in Italy but in other European countries as well.

*The European spelling of these individuals' names made later generations think they were Europeans!

Schools at this time were only for boys.

Artists and Realism

Formal education was not the only way through which humanists shaped the minds of their age. Art, architecture and books were wonderfully effective in transmitting humanist ideas.

' "Art" is embedded in nature; he who can extract it, has it... Moreover, you may demonstrate much of your work by geometry. The more closely your work abides by life in its form, so much the better will it appear...No man shall ever be able to make a beautiful figure out of his own imagination unless he has well stored his mind by much copying from life.'

– Albrecht Durer (1471-1528)

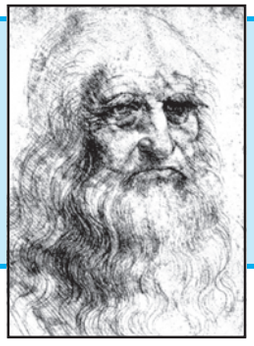
This sketch by Durer (Praying Hands) gives us a sense of Italian culture in the sixteenth century, when people were deeply religious, but also had a sense of confidence in man's ability to achieve near-perfection and to unravel the mysteries of the world and the universe.

'Praying Hands', brush drawing by Durer, 1508.

'The Pieta' by Michelangelo depicts Mary holding the body of Jesus.

Artists were inspired by studying works of the past. The material remains of Roman culture were sought with as much excitement as ancient texts: a thousand years after the fall of Rome, fragments of art were discovered in the ruins of ancient Rome and other deserted cities. Their admiration for the figures of 'perfectly' proportioned men and women sculpted so many centuries ago, made Italian sculptors want to continue that tradition. In 1416, Donatello (1386-1466) broke new ground with his lifelike statues.

Artists' concern to be accurate was helped by the work of scientists. To study bone structures, artists went to the laboratories of medical schools. Andreas Vesalius (1514-64), a Belgian and a professor of medicine at the University of Padua, was the first to dissect the human body. This was the beginning of modern physiology.



This self-portrait is by Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) who had an amazing range of interests from botany and anatomy to mathematics and art. He painted the Mona Lisa and The Last Supper.

One of his dreams was to be able to fly. He spent years observing birds in flight, and designed a flying machine.

He signed his name 'Leonardo da Vinci, disciple of experiment'.

Painters did not have older works to use as a model. But they, like sculptors, painted as realistically as possible. They found that a knowledge of geometry helped them understand perspective, and that by noting the changing quality of light, their pictures acquired a three-dimensional quality. The use of oil as a medium for painting also gave a greater richness of colour to paintings than before. In the colours and designs of costumes in many paintings, there is evidence of the influence of Chinese and Persian art, made available to them by the Mongols. (see Theme 5)

Thus, anatomy, geometry, physics, as well as a strong sense of what was beautiful, gave a new quality to Italian art, which was to be called 'realism' and which continued till the nineteenth century.

ACTIVITY 2

Describe the different scientific elements in the work of sixteenth-century Italian artists.

Architecture

The city of Rome revived in a spectacular way in the fifteenth century. From 1417, the popes were politically stronger because the weakness caused by the election of two rival popes since 1378 had ended. They actively encouraged the study of Rome's history. The ruins in Rome were carefully excavated by archaeologists (archaeology was a new skill). This inspired a 'new' style in architecture, which was actually a revival of the imperial Roman style – now called 'classical'. Popes, wealthy merchants and aristocrats employed architects who were familiar with classical architecture. Artists and sculptors were also to decorate buildings with paintings, sculptures and reliefs.

Some individuals were skilled equally as painters, sculptors and architects. The most impressive example is Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564) – immortalised by the ceiling he painted for the Pope in the Sistine Chapel, the sculpture called 'The Pieta' and his design of the dome of St Peter's Church, all in Rome. Filippo Brunelleschi (1337-1446), the architect who designed the spectacular Duomo of Florence, had started his career as a sculptor.

Italian architecture in the sixteenth century copied many features of imperial Roman buildings.

Another remarkable change was that from this time, artists were known individually, by name, not as members of a group or a guild, as earlier.

The Duomo, the dome of Florence cathedral designed by Brunelleschi.

Leon Batista Alberti (1404-72) wrote on art theory and architecture. 'Him I call an Architect who is able to devise and to compleat all those Works which, by the movement of great Weights, and by the conjunction and amassment of Bodies can, with the greatest Beauty, be adapted to the uses of Mankind.'

The First Printed Books

If people in other countries wanted to see paintings, sculptures or buildings of great artists, they had to travel to Italy. But in the case of the written word, what was written in Italy travelled to other countries. This was because of the greatest revolution of the sixteenth century – the mastery of the technology of printing. For this, Europeans were indebted to other peoples – the Chinese, for printing technology, and to Mongol rulers because European traders and diplomats had become familiar with it during visits to their courts. (This was also the case with three other important innovations – firearms, the compass and the abacus.)

Earlier, texts existed in a few hand-written copies. In 1455, 150 copies of the Bible were printed in the workshop of Johannnes Gutenberg (1400-1458), the German who made the first printing press. Earlier, a monk would have taken the same amount of time to write out *one* copy of the Bible!

By 1500, many classical texts, nearly all in Latin, had been printed in Italy. As printed books became available, it was possible to buy them, and students did not have to depend solely on lecture-notes. Ideas, opinions and information moved more widely and more rapidly than ever before. A printed book promoting new ideas could quickly reach hundreds of readers. This also made it possible for individuals to read books, since it was possible to buy copies for oneself. This developed the reading habit among people.

The chief reason that the humanist culture of Italy spread more rapidly across the Alps from the end of the fifteenth century is that printed books were circulating. This also explains why earlier intellectual movements had been limited to particular regions.

A New Concept of Human Beings

One of the features of humanist culture was a slackening of the control of religion over human life. Italians were strongly attracted to material wealth, power and glory, but they were not necessarily irreligious. Francesco Barbaro (1390-1454), a humanist from Venice, wrote a

pamphlet defending acquisition of wealth as a virtue. In *On Pleasure*, Lorenzo Valla (1406-1457), who believed that the study of history leads man to strive for a life of perfection, criticised the Christian injunction against pleasure. There was also a concern at this time with good manners – how one should speak politely and dress correctly, what skills a person of culture should learn.

Humanism also implied that individuals were capable of shaping their own lives through means other than the mere pursuit of power and money. This ideal was closely tied with the belief that human nature was many-sided, which went against the three separate orders that feudal society believed in.

Niccolo Machiavelli wrote about human nature in the fifteenth chapter of his book, The Prince (1513).

'So, leaving aside imaginary things, and referring only to those which truly exist, I say that whenever men are discussed (and especially princes, who are more exposed to view), they are noted for various qualities which earn them either praise or condemnation. Some, for example, are held to be generous, and others miserly. Some are held to be benefactors, others are called grasping; some cruel, some compassionate; one man faithless, another faithful; one man effeminate and cowardly, another fierce and courageous; one man courteous, another proud; one man lascivious, another pure; one guileless, another crafty; one stubborn, another flexible; one grave, another frivolous; one religious, another sceptical; and so forth.'

Machiavelli believed that 'all men are bad and ever ready to display their vicious nature partly because of the fact that human desires are insatiable'. The most powerful motive Machiavelli saw as the incentive for every human action is self-interest.

The Aspirations of Women

The new ideal of individuality and citizenship excluded women. Men from aristocratic families dominated public life and were the decision-makers in their families. They educated their sons to take their place in family businesses or in public life, at times sending their younger sons to join the Church. Although their dowries were invested in the family businesses, women generally had no say in how their husbands should run their business. Often, marriages were intended to strengthen business alliances. If an adequate dowry could not be arranged, daughters were sent to convents to live the life of a nun. Obviously, the public role of women was limited and they were looked upon as keepers of the households.

The position of women in the families of merchants, however, was somewhat different. Shopkeepers were very often assisted by their wives in running the shop. In families of merchants and bankers, wives looked after the businesses when the male members were away on work. The early death of a merchant compelled his widow to perform a larger public role than was the case in aristocratic families.

A few women were intellectually very creative and sensitive about the importance of a humanist education. 'Even though the study of letters promises and offers no reward for women and no dignity', wrote the Venetian Cassandra Fedele (1465-1558), 'every woman ought to seek and embrace these studies.' She was one of a handful of women who questioned the idea that women were incapable of achieving the qualities of a humanist scholar. Fedele was known for her proficiency in Greek and Latin, and was invited to give orations at the University of Padua.

Isabella d'Este.

Fedele's writings bring into focus the general regard for education in that age. She was one of many Venetian women writers who criticised the republic 'for creating a highly limited definition of freedom that favoured the desires of men over those of women'. Another remarkable woman was the Marchesa of Mantua, Isabella d'Este (1474-1539). She ruled the state while her husband was absent, and the court of Mantua, a small state, was famed for its intellectual brilliance. Women's writings revealed their conviction that they should have economic power, property and education to achieve an identity in a world dominated by men.

ACTIVITY 3

Compare the aspirations for women expressed by a woman (Fedele) and by a man (Castiglione). Did they have only women of a particular class in mind?

Balthasar Castiglione, author and diplomat, wrote in his book The Courtier (1528):

'I hold that a woman should in no way resemble a man as regards her ways, manners, words, gestures and bearing. Thus just as it is very fitting that a man should display a certain robust and sturdy manliness, so it is well for a woman to have a certain soft and delicate tenderness, with an air of feminine sweetness in her every movement, which, in her going and staying and whatsoever she does, always makes her appear a woman, without any resemblance to a man. If this precept be added to the rules that these gentlemen have taught the courtier, then I think that she ought to be able to make use of many of them, and adorn herself with the finest accomplishments... For I consider that many virtues of the mind are as necessary to a woman as to a man; as it is to be of good family; to shun affectation: to be naturally graceful; to be well mannered, clever and prudent; to be neither proud, envious or evil-tongued, nor vain... to perform well and gracefully the sports suitable for women.'

Debates within Christianity

Trade and travel, military conquest and diplomatic contacts linked Italian towns and courts with the world beyond. The new culture was admired and imitated by the educated and the wealthy. Very few of the new ideas filtered down to the ordinary man who, after all, could not read or write.

In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, many scholars in universities in north Europe were attracted to humanist ideas. Like their Italian colleagues, they too focused on classical Greek and Roman texts along with the holy books of the Christians. But, unlike Italy, where professional scholars dominated the humanist movement, in north Europe humanism attracted many members of the Church. They called on Christians to practise religion in the way laid down in the ancient texts of their religion, discarding unnecessary rituals, which they condemned as later additions to a simple religion. Theirs was a radically new view of human beings as free and rational agents. Later philosophers were to return to this over and over again, inspired by the belief in a distant God who created man but allowed him complete freedom to live his life freely, in pursuit of happiness 'here and now'.

Christian humanists like Thomas More (1478-1535) in England and Erasmus (1466-1536) in Holland felt that the Church had become an institution marked by greed, extorting money at will from ordinary people. One of the favourite methods of the clergy was to sell 'indulgences', documents which apparently freed the buyer from the burden of the sins he had committed. Christians came to realise from printed translations of the Bible in local languages that their religion did not permit such practices.

In almost every part of Europe, peasants began to rebel against the taxes imposed by the Church. While the common folk resented the extortions of churchmen, princes found their interference in the work of the state irritating. They were pleased when the humanists pointed out that the clergy's claim to judicial and fiscal powers originated from a document called the 'Donation of Constantine' supposed to have been issued by Constantine, the first Christian Roman Emperor. Humanist scholars were able to point out that this was not genuine, and had been forged later.

In 1517, a young German monk called Martin Luther (1483-1546) launched a campaign against the Catholic Church and argued that a person did not need priests to establish contact with God. He asked his followers to have complete faith in God, for faith alone could guide them to the right life and entry into heaven. This movement – called the Protestant Reformation – led to the churches in Germany and Switzerland breaking their connection with the Pope and the Catholic Church. In Switzerland, Luther's ideas were popularised by Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) and later by Jean Calvin (1509-64). Backed by merchants, the reformers had greater popular

appeal in towns, while in rural areas the Catholic Church managed to retain its influence. Other German reformers, like the Anabaptists, were even more radical: they blended the idea of salvation with the end of all forms of social oppression. They said that since God had created all people as equal, they were not expected to pay taxes and had the right to choose their priests. This appealed to peasants oppressed by feudalism.

William Tyndale (1494-1536), an English Lutheran who translated the Bible into English in 1506, defended Protestantism thus:

'In this they be all agreed, to drive you from the knowledge of the scripture, and that ye shall not have the text thereof in the mother-tongue, and to keep the world still in darkness, to the intent they might sit in the consciences of the people, through vain superstition and false doctrine, to satisfy their proud ambition, and insatiable covetousness, and to exalt their own honour above king and emperor, yea, and above God himself... Which thing only moved me to translate the New Testament. Because I had perceived by experience, how that it was impossible to establish the lay-people in any truth, except the scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother-tongue, that they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text. '

The New Testament is the section of the Bible dealing with the life and teachings of Christ and his early followers.

Luther did not support radicalism. He called upon German rulers to suppress the peasants' rebellion, which they did in 1525. But radicalism survived, and merged with the resistance of Protestants in France, who, persecuted by the Catholic rulers, started claiming the right of a people to remove an oppressive ruler and to choose someone of their own liking. Eventually, in France, as in many other parts of Europe, the Catholic Church allowed Protestants to worship as they chose. In England, the rulers ended the connection with the Pope. The king/queen was from then onwards the head of the Church.

The Catholic Church itself did not escape the impact of these ideas, and began to reform itself from within. In Spain and in Italy, churchmen emphasised the need for a simple life and service to the poor. In Spain, Ignatius Loyola, in an attempt to combat Protestantism, set up the Society of Jesus in 1540. His followers were called Jesuits, whose mission was to serve the poor and to widen their knowledge of other cultures.

ACTIVITY 4

What were the issues on which the Protestants criticised the Catholic Church?

The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries	
1516	*Thomas More's Utopia published*
1517	*Martin Luther writes the Ninety-Five Theses*
1522	*Luther translates the Bible into German*
1525	*Peasant uprising in Germany*
1543	*Andreas Vesalius writes On Anatomy*
1559	*Anglican Church established in England, with the king/queen as its head*
1569	*Gerhardus Mercator prepares cylindrical map of the earth*
1582	*Gregorian calendar introduced by Pope Gregory XIII*
1628	*William Harvey links the heart with blood circulation*
1673	*Academy of Sciences set up in Paris*
1687	*Isaac Newton's Principia Mathematica published*

The Copernican Revolution

The Christian notion of man as a sinner was questioned from an entirely different angle – by scientists. The turning point in European science came with the work of Copernicus (1473-1543), a contemporary of Martin Luther. Christians had believed that the earth was a sinful place and the heavy burden of sin made it immobile. The earth stood at the centre of the universe around which moved the celestial planets.

Celestial means divine or heavenly, while terrestrial implies having a worldly quality.

Copernicus asserted that the planets, including the earth, rotate around the sun. A devout Christian, Copernicus was afraid of the possible reaction to his theory by traditionalist clergymen. For this reason, he did not want his manuscript, *De revolutionibus* (The Rotation) to be printed. On his deathbed, he gave it to his follower, Joachim Rheticus. It took time for people to accept this idea. It was much later – more than half a century later, in fact – that the difference between 'heaven' and earth was bridged through the writings of astronomers like Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) and Galileo Galilei (1564-1642). The theory of the earth as part of a sun-centred system was made popular by Kepler's *Cosmographical Mystery*, which demonstrated that the planets move around the sun not in circles but in ellipses. Galileo confirmed the notion of the dynamic world in his work *The Motion*. This revolution in science reached its climax with Isaac Newton's theory of gravitation.

Self-portrait by Copernicus.

Reading the Universe

Galileo once remarked that the Bible that lights the road to heaven does not say much on how the heavens work. The work of these thinkers showed that *knowledge*, as distinct from *belief*, was based on observation and experiments. Once these scientists had shown the way, experiments and investigations into what came to be called physics, chemistry and biology expanded rapidly. Historians were to label this new approach to the knowledge of man and nature the Scientific Revolution.

Consequently, in the minds of sceptics and non-believers, God began to be replaced by Nature as the source of creation. Even those who retained their faith in God started talking about a distant God who does not directly regulate the act of living in the material world. Such ideas were popularised through scientific societies that established a new scientific culture in the public domain. The Paris Academy, established in 1670 and the Royal Society in London for the promotion of natural knowledge, formed in 1662, held lectures and conducted experiments for public viewing.

Was there a European 'Renaissance' in the Fourteenth Century?

Let us now reconsider the concept of the 'Renaissance'. Can we see this period as marking a sharp break with the past and the rebirth of ideas from Greek and Roman traditions? Was the earlier period (twelfth and thirteenth centuries) a time of darkness?

Recent writers, like Peter Burke of England, have suggested that Burckhardt was exaggerating the sharp difference between this period and the one that preceded it, by using the term 'Renaissance', which implies that the Greek and Roman civilisations were *reborn* at this time, and that scholars and artists of this period substituted the pre-Christian world-view for the Christian one. Both arguments were exaggerated. Scholars in earlier centuries had been familiar with Greek and Roman cultures, and religion continued to be a very important part of people's lives.

To contrast the Renaissance as a period of dynamism and artistic creativity, and the Middle Ages as a period of gloom and lack of development is an over-simplification. Many elements associated with the Renaissance in Italy can be traced back to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It has been suggested by some historians that in the ninth century in France, there had been similar literary and artistic blossoming.

The cultural changes in Europe at this time were not shaped only by the 'classical' civilisation of Rome and Greece. The archaeological and literary recovery of Roman culture did create a great admiration of that civilisation. But technologies and skills in Asia had moved far

ahead of what the Greeks and Romans had known. Much more of the world had become connected, and the new techniques of navigation (see Theme 8) enabled people to sail much further than had been possible earlier. The expansion of Islam and the Mongol conquests had linked Asia and North Africa with Europe, not politically but in terms of trade and of learning skills. The Europeans learned not just from the Greeks and Romans, but from India, from Arabia, from Iran, from Central Asia and China. These debts were not acknowledged for a long time because when the history of this period started to be written, historians saw it from a Europe-centred viewpoint.

An important change that did happen in this period was that gradually the 'private' and the 'public' spheres of life began to become separate: the 'public' sphere meant the area of government and of formal religion; the 'private' sphere included the family and personal religion. The individual had a private as well as a public role. He was not simply a member of one of the 'three orders'; he was also a person in his own right. An artist was not just a member of a guild, he was known for himself. In the eighteenth century, this sense of the individual would be expressed in a political form, in the belief that all individuals had equal political rights.

Another development was that the different regions of Europe started to have their separate sense of identity, based on language. Europe, earlier united partly by the Roman Empire and later by Latin and Christianity, was now dissolving into states, each united by a common language.

Exercises

ANSWER IN BRIEF

1. *Which elements of Greek and Roman culture were revived in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries?*
2. *Compare details of Italian architecture of this period with Islamic architecture.*
3. *Why were Italian towns the first to experience the ideas of humanism?*
4. *Compare the Venetian idea of good government with those in contemporary France.*

ANSWER IN A SHORT ESSAY

5. *What were the features of humanist thought?*
6. *Write a careful account of how the world appeared different to seventeenth-century Europeans.*

THEME 8

CONFRONTATION OF CULTURES

THIS chapter will examine some aspects of the encounters between Europeans and the people of the Americas between the fifteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Some Europeans ventured out on unknown oceans in order to find trading routes to areas where spices and silver were to be obtained. The first to do this were the Spanish and the Portuguese. They persuaded the Pope to give them the exclusive right to rule over any new regions they might locate. Christopher Columbus, an Italian, sponsored by the rulers of Spain, sailed west in 1492, and thought that the lands he had reached were 'the Indies' (India and countries east of India about which he had read in the Travels *of Marco Polo).*

Later exploration indicated that the 'Indians' of the 'New World' actually belonged to different cultural groups and were not part of Asia. Two types of culture were to be found in the Americas. There were small subsistence economies in the Caribbean region and in Brazil. There were also powerful monarchical systems based on well-developed agriculture and mining. These, like the Aztecs and Mayas of central America and the Incas of Peru, also had monumental architecture.

The exploration and later the settlement of South America were to have disastrous consequences for the native people and their cultures. It also marked the beginning of the slave trade, with Europeans selling slaves from Africa to work in plantations and mines in the Americas.

European conquest of the people of America was accompanied by the ruthless destruction of their manuscripts and monuments. It was only in the late nineteenth century that anthropologists began to study these cultures. Still later, archaeologists found the ruins of these civilisations. The Inca city of Machu Picchu was rediscovered in 1911. Recently, photographs taken from the air have shown traces of many cities now covered by forest.

By contrast, we know the European side of the encounters in great detail. The Europeans who went to the Americas kept log-books and diaries of their journeys. There are records left by officials and Jesuit missionaries (see Theme 7). Europeans wrote about their 'discovery' of the Americas, and when histories of the countries of America were written, these were in terms of *European* settlements, with little reference to the local people.

People have been living in North and South America and nearby islands for thousands of years, and many migrations from Asia and from the South Sea Islands have taken place over time. South America was (and still is, in parts) densely forested and mountainous, and the Amazon, the world's largest river, flows through miles of dense forest. In Mexico, in central America, there were densely settled areas of habitation along the coast and in the plains, while elsewhere villages were scattered over forested areas.

Communities of the Caribbean and Brazil

The Arawakian Lucayos lived on a cluster of hundreds of small islands in the Caribbean Sea, today known as the Bahamas, and the Greater Antilles. They had been expelled from the Lesser Antilles by the Caribs, a fierce tribe. In contrast to them, the Arawaks were a people who preferred negotiation to conflict. Skilled boat-builders, they sailed the open sea in dugout canoes (canoes made from hollow tree trunks). They lived by hunting, fishing and agriculture, growing corn, sweet potatoes, tubers and cassava.

A central cultural value was the organisation of people to produce food collectively and to feed everyone in the community. They were organised under clan elders. Polygamy was common. The Arawaks were animists. As in many other societies, shamans played an important role as healers and intermediaries between this world and that of the supernatural.

Animists believe that even objects regarded by modern science as 'inanimate' may have life or a soul.

MAP 1: Central America and the Caribbean Islands

ACTIVITY 1

Discuss the differences between the Arawaks and the Spanish. Which of these differences would you consider most significant and why?

The Arawaks used gold for ornaments, but did not attach the value to the metal that the Europeans did. They were quite happy to exchange gold for glass beads brought by the Europeans, because these seemed so much more beautiful. The art of weaving was highly developed – the hammock was one of their specialities, and one which captured the imagination of the Europeans.

The Arawaks were generous and were happy to collaborate with the Spanish in their search for gold. It was when Spanish policy became brutal that they were forced to resist, but this was to have disastrous consequences for them. Within twenty-five years of contact with the Spanish very little remained of the Arawaks or their way of life.

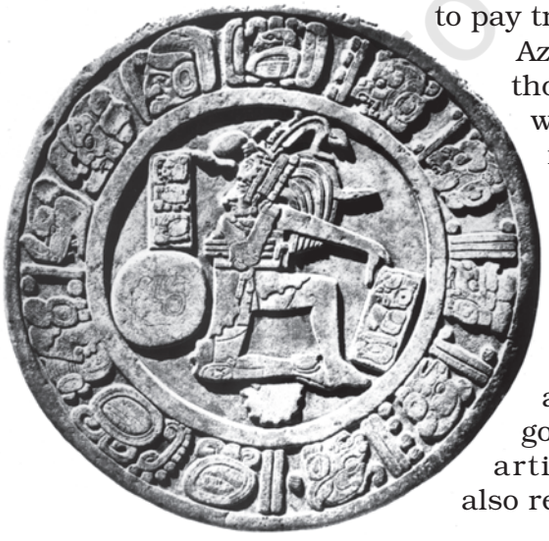
People called the Tupinamba lived on the east coast of South America, and in villages in the forests (the name 'Brazil' is derived from the brazilwood tree). They could not clear the dense forests for cultivation as they had no access to iron. But they had a healthy and plentiful supply of fruits, vegetables and fish, and so did not have to depend on agriculture. The Europeans who met them envied their happy freedom, with no king, army or church to regulate their lives.

The State Systems of Central and South America

In contrast to the Caribbean and Brazil, there were some highly organised states in central America. There was a generous surplus of corn, which provided the basis for the urbanised civilisations of the Aztecs, Mayas and Incas. The monumental architectural remains of these cities continue to mesmerise visitors today.

The Aztecs

A ball-court marker, with inscribed dates, Maya culture, Chiapas, sixth century.



In the twelfth century, the Aztecs had migrated from the north into the central valley of Mexico (named after their god Mexitli). They expanded their empire by defeating different tribes, who were forced to pay tribute.

Aztec society was hierarchical. The nobility included those who were nobles by birth, priests, and others who had been awarded the rank. The hereditary nobility were a small minority who occupied the senior positions in the government, the army and the priesthood. The nobles chose from among them a supreme leader who ruled until his death. The king was regarded as the representative of the sun on earth. Warriors, priests and nobles were the most respected groups, but traders also enjoyed many privileges and often served the government as ambassadors and spies. Talented artisans, physicians and wise teachers were also respected.

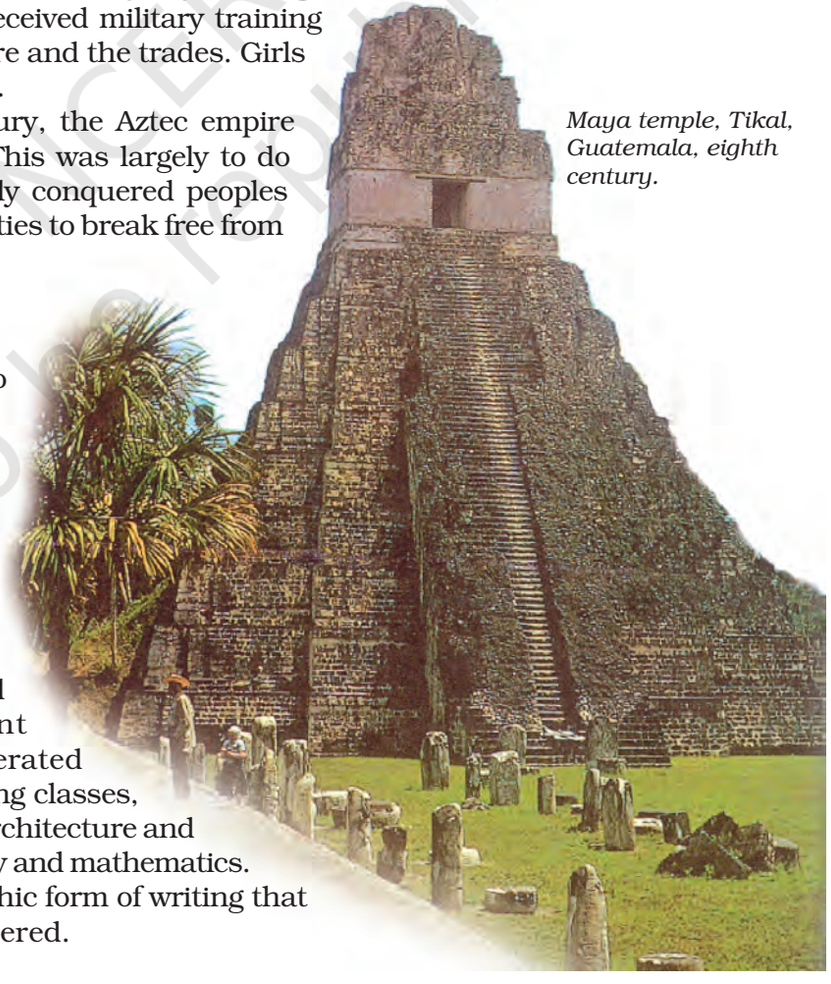
Since land was limited, the Aztecs undertook reclamations. They made *chinampas*, artificial islands, in Lake Mexico, by weaving huge reed-mats and covering them with mud and plants. Between these exceptionally fertile islands, canals were constructed on which, in 1325, was built the capital city Tenochtitlan. Its palaces and pyramids rose dramatically out of the lake. Because the Aztecs were frequently engaged in war, the most impressive temples were dedicated to the gods of war and the sun.

Reclamation is the conversion of wasteland into land suitable for habitation or cultivation.

The empire rested on a rural base. People cultivated corn, beans, squash, pumpkins, manioc root, potatoes and other crops. Land was owned not by individuals but by clans, which also organised public construction works. Peasants, like European serfs, were attached to lands owned by the nobility and cultivated them in exchange for part of the harvest. The poor would sometimes sell their children as slaves, but this was usually only for a limited period, and slaves could buy back their freedom.

The Aztecs made sure that all children went to school. Children of the nobility attended the *calmecac* and were trained to become military and religious leaders. All others went to the *tepochcalli* in their neighbourhood, where they learned history, myths, religion and ceremonial songs. Boys received military training as well as training in agriculture and the trades. Girls were trained in domestic skills.

In the early sixteenth century, the Aztec empire was showing signs of strain. This was largely to do with discontent among recently conquered peoples who were looking for opportunities to break free from central control.



Maya temple, Tikal, Guatemala, eighth century.

The Mayas

The Mayan culture of Mexico developed remarkably between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, but in the sixteenth century they had less political power than the Aztecs. Corn cultivation was central to their culture, and many religious ceremonies were centred on the planting, growing and harvesting of corn. Efficient agricultural production generated surplus, which helped the ruling classes, priests and chiefs to invest in architecture and in the development of astronomy and mathematics. The Mayas devised a pictographic form of writing that has only been partially deciphered.

The Incas of Peru

The largest of the indigenous civilisations in South America was that of the Quechuas or Incas in Peru. In the twelfth century the first Inca, Manco Capac, established his capital at Cuzco. Expansion began under the ninth Inca and at its maximum extent the Inca empire stretched 3,000 miles from Ecuador to Chile.

The empire was highly centralised, with the king representing the highest source of authority. Newly conquered tribes were absorbed effectively; every subject was required to speak Quechua, the language of the court. Each tribe was ruled independently by a council of elders, but the tribe as a whole owed its allegiance to the ruler. At the same time, local rulers were rewarded for their military co-operation. Thus, like the Aztec empire, the Inca empire resembled a confederacy, with the Incas in control. There are no precise figures of the population, but it would seem that it included over a million people.

Like the Aztecs, the Incas too were magnificent builders. They built roads through mountains from Ecuador to Chile. Their forts were built of stone slabs that were so perfectly cut that they did not require mortar. They used labour-intensive technology to carve and move stones from nearby rock falls. Masons shaped the blocks, using an effective but simple method called flaking. Many stones weighed more than 100 metric tons, but they did not have any wheeled vehicles to transport these. Labour was organised and very tightly managed.

MAP 2: South America

The basis of the Inca civilisation was agriculture. To cope with the infertile soil conditions, they terraced hillsides and developed systems of drainage and irrigation. It has been recently pointed out that in 1500, cultivation in the Andean highlands was much greater than what it is today. The Incas grew corn and potatoes, and reared llamas for food and labour.

Their weaving and pottery were of a high quality. They did not develop a system of writing. However, there was an accounting system in place – the *quipu*, or cords upon which knots were made to indicate specific mathematical units. Some scholars now suggest that the Incas wove a sort of code into these threads.

Most visitors today wonder at the arts and skills of the Incas. However, there are some like the Chilean poet Neruda, who thought of the hours of hard work that thousands of people must have been forced to put in. And all that to achieve such high levels of agricultural output, such remarkable architecture, and such exquisite crafts, in this difficult environment.

'Look at me from the depths of the earth,
tiller of fields, weaver, reticent shepherd,
...
mason high on your treacherous scaffolding,
iceman of Andean tears,
jeweler with crushed fingers,
farmer anxious among his seedlings,
potter wasted among his clays –
bring to the cup of this new life
your ancient buried sorrows.
Show me your blood and your furrow;
say to me: here I was scourged
because a gem was dull or because the earth
failed to give up in time its tithe of corn or stone.'

– Pablo Neruda (1904-73), The Heights of Machu Picchu, 1943.

The hilltop town of Machu Picchu. It escaped the notice of the Spaniards and was therefore not destroyed.

The organisation of the Inca empire, with its pyramid-like structure, meant that if the Inca chief was captured, the chain of command could quickly come apart. This was precisely what happened when the Spaniards decided to invade their country.

The cultures of the Aztecs and Incas had certain features in common, and were very different from European culture. Society was hierarchical, but there was no private ownership of resources by a few people, as in Europe. Though priests and shamans were accorded an exalted status, and large temples were built, in which gold was used ritually, there was no great value placed on gold or silver. This was also in marked contrast to contemporary European society.

Voyages of Exploration by Europeans

The people of South America and the Caribbean got to know of the existence of European people when the latter began to sail across the Atlantic Sea. The magnetic compass, which helped identify the cardinal points accurately, had been known since 1380, but only in the fifteenth century did people use it when they ventured on voyages into unknown areas. By this time many improvements had been made in European sailing ships. Larger ships were built, that could carry a huge quantity of cargo as well as equipment to defend themselves if attacked by enemy ships. The circulation of travel literature and books on cosmography and geography created widespread interest right through the fifteenth century.

ACTIVITY 2

Examine a detailed physical map of South America. To what extent do you think geography influenced the developments of the Inca empire?

Cosmography was understood as the science of mapping the universe. It described both heaven and Earth, but was seen as distinct from geography and astronomy.

In 1477, Ptolemy's *Geography* (written 1,300 years earlier) became available in print (see Theme 7) and thus came to be widely read. According to Ptolemy, an Egyptian, the regions of the world were arranged in terms of latitudes and longitudes. Reading these texts gave Europeans some knowledge of the world, which they understood to have three continents, namely, Europe, Asia and Africa. Ptolemy had suggested that the world was spherical, but he underestimated the width of the oceans. Europeans had no idea of the distance they would have to travel in the Atlantic before they reached land. Since they imagined it would be a short voyage, there were many who were ready to venture forth recklessly beyond the known seas.

People from the Iberian peninsula – the Portuguese and the Spanish – were the pioneers in the fifteenth-century voyages of exploration. For a long time these were called 'voyages of discovery'. Later historians, however, argued that these were *not* the first voyages that people of the "Old World" made to lands unknown to them. Arabs, Chinese and Indians had navigated vast stretches of ocean, and sailors from the Pacific Islands (the Polynesians and Micronesians) had made major ocean crossings. The Vikings of Norway had reached North America in the eleventh century.

Why were Spanish and Portuguese rulers in particular so receptive to the idea of funding a maritime quest? What produced such a passion for gold and treasure and for glory and titles? One may find the answers in a combination of three motives: economic, religious and political.

The European economy went through a decline from the mid-fourteenth to the mid-fifteenth centuries (see Theme 6). Plague and wars led to depopulation in many parts of Europe, trade grew slack, and there was a shortage of gold and silver, used for making European coins. This situation was in stark contrast to the preceding period (from the eleventh to the mid-fourteenth centuries) when growing trade had supported Italian city-states and led to the accumulation of capital. In the late fourteenth century, long-distance trade declined, and then became difficult after the Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453. Italians managed to do business with Turks, but were now required to pay higher taxes on trade.

The possibility that many more people could be brought into the fold of Christianity made many devout Christian Europeans ready to face adventure.

As it happened, the 'Crusades' against the Turks (see Theme 4) began as a religious war, but they increased Europe's trade with Asia and created a taste for the products of Asia, especially spices. If trade could be followed by political control, with European countries establishing 'colonies' in regions with a warmer climate, they would benefit further.

When thinking of new regions where gold and spices might be found, one possibility was West Africa, where Europeans had not traded directly so far. Portugal, a small country which had gained independence from

Spain since 1139, and which had developed fishing and sailing skills, took the lead. Prince Henry of Portugal (called the Navigator) organised the coasting of West Africa and attacked Ceuta in 1415. After that, more expeditions were organised, and the Portuguese established a trading station in Cape Bojador in Africa. Africans were captured and enslaved, and gold dust yielded the precious metal.

Reconquista was the military reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula by Christian kings from the Arabs in 1492.

In Spain, economic reasons encouraged individuals to become knights of the ocean. The memory of the Crusades and the success of the *Reconquista* fanned private ambitions and gave rise to contracts known as *capitulaciones*. Under these contracts the Spanish ruler claimed rights of sovereignty over newly conquered territories and gave rewards to leaders of expeditions in the form of titles and the right to govern the conquered lands.

The Atlantic Crossing

Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) was a self-taught man who sought adventure and glory. Believing in prophecies, he was convinced that his destiny lay in discovering a route to the East (the 'Indies') by sailing westwards. He was inspired by reading *Imago Mundi* (a work on astronomy and geography) by Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly written in 1410. He submitted his plans to the Portuguese Crown, only to have them turned down. He had better luck with the Spanish authorities who sanctioned a modest expedition that set sail from the port of Palos on 3 August 1492.

Nothing, however, prepared Columbus and his crew for the long Atlantic crossing that they embarked upon, or for the destination that awaited them. The fleet was small, consisting of a small *nao* called *Santa Maria*, and two caravels (small light ships) named Pinta and *Nina*. Columbus himself commanded the *Santa Maria* along with 40 capable sailors. The outward journey enjoyed fair trade winds but was long. For 33 days, the fleet sailed without sight of anything but sea and sky. By this time, the crew became restive and some of them demanded that they turn back.

Nao means a heavy ship in Spanish. It is derived from Arabic, and this is explained by the fact of Arab occupation of the region till 1492.

On 12 October 1492, they sighted land; they had reached what Columbus thought was India, but which was the island of Guanahani in the Bahamas. (It is said that this name was given by Columbus, who described the Islands as surrounded by shallow seas, *baja mar* in Spanish.) They were welcomed by the Arawaks, who were happy to share their food and provisions; in fact, their generosity made a deep impression upon Columbus. As he wrote in his log-book, 'They are so ingenuous and free with all they have, that no one would believe it who has not seen of it, anything they possess, if it be asked of them, they never say no, on the contrary, they invite you to share it and show as much love as if their hearts went with it'.

Columbus planted a Spanish flag in Guanahani (which he renamed San Salvador), held a prayer service and, without consulting the local

Europeans meet native Americans – a European woodblock print, sixteenth century.

people, proclaimed himself viceroy. He enlisted their cooperation in pressing forward to the larger islands of Cubanascan (Cuba, which he thought was Japan!) and Kiskeya (renamed Hispaniola, today divided between two countries, Haiti and the Dominican Republic). Gold was not immediately available, but the explorers had heard that it could be found in Hispaniola, in the mountain streams in the interior.

But before they could get very far, the expedition was overtaken by accidents and had to face the hostility of the fierce Carib tribes. The men clamoured to get back home. The return voyage proved more difficult as the ships were worm-eaten and the crew tired and homesick. The entire voyage took 32 weeks. Three more voyages followed, in the course of which Columbus completed his explorations in the Bahamas and the Greater Antilles, the South American mainland and its coast. Subsequent voyages revealed that it was not the 'Indies' that the Spaniards had found, but a new continent.

'Viceroy' means in place of the king (in this case the King of Spain).

Columbus's achievement had been to discover the boundaries of what seemed like infinite seas and to demonstrate that five weeks' sailing with the trade wind took one to the other side of the globe. Since places are often given the names of individuals, it is curious that Columbus is commemorated only in a small district in the USA and in a country in north-western South America (Columbia), though he did not reach either of these areas. The two continents were named after Amerigo Vespucci, a geographer from Florence who realised how large they might be, and described them as the 'New World'. The name 'America' was first used by a German publisher in 1507.

Voyages by Europeans	
1492	Columbus claims Bahama Islands and Cuba for Spain
1494	The 'undiscovered world' divided between Portugal and Spain
1497	John Cabot, Englishman, explores North American coast
1498	Vasco da Gama reaches Calicut/Kozhikode
1499	Amerigo Vespucci sights South American coast
1500	Cabral claims Brazil for Portugal
1513	Balboa crosses Panama Isthmus, sights Pacific Ocean
1521	Cortes defeats Aztecs
1522	Magellan circumnavigates the globe
1532	Pizarro conquers Inca kingdom
1571	Spanish conquer the Philippines
1600	British East India Company formed
1602	Dutch East India Company formed

ACTIVITY 3

What according to you were the reasons for people from different European countries wanting to take the risk of going on a 'voyage of discovery'?

Spain Establishes an Empire in America

Spanish expansion was based on a display of military strength with the use of gunpowder and of horses. The local people were compelled either to pay tribute or to work in gold and silver mines. The initial discovery was typically followed by establishing a small settlement, peopled by a few Spaniards who supervised the labour of the local inhabitants. Local chieftains were enlisted to explore new lands and, hopefully, more sources of gold. The greed for gold led to violent incidents provoking local resistance. The Spanish friar Bartolome de las Casas, the most severe critic of the Spanish conquerors, observed that the Spanish often tested their swords on the naked flesh of the Arawaks.

To military repression and forced labour was added the ravages of disease. The diseases of the Old World, particularly smallpox wreaked havoc on the Arawaks whose lack of immunity resulted in large-scale deaths. The local people imagined these diseases were caused by 'invisible bullets' with which the Spaniards attacked them. The extinction of the Arawaks and all traces of their way of life is a silent reminder of their tragic encounter with Spaniards.

The expeditions of Columbus were followed by a sustained and successful *exploration* of Central and South America. Within half a century, the Spanish had explored and laid claim to a vast area of the western hemisphere, from approximately latitudes 40 degrees north to 40 degrees south, without anyone challenging them.

Before this, the Spanish conquered lands of two great empires of the region. This was largely the work of two individuals: Hernan Cortes (1488-1547) and Francisco Pizarro (1478-1541). Their explorations were financed by members of the landed gentry in Spain, officials of municipal councils and noblemen. Those joining the expeditions supplied their own equipment in exchange for a share of the booty they expected from the conquests.

Cortes and the Aztecs

Cortes and his soldiers (called *conquistadores*) conquered Mexico swiftly and ruthlessly. In 1519, Cortes set sail from Cuba to Mexico, where he made friends with the Totonacs, a group who wanted to secede from Aztec rule. The Aztec king, Montezuma, sent an official to meet him. He was terrified at the aggressiveness of the Spanish, their gunpowder and their horses. Montezuma himself was convinced that Cortes was the reincarnation of an exiled god who had returned to avenge himself.

Dona Marina

Bernard Diaz del Castillo(1495-1584) wrote in his True History of the Conquest of Mexico that the people of Tabasco gave Cortes a woman attendant called Dona Marina. She was fluent in three local languages, and was able to play a crucial role as interpreter for Cortes. 'This was the great beginning of our conquests,and without Dona Marina we could not have understood the language of New Spain and Mexico.'

Diaz thought she was a princess, but the Mexicans called her 'Malinche', a word meaning 'betrayal'. Malinchista means someone who slavishly copies the costumes and language of another people.

Bernard Diaz wrote:

'And when we saw all those cities and villages built in the water, and other towns on dry land, and that straight and level causeway leading to Mexico City, we were astounded. These great towns and buildings rising from the water all made of stone, seemed like an enchanted vision from the tale of Amadis. Indeed, some of our soldiers asked whether it was not a dream.'

The Spaniards pressed against the Tlaxcalans, fierce fighters who submitted only after a stiff resistance. The Spaniards proceeded to massacre them cruelly. Then they marched to Tenochtitlan, which they reached on 8 November 1519.

The invading Spaniards were dumbstruck at the sight of Tenochtitlan. It was five times larger than Madrid and had 100,000 inhabitants, twice the population of Seville, Spain's largest city.

Cortes was cordially received by Montezuma. The Aztecs led the Spaniards into the heart of the city, where the Emperor showered them with gifts. His people were apprehensive, having heard of the massacre of the Tlaxcalans. An Aztec account described the situation: 'It was as though Tenochtitlan had given shelter to a monster. The people of Tenochtitlan felt as if everyone had eaten stupefying mushrooms... as if they had seen something astonishing. Terror dominated everyone, as if all the world were being disemboweled... people fell into a fearful slumber.'

The fears of the Aztecs proved to be well founded. Cortes without any explanation placed the Emperor under house arrest and attempted to rule in his name. In an attempt to formalise the Emperor's submission to Spain, Cortes installed Christian images in the Aztec temple. Montezuma, on his part, suggested a compromise and placed both Aztec and Christian images in the temple.

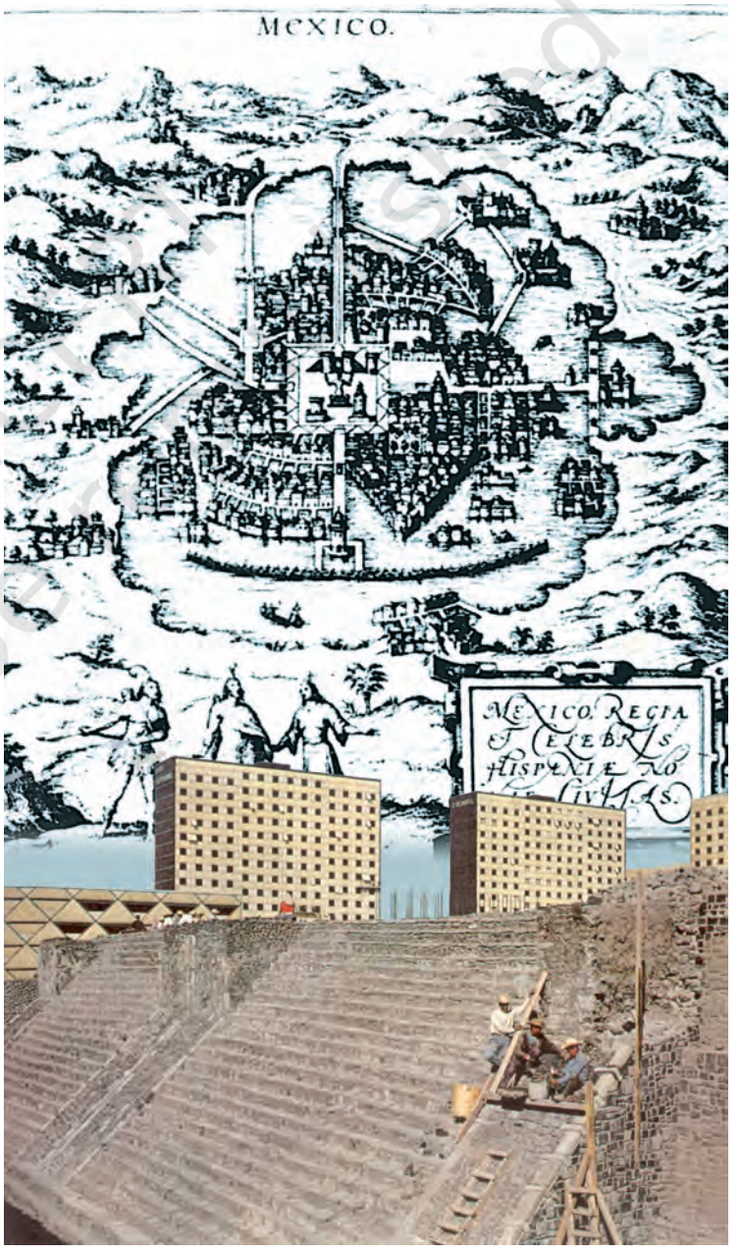
At this point, Cortes had to leave his deputy in charge and hurry back to Cuba. The high-handedness of the Spanish occupation and their incessant demands for gold provoked a general uprising. Alvarado ordered a massacre during the Aztec spring festival of Huizilpochtli. When Cortes returned on 25 June 1520, he had on his hands a full-blown crisis. The causeways were cut, the bridges taken away and the net closed. The Spaniards faced acute shortages of food and drinking water. Cortes was forced to retreat.

Around this time, Montezuma died under mysterious circumstances. The Aztecs continued to fight the Spaniards. 600 conquistadores and many more of their Tlaxcalan allies were killed in what is known as the Night of Tears. Cortes was forced to retreat to Tlaxcala to plan his strategy against the newly elected king, Cuatemoc. By then, the Aztecs were dying from the dreaded smallpox which had come with the Europeans. With just 180 soldiers and 30 horses, Cortes moved into Tenochtitlan as the Aztecs prepared for their final stand. The Aztecs thought they could see omens foretelling that their end was near, and because of this the Emperor chose to give up his life.

The conquest of Mexico had taken two years. Cortes became Captain-General of New Spain in Mexico and was showered with honours by Charles V. From Mexico, the Spaniards extended their control over Guatemala, Nicaragua and the Honduras.

Above: A European sketch of Tenochtitlan, sixteenth century.

Below: The grand stairway that led to the temples in the centre of Tenochtitlan, now a ruin in Mexico City.



Pizarro and the Incas

A gold statuette of a woman, Peru. This was found in a tomb which the Spanish missed, and therefore was not melted down.

Pizarro, in contrast to Cortes, was uneducated and poor when he joined the army and found his way to the Caribbean Islands in 1502. He had heard stories about the Inca kingdom as a land of silver and gold (*El-dor-ado*). He made repeated attempts to reach it from the Pacific. On one of his journeys back home, he was able to meet the Spanish king and show him beautifully designed gold jars of Inca workmanship. The king's greed was aroused, and he promised Pizarro the governorship of the Inca lands if he conquered it. Pizarro planned to follow Cortes' method, but was disconcerted to find that the situation in the Inca empire was different.

In 1532, Atahualpa secured the throne of the Inca empire after a civil war. Pizarro arrived on the scene and captured the king after setting a trap for him. The king offered a roomful of gold as ransom for his release – the most extravagant ransom recorded in history – but Pizarro did not honour his promise. He had the king executed, and his followers went on a looting spree. This was followed by the occupation of the country. The cruelty of the conquerors provoked an uprising in 1534 that continued for two years, during which time thousands died in war and due to epidemics.

In another five years, the Spanish had located the vast silver mines in Potosi (in Upper Peru, modern Bolivia) and to work these they made the Inca people into slaves.

Cabral and Brazil

The Portuguese occupation of Brazil occurred by accident. In 1500, a grand procession of ships set out from Portugal for India, headed by Pedro Alvares Cabral. To avoid stormy seas, he made a wide loop around West Africa, and found to his surprise that he had reached the coast of present-day Brazil. As it happened, this eastern part of South America was within the section assigned on the map to Portugal by the Pope, so they regarded it as indisputably theirs.

The Portuguese were more eager to increase their trade with western India than with Brazil, which did not promise any gold. But there was one natural resource there which they exploited: timber. The brazilwood tree, after which the Europeans named the region, produced a beautiful red dye. The natives readily agreed to cut the trees and carry the logs to the ships in exchange for iron knives and saws, which they regarded as marvels. ('For one sickle, knife or comb [they] would bring loads of hens, monkeys, parrots, honey, wax, cotton thread and whatever else these poor people had'.)

'Why do you people, French and Portuguese, come from so far away to seek wood? Don't you have wood in your country?' a native asked a French priest. At the end of their discussion, he said 'I can see that you are great madmen. You cross the sea and suffer great inconvenience

and work so hard to accumulate riches for your children. Is the land that nourished you not sufficient to feed them too? We have fathers, mothers and children whom we love. But we are certain that after our death the land that nourished us will also feed them. We therefore rest without further cares.'

This trade in timber led to fierce battles between Portuguese and French traders. The Portuguese won because they decided to 'settle' in/colonise the coast. In 1534, the king of Portugal divided the coast of Brazil into fourteen hereditary 'captaincies'. To the Portuguese who wanted to live there he gave landownership rights, and the right to make the local people into slaves. Many Portuguese settlers were veterans of the wars in Goa, in India, and were brutal to the local people.

In the 1540s, the Portuguese began to grow sugarcane on large plantations and built mills to extract sugar, which was then sold in Europe. In this very hot and humid climate they depended on the natives to work the sugar mills. When the natives refused to do this exhausting and dreary work, the mill-owners resorted to kidnapping them to work as slaves.

The natives kept retreating into the forests to escape the 'slavers' and, as time went on, there were hardly any native villages on the coast; instead, there were large, well-laid-out European towns. Plantation owners were then forced to turn to another source for slaves: West Africa. This was a contrast to the Spanish colonies. A large part of the population in the Aztec and Inca empires had been used to labouring in mines and fields, so the Spanish did not need to *formally* enslave them or to look elsewhere for slaves.

In 1549, a formal government under the Portuguese king was established, with the capital in Bahia/Salvador. From this time, Jesuits started to go out to Brazil. European settlers disliked them because they argued for humane interaction with the natives, ventured into the forests to live in villages, and sought to teach them Christianity as a joyous religion. Above all, the Jesuits strongly criticised slavery.

ACTIVITY 4

Analyse the effects of contact with the Europeans on the native people of South America. Describe their reactions to the settlers and the Jesuits.

'There is no greater curse on a home or family than to be unjustly supported by the sweat of others!'

'Any man who deprives others of their freedom, and being able to restore that freedom, does not do so, is condemned!'

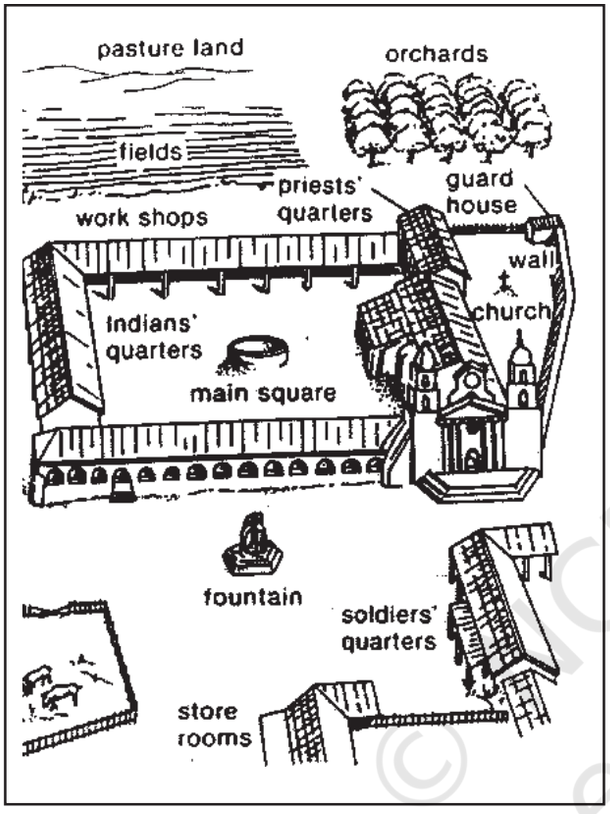
– Antonio Vieira, Jesuit priest in Brazil, 1640s.

Conquest, Colonies and the Slave Trade

What had begun as uncertain voyages came to have lasting consequences for Europe, the Americas and Africa.

From the fifteenth century, European maritime projects produced knowledge of *continuous sea passages* from ocean to ocean. Before this, most of these passages had been unknown to Europeans. Some were not known to anyone. No ship had penetrated the Caribbean or the Americas. The South Atlantic was wholly unexplored; no sea-going ship had ever entered its waters, much less crossed it, or sailed from it to the Pacific or the Indian Ocean. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, all these feats were accomplished.

For Europe, the 'discovery' of the Americas had consequences for others besides the initial voyagers. The influx of gold and silver helped further expansion of international trade and industrialisation. Between 1560 and 1600, a hundred ships *each year* carried silver from South American mines to Spain. But it was not Spain and Portugal that benefited. They did not invest their huge income in further trade, or in building up a merchant navy. Instead, it was the countries bordering the Atlantic, particularly England, France, Belgium and Holland, that took advantage of the 'discoveries'. Their merchants formed joint-stock companies and sent out trading expeditions, established colonies and introduced Europeans to the products of the New World, including tobacco, potatoes, cane-sugar, cacao and rubber.



Sketch of a typical Spanish township in South America.

Europe also became familiar with new crops from America, notably potatoes and chillies. These were then taken by Europeans to other countries like India.

For the native people of the Americas, the immediate consequences were the physical decimation of local populations, the destruction of their way of life and their enslavement in mines, plantations and mills.

Estimates indicate that pre-conquest Mexico had a population of between 30 and 37.5 million, the Andean region a similar number while Central America had between 10 and 13 million. The natives on the eve of the arrival of the Europeans totalled 70 million. A century and a half later, they had reduced to 3.5 million. Warfare and disease were primarily responsible for this.

The sudden destruction of the two major civilisations – those of the Aztecs and the Incas – in America highlights the contrasts between the two cultures in combat. Both with the Aztecs and the Incas, the nature of warfare played a crucial role in terrorising local inhabitants psychologically and physically. The contest also revealed a fundamental difference in values. The Spanish avarice for gold and silver was incomprehensible to the natives.

The capitalist system of production is one in which the means of production and distribution are owned by individuals or corporates and where competitors participate in a free market.

The enslavement of the population was a sharp reminder of the brutality of the encounter. Slavery was not a new idea, but the South American experience was new in that it accompanied the emerging capitalist system of production. Working conditions were horrific, but the Spanish regarded the exploitation as essential to their economic gain.

The silver mines in Peru began to function in the 1550s, and the monk Dominigo de Santo Tomas reported to the Council of the Indies that the Potosi was a mouth of hell which swallowed Indians by the thousands every year and that greedy mine owners treated them like stray animals.

In 1601, Philip II of Spain publicly banned forced labour, but made arrangements by a secret decree for its continuation. Things came to a head with the law of 1609, which gave full freedom to the local people, Christian and non-Christian alike. The European settlers were enraged, and within two years they had forced the king to revoke this law and to permit enslavement once again.

As new economic activities began – cattle farming on lands cleared of forests, and mining after the discovery of gold in 1700 – the demand for cheap labour continued. It was clear that the local people would resist enslavement. The alternative was to turn to Africa. Between the 1550s and 1880s (when slavery was abolished in Brazil) over 3,600,000 African slaves were imported into Brazil. This was almost half the total number of African slaves imported into the Americas. In 1750, there were individuals who owned as many as a thousand slaves.

From the early debates in the 1780s on abolishing slavery, there were those who argued that slavery existed in Africa prior to the entry of the Europeans, indeed slaves formed the bulk of the labour-force in the states being formed in Africa from the fifteenth century. They also pointed out that European traders were helped by Africans who helped capture young men and women to be sold as slaves, in return for crops imported from South America (maize, manioc and cassava, which became their staple foods). In his autobiography (1789), the freed slave Olaudah Equiano replied to these arguments by saying that slaves in Africa were treated as part of the family. In the 1940s, in his book *Capitalism and Slavery*, Eric Williams was one of the first modern historians to initiate a reassessment of the suffering experienced by African slaves.

MAP 3: Africa, indicating regions from where slaves were captured

Epilogue

In the early nineteenth century, European settlers in the South American colonies were to rebel against Spain and Portugal and become independent countries, just as in 1776 the thirteen North American colonies rebelled against Britain and formed the United States of America.

South America today is also called 'Latin America'. This is because Spanish and Portuguese, two of the main languages of the continent, are part of the Latin family of languages. The inhabitants are mostly native European (called Creole), European, and African by origin. Most of them are Catholics. Their culture has many elements of native traditions mixed with European ones.

Exercises

ANSWER IN BRIEF

1. *Compare the civilisation of the Aztecs with that of the Mesopotamians.*
2. *What were the new developments helping European navigation in the fifteenth century?*
3. *Give reasons for Spain and Portugal being the first in the fifteenth century to venture across the Atlantic.*
4. *What new food items were transmitted from South America to the rest of the world?*

ANSWER IN A SHORT ESSAY

5. *Write an account of the journey of an African boy of seventeen captured and taken to Brazil as a slave.*
6. *How did the 'discovery' of South America lead to the development of European colonialism?*

IV

TOWARDS MODERNISATION

The Industrial Revolution

Displacing Indigenous Peoples

Paths to Modernisation

TOWARDS MODERNISATION

IN the previous section you have read about certain crucial developments in the medieval and early modern world – feudalism, the European 'Renaissance' and the encounters between Europeans and the peoples of the Americas. As you would have realised, some of the phenomena that contributed to the making of our modern world gradually evolved in this period, and especially so from the mid-fifteenth century onwards. Two further developments in world history created a context for what has been called 'modernisation'. These were the Industrial Revolution and a series of political revolutions that transformed subjects into citizens, beginning with the American Revolution (1776-81) and the French Revolution (1789-94).

Britain has been the world's first industrial nation and you will read about how this came to be in Theme 9. For long it was believed that British industrialisation provided the model for industrialisation in other countries. The discussion of Theme 9 will show how historians have begun to question some of the earlier ideas about the Industrial Revolution. Each country drew upon the experiences of other nations, without necessarily reproducing any model. In Britain, for instance, coal and cotton textile industries were developed in the first phase of industrialisation, while the invention of railways initiated the second stage of that process. In other countries such as Russia, which began to industrialise much later (from the late nineteenth century onwards), the railway and other heavy industry emerged in the initial phase of industrialisation itself. Likewise, the role of the state, and of banks, in industrialisation has differed from country to country. The treatment of the British case in Theme 9 will hopefully whet your curiosity about the industrial trajectories of other nations such as the USA and Germany, two significant industrial powers. Theme 9 also emphasises the human and material costs incurred by Britain on its industrialisation – the plight of the labouring poor, especially of children, environmental degradation and the consequent epidemics of cholera and tuberculosis.

Linking the world – In 1927 Charles Lindbergh, twenty-five years old, flew across the Atlantic Ocean, from New York to Paris, in a single-engine aeroplane.

In Theme 11 you will similarly read about industrial pollution and cadmium and mercury poisoning in Japan that stirred people into mass movements against indiscriminate industrialisation.

European powers began to colonise parts of America and Asia and South Africa well before the Industrial Revolution. Theme 10 tells you the story of what European settlers did to the native peoples of America and Australia. The bourgeois mentality of the settlers made them buy and sell everything, including land and water. But the natives, who appeared uncivilised to European Americans, asked, 'If you do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can one buy them?' The natives did not feel the need to own land, fish or animals. They had no desire to *commodify* them; if things needed to be exchanged, they could simply be *gifted*. Quite obviously, the natives and the Europeans represented competing notions of civilisation. The former did not allow the European deluge to wipe out their cultures although the US and Canadian governments of the mid-twentieth century desired natives to 'join the mainstream' and the Australian authorities of the same period attempted to simply ignore their traditions and culture. One might wonder what is meant by 'mainstream'. How does economic and political power influence the making of 'mainstream cultures'?

Linking the world – J. Lipchitz's Figure, *sculpted in the 1920s, shows the influence of central African statuary.*

Western capitalisms – mercantile, industrial and financial – and early twentieth-century Japanese capitalism created colonies in large parts of the third world. Some of these were settler colonies. Others, such as British rule in India, are examples of direct imperial control. The case of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century China illustrates a third variant of imperialism. Here Britain, France, Germany, Russia, America and Japan meddled in Chinese affairs without directly taking over state power. They exploited the country's resources to their own advantage, seriously compromising Chinese sovereignty and reducing the country to the status of a semi-colony.

Linking the world – Japanese Zen paintings like this one were admired by western artists, and influenced the 'Abstract Expressionist' style of painting in the 1920s in the USA.

Almost everywhere, colonial exploitation was challenged by powerful nationalist movements. Nationalisms, however, also arose without a colonial context, as in the West or Japan. All nationalisms are doctrines of popular sovereignty. Nationalist movements believe that political power should rest with the people and this is what makes nationalism a modern concept. Civic nationalism vests sovereignty in *all* people regardless of language, ethnicity, religion or gender. It seeks to create a community of rights-exercising citizens and defines nationhood in terms of *citizenship*, not ethnicity or religion. Ethnic and religious nationalisms try to build national solidarities around a given language, religion or set of traditions, defining the people ethnically, not in terms of common citizenship. In a multi-ethnic country, ethnic nationalists might limit the exercise of sovereignty to a chosen people, often assumed to be superior to minority communities. Today, most western countries define their nationhood in terms of common citizenship and not by common ethnicity. One prominent exception is Germany where ideas

of ethnic nationalism have had a long and troubling career going back to the reaction against the French imperial occupation of German states in 1806. Ideologies of civic nationalism have vied with those of ethnic/religious nationalism the world over and this has been so in modern India, China and Japan as well.

As with industrialisation, so with paths to modernisation. Different societies have evolved their distinctive modernities. The Japanese and Chinese cases are very instructive in this regard. Japan succeeded in remaining free of colonial control and achieved fairly rapid economic and industrial progress throughout the twentieth century. The rebuilding of the Japanese economy after a humiliating defeat in the Second World War should not be seen as a mere post-war miracle. As Theme 11 shows, it resulted from certain gains that had already been accomplished in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Did you know, for instance, that by 1910 tuition fees for studying at a primary school had more or less ended and enrolment had become universal? Japan's path to modernisation, like that of any other country, has had its own tensions: those between democracy and militarism, ethnic nationalism and civic nation-building and between what many Japanese describe as 'tradition' and 'westernisation'.

The Chinese resisted colonial exploitation and their own bureaucratic landed elite through a combination of peasant rebellion, reform and revolution. By the early 1930s, the Chinese Communist Party, which drew its strength from peasant mobilisation, had begun confronting the imperial powers as well as the Nationalists who represented the country's elite. It had also started implementing its ideas in selected pockets of the country. Its egalitarian ideology, stress on land reforms and awareness of women's problems helped it overthrow foreign imperialism and the Nationalists in 1949. Once in power, it succeeded in reducing inequalities, spreading education and creating political awareness. Even so, the country's single-party framework and state repression contributed to considerable dissatisfaction with the political system after the mid-1960s. But the Chinese Communist Party has been able to retain control over the country largely because, in embracing certain market principles, it reinvented itself and has worked hard to transform China into an economic powerhouse.

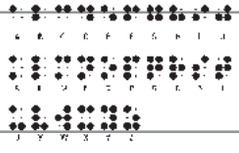
The different ways in which various countries have understood 'modernity' and sought to achieve it, each in the context of its own circumstances and ideas, make a fascinating story. This section introduces you to some aspects of that story.

TIMELINE IV

(c. 1700 to 2000)

This timeline will give you an idea of what was happening in different parts of the world in the last three centuries, and how people in different countries contributed to the making of our modern world. It will tell you about the slave trade in Africa and the establishment of the Apartheid regime in South Africa, about social movements in Europe and the formation of nation states, about the expansion of imperial powers and the process of colonisation, and about democratic and anti-colonial movements that swept through the world in the last century. It will also refer to some of the inventions and technological developments that are associated with modernity.

As with all timelines, this one focuses on a few dates. There are others that are important. When you see a series of dates in a timeline, do not think that those are the only dates you need to know. Find out why different timelines focus on different types of dates, and what this selection tells us.

DATES	AFRICA	EUROPE
1720-30	King Agaja of Dahomey (1724-34), West Africa, stops slave trade*; it is reintroduced in the 1740s	
1730-40		Carolus Linnaeus invents a taxonomic system* to classify plants and animals (1735) 
1740-50		
1750-60	First outbreak of smallpox (1755) brought by sailors, in Cape Town, South Africa	
1760-70		
1770-80	Peak of international slave trade, all the colonial powers are involved in it. Several hundred thousand Black Africans are taken across the Atlantic every year. As many as two-thirds die on board ship itself	Emelian Pugachev heads a peasant uprising (1773-75) that sweeps across Russia
1780-90		Beginning of the French Revolution* (1789)
1790-1800		
1800-10	Mohammed Ali rules Egypt, 1805-48; Egypt breaks away from Ottoman empire	
1810-20		
1820-30	Liberia founded (1822) in West Africa as home for freed slaves	Louis Braille develops a system of finger reading* (1823); passenger trains introduced in England (1825)
1830-40	Abdal-Kadir leads Arab resistance (1832-47) against French presence in Algeria	
1840-50		Liberal and socialist movements in several European countries (1848)
1850-60		

DATES	AFRICA	EUROPE
1860-70	Suez Canal*, one of the most important trade routes in the world, opens (1869) 	Russian serfs are freed (1861)
1870-80		Germany and Italy emerge as unified nation-states
1880-90	Beginning of the European 'Scramble for Africa'	
1890-1900		Making of the first film (1895); the modern Olympics are held for the first time in Athens (1896)
1900-1910	Mahatma Gandhi* advocates satyagraha to resist racist laws (1906)	
1910-1920	South Africa introduces laws to reserve 87 per cent of land for whites (1913)	First World War (1914-1918); the Russian Revolution of 1917
1920-30		Turkey becomes a republic under Mustapha Kemal (1923)
1930-40	First trans-African railway from Angola to Mozambique completed (1931)	Hitler captures power in Germany (1933); Second World War (1939-45)
1940-50	Afrikaner National Party wins power in South Africa (1948). The policy of Apartheid is put in place	Britain recognises Irish independence (1949)
1950-60	Ghana is the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to become independent (1957)	Discovery of DNA; Russia launches the spacecraft Sputnik (1957)
1960-70	Organisation of African Unity founded (1963)	Protest movements in Europe (1968)
1970-80		
1980-90		Mikhail Gorbachev, leader of the USSR (1985); Beginning of the world wide web (1989)
1990-2000	Nelson Mandela* freed in South Africa (1990); process of dismantling Apartheid begins	Scientists clone the sheep Dolly (1997) raising new debates about the limits of genetic engineering

DATES	ASIA	SOUTH ASIA
1720-30	*Gujin tushu jicheng**, the largest encyclopaedia ever printed, commissioned by Kangxi, the Manchu ruler of China	
1730-40		
1740-50		Marathas extend control over northern India
1750-60	Aoki Konyo, a Japanese scholar, compiles a Dutch-Japanese dictionary (1758)	Robert Clive defeats Siraj-ud-daula, Nawab of Bengal, at Battle of Plassey (1757)
1760-70		
1770-80		
1780-90	British export of opium* from India to China expands dramatically	
1790-1800		Ranjit Singh* founds Sikh kingdom in Punjab (1799)
1800-10		
1810-20		
1820-30	Javanese revolt against Dutch (1825-30)	Practice of *sati* made illegal (1829)
1830-40	Ottoman sultan Abdul Majid starts a programme of modernisation (1839)	
1840-50		
1850-60	King Rama IV rules Thailand, opens the country to foreign trade (1853)	Railway and telegraph line introduced (1853); the Great Revolt* (1857)
1860-70	French begin to occupy Indo-China (Southeast Asia) (1862)	
1870-80	Opening of the first Japanese railway, Tokyo to Yokohama (1872)	Famine in the Deccan, southern India (1876-78), over 5 million die
1880-90	Britain annexes Burma (Myanmar) (1885-86)	Foundation of Indian National Congress* (1885)
1890-1900		
		 The First Indian National Congress, 1885

DATES	ASIA	SOUTH ASIA
1900-10	Japanese navy defeats Russian fleet (1905)	
1910-20	Balfour Declaration promises homeland for Jews in Palestine (1917)	
1920-30		Non-Cooperation Movement (1921) launched by Mahatma Gandhi; E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker launches the Self-Respect Movement in Tamil Nadu (1925)
1930-40	Opening of British oil pipeline from Iraq to Syria (1934)	Alam Ara by Ardeshir Irani (1931) is the first Indian talkie. Berlin–Baghdad Railway linking Baghdad to Istanbul begins operation (1940)
1940-50	USA drops atom bombs on Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki* (1945) killing approximately 120,000 civilians. Many more were to die later through the effects of radiation; formation of People's Republic of China (1949)	Quit India Movement (1942); India and Pakistan become independent (1947)
1950-60	Bandung Conference (1955) strengthens the Non-Aligned Movement	India becomes a republic* (1950)
1960-70	Arab leaders set up Palestine Liberation Organisation to unite Palestinian refugees (1964); war in Vietnam (1965-73)	Sirimavo Bandarnaike* becomes world's first woman prime minister (1960) 
1970-80	Shah of Iran is overthrown (1979)	Bangladesh emerges as an independent nation (1971)
1980-90	Mass demonstrations for democracy in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, China (1989)	A leak at the Union Carbide pesticides plant in Bhopal (1984) leads to one of the worst industrial disasters in history, thousands die
1990-2000	Gulf War between Iraq, Kuwait and the USA	India and Pakistan conduct nuclear tests (1998)
		

DATES	AMERICAS	AUSTRALIA / PACIFIC ISLANDS
1720-30	Portuguese introduce coffee in Brazil (1727)	Dutch navigator Roggeveen reaches Samoa Islands and Easter Island in the Pacific (1722)
1730-40	Stono Slave Rebellion led by a literate slave Jemmy (1739)	
1740-50	Juan Santos, also called Atahualpa II, leads Native Americans of Peru in unsuccessful revolt (1742)	
1750-60		
1760-70	Chief Pontiac of the Ottawa tribe leads protest against the British (1763)	First of Captain James Cook's three voyages to the Pacific* (1768-71)
1770-80	US Declaration of Independence (1776)	
1780-90	US Constitution drawn up; dollars first used as American currency (1787)	First British convicts shipped to Botany Bay, Australia (1788)
1790-1800		
1800-10		Matthew Flinders circumnavigates, then names, Australia; it means 'southern' (1801-03)
1810-20		
1820-30	Simon Bolivar* leads Venezuela to independence (1821)	
1830-40	Trail of Tears; in the USA, thousands of eastern Native Americans are forced to move west, many dying on the way (1838)	Charles Darwin sets out on voyage to the Pacific, Galapagos Islands (1831), leading to the development of the theory of evolution
1840-50	Meeting in Seneca Falls, New York, calls for equal rights for American women (1848)	British and Maoris in New Zealand sign Treaty of Waitangi (1840). This was followed by a series of Maori uprisings (1844-88)
1850-60		Beginning of the first regular steamship service between Australia and England (1856)

DATES	AMERICAS	AUSTRALIA/PACIFIC ISLANDS
1860-70	Civil War in USA (1861-65); Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution outlaws slavery	Transportation of prisoners to Australia from Britain ends (1868)
1870-80	Invention of telephone, record-player, electric bulb	
1880-90	Invention of Coca-Cola* (1886) 	
1890-1900		Voting right for women in New Zealand (1893)
1900-1910	Wright brothers invent the aeroplane (1903)	
1910-1920	Henry Ford begins assembly line production of cars (1913); Panama Canal linking the Atlantic and Pacific opened (1914)	Influenza epidemic kills one-fifth of population of Western Samoa (1918)
1920-30	US Wall Street Stock Exchange crashes (1929); Great Depression follows; by 1932, 12 million are out of work	Uprising of Mau people of Samoa against New Zealand government (1929)
1930-40		
1940-50	The US enters Second World War	
1950-60	Fidel Castro comes to power after the Cuban Revolution (1958)	
1960-70	Civil Rights movement in the USA (1963)*; US Civil Rights Act (1964) bans racial discrimination. Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King is assassinated (1968); US astronauts land on the moon (1969)	
1970-80	US Congress passes Equal Opportunity Act in response to women's movement (1972)	Tonga and Fiji gain independence from Britain (1970); Papua New Guinea gains independence from Australia (1975)
1980-90		New Zealand declared nuclear-free zone (1984); Treaty of Rarotonga sets up South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone (1986)
1990-2000		

ACTIVITY

If you compare the four timelines given in the book, you will find that the chronological reference periods in the left-hand column differ. Can you think of the reasons for this? Try and design a timeline of your own, giving reasons for your selections.

THEME 9

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

THE transformation of industry and the economy in Britain between the 1780s and the 1850s is called the 'first industrial revolution'. This had far-reaching effects in Britain. Later, similar changes occurred in European countries and in the USA. These were to have a major impact on the society and economy of those countries and also on the rest of the world.*

This phase of industrial development in Britain is strongly associated with new machinery and technologies. These made it possible to produce goods on a massive scale compared to handicraft and handloom industries. The chapter outlines the changes in the cotton and iron industries. Steam, a new source of power, began to be used on a wide scale in British industries. Its use led to faster forms of transportation, by ships and railways. Many of the inventors and businessmen who brought about these changes were often neither personally wealthy nor educated in basic sciences like physics or chemistry, as will be seen from glances into the backgrounds of some of them.

Industrialisation led to greater prosperity for some, but in the initial stages it was linked with poor living and working conditions of millions of people, including women and children. This sparked off protests, which forced the government to enact laws for regulating conditions of work.

*In the second one, after about 1850, new areas like the chemical and electrical industries expanded. In that period, Britain fell behind, and lost its position as the world's leading industrial power, as it was overtaken by Germany and the USA.

The term 'Industrial Revolution' was used by European scholars – Georges Michelet in France and Friedrich Engels in Germany. It was used for the first time in English by the philosopher and economist Arnold Toynbee (1852-83), to describe the changes that occurred in British industrial development between 1760 and 1820. These dates coincided with those of the reign of George III, on which Toynbee was giving a series of lectures at Oxford University. His lectures were published in 1884, after his untimely death, as a book called *Lectures on the Industrial Revolution in England: Popular Addresses, Notes and Other Fragments*.

Later historians, T.S. Ashton, Paul Mantoux and Eric Hobsbawm, broadly agreed with Toynbee. There was remarkable economic growth from the 1780s to 1820 in the cotton and iron industries, in coal mining, in the building of roads and canals and in foreign trade. Ashton (1889-1968) celebrated the Industrial Revolution, when England was 'swept by a wave of gadgets'.

Why Britain?

Britain was the first country to experience modern industrialisation. It had been politically stable since the seventeenth century, with England, Wales and Scotland unified under a monarchy. This meant that the kingdom had common laws, a single currency and a market that was not fragmented by local authorities levying taxes on goods that passed through their area, thus increasing their price. By the end of the seventeenth century, money was widely used as the medium of exchange. By then a large section of the people received their income in the form of wages and salaries rather than in goods. This gave people a wider choice for ways to spend their earnings and expanded the market for the sale of goods.

In the eighteenth century, England had been through a major economic change, later described as the 'agricultural revolution'. This was the process by which bigger landlords had bought up small farms near their own properties and enclosed the village common lands, thus creating very large estates and increasing food production. This forced landless farmers, and those who had lived by grazing animals on the common lands, to search for jobs elsewhere. Most of them went to nearby towns.

'The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied;

Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;

The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robbed the neighbouring fields of half their growth.'

– Oliver Goldsmith (1728-74), The Deserted Village.

Towns, Trade and Finance

From the eighteenth century, many towns in Europe were growing in area and in population. Out of the 19 European cities whose population doubled between 1750 and 1800, 11 were in Britain. The largest of them was London, which served as the hub of the country's markets, with the next largest ones located close to it.

London had also acquired a global significance. By the eighteenth century, the centre of global trade had shifted from the Mediterranean ports of Italy and France to the Atlantic ports of Holland and Britain. Still later, London replaced Amsterdam as the principal source of loans for international trade. London also became the centre of a triangular trade network that drew in England, Africa and the West Indies. The companies trading in America and Asia also had their offices in London. In England the movement of goods between markets was helped by a good network of rivers, and an indented coastline with sheltered bays. Until the spread of railways, transport by waterways was cheaper and faster than by land. As early as 1724, English rivers provided some 1,160 miles of navigable water, and except for mountainous areas, most places in the country were within 15 miles of a river. Since all the navigable sections of English rivers flow into the sea, cargo on river vessels was easily transferred to coastal ships called coasters. By 1800, at least 100,000 sailors worked on the coasters.

ACTIVITY 1

Discuss the developments in Britain and in other parts of the world in the eighteenth century that encouraged British industrialisation.

The centre of the country's financial system was the Bank of England (founded in 1694). By 1784, there were more than a hundred provincial banks in England, and during the next 10 years their numbers trebled. By the 1820s, there were more than 600 banks in the provinces, and over 100 banks in London alone. The financial requirements to establish and maintain big industrial enterprises were met by these banks.

The industrialisation that occurred in Britain from the 1780s to the 1850s is explained partly by the factors described above – many poor people from the villages available to work in towns; banks which could loan money to set up large industries; and a good transport network.

The following pages will describe two new factors: a range of technological changes that increased production levels dramatically and a new transport network created by the construction of railways. In both developments, if the dates are read carefully, one will notice that there is a gap of a few decades between the development and its widespread *application*. One must not assume that a new innovation in technology led to it being used in the industry *immediately*.

Of the 26,000 inventions recorded in the eighteenth century, more than half were listed for the period 1782-1800. These led to many changes. We shall discuss the four major ones: the transformation of the iron industry, the spinning and weaving of cotton, the development of steam 'power' and the coming of the railways.

Coal and Iron

England was fortunate in that coal and iron ore, the staple materials for mechanisation, were plentifully available, as were other minerals – lead, copper and tin – that were used in industry. However, until the eighteenth century, there was a scarcity of *usable iron*. Iron is drawn out from ore as pure liquid metal by a process called smelting. For centuries, charcoal (from burnt timber) was used for the smelting process. This had several problems: charcoal was too fragile to transport across long distances; its impurities produced poor-quality iron; it was in short supply because

Coalbrookdale: blast-furnaces (left and centre) and charcoal-ovens (right); painting by F.Vivares, 1758.

forests had been destroyed for timber; and it could not generate high temperatures.

The solution to this problem had been sought for years before it was solved by a family of iron-masters, the Darbys of Shropshire. In the course of half a century, three generations of this family – grandfather, father and son, all called Abraham Darby – brought about a revolution in the metallurgical industry. It began with an invention in 1709 by the first Abraham Darby (1677-1717). This was a blast furnace that would use coke, which could generate high temperatures; coke was derived from coal by removing the sulphur and impurities. This invention meant that furnaces no longer had to depend on charcoal. The melted iron that emerged from these furnaces permitted finer and larger castings than before.

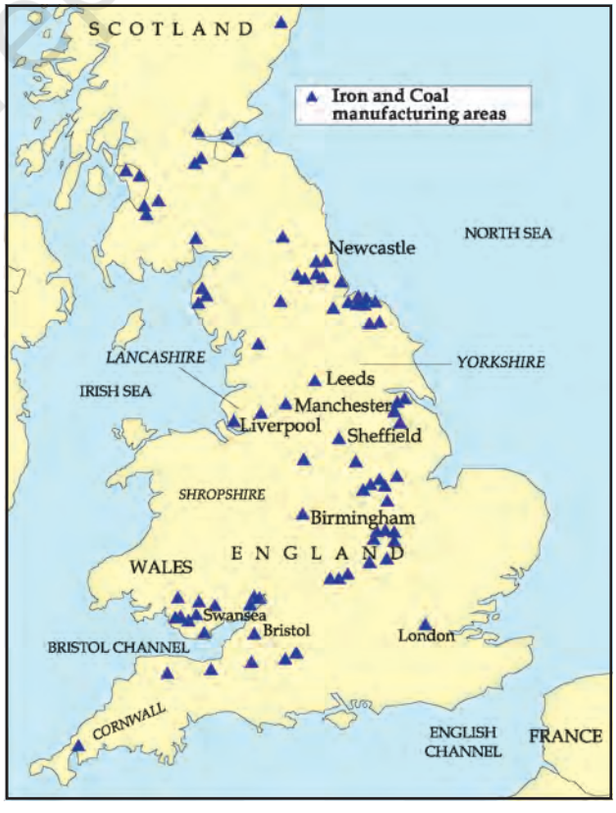
The Cast Iron Bridge near Coalbrookdale, painting by William Williams, 1780.

*This area later grew into the village called Ironbridge.

The process was further refined by more inventions. The second Darby (1711-68) developed wrought-iron (which was less brittle) from pig-iron. Henry Cort (1740-1823) designed the puddling furnace (in which molten iron could be rid of impurities) and the rolling mill, which used steam power to roll purified iron into bars. It now became possible to produce a broader range of iron products. The durability of iron made it a better material than wood for everyday items and for machinery. Unlike wood, which could burn or splinter, the physical and chemical properties of iron could be controlled. In the 1770s, John Wilkinson (1728-1808) made the first iron chairs, vats for breweries and distilleries, and iron pipes of all sizes. In 1779, the third Darby (1750-91) built the first iron bridge in the world, in Coalbrookdale, spanning the river Severn*. Wilkinson used cast iron for the first time to make water pipes (40 miles of it for the water supply of Paris).

The iron industry then came to be concentrated in specific regions as integrated units of coal mining and iron smelting. Britain was lucky in possessing excellent coking coal and high-grade iron ore in the same basins or even the same seams. These basins were also close to ports; there were five coastal coalfields which could deliver their products almost straight into ships. Since the coalfields were near the coast, shipbuilding increased, as did the shipping trade.

MAP 1: Britain: The iron industry



ACTIVITY 2

Ironbridge Gorge is today a major 'heritage site'. Can you suggest why?

The British iron industry quadrupled its output between 1800 and 1830, and its product was the cheapest in Europe. In 1820, a ton of pig iron needed 8 tons of coal to make it, but by 1850 it could be produced by using only 2 tons. By 1848, Britain was smelting more iron than the rest of the world put together.

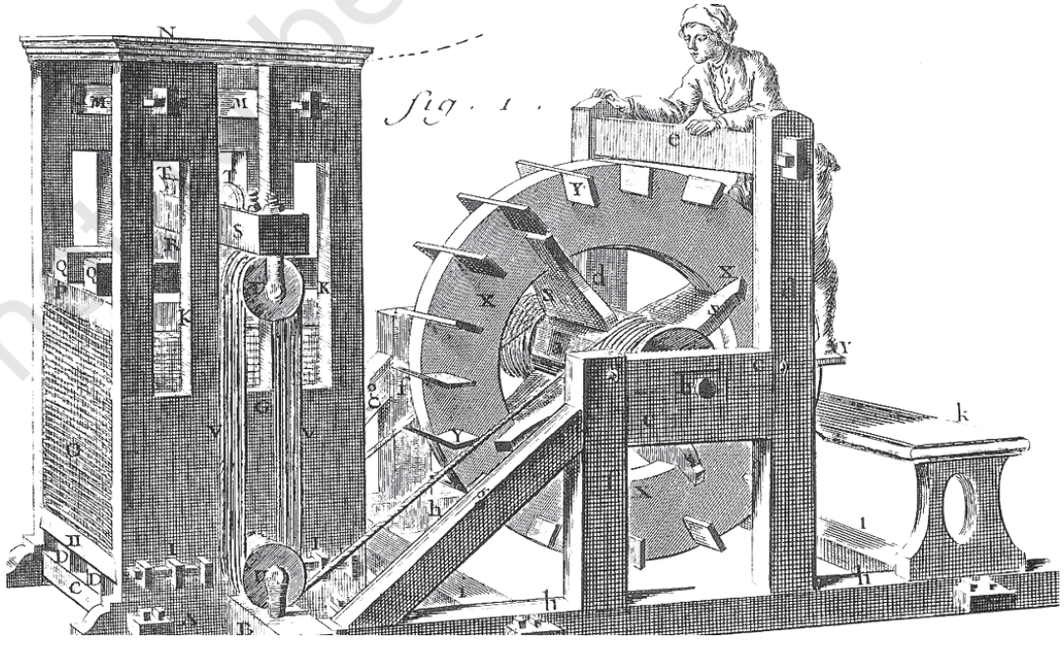
Cotton Spinning and Weaving

The British had always woven cloth out of wool and flax (to make linen). From the seventeenth century, the country had been importing bales of cotton cloth from India at great cost. As the East India Company's political control of parts of India was established, it began to import, along with cloth, raw cotton, which could be spun and woven into cloth in England.

Till the early eighteenth century, spinning had been so slow and laborious that 10 spinners (mostly women, hence the word 'spinster') were required to supply sufficient yarn to keep a single weaver busy. Therefore, while spinners were occupied all day, weavers waited idly to receive yarn. But a series of technological inventions successfully closed the gap between the speed in spinning raw cotton into yarn or thread, and of weaving the yarn into fabric. To make it even more efficient, production gradually shifted from the homes of spinners and weavers to factories.

From the 1780s, the cotton industry symbolised British industrialisation in many ways. This industry had two features which were also seen in other industries.

Raw cotton had to be entirely imported and a large part of the finished cloth was exported. This sustained the process of colonisation,



Manpower (in this picture, woman-power) worked the treadmill that lowered the lid of the cotton press.

1. The **flying shuttle loom**, *designed by John Kay (1704-64) in 1733 made it possible to weave broader fabrics in less time and consequently called for more yarn than could be supplied at the prevailing pace of spinning.*

2. The **spinning jenny** *was a machine made by James Hargreaves (1720-78) in 1765 on which a single person could spin several threads of yarn simultaneously. This provided weavers with yarn at a faster rate than they could weave into fabric.*

3. The **water frame**, *which Richard Arkwright (1732-92) invented in 1769, produced a much stronger thread than before. This also made it possible to weave pure cotton fabrics rather than fabrics that combined linen and cotton yarn.*

4. The **mule** *was the nickname for a machine invented in 1779 by Samuel Crompton (1753-1827) that allowed the spinning of strong and fine yarn.*

5. The cycle of inventions in the cotton textile industry that sought to maintain a balance between the tasks of spinning and weaving concluded with the invention of the **powerloom** *by Edmund Cartwright (1743-1823) in 1787. This was easy to work, stopped automatically every time a thread broke and could be used to weave any kind of material. From the 1830s, developments in this industry concentrated on increasing the productivity of workers rather than bringing new machines into use.*

MAP 2: Britain: The cotton industry

so that Britain could retain control over the sources of raw cotton as well as the markets.

The industry was heavily dependent on the work of women and children in factories. This exemplified the ugly face of early industrialisation, as will be described below.

Steam Power

The realisation that steam could generate tremendous power was decisive to large-scale industrialisation.

Water as hydraulic power had been the prime source of energy for centuries, but it had been limited to certain areas, seasons and by the speed of the flow of water. Now it was used differently. Steam power provided pressure at high temperatures that enabled the use of a broad range of machinery. This meant that steam power was the only source of energy that was reliable and inexpensive enough to manufacture machinery itself.

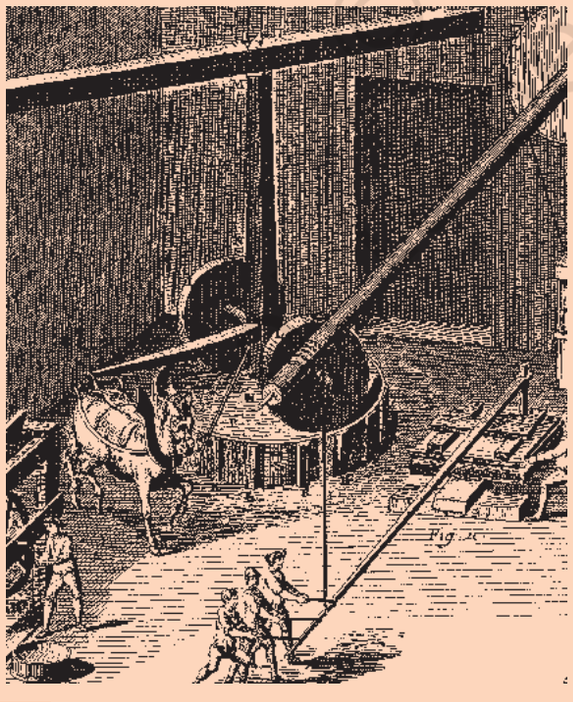
Steam power was first used in mining industries. As the demand for coal and metals expanded, efforts to obtain them from ever-deeper mines intensified. Flooding in mines was a serious problem. Thomas Savery (1650-1715) built a model steam engine called the Miner's Friend in 1698 to drain mines. These engines worked slowly, in shallow depths, and the boiler burst under too much pressure.

Another steam engine was built by Thomas Newcomen (1663-1729) in 1712. This had the major defect of losing energy due to continuous cooling of the condensing cylinder.

The steam engine had been used only in coal mines until James Watt (1736-1819) developed his machine in 1769. Watt's invention converted the steam engine from being a mere pump into a 'prime mover' capable of providing energy to power machines in factories. Backed by the wealthy manufacturer Matthew Boulton (1728-1809), Watt created the Soho Foundry in Birmingham in 1775. From this foundry Watt's steam engines were produced in steadily growing numbers. By the end of the eighteenth century, Watt's steam engine was beginning to replace hydraulic power.

After 1800, steam engine technology was further developed with the use of lighter, stronger metals, the manufacture of more accurate machine tools and the spread of better scientific knowledge. In 1840, British steam engines were generating more than 70 per cent of all European horsepower.

Watt's inventions were not limited to the steam engine. He invented a chemical process for copying documents. He also created a unit of measurement based on comparing mechanical power with that of the previous universal power source, the horse. Watt's measurement unit, horsepower, equated the ability of a horse to lift 33,000 pounds (14,969 kg) one foot (0.3 m) in one minute. Horsepower remains as a universally used index of mechanical energy.



Horses turned the wheels to grind metal. The use of steam reduced the dependence on manpower and horsepower.

Canals and Railways

Canals were initially built to transport coal to cities. This was because the bulk and weight of coal made its transport by road much slower and more expensive than by barges on canals. The demand for coal, as industrial energy and for heating and lighting homes in cities, grew constantly. The making of the first English canal, the Worsley Canal (1761) by James Brindley (1716-72), had no other purpose than to carry coal from the coal deposits at Worsley (near Manchester) to that city; after the canal was completed the price of coal fell by half.

Canals were usually built by big landowners to increase the value of the mines, quarries or forests on their lands. The confluence of canals created marketing centres in new towns. The city of Birmingham, for example, owed its growth to its position at the heart of a canal system connecting London, the Bristol Channel, and the Mersey and Humber rivers. From 1760 to 1790, twenty-five new canal-building projects were begun. In the period known as the 'canal-mania', from 1788 to 1796, there were another 46 new projects and over the next 60 years more than 4,000 miles of canal were built.

The first steam locomotive, Stephenson's Rocket, appeared in 1814. Railways emerged as a new means of transportation that was available throughout the year, both cheap and fast, to carry passengers and goods. They combined two inventions, the iron track which replaced the wooden track in the 1760s, and haulage along it by steam engine.

The invention of the railways took the entire process of industrialisation to a second stage. In 1801, Richard Trevithick (1771-1833) had devised an engine called the 'Puffing Devil' that pulled trucks around the mine where he worked in Cornwall. In 1814, the railway engineer George Stephenson (1781-1848) constructed a locomotive, called 'The Blutcher', that could pull a weight of 30 tons up a hill at 4 mph. The first railway line connected the cities of Stockton and Darlington in 1825, a distance of 9 miles that was completed in two hours at speeds of up to 24 kph (15 mph), and the next railway line connected Liverpool and Manchester in 1830. Within 20 years, speeds of 30 to 50 miles an hour were usual.

In the 1830s, the use of canals revealed several problems. The congestion of vessels made movement slow on certain stretches of canals, and frost, flood or drought limited the time of their use. The railways now appeared as a convenient alternative. About 6,000 miles of railway was opened in Britain between 1830 and 1850, most of it in two short bursts. During the 'little railway mania' of 1833-37, 1400 miles of line was built, and during the bigger 'mania' of 1844-47, another 9,500 miles of line was sanctioned. They used vast amounts of coal and iron, employed large numbers of workers and boosted activity in the construction and public works industries. Most of England had been connected by railway by 1850.

Who were the inventors?

It is interesting to find out who the individuals were who brought about these changes. Few of them were trained scientists. Education in basic sciences like physics or chemistry was extremely limited until the late nineteenth century, well after the technological inventions described above. Since these breakthroughs did not require a full knowledge of the laws of physics or chemistry on which they were based, advances could be and were made by brilliant but intuitive thinkers and persistent experimenters. They were helped by the fact that England had certain features which European countries did not. Dozens of scientific journals and published papers of scientific societies appeared in England between 1760 and 1800. There was a widespread thirst for knowledge even in the smaller towns. This was met by the activities of the Society of Arts (founded in 1754), by travelling lecturers, or in 'coffee houses' that multiplied through the eighteenth century.

Most inventions were more the product of determination, interest, curiosity, even luck, than the application of scientific knowledge. Some inventors in the cotton industry, like John Kay and James Hargreaves, were familiar with the skills of weaving and carpentry. Richard Arkwright, however, was a barber and wig-maker, Samuel Crompton was not technically skilled, and Edmund Cartwright studied literature, medicine and agriculture, initially wished to become a clergyman, and knew little of mechanics.

By contrast, in the area of steam engines, Thomas Savery, an army officer, Thomas Newcomen, a blacksmith and locksmith, and James Watt, with a strong mechanical bent, all had some knowledge relevant to their inventions. The road-builder John Metcalf, who personally surveyed surfaces for roads and planned them, was blind. The canal builder James Brindley was almost illiterate, with such poor spelling that he could never spell the word 'navigation', but he had tremendous powers of memory, imagination and concentration.

Changed Lives

In these years, therefore, it was possible for individuals with talent to bring about revolutionary changes. Similarly, there were rich individuals who took risks and invested money in industries in the hope that profits could be made, and that their money would 'multiply'. In most cases this money – capital – did multiply. Wealth, in the form of goods, incomes, services, knowledge and productive efficiency, did increase dramatically. There was, at the same time, a massive negative human cost. This was evident in broken families, new addresses, degraded cities and appalling working conditions in factories. The number of cities in England with a population of over 50,000 grew from two in 1750 to 29 in 1850. This pace of growth was not matched with the provision of adequate housing, sanitation or clean water for the rapidly growing urban population.

Far left: Coalbrookdale, Carpenters' Row, cottages built by the company for workers in 1783.
Left: The houses of the Darbys; painting by William Westwood, 1835.

Newcomers were forced to live in overcrowded slums in the congested central areas of towns near factories, while the rich inhabitants escaped, by shifting to homes in the suburbs where the air was cleaner and the water safe to drink.

Edward Carpenter eloquently described such cities in about 1881, in his poem 'In a Manufacturing Town'

'As I walked restless and despondent through the gloomy city,
And saw the eager unresting to and fro – as of ghosts in some sulphurous Hades –*
And saw the crowds of tall chimneys going up, and the pall of smoke covering the sun, covering the earth, lying heavy against the very ground –
And saw the huge-refuse heaps writhing with children picking them over,
And the ghastly half-roofless smoke-blackened houses, and the black river flowing below, –
As I saw these, and as I saw again faraway the Capitalist quarter,
With its villa residences and its high-walled gardens and its well-appointed carriages, and its face turned away from the wriggling poverty which made it rich, …
I shuddered.'

**The gates of Hell.*

The Workers

A survey in 1842 revealed that the average lifespan of workers was lower than that of any other social group in cities: it was 15 years in Birmingham, 17 in Manchester, 21 in Derby. More people died, and died at a younger age, in the new industrial cities, than in the villages they had come from. Half the children failed to survive beyond the age of five. The increase in the population of cities was because of immigrants, rather than by an increase in the number of children born to families who already lived there.

Deaths were primarily caused by epidemics of disease that sprang from the pollution of water, like cholera and typhoid, or of the air,

like tuberculosis. More than 31,000 people died from an outbreak of cholera in 1832. Until late in the nineteenth century, municipal authorities were negligent in attending to these dangerous conditions of life and the medical knowledge to understand and cure these diseases was unknown.

Women, Children and Industrialisation

The Industrial Revolution was a time of important changes in the way that children and women worked. Children of the rural poor had always worked at home or in the farm at jobs that varied during the day or between seasons, under the watchful eye of parents or relatives. Likewise, in villages women were actively involved in farm work; they reared livestock, gathered firewood and spun yarn on spinning wheels in their homes.

Work in the factories, with long, unbroken hours of the same kind of work, under strict discipline and sharp forms of punishment, was completely different. The earnings of women and children were necessary to supplement men's meagre wages. As the use of machinery spread, and fewer workers were needed, industrialists preferred to employ women and children who would be less agitated about their poor working conditions and work for lower wages than men.

They were employed in large numbers in the cotton textile industry in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Women were also the main workers in the silk,

Woman in gilt-button factory, Birmingham. In the 1850s, two-thirds of the workforce in the button trade were women and children. Men received 25 shillings a week, women 7 shillings and children one shilling each, for the same hours of work.

lace-making and knitting industries, as well as (along with children) in the metal industries of Birmingham. Machinery like the cotton spinning jenny was designed to be used by child workers with their small build and nimble fingers. Children were often employed in textile factories because they were small enough to move between tightly packed machinery. The long hours of work, including cleaning the machines on Sundays, allowed them little fresh air or exercise. Children caught their hair in machines or crushed their hands, while some died when they fell into machines as they dropped off to sleep from exhaustion.

Coal mines were also dangerous places to work in. Roofs caved in or there could be an explosion, and injuries were therefore common. The owners of coal mines used children to reach deep coal faces or those where the approach path was too narrow for adults. Younger children worked as 'trappers' who opened and shut doors as the coal wagons travelled through mines, or carried heavy loads of coal on their backs as 'coal bearers.'

Factory managers considered child labour to be important training for future factory work. The evidence from British factory records reveals that about half of the factory workers had started work when they were less than ten years old and 28 per cent when they were under 14. Women may well have gained increased financial independence and self-esteem from their jobs; but this was more than offset by the humiliating terms of work they endured, the children they lost at birth or in early childhood and the squalid urban slums that industrial work compelled them to live in.

A lane in the poorer quarters of London; engraving by the French artist Dore, 1876.

In his novel Hard Times, Charles Dickens (1812-70), perhaps the most severe contemporary critic of the horrors of industrialisation for the poor, wrote a fictional account of an industrial town he aptly called Coketown. 'It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it; but as matters stood it was a town of unnatural red and black like the painted face of a savage. It was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye, and vast piles of building full of windows where there was a rattling and a trembling all day long, and where the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down, like the head of an elephant in a stare of melancholy madness.'

ACTIVITY 3

Discuss the effects of early industrialisation on British towns and villages, and compare these with similar situations in India.

D.H.Lawrence (1885-1930), British essayist and novelist, writing seventy years after Dickens, described the change in a village in the coal-belt, change which he had not experienced, but about which he had heard from older people.

'Eastwood…must have been a tiny village at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a small place of cottages and fragmentary rows of little four-roomed miners' dwellings, the homes of the old colliers…But somewhere about 1820 the company must have sunk the first big shaft…and installed the first machinery of the real industrial colliery…Most of the little rows of dwellings were pulled down, and dull little shops began to rise along the Nottingham Road, while on the down-slope…the company erected what is still known as the New Buildings…little four-room houses looking outward into the grim, blank street, and the back looking into the desert of the square, shut in like a barracks enclosure, very strange.'

Protest Movements

The early decades of industrialisation coincided with the spread of new political ideas pioneered by the French Revolution (1789-94). The movements for 'liberty, equality and fraternity' showed the possibilities of collective mass action, both in creating democratic institutions like the French parliamentary assemblies of the 1790s, and in checking the worst hardships of war by controlling the prices of necessities like bread. In England, political protest against the harsh working conditions in factories kept increasing, and the working population agitated to be given the right to vote. The government reacted by repression and by new laws that denied people the right to protest.

England had been at war with France for a long time – from 1792 to 1815. Trade between England and Europe was disrupted, factories were forced to shut down, unemployment grew and the price of essential items of food, like bread and meat, soared to heights beyond the level of average wages.

Parliament in 1795 passed two Combination Acts which made it illegal to 'incite the people by speech or writing to hatred or contempt of the King, Constitution or Government'; and banned unauthorised public meetings of over 50 persons. Protest, nonetheless, continued against 'Old Corruption'. This term was used for privileges linked to the monarchy and Parliament. Members of Parliament – landowners, manufacturers and professionals – were opposed to giving the working population the right to vote. They supported the Corn Laws, which prevented the import of cheaper food until prices in Britain had risen to a certain level.

As workers flooded towns and factories, they expressed their anger and frustration in numerous forms of protest. There were bread or

food riots throughout the country from the 1790s onwards. Bread was the staple item in the diet of the poor and its price governed their standard of living. Stocks of bread were seized and sold at a price that was affordable and morally correct rather than at the high prices charged by profit-hungry traders. Such riots were particularly frequent in the worst year of the war,1795, but they continued until the 1840s.

Another cause of hardship was the process known as 'enclosure' – by which, from the 1770s, hundreds of small farms had been merged into the larger ones of powerful landlords. Poor rural families affected by this had sought industrial work. But the introduction of machines in the cotton industry threw thousands of handloom weavers out of work and into poverty, since their labour was too slow to compete with machines. From the 1790s, these weavers began to demand a legal minimum wage, which was refused by Parliament. When they went on strike, they were dispersed by force. In desperation, in Lancashire, cotton weavers destroyed the powerlooms which they believed had destroyed their livelihood. There was also resistance to the introduction of machines in the woollen knitting industry in Nottingham; protests also took place in Leicestershire and Derbyshire.

In Yorkshire, shearing-frames were destroyed by croppers, who had traditionally sheared sheep by hand. In the riots of 1830, farm labourers found their jobs threatened by the new threshing machines that separated the grain from the husk. The rioters smashed these machines. Nine of them were hanged and 450 were sent to Australia as convicts (see Theme 10).

The movement known as Luddism (1811-17), led by the charismatic General Ned Ludd, exemplified another type of protest. Luddism was not merely a backward-looking assault on machines. Its participants demanded a minimum wage, control over the labour of women and children, work for those who had lost their jobs because of the coming of machinery, and the right to form trade unions so that they could legally present these demands.

During the early years of industrialisation, the working population possessed neither the vote nor legal methods to express their anger at the drastic manner in which their lives had been overturned. In August 1819, 80,000 people gathered peacefully at St Peter's Fields in Manchester to claim democratic rights – of political organisation, of public meetings, and of the freedom of the press. They were suppressed brutally in what became known as the Peterloo* Massacre and the rights they demanded were denied by the Six Acts, passed by Parliament the same year. These extended the restrictions on political activity introduced in the two Combination Acts of 1795. But there were some gains. After Peterloo, the need to make the House of Commons more representative was recognised by liberal political groups, and the Combination Acts were repealed in 1824-25.

*This name was made up to rhyme with 'Waterloo'; the French army had been defeated at Waterloo in 1815.

Reforms through Laws

How attentive was the government to the conditions of work of women and children? Laws were passed in 1819 prohibiting the employment of children under the age of nine in factories and limiting the hours of work of those between the ages of nine and sixteen to 12 hours a day. But this law lacked the powers needed for its enforcement. It was not until 1833, after intense protest by workers throughout the north of England, that an Act was passed that permitted children under nine to be employed only in silk factories, limited the hours of work for older children and provided a number of factory inspectors to ensure that the Act was enforced. Finally, in 1847, after more than 30 years of agitation, the Ten Hours' Bill was passed. This limited the hours of work for women and young people, and secured a 10-hour day for male workers.

These Acts applied to the textile industries but not to the mining industry. The Mines Commission of 1842, set up by the government, revealed that working conditions in mines had actually become worse since the Act of 1833, because more children had been put to work in coal mines. The Mines and Collieries Act of 1842 banned children under ten and women from working underground. Fielder's Factory Act laid down in 1847 that children under eighteen and women should not work more than 10 hours a day. These laws were to be enforced by factory inspectors, but this was difficult to do. The inspectors were poorly paid and easily bribed by factory managers, while parents lied about the real ages of their children, so that they could work and contribute to family incomes.

ACTIVITY 4

Argue the case for and against government regulation of conditions of work in industries.

The Debate on the 'Industrial Revolution'

Until the 1970s, historians used the term 'industrial revolution' for the changes that occurred in Britain from the 1780s to the 1820s. From then, it was challenged, on various grounds.

Industrialisation had actually been too gradual to be considered a 'revolution'. It carried processes that already existed towards new levels. Thus, there was a *relatively* greater concentration of workers in factories, and a *wider* use of money.

Until well into the nineteenth century, large regions of England remained untouched by factories or mines and therefore the term 'industrial revolution' was regarded as inaccurate: England had changed in a *regional* manner, prominently around the cities of London, Manchester, Birmingham or Newcastle, rather than throughout the country.

Could the growth in the cotton or iron industries or in foreign trade from the 1780s to the 1820s be called revolutionary? The impressive growth of cotton textiles, based on new machinery, was in an industry that relied on a non-British raw material, on sales abroad (especially

India), on non-metallic machinery, and with few links to other branches of industry. Metallic machinery and steam power was rare until much later in the nineteenth century. The rapid growth in British imports and exports from the 1780s occurred because of the resumption of trade with North America that the War of American Independence had interrupted. This growth was recorded as being sharp only because it started from a low point.

Indicators of economic change occurring before and after 1815-20 suggest that sustained industrialisation was to be seen *after* rather than *before* these dates. The decades after 1793 had experienced the disruptive effects of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Industrialisation is associated with a growing investment of the country's wealth in 'capital formation', or building infrastructure and installing new machinery, and with raising the levels of efficient use of these facilities, and with raising productivity. Productive investment, in these senses, grew steadily only after 1820, as did levels of productivity. The cotton, iron and engineering industries had accounted for less than half of the industrial output until the 1840s. Technical progress was not limited to these branches, but was visible in other branches too, like agricultural processing and pottery.

In searching for an answer as to why British growth may have been faster after 1815 than before, historians have pointed to the fact that from the 1760s to 1815, Britain tried to do two things simultaneously – to industrialise, and to fight wars in Europe, North America and India – and it may possibly have failed with one. Britain was at war for 36 out of 60 years from 1760. Capital that was borrowed was used to fight the wars rather than invested. As much as 35 per cent of the cost of the war was met by taxing people's incomes. Workers were transferred out of factories and farms to the army. Food prices rose so sharply that the poor had little money left for buying consumer goods. Napoleon's policies of blockade, and British reactions to them, closed the European continent, the destination for more than half of British exports, to British traders.

The word 'industrial' used with the word 'revolution' is too limited. The transformation extended beyond the economic or industrial sphere and into society and gave prominence to two classes: the bourgeoisie and the new class of proletarian labourers in towns and in the countryside.

In 1851, visitors thronged the Great Exhibition at the specially constructed Crystal Palace in London to view the achievements of British industry. At that time, half the population was living in towns, but of the workers in towns as many were in handicraft units as in factories. From the 1850s, the proportion of people living in urban areas went up dramatically, and most of these were workers in industry – the working class. Only 20 per cent of Britain's workforce now lived in rural areas. This was a far more rapid rate of industrialisation than had been witnessed in other European countries. In his detailed study of British industry, the historian A.E. Musson has suggested that

The Great Exhibition of 1851 displayed "the Works of Industry of all Nations", particularly the spectacular progress of Britain. It was held in London's Hyde Park, in the Crystal Palace, made of glass panes set in iron columns manufactured in Birmingham.

'There are good grounds for regarding the period 1850-1914 as that in which the Industrial Revolution really occurred, on a massive scale, transforming the whole economy and society much more widely and deeply than the earlier changes had done.'

Exercises

ANSWER IN BRIEF

1. *How did Britain's involvement in wars from 1793 to 1815 affect British industries?*
2. *What were the relative advantages of canal and railway transportation?*
3. *What were the interesting features of the 'inventions' of this period?*
4. *Indicate how the supply of raw materials affected the nature of British industrialisation.*

ANSWER IN A SHORT ESSAY

5. *How were the lives of different classes of British women affected by the Industrial Revolution?*
6. *Compare the effects of the coming of the railways in different countries in the world.*

THEME 10

DISPLACING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

THIS chapter recounts some aspects of the histories of the native peoples of America and Australia. Theme 8 described the history of the Spanish and Portuguese colonisation of South America. From the eighteenth century, more areas of South America, Central America, North America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand came to be settled by immigrants from Europe. This led to many of the native peoples being pushed out into other areas. The European settlements were called 'colonies'. When the European inhabitants of the colonies became independent of the European 'mother-country', these colonies became 'states' or countries.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, people from Asian countries also migrated to some of these countries. Today, these Europeans and Asians form the majority in these countries, and the number of the native inhabitants are very small. They are hardly seen in the towns, and people have forgotten that they once occupied much of the country, and that the names of many rivers, towns, etc. are derived from 'native' names (e.g. Ohio, Mississippi and Seattle in the USA, Saskatchewan in Canada, Wollongong and Parramatta in Australia).

Till the middle of the twentieth century, American and Australian history textbooks used to describe how Europeans 'discovered' the Americas and Australia. They hardly mentioned the native peoples except to suggest that they were hostile to Europeans. These peoples were, however, studied by anthropologists in America from the 1840s. Much later, from the 1960s, the native peoples were encouraged to write their own histories or to dictate them (this is called oral history).

Today, it is possible to read historical works and fiction written by the native peoples, and visitors to museums in these countries will see galleries of 'native art' and special museums which show the aboriginal way of life. The new National Museum of the American Indian in the USA has been curated by American Indians themselves.

European Imperialism

The American empires of Spain and Portugal (see Theme 8) did not expand after the seventeenth century. From that time other countries – France, Holland and England – began to extend their trading activities and to establish colonies – in America, Africa and Asia; Ireland also was virtually a colony of England, as the landowners there were mostly English settlers.

From the eighteenth century, it became obvious that while it was the prospect of profit which drove people to establish colonies, there were significant variations in the *nature* of the control established.

In South Asia, trading companies like the East India Company made themselves into political powers, defeated local rulers and annexed their territories. They retained the older well-developed administrative system and collected taxes from landowners. Later they built railways to make trade easier, excavated mines and established big plantations.

In Africa, Europeans traded on the coast, except in South Africa, and only in the late nineteenth century did they venture into the interior. After this, some of the European countries reached an agreement to divide up Africa as colonies for themselves.

The word 'settler' is used for the Dutch in South Africa, the British in Ireland, New Zealand and Australia, and the Europeans in America. The official language in these colonies was English (except in Canada, where French is also an official language).

Names given by Europeans to Countries of the 'New World'

'America'	*First used after the publication of the travels of Amerigo Vespucci (1451-1512)*
'Canada'	*from kanata (= 'village' in the language of the Huron-Iroquois, as heard by the explorer Jacques Cartier in 1535)*
'Australia'	*Sixteenth-century name for land in the Great Southern Ocean (austral is Latin for 'south')*
'New Zealand'	*Name given by Tasman of Holland, who was the first to sight these islands in 1642 (zee is Dutch for 'sea')*

The Geographical Dictionary (pp 805-22) lists over a hundred place-names in the Americas and Australia which begin with 'New'.

NORTH AMERICA

The continent of North America extends from the Arctic Circle to the Tropic of Cancer, from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean. West of the chain of the Rocky Mountains is the desert of Arizona and Nevada, still further west the Sierra Nevada mountains, to the east the Great Plains, the Great Lakes, the valleys of the Mississippi and the Ohio and the Appalachian Mountains. To the south is Mexico. Forty per cent of Canada is covered with forests. Oil, gas and mineral resources are found in many areas, which explains the many big industries in the USA and Canada. Today, wheat, corn and fruit are grown extensively and fishing is a major industry in Canada.

Mining, industry and extensive agriculture have been developed only in the last 200 years by immigrants from Europe, Africa and China. But there were people who had been living in North America for thousands of years before the Europeans learnt of its existence.

The Native Peoples

'Native' means a person born in the place he/she lives in. Till the early twentieth century, the term was used by Europeans to describe the inhabitants of countries they had colonised.

The earliest inhabitants of North America came from Asia over 30,000 years ago on a land-bridge across the Bering Straits, and during the last Ice Age 10,000 years ago they moved further south. The oldest artefact found in America – an arrow-point – is 11,000 years old. The population started to increase about 5,000 years ago when the climate became more stable.

> *'At sunset on the day before America [that is, before the Europeans reached there and gave the continent this name], diversity lay at every hand. People spoke in more than a hundred tongues. They lived by every possible combination of hunting, fishing, gathering, gardening, and farming open to them. The quality of soils and the effort required to open and tend them determined some of their choices of how to live. Cultural and social biases determined others. Surpluses of fish or grain or garden plants or meats helped create powerful, tiered societies here but not there. Some cultures had endured for millennia…'* – *William Macleish, The Day before America.*

These peoples lived in bands, in villages along river valleys. They ate fish and meat, and cultivated vegetables and maize. They often went on long journeys in search of meat, chiefly that of bison, the wild buffalo that roamed the grasslands (this became easier from the seventeenth century, when the natives started to ride horses, which they bought from Spanish settlers). But they only killed as many animals as they needed for food.

They did not attempt extensive agriculture and since they did not produce a surplus, they did not develop kingdoms and empires as in Central and South America. There were some instances of quarrels between tribes over territory, but by and large control of land was not an issue. They were content with the food and shelter they got from the land without feeling any need to 'own' it. An important feature of their tradition was that of making formal alliances and friendships, and exchanging gifts. Goods were obtained not by buying them, but as gifts.

Wampum belts, made of coloured shells sewn together, were exchanged by native tribes after a treaty was agreed to.

Numerous languages were spoken in North America, though these were not written down. They believed that time moved in cycles, and each tribe had accounts about their origins and their earlier history which were passed on from one generation to the next. They were skilled craftspeople and wove beautiful textiles. They could read the land – they could understand the climates and different landscapes in the way literate people read written texts.

Encounters with Europeans

Different terms are used in English for the native peoples of the 'New World'

aborigine – native people of Australia (in Latin, ab = from, origine = the beginning)

Aboriginal – adjective, often misused as a noun

American Indian/Amerind/Amerindian – native peoples of North and South America and the Caribbean

First Nations peoples – the organised native groups recognised by the Canadian government (the Indians Act of 1876 used the term 'bands' but from the 1980s the word 'nations' is used)

indigenous people – people belonging naturally to a place

native American – the indigenous people of the Americas (this is the term now commonly used)

'Red Indian' – the brown-complexioned people whose land Columbus mistook for India

A woman of the Winnebago tribe of Wisconsin. In the 1860s, people of this tribe were moved to Nebraska

Names of native tribes are often given to things unconnected with them: Dakota (an aeroplane), Cherokee (a jeep), Pontiac (a car), Mohawk (a haircut)!

'It was indicated on the stone tablets that the Hopis had that the first brothers and sisters that would come back to them would come as turtles across the land. They would be human beings, but they would come as turtles. So when the time came close the Hopis were at a special village to welcome the turtles that would come across the land and they got up in the morning and looked out at the sunrise. They looked out across the desert and they saw the Spanish Conquistadores coming, covered in armour, like turtles across the land. So this was them. So they went out to the Spanish man and they extended their hand hoping for the handshake but into the hand the Spanish man dropped a trinket. And so word spread throughout North America that there was going to be a hard time, that maybe some of the brothers and sisters had forgotten the sacredness of all things and all the human beings were going to suffer for this on the earth.'*

– From a talk by Lee Brown, 1986

*The Hopis are a native tribe who now live near California.

In the seventeenth century, the European traders who reached the north coast of North America after a difficult two-month voyage were relieved to find the native peoples friendly and welcoming. Unlike the Spanish in South America, who were overcome by the abundance of gold in the country, these adventurers came to trade in fish and furs, in which they got the willing help of the natives who were expert at hunting.

Further south, along the Mississippi river, the French found that the natives held regular gatherings to exchange handicrafts unique to a tribe or food items not available in other regions. In exchange for local products the Europeans gave the natives blankets, iron vessels (which they used sometimes in place of their clay pots), guns, which was a useful supplement for bows and arrows to kill animals, and alcohol. This last item was something the natives had not known earlier, and they became addicted to it, which suited the Europeans, because it enabled them to dictate terms of trade. (The Europeans acquired from the natives an addiction to tobacco.)

Quebec	American colonies
1497 John Cabot reaches Newfoundland	*1507 Amerigo de Vespucci's Travels published*
1534 Jacques Cartier travels down the St Lawrence river and meets native peoples	
1608 French found the colony of Quebec	*1607 British found the colony of Virginia*
	1620 British found Plymouth (in Massachusetts)

Mutual Perceptions

In the eighteenth century, western Europeans defined 'civilised' people in terms of literacy, an organised religion and urbanism. To them, the natives of America appeared 'uncivilised'. To some, like the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, such people were to be admired, as they were untouched by the corruptions of 'civilisation'. A popular term was 'the noble savage'. Some lines in a poem by the English poet William Wordsworth indicate another perspective. Neither he nor Rousseau had met a native American, but Wordsworth described them as living 'amid wilds/Where fancy hath small liberty to grace/The affections, to exalt them or refine', meaning that people living close to nature had only limited powers of imagination and emotion!

Thomas Jefferson, third President of the USA, and a contemporary of Wordsworth, spoke of the natives in words that would lead to a public outcry today:

'This unfortunate race which we have been taking so much pains to civilise... have justified extermination.'

It is interesting to note that another writer, Washington Irving, much younger than Wordsworth and who had actually met native people, described them quite differently.

'The Indians I have had an opportunity of seeing in real life are quite different from those described in poetry... Taciturn they are, it is true, when in company with white men, whose goodwill they distrust and whose language they do not understand; but the white man is equally taciturn under like circumstances. When the Indians are among themselves, they are great mimics, and entertain themselves excessively at the expense of the whites... who have supposed them impressed with profound respect for their grandeur and dignity... The white men (as I have witnessed) are prone to treat the poor Indians as little better than animals.'

To the natives, the goods they exchanged with the Europeans were *gifts*, given in friendship. For the Europeans, dreaming of becoming rich, the fish and furs were *commodities*, which they would sell for a profit in Europe. The prices of the goods they sold varied from year to year, depending on the supply. The natives could not understand this – they had no sense of the 'market' in faraway Europe. They were puzzled by the fact that the European traders sometimes gave them a lot of things in exchange for their goods, sometimes very little. They were also saddened by the greed of the Europeans*. In their impatience to get furs, they had slaughtered hundreds of beavers, and the natives were very uneasy, fearing that the animals would take revenge on them for this destruction.

*Many folk tales of the natives mocked Europeans and described them as greedy and deceitful, but because these were told as imaginary stories, it was only much later that the Europeans understood the references.

Following the first Europeans, who were traders, were those who came to 'settle' in America. From the seventeenth century, there were groups of Europeans who were being persecuted because they were of a different sect of Christianity (Protestants living in predominantly Catholic countries, or Catholics in countries where Protestantism was the official religion). Many of them left Europe and went to America to begin a new life. As long as there was vacant

land, this was not a problem, but gradually the Europeans moved further inland, near native villages. They used their iron tools to cut down forests to lay out farms.

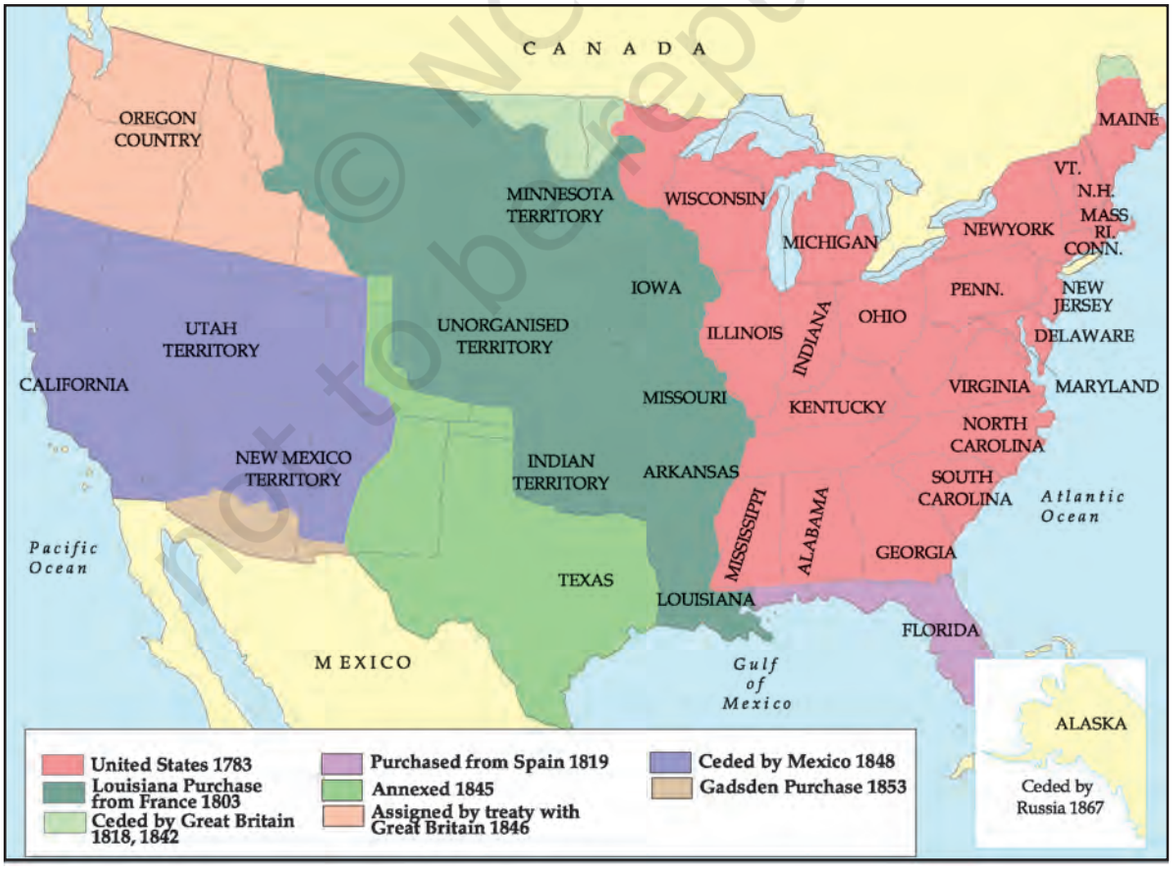
Natives and Europeans saw different things when they looked at forests – natives identified tracks invisible to the Europeans. Europeans imagined the forests cut down and replaced by cornfields. Jefferson's 'dream' was a country populated by Europeans with small farms. The natives, who grew crops for their own needs, not for sale and profit, and thought it wrong to 'own' the land, could not understand this. In Jefferson's view, this made them 'uncivilised'.

ACTIVITY 1

Discuss the different images that Europeans and native Americans had of each other, and the different ways in which they saw nature.

Canada	USA
1701 French treaty with natives of Quebec	
1763 Quebec conquered by the British	*1781 Britain recognises USA as an independent country*
1774 Quebec Act	*1783 British give Mid-West to the USA*
1791 Canada Constitutional Act	

MAP 1: The expansion of the USA

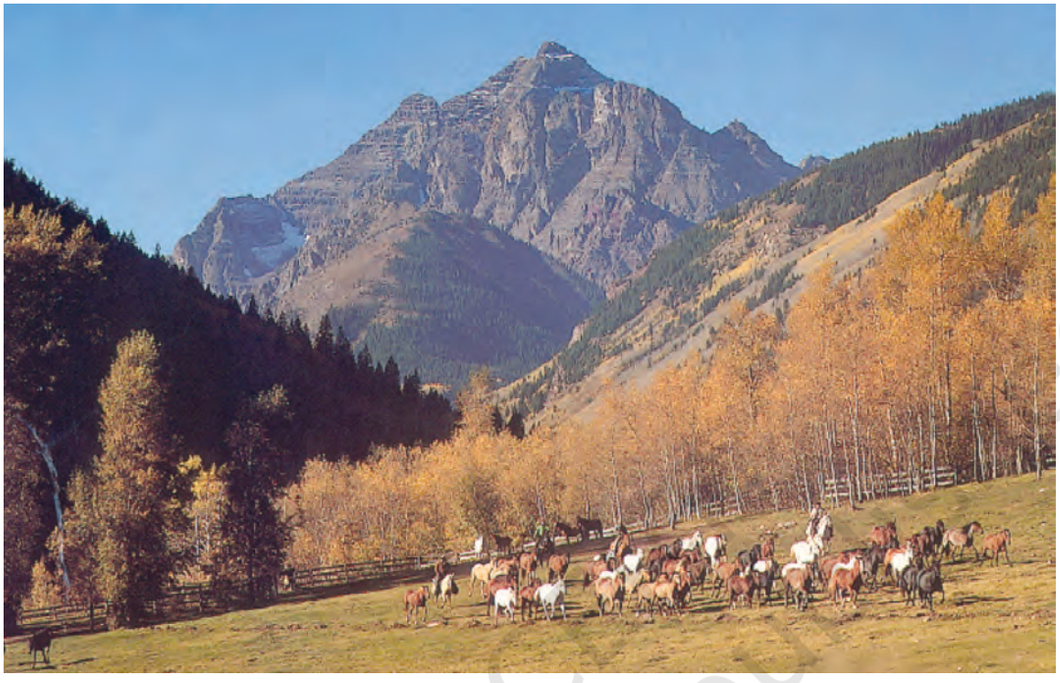


The countries that are known as Canada and the United States of America came into existence at the end of the eighteenth century. At that time they occupied only a fraction of the land they now cover. Over the next hundred years they extended their control over more territory, to reach their present size. Large areas were acquired by the USA by purchase – they bought land in the south from France (the 'Louisiana Purchase') and from Russia (Alaska), and by war – much of southern USA was won from Mexico. It did not occur to anyone that the consent of natives living in these areas should have been asked. The western 'frontier' of the USA was a shifting one, and as it moved, the natives also were forced to move back.

Canada	USA
	1803 Louisiana purchased from France
	1825-58 Natives in USA moved to reserves
1837 French Canadian rebellion	*1832 Justice Marshall's judgement*
1840 Canadian Union of Upper and Lower Canada	*1849 American Gold Rush*
1859 Canada Gold Rush	*1861-65 American Civil War*
1867 Confederation of Canada	*1865-90 American Indian Wars*
1869-85 Red River Rebellion by the Metis in Canada	*1870 Transcontinental railway*
1876 Canada Indians Act America	*1890 Bison almost exterminated in*
1885 Transcontinental railway links east and west coasts	*1892 'End' of American frontier*

The landscapes of America changed drastically in the nineteenth century. The Europeans treated the land differently from the natives. Some of the migrants from Britain and France were younger sons who would not inherit their fathers' property and therefore were eager to own land in America. Later, there were waves of immigrants from countries like Germany, Sweden and Italy who had lost their lands to big farmers, and wanted farms they could own. People from Poland were happy to work in the prairie grasslands, which reminded them of the steppes of their homes, and were excited at being able to buy huge properties at very low prices. They cleared land and developed agriculture, introducing crops (rice and cotton) which could not grow in Europe and therefore could be sold there for profit. To protect their huge farms from wild animals – wolves and mountain lions – these were hunted to extinction. They felt totally secure only with the invention of barbed wire in 1873.

The climate of the southern region was too hot for Europeans to work outdoors, and the experience of South American colonies had



A ranch in Colorado.

shown that the natives who had been enslaved had died in large numbers. Plantation owners therefore bought slaves in Africa. Protests by anti-slavery groups led to a ban on slave trade, but the Africans who were in the USA remained slaves, as did their children.

The northern states of the USA, where the economy did not depend on plantations (and therefore on slavery), argued for ending slavery which they condemned as an inhuman practice. In 1861-65, there was a war between the states that wanted to retain slavery and those supporting abolition. The latter won. Slavery was abolished, though it was only in the twentieth century that the African Americans were able to win the battle for civil liberties, and segregation between 'whites' and 'non-whites' in schools and public transport was ended.

The Canadian government had a problem which was not to be solved for a long time, and which seemed more urgent than the question of the natives – in 1763 Canada had been won by the British after a war with France. The French settlers repeatedly demanded autonomous political status. It was only in 1867 that this problem was solved by organising canada as a Confederation of autonomous states.

The Native Peoples Lose their Land

In the USA, as settlement expanded, the natives were induced or forced to move, after signing treaties selling their land. The prices paid were very low, and there were instances when the Americans (a term used

to mean the *European* people of the USA) cheated them by taking more land or paying less than promised.

Even high officials saw nothing wrong in depriving the native peoples of their land. This is seen by an episode in Georgia, a state in the USA. Officials had argued that the Cherokee tribe was governed by state laws, but could not enjoy the rights of citizens. (This was despite the fact that, of all the native peoples, the Cherokees were the ones who had made the most effort to learn English and to understand the American way of life; even so they were not allowed the rights of citizens.)

In 1832, an important judgment was announced by the US Chief Justice, John Marshall. He said that the Cherokees were 'a distinct community, occupying its own territory in which the laws of Georgia had no force', and that they had sovereignty in certain matters. US President Andrew Jackson had a reputation for fighting against economic and political privilege, but when it came to the Indians, he was a different person. He refused to honour the Chief Justice's judgment, and ordered the US army to evict the Cherokees from their land and drive them to the Great American Desert. Of the 15,000 people thus forced to go, over a quarter died along the 'Trail of Tears'.

Those who took the land occupied by the tribes justified it by saying the natives did not deserve to occupy land which they did not use to the maximum. They went on to criticise them for being lazy, since they did not use their crafts skills to produce goods for the market, for not being interested in learning English or dressing 'correctly' (which meant like the Europeans). They deserved to 'die out', they argued. The prairies were cleared for farmland, and wild bison killed off. 'Primitive man will disappear with the primitive animal' wrote a visiting Frenchman.

ACTIVITY 2

Comment on these two sets of population data.

	USA: 1820	*Spanish America: 1800*
Natives	0.6 million	7.5 million
Whites	9.0 million	3.3 million
Mixed Europeans	0.1 million	5.3 million
Blacks	1.9 million	0.8 million
Total	**11.6 million**	**16.9 million**

Meanwhile, the natives were pushed westward, given land elsewhere ('theirs in perpetuity') but often moved again if any mineral – lead or gold – or oil was found on their lands. Many tribes were forced to share the land originally occupied by one tribe, thus leading to quarrels

between them. They were locked off in small areas called 'reservations', which often was land with which they had no earlier connection. They did not give in without a fight. The US army crushed a series of rebellions from 1865 to 1890, and in Canada there were armed revolts by the Metis (people of native European descent) between 1869 and 1885. But after that they gave up.

In 1854, the President of the USA received a letter from a native leader, Chief Seattle. The president had asked the chief to sign a treaty giving a large part of the land they lived on to the American government. The Chief replied:

'How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. If you do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can one buy them? Every part of the earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine-needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and every humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people. The sap which courses through the trees carries the memories of the red man…

So, when the Great Chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land, he asks much of us. The Great Chief sends word that he will reserve us a place so that we can live comfortably. He will be our father and we will be his children. So we will consider your offer to buy our land. But it will not be easy. For this land is sacred to us. The shining water that moves in the streams and rivers is not just water but the blood of our ancestors. If we sell you land, you must remember that it is sacred and you must teach your children that it is sacred and that each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events and memories in the life of my people. The water's murmur is the voice of my father's father…'

The Gold Rush, and the Growth of Industries

There was always the hope that there was gold in North America. In the 1840s, traces of gold were found in the USA, in California. This led to the 'Gold Rush', when thousands of eager Europeans hurried to America in the hope of making a quick fortune. This led to the building of railway lines across the continent, for which thousands of Chinese workers were recruited. The USA's railway was completed by 1870, that of

Anthropology

It is significant that it was at this time (from the 1840s) that the subject of 'anthropology' (which had been developed in France) was introduced in North America, out of a curiosity to study the differences between native 'primitive' communities and the 'civilised' communities of Europe. Some anthropologists argued that just as there were no 'primitive' people to be found in Europe, the American natives too would 'die out'.

A native lodge, 1862. Archaeologists moved this from the mountains and placed it in a museum in Wyoming.

Moving to California as part of the 'Gold Rush', photograph.

Canada by 1885. 'The old nations creep on at a snail's pace' said Andrew Carnegie, a poor immigrant from Scotland who became one of the first millionaire industrialists in the USA, 'the Republic thunders on at the speed of an express'.

One reason why the Industrial Revolution happened in England when it did was because small peasants were losing their land to big farmers, and moving to jobs in factories (see Theme 9). In North America, industries developed for very different reasons – to manufacture railway equipment so that rapid transport could link distant places, and to produce machinery which would make large-scale farming easier. Industrial towns grew and factories multiplied, both in the USA and Canada. In 1860, the USA had been an undeveloped economy. In 1890, it was the leading industrial power in the world.

Large-scale agriculture also expanded. Vast areas were cleared and divided up into farms. By 1890, the bison had almost been exterminated, thus ending the life of hunting the natives had followed for centuries. In 1892, the USA's continental expansion was complete. The area between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans was divided up into states. There no longer remained the 'frontier' that had pulled European settlers west for many decades. Within a few years the USA was setting up its own colonies – in Hawaii and the Philippines. It had become an imperial power.

Above: Immigrants welcomed by the USA, colour print, 1909.

Below: The ranch on the prairie that was the dream of poor European immigrants, photograph.

Constitutional Rights

The 'democratic spirit' which had been the rallying cry of the settlers in their fight for independence in the 1770s, came to define the identity of the USA against the monarchies and aristocracies of the Old World. Also important to them was that their constitution included the individual's 'right to property', which the state could not override.

But both democratic rights (the right to vote for representatives to Congress and for the President) and the right to property *were only for white men*. Daniel Paul, a Canadian native, pointed out in 2000 that Thomas Paine, the champion of democracy at the time of the War for American Independence and the French Revolution, 'used the Indians as models of how society might be organized'. He used this to argue that 'the Native Americans by their example sowed the seeds for the long-drawn-out movement towards democracy by the people of Europe' (*We Were Not the Savages*, p. 333)

Karl Marx (1818-83), the great German philosopher, described the American frontier as 'the last positive capitalist utopia…the limitless nature and space to which the limitless thirst for profit adapts itself'.

– 'Bastiat and Carey', Grundrisse

The Winds of Change…

Not till the 1920s did things begin to improve for the native peoples of the USA and Canada. *The Problem of Indian Administration*, a survey directed by social scientist Lewis Meriam and published in 1928, only a few years before the USA was swept by a major economic depression that affected all its people, painted a grim picture of the terribly poor health and education facilities for natives in reservations.

White Americans felt sympathy for the natives who were being discouraged from the full exercise of their cultures and simultaneously denied the benefits of citizenship. This led to a landmark law in the USA, the Indian Reorganisation Act of 1934, which gave natives in reservations the right to buy land and take loans.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the US and Canadian governments thought of ending all special provisions for the natives in the hope that they would 'join the mainstream', that is, adopt European culture. But the natives did not want this. In 1954, in the 'Declaration of Indian Rights' prepared by them, a number of native peoples accepted citizenship of the USA but on condition that their reservations would not be taken away and their traditions would not be interfered with. A similar development occurred in Canada. In 1969 the government announced that they would 'not recognise aboriginal rights'. The natives, in a well-organised opposition move, held a series of demonstrations and debates. The question could not be resolved till 1982, when the Constitution Act accepted the existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the natives. Many details remain to be worked out. Today, it is clear that the native peoples of both countries, though reduced so much in numbers from what they had been in the eighteenth century, have been able to assert their right to their own cultures and, particularly in Canada, to their sacred lands, in a way their ancestors could not have done in the 1880s.

ACTIVITY 3

Comment on the following statement by the American historian Howard Spodek: 'For the indigenous [people] the effects of the American Revolution were exactly opposite to those of the settlers – expansion became contraction, democracy became tyranny, prosperity became poverty, and liberty became confinement.'

Indians under British rule	*Taxed arbitrarily; seen as not equal (rationalisation – not ready for responsibility of representative government)*
Natives in America and	*Not seen as citizens; not equal Australia (rationalisation 'primitive' as in no settled agriculture, provision for the future, towns)*
African slaves in America	*Denied personal liberty; not equal (rationalisation – 'Slavery is part of their own social system', black people are inferior)*

AUSTRALIA

As in the Americas, human habitation in Australia has a long history. The 'aborigines' (a general name given to a number of different societies) began to arrive on the continent over 40,000 years ago (possibly even earlier). They came from New Guinea, which was connected to Australia by a land-bridge. In the natives' traditions, they did not *come* to Australia, but had always been there. The past centuries were called the 'Dreamtime' – something difficult for Europeans to understand, since the distinction between past and present is blurred.

In the late eighteenth century, there were between 350 and 750 native communities in Australia each with its own language (even today 200 of these languages are spoken). There is another large group of indigenous people living in the north, called the Torres Strait Islanders. The term 'Aborigine' is not used for these as they are believed to have migrated from elsewhere and belong to a different race. Together, they make up 2.4 per cent of Australia's population in 2005.

Australia is sparsely populated, and even now most of the towns are along the coast (where the British first arrived in 1770) because the central region is arid desert.

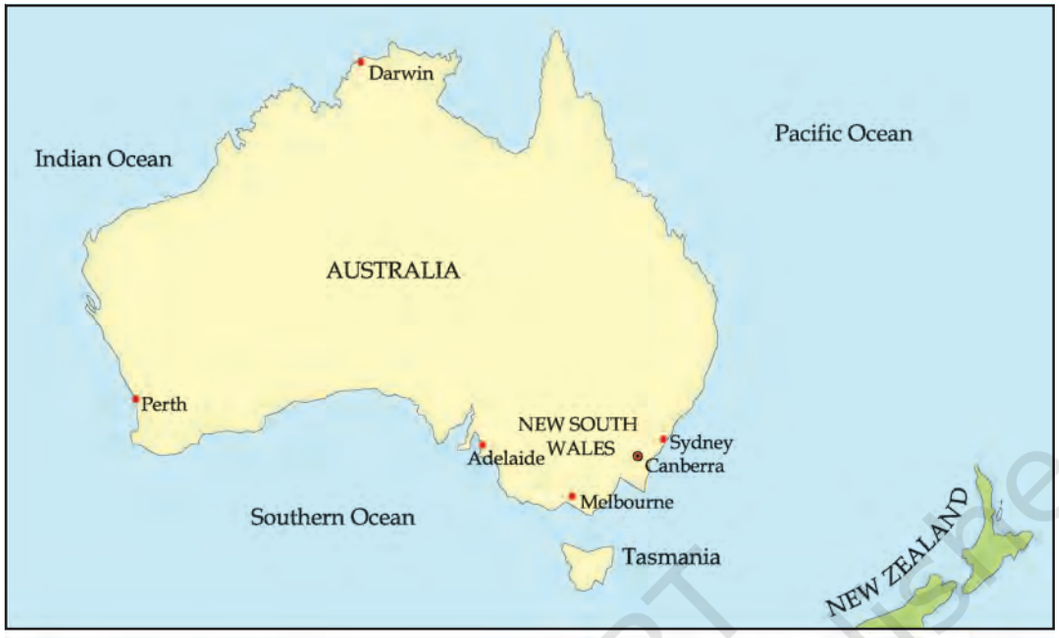
The Europeans Reach Australia

1606 Dutch travellers sight Australia

1642 Tasman lands on the island later named Tasmania

1770 James Cook reaches Botany Bay, named New South Wales

1788 British penal colony formed. Sydney founded



MAP 2: Australia

The story of the interaction between the European settlers, the native peoples and the land in Australia has many points of similarity to the story of the Americas, though it began nearly 300 years later. Initial reports from Captain Cook and his crew about encounters with natives are enthusiastic about their friendliness. There was a sharp reversal of feeling on the part of the British when Cook was killed by a native – not in Australia, but in Hawaii. As often happened, a single incident of this nature was used by colonisers to justify subsequent acts of violence towards other people.

A Description of the Sydney Area in 1790

'Aboriginal production had been dramatically disturbed by the British presence. The arrival of a thousand hungry mouths, followed by hundreds more, put unprecedented pressure on local food resources.

So what would the Daruk people have thought of all this? To them such large-scale destruction of sacred places and strange, violent behaviour towards their land was inexplicable. The newcomers seemed to knock down trees without any reason, for they were not making canoes, gathering bush honey or catching animals. Stones were moved and stacked together, clay dug up, shaped and cooked, holes were made in the ground, large unwieldy structures built. At first they may have equated the clearing with the creation of a sacred ceremonial ground...Perhaps they thought a huge ritual gathering was to be held, dangerous business from which they should steer well clear. There is no doubt the Daruks subsequently avoided the settlement, for the only way to bring them back was by an official kidnapping.'

– (P. Grimshaw, M. Lake, A. McGrath, M. Quartly, Creating a Nation)

They did not foresee that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries nearly 90 per cent of them would die by exposure to germs, by the loss of their lands and resources, and in battles against the settlers. The experiment of settling Brazil with Portuguese convicts had been abandoned when their violent behaviour provoked angry reprisals from the natives. The British had adopted the same practice in the American colonies until they became independent. Then they continued it in Australia. Most of the early settlers were convicts who had been deported from England and, when their jail term ended, were allowed to live as free people in Australia on condition that they did not return to Britain. With no recourse but to make a life for themselves in this land so different from their own, they felt no hesitation about ejecting natives from land they took over for cultivation.

The Development of Australia

1850 Self-government granted to Australian colonies

1851 Chinese coolie immigration. Stopped by law in 1855

1851-1961 Gold rushes

1901 Formation of Federation of Australia, with six states

1911 Canberra established as capital

1948-75 Two million Europeans migrate to Australia

ACTIVITY 4

In 1911, it was announced that New Delhi and Canberra would be built as the capital cities of British India and of the Commonwealth of Australia. Compare and contrast the political situations of the native people in these countries at that time.

The economic development of Australia under European settlement was not as varied as in America. Vast sheep farms and mining stations were established over a long period and with much labour, followed by vineyards and wheat farming. These came to form the basis of the country's prosperity. When the states were united, and it was decided that a new capital would be built for Australia in 1911, one name suggested for it was Woolwheatgold! Ultimately, it was called Canberra (= kamberra, a native word meaning 'meeting place').

Some natives were employed in farms, under conditions of work so harsh that it was little different from slavery. Later, Chinese immigrants provided cheap labour, as in California, but unease about being dependent on non-whites led to the governments in both countries to ban Chinese immigrants. Till 1974, such was the popular fear that 'dark' people from South Asia or Southeast Asia might migrate to Australia in large numbers that there was a government policy to keep 'non-white' people out.

The Winds of Change...

In 1968, people were electrified by a lecture by the anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner, entitled 'The Great Australian Silence' – the silence of historians about the aborigines. From the 1970s, as was happening in North America, there was an eagerness to understand natives not as anthropological curiosities but as communities with distinct cultures, unique ways of understanding nature and climate, with a sense of community which had vast bodies of stories, textile and painting and carving skills, which should be understood and recorded and respected. Underlying it all was the urgent question which Henry Reynolds later articulated in a powerful book, *Why Weren't We Told?* This condemned the practice of writing Australian history as though it had begun with Captain Cook's 'discovery'.

Since then, university departments have been instituted to study native cultures, galleries of native art have been added to art galleries, museums have been enlarged to incorporate dioramas and imaginatively designed rooms explaining native culture, and natives have begun writing their own life histories. This has been a wonderful effort. It has also occurred at a critical time, because if native cultures had remained ignored, by this time much of such cultures would have been forgotten. From 1974, 'multiculturalism' has been official policy in Australia, which gave equal respect to native cultures and to the different cultures of the immigrants from Europe and Asia.

'Kathy my sister with the torn heart,
I don't know how to thank you
For your dreamtime stories of joy and grief
Written on paperbark.
You were one of the dark children
I wasn't allowed to play with–
Riverbank campers, the wrong colour
(I couldn't turn you white.)
So it was late I met you,
Late I began to know
They hadn't told me the land I loved
Was taken out of your hands.'

– 'Two Dreamtimes', written for Oodgeroo Noonuccal

JUDITH WRIGHT (1915-2000), an Australian writer, was a champion of the rights of the Australian aborigines. She wrote many moving poems about the loss created by keeping the white people and the natives apart.

From the 1970s, as the term 'human rights' began to be heard at meetings of the UNO and other international agencies, the Australian public realised with dismay that, in contrast to the USA, Canada and New Zealand, Australia had no treaties with the natives formalising the takeover of land by Europeans. The government had always termed the land of Australia *terra nullius*, that is belonging to nobody.

There was also a long and agonising history of children of mixed blood (native European) being forcibly captured and separated from their native relatives.

Agitation around these questions led to enquiries and to two important decisions: one, to recognise that the natives had strong historic bonds with the land which was 'sacred' to them, and which should be respected; two, that while past acts could not be undone, there should be a public apology for the injustice done to children in an attempt to keep 'white' and 'coloured' people apart.

1974	*'White Australia' policy ends, Asian immigrants allowed entry*
1992	*Australian High Court (in the Mabo case) declares that terra nullius was legally invalid, and recognises native claims to land from before 1770*
1995	*National Enquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families*
1999	*(26 May) 'A National Sorry Day' as apology for the children 'lost' from the 1820s to the 1970s*

Exercises

ANSWER IN BRIEF

1. *Comment on any points of difference between the native peoples of South and North America.*
2. *Other than the use of English, what other features of English economic and social life do you notice in nineteenth-century USA?*
3. *What did the 'frontier' mean to the Americans?*
4. *Why was the history of the Australian native peoples left out of history books?*

ANSWER IN A SHORT ESSAY

5. *How satisfactory is a museum gallery display in explaining the culture of a people? Give examples from your own experience of a museum.*
6. *Imagine an encounter in California in about 1880 between four people: a former African slave, a Chinese labourer, a German who had come out in the Gold Rush, and a native of the Hopi tribe, and narrate their conversation.*

THEME 11

PATHS TO MODERNISATION

EAST ASIA at the beginning of the nineteenth century was dominated by China. The Qing dynasty, heir to a long tradition, seemed secure in its power, while Japan, a small island country, seemed to be locked in isolation. Yet, within a few decades China was thrown into turmoil unable to face the colonial challenge. The imperial government lost political control, was unable to reform effectively and the country was convulsed by civil war. Japan on the other hand was successful in building a modern nation-state, creating an industrial economy and even establishing a colonial empire by incorporating Taiwan (1895) and Korea (1910). It defeated China, the land that had been the source of its culture and ideals, in 1894, and Russia, a European power, in 1905.

The Chinese reacted slowly and faced immense difficulties as they sought to redefine their traditions to cope with the modern world, and to rebuild their national strength and become free from Western and Japanese control. They found that they could achieve both objectives – of removing inequalities and of rebuilding their country – through revolution. The Chinese Communist Party emerged victorious from the civil war in 1949. However, by the end of the 1970s Chinese leaders felt that the ideological system was retarding economic growth and development. This led to wide-ranging reforms of the economy that brought back capitalism and the free market even as the Communist Party retained political control.

Japan became an advanced industrial nation but its drive for empire led to war and defeat at the hands of the Anglo-American forces. The US Occupation marked the beginning of a more democratic political system and Japan rebuilt its economy to emerge by the 1970s as a major economic power.

The Japanese path to modernisation was built on capitalist principles and took place within a world dominated by Western colonialism. Japanese expansion was justified by the call to resist Western domination and liberate Asia. The rapid development underlined the strength of tradition in Japanese institutions and society, their ability to learn and the strength of nationalism.

China and Japan have had a long tradition of historical writings, as history was an important guide for the rulers. The past provided the standards by which they would be judged and

the rulers established official departments to maintain records and write dynastic histories. Sima Qian (145-90 BCE) is considered the greatest historian of early China. In Japan, Chinese cultural influence led to history being given a similar importance. One of the earliest acts of the Meiji government was to establish, in 1869, a bureau to collect records and write, as it were, a victor's version of the Meiji Restoration. There was great respect for the written word and literary ability was highly valued. This has meant that a wide range of written materials – official histories, scholarly writings, popular literature, religious tracts – are available. Printing and publishing were important industries in the pre-modern period and it is possible, for instance, to trace the distribution of a book in eighteenth-century China or Japan. Modern scholars have used these materials in new and different ways.

Modern scholarship has built on the work of Chinese intellectuals such as Liang Qichao or Kume Kunitake (1839-1931), one of the pioneers of modern history in Japan, as well as earlier writings by European travellers, such as the Italian Marco Polo (1254-1324, in China from 1274 to 1290), the Jesuit priests Mateo Ricci (1552-1610) in China and Luis Frois (1532-97), in Japan, all of whom left rich accounts of these countries. It has also benefited from the writings of Christian missionaries in the nineteenth century whose work provides valuable material for our understanding of these countries.

Scholarship in English from Joseph Needham's monumental work on the history of science in Chinese civilisation or George Sansom's on Japanese history and culture has grown and there is an immense body of sophisticated scholarship available to us today. In recent years, writings by Chinese and Japanese scholars have been translated into English, some of whom teach abroad and write in English, and in the case of Chinese scholars, since the 1980s, many have been working in Japan as well and write in Japanese. This has meant that we have scholarly writings from many parts of the globe that give us a richer and deeper picture of these countries.

Naito Konan* (1866-1934)

A leading Japanese scholar of China, Naito Konan's writings influenced scholars worldwide. Using the new tools of Western historiography Naito built on a long tradition of studying China as well as bringing his experience as a journalist there. He helped establish the Department of Oriental Studies in Kyoto University in 1907. In *Shinaron* [On China (1914)], he argued that republican government offered the Chinese a way to end aristocratic control and centralised power that had existed since the Sung dynasty (960-1279) – a way to revitalise local society where reform must begin. He saw in Chinese history strengths that would make it modern and democratic. Japan, he thought had an important role to play in China but he underestimated the power of Chinese nationalism.

*In Japan, the surname is written first.

Introduction

China and Japan present a marked physical contrast. China is a vast continental country that spans many climatic zones; the core is dominated by three major river systems: the Yellow River (Huang He), the Yangtse River (Chang Jiang – the third longest river in the world) and the Pearl River. A large part of the country is mountainous.

MAP 1: East Asia

The dominant ethnic group are the Han and the major language is Chinese (Putonghua) but there are many other nationalities, such as the Uighur, Hui, Manchu and Tibetan, and aside from dialects, such as Cantonese (Yue) and Shanghainese (Wu), there are other minority languages spoken as well.

Chinese food reflects this regional diversity with at least four distinct types. The best known is southern or Cantonese cuisine – as most overseas Chinese come from the Canton area – which includes dim sum (literally touch your heart), an assortment of pastries and dumplings. In the north, wheat is the staple food, while in Szechuan spices brought by Buddhist monks in the ancient period, along the silk route, and chillies by Portuguese traders in the fifteenth century, have created a fiery cuisine. In eastern China, both rice and wheat are eaten.

Japan, by contrast, is a string of islands, the four largest being Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku and Hokkaido. The Okinawan chain is the southernmost, about the same latitude as the Bahamas. More than 50 per cent of the land area of the main islands is mountainous and Japan is situated in a very active earthquake zone. These geographical conditions have influenced architecture. The population is largely Japanese but there are a small Ainu minority and Koreans who were forcibly brought as labour when Korea was a Japanese colony.

Japan lacks a tradition of animal rearing. Rice is the staple crop and fish the major source of protein. Raw fish (sashimi or sushi) has now become a widely popular dish around the world as it is considered very healthy.

JAPAN

The Political System

An emperor had ruled Japan from Kyoto but by the twelfth century the imperial court lost power to shoguns, who in theory ruled in the name of the emperor. From 1603 to 1867, members of the Tokugawa family held the position of shogun. The country was divided into over 250 domains under the rule of lords called *daimyo*. The shogun exercised power over the domainal lords, ordering them to stay at the capital Edo (modern Tokyo) for long periods so that they would not pose a threat. He also controlled the major cities and mines. The samurai (the warrior class) were the ruling elite and served the shoguns and *daimyo*.

In the late sixteenth century, three changes laid the pattern for future development. One, the peasantry was disarmed and only the samurai could carry swords. This ensured peace and order, ending the frequent wars of the previous century. Two, the *daimyo* were ordered to live in the capitals of their domains, each with a large degree of autonomy. Third, land surveys identified owners and taxpayers and graded land productivity to ensure a stable revenue base.

The *daimyo*'s capitals became bigger, so that by the mid-seventeenth century, Japan not only had the most populated city in the world – Edo – but also two other large cities – Osaka and Kyoto, and at least half a dozen castle-towns with populations of over 50,000. (By contrast, most European countries of the time had only one large city.) This led to the growth of a commercial economy, and created financial and credit systems. A person's merit began to be more valued than his status. A vibrant culture blossomed in the towns, where the fast-growing class of merchants patronised theatre and the arts. As people enjoyed reading, it became possible for gifted writers to earn a living solely by writing. In Edo, people could 'rent' a book for the price of a bowl of noodles. This shows how popular reading had become and gives a glimpse into the scale of printing*.

* Printing was done with wood blocks. The Japanese did not like the regularity of European printing.

Japan was considered rich, because it imported luxury goods like silk from China and textiles from India. Paying for these imports with gold and silver strained the economy and led the Tokugawa to put restrictions on the export of precious metals. They also took steps to develop the silk industry in Nishijin in Kyoto so as to reduce imports. The silk from Nishijin came to be known as the best in the world. Other developments such as the increased use of money and the creation of a stock market in rice show that the economy was developing in new ways.

Social and intellectual changes – such as the study of ancient Japanese literature – led people to question the degree of Chinese influence and to argue that the essence of being Japanese could be found long before the contact with China, in such early classics as the *Tale of the Genji* and in the myths of origin that said that the islands were created by the gods and that the emperor was a descendant of the Sun Goddess.

Tale of the Genji

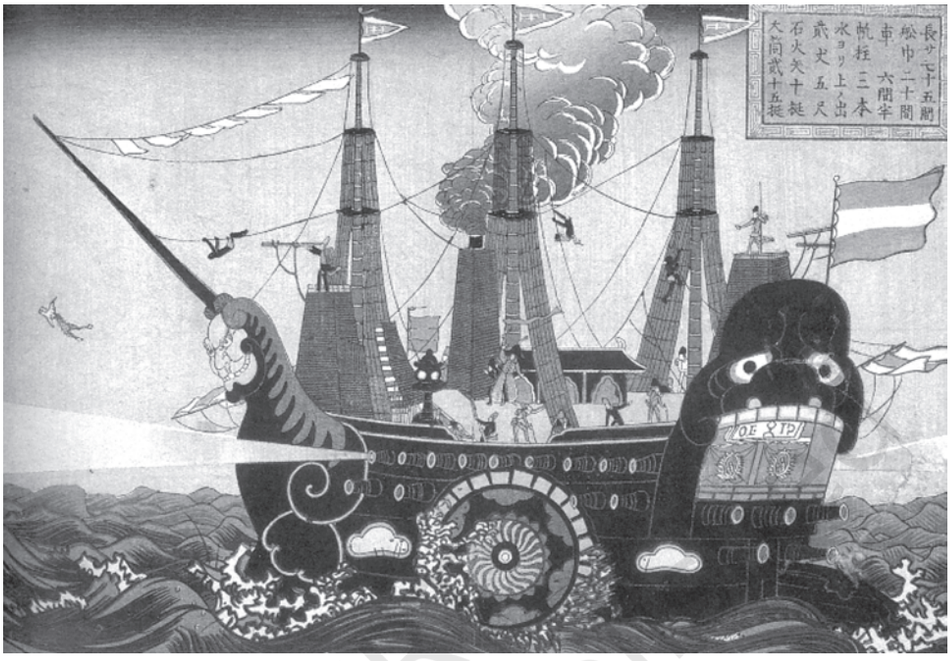
A fictionalised diary of the Heian court written by Murasaki Shikibu, the Tale of the Genji became the central work of fiction in Japanese literature. That period saw the emergence of many women writers, like Murasaki, who wrote in the Japanese script, while men wrote in the Chinese script, used for education and government. The novel depicts the romantic life of Prince Genji and is a striking picture of the aristocratic atmosphere of the Heian court. It shows the independence that women had in choosing their husbands and living their lives.

The Meiji Restoration

Internal discontent coincided with demands for trade and diplomatic relations. In 1853, the USA sent Commodore Matthew Perry (1794-1858) to Japan to demand that the government sign a treaty that would permit trade and open diplomatic relations, which it did the following year. Japan lay on the route to China which the USA saw as a major market; also, their whaling ships in the Pacific needed a place to refuel. At that time, there was only one Western country that traded with Japan, Holland.

Perry's arrival had an important effect on Japanese politics. The emperor, who till then had had little political power, now re-emerged as an important figure. In 1868, a movement forcibly removed the shogun from power, and brought the Emperor to Edo. This was made the capital and renamed Tokyo, which means 'eastern capital'.

Nishijin is a quarter in Kyoto. In the sixteenth century, it had a weavers' guild of 31 households and by the end of the seventeenth century the community numbered over 70,000 people. Sericulture spread and was encouraged by an order in 1713 that only domestic yarn was to be used. Nishijin specialised only in the most expensive products. Silk production helped the growth of a class of regional entrepreneurs who challenged the Tokugawa order, and when foreign trade started in 1859 Japan's silk exports became a major source of profit for the economy struggling to compete with Western goods.



Perry's ship: a Japanese woodblock print.

What the Japanese called 'black ships' (tar was used to seal the joints of the wood) are depicted in paintings and cartoons showing the strange foreigners and their habits. This became a powerful symbol of Japan's 'opening'. (Today, scholars would argue that Japan had not been 'closed', took part in the east Asian trade and had access to knowledge of the wider world both through the Dutch and the Chinese.)

Commodore Perry as seen by the Japanese.

Officials and the people were aware that some European countries were building colonial empires in India and elsewhere. News of China being defeated by the British (see p. 244) was flowing in, and this was even depicted in popular plays, so that there was a real fear that Japan might be made a colony. Many scholars and leaders wanted to *learn* from the new ideas in Europe rather than ignore them as the Chinese were doing; others sought to exclude the Europeans even while being ready to adopt the new technologies they offered. Some argued for a gradual and limited 'opening' to the outer world.

The government launched a policy with the slogan '*fukoku kyohei*' (rich country, strong army). They realised that they needed to develop their economy and build a strong army, otherwise they would face the prospect of being subjugated like India. To do this they needed to create a sense of nationhood among the people, and to transform subjects into citizens.

At the same time, the new government also worked to build what they called the 'emperor system'. (Japanese scholars use this term as the emperor was part of a system, along with the bureaucracy and the military, that exercised power.) Officials were sent to study the European monarchies on which they planned to model their own. The Emperor would be treated with reverence as he was considered a direct descendant of the Sun Goddess but he was also shown as the leader of westernisation. His birthday became a national holiday, he wore Western-style military uniforms, and edicts were issued in his name to set up modern institutions. The Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890 urged people to pursue learning, advance public good and promote common interests.

ACTIVITY 1

Contrast the encounter of the Japanese and the Aztecs with the Europeans.

A new school system began to be built from the 1870s. Schooling was compulsory for boys and girls and by 1910 almost universal. Tuition fees were minimal. The curriculum had been based on Western models but by the 1870s, while emphasising modern ideas, stress was placed on loyalty and the study of Japanese history. The ministry of education exercised control over the curriculum and in the selection of textbooks, as well as in teachers' training. What was called 'moral culture' had to be taught, and texts urged children to revere their parents, be loyal to the nation, and become good citizens.

The Japanese had borrowed their written script from the Chinese in the sixth century. However, since their language is very different from Chinese they developed two phonetic alphabets – hiragana and katakana. Hiragana is considered feminine because it was used by many women writers in the Heian period (such as Murasaki). It is written using a mixture of Chinese characters and phonetics so that the main part of the word is written with a character – for instance, in 'going', 'go' would be written with a character and the 'ing' in phonetics.

The existence of a phonetic syllabary meant that knowledge spread from the elites to the wider society relatively quickly. In the 1880s it was suggested that Japanese develop a completely phonetic script, or adopt a European language. Neither was done.

To integrate the nation, the Meiji government imposed a new administrative structure by altering old village and domain boundaries. The administrative unit had to have revenue adequate to maintain the local schools and health facilities, as well as serve as a recruitment centre for the military. All young men over twenty had to do a period of military service. A modern military force was developed. A legal system was set up to regulate the formation of political groups, control the holding of meetings and impose strict censorship. In all these measures the government had to face opposition. The military and the bureaucracy were put under the direct command of the emperor. This meant that even after a constitution was enacted these two groups remained outside the control of the government. In all these measures the government faced opposition.

The tension between these different ideals represented by a democratic constitution and a modern army was to have far-reaching consequences. The army pressed for a vigorous foreign policy to acquire more territory. This led to wars with China and Russia, in both of which Japan was the victor. Popular demand for greater democracy was often in opposition to the government's aggressive policies. Japan developed economically and acquired a colonial empire that suppressed the spread of democracy at home and put it in collision with the people it colonised.

Writing Japanese: Kanji (Chinese characters) – red; katakana – blue; hiragana – green.

Modernising the Economy

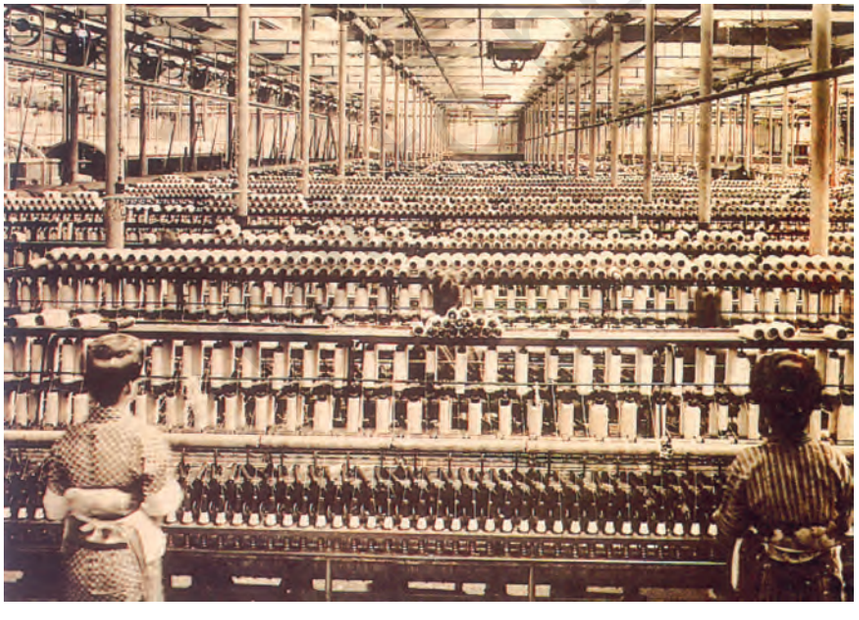
Another important part of the Meiji reforms was the modernising of the economy. Funds were raised by levying an agricultural tax. Japan's first railway line, between Tokyo and the port of Yokohama, was built in 1870-72. Textile machinery was imported from Europe, and foreign technicians were employed to train workers, as well as to teach in universities and schools, and Japanese students were sent abroad. In 1872, modern banking institutions were launched. Companies like Mitsubishi and Sumitomo were helped through subsidies and tax benefits to become major shipbuilders so that Japanese trade was from now on carried in Japanese ships. *Zaibatsu* (large business organisations controlled by individual families) dominated the economy till after the Second World War.

The population, 35 million in 1872, increased to 55 million in 1920. To reduce population pressure the government actively encouraged migration, first to the northern island of Hokkaido, which had been a largely autonomous area where the indigenous people called the Ainu lived, and then to Hawaii and Brazil, as well as to the growing colonial empire of Japan. Within Japan there was a shift to towns as industry developed. By 1925, 21 per cent of the population lived in cities; by 1935, this figure had gone up to 32 per cent (22.5 million).

Industrial Workers

The number of people in manufacturing increased from 700,000 in 1870 to 4 million in 1913. Most of them worked in units employing less than five people and using neither machinery nor electric power. Over half of those employed in modern factories were women. And it was women who organised the first modern strike in 1886. After 1900, the number of men began to increase but only in the 1930s did male workers begin to outnumber women.

Workers in a textile factory.



The size of factories also began to increase. Factories employing more than a hundred workers, just over 1,000 in 1909, jumped to over 2,000 by 1920 and 4,000 by the 1930s; yet even in 1940, there were over 550,000 workshops

that employed less than five employees. This sustained the family-centred ideology, just as nationalism was sustained by a strong patriarchal system under an emperor who was like a family patriarch.

The rapid and unregulated growth of industry and the demand for natural resources such as timber led to environmental destruction. Tanaka Shozo, elected to the first House of Representatives, launched the first agitation against industrial pollution in 1897 with 800 villagers in a mass protest forcing the government to take action.

Tanaka Shozo (1841-1913), the self-taught son of a farmer, rose to become a major political figure. He participated in the Popular Rights Movement in the 1880s, a movement demanding constitutional government. He was elected member to the first Diet. He believed that ordinary people should not be sacrificed for industrial progress. The Ashio Mine was polluting the Watarase river ruining 100 square miles of farmland and affecting a thousand families. The agitation forced the company to take pollution-control measures so that by 1904 harvests were normal.

Aggressive Nationalism

The Meiji constitution was based on a restricted franchise and created a Diet (the Japanese used the German word for parliament because of the influence of German legal ideas) with limited powers. The leaders who brought about the imperial restoration continued to exercise power and even established political parties. Between 1918 and 1931, popularly elected prime ministers formed cabinets. Thereafter, they lost power to national unity cabinets formed across party lines. The emperor was the commander of the forces and from 1890 this was interpreted to mean that the army and the navy had independent control. In 1899, the prime minister ordered that only serving generals and admirals could become ministers. This strengthening of the military, together with the expansion of Japan's colonial empire, was connected with the fear that Japan was at the mercy of the Western powers. This fear was used to silence opposition to military expansion and to higher taxes to fund the armed forces.

Young people being exhorted to fight for the nation: a magazine cover. Student-soldiers: photographs.

'Westernisation' and 'Tradition'

Successive generations of Japanese intellectuals had different views on Japan's relations with other countries. To some, the USA and western European countries were at the highest point of civilisation, to which Japan aspired. Fukuzawa Yukichi, a leading Meiji intellectual, expressed this by saying that Japan must 'expel Asia'. He meant that Japan must shed its 'Asian' characteristics and become part of the West.

Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901)
Born in an impoverished samurai family, he studied in Nagasaki and Osaka learning Dutch and Western sciences and, later, English. In 1860, he went as a translator for the first Japanese embassy to the USA. This provided material for a book on the West, written not in the classical but in the spoken style that became extremely popular. He established a school that is today the Keio University. He was one of the core members of the Meirokusha, a society to promote Western learning.

In The Encouragement to Learning (Gakumon no susume,1872-76) he was very critical of Japanese knowledge: 'All that Japan has to be proud of is its scenery'. He advocated not just modern factories and institutions but the cultural essence of the West – the spirit of civilisation. With this spirit it would be possible to build a new citizen. His principle was: 'Heaven did not create men above men, nor set men below men.'

The next generation questioned this total acceptance of Western ideas and urged that national pride be built on indigenous values. The philosopher Miyake Setsurei (1860-1945) argued that each nation must develop its special talents in the interest of world civilisation: 'To devote oneself to one's country is to devote oneself to the world.' By contrast, many intellectuals were attracted to Western liberalism and wanted a Japan based not on the military but on democracy. Ueki Emori (1857-1892), a leader of the Popular Rights Movement, was demanding constitutional government, admired the French Revolution's doctrine of the natural rights of man and of popular sovereignty, and spoke for a liberal education that would develop each individual: 'Freedom is more precious than order.' Others even advocated voting rights for women. This pressure led the government to announce a constitution.

Daily Life

Japan's transformation into a modern society can be seen also in the changes in everyday life. The patriarchal household system comprised many generations living together under the control of the head of the house, but as more people became affluent, new ideas of the family spread. The new home (*homu* as the Japanese say, using the English word) was that of the nuclear family, where husband and wife lived as breadwinner and homemaker. This new concept of domesticity in turn generated demands for new types of domestic goods, new types of family entertainments, and new forms of housing. In the 1920s, construction companies made cheap housing available for a down payment of 200 yen and a monthly instalment of 12 yen for ten years – this at a time when the salary of a bank employee (a person with higher education) was 40 yen per month.

The novelty of electric goods: a rice-cooker, an American grill, a toaster.

CAR-CLUB

Moga: An abbreviation for 'modern girl'. It represented the coming together in the twentieth century of ideas of gender equality, a cosmopolitan culture and a developed economy. The new middle-class families enjoyed new forms of travel and entertainment. Transport in cities improved with electric trams, public parks were opened from 1878, and department stores began to be built. In Tokyo, the Ginza became a fashionable area for Ginbura, a word combining 'Ginza' and 'burbura' (walking aimlessly). The first radio stations opened in 1925. Matsui Sumako, an actress, became a national star with her portrayal of Nora in the Norwegian writer Ibsen's A Doll's House. Movies began to be made in 1899 and soon there were a dozen companies making hundreds of films. The period was one of great vitality and the questioning of traditional norms of social and political behaviour.

Women's car-pool.

'Overcoming Modernity'

State-centred nationalism found full expression in the 1930s and 1940s as Japan launched wars to extend its empire in China and other parts of Asia, a war that merged into the Second World War after Japan attacked the USA at Pearl Harbor. This period saw greater controls on society, the repression and imprisonment of dissidents, as well as the formation of patriotic societies, many of them women's organisations, to support the war.

An influential symposium on 'Overcoming Modernity' in 1943 debated the dilemma facing Japan – of how to combat the West while being modern. A musician, Moroi Saburo, posed the question of how to rescue music from the art of sensory stimulation and restore it to an art of the spirit. He was not rejecting Western music but trying to find a way that went beyond merely rewriting or playing Japanese music on Western instruments. The philosopher Nishitani Keiji defined 'modern' as the unity of three streams of Western thought: the Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, and the rise of natural sciences. He argued that Japan's 'moral energy' (a term taken from the German philosopher Ranke) had helped it to escape colonisation and it was its duty to establish a new world order, a Greater East Asia. For this a new vision that would integrate science and religion was necessary.

ACTIVITY 2

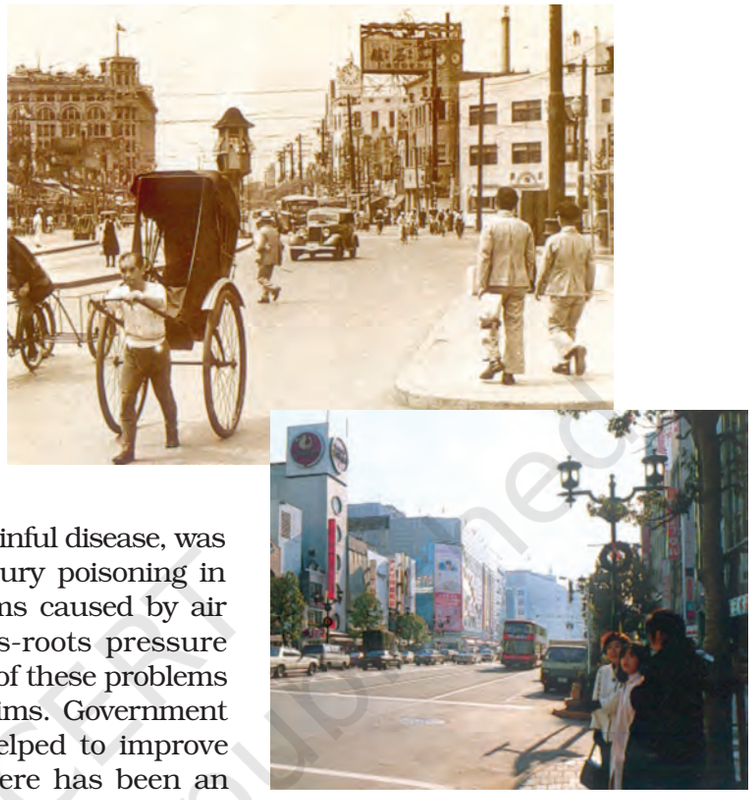
Would you agree with Nishitani's definition of 'modern'?

After Defeat: Re-emerging as a Global Economic Power

Japan's attempt to carve out a colonial empire ended with its defeat by the Allied forces. It has been argued that nuclear bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to shorten the war. But others think the immense destruction and suffering it caused were unnecessary. Under the US-led Occupation (1945-47) Japan was demilitarised and a new constitution introduced. This had Article 9, the so-called 'no war clause' that renounces the use of war as an instrument of state policy. Agrarian reforms, the re-establishment of trade unions and an attempt to dismantle the *zaibatsu* or large monopoly houses that dominated the Japanese economy were also carried out. Political parties were revived and the first post-war elections held in 1946 where women voted for the first time.

The rapid rebuilding of the Japanese economy after its shattering defeat was called a post-war 'miracle'. But it was more than that – it was firmly rooted in its long history. The constitution was democratised only now, but the Japanese had a historic tradition of popular struggles and intellectual engagement with how to broaden political participation. The social cohesion of the pre-war years was strengthened, allowing for a close working of the government, bureaucracy and industry. US support, as well as the demand created by the Korean and the Vietnamese wars also helped the Japanese economy.

The 1964 Olympics held in Tokyo marked a symbolic coming of age. In much the same way the network of high-speed *Shinkansen* or bullet trains, started in 1964, which ran at 200 miles per hour (now it is 300 miles per hour) have come to represent the ability of the Japanese to use advanced technologies to produce better and cheaper goods.



Tokyo before and after the Second World War.

The 1960s saw the growth of civil society movements as industrialisation had been pushed with utter disregard to its effect on health and the environment. Cadmium poisoning, which led to a painful disease, was an early indicator, followed by mercury poisoning in Minamata in the 1960s and problems caused by air pollution in the early 1970s. Grass-roots pressure groups began to demand recognition of these problems as well as compensation for the victims. Government action and new legal regulations helped to improve conditions. From the mid-1980s there has been an increasing decline in interest in environmental issues as Japan enacted some of the strictest environmental controls in the world. Today, as a developed country it faces the challenge of using its political and technological capabilities to maintain its position as a leading world power.

CHINA

The modern history of China has revolved around the question of how to regain sovereignty, end the humiliation of foreign occupation and bring about equality and development. Chinese debates were marked by the views of three groups. The early reformers such as Kang Youwei (1858-1927) or Liang Qichao (1873-1929) tried to use traditional ideas in new and different ways to meet the challenges posed by the West. Second, republican revolutionaries such as Sun Yat-sen, the first president of the republic, were inspired by ideas from Japan and the West. The third, the Communist Party of China (CCP) wanted to end age-old inequalities and drive out the foreigners.

The beginning of modern China can be traced to its first encounter with the West in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when Jesuit missionaries introduced Western sciences such as astronomy and mathematics. Limited though its immediate impact was, it set in motion events that gathered momentum in the nineteenth century when Britain

used force to expand its lucrative trade in opium leading to the first Opium War (1839-42). This undermined the ruling Qing dynasty and strengthened demands for reform and change.

The Opium War: A European painting.

THE OPIUM TRADE

The demand for Chinese goods such as tea, silk and porcelain created a serious balance-of-trade problem. Western goods did not find a market in China, so payment had to be in silver. The East India Company found a new option – opium, which grew in India. They sold the opium in China and gave the silver that they earned to company agents in Canton in return for letters of credit. The Company used the silver to buy tea, silk and porcelain to sell in Britain. This was the 'triangular trade' between Britain, India and China.

ACTIVITY 3

Does this painting give you a clear sense of the significance of the Opium War?

Qing reformers such as Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao realised the need to strengthen the system and initiated policies to build a modern administrative system, a new army and an educational system, and set up local assemblies to establish constitutional government. They saw the need to protect China from colonisation.

The negative example of colonised countries worked powerfully on Chinese thinkers. The partition of Poland in the eighteenth century was a much-discussed example. So much so that by the late 1890s it came to be used as a verb: 'to Poland us' (*bolan wo*). India was another such example. In 1903, the thinker Liang Qichao, who believed that only by making people aware that China was a nation would they be able to resist the West, wrote that India was 'a country that was destroyed by a non-country that is the East India Company'.

He criticised Indians for being cruel to their own people and subservient to the British. Such arguments carried a powerful appeal as ordinary Chinese could see that the British used Indian soldiers in their wars on China.

Above all many felt that traditional ways of thinking had to be changed. Confucianism, developed from the teachings of Confucius (551-479 BCE) and his disciples, was concerned with good conduct, practical wisdom and proper social relationships. It influenced the Chinese attitude toward life, provided social standards and laid the basis for political theories and institutions. It was now seen as a major barrier to new ideas and institutions.

To train people in modern subjects students were sent to study in Japan, Britain and France and bring back new ideas. Many Chinese students went to Japan in the 1890s. They not only brought back new ideas but many became leading republicans. The Chinese borrowed even Japanese translations of European words such as justice, rights, and revolution because they used the same ideographic script, a reversal of the traditional relationship. In 1905, just after the Russo-Japanese war (a war fought on Chinese soil and over Chinese territory) the centuries-old Chinese examination system that gave candidates entry into the elite ruling class was abolished.

The Examination System

Entry to the elite ruling class (about 1.1 million till 1850) had been largely through an examination. This required writing an eight-legged essay [pa-ku wen] in classical Chinese in a prescribed form. The examination was held twice every three years, at different levels and of those allowed to sit only 1-2 per cent passed the first level, usually by the age of 24, to become what was called 'beautiful talent'. At any given time before 1850 there were about 526,869 civil and 212,330 military provincial (sheng-yuan) degree holders in the whole country. Since there were only 27,000 official positions, many lower-level degree holders did not have jobs. The examination acted as a barrier to the development of science and technology as it demanded only literary skills. In 1905, it was abolished as it was based on skills in classical Chinese learning that had, it was felt, no relevance for the modern world.

Establishing the Republic

The Manchu empire was overthrown and a republic established in 1911 under Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925) who is unanimously regarded as the founder of modern China. He came from a poor family and studied in missionary schools where he was introduced to democracy and Christianity. He studied medicine but was greatly concerned about the fate of China. His programme was called the Three Principles (*San*

min chui). These were nationalism – this meant overthrowing the Manchu who were seen as a foreign dynasty, as well as other foreign imperialists; democracy or establishing democratic government; and socialism regulating capital and equalising landholdings.

The social and political situation continued to be unstable. On 4 May 1919, an angry demonstration was held in Beijing to protest against the decisions of the post-war peace conference. Despite being an ally of the victorious side led by Britain, China did not get back the territories seized from it. The protest became a movement. It galvanised a whole generation to attack tradition and to call for saving China through modern science, democracy and nationalism. Revolutionaries called for driving out the foreigners, who were controlling the country's resources, to remove inequalities and reduce poverty. They advocated reforms such as the use of simple language in writing, abolishing the practice of foot-binding and the subordination of women, equality in marriage, and economic development to end poverty. After the republican revolution the country entered a period of turmoil. The Guomindang (the National People's Party) and the CCP emerged as major forces striving to unite the country and bring stability.

Sun Yat-sen's ideas became the basis of the political philosophy of the Guomindang. They identified the 'four great needs' as clothing, food, housing and transportation. After the death of Sun, Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975) emerged as the leader of the Guomindang as he launched a military campaign to control the 'warlords', regional leaders who had usurped authority, and to eliminate the communists. He advocated a secular and rational 'this-worldly' Confucianism, but also sought to militarise the nation. The people, he said, must develop a 'habit and instinct for unified behaviour'. He encouraged women to cultivate the four virtues of 'chastity, appearance, speech and work' and recognise their role as confined to the household. Even the length of hemlines was prescribed.

The Guomindang's social base was in urban areas. Industrial growth was slow and limited. In cities such as Shanghai, which became the centres of modern growth, by 1919 an industrial working class had appeared numbering 500,000. Of these, however, only a small percentage were employed in modern industries such as shipbuilding. Most were 'petty urbanites' (*xiao shimin*), traders and shopkeepers. Urban workers, particularly women, earned very low wages. Working hours were long and conditions of work bad. As individualism increased, there was a growing concern with women's rights, ways to build the family and discussions about love and romance.

Social and cultural change was helped along by the spread of schools and universities (Peking University was established in 1902). Journalism flourished reflecting the growing attraction of this new thinking. The popular *Life Weekly*, edited by Zao Taofen (1895-1944), is representative of this new trend. It introduced readers to new ideas, as well as to

leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and Kemal Ataturk, the modernist leader of Turkey. Its circulation increased rapidly from just 2,000 in 1926 to a massive 200,000 copies in 1933.

ACTIVITY 4

How does a sense of discrimination unite people?

Shanghai in 1935: Buck Clayton, a black American trumpet player, in Shanghai with his jazz orchestra lived the life of the privileged expatriates. But he was black and once some white Americans assaulted him and his orchestra members and threw them out from the hotel they played in. Thus, though American, he had greater sympathy for the plight of the Chinese being himself a victim of racial discrimination.

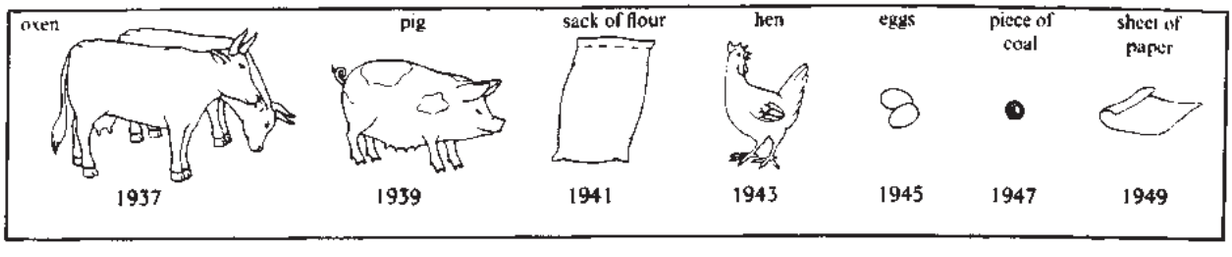
Of their fight with white Americans where they emerged victorious he writes, 'The Chinese onlookers treated us like we had done something they always wanted to do and followed us all the way home cheering us like a winning football team.'

On the poverty and hard life of the Chinese, Clayton writes, 'I would see sometimes twenty or thirty coolies pulling a big heavy cart that in America would be pulled by a truck or horses. These people seemed to be nothing but human horses and all they would get at the end of the day was just enough to get a couple of bowls of rice and a place to sleep. I don't know how they did it.'

'Rickshaw Puller', woodcut by Lan Jia. The novel Rickshaw *by Lao She (1936) became a classic.*

The Guomindang despite its attempts to unite the country failed because of its narrow social base and limited political vision. A major plank in Sun Yat-sen's programme – regulating capital and equalising land – was never carried out because the party ignored the peasantry and the rising social inequalities. It sought to impose military order rather then address the problems faced by the people.

The story of rising prices.



TIMELINE

	JAPAN		CHINA
1603	Tokugawa Ieyasu establishes the Edo shogunate	1644-1911	Qing dynasty
1630	Japan closes country to Western Powers except for restricted trade with the Dutch	1839-60	Two Opium Wars
1854	Japan and the USA conclude the Treaty of Peace, ending Japan's seclusion		
1868	Restoration of Meiji		
1872	Compulsory education system First railway line between Tokyo and Yokohama		
1889	Meiji Constitution enacted		
1894-95	War between Japan and China		
1904-05	War between Japan and Russia		
1910	Korea annexed, colony till 1945	1912	Sun Yat-sen founds Guomingdang
1914-18	First World War	1919	May Fourth Movement
1925	Universal male suffrage	1921	CCP founded
1931	Japan's invasion of China	1926-49	Civil Wars in China
1941-45	The Pacific War	1934	Long March
1945	Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki	1945	
1946-52	US-led Occupation of Japan Reforms to democratise and demilitarise Japan	1949	People's Republic of China Chiang Kai-shek founds Republic of China in Taiwan
1956	Japan becomes a member of the United Nations	1962	China attacks India over border dispute
1964	Olympic Games in Tokyo, the first time in Asia	1966	Cultural Revolution
		1976	Death of Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai
		1997	Hong Kong returned to China by Britain

The Rise of the Communist Party of China

When the Japanese invaded China in 1937, the Guomindang retreated. The long and exhausting war weakened China. Prices rose 30 per cent per month between 1945 and 1949, and utterly destroyed the lives of ordinary people. Rural China faced two crises: one ecological, with soil exhaustion, deforestation and floods, and the second, a socio-economic one caused by exploitative land-tenure systems, indebtedness, primitive technology and poor communications.

The CCP had been founded in 1921, soon after the Russian Revolution. The Russian success exercised a powerful influence around the world and leaders such as Lenin and Trotsky went on to establish the Comintern or the Third International in March 1918 to help bring about a world government that would end exploitation. The Comintern and the Soviet Union supported communist parties around the world but they worked within the traditional Marxist understanding that revolution would be brought about by the working class in cities. Its initial appeal across national boundaries was immense but it soon became a tool for Soviet interests and was dissolved in 1943. Mao Zedong (1893-1976), who emerged as a major CCP leader, took a different path by basing his revolutionary programme on the peasantry. His success made the CCP a powerful political force that ultimately won against the Guomindang.

Mao Zedong's radical approach can be seen in Jiangxi, in the mountains, where they camped from 1928 to 1934, secure from Guomindang attacks. A strong peasants' council (soviet) was organised, united through confiscation and redistribution of land. Mao, unlike other leaders, stressed the need for an independent government and army. He had become aware of women's problems and supported the emergence of rural women's associations, promulgated a new marriage law that forbade arranged marriages, stopped purchase or sale of marriage contracts and simplified divorce.

In a survey in 1930 in Xunwu, Mao Zedong looked at everyday commodities such as salt and soya beans, at the relative strengths of local organisations, at petty traders and craftsmen, ironsmiths and prostitutes, and the strength of religious organisations to examine the different levels of exploitation. He gathered statistics of the number of peasants who had sold their children and found out what price they received – boys were sold for 100-200 yuan but there were no instances of the sale of girls because the need was for hard labour not sexual exploitation. It was on the basis of these studies that he advocated ways of solving social problems.

MAP 2: The Long March

The Guomindang blockade of the Communists' Soviet forced the party to seek another base. This led them to go on what came to be called the Long March (1934-35), 6,000 gruelling and difficult miles to Shanxi. Here, in their new base in Yanan, they further developed their programme to end warlordism, carry out land reforms and fight foreign imperialism. This won them a strong social base. In the difficult years of the war, the Communists and the Guomindang worked together, but after the end of the war the Communists established themselves in power and the Guomindang was defeated.

Photograph of soldiers on the Long March reclaiming wasteland, 1941.

Establishing the New Democracy: 1949-65

The Peoples Republic of China government was established in 1949. It was based on the principles of the 'New Democracy', an alliance of all social classes, unlike the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'* that the Soviet Union said it had established. Critical areas of the economy were put under government control, and private enterprise and private ownership of land were gradually ended. This programme lasted till 1953 when the government declared that it would launch a programme of socialist transformation. The Great Leap Forward movement launched in 1958 was a policy to galvanise the country to industrialise rapidly. People were encouraged to set up steel furnaces in their backyards. In the rural areas, people's communes (where land would be collectively owned

*This term was used by Karl Marx to stress that the working class would replace the repressive government of the propertied class with a revolutionary government and not a dictatorship in the current sense.

and cultivated) were started. By 1958, there were 26,000 communes covering 98 per cent of the farm population.

Mao was able to mobilise the masses to attain the goals set by the Party. His concern was with creating a 'socialist man' who would have five loves: fatherland, people, labour, science and public property. Mass organisations were created for farmers, women, students and other groups. For instance, the All-China Democratic Women's Federation had 76 million members, the All-China Students Federation 3.29 million members. These objectives and methods did not appeal to everyone in the Party. In 1953-54, some were urging for more attention to industrial organisation and economic growth. Liu Shaochi (1896-1969) and Deng Xiaoping (1904-97) tried to modify the commune system as it was not working efficiently. The steel produced in the backyard furnaces was unusable industrially.

Conflicting Visions: 1965-78

The conflict between the Maoists wanting to create a 'Socialist Man' and those who objected to his emphasis on ideology rather than expertise, culminated in Mao launching the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1965 to counter his critics. The Red Guards, mainly students and the army, was used for a campaign against old culture, old customs and old habits. Students and professionals were sent to the countryside to learn from the masses. Ideology (being Communist) was more important than having professional knowledge. Denunciations and slogans replaced rational debate.

The Cultural Revolution began a period of turmoil, weakened the Party and severely disrupted the economy and educational system. From the late 1960s, the tide began to turn. In 1975, the Party once again laid emphasis on greater social discipline and the need to build an industrial economy so that China could become a power before the end of the century.

Reforms from 1978

The Cultural Revolution was followed by a process of political manoeuvring. Deng Xiaoping kept party control strong while introducing a socialist market economy. In 1978, the Party declared its goal as the Four Modernisations (to develop science, industry, agriculture, defence). Debate was allowed as long as the Party was not questioned.

In this new and liberating climate, as at the time of the May Fourth movement 60 years earlier, there was an exciting explosion of new ideas. On 5 December 1978, a wall-poster, 'The Fifth Modernisation' proclaimed that without Democracy the other modernisations would come to nothing. It went on to criticise the CCP for not solving the problem of poverty or ending sexual exploitation, even citing cases of such abuse from within the Party.

After the 1978 Reforms, the Chinese were able to buy consumer goods freely.

These demands were suppressed, but in 1989 on the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth movement many intellectuals called for a greater openness and an end to 'ossified dogmas' (*su shaozhi*). Student demonstrators at Tiananmen Square in Beijing were brutally repressed. This was strongly condemned around the world.

The post-reform period has seen the emergence of debates on ways to develop China. The dominant view supported by the Party is based on strong political control, economic liberalisation and integration into the world market. Critics argue that increasing inequalities between social groups, between regions and between men and women are creating social tensions, and question the heavy emphasis on the market. Finally, there is a growing revival of earlier so-called 'traditional' ideas, of Confucianism and arguments that China can build a modern society following its own traditions rather than simply copying the West.

The Story of Taiwan

Chiang Kai-shek, defeated by the CCP fled in 1949 to Taiwan with over US$300 million in gold reserves and crates of priceless art treasures and established the Republic of China. Taiwan had been a Japanese colony since the Chinese ceded it after the 1894-95 war with Japan. The Cairo Declaration (1943) and the Potsdam Proclamation (1949) restored sovereignty to China.

Massive demonstrations in February 1947 had led the GMD to brutally kill a whole generation of leading figures. The GMD, under Chiang Kai-shek went on to establish a repressive government forbidding free speech and political opposition and excluding the local population from positions of power. However, they carried out land reforms that increased agricultural productivity and modernised the economy so that by 1973 Taiwan had a GNP second only to that of Japan in Asia. The economy, largely dependent on trade has been steadily growing, but what is important is that the gap between the rich and poor has been steadily declining.

Even more dramatic has been the transformation of Taiwan into a democracy. It began slowly after the death of Chiang in 1975 and grew in momentum when martial law was lifted in 1987 and opposition parties were legally permitted. The first free elections began the process of bringing local Taiwanese to power. Diplomatically most countries have only trade missions in Taiwan.

Full diplomatic relations and embassies are not possible as Taiwan is considered to be part of China.

The question of re-unification with the mainland remains a contentious issue but "Cross Strait" relations (that is between Taiwan and China) have been improving and Taiwanese trade and investments in the mainland are massive and travel has also become easier. China may be willing to tolerate a semi-autonomous Taiwan as long as it gives up any move to seek independence.

The Story of Korea

Beginnings of Modernisation

During the late nineteenth century, Korea's Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910) faced internal political and social strife and increasing foreign pressure from China, Japan and the West. Amidst this, Korea implemented modernisation reforms in its governmental structures, diplomatic relations, infrastructure and society. After decades of political interference, the imperial Japan annexed Korea as its colony in 1910, bringing the over 500-year long Joseon Dynasty to its end. However, the Korean people were angry about Japan's suppression of their culture and forced assimilation. Desiring independence, Koreans around the country demonstrated against the colonial rule, set up a provisional government and sent delegations to appeal to foreign leaders at international meetings, such as the Cairo, Yalta and Potsdam conferences.

Koreans celebrate their independence from Japan in 1945.

The Japanese colonial rule ended after 35 years in August 1945 with Japan's defeat in the World War II. However, it was the continued efforts of independence activists both inside and outside Korea that ensured Korea's independence after Japan's defeat. Following liberation, the Korean Peninsula was temporarily divided along the 38th parallel with the Soviets managing the North and the U.N. managing the South even as the nations worked to disband the Japanese forces in the region. However, this division became permanent as separate governments were established in both the North and the South in 1948.

A Post-War Nation

In June 1950, the Korean War broke out. With South Korea receiving support from the US-led United Nations forces and North Korea receiving support from communist China, it developed into

a vintage proxy war of the Cold War era. In July 1953, after three years, the war ended in an armistice agreement. Korea remained divided. The Korean War had caused not only massive losses of life and property, but also a delay in free-market economic development and democratisation. Prices suddenly rose due to inflation caused by increased national expenses and currency issued during the war. Furthermore, industrial facilities constructed during the colonial period had been destroyed entirely. As a result, South Korea was forced to rely on the economic assistance being provided by the USA.

Though South Korea's first president Syngman Rhee had been elected in 1948 through democratic process after the Korean War, he extended his administration, twice through illegal constitutional amendments. In April 1960, citizens protested against a rigged election in what is known as the April Revolution and Rhee was forced to resign.

With the revolution as an impetus, the spirit of the people, which had been suppressed during the Rhee administration, erupted in the form of demonstrations and demands. However, the Democratic Party administration, which took power after Rhee's resignation could not properly respond to citizens' demands due to internal divisions and conflict. Rather, reformist political powers emerged and the students' movement grew into a unification movement. This was not looked upon favourably by the military authorities. In May 1961, the Democratic Party government was overthrown in a military coup staged by General Park Chung-hee and other military authorities.

Rapid Industrialisation under Strong Leadership

In October 1963, an election was held and military coup leader Park Chung-hee was elected the president. The Park administration adopted a state-led, export-oriented policy to achieve economic growth. The five-year economic plans of the government favoured large corporate firms, placed emphasis on expanding employment and increased Korea's competitiveness.

Korea's unprecedented rate of economic growth began in the early 1960s when the state policy shifted from import substitution industrialisation (ISI) towards a focus on exports. Under the export-oriented policy, the government supported labour-intensive light industrial products, such as textiles and garments in which Korea had a comparative advantage. During the late 1960s and 1970s, the focus again shifted from light industries to value-added heavy and chemical industries. Steel, non-ferrous metals machinery, shipbuilding, electronics and chemical production were selected as the most important industries in the race for economic growth.

In 1970, the New Village (*Saemaul*) Movement was introduced to encourage and mobilise the rural population and modernise the agricultural sector. This campaign aimed at reforming the spirit of the people from being passive and disheartened to becoming active and hopeful. Rural people were empowered to help themselves in developing their villages and improve the living conditions of their respective communities. The movement was later expanded to assist the neighbourhoods near industrial plants and in urban areas. Today, Korea is sharing the knowledge and experiences from this movement with developing countries, who wish to adopt the principles of the *Saemaul* Movement in their development efforts.

Korea achieved startling economic growth thanks to a combination of strong leaders, well-trained bureaucrats, aggressive industrialists and a capable labour force. Ambitious entrepreneurs responded well to government incentives to increase exports and develop new industries.

The high level of education also contributed to the economic growth of Korea. At the dawn of Korea's industrialisation, almost all Korean workers were already literate and could easily acquire new skills. At the same time, the country's open economic policy worked to absorb more advanced institutions and technologies from other countries. Foreign investment and Korea's high domestic savings rate helped develop the heavy industrial sector, while remittances from South Korean workers overseas also contributed to the overall economic development.

Economic growth was the foundation of the Park administration's long-term power. Park revised the constitution so that he could run for a third term and was reelected in 1971. In October 1972, Park declared and implemented the Yusin Constitution, which made permanent presidency possible. Under the Yusin Constitution, the president had complete authority over legislation, jurisdiction and administration and also had a constitutional right to repeal any law as an 'emergency measure'.

As the president was invested with absolute authority, the progress of democracy was temporarily suspended in pursuit of economic development. However, the second oil crisis in 1979 acted as a hindrance to the economic policy, which had over-invested in the heavy chemical industry. Moreover, students, scholars and the opposition continually demonstrated against the Yusin Constitution as the Park administration's invocation of emergency measures and suppression brought about political instability. Amidst this economic crisis and political instability, the Park administration came to an end in October 1979 when Park Chung-hee was assassinated.

Continued Economic Growth and Calls for Democratisation

The desire for democratisation grew upon the death of Park Chung-hee, but in December 1979, another military coup, this time led by Chun Doo-hwan, was staged. In May 1980, various protests in key cities around the nation were held by students and citizens demanding democracy in the face of Chun's military faction. The military faction suppressed the democracy movement by implementing martial law across the country. In the city of Gwangju, in particular, students and citizens did not back down and demanded that martial law be ended. This is known as the Gwangju Democratisation Movement. However, Chun's military faction suppressed the protests for democratisation. Later that year, Chun became the president through an indirect election under the Yusin Constitution.

The Chun administration strengthened the suppression of democratisation influences in order to stabilise the regime. Due in part to the international economic boom, the Chun administration was able to raise economic growth from 1.7 per cent in 1980 to 13.2 per cent by 1983, while also significantly lowering inflation. Economic development had led to urbanisation, improved education levels and media advancements. As a result, citizens' self-awareness about political rights grew, leading to demands for a constitutional amendment to allow direct election of the president.

In May 1987, the Chun administration's minimisation of inquiries into the death-by-torture of a university student was made known, making citizens begin participate in a large-scale struggle for democratisation. The June Democracy Movement that followed had participation not only by students, but the middle class as well. Owing to these efforts, the Chun administration was forced to make a revision to the constitution, allowing direct elections. A new chapter of Korean democracy thus began.

Demonstrators during the June Democracy Movement of 1987.

Korean Democracy and the IMF Crisis

As per the new constitution, the first direct election since 1971 was held in December 1987. But due to the opposition parties' failure to unite, a fellow military leader of Chun's military faction, Roh Tae-woo, was elected. However, Korea continued along the path of democracy. In 1990, long-time opposition leader Kim Young-sam compromised with Roh's party to create a large

ruling party. In December 1992, Kim, a civilian, was elected the president after decades of military rule. With his election and the consequent dissolution of authoritarian military power, democracy made its forward march.

Under the export-driven policy of the new administration, several companies grew to global prominence, which continued until the early 1990s. With governmental support, Korean conglomerates invested in capital-intensive heavy and chemical industries, as well as, electronic industries, while the government continued to focus on building industrial and social infrastructure.

Meanwhile, under increasing neoliberalist pressure to open its market, the Kim administration joined the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1996 and attempted to strengthen Korea's international competitiveness. But amidst increasing trade deficits, poor management by financial institutions, reckless business operations by conglomerates, and more, Korea was met with a foreign currency crisis in 1997. The crisis was dealt with through emergency financial support provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Simultaneous efforts were also made to improve the country's economic constitution as the citizens actively contributed towards foreign loan repayment through the Gold Collection Movement.

In December 1997, long-time opposition party leader Kim Dae-jung was elected the president for the first time in Korea, marking a peaceful transfer of power. The second peaceful transfer of power came in 2008, when conservative Lee Myung-bak was elected as the president, following the progressive Roh Mu-hyun administration. In 2012, conservative Park Geun-hye was elected as the first female president. At the beginning of her presidency, she gained support due to the political legacy of her father, Park Chung-hee. But in October 2016, as it came to light that she had let a friend secretly manage government affairs, she met with nationwide protests, leading to her impeachment and removal from office in March 2017. In May 2017, Moon Jae-in was elected the president, in a peaceful transfer of power for the third time.

Present-day downtown Seoul at night.

The candlelight protests of 2016, led by citizens who peacefully demonstrated for the president's resignation within the boundaries of democratic law and systems, show the maturity of the Korean democracy. The Korean democracy owes a debt to economic development, but it was the citizens' elevated political awareness to encourage republicanism in the country, which played the lead role in advancing it to where it is today.

Two Roads to Modernisation

Industrial societies far from becoming like each other have found their own paths to becoming modern. The histories of Japan and China, along with the stories of Taiwan and Korea, show how different historical conditions led them on widely divergent paths to building independent and modern nations.

Japan was successful in retaining its independence and using traditional skills and practices in new ways. However, its elite-driven modernisation generated an aggressive nationalism, helped to sustain a repressive regime that stifled dissent and demands for democracy, and established a colonial empire that left a legacy of hatred in the region, as well as, distorted internal developments.

Japan's programme of modernisation was carried out in an environment dominated by Western imperial powers. While it imitated them, it also attempted to find its own solutions. Japanese nationalism was marked by these different compulsions — while many Japanese hoped to liberate Asia from Western domination, for others these ideas justified building an empire.

It is important to note that the transformation of social and political institutions and daily life was not just a question of reviving traditions, or tenaciously preserving them, but rather of creatively using them in new and different ways. For instance, the Meiji school system, modelled on European and American practices, introduced new subjects but the curriculum's main objective was to make loyal citizens. A course on morals that stressed loyalty to the emperor was compulsory. Similarly, changes in the family or in daily life show how foreign and indigenous ideas were brought together to create something new.

The Chinese path to modernisation was very different. Foreign imperialism, both Western and Japanese, combined with a hesitant and unsure Qing dynasty to weaken government control and set the stage for a breakdown of political and social order leading to immense misery for most of the people. Warlordism, banditry and civil war exacted a heavy toll on human lives, as did the savagery of the Japanese invasion. Natural disasters added to this burden.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw a rejection of traditions and a search for ways to build national unity and strength. The CCP and its supporters fought to put an end to tradition, which they saw

as keeping the masses in poverty, the women subjugated and the country undeveloped. While calling for power to the people, it built a highly centralised state. The success of the Communist programme promised hope but its repressive political system turned the ideals of liberation and equality into slogans to manipulate the people. Yet it did remove centuries' old inequalities, spread education and raise consciousness among the people.

The Party has now carried out market reforms and has been successful in making China economically powerful but its political system continues to be tightly controlled. The society now faces growing inequalities, as well as, a revival of traditions long suppressed. This new situation again poses the question of how China can develop while retaining its heritage.

Exercises

Answer in brief

1. *What were the major developments before the Meiji restoration that made it possible for Japan to modernise rapidly?*
2. *Discuss how daily life was transformed as Japan developed.*
3. *How did the Qing dynasty try and meet the challenge posed by the Western powers?*
4. *What were Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles?*
5. *How did Korea deal with the foreign currency crisis in 1997?*

Answer in a short essay

6. *Did Japan's policy of rapid industrialisation lead to wars with its neighbours and destruction of the environment?*
7. *Do you think that Mao Zedong and the Communist Party of China were successful in liberating China and laying the basis for its current success?*
8. *Did economic growth in South Korea contribute to its democratisation?*

CONCLUSION

THIS book on Themes of World History has taken you across vast stretches of time – ancient, medieval, modern. It has focused on some of the more prominent themes of human evolution and development. Each section has covered the following, increasingly foreshortened, periods:

I c.6 MYA – 400 BCE
II BCE 400 – 1300 CE
III 800 – 1700 CE
IV 1700 – 2000 CE

Although historians tend to specialise in ancient, medieval and modern periods, the historian's craft displays certain common features and predicaments. We have attempted to nuance the distinction between ancient, medieval and modern in order to convey a holistic idea of how history is written and discussed as also to equip you with an overall understanding of human history that goes well beyond our modern roots.

The book would have allowed you a glimpse into the history of Africa, West and Central Asia, East Asia, Australia, North and South America and Europe including the United Kingdom. It would have familiarised you with what may be called the 'case study' method. Instead of burdening you with enormous detail about the history of all these places, we felt it would be better to examine key illustrations of certain phenomena in detail.

World history can be written in many ways. One of these, perhaps the oldest, is to focus on contact between peoples to stress the interconnectedness of cultures and civilisations and to explore the multifarious dimensions of world historical change. An alternative is to identify relatively self-contained – though expanding – regions of economic exchange that sustained certain forms of culture and power. A third method specifies differences in the historical experience of nations and regions to highlight their distinctive characteristics. You would have found traces of each of these approaches in the book. But differences between societies (and individuals) go hand in

hand with similarities. Interlinkages, connections and similarities among human communities always existed. The interplay of the global and the local ('the world in a grain of sand'), the 'mainstream' and the 'marginal', the general and the specific, which you would have gleaned from this book, are a fascinating aspect of the study of history.

Our account began from scattered settlements in Africa, Asia and Europe. From there we moved on to city life in Mesopotamia. Early empires were created around cities in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, Persia and India. Empires of greater extent followed them – the Greek (Macedonian), Roman, Arab and (from the 1200s) the Mongol. Trading operations, technology and government were often highly intricate in these empires. Very often, they were based on effective use of a written language.

A new era in human history took shape as a consequence of a combination of technological and organisational changes that occurred in Western Europe in the middle of the second millennium CE (from the 1400s onwards). These were linked to the 'Renaissance' or 'rebirth' of civilisation, whose primary impact was felt in the cities of northern Italy, but whose influence spread quickly over Europe. This Renaissance was the product of the region's city life, and of extensive interactions with Byzantium and the Muslim world of the Mediterranean. Over time, ideas and discoveries were carried to the Americas by explorers and conquerors, in the sixteenth century CE. Some of these notions were carried later to Japan, India and elsewhere as well.

European pre-eminence in global trade, politics and culture did not come at this time. It was to be the feature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the Industrial Revolution took place in Britain, and spread to Europe. Britain, France and Germany were able to create systems of colonial control over parts of Africa and Asia – systems more intense and powerful than those of earlier empires. By the mid-twentieth century, the technology, economic life and culture that had once made European states powerful had been reworked in the rest of the world to create the foundations of modern life.

You must have noticed passages quoted in the various chapters of the book. Many of these are extracts for what historians call 'primary sources'. Scholars construct history from such materials, drawing their 'facts' from them. They critically evaluate these materials and are attentive to their ambiguities. Different historians may use a given source-material to advance vastly different, even contradictory arguments about historical phenomena. As with the other human sciences, history can be made to speak to us in varied voices. This is because of the intricate relationship between the historian's reasoning and historical facts.

In your final year at school you will be studying aspects of Indian (or South Asian) history from Harappan times to the making of modern India's Constitution. Again, the emphasis will be on a judicious mix

of political, economic, social and cultural history, inviting you to engage with chosen themes through the case-study method. We hope these books will help you formulate your own answers to so many questions, above all to the question,'Why study History?' Do you know the gifted medievalist, Marc Bloch, began his book, *The Historian's Craft*, written in the trenches during the Second World War, by recalling a young boy's question, 'Tell me, Daddy. What is the use of history?'

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