

**BISMARCK'S FOREIGN POLICY-BASIC OBJECTIVES,  
RELATIONS WITH FRANCE AND RUSSIA**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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Otto Von Bismarck who was called upon by Willian I to form the ministry at a crucial time in the history of Prussia was a man of brutal forthrightness. He was a post-master in diplomacy and was not worried over scruples and for him the end justified the means.

**Bismarck's Early Life :** He was born in a noble, conservative family in the year 1815, which marked the downfall of Napoleon. After completing his education he joined the civil service, but was dismissed on account of "deficiency in regularity and discipline". During the revolutionary years of 1848-49, he had no sympathy with the Liberals and voted against the constitution of 1850. He also supported King Frederick William IV in rejecting the offer of the crown made by Frankfurt Parliament. In 1847, he was married to Johanna Von Puttkamer. Unpretentious and deeply religious, Johanna was loyal friend and an essential support throughout her husband's career. Johanna's considerable influence on her husband's politics is documented by their voluminous correspondence as Prussian representative at the Federal Diet at Frankfort in 1851.

**His Early Career :** Bismarck entered politics in 1847 when he was elected a member of the Joint Prussian Diet and got an opportunity of becoming a member of

the National Assembly and the Constitutional assembly. In 1851, the Emperor William I appointed Bismarck a representative of Prussia for eight years, i.e. From 1851 to 1859. As such he got an insight into the working of the confederation and also the weaknesses of Austria and he was convinced that Prussia alone was capable of achieving German unity. In 1859, Bismarck was sent to St. Petersburg as an ambassador. By dint of his intelligence, he established personal friendship with Czar Alexander II of Russia. It was his first diplomatic achievement which proved very advantageous in future. At the time of Crimean War, he remained neutral and won the pleasure of Russian Emperor. He made good use of Russia's friendship during the war against France. In 1862 he was transferred to Paris in the same capacity. As an ambassador in France, he availed himself of the opportunity of strengthening relations with Napoleon III and his ministers and making close study of their policies. So he was able to correctly assess the weakness and strength of both Russia and France and made use of his knowledge to the best advantage of Prussia later on.

**Bismarck as Chancellor :** At the time of taking oath as chancellor, Bismarck declared, "I will not give up the company of the Emperor even at the cost of my life in this parliamentary strife." His views were in perfect consonance with those of his king William I. Refuting the ideals of liberalists, Bismarck clarified his policy in these words, "Germany has focused its attention on its power rather than on liberalism of Prussia. Prussia has to preserve its strength for an appropriate occasion. The grave problems of own times can be solved by following the blood and iron policy rather than having a recourse to speeches and majority votes."

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## **OBJECTIVES**

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The objective of the lesson is to enable you to understand the basic objectives of Bismarck's foreign policy and its impact on world history. The present lesson will help you to know the repercussions of Bismarck's foreign policy and relation of Germany with other countries.

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## **UNIFICATION OF GERMANY UNDER BISMARCK**

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**His Aims :** These were two-fold :-

- (1) Prussia must take the lead in the matter of German unification and oust Austria from the German confederation by force.
- (2) Germany must be conquered by Prussia, that is, Germany must be Prussianized, rather than that Prussia should lose its identity in Germany. Prussian culture, Prussian traditions, her administrative machinery and her armed might should extend to the whole of Germany.

**His policy of Blood and Iron :** He knew well that his aims could not be achieved by peaceful means. Therefore, to realize them he initiated a policy of “blood and iron”. In a memorable speech in Parliament in 1862, he poignantly said, “The German problem cannot be solved by Parliamentary decrees, but only by blood and iron”. Again, commenting upon the failure of the revolutionary movements he observed, “Not by speeches and majority resolutions are the great questions of the time decided---that was the mistake of 1848---49---but by blood and iron.”

This policy therefore demanded that, firstly, Prussia should build up an irresistible army whose striking power should be swift and certain, and secondly, all chances of an international intervention in the German question should be eliminated lest France or Russia might intervene in her disputes with Austria, and deprive her of her fruits of victory. He was not afraid of England and could rely on her neutrality. To him a united Germany meant a Prussianised Germany. But Prussia would never be able to assume the leadership of Germany as long as there was Austria to thwart her projects. Hence Austria must go, and as she would not go voluntarily, war was necessary. This was the inescapable conviction of the loyal Prussian minister and he was determined to act upon it.

The army alone could help to achieve his objective and so it was his chief interest; it was to be his engine of unification and hence the army reforms must continue. At first he tried to woo the liberal members of Parliament, but when they did not respond favorably he ignored the land tag and continued to build up the army in the teeth of the bitter antagonism and the opposition of the Liberals. By the time

two guiding principles emerged i.e. alliance with France and Russia, and a decisive showdown with Austria. These ideas governed his initial policy.

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### **BISMARCK'S DIPLOMATIC PREPARATIONS**

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**His measures to isolate Austria :** While boldly handling a very difficult situation at home Bismarck was concurrently pursuing his great diplomatic schemes abroad. He realized the necessity of securing the friendship of the neighboring powers if he was to succeed in his plan of expelling Austria from the German confederation. To fight Austria it was essential to isolate her diplomatically. He began by counting the friendship of Napoleon III, the recent enemy of Austria, and, for the purpose he concluded a commercial treaty with France, giving her favorable terms, helped Czar during the Polish revolt. Next in 1863 he took advantage of a revolt in Russian Poland to win the goodwill of the Czar at a time when Austria lost it by her pro-Polish attitude.

**Bismarck frustrates Austria's attempts at federal reforms :** Even while engaged in foreign affairs Bismarck was preparing for breach with Austria. He insisted that king William of Prussia should not attend the Congress of German princes which Austria had summoned in 1863 to consider proposals for the reform of German confederation. Bismarck feared that any scheme of federal reform sponsored by Austria might strengthen her position in Germany, and so with great difficulty persuaded the King not to attend. Bismarck's attitude ruined all hopes of reform by which Austria had sought to consolidate her leadership of Germany. It was the last throw of Austria and it ended in failure. But the time for a definite breach with Austria had not yet come. Bismarck was willing to act with Austria so long as she was useful to his ultimate ends. Joint action might give him a good pretext for a quarrel, and his opportunity came in 1863, with the revival of the Schleswig- Holstein question.

His foremost aim was to drive out Austria from Germany and to facilitate her unification. He had firm belief that Germany must facilitate her unification. He had firm belief that Germany must be unified under the leadership of a powerful Prussia. He used to say, "Prussians we are and Prussians we will remain". He was an opponent of liberalism and favored monarchy. He hated the parliamentary democracy

and often used to say, “References, to England are our misfortunes”.

With Bismarck at the helm, Germany after unification achieved remarkable progress in many fields, i.e. uniform code of law, establishment of Imperial Railway Bureau by an act of 1873, Bant Act of 1875 and great German military strength. But his remarkable achievement was foreign policy. He was the greatest politician and diplomat of his times. His contemporary politicians accepted his gains. He worked hard to make Germany a super power in Europe. The historians have compared him with a juggler, who could manage to perform the skillful feat of handling five balls at a time, the two of these being always in the air.” Bismarck had based his foreign policy on far sightedness. As long as Bismarck remained the Chancellor of Germany he did not let it fall.

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#### **AIMS OF BISMARCK’S FOREIGN POLICY**

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- He adopted principle of maintaining status quo in Europe i.e. he was in favour of peace.
- After becoming Chancellor of Germany, he declared that Germany was a continental country and not a colonial country.
- Bismarck considered himself to be a hero on land and never tried to develop the naval force of Germany. Moreover he never wanted to spoil his relations with England by making Germany a strong naval power.
- After defeating France in the battle of Sedan Bismarck had taken the province of Alsace and Lorraine. Both these provinces were rich in mines and industries. Bismarck very well knew that France would try to get them back so that enmity between the two became inevitable. Bismarck decided to isolate France so that she could not wage war of revenge against Germany. Actually the basis of Bismarck’s foreign policy was to keep France isolated in Europe.
- The foreign policy of German Empire since 1871 had been the maintenance of peace and prevention of anti-German coalition and special attention was given to Russia.

- Austria joined hands with France as she was defeated by Bismarck in 1866 in the battle of Sadowa. But Bismarck managed to have friendly relations with Austria from 1879 to 1890 and isolated France.
- Bismarck completed the unification of Germany in 1870 by incorporating several states into Prussia. After 1870 Bismarck assured his people that Germany would not indulge into wars any more.
- Bismarck had no faith in Italy and used to call her a “jackal” due to her opportunistic attitude.
- He did not take interest in eastern questions as he always regarded the eastern question as useless riddle.
- Bismarck considered Germany, Austria, France, Russia and Italy to be powerful European countries and always planned to be united with at least three powers.

**Ascendency of Bismarck :** In 1871 Bismarck, now created a prince of the Empire, was appointed the first Imperial Chancellor. For the next twenty years, he remained, as before, the central figure in German history. He held in his hands all the strings of government and managed all the affairs of the state almost as a dictator. It is true that at times he had to yield to the pressure of circumstances and to make concessions here and there., but on the whole he remained a masterful autocrat, strong enough to hold his own against all sorts of attack, political and personal, and to formulate a policy which was essentially his own. He had one important circumstance in his favour, viz., the unstinted support of the Emperor.

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#### **FOREIGN POLICY OF BISMARCK (1871-90A.D.)**

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Bismarck had won for his country national unity and hegemony of Europe by a policy of “blood and iron”. But to him militarism was only a means to the attainment of a definite end. When that end had been attained his policy was directed towards maintenance of peace and status quo. Germany, he declared, was “satisfied” country. She had acquired a commanding position and should be satisfied with it. She should do nothing which might endanger it or threaten the internal consolidation of the German Empire, which was necessary to the development of

her political unity.

**Chief aim to isolate France diplomatically :** Knowing full that he had morally offended France and made her an irreconcilable enemy, he devoted his whole diplomatic skill towards providing safeguards against a possible renewal of French hostility. He realized that France would never be reconciled to the loss of Alsace-Lorraine and would embrace the earliest opportunity to avenge national humiliation and to recover territorial loss. Hence Bismarck sought to make any war of vengeance on the part of France hopeless and impossible by completely isolating her. To isolate France diplomatically it was necessary for Germany to form a comprehensive system of alliances and conversely, to prevent the formation of counter-alliances against her. In pursuit of this object he showed the same subtlety and audacity that had characterized his previous diplomatic career.

**Three Emperor's league or Dreikaiserbund (1873) :** The keystone of his foreign policy was a close alliance with Austria and so immediately after Sedan he proceeded to court her friendship. This was a difficult as well as a delicate task, for Austria was a defeated enemy of recent standing. But Bismarck had already prepared way for rapprochement by the lenient treatment of Austria after Sadowa. The friendship of Austria alone was, however, not sufficient for Bismarck's plan; other powers must be included in the diplomatic combination which he had in view. He fixed upon Russia with whom he had cultivated good relations in the past and sought to maintain them in future. As a matter of fact, a friendly understanding, with Russia if not an alliance, was a cardinal principle of Bismarck's policy. Russia was not difficult to manage as her interests did not conflict with those of Germany. Besides, she had the support of Bismarck's when in 1870 he took advantage of the Franco-Prussian war to repudiate the Black sea clauses of the Treaty of Paris. Out of these factors Bismarck succeeded in forming a three Emperor's league or *Dreikaiserbund*, comprising the Emperor of Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary. It was not a treaty of alliance but an announcement of the intimate and cordial relations between the three powers. Ostensibly it was meant to emphasize the common interests of the three Emperors in strengthening the



monarchical principle and arresting the progress of Socialism. But its political significance was important. It means that Austria had forgiven Sadowa and accepted her exclusion from Germany and she no longer meditated revenge. This league continued to exist from 1873-1887, but a gulf was created in the relation of the members of the league at the time of treaty of Berlin in 1878 when Germany supported Austria in place of Russia. The relations between Germany and Russia remained strained from 1879 to 1881, the year of revision of three Emperor's league.

**Dual alliance (1879) :** The league of the three Emperors was no doubt a great diplomatic achievement of Bismarck. But it proved difficult to maintain the pleasant harmony. It was ruffled in 1875 by the scare of war between Germany and France, in which the Czar intervened to prevent Germany from attacking France. Perceiving that Russia was an uncertain ally. Bismarck turned to a closer union with Austria. His opportunity came when troubles arose in the Balkans as the result of the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish war. The interests of Austria and Russia in the Balkan affairs clashed too decisively to permit of any satisfactory agreement between them, and at the Congress of Berlin (1878) Bismarck was compelled to choose between his two imperial neighbours. He accepted the Austrian view on the Eastern question and supported the demand that the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano should be submitted for revision to a European Congress. This pro-Austria attitude alienated the Czar who in bitterness of spirit withdrew from **Dreikaiserbund**. It, however, strengthened the friendship with Austria with the result that a strong Austro-German alliance was concluded in 1879. It provided for mutual military assistance in case either power should be attacked by Russia or by any other power, e.g., France aided by Russia. Thus the alliance was aimed directly against Russia, but to a lesser degree against France.

**Terms of Treaty :** (a) If Russia attacks any of the two, the other will come for help.

(b) If France attacks any of the two, the other will remain neutral.

(c) If Russia and France unitedly attack any of the two then both will help each other.

(d) This alliance will be valid for five years and its term can be extended by three

years more by mutual agreement.

(e) It was to be kept as a secret alliance.

**Triple alliance of 1882 :** Bismarck next drew Italy into the Austro-Prussian alliance. The Italians feared that France where the influence of the clerical party was strong, might seek to restore the temporal power of the Papacy. Bismarck worked upon this fear and at the same time fermented Franco-Italian rivalry over Tunis in North Africa. He encouraged France to seize Tunis upon which Italy also had her wistful eyes. His objective was to make one more enemy for France and to lure that enemy into Austro-German alliance. His plan succeeded to a nicety. In 1881 France seized Tunis and thereby morally wounded Italian sentiments. Italy at once showed her irritation by joining the dual alliance of Austria and Germany and thus was formed the famous **Triple alliance of 1882**. It was, perhaps, the master stroke of Bismarck's diplomacy. It was no more achievement to wipe out powers who had been traditional enemies in the past and between whom there existed outstanding causes of friction.

The representatives of Austria, Italy and Germany held a conference at Vienna and the three signed a treaty on May 20, 1882. The main terms of this alliance :

- (a) If France attacks Italy then Germany and Austria will help her.
- (b) If France attacks Germany then Austria and Italy will help her.
- (c) If France and Russia unitedly attack one or two countries of this alliance, then the three will unitedly fight against them.

This alliance was kept a secret and its term was five years. It was made clear that this alliance will not be directed against England. This alliance proved a boon for Italy and her international influence increased. She gained an assurance of help from Germany and Austria at the times of Russia or French attack. But in case of Russia attack on Germany or Austria it was not obligatory for her to come to their help.

**Treaty with Rumania (1883 A.D.) :** In 1883 A.D., the king of Rumania visited Germany. On the occasion Bismarck put a proposal before Austria to conclude a treaty with Rumania. Austria came under German pressure and she had

a treaty with Rumania in 1883 A.D., where it was decided that both of them will help each other in case of Russia attack on any one of them. Austria agreed and a treaty was concluded among the three countries for five years and there was also a provision of revision after the expiry of this period. This treaty was kept as secret.

**Reinsurance Treaty (1887 A.D.) :** Having thus provided safeguards for Germany Bismarck wanted to “re-insure” her safety by striving to arrest the alienation of Russia and to restore friendly relations with her. As he declared, he must keep the “private wire open to St. Petersburg” although, the “Public wire” had broken. For him, an antagonized Russia might drift towards a French alliance. By humoring the susceptibilities of Russia he was successful in reviving the old league of the Three Emperors. In 1884 a secret treaty was signed by which each of the three Emperors promised benevolent neutrality in case one of them should become involved in war with a fourth power. But good relations between Russia and Austria became impossible owing to the outbreak of troubles in the Balkans, Bismarck, not to be put off, concluded a separate treaty with Russia known as the Reinsurance Treaty of 1887 A.D.

Terms of Treaty :

- (a) If any of the two powers got involved in war with a third one then the other would remain neutral so that the war should be limited.
- (b) It was decided to maintain status quo in the Balkans. Germany recognized the Russian interest in Bulgaria.
- (c) Germany gave a word that she would help Russia in checking Battenberg’s Prince Alexander from sitting on the throne of Bulgaria.

Thus did Bismarck isolate France and made Germany the arbiter of the international relations of Europe. The peace of Europe rested on Bismarckian system. It has been rightly said, “The new friendship of Germany and Russia prevented an Austro-Russian war and Franco-Russian coalition”.

**Relations with England :** Bismarck established friendly relations with England. He never took interest in expansion of navy as navy was vital to England and Bismarck

very well realized this fact. He declared, "Germany is a saturated country and I am not a colonial man". Bismarck did not take interest in Eastern Question. He knew that it could create enmity between Germany and England. He thoroughly realized the necessity of maintaining good relations with England and was not prepared to risk war with England. The peaceful relations between England and Germany continued as long as Bismarck remained in his office.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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To sum up, Bismarck's foreign policy after the Franco- Prussian War had two main aims :

- a) The maintenance of peace and status quo, in other words, to preserve what had been won for Germany.
- b) The diplomatic isolation of France. He sought to achieve his objects by a skillful balancing of alliances so as to leave France without an ally. He would keep the peach and also compel France to keep it, that is, would prevent a French war of revenge. His first diplomatic achievement in this direction was to pacify Austria, a defeated enemy, and with her help to set up a league of the Three Emperors. But Austro-Russian rivalry in the Balkans made it difficult to maintain this league. At the Congress of Berlin, Bismarck had to make his choice between the two rivals. He chose Austria and thereby offended Russia. But he was rewarded for his pro-Austrian attitude by a dual alliance between Germany and Austria in 1879. He next drew Italy into his alliance which thus became the famous Triple Alliance of 1882. Yet in making this comprehensive system of alliances for the protection of Germany, Bismarck had no mind to antagonize Russia lest she should be drawn towards France. Hence he revived the League of the Three Emperors and followed it up by concluding a "Reinsurance" treaty with Russia which guaranteed Russian neutrality in case Germany should be attacked. Thus did Bismarck realize his ambitions: he had kept his gain and had allied Germany with Austria, Italy and Russia, France was completely isolated. Germany was supreme in Europe and Bismarck controlled the international relations.

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## CRITICISM OF BISMARCK'S FOREIGN POLICY

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Bismarck once said : “The idea of coalitions give me nightmares.” But it was he who laid the foundation of such coalitions and thereby encouraged the very thing he wished to avoid. His system of alliances provoked counter-alliances and thus divided Europe into armed camps. Hence the peace which it was his policy to maintain was an armed founded upon saber rattling. This peace, as also the protection of Germany, he sought to ensure by a dexterous juggling of alliances. But his system was so delicate, so intricate, that to work it required master juggler like him. In unskilled hands it might lead to disaster. All went well so long as he himself piloted the ship of the state. His policy in its immediate results was successful. The status quo based upon Germany’s retention of the recent gains was maintained : the safety of the German Empire was ensured and France isolated. But when William III dropped the pilot he found it difficult to keep clear of shoals and rocks and eventually the ship foundered, “Genius can make black look like white for a time, but not for ever”. Russia soon realized that the great diplomatic artist had tricked her.

The fact is that Bismarck’s system had obvious defects, which a little bungling would upset. He had chosen Austria and Italy as Germany’s yoke-fellows, but this arrangement was fraught with risk and lacked cohesion. It not only alienated Russia but involved the risk of a war with her for Austria’s sake. Austria and Russia were keen rivals in the Balkans and any hostility that might break out there would entangle Germany in it. Italy’s alliance could never be solid. She had bitter memories of her old feud with Austria and had besides, existing causes of rivalry with her. She could not look with satisfaction upon an alliance which robbed her of all prospect of acquiring “unredeemed” Italy from Austria and subordinated her interests in the Adriatic to those of Austria. Another flaw in Bismarck’s system was that he failed to the loss of Alsace-Lorraine as he had reconciled Austria to her exclusion from Germany. The result was that France remains un placated. This coupled with the Balkan ambitions of Austria-Hungary led to the Great War of 1914 when the Triple alliance reared by Bismarck fell to pieces.

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**FRANCO-RUSSIAN ALLIANCE OF 1894**

**Introduction**

**Objectives**

**Factors that brought about Franco-Russian Alliance**

**France's contempt for Germany**

**Relationship between Russia and Germany**

**Improving Franco-Russian Relationship**

**The need to avoid International Isolation**

**Events leading to the formation of Franco-Russian Alliance of 1894**

**Russian help of Germany in 1875**

**The Bulgaria Issue and Rift with Germany (1887).**

**French Visit to Russia 1883**

**Economic cooperation between Russia and France**

**Military Cooperation between Russia and France**

**Terms Of The Franco-Russian Alliance Military Convention**

**Main terms of the treaty**

**Results/ Significance of The Franco-Russian Alliance**

**Let us sum up**

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## INTRODUCTION

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Dual Alliance, also called Franco-Russian Alliance, a political and military pact that developed between France and Russia from friendly contacts in 1891 to a secret treaty in 1894; it became one of the basic European alignments of the pre-World War I era. Germany, assuming that ideological differences and lack of common interest would keep republican France and tsarist Russia apart, allowed its Reinsurance Treaty with Russia to lapse in 1890. In the event of war, France wanted support against Germany; and Russia, against Austria-Hungary. The two powers slowly came closer together, upsetting the system of alliances that had been established by Otto von Bismarck to protect Germany against such a potential “two-front” threat. In August 1891 they made a preliminary agreement to consult in case of aggression against either of them. This agreement was strengthened by a military convention in August 1892. To preserve secrecy, it was necessary to bypass discussion and ratification by the French Parliament, the alliance being formalized through an exchange of letters (Dec. 27, 1893–Jan. 4, 1894) that accepted the previously agreed upon terms. The new alliance was to be in force as long as the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy, and its terms were to be secret. It provided that in the event of an attack on France by Germany or by Italy supported by Germany, Russia would field 700,000 to 800,000 men to fight Germany; in the event of an attack on Russia by Germany or by Austria-Hungary supported by Germany, France would field 1,300,000 men to fight Germany. Provisions for specific military plans and organizations were also made. The alliance was renewed and strengthened in 1899 and 1912.

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## OBJECTIVES

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After studying this lesson you will be able to know about:

- What motivated the alliance between France and Russia
- What were the key terms of the Alliance
- How significant was the Alliance and what was its Impact across Europe

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## **FACTORS THAT BROUGHT ABOUT FRANCO-RUSSIAN ALLIANCE**

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Following are the factors that brought about the Franco-Russian alliance

### **France's contempt for Germany**

France aimed to get revenge on Germany for the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1871 where France were disastrously defeated, Germany aimed to stay free from an invasion from France and keep Austria-Hungary happy as France and Austria-Hungary were on either side of Germany, and Russia wanted an ally so it could feel safe from Germany.

France made an alliance with Russia because it was against Germany. France wanted Revenge on Germany because of the humiliation of losing the Franco-Prussian war and the valuable land lost, like "Alsace - Lorraine". They wanted revenge and this was widely known. France knew that "without Russia's help, the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871, in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine could never be repaired", so it was important that France allied with a relatively strong power. Karl Marx said "If Alsace - Lorraine is taken, then France will later make war with Germany in conjunction with France".

France needed an ally because she felt extremely vulnerable, this was mainly due to Bismarck and Germany. Bismarck had been successful in isolating France diplomatically over the previous decade, so she needed to catch up with the other major powers. France couldn't ally with Britain because Britain kept itself in "splendid isolation", so Russia was really the only real choice as they were the only other great power who was suspicious and disliked Germany.

### **Relationship between Russia and Germany**

Bismarck had always worked hard to maintain Russo-German relations (Dreikaiserbund / Reinsurance Treaty). The new German Kaiser was far less concerned and favoured a more positive relationship with other countries.

At the Congress of Berlin, Russia blamed Bismarck and Germany for forcing her to abandon the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano. Russia felt humiliated.



In 1879 due to domestic political issues Bismarck introduced tariffs against

Russian grain imports. Grain was Russia's main export. The Russian economy suffered and further hostility grew between the two nations.

Vyshnegradsky and Witte approached Germany to support the development of the Russian economy with loans. Germany refused.

In 1890 Kaiser Wilhelm, feeling that the Reinsurance Treaty was incompatible with Germany's other international agreements decided not to renew. It became very clear that Germany's loyalties lay with Austria-Hungary. Russia found herself isolated in a world of alliances.

### **Improving Franco- Russian Relationship**

Relations between France and Russia had been getting closer since the end of the nineteenth century. The Tsarist government was keen to exert greater influence over the regions that had been controlled by the declining Ottoman Empire. This inevitably put it in competition with Austria-Hungary, already a German ally. France had substantial capital invested in Ottoman territories, and French politicians were anxious to secure these investments as Russia tried to increase its influence in the region.

France hoped to use close ties with Russian to boost its own relative position in Europe. If Russia's interest in the Entente was strengthening its position against Austria-Hungary, the French were concerned about their western neighbour Germany. For much of the nineteenth century France had been one of the most influential powers in Western Europe. As that century came to a close though, German industrial expansion and increasing overseas imperialism was beginning to be viewed as a threat in France.

In the wake of German unification, Bismarck had set about creating a series of alliances that would protect Germany from being surrounded by hostile states. Hence both the countries in order to defend itself against alliances entered into collective security that if in case one country was being attacked then the other will defend her.

### **The need to avoid International isolation –**

After the battle of Sedan Alsace and Lorraine was taken by Germany. Bismarck very well knew that France would try to get them back so that the enmity between the two became inevitable. Therefore, Bismarck decided to isolate France so that

she could not wage war of revenge against Germany. He become very much successful in that. On the other hand Russia which was an ally of Germany by treaty of Dreikaiserbund was taken aback by the German support of Austria in place of Russia during the time of Treaty of Berlin in 1878. Though the League was revived but the Russia help of France in 1875 made Germany apprehensive of Russia leading to the formation of Dual alliance with Austria in 1879. Russia got annoyed with Germany and Germany started working for isolation of Russia too. In this situation both France and Russia in order to avoid international isolation came into a secret treaty with each other and prevented themselves from remaining internationally isolated.

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### **EVENTS LEADING TO THE FORMATION OF FRANCO-RUSSIAN ALLIANCE OF 1894**

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The following events brought about an estrangement between Germany and Russia and finally led to the formation of the Dual alliance between Russia and France

#### **Russian help of Germany in 1875**

On the occasion of the war of 1875 A.D. , Russia gave a proof of her practical sympathy for France. Germany wanted to attack France and crush her before she emerged as a strong nation and give a challenge to Germany. The Russian Czar and the foreign minister of Russia went to Berlin and pacified the Germans. This action of Russia helped to create intimate relations with France.

#### **The Bulgaria Issue and Rift with Germany (1887).**

Ever since 1887, relations between Russia and Austria were getting strained on account of Bulgaria. Russia had all along been trying to convert Bulgaria into a vassal State and strongly opposed the accession of prince Ferdinand. But this move was resisted by England, Austria and Italy , and there was a grave danger of a war breaking out between Russia and Austria. But Bismark's publication of the terms of the Austro – German alliance of 1879 averted the crisis and war was avoided. He made it clear to Russia that if there was a war between her and Austria, Germany would support Austria. Russia felt very indignant but held back. Bulgaria was saved from the horrors of another blood – bath . Being certain of Austria and German support king Ferdinand ascended the Thorne of Bulgaria. Bismark's action had clearly

demonstrated to Russia where German sympathy lay if there was a conflict.

But before a final break with Russia, Germany made one more effort to reconcile Russia and proposed to renew the Reinsurance Compact in 1890. The Czar declined the offer and a definite break occurred in Russo-German relations

### **French Visit to Russia 1883**

In 1883 A.D. Grand Duke of Russia visited France and agreed to supply the arms and ammunition to Russia on the condition that it would not be used against her. In 1888 A.D. France manufactured half a million rifles. France advanced a large sum as loan to Russia to conclude a treaty but did not succeed much.

### **Economic cooperation between Russia and France**

France which had been completely isolated so far watched with interest the growing rift between Russia and Germany and when it was complete, she made overtures to Russia.

“Hence little by little, following the lapse of the Reinsurance Treaty between Germany and Russia, Russia and France drifted into an alliance”. Russians suspected that Bismarck had inspired the press campaign and we’re ready to borrow from Paris. Negotiations began for a series of loans to be floated in France, in favour of Russia. The first amount of 500,000,000 francs was approved by the government’s on both sides.

The Russians were encouraged next year to contract two more loans for 700,000,000 and 1,200,000,000 francs. Both met with equal success. France set out on the financial path which made thousands of her citizens interested financially and politically in Russia’s ambitions.

### **Military Cooperation between Russia and France**

The friendship between the two countries was further cemented by naval visits. A French fleet visited Kronstadt in 1892 and was received by Czar. This resulted in an “Entente Cordiale” between the two countries and they agreed to consult each other if the peace of Europe was threatened. It was not a military alliance yet. A Russian fleet paid a return visit to Toulon in 1893 and the “Entente Cordiale” was converted into a

“Dual Alliance”. The military convention was signed between France and Russia on 31<sup>st</sup> Dec,1893; It was ratified by both on Jan 4,1894.

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**TERMS OF THE FRANCO-RUSSIAN ALLIANCE MILITARY  
CONVENTION**

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France and Russia, being animated by a common desire to preserve peace, and having no other object than to meet the necessities of a defensive war, provoked by an attack of the forces of the Triple Alliance against either of them, have agreed upon the following provisions:

- If France is attacked by Germany, or by Italy supported by Germany, Russia shall employ all her available forces to attack Germany.

If Russia is attacked by Germany, or by Austria supported by Germany, France shall employ all her available forces to attack Germany.

- In case the forces of the Triple Alliance, or of any one of the Powers belonging to it, should be mobilized, France and Russia, at the first news of this event and without previous agreement being necessary, shall mobilize immediately and simultaneously the whole of their forces, and shall transport them as far as possible to their frontiers.
- The available forces to be employed against Germany shall be, on the part of France, 1,300,000 men, on the part of Russia, 700,000 or 800,000 men.

These forces shall engage to the full with such speed that Germany will have to fight simultaneously on the East and on the West.

- The General Staffs of the Armies of the two countries shall cooperate with each other at all times in the preparation and facilitation of the execution of the measures mentioned above.

They shall communicate with each other, while there is still peace, all information relative to the armies of the Triple Alliance which is already in their possession or shall come into their possession.

Ways and means of corresponding in time of war shall be studied and

worked out in advance.

- France and Russia shall not conclude peace separately.
- The present Convention shall have the same duration as the Triple Alliance.
- All the clauses enumerated above shall be kept absolutely secret.

A political entente (friendship agreement) was signed between France and Russia in 1892. This became a full blown alliance in 1894. Although the alliance was officially a secret one it quickly became common knowledge across Europe

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### **MAIN TERMS OF THE TREATY**

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- Russia would support France if she was attacked by Germany or Germany and Italy.
- France would support Russia if she was attacked by either Germany or Germany and Austria-Hungary.

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### **RESULTS/SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FRANCO-RUSSIAN ALLIANCE**

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Franco-Russian Alliance of 1894 was the first alliance after 1870 A.D.in which Germany was not party.

- To begin with the relationship between Russia and Germany remained stable mainly due to the family relationship between the Czar and the Emperor who genuinely seemed to like each other. Indeed, in July 1905 the two leaders signed the Treaty of Björkö, a secret mutual defence accord.
- The German Military High Command felt encircled by enemies. Fears of a war on two fronts were rife. In response the Germans created the Schlieffen Plan. This military plan was supposed to remove the problem of fighting on two fronts.
- Britain looked at the alliance with alarm. She was again on the outside of a big agreement looking in. The British were deeply suspicious of the agreement and there was a feeling that they might be better off abandoning their “splendid isolation”. Yet Britain was suspicious of Germany, Russia

and France so it was not clear who Britain would turn to.

- The alliance was against the triple Alliance . Europe was divided into rival camps and this treaty proved helpful in the maintenance of balance of power in Europe. But after sometime it divided the Europe into two hostile groups. These groups started race for armaments and thus the preparations were started for the 1<sup>st</sup> world war in 1914 A.D.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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Prior to World War I, the cooperation of the general staffs of both countries assumed closer forms. In 1912 a Russo-French naval convention was signed. Russia and France entered the war united by the treaty of alliance. This had a significant effect on the course and outcome of the war since it forced Germany from the first day of the war to fight on two fronts. This led to the defeat at the battle of Marne, to the collapse of the Schlieffen Plan, and finally to the defeat of Germany. The Russo-French Alliance was nullified by the Soviet government in 1917.

**ANGLO-FRENCH ENTENTE OF 1904****Introduction****Objectives****Background of Anglo French Entente of 1904****Terms of entente****Achievements****Aftermath****Let us sum up****References****Test your knowledge****Model Paper**

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**INTRODUCTION**

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In April 1904 nearly a diplomatic revolution took place when the eternal enemies, Great Britain and France, finally came to terms and throughout settlement of their mutual difficulties in extra-European areas concluded alliance, which had far reaching effects upon the later world diplomacy. However, the origins of Anglo-French reapproachment and final understanding must be seen farther than in spring of 1904.

Entente cordiale is a series of agreements signed on 8<sup>th</sup> of April, 1904 between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the French republic in Anglo- French relations. The agreement was hailed as a triumph of reason, progress and diplomatic agility. Britain had at last ended her age old enmity with France, abandoned imperial



adventurism and had emerged from her self-imposed chauvinistic isolation.

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## **OBJECTIVES**

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After studying this lesson you will be able to know:

- Reasons behind Anglo-French Entente
- Circumstances leading to the formation of Anglo-French Entente.
- Outcomes of the Anglo-French Entente.
- Failures of the Entente

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## **BACKGROUND OF ANGLO-FRENCH ENTENTE OF 1904**

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The entente cordiale was the culmination of the policy of foreign minister of France Theophile Delcasse, who believed that a Franco-British understanding would give France some security against any German system of alliances in Western Europe. By the entente cordiale both powers reduced the virtual isolation into which they had withdrawn—France involuntarily, the U.K. complacently—while they had eyed each other over African affairs. The agreement was considered as savior for both the countries. France had been isolated from the other European powers mostly as the result of the efforts of the German chancellor Otto Van Bismarck to estrange France from potential allies, as it was thought that France might seek revenge for its defeat in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71. The U.K. had maintained a policy of isolation on the European continent for nearly a century, intervening in continental affairs only when it was considered necessary to protect British interests and to maintain the continental balance of power. The situation for both countries changed in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The change had its roots in a British loss of confidence after the second Boer war, and a growing fear that the country was isolated in the face of potentially aggressive Germany. As early as March 1881, the French statesman Leon Gambetta and the then Prince of Wales, met to discuss an alliance against Germany.

On the initiative of colonial secretary Joseph Chamberlain, there were three rounds of British-German talks between 1898 and 1901. The U.K. decided not to join the triple alliance, broke off the negotiations with Berlin, and revived the idea of a British-French alliance. When the Russo-Japanese war was about to erupt, France and the U.K. found

themselves on the verge of being dragged into the conflict on the side of their respective allies. France was firmly allied with Russia, while the U.K had recently signed the Anglo- Japanese alliance. In order to avoid going to war, both powers “shucked off their ancient rivalry” and resolved their differences in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific.

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### **TERMS OF ENTENTE**

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The Anglo-French entente was composed of three documents;

1) Declaration respecting Egypt and Morocco. In return for the French promise not to obstruct British actions in Egypt, the British allowed France to preserve order and provide assistance in Morocco. Free passage through the Suez canal was guaranteed, finally putting the convention of Constantinople into force, and the erections of fortifications on parts of the Moroccan coast forbidden. The treaty contained a secret dealing with the possibility of “changed circumstances in the administration of either of the two countries.

2) The second document dealt with Newfoundland and portions of West and Central Africa. The French gave up their rights (stemming from the treaty of Utrecht) over the western coast of Newfoundland, although they retained the right to fish the coast. In return, the British gave the French the town of Yarbutenda and the Les de los. An additional provision dealt with the border between French and British possessions east of the river Niger (present day Niger and Nigeria)

3) The final declaration concerned Siam, Madagascar and New Hebrides(Vanuatu).In Siam, British recognized a French sphere of influence to the east of the river Menem’s basin. In turn, the French recognized British influence over the territory to the west of the Menam basin in turn, the French recognized British influence over the territory to the west of the Menam’s basin. Both parties disclaimed any idea of annexing Siamese territory. The British withdrew their objection to the French introducing a tariff in Madagascar. The parties came to an agreement which would put an end to the difficulties arising from the lack of jurisdiction over the natives of New Hebrides.

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### **ACHIEVEMENTS**

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1) The signing of the entente cordial marked the end of almost a thousand years of intermittent conflict between the two states and their predecessors.

2) Entente cordiale reduced the virtual isolation of both the powers and established a diplomatic understanding between the two countries.

3) Anglo-France entente shucked off their ancient rivalry. By this entente the friction between France and England in non-European territories was removed. The colonial rivalry was ended and mutual relations between both great powers were finally smoothed out. France abandoned the policy of pinpricks in Egypt in exchange for the policy of a free hand in Morocco, but the struggle over Morocco still not ended. However, the main opponent was not Britain, but Germany.

#### 4) ANGLO-FRENCH MILITARY CONVENTION

In 1906 Edward Grey, British foreign secretary had told French ambassador that in the event of an aggression by Germany, British public opinion would demand that military and naval assistance given to France.

#### 5) MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN MORROCAN AFFAIR:

German government sent Kaiser William II to Morocco in March 1905 to declare his support for the Sultan- a clear challenge to France's influence in that country, which had been sanctioned by the entente cordiale. This bid to shake the Anglo-French alliance failed, as Britain sided with France; an international conference was convened in at Algeciras. Spain, the following year also recognized France's claims in the region.

In 1911 second Moroccan crisis- As a result of solidifying of Entente cordiale, as Britain and France aiming at German aggression, moved from mere friendship to an informal military alliance and, later, to talks and an agreement with France's ally, Russia. By 1912, then, two powerful and hostile blocs had been formed in Europe, with France, Britain and Russia on one side, and an increasingly isolated Germany with relative lukewarm support from Austria, Hungary and Italy-on the other.

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### **AFTERMATH**

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It is unclear what exactly the Entente meant to the British foreign office. For

example, in early 1911 following French press reports contrasting the virility of triple alliance minuted as “The fundamental fact of course is that the entente is not an alliance. For purposes of ultimate emergencies it may be of no substance at all. For the entente is nothing but a frame of mind, a view of general policy which is shared by governments of two countries, but which may be, or become, so vague as to lose all content.”

The entente collapsed at the outbreak of World War first.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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Formally entitled a declaration between the United Kingdom and France respecting Egypt and Morocco, the Entente cordiale of April 1904 amounted more than anything to a declaration of friendship between these two great European powers.

Entente was more an alliance, promising in the concluding words of the agreement, to afford to one another their diplomatic support, in order to obtain the execution of the clauses of the present declaration regarding Egypt and Morocco. The agreement stopped short, however, of requiring the two nations to provide military support to each other; this aspect of the alliance would come later

A motivating factor behind the agreement was undoubtedly France’s desire to protect itself against possible aggression from its old rival, Germany, who had steadily been growing stronger in the years since its victory in the Franco-Prussia War of 1870-71 and now possessed the most powerful land army in the world. Britain was also eager to keep Germany in check, especially in light of revamped, ambitious German naval program, which- If successful-threatened to challenge Britain’s clear dominance at sea.

Entente resulted into formation of strong alliance which further formed two powerful hostile blocs in Britain by 1912, with France, Russia and England on one side and Austria, Hungary and Italy on other. Two years later, this volatile situation would erupt into the First World War.

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**ANGLO-RUSSIAN ENTENTE OF 1907****4.1. Introduction****4.2 Objectives****Background****Rise of Germany****Trouble In Iran****Diplomatic Actor****Agreement- The Anglo-Russian Entente of 1907****Aftermath****Let Us Sum Up**

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**INTRODUCTION**

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Anglo-Russian convention of 1907, was an agreement relating to Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet. Signed on 31<sup>st</sup> August in St. Petersburg, it formalized political changes that had occurred in Far East, the Middle East and the Europe as the result of Russo-Japanese war and the Russian revolution of 1905. Early British attempts to induce the Russians to sign an agreement on Persia and Afghanistan, the two most sensitive areas of rivalry ended in failure. Sensing that the tie was in their favor the Russians had no intention of bargaining away any part of Persia or Afghanistan but military defeat and

revolution forced Russian government to reappraise the methods of its foreign policy. The initiative in the negotiations belonged to the new British ambassador at St. Petersburg, Sir Arthur Nicholman, who together with Sir Edward Grey and Sir Charles Hardinge, permanent undersecretary at the foreign office, constituted the hard core group of the anti-German group that sought a Russian alliance. Nicholson's proposal was broadly discussed in Russian cabinet, cabinet was not in the favor of any conflict with England so the suitable solution was "delimitation of the sphere of influence".

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### **OBJECTIVES**

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After Studying this lesson you will be able to know

- the reason behind the Anglo-Russian Entente of 1907.
- the outcome related to the signing up of treaty.

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### **BACKGROUND**

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During the late nineteenth century the Russians intended to advance towards Central Asia and at the same time the British had their eye over domination of South Asia. This led to intense rivalry between the two European colonial empires. The conflicting interests centered on Afghanistan, Iran, and the Tibet, three states that constituted buffers between Britain's and Russia's colonial possessions in Asia. The emergence of the German empire as a world power and the humiliating defeat in 1905 of Russia by a nascent Asian power, the empire of Japan, in the Russo Japanese war, helped to persuade some British and Russian officials of a need to resolve their respective differences in Asia.

### **RISE OF GERMANY**

On May 20, 1882, Germany entered into the Triple alliance with Italy and Austria-Hungary, complementing its industrial and socio-political climb in the world arena. Furthermore, Germany dramatically increased its military output from the early 1900s up to the outbreak of World War 1. Under a new Prussian-German empire, the German government worked to increase nation's wealth and reach what was then the zenith of German power. Members of Triple alliance were somewhat threatened by Britain's and Russia's aggressive foreign policy tactics and wealth derived from their colonies. Germany wanted to increase its military power in order to dominate international politics and to

become a major international player. Berlin peacefully penetrated into the Ottoman Empire and had few colonial aspirations in the region

### **TROUBLE IN IRAN**

In 1905, revolutionary activity spread throughout Tehran, forcing the Shah to accept a constitution, allow the formation of Mjlis and hold elections. Major figures in the revolution had secular goals, which then created rifts in the clergy to the advantage of monarchy. Neither Britain nor Russia approved of the new liberal, unstable, political arrangement, and preferred a stable puppet government that submitted to foreign concessions and worked well with imperialistic goals. To facilitate the system in Iran, Britain and Russia discussed splitting Iran “into three zones. The agreement they wanted would allocate the North, including Isfahan, to

Russia: the south-east, especially Kerman, Sistaniand Baluchistan to Britain: and demarcate the remaining land between the two powers as a “neutral zone”. The division of Iran reinforced Great power control over these respective territorial and economic interests in the country as well as allowed for contrived interference in Iran’s political system.

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### **DIPLOMATIC ACTORS**

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There were a number of key individuals who were instrumental in furthering the understanding between Britain and Russia.

Russian actors:

1. The Russian ambassador to UK, Sergei DmitrievichSazonov.
2. The Russian foreign secretary, Alexander PetrovichIzvolsky.

British actors:

1. Cecil Spring-Rice was the British ambassador to Moscow from 1906-08.
2. Arthur Nicholson British ambassador to Moscow in 1906.
3. Sir Edward Grey Foreign Secretary.

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### **AGREEMENT - THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN ENTENTE OF 1907**

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## **1. PERSIA**

In 1901 Russia opened two consulates in Persia, investing in the Persian railways. The two countries shared a border of more than thousand km, Persia was an important export market for Russia manufacturing. The agreement divided Persia into three zones-

- A large Russian zone to the north.
- One which neither country dominated.
- A British zone to the south.

## **2. AFGHANISTAN**

Afghanistan was bone of contention between the two countries, Russia considered Afghanistan important because of border shared. For Britain, Afghanistan signified access to India. The Russians were conscious of British sensitivities with regards to any country bordering India. The agreement over Afghanistan was a concession by Russia.

## **3. TIBET**

Russia's interest over Tibet was to enable their Buddhist people to consult Dalai Lama on religious matters. Its significance was the potential interest of other country. Both countries affirmed that business with Tibet would be conducted through the Chinese government.

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## **AFTERMATH**

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On 31<sup>st</sup> August 1907, Britain and Russia signed an agreement in St Petersburg which put in place the final piece of the alliance system which has widely been considered to have been a major contributing factor regarding the outbreak of the First World War.

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## **LET US SUM UP**

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By the end of twentieth century Britain was moving out of the so called "splendid isolation" it had adopted in late nineteenth century. In 1902 it entered an agreement with Japan and in 1904 established Entente cordiale with France. The Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 was a turning point in Russia's bilateral relations with Britain. Russia had decisively lost war, whilst at the same time experiencing revolutionary



turmoil. With the establishment of constitution and monarchy, Russia was beginning to look outward again. Despite Britain's alliance with Japan neither Russia nor Britain wanted to fight each other. This was visible in Dogger Bank incident. So, in order to avoid any actual war or clash which can cause further military and economic loss of both the countries, an agreement was signed. However, this entente further divide the great powers into groups and hence world war was inevitable.

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**CAUSES OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1917****Introduction****Objectives****The Russian Revolution of 1917****Causes of the Russian Revolution of 1917****Let Us Sum Up****Glossary****Self Assessment Questions****Lesson End Exercise**

Well Students in this lesson we shall learn about the revolution that took place in Russia in the twentieth century. The condition of the peasants and working class was deplorable and they took to revolutionary methods in order to improve their condition and free themselves.

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**INTRODUCTION**

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In the nineteenth century, there occurred various reforms and revolutionary movements expressing discontent among the Russian peasantry who continued to live in misery even after serfdom was abolished in 1861. Vast Estates were owned by the Russian nobility and the church, and there were millions of peasants without

any landholdings of their own. The industrial workers, a new class that had emerged with the beginning of industrialization also lived in conditions of misery. While the common people were obviously opposed to the existing system in Russia, the middle classes and the intellectuals were also united in their opposition to the autocratic political system and were thus drawn to the revolutionary movement along with the peasants and workers.

Since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, socialist ideas had begun to spread in Russia and the numerous socialist groups had been formed. In 1898, the various socialist groups joined together to form the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, popularly known as Lenin, was the leader of the left-wing section of the party. In 1903, this section secured a majority in the party and came to be known as **the Bolsheviks**, while the minority section came to be known as **the Mensheviks**.

The Bolsheviks, while defining their final goal as the establishment of socialism, proposed their immediate tasks as the overthrow of the autocratic rule of the Czar and the establishment of a republic, ending the oppression of the non-Russian nationalities of the Russian empire and granting them the right of self determination, introduction of an eight hour working day and abolition of inequalities in land and the end of all feudal oppressions of the peasantry.

There was a revolution in Russia in 1905, which forced Nicholas II, the reigning Czar, to agree for the establishment of a parliament, called the **Duma**, along with other democratic rights of the people. During this period, a new form of workers' organization had come into being, called **the Soviet**. It was a body of workers' representatives set up for the purpose of conducting strikes. Later, Soviets of peasants were also formed-followed by Soviets of soldiers – and these sprang up all over the country. The Soviets were later to play a crucial role in the history of the Russian Revolution.

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## **OBJECTIVES**

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- Read about the Revolutions of Russia during twentieth century.
- Distinguish revolution of 1905 from that of the revolutions of 1917.

- Differentiate between the February Revolution of 1917 and October Revolution of 1917.
- Identify the causes of the Revolution of 1917.
- Name the Revolutionaries related to the Revolution of 1917 and identify them.
- Arrange events related to the Revolution in a chronological pattern.

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### **THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1917**

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The Revolution of 1905 had not ended the autocracy in Russia. Though the Duma existed, the power in Russia was wielded by the Czar, the nobility and the corrupt bureaucracy. Russia's imperial ambitions led her to the war but the inefficient and corrupt Russian government was incapable of carrying on a modern war. The war exposed the bankruptcy of the existing system in Russia, aggravated the crisis of the autocratic system and ultimately brought about its downfall. The Russian soldiers, 12 million of whom had been mobilized, were ill-equipped and ill fed. The Russian army suffered heavy losses during the war. The war had further worsened the already poor state of the Russian economy, further adding to the growing unrest. The country, including the capital city of Petrograd (formerly St. Petersburg, later Leningrad and then again St. Petersburg) with its population of two million, was facing prospects of starvation. There were long queues for bread which was in short supply. From the beginning of the year 1917, there was a spate of strikes which took the form of a general strike. The demand for ending the war and also the rule of the Czar grew and on 12th March many regiments of the army joined the striking workers, freed political prisoners and arrested Czarist generals and ministers. By the evening, capital Petrograd had passed into the control of insurgent workers and soldiers. These events of 12 March 1917 marked what has been called the February Revolution (because, according to the old Russian calendar, the date was 27 February).

The Czar, who had been away from the capital, had ordered the suppression of the insurgents and the dissolution of the Duma. However, the Duma decided to take over power in its own hands and on 15th March announced the formation of

Provisional Government. That very day, the Czar was forced to abdicate and his autocratic rule came to an end. A few months later, in September 1917, Russia was proclaimed a republic.

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## **CAUSES OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1917**

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Students now we shall discuss the various causes responsible for the Revolution of 1917. Following are the important causes of the Russian Revolution.

**1. Rule of Despotic Czars :** The Russian Czars were despots. Russia had to suffer under the reactionary policies of Czar Alexander I, Nicholas I, Alexander III. There was no freedom for the press, for visiting foreign countries, for the universities and an alert police system held the public under fear.

**2. Policy of Russification :** The Russian subjects belonged to several races, followed several religions and spoke several languages. There were Jews, Finns, Tatars, Armenians, Russians etc. They had their own culture and civilization. Being most powerful among them the Russians held the reins of government and had no sympathy with those minorities. From the time of Czar Alexander I the policy of Russification (according to which no language other than Russian and no religion except orthodox Catholicism was tolerated in Russia) was thrust on these races. Non- Russian subjects were repressed and their languages were banned. Thus, a wave of discontentment swept over the minorities against the autocratic regime.

**3. Rule of Czar Nicholas II :** Rule of Czar Nicholas II was as autocratic as inefficient. The political condition of the country was unstable, censorship was notorious and the police system ruthless. Nicholas was well intentioned but weak. He was much liberal to his subjects, but he was heavily influenced by his wife the empress Alexandra. Nicholas had inherited the concept of autocracy, which combined the more extreme forms of divine rights with a mystical tradition rooted in a Muscovite and Byzantine past. When an obsessive empress admitted the disreputable Rasputin (a monk) to her confidence, the last elements of the Czar's independence of action faded. Able ministers gave place to non-entities. He lacked the qualities required for independent political judgment and action.

**4. Emancipation of Serfs:** An enquiry into the origins of Russian revolution must inevitably take into account the late survival of Serfdom in Russia and the problems, which followed its abolition by Czar Alexander II. The servile system reached its climax in Russia in the late 18th century. A material and a spiritual gulf separated rich from poor. The peasants belonged to an older Russian tradition whose roots lay in the shadows of a dark past. Untouched by education, they lived in a world dominated by superstition and conservatism. Alexander's most cherished reform (emancipation of the serf), was a potent cause of the revolution of 1917. What it destroyed was nothing less than a whole social structure, without providing a sound basis of new one.

**5. Agrarian Problems:** The lot of the landed peasant was more complex. The landlords were handsomely compensated at once. The vagaries of officialdom and the rapacity of some landlords meant that many peasants received unworkable units of land for possession of which they now found themselves burdened with redemption payments for heavier than their dues under the old system. As the 19th century ended, the agrarian situation was one of the most pressing problems. Between 1905-1914 successive ministers tried to produce a new land policy, to encourage consolidated farms and the practice of a more modern agriculture. When war (First World War) came, Russian agriculture was still largely dependent on the wooden plough and on a primitive, under fed peasantry rooted in the habits of the thought of the past. And ahead lay the stern communist experiments in collectivization. The emancipation of 1861, had destroyed a social order and created new economic problems.

**6. Rise of Socialist Revolutionaries:** The socialist revolutionaries were the party of the peasants; they were heirs to the Narodnik (A class of socialist revolutionaries) or populist tradition which in the 1870's had produced a good deal of revolutionary terrorism. The Narodnik Movement, part terrorist part reformist, had died out when the peasants failed to rise in revolt. Subsequently the Socialist Revolutionary Party emerged, founded on the pattern of European left wing parties, and affiliated in 1903, to the second socialist international. Their programme included political and social reform, with the main emphasis on the land for the peasant. Their tendency to utopianism seems to make them akin to the tradition of the English radicals.

**7. Influence of liberal ideas:** As in France, the material revolution in Russia was preceded by a revolution in the realm of ideas. In spite of the attempts of the Czar to seal Russia against the liberal ideas of the west, the influence of West European thought filtered into Russia. A wave of realism was ushered in Russian literature by Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky. The novels of Turgenev, Dostoyevsky profoundly stirred the imagination of young Russians. The writers pleaded on behalf of radical social reforms. The writings of the intelligentsia generated a passion among the people for fairness and justice. Impelled by the new monumental human passion, the scholars gave such dynamism to radicalism and revolutionary movements that when the Czarist State and the old order collapsed they came down with a thunderclap.

**8. The Nihilist Rebellion:** The murder of Czar Alexander II by the Nihilists (A group of revolutionaries who raised their voice against old order- Czarism, orthodox church, Feudalism) made it evident that there was some violent revolutionary activities in progress. These Nihilists inspired by Marx organized an anarchist movement in Russia. They adopted terrorist method through secret societies and were determined to free Russia from the grip of a rotten system.

**9. Industrialisation:** In Russia industrialization made rapid progress during the last part of 19th century. Large untapped resources of the state and cheap labour attracted foreign capital. There was extension of railways, exploitation of mines etc. Witte's (the minister) policy of protective tariff promoted home industries. This led to the rise and growth of urban centres. There was also phenomenal growth of urban proletariat (working class people).

**10. Impact of Marxist ideology:** The teaching of Marx had a deep impact among the Russians. Marx was a supporter of the dictatorship of the workers. He laid stress on the trade union for it. Marx said that those who hold the reins of the society have control over the means of production. They make use of social institutions to achieve their ends. The society is thus divided into the capitalists and the workers. The price of a thing should be fixed in proportion to its cost of production. The labour adds to the value of a thing but the surplus value goes to the pockets of the capitalists and the labourers gain much less. In a capitalist society the rich became richer and the poor become poorer. This led to a class struggle.

Marx predicted that in this struggle the proletariat would emerge victorious.

**11. Russia's defeat in war and the revolution of 1905:** The defeat of the Russian Army in the Crimean war, the Russo-Japanese war, revealed to the Russians the utter inefficiency of the czarist government. The autocratic Government of Russia did not provide essential facilities to the army. Besides, the bureaucracy of Russia was also responsible for the revolution. They never thought of the problems of the masses. Resentment spread all over the country, as corruption and nepotism became the order of the day. In 1905, the deep political and social discontent in Russia, exacerbated by the defeats suffered on the war against Japan in 1904-05, erupted in a great revolutionary movement. This was heralded by the massacre in St. Petersburg of a large number of workers and others who had come intending a peaceful demonstration before the czar's winter palace, a massacre which earned for 22nd January the name "**Bloody Sunday.**" After peaceful demonstration when the protesters were marching forward the soldiers of the czar attacked these unarmed people and killed many of them. With a view to pacify the situation, the czar announced administrative reforms. People were granted freedom of speech and expression. It marked the beginning of a new era. But as soon as the discontent subsided the czar dissolved the Duma in 1906. Common people were dissatisfied with this action of the Czar. The Zemstvos demanded reforms, the workmen struck work, and the peasantry plundered the landlords. Though the revolution of 1905 failed but it created a deep crack in the edifice of the Czarist autocracy.

**12. Mass Rebellion and Czar Nicholas II dethroned:** The great German offensives cruelly exposed the inadequacies of the Czarist government. The numbers and heroism of men alone, could not save Russia. By 1916, the frustration of defeat, the shortage of food, the appalling casualties and the humiliations of retreat lay heavily upon the Russian people. The liberals pressed urgently for government reform. The revolutionaries were also at work, inciting desertion from the ranks of the army and organizing strikes in the factories. From exile, Lenin called on workers everywhere to lay down their arms and refuse to continue to fight for the capitalist, imperialist cause. Supported by well-disciplined Bolshevik party, Lenin kept vigilant control over all what was happening in Russia. He was a practical genius. Lenin vehemently opposed the policy of Russification by the Czar. By



January 1917, civil and military authority in Russia was virtually at breaking point. Everywhere there was utter confusion as refugees, deserters, and workers on strike, and peasants taking advantage of the confusion started the seizure of land, contributed to the disintegration of order. When bread riot broke out on 8th March, 1917, in Petrograd, they acted as the focus of revolutionary insurrection and within four days the city was effectively in revolutionary hands. The tsarist system virtually crumbled away and Nicholas II abdicated on March 1917 and the Duma set up a provisional government.

**13. Formation of Provisional Government:** The February (Or March according to the new style calendar) revolution and the collapse of the Romanov dynasty, obliged the opposition groups to redefine their aims. The constitutional democrats joined with moderate right wing elements in the Duma formed the provisional government under Prince Lvov, who was succeeded later in the year by the moderate socialist, Kerensky. But without popular support the provisional government was doomed from the start. The Bolsheviks were opposed to war and they sought to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. They established Petrograd Soviet, an elected council of Workers, peasants, and soldier's deputies. The soldiers influenced by the pacifist propaganda of the Bolsheviks refused to fight. In vain Kerensky continued to offer the liberal panacea of constitutional reform but by now the provisional government had shown it could offer neither success in the war nor in the revolution. The Romanovs had gone, now Kerensky passed unmourned from the scene. On 26th October (or November) the Bolsheviks stepped-in to fill the void created by the disappearance of opposition. Lenin is still remembered in history as the father of the Bolshevik revolution and the creator of new Russia.

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### LET US SUM UP

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The end of the Czarist autocracy was welcomed the world over. But the Provisional Government failed to solve any of the problems that had led to the collapse of the Czarist government. The policy of pursuing the war was continued and nothing was done to solve the land problem. The Bolsheviks were the only party which had a clear cut programme. As is known, the two Russian socialists-Lenin and Martov-had drafted a part of the second International's resolution which called upon workers to utilize the crisis, created by the imminent danger of the war. The Bolsheviks were consistent in

their opposition to the war. There were five Bolshevik members of the Duma. They opposed the war when it broke out. They were arrested and exiled. When the February Revolution took place, Lenin was in Zurich, Switzerland. After February revolution Russia had to witness another revolution in October- the Bolshevik Revolution. We shall read about it in next lesson.

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## **CAUSES OF THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION (OCTOBER-1917)**

### **Introduction**

### **Objectives**

#### **The Bolshevik Revolution (October 1917)**

#### **Causes of the Bolshevik Revolution (October Revolution, 1917)**

### **Let Us Sum Up**

### **Glossary**

### **Self Assessment Questions**

### **Lesson End Exercise**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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Welcome to the Lesson No. 06, “**Causes of Bolshevik Revolution**”. This lesson is in continuation to the Russian Revolution (February 1917) which we read in the previous lesson.

The Bolshevik Revolution, is only one half of the Russian Revolution. One Revolution was the February Revolution in which workers, soldiers and peasants demonstrated so fiercely against the Czars’ mismanagement of government that he abdicated in favour of the Provisional Government. We read about it in the previous lesson. The second half

of revolution is the October Revolution which is popularly known as the Bolshevik Revolution. In this revolution the Bolshevik party led by Vladimir Lenin overthrew the Provisional Government and took over the administration. The Russian Revolution of 1917 consists of two separate groups against two separate governments.

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### **OBJECTIVES**

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- Differentiate between the Revolution of 1917 (The February Revolution) and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 (The October Revolution).
- Explain the causes behind the Revolutions.
- Identify the Revolutions of 1917 as two separate Revolutions.
- Locate places actively involved in the Revolution.

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### **THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION (OCTOBER 1917)**

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As read in the previous lesson at the time of the February Revolution, the Petrograd Soviet of workers and Soldier's Deputies had been formed and it became the most important force in the fast-changing situation. Lenin on his arrival in Petrograd in April 1917, addressed the people with the following appeal:

*“The people need peace; The people need bread; the people need land. And they give you-war, hunger, no bread; they leave the landlords on the land.”*

He gave the call:

“No support for the Provincial Government,

All powers to the Soviets.”

At this time there was another threat to the Provincial Government in the name of General Kornilov. General Kornilov had risen in revolt in an effort to establish his dictatorship. However, the attempt was thwarted by the workers and soldiers who rose up to defend the Revolution. During this time, the Provisional Government was headed by Aleksander Kerensky, who held liberal and democratic views. He however failed to make any departure from the policies which had been pursued by the Russian government since the outbreak of the war, and proved himself

to be totally ineffective. He was totally lacking in support.

In October, the Bolsheviks made careful preparation for an uprising. The All Russian Congress of Soviets of workers' and soldiers' Deputies had been convened on 25<sup>th</sup> October. The uprising to overthrow the Provisional Government had been timid to coincide with the congress. The uprising began in the early hours of 25<sup>th</sup> October in Petrograd and within the few hours, almost every strategic point in the city was occupied by the revolutionary soldiers and workers under the guidance of the Bolsheviks. The date of this event was 25<sup>th</sup> October according to the Russian calendar and hence it is called the **October Revolution**. It actually happened on 7<sup>th</sup> November. The Bolsheviks preached their ideas through the news paper, **Pravada**. The Kerensky government was not in the good condition. Kerensky fled away from the capital. On the morning of November 7, 1917; workers, soldiers and sailors arrested the members of temporary government. Thus in a few hours and without any bloodshed the Russian capital passed into the hands of Bolshevik party.

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## **CAUSES OF BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION (OCTOBER REVOLUTION 1917)**

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In lesson no 5, we have read about the causes of the February Revolution. All the causes we have discussed in the previous lesson were responsible for the Bolshevik Revolution. Besides those some other causes responsible for Bolshevik Revolution are:-

**1. Weak Provisional Government-** After the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia, Czar Nicholas II was dethroned in Russia and the Provisional Government was formed under the leadership of Aleksander Kerensky. The Provisional Government comprised of bankers, lawyers, industrialists and capitalists. This government proved weak and failed to live upto its promise of ending Russia's involvement in the war. They kept Russia in the war and just made things worse for themselves and for Russia.

**2. Rebellious people of Russia-** When Czar Nicholas II dragged Eleven million peasants into World War-I, the Russian people became discouraged with their injuries and the loss of life they sustained. People of Russia became rebellious

and they overthrew Czar and led to the establishment of Provisional Government. But Kerensky too continued with the war. This further led to the peoples' disheartening towards Kerensky. They now looked towards the Bolsheviks.

**3. Workers and soldiers lacking discipline-**The Government had to compete for power with Petrograd Soviet of workers' and soldiers' deputies. This group scrupulously watched the Provisional Government and even made decrees of their own. One of which took away the authority of the officers and placed it with elected committees. This led to collapse of army discipline. Later that year, soldiers began returning home to seize some land for their families. The soldiers began to ask for land, just as their fellow peasants.

**4. Peasants taking on their own-** The peasants took matters in their own hands by taking the land themselves. Peasants were looting farms and having food riots because the Provisional Government had not overcome the problem of food supply. Anarchy was taking the place of liberty and this was perfect for Bolsheviks to take lead.

**5. Soviets, soldiers, workers and peasants against the Provisional Government-** The Provisional Government was opposed right away by the Soviets, soldiers, councils of workers, peasants, who wanted the right to make their own decisions. They were becoming closer to being Bolsheviks and the Provisional Government began to fall away from their support. Now, that the Bolsheviks had support from all these sections of society, they were aiming to win the elections early in September in important Russian industrial centres.

**6. Ideology Differences-** The Provisional Government established a liberal program of various rights. These included freedom of speech, religion and assembly; equality before the law and the right of unions to organize and strike. The leaders of this new established government, including Aleksander Kerensky were still opposed to social revolution and saw the continuation of the war effort as a national duty.

On the contrary the Bolsheviks had established themselves as the only party which stood in opposition to continuing the war effort. Bolsheviks already had support of peasants, workers, soldiers etc. The Bolshevik workers had to unite and

fight as one against the military. Now, the Bolsheviks had support from almost all sections of society. Anarchy was taking place of liberty under the Provisional Government and this was perfect situation for a radical socialist like Vladimir Ilyich Lenin to take control.

**7. Good Leadership in Lenin-** Lenin was a strong supporter of Marxian socialism. He believed that capitalism would only disappear with a revolution and this was only possible under certain conditions. The socialism party was split between Lenin's Bolsheviks or Majority group and the Menshevik's or Minority group. Lenin's group did not stay in the majority, but he kept the name and developed a disciplined, revolutionary group.

**8. Propaganda against Government by Bolsheviks-** Bolsheviks launched a strenuous propaganda against the Government under the leadership of Lenin with the slogan "**Peace-Bread-Land**". They promised land to landless peasants, work for unemployment and peace to the war fed soldiers. This propaganda had a mass appeal and mass following towards Bolsheviks.

**9. Well organized Army-** Trotsky had organized the revolutionaries on military basis. As such, Bolshevik had at their command an armed force of twenty-five thousand workers known as **Red-Guards or Red Army**. Petrograd garrison also helped them indirectly because they did not want to go to war front. The private army of the Bolsheviks, the Red Guards, ably trained and led by Trotsky were also important in the Bolsheviks gaining power.

**10. Unity among Revolutionaries-** Bolshevik were united and their unity was very sound. They had full faith in the principles of Socialism and Revolution. They were ready to make all sacrifices for their cause. In addition to this Trotsky united them on the military front too.

**11. Disunity among counter-Revolutionaries-** There was a great deal of disunity among the counter-revolutionaries who possessed grave differences. The Royalists and the Republicians had different aims and there were vast differences among their political leaders and military officers. The internal dissension among them made the revolutionaries succeed.

**12. Counter-Revolutionaries seeking help from the foreign soldiers-**

The counter Revolutionaries tried to suppress the Bolshevik with the foreign help. This foreign intervention changed the minds of nationalists of Russia. They ignored their mutual differences and helped Bolshevik Revolutionaries against anti-revolutionary elements.

**13. Aid from Germany-** German money which was invested in the Bolsheviks was an important factor in the Bolsheviks gaining power in 1917. The money allowed the party to spend money on propaganda, activist and militia, all of which themselves were crucial in the Bolsheviks coming to power.

**14. Inadequate help from Allies-** The intervention and co-operation of the Allies was inadequate and half-hearted. There were many post war problems before them to be solved. They were therefore not in a mood to undertake extensive military operation against Russia. They therefore withdrew their forces from Russia and this further favoured Bolsheviks.

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### LET US SUM UP

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The Bolsheviks, keeping in mind all the above discussed causes, attempted to seize power in July, but failed. Lenin fled from Petrograd and went into hiding in Finland. The Bolshevik popularity however grew tremendously throughout the summer.

By the autumn of 1917, it was clear that the main social and economic problems that caused the uprising in March (February Revolution taken up in the previous chapter) still existed. In the second half of September there was a debate in Petrograd between the Bolshevik and other parties (Socialists and Mensheviks). The voting figures clearly pointed towards a Bolshevik majority. Leon Trotsky was elected as chairman of the governing body. The people wanted to see end of Kerensky's Provisional Government, the end to the war and they wanted new land distribution. Trotsky and Lenin saw the answer to all these desires in a Bolshevik seizure of power.

From Finland, Lenin urged the Bolshevik committee to plan an armed uprising. Many thought it was premature and reckless. However, after Lenin made a trip to Petrograd, debated with them for 10 hours, convinced the Bolsheviks. Trotsky



meticulously executed the revolution. He formed a military revolutionary committee to head the arming of the workers throughout Petrograd. Factory meetings were held to boost the workers' enthusiasm.

November 7 (October 27) is a **red letter day** in the history of Humanity, as on this day the people's revolution succeeded in Petrograd without shedding a drop of blood. The Red-Guards captured the government buildings like government offices, railway stations, post and telegraph offices, electric works and the State Bank, etc. Kerensky fled to an unknown place. Several of his colleagues and Ministers were arrested. The army headquarters were also captured. The Provisional Government of Kerensky had officially fallen to the Bolshevik regime without any bloodshed. V.I. Lenin, the leader of the Bolsheviks announced his attempt to construct the socialist order in Russia. It was success of the proletariats who backed the Bolshevik motto-  
**“All power to the Soviets!”**  
In July 1918, the royal family was killed. They were murdered out of fear that if they remained alive they could serve as a focus of the anti-Bolshevism movement. By the end of 1920, when some stability returned Russia emerged as an entirely different country.

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**CAUSES OF THE BOLSHEVIK SUCESS AND  
IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES****Introduction****Objectives****Causes of Bolshevik Success****Immediate Consequences****Others Consequences of Bolshevik Revolution****Let Us Sum Up**

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**INTRODUCTION**

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We read about the causes of the Bolshevik Revolution in the previous lesson. In this lesson we shall read about the causes of success of Bolshevik Revolution and its immediate consequences besides some other. We already read that the Bolsheviks managed to topple the Russian Provisional Government with support from the Russian people.

Lenin was the leader of the revolutionaries who unified with the purpose to overcome the opponents (a mixture of Royalists, moderate Socialists and Republicans) who lacked the same will and cohesion that characterized the Bolshevik Movement.

Bolshevik ideology and popular appeals resonated with the Russian people. The Bolsheviks were especially popular in St. Petersburg, where the people gradually became convinced that only they could be trusted to bring the disastrous war to an end. Bread and Fuel shortages exacerbated by the war itself, made them willing to embrace Bolshevik reforms.

Infact the Bolshevik slogan of “**Peace, Land and Bread**” was in many ways a response to the demands of the Russian people, especially soldiers and sailors and their families in Petrograd.

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## **OBJECTIVES**

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- To recall the causes of the Bolshevik Revolution read in lesson 6.
- To be able to reproduce the causes of success of the Bolshevik Revolution.
- To be able to distinguish the causes of the Bolshevik Revolution and the causes of the success of the Bolshevik Revolution.
- Enable to arrange the causes of the Bolshevik Success and immediate consequences.

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## **CAUSES OF BOLSHEVIK SUCCESS**

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### **1. Unpopularity of the Provisional Government.**

When the peasants tried to claim land, the Provisional Government led by Aleksander Kerensky tried to stop them. This decision and many others, made Provisional Government very unpopular. With the Provisional government not allowing peasants land and the Bolsheviks supporting peasants, the popularity of the Bolshevik party could only grow, and the Provisional governments support could only drop, making the Bolsheviks seen even better.

### **2. Bolsheviks defended Provisional Government from Karnilov's- Karnilov,**

the commander-in-chief of the Russian Army got against Russian Provisional Government headed by Aleksander Kerensky in August 1917. At this time Bolsheviks defended Provisional Government from Karnilov. Karnilov had larger army, more men, more armoured vehicles and other war assets as compared to **Red Guards** ( Bolsheviks Forces). Although Red Guards had much smaller defence than that of Karnilov, but the Red Guard forces were superior in many ways. The Red Guards were highly disciplined, with excellent training which made them better quality soldiers than the forces of Karnilov. The Red Guard were dedicated to the cause of revolution with each one determined to fight to bitter end, as they were fighting for a cause they firmly believed in. This raised the popularity of the Bolsheviks further and helped them gain support of army. Karnilov was a military Intelligence Officer, Explorer and General in the imperial Russian army during World War-1 and the ensuing Russian civil war.

**3. Army on the side of Bolsheviks-** The authorities could not enforce the measures necessary to put down the revolution as the army was on the side of Bolsheviks. Now, with the help of the army the Bolsheviks could control the communications and travel network through out the country. The army took control of the railway network, the communication lines and other means of power, making it nearly impossible for anyone to stop the revolution.

**4. Kronstadt, the main Russian naval base also joined the Bolsheviks-** This was the huge boost for the Bolsheviks, as now they could control the sea with most sailors joining the Bolsheviks cause as now they could control the Sea and were able to keep watch on what was coming in and going out of the country through Sea. Also the Naval cruisers such as the Aurora were now in Bolsheviks possession and could supply heavy fire several miles in-land if necessary.

**5. Industrialists too cooperating the Bolsheviks-** This meant that the Bolsheviks could now manipulate the Russian industry, they could make ammunitions and all the goods could be available to Bolshevik forces if they need them. They could produce all the material they needed to make certain things e.g., building, weapons, utility items etc.

**6. The Bolsheviks had the support of the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets-** This was especially important as the Soviets had quite a considerable amount of power

and also were against the current living conditions faced by the peasants which the Bolsheviks were also against. The common cause of both strengthened the position of Bolsheviks.

**7. Effective leadership from Lenin and Trotsky-** Lenin was responsible for the popularity of the Bolsheviks as his political ideas and beliefs, which when read by others, encouraged them to take action and side with the Bolsheviks. Trotsky was another influential leader who led alongside Lenin. When Lenin and Trotsky were exiled, Trotsky escaped in 1907 and tried to bring together the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks to work together with Lenin.

**8. The Red Guards: The strength of the Bolsheviks-** The private army of the Bolsheviks, The Red Guards, ably trained and led by Trotsky was an important factor in the Bolsheviks gaining power. The strength and the size of the Red Guards allowed the Bolsheviks to intimidate and exert their influence on less powerful political groups and the Provisional Government itself. The strength of the Red Guards became the symbol of the Bolsheviks.

**9. The Bolsheviks- An Organized Party-** The Bolsheviks were brilliantly organized which was crucial in their attempt to gain power. A central committee (controlled by Lenin and other leading Bolsheviks) sent orders to the Soviets, who gave orders to the factories. Membership grew to two millions in three months. Unlike the Provisional Government, the Bolsheviks demanded the total obedience from their members. They were well disciplined (members did what leaders wanted). This allowed the Bolsheviks to coordinate their members into effective protests and opposition to the Provisional Government.

**10. Support from the Proletariat-** The fact that Bolsheviks had the widespread support of the people of industrial cities made them assume and maintain command which could have been otherwise difficult to maintain without the support and backing from the Proletariat workers. The support from the cities including the two major centres of Petrograd and Moscow meant that they had a lot of influence in the major seats of power which was crucial for them to come to power and stay in power after defeating the Provisional Government. Peasants and Farmers too supported the Bolsheviks. Both the ranks (workers and peasants) who were greater in

numbers fully helped and supported the Bolsheviks, making Bolsheviks successful.

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## **IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES**

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With the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the Bolsheviks set up a government which gave new ideology and direction to society and country. The communist government of Russia left a deep impress on Russia and other countries of the world. It actually happened on 7th November (25th October according to the Old Russian Calendar). In the evening the meeting of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Worker's and Soldiers' Deputies began in Petrograd. The Congress elected the Council of People's commissars as the executive body of the Soviet. Lenin was the chairman of the commissars, Trotsky was the commissars for Foreign Affairs and Stalin was the Commissar of Nationalities.

According to the eye-witness account of John Reed, an American Journalist, Lenin was received with a "long rolling ovation" as he stood up. As the ovation finished he said simply, "we shall now proceed to construct the socialist order." The first act of the new government was the adoption of the Decree on Peace. It expressed the resolve of the government to immediately enter into negotiations to conclude a peace without annexations or reparations.

As a consequence of such a policy, Russia withdrew from the war even at the cost of losing many of her territories which Germany had made a Condition for agreeing to peace.

The second step taken by the revolutionary government, headed by Lenin was the Decree on Land, which was adopted on 27th October. This Decree abolished private property in land and declared land to be the property of the entire nation. Soon it renounced unilaterally all the unequal treaties which the Czarist government had imposed on countries such as China, Iran and Afghanistan. The right of all peoples to equality and self-determination was proclaimed.

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## **OTHER CONSEQUENCES OF THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION**

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1. Russian revolution is a symbolic continuation of the French Revolution because the latter was the revolution of the bourgeoisie against the absolute feudal order and arbitrary monarchy. It was a Marxist-Socialist revolution, aiming to install the

dictatorship of the proletariat, which after withering away, would lead to the communist ideal known as communism. The revolution has an important place in Russian history. It overthrew autocracy, destroyed the powers of the church and ushered a new type of state and society. The revolution of 1917 was an epoch making event not only for Russia but also for the whole world. It put an end to the despotic and reactionary government of the Czars. The union of Soviet Socialist Republic was established. That led to the formation of the first socialist government of the world. Russia withdrew from the war and signed the humiliating treaty of Brest Litovsk with Germany.

2. The Russian revolution of 1917 and the later development of Russia internally made a profound impression upon the world. The rise of communist Russia is an event of great consequences in the world history.

3. Marx and Engles visualized the proletarian revolution sweeping all over Europe. Though Czarist Russia was not ripe for proletariat revolution, as the industrial base of Russia was of meagre nature. However, in the lead, which was given by the revolutionaries, workers played a prominent part and that too those of the workers who were sufficiently indoctrinated in the Marxist thought, gave that.

4. The example and propaganda of the Bolshevik revolution helped to found communist parties in different countries that were pro-Russian. These were federated in 1919 in a third international (comintern), with head quarters at Moscow. Through the comintern, Russia directed the policies and activities to communist parties in Germany, France, Italy and most of the countries on the European continent. Socialism has been not feasible only by the success of the Russian Revolution. Russian achievement in the economic activity as piloted by the plans captivated the imagination of a great number of nations in the world. In other words, the importance of Russian revolution lies in the fact that the capitalist societies have to connect fighting their own creation since Socialism is a direct product of the capitalist system. Socialism is a logic extension to democratic tradition. The Russian Revolution is a monumental landmark in the emancipation of man.

5. Socialism as advocated by Marx was not national but international in character it gave rise to socialist feelings among the workers and prepared them to fight against

capitalism. Working class got ready to establish a classless society.

6. The rise of Socialism brought about redemption in democracy. Now social justice and economic equalities are the watchword of democracy.

7. Almost all countries of the world under the influence of socialism carried out many programmes for the welfare of workers.

8. The immediate importance of Russian Revolution for instance is taken by its impact on the future of subject nationalist as advised that the nationalist leaders in various colonies have to work for the emancipation of their colonies as the first goal.

9. The Russian Revolution had tremendous impact on the economic sphere of the country. Agriculture and industry developed on an unprecedented scale. Properties, factories, lands, banks were nationalised and private properties were declared illegal. Production and distribution system were nationalised. Thus imperialism was substituted by socialism. The committees of workers were formed to manage the systems of production and distribution. Further the birth of Communist Russia alarmed the democratic world. As an ideology, communism differed from democracy on many basic issues. Thus, there began an ideological conflict between communist Russia and the democratic states like England, France and America.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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In short the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 can be attributed to, among other factors, their organization, the conditions faced by the Russian people and the inability of the Provisional Government to deal with these conditions. All the causes discussed above contributed to the Bolsheviks coming to power in 1917 and subsequently allowed them to govern effectively, mainly with the support of the people of the working class in large cities and towns and that of peasants and farmers in the Villages. Communism, the most important effect of the October Revolution intended beyond the boundaries of Russia. Soviet Russia, later the union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, became a major influence in the subsequent history of the world.



**CONTRIBUTION OF LENIN (1917-1924)****Introduction****Objectives****Contribution of Lenin****A New Constitution****New Economic Policy of Lenin****Foreign Policy of Russia under Lenin****Let Us Sum Up****Glossary****Self Assessment Questions****Lesson End Exercise**

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**INTRODUCTION**

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In the Lessons 5, 6 & 7 we have read about the Russian Revolution of 1917, causes of Bolsheviks revolution and the causes of the success of the Bolshevik Revolution and immediate consequences. We read that there were many Revolutionaries who spread, backed and initiated the cause of Revolution. Among those the name of Lenin is the foremost and that of active Revolutionary. In this

lesson we would know about the contributions of Lenin in Russian Revolution. Lenin or Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov was born in Simbirsk on the Volga river on 22 April 1870 into a well-educated family. He excelled at school and went on to study law. At University, he was exposed to radical thinking and his views were also influenced by the execution of his elder brother, a member of a revolutionary group.

Expelled from University for his radical policies, Lenin completed his law degree as an external student in 1891. He moved to St. Petersburg and became a professional revolutionary. Like many of his contemporaries, he was arrested and exiled to Siberia, where he married Nadezhda Krupskaya.

After his Siberian exile he adopted the pseudonym Lenin in 1901. He spent most of the subsequent decade and a half in Western Europe, where he emerged as a prominent figure in the international revolutionary movement and became the leader of the 'Bolshevik' faction of the Russian Social Democratic Worker's party.

In 1917, exhausted by the world war one, Russia was ripe for change. Lenin returned home and started working against the provisional government that had overthrown the Tsarist Regime during February Revolution of 1917. Lenin gave a call for the Soviet government one that would be ruled directly by soldiers, peasants and workers.

In late 1917, Lenin led what was soon to be known as the October Revolution, but was essentially a *coup d'etat*. The Lenin-led Soviet government faced incredible odds. Three years of civil war followed. The anti-Soviet forces, or whites headed mainly by former Tsarist Generals and admirals fought desperately to overthrow Lenin's Red regime.

Determined to win at any cost, Lenin showed himself to be ruthless in his push to secure power. He launched what came to be known as the Red Terror, a vicious campaign Lenin used to eliminate the opposition within the civilian population. In August 1918, Lenin narrowly escaped an assassination attempt, when he was severely wounded with a pair of bullets from a political opponent. His recovery only reinforced his larger than life presence among his countrymen, though, his health was never truly the same.

Despite opposition, Lenin came out victorious. But the kind of country he hoped to lead never came to fruition. His defeat of an opposition that wished to keep Russia tethered to Europe's Capital system, ushered in an era of international retreat for the Lenin-led government. Russia, as he saw it, would be void of class conflict and the international wars it fostered.

But, the Russia he presided over was reeling from the bloody civil war. In 1921, Lenin now faced the same kind of peasant uprising he had led to power against earlier Provincial Government of Russia. Widespread strikes in cities and in rural sections of the country broke out, threatening the stability of Lenin's Government. This is when his efforts to transform the Russian economy, to a socialist model stalled.

To ease the tension, Lenin introduced New Economic Policy, which allowed workers to sell their grain in the open market. In new Economic policy a measure of private enterprise was permitted, a policy that continued for several years after his death. In his declining years, he was worried about the bureaucratization of the regime and also expressed concern over the increasing power of his eventual successor Joseph Stalin. Lenin died on 24th January 1924 and was laid to rest in a Mausoleum on Moscow's Red Square.

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## **OBJECTIVES**

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- To recall the role played by Revolutionaries in the Russian Revolution of 1917 as read in previous lessons.
- To name the Revolutionaries involved in the Russian Revolution.
- To identify the role played by Lenin in the Russian Revolution.
- To analyse the Contribution made by Lenin in the Russian Revolution.
- To study the influence of Lenin in Russian Revolution.

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## **CONTRIBUTION OF LENIN**

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Lenin was responsible for many things, one of which was his propaganda. It was Lenin who produced his April Theses, including his political ideas and beliefs, which when read by others, encouraged them to take action and side with the Bolsheviks.

Historians have described Lenin as the overall planner of the revolution. He provided tight control, and a degree of discipline and unity which the other parties lacked. Lenin was an influential leader who made the whole revolution possible using his great leadership skills. He had faced exile in Siberia, yet he still managed to hide away and return with influential speeches and propaganda, making him a superb and prominent leader. He was the person who planned the whole revolution finally leading the Bolsheviks to power on 7th November 1917 (26th October as per Julian Calendar-Russian Calendar) Lenin's importance to the Bolshevik's seizure of power was in his ability to persuade and lead. He was not there at the start (exiled) and he was not the military leader, but he was important in getting both the masses and the leaders to act decisively. When Lenin was brought out of exile in Switzerland to Russia by the German Government to undermine the Russian effort in its war against Germany he gave many speeches pushing the people to rise up against the Provisional Russian Government. These speeches did not start the revolution, but they encouraged it and got more converts. After he and other leaders had to flee, he returned and played big role in persuading other leaders of the Bolshevik movement that the time was now right and they would be able to win. It was decided by the Bolshevik leaders to execute the plan of revolution before November 7, when the All Russian Congress of Soviets was scheduled to meet. On the night of 6-7 November, the Bolsheviks captured telephone booths, port offices, railway stations and banks. On the morning of November 7, 1917 workers, soldiers and sailors arrested the members of the temporary government. Kerensky, the head of the Provisional Government fled from capital. On this day the people's revolution succeeded in Petrograd without shedding a drop of blood and is considered a Red Letter Day in the history of humanity.

The second All Russian Congress of Soviets held its session and elected a Soviet cabinet under the leadership of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Two important resolutions were moved in this congress.

i. An appeal was made to all the belligerent nations to stop war and to begin peace talks.

ii. To confiscate all the land belonging to land owners.

A council of People's Commissars was set up under Lenin who issued many

commands and declared the programme of the newly constituted government.

**Lenin's Programme :-**

- a) Early end of war for negotiating peace treaty
- b) All private land to be nationalized without any compensation.
- c) Factories to be owned by workers.
- d) Capitalists to be deprived of their political rights.
- e) Banks to be centralized and nationalized.
- f) *Laissez Faire* to be abolished.
- g) Production to be controlled by the state.
- h) All independent trading companies to be compulsorily made members of the syndicate.

Lenin was greatly influenced by the ideas of Marx. He constituted a government of peasants and workers and recruited new personnel to manage the affairs of the state.

Lenin successfully paved the way for the emergence of Russia. In this attempt, he foremost:

- i.** Signed Treaty with Germany on march 3, 1918- The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. This was a very humiliating treaty for Russia for she had to withdraw from all the territories that had been under her since the days of Peter, the Great. But, Lenin chose to make friends with Germany and withdrew from the war. This gave Lenin respite to introduce internal reforms.
- ii.** Lenin distributed the land among the peasants taking it from land lords.
- iii.** He also nationalized factories and handed over their management to the workers. Private property was confiscated.

- iv. The landlords, traders, clergymen and supporters of the Czar opposed all this strongly. As a result of it, a civil war broke out in Russia, which lasted for two years from 1918 to 1920. The government put down this civil war with iron hands and perpetrated many atrocities on them. This period of oppression is known as “**Red Terror**,” as the Bolsheviks adopted violent means to finish their adversaries and to cause terror among them.

#### **A New Constitution.**

The new Bolshevik Government came into existence in November 1917 and framed a new constitution in 1918.

- A) It had three organs viz
  - All Russian Congress of Soviets.
  - All Russian Central Legislature.
  - People’s Commissors.

i. All Russian Congress of Soviets comprised of the local Soviet, the Provincial Soviet, the Central Soviet Congress.

**The Provincial Soviet-** The members of the Local Soviet elected the representatives of the Provincial Soviet.

**The Central Soviet Congress-** The Provincial Soviet elected the representatives for the Central Soviet Congress.

The number of representatives in the All Russian Congress of Soviets was around thirteen hundred. The highest authority of the state was vested in them.

ii. **All Russian Central Legislature-** About 200 members of the All Russian Central Legislature were elected by the All Russian Congress of Soviets. This organ was responsible for passing the laws which were finally approved by the All Russian Congress of Soviets.

iii. **People’s Commissars-** were the ministers elected by the All Russian Central Legislature. They were about 18 in number and were like present day council of Ministers. They ran the government of the country.

**B) Franchise-** Every citizen above the age of 18 years who worked for his living was entitled to vote. It was unlike the Czar regime when only officers, clergymen and landlords had the right to vote.

**C) The Communist party-**The real power of the government were in the hands of the communist party and it had complete control over the administration and on the socio-economic structure. The President of this party was all in all and he was Lenin.

**D) Amendment in 1923-**After the Civil war Russia got back many of her lost territories and then there were seven republics in Russia. U.S.S.R- the union of Soviet Socialist Republic was established uniting these republics under the new Constitution. Each of these Republics had its administrative set up like the above mentioned structure of the Central Government.

### **New Economic Policy of Lenin**

From July 1918 to March 1921, the policy of war Communism was effective in Russia. It could not do much to streamline the economy of Russia. There was horrible destruction and wide spread poverty all over Russia the discontent rampant among the Russian public during the administration of war-communism burst into a series of peasant's revolts in 1920-21. In the beginning of March 1921, the sailors of the Russian navy revolted. Though the revolts were crushed but the Soviet leaders decided to remove the causes of discontent as well as to adopt a stern policy for the eradication of hostile movements.

Lenin was a farsighted leader. Under his able leadership Russia soon began to march forward on the path of progress. He knew very well that the economic policy should be immediately changed in order to pacify the discontent of the masses. So, he announced a New Economic Policy which continued till 1928.

The New Economic Policy analysed all the steps taken by the Soviet Government in the field of economy, agriculture, industries, trade and commerce etc.

The aim of the New Economic Policy was to strengthen the economic contribution of workers and peasants, to encourage all the workers in rural and

urban areas to improve the economy of the country and to allow partial capitalism while keeping the main sources of economy in the hand of the government. The New Economic Policy was a compromise between Socialism and Capitalism which enabled Russia to march forward on the path of progress. Following were the main features of New Economic Policy of Lenin.

**Regeneration of Agriculture-** The Russian peasants welcomed the New Economic Policy and enthusiastically accepted Regeneration of Agriculture. First of all the compulsory procurement of the excess yield of the peasants was stopped and they were permitted to sell it in the open market. This started retail trading and the retail traders made market transaction with a view to earn profit.

The revolution in the field of agriculture was done in two stages.

- a) The first stage did away with the landlords. This change was brought about by circulating an order through which the government nationalized land and decided to redistribute it among the peasants. It did away with big landlords.
- b) The stage replaced individual farming by cooperative farming. It took place ten years after the first stage. In this stage the land was taken away from the individual peasants and handed over to cooperatives. There were two aims behind the adoption of this policy.
  - i) Many communist leaders feared that the class of affluent peasants might bring back capitalism.
  - ii) Russia had suffered severe scarcity of food grain, had to import wheat and introduce rationing.

To meet the above objectives Russia nationalized agriculture.

- 2) **Nationalization of Agriculture.** This step was taken to increase agricultural production by nationalization and collectivization of agriculture. Large government farms were opened to bring barren or infertile land under cultivation under government management. Collectivization meant bringing together the farms of several peasants



under a cooperative management. This was aimed at increased agricultural yield.

- 3) **Collective Farming-** The Collective farms can be put into three classes.
- a) The farms in which the peasants pooled their land, performed all agricultural operations jointly and shared the yield. Only the land was pooled, the cattle and agricultural implements were individually owned.
  - b) The farmers called **artels** where beside land and labour, capital was also collectivized.
  - c) The farms called **communes** in which everything was collectivized. The farmers owned nothing individually. Houses, cattle and implements were collective property and the farmers got their requirement from the joint stock.

Collective farming made Soviet Union a country with a large scale agricultural production. By collectivization of agriculture, the Bolshevik government took a big step in the direction of socialization.

- 4) **The Beginning of the Private Trade-** During the war communism, there was very little private trade and that too was carried on through barter system. Now the surplus grain after the payment of taxes could be sold in the local market. The private trade started and improved the economic condition of the peasants.
- 5) **Nationalization of Industries-** In the New Economic Policy, the Bolshevik government decided to continue capitalism together with Nationalization. The owner of small factories were allowed to retain their factories and to market their products. The government controlled large industries but permitted some decentralization there too. Trusts or Syndicates were made wherein factories producing the same goods were brought under one head.

For example, all the textile mills were put under a central organization called a syndicate or a trust. Such syndicates were constituted for iron, steel paper, sugar and chemical industries. All such syndicates were put under a central business organization so that all industries could develop in cooperation with one another. The Soviet government paid more attention to the development of large industries, especially heavy industries. Old factories were renovated and some new ones were built. The New Economic Policy transformed all the Industries in Russia.

- 6) **Reform in currency system**-Russian currency had been completely devalued due to civil war. Chavonets, the bank notes of the value of 10 gold roubles were issued by the Government Banks. The exchange rate of rouble was also fixed.
- 7) **Concessions to small scale industries**- In order to encourage the set up of small scale industries concessions were given. The average number of workers in these industries was 2 and they produced only 5% of the total manufactures. Easy Licenses were granted to small-scale industries.
- 8) **Trade Unions and the Workers Code**-All industries were supervised by a Tripartite control. According to it there was a manager in every factory to run it, a party committee comprising members of the communist party and a factory committee which represented the trade Union. In this system, though the workers did not directly control the factory, their interests were always kept in mind.

The workers code offered the workers several privileges such as an eight-hour day, two weeks leave on full pay, social insurance which included payment of wages during illness, unemployment allowance, medical benefits, etc., Under the New Economic Policy the workers were paid some cash wages and this brought a spurt in private trade, unlike the war communism where government provided ration and other necessities of life to the workers.

- a) **Public interest and the workers' welfare**- According to the New Economic Policy, the government received a fixed proportion of

the profits earned by mills and factories. One part was put in the reserve fund of the factory and the rest was spent on education, medical care and other welfare activities. New Economic Policy of Russia aimed at the progress of the country, public interest and the workers' welfare.

### **FOREIGN POLICY OF RUSSIA UNDER LENIN**

The Foreign policy of Soviet Russia during 1917-1924 was not a continuation of the Czarist Foreign Policy. It was to a great extent influenced by the communist ideology. The foreign policy of a country is an extension of her internal policy. The foreign policy of Russia under Lenin was to a great extent shaped by the events like

- a) Russia's attempt at creating a world communist revolution.
- b) Counter Revolution in Russia with the support of the western powers.
- c) Friendly relations with western countries by leaving the policy of isolation.

Major events of Russia's Foreign policy under Lenin are:

1. During this period the relations of Russia were strained with the western powers because after the revolution Russia started propagating the inevitability of a conflict between the communist and the non-communist countries.
2. Russia's withdrawal, from the war and conclusion of Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty with Germany strained her relations with the Allies, as they were in favour of Russia continuing the war with Germany.
3. Russia's repudiation of the Czarist debts and nationalization of foreign industrial enterprises created further friction This was further aggravated when she nationalized foreign trade in 1918.
4. The military intervention of western states in favour of the counter-revolutionaries strained the relations of Soviet Union with the Western Powers. But, Russia was able to thwart all attempts of the western nations

and the Bolshevik government emerged stronger.

5. Trade Agreement with Britain in 1920-21. In the economic sphere, Russia aimed at a sound economic base and for that purpose she was willing to co-operate even with capitalist countries. This explains her trade agreement with Britain in 1920-21 with a view to expand her trade and to secure foreign loans, Soviet Russia tried to establish friendly relation with all the countries indiscriminately.

In 1924, the British government accorded recognition to the Bolshevik government of Russia and after that some other countries too recognized it.

- 6) Realising that the Soviet Union was hopelessly weak as compared to the western nations, the Russians followed a policy of concluding non-aggression facts. She was particularly keen that Germany should not fall in the fold of the western powers and concluded the Treaty of Rapallo with her in 1922.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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To conclude we can say that Russia wanted to live in peace and amity and avoid all sorts of international tension and war. She tried to establish friendly relations with all countries indiscriminately. She also abandoned her policy of co-operation with the west. Measures and policies adopted by Lenin to transform Russia and take it towards the path of progress continued for several years after his death in 1924. Contribution of Lenin in Russian revolution cannot be undermined or ignored. All the efforts undertaken by him as discussed above make Lenin an important historical figure.

**CAUSES OF FIRST WORLD WAR & PEACE  
SETTLEMENT OF 1919**

**Introduction**

**Objectives**

**Political situation on the eve of First World War**

**Causes of the First World War**

**Long term Causes**

**Short term Causes**

**Other Causes**

**Immediate Cause**

**Course of the War**

**Peace Settlement of 1919**

**Let Us Sum Up**

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**INTRODUCTION**

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In the early years of the 20th c Europe was standing on a heap of explosives which

needed just a spark to go off. The first world war which began on the night of 28th July, when Austria attacked Serbia, lasted for four years and ended on 11th November 1918. Contemporaries called it The GREAT War because it was literally greater than any war waged before. Over 59 million troops were mobilised, over million died and over 29 million were injured in a struggle which sharply altered the political, economic and cultural nature of the Europe . Disparity between the end sought, the price paid and the results obtained are the greatest novelty historically. Moreover, the former division of a nation into two categories of participants and spectators has ceased to be valid. All are now participants if not in the actual fighting or in manufacture of war material, The first world war demonstrated the profound truth that a modern war is conducted on two fronts : the fighting front and the home front. The, latter not less important than former because a country may win every battle yet loose the war if the morale of the people collapse under the strains of hardship caused by the war. While the causes of the war are infinitely more complicated than a simple timeliness of events, and are still debated and discussed to this day. All the countries of the world were forced into war.

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### **OBJECTIVES**

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After studying this lesson you will be able to know about:

- The long term causes of first world war
- The short term causes of the first world war
- Who is to be blamed for war
- To what extent Germany is responsible for war
- Circumstances leading up to peace settlement and it's effect

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### **POLITICAL SITUATION ON THE EVE OF FIRST WORLD WAR**

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Following are the points which clearly indicates the political situation on the eve of world war I

#### **Europe still dominated the rest of the world in 1914**

Economically and militarily Germany was the leading power in Europe. Britain lag behind in the production of pig-iron and steel while France , Belgium, Italy and Austria

– Hungary (known as the Hapsburg Empire) were well behind from Germany. Russia was an emerging powerboat not up to the level of Germany and Britain. USA also produced more coal, pig -iron and steel and now ranked as world power.

### **The political systems of these world powers varied widely**

Europe of 1914 was an amalgamation of different political system which varied from a pure democratic set up to a full autocratic rule. Countries like U.S.A, Britain and France had democratic form of government in which the people had the power to elect the representatives in the parliament and had say in running the country. On the contrary, countries like Russia and Austria – Hungary had autocratic rulers . The tsar (emperor) of Russia and emperor of Austria were both autocratic. Although parliament existed but rulers could ignore the parliaments. However, countries like Germany had elected lower house of parliament (Reichstag), but the relevant power lay with the chancellor ( a sort of prime minister) and Kaiser (emperor). In Italy there was monarchy with an elected parliament, but the franchise was limited to the wealthy people.

### **Division of Europe into two alliance systems**

By 1914, the six major powers of Europe were split into two alliances, which would- with the exception of Italy- form the two warring sides in the world war I. Britain, France and Russia were in the Triple Entente, while Germany, Austria – Hungary, and Italy were in the Triple Alliance. Friction between the two main groups (sometimes called ‘the armed camps’ ) had brought Europe on the verge of war several times since 1900.

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## **CAUSES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR**

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The war which lasted for 1565 days and took the life of one in every five and wounded one in every three soldiers, was due to many causes which are broadly classified into three main categories

### **Long term causes :-**

- A. Nationalism
- B. Imperialism
- C. Militarism

D. Entangled Alliance

### **Short term Causes**

A. The Moroccan Crisis (1905,1911)

B. The Bosnia Crisis (1908).

C. The First Balkan War

D. The Second Balkan War (1913)

E. Schlieffen plan

### **Other causes**

A. The Character of Emperor William Kaiser

B. Absence of an international Organisation

C. The Influence of Press and Means of Communications

D. low tone of International Morality

E. War Psychosis in Germany

### **Immediate cause**

## **Long Term Causes**

### **A. Militarism:**

Definition: The glorification of one's military. Also the belief of a nation or its people to build and maintain a strong military, with the intention to use it whenever it is felt necessary.

Militarism was a long-term cause of the war; due to the length of time it takes a country to build its military to the strength necessary to wage a major war.

Specifics: Germany—Stemming from the invasion of German-speaking peoples lands near the Rhine River by Napoleon during the Napoleonic Wars and the Franco-Prussian War, Otto von Bismarck made it his goal to keep the unified German State prepared to defend itself against France. He felt that it was necessary to keep France isolated



and weak at all cost. France—Understanding that Germany was building a large military, saw it as a necessity to in turn build a large military to protect themselves against the Germans. Thus, these two nations were building massive military strength to use against each other. The Germans were also threatening the British by building a large Navy, making the British feel insecure about their place amongst the world's elite navies for the first time in nearly a hundred years. Thus, the British would have to respond to this growing threat as well, by building a larger navy. Though these were not the only countries building and perfecting their arsenal, they were the most significant prior to the outbreak of WWI. It did not take long for these countries to find a reason to use their militaries against each other in an attempt to prove who is superior.

### **B. EntangledAlliances:**

Definition: An agreement between two or more countries to work together for the benefit of each country.

Long/Short: Alliances are seen as a long-term cause of WWI. Due to the secret alliances created by/between nations, it is inevitable that a disagreement between two nations will lead to the involvement of many nations, who have secretly agreed to help one another. These alliances take time to develop; thus, they are a long-term cause.

Specifics: The two major alliances that developed prior to WWI were the Triple Entente (Allies) and the Triple Alliance (Central Powers). The Triple Entente consisted of Great Britain, France and Russia. This alliance was created in an effort to counter the Triple Alliance, which consisted of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. At the beginning of the war, the Triple Alliance became known as the Central Powers and did not include Italy. Italy finds that it is in their best interest to wait and see what unfolds during the war; thus, allowing them to further their growth as a nation. The Central Powers eventually consisted of Austro-Hungary (1914), the German Empire (1914), the Ottoman Empire (1914), and the Kingdom of Bulgaria (1915). The Triple Entente would become known as the Allied Powers and grow considerably, consisting of the Kingdom of Belgium, Kingdom of Serbia, the French Third Republic, the Russian Empire, the British Empire, the Kingdom of Italy, the Empire of Japan, the United States, the Portuguese Republic, the Kingdom of Romania, the Kingdom of Greece and many others who lent military and financial aid.

### **C. Nationalism:**

Definition : Extreme pride in one's nations or state. Often seen by the use of flags, national anthems, and other signature items.

Long/Short : Nationalism is a long-term cause of WWI. As many of the other causes, nationalism takes time to create. People are not born with the love of their country and land instilled within them; instead, they must learn to love it. This requires a longer period of time to complete; thus, it is a long-term cause.

Specifics : Germany was extremely proud of the military power that they had become after the Franco-Prussian War. As a new unified nation after January of 1871, the Germans felt nearly unstoppable as a world power. The French on the other hand had been embarrassed by the Germans and found it necessary to regain their pride. These feelings of resentment led to the massive militarism between these two nations. Also with the growth of Pan-Slavism or the unification of all Slavic peoples, protected by Russia, the areas around Serbia became very unstable. The Serbians were prepared to create their own independent Slavic state supported by the Russians. This will lead to what we call the "Balkan Powder Keg" or an area in the Balkans that would only take a minor issue to explode into full on war.

### **D. Imperialism:**

Definition : Domination by one country over another in terms of the political, economic, or cultural life of the dominated country or region.

Long term : Imperialism also takes time to develop in terms of establishing the dominance needed to secure another nation/country. Therefore, imperialism is seen as a long-term cause of WWI.

Specifics: Many nations from around the globe were competing for control of colonies in order to gain land, resources, and influence. Prior to the out-break of First World War scramble for Africa begin resulting in polarisation between the imperialist power on account of conflicting economic interest.

Specifically, Germany was attempting to control lands in Africa, a place that Britain and France had already established. In 1905 and 1911 Germany was attempting to

keep France from imposing a protectorate on Morocco. As a result, Britain and France became closer allies in the conflict against Germany. Britain and France quickly found that keeping Germany out of Africa, the Germans would not be able to build themselves into a threatening power. England attempted to build the Cape-to-Cairo railway. This project came into conflict with German, Belgian and French ambitions. On the other hand Russia built Trans-Siberian railway which was envied by Japan. Thus, quest for acquiring colonies, leases and economic concessions resulted in hostility among the imperialist powers.

### **Short term Causes**

#### **A. The Moroccan Crisis ( 1905, 1911)**

There were two Moroccan Crisis one in the year 1905 and the other in the year 1911.

##### **First Moroccan Crisis (1905)**

This was an attempt by the Germans to test the recently signed Anglo – French ‘Entente Cordiale’ (1904) with its understanding that France would recommend organise Britain’s position in Egypt in return for British approval of a possible French takeover of Morocco. In 1905 **Kaiser Wilhelm II** visited the Moroccan port of **Tangier** and denounced French influence in **Morocco**. The move was designed to test the strength of the recent Anglo-French entente. The visit provoked an international crisis, which was resolved in France’s favour at the **Algeciras Conference**, 1906. The result was to bring France and Britain closer together. **Edward VII** called the German actions *“the most mischievous and uncalled for event which the German Emperor has been engaged in since he came to the throne.”*

##### **Second Moroccan Crisis (1911)**

This crisis erupted when the Germans sent the gunboat **“Panther”** to the Moroccan port of **Agadir**, to protect German citizens there. Germany claimed that the French had ignored the terms of the Algeciras Conference. This provoked a major war scare in Britain until the Germans agreed to leave Morocco to the French in return for rights in the **Congo**. Many Germans felt that they had been humiliated and that their government had backed down.

#### **B. Bosnian Crisis**

In 1908, Austria-Hungary took over the former Turkish province of Bosnia. This angered Serbians who felt the province should be theirs. Serbia threatened Austria-Hungary with war, Russia, allied to Serbia, mobilized its forces. Germany, allied to Austria-Hungary mobilised its forces and prepared to threaten Russia. War was avoided when Russia backed down. There was to be no help for Serbia; no conference took place, and Austria kept Bosnia. It was a triumph for the Austro-German alliance, but it had unfortunate results:

- Serbia remained bitterly hostile to Austria, and it was this quarrel which led to the outbreak of war; and
- The Russians were determined to avoid any further humiliations and embarked on a massive military build up. They intended to be prepared if Serbia should ever appeal for help again.

### **C. The First Balkan War (1912)**

This war began when Serbia, Greece, Montenegro and Bulgaria (calling themselves the Balkan League) attacked Turkey, capturing most of her remaining territory in Europe. Together with the German government, Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, arranged a peace Conference in London. He was anxious to avoid the conflict spreading, and also to demonstrate that Britain and Germany could still work together. The resulting settlement divided up the former Turkish lands among the Balkan states. However, the Serbs were not happy with their gains: they wanted Albania, which would give them an outlet to the sea, but the Austrians, with German and British support, insisted that Albania should become an independent state. This was an Austrian move to prevent Serbia becoming more powerful

### **D. The Second Balkan War (1913)**

The Second Balkan War began because the Bulgarians were dissatisfied with the peace settlement. They were hoping for Macedonia, but most of it was given to Serbia. Bulgaria therefore attacked Serbia, but their plan misfired when Greece, Romania and Turkey rallied to support Serbia. The Bulgarians were defeated and, by the treaty of Bucharest (1913), they forfeited most of their gains from the first

war. It seemed that Anglo-German influence had prevented an escalation of the war by restraining the Austrians, who were itching to support Bulgaria and attack Serbia. In reality though, the consequences of the Balkan wars were serious:

- Serbia had been strengthened and was determined to stir up trouble among the Serbs and Croats inside Austria-Hungary
- The Austrians were equally determined to put an end to Serbians ambitions
- The Germans took Greys willingness to Co – operate as a sign that Britain was prepared to be detached from France and Russia.

### **E. The Schlieffen Plan**

The famous German war plan, the **Schlieffen Plan**, relied on the quick movement of troops and the assumption that once Germany found itself at war with Russia, it would also be at war with France.

It involved:

- Concentrating German forces on an attempt to take Paris and so defeat France.
- When that was achieved troops would be transferred to attack Russia. This is the most famous plan as it came very close to success.
- It also meant that once Germany declared war on Russia in August 1914, she would also have to attack France. However in invading France, **Belgium's** neutrality was violated and this brought Britain into the war.

France had her own plan called **Plan XVII** (which **Niall Ferguson** described as “mad strategy”) and so also did Russia (**Plan G**) and Austria-Hungary (**Plans R and B**).

All of these plans assumed the co-operation of their respective allies.

Once the first steps towards mobilisation were taken, everyone assumed that it would be fatal to stand still while their potential enemies moved forward.

## **Other Causes**

### **A. The Character of Emperor William Kaiser**

The Character of Emperor William Kaiser was also one of the causes of the war. He was highly ambitious and short-tempered. His policy was 'supremacy in the world or extermination'. He was not willing to strike a compromise in international matters. He considered the British policy of neutrality as her weakness. This misconception finally led to his destruction. His violent temper and imperialistic ambitions, drove Europe to the threshold of war.

### **B. Absence of an international Organisation**

At this time there was no international organisation in Europe which could solve disputes between various states through negotiations and put off the imminence of war. Every state considered herself most affluent and turned an indifferent eye towards international promises

Because of the system of secret alliances the people or the house of Representatives in a country did not know what type of agreement its ambassadors or ministers had entered into with other countries. Thus in the absence of international organisation there was no check on any country and every country was free to do whatever it liked whether right or wrong.

### **C. The Influence of Press and Means of Communications**

Inspired by the vigorous nationalism, the press in all countries reported many events in such way that excited the people and made a peaceful settlement of disputes seem impossible. Germans became inimical to the people of England and the relations between France and Germany deteriorated because of Press reports. After the murder of ArchDuke Ferdinand newspapers in Serbia and Austria wrote acrimonious articles against each other. This engaged people in both the countries.

### **D. Low tone of International Morality.**

Certain resolutions regarding international law and conduct of foreign relations were passed at the Hague Conference of 1899 and 1907; but these were observed by the various countries according to their convenience. Every country considered

itself to be sovereign and did not consider itself bound by its international commitments. There was low tone of International morality. International relations were not regulated by international laws or canons of morality but the relations among the nations were governed by secret diplomacy, hypocrisy, deceit, intimidation and power politics. The nation's of Europe made frantic efforts for increasing armed strength which alone was a decisive factor in international relations. In such circumstances hope for a durable peace was a far cry.

### **E. War Psychosis in Germany**

The atmosphere in Germany was suffused and permeated with war Psychosis. According to the Prussian spirit prevailing in Germany “ He who succeeds is never in the wrong”. Victory was identified with morality. War was glorified in Germany. According to Mirabeau “War is the national industry of Prussian”. In such circumstances Europe was bound to be disturbed. It cannot be denied that Germany played a decisive role in plunging Europe in the First World war.

### **Immediate Cause**

The immediate cause was the assassination of Arch Duke Francis Ferdinand who was heir to the Austrian throne. Arch Duke Francis Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated by Serbians in the Bosnian capital Sarajevo when they paid a visit to this city on 28th June 1914. The news of this murder shocked many countries. Austria-Hungary was already sick of Serbia and she decided to take advantage of the new situation to crush her. The murder of their crown prince and his wife resulted in an ultimatum being sent to Serbia for immediate compliance of certain terms. Serbia's reply did not pacify Austria-Hungary. Hence, Austria-Hungary backed by Germany declared war on Serbia. Russia mobilised her forces in favour of Serbia. This event pushed Europe into the conflagration of war.

## **COURSE OF THE WAR**

### **Two sides of the war**

In the First World War, the Allies, which made up of 27 states including France, Britain, Russia, Italy , the United States, Rumania, Greece, Serbia and Japan, fought against the Central Powers including Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria.

At the beginning of the war, the Central Powers scored some victories because Russia was too poorly equipped for the war, and Britain and France could not coordinate and concentrate their efforts to fight.

### **Italy and the Allies**

Italy refused to support Germany and Austria on the ground that Austria was the aggressor. Her real purpose in staying out was to bargain for territory. Because her claims were directed against Austria, only one outcome was possible. In May 1915, after concluding a secret treaty (Treaty of London) with the Entente powers, who promised her nearly all the Austrian and Turkish territories that she wanted, Italy entered the War against her former allies.

### **Victory of the Allies**

Later, after the entry of the United States into the war in 1917, the tide began to turn against the Central Powers. The Allies finally defeated the Central Powers in November 1918. The chief reasons for the defeat of the Central Powers were as follows:

(1) 27 Allied states fought against 4 Central Powers, so the Allied states had more manpower and more resources.

(2) The Allied states had almost complete control of the seas, so they could successfully blockade the German coastline and starve the Central Powers of food and raw materials.

(3) The Allied states had moral support due to their claim to fight for democracy.

(4) The Germans committed two important strategic errors. The first was the invasion of Belgium which offended the moral conscience of the world and brought Britain into the war. The second was the unrestricted submarine campaign which strengthened universal hatred of German militarism and brought about the entry of the United States into war on the Allies' side.

The First World War lasted for four years and three months. It began on August 4, 1914 and ended on November 11, 1918. It involved sixty sovereign states, overthrew four Empires (German Empire, Hapsburg Empire, Turkish Empire,



Russian Empire), gave birth to seven new nations, took ten million combatant lives (another 30 million were wounded), and cost about £35,000 million.

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## PEACE SETTLEMENT OF 1919

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The Paris Peace Conference was convened in January 1919 at Versailles just outside Paris. The conference was called to establish the terms of the peace after World War I when the allied powers agreed to an armistice with Germany. Though nearly thirty nations participated, the representatives of the United Kingdom, France, the United States, and Italy became known as the “Big Four.” The “Big Four” were the Prime Minister of France, Georges Clemenceau; the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Lloyd George; the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson; and the Prime Minister of Italy, Vittorio Emanuele Orlando. They met together informally 145 times and made all the major decisions, which in turn were ratified by the others. The “Big Four” dominated the proceedings that led to the formulation of the Treaty of Versailles, a treaty that ended World War I.

In the Paris Peace settlement of 1919 five treaties were concluded:

- A. the **Treaty of Versailles**, 28 June 1919, (Germany)
- B. the **Treaty of Saint-Germain**, 10 September 1919, (Austria)
- C. the **Treaty of Neuilly**, 27 November 1919, (Bulgaria)
- D. the **Treaty of Trianon**, 4 June 1920, (Hungary)
- E. the **Treaty of Sèvres**, 10 August 1920; subsequently revised by the **Treaty of Lausanne**, 24 July 1923, (Ottoman Empire/Republic of Turkey).

Jointly all these were given the name of Treaty of Versailles or peace settlement of 1919- 20 in world history

### A. The Treaty of Versailles

Signed on June 28th, 1919 as an end to the First World War, The Treaty of Versailles was supposed to ensure a lasting peace by punishing Germany and setting up a League of Nations to solve diplomatic problems. Instead, it left a legacy of political and geographical difficulties which have often been blamed,

sometimes solely, for starting the Second World War.

**BACKGROUND :** The First World War had been fought for four years when, on November 11th, 1918, Germany and the Allies signed an armistice.

The Allies soon gathered to discuss the peace treaty they would sign, but Germany and Austria-Hungary weren't invited; instead they were only allowed to present a response to the treaty, a response which was largely ignored. Instead, terms were drawn up mainly by the 'Big Three': British Prime Minister Lloyd George, French Prime Minister Frances Clemenceau, and US President Woodrow Wilson.

### **THE BIG THREE**

Each had different desires:

- Woodrow Wilson: Wanted a 'fair and lasting peace' and had written a plan – the Fourteen Points – to achieve this. He wanted the armed forces of all nations reduced, not just the losers, and a League of Nations created to ensure peace.
- Frances Clemenceau: Wanted Germany to pay dearly for the war, including being stripped of land, industry and their armed forces. Also wanted heavy reparations.
- Lloyd George: While he personally agreed with Wilson, he was affected by public opinion in Britain which agreed with Clemenceau.

The result was a treaty which tried to compromise, and many of the details were passed down to un-coordinated sub-committees to work out, which thought they were drafting a starting point, rather than the final wording. It was an almost impossible task, with the need to pay off loans and debts with German cash and goods, but also to restore the pan-European economy; the need to sate territorial demands, many of which were included in secret treaties, but also allow self-determination and deal with growing nationalism; the need to remove the German threat, but not humiliate the nation and breed a generation intent on revenge, all while mollifying voters.

### **SELECTED TERMS OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES**

**Territory:**

- Alsace-Lorraine, captured by Germany in 1870 and the war aim of the attacking French forces in 1914, was returned to France.
- The Saar, an important German coalfield, was to be given to France for 15 years, after which a plebiscite would decide ownership.
- Poland became an independent country with a 'route to the sea', a corridor of land cutting Germany in two.
- Danzig, a major port in East Prussia (Germany) was to be under international rule.
- All German and Turkish Colonies were taken away and put under Allied control.
- Finland, Lithuania, Latvia and Czechoslovakia were made independent.
- Austria-Hungary was split up and Yugoslavia was created.

#### **Arms:**

- The left bank of the Rhine was to be occupied by Allied forces and the right bank demilitarized.
- The German army was cut to 100,000 men.
- Wartime weapons were to be scrapped.
- The German Navy was cut to 36 ships and no submarines.
- Germany was banned from having an Air Force
- An anschluss (union) between Germany and Austria was banned.

#### **Reparations and Guilt:**

- In the 'war guilt' clause Germany had to accept total blame for the war.
- Germany had to pay £6,600 million in compensation.

#### **The League of Nations:**

- A League of Nations was to be created to prevent further world conflict.

## **REACTIONS**

Germany lost 13% of its land, 12% of its people, 48% of its iron resources, 15% of its agricultural production and 10% of its coal. Perhaps understandably, German public opinion soon swung against this 'Diktat' (dictated peace), while the Germans who signed it were called the 'November Criminals'. Britain and France felt the treaty was fair – they actually wanted harsher terms imposed on the Germans – but the United States refused to ratify it because they didn't want to be part of the League of Nations.

## **RESULTS**

- The map of Europe was redrawn with consequences which, especially in the Balkans, remain to the modern day.
- Numerous countries were left with large minorities groups: there were three and a half million Germans in Czechoslovakia alone.
- The League of Nations was fatally weakened without the United States and its army to enforce decisions.
- Many Germans felt unfairly treated. After all, they had just signed an armistice, not a unilateral surrender, and the allies hadn't occupied deep into Germany.

### **B. The Treaty of Saint German**

Officially signed on September 10, 1919 and came into force on July 16, 1920.

- The treaty officially registered the breakup of the Habsburg Empire, recognizing the independence of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Yugoslavia) and ceding eastern Galicia, Trento, southern Tirol, Trieste, and Istria.
- Reduced Austria to a small state of 8 million people and allocated former non-German speaking territories to the new states of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.
- The union of Austria with Germany was expressly forbidden without the consent of the Council of the League of Nations. Because the allied powers wanted Germany to remain weak.
- The Austrian Army was reduced to 30,000 men and broke up Austro-Hungarian

navy, distributing it among the Allied powers.

- The Austria created by the treaty was financially and militarily weak and therefore a chronic force of instability in Europe between the two World Wars.

### **C. Treaty of Trianon**

- Officially signed on signed on June 4th 1920
- Germany lost 13 % of its former territory... Hungary had been compelled to cede 72 % of the territory held by her for thousand years. Of 20 million inhabitants of Hungary, 13.4 million i.e. 64% of the original population were torn away.
- The Hungarian Army cannot exceed 35,000 men.
- Against 35,000 men of the Hungarian-Trianon army stood 542,000 soldiers at the disposal of the newly developed hostile states.
- Hungary was deprived of 62.2 % of its railroad network, 73.8 % of its public roads 64.6 % of its canals, 83 % of its iron ore mines.
- Citizens of former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy differing in race and language from the majority of the population of the territory, shall within six months [join a state], if the majority of the population of the State has the same race and language as the person exercising the right to opt.
- Hungary lost over 2/3 of its territory to Yugoslavia, Romania and Czechoslovakia.

### **D. Treaty of Neuilly**

- Neuilly, Treaty of, November 27, 1919, the peace treaty signed by defeated Bulgaria and the World War I victors.
- Bulgaria was forced to reduce its army to 20,000 men, cede lands to Yugoslavia and Greece that involved the transfer of 300,000 people.
- Bulgarian army was limited to 20,000 men.
- Bulgaria was commanded to pay reparations exceeding \$400 million, and recognize the existence of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

- This treaty was not effective because Bulgaria did not follow the treaty until 75% was remitted from it.

#### **E. Treaty of Sevres**

- Signed on Aug. 10, 1920 by Turkey and the Allied Powers
- The treaty abolished the Ottoman Empire and obliged Turkey to renounce all rights over Arab Asia and North Africa.
- Its Middle Eastern Territories were handed to British and the French as League of Nations mandate. Britain gained mandate of Iraq and Palestine. France gained mandate of Lebanon and Syria.
- Led to treaty of Lausanne in 1923.
- The Ottoman Army was to be restricted to 50,000 men; the Ottoman navy could only preserve seven sloops and six torpedo boats; and the Ottoman state was prohibited from obtaining an air force.
- Turkey's territory was reduced from 613,724 before war to 174,900 as a result of the treaty.
- Created a new nation called Saudi Arabia in the Middle East.

#### **Treaty of Lausanne (24th July 1923)**

The terms of the Treaty of Sevres was accepted by the Sultan, but not so by a parallel government headed by Mustafa Kemal Pasha. He retired to Ankara and set up a rival government and also gathered a large army. Repeated attempts by the Greeks to defeat Mustafa Kemal failed and a large number of Greeks were killed and the remaining were expelled from Asia Minor. There was no one to enforce the terms of the Treaty of Sevres. The French and Italian forces were withdrawn from there. The small British army remained at its stations and instead of attacking it, Mustafa Kemal entered into negotiations which led to the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne.

The treaty provided not only for the independence of the Republic of Turkey but also for the protection of the ethnic Greek minority in Turkey and the mainly

ethnically Turkish Muslim minority in Greece. Much of the Greek population of Turkey was exchanged with the Turkish population of Greece. The treaty delimited the boundaries of Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey, formally ceded all Turkish claims on Cyprus, Iraq and Syria, and (along with the Treaty of Ankara) settled the boundaries of the latter two nations. The treaty also led to international recognition of the sovereignty of the new Republic of Turkey as the successor state of the defunct Ottoman Empire.

### **An Evaluation of the Treaty of Versailles : A Case Study**

Having gone through the terms of this treaty a question arises as to whether this was a fair settlement or not? There is a long standing argument that it was not. This originated from the forebodings of contemporary diplomats and observers like Norman Davies and Harold Nicolson, of economist J.M. Keynes, and historian W.H. Dawson and Ruth Henig. Although the sympathy for Germany was subsequently diluted by the rise of Hitler, there emerged a feeling that the Treaty of Versailles could well have contributed to the destructive phenomenon of Nazism. It then became common to question, the wisdom of visiting the guilt of the Kaiser's Germany upon moderate Weimer republic which had been engaged in a desperate struggle for survival against the forces of extreme Right. The Germans constantly attacked the Versailles Diktat.

Using these sources, we can now build a composite criticism of the Treaty of Versailles. On the issue of territorial changes there is some support for the implementation of national self-determination, but considerable criticism of the uneven use of plebiscite. Why, for example, this facility has been provided to the Danes of Northern Schlezwig and the Poles and Czechs of Southern Silesia, but not to the Germans of the Sudetanland or of Austria? Germany's frontier literally bled. Poland, in particular, was treated too generously at German's expense, a clear perversion of the thirteenth of President Wilson's Fourteen Points. As for the confiscation of German colonies, many observers point to the element of hypocrisy. Wilson's avowed reason for this was to protect the inhabitants from the proven harshness of the German rule.

The most influential critique of the economic provisions of the Treaty was

J.M. Keynes. He argued that settlement lacked wisdom in its aim to destroy Germany's very means of subsistence. The coal and iron provisions, for example, were disastrous. Germany would be left with a capacity to produce only 60 million tonnes annually, whereas in 1913 she had consumed 110 million tonnes. Above all the indemnity being considered by the Allies in 1919 was well beyond the German means to pay. According to Keynes, the real dangers for the future lay not in boundary questions but rather in questions of food, coal and commerce. He remained convinced that 'The Treaty, by overstepping the limits of the possible, has in practice settled nothing'. The subsequent economic crisis suffered by the Weimer Republic, including the collapse of the mark in 1923, seemed to provide immediate evidence to support his prediction.

**Why did a treaty of such severity emerge in the first place?** The reason most commonly given was that the ideals of Wilson were heavily diluted by the ideals of Clemenceau and the practical approach of Lloyd George. Clemenceau influenced the whole proceedings because he knew only one goal: "security for France." The British delegation took a more moderate stance, but Lloyd George was, nevertheless, under heavy pressure from the public opinion at home to make Germany pay for all the damage caused during the war. The result was the triumph of expediency over ideals leading to a deterioration of moral awareness.

There could be only one solution. The revision of the treaty was the necessary and inevitable first step forward. In 1924, the Dawes Plan modified the method of paying reparations, while the Young Plan of 1930 extended the deadline, and the Lausanne Agreement of 1932 cancelled outstanding reparations. Meanwhile, all occupation forces were withdrawn from the Rhineland by 1930 and League of Nations provided for the full return of the Saar to Germany by 1935. But critics of the treaty maintained that these concessions were too late to reconcile the Germans to a settlement which it bitterly hated.

However in recent times a different picture of the Treaty of Versailles emerged. By emphasizing three points it is possible to show that the treatment meted out to Germany was not unduly harsh. First, her territorial losses in 1919 were tiny compared with the alterations which the German victory would have brought. According to Fritz Fisher (German historian), Germany's war aims included economic dominance over



Belgium, Holland and France; supremacy over Courland, Livonia, Estonia, Lithuania and Poland in Eastern Europe, and over Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey in the Balkans; unification with Austria and the creation of Greater Germany; and control over the entire Eastern Mediterranean and over dismantled Russia. In sharp contrast the Allied ambassadors, far from humiliating a defeated country, showed considerable restraint in removing only those ethnic minorities who had clearly suffered inclusion in the German Reich. Second, some form of economic compensation was only to be expected, given the terrible French losses. German industries, by contrast, had largely escaped destruction since the Rhineland and Ruhr never came within the scope of Allied operations. There was, therefore, a clear-cut argument for transferring some of the wealth of a complete industrial economy to assist the reconstruction of a shattered one. Third, it has not been conclusively proved that the Treaty of Versailles crippled Germany in the process of compensating France and Belgium. The chronic inflation between 1919 and 1923 was due at least as much to the German government's unrestrained use of bank notes and to the heavy speculation by the Rhineland industrialists. There remains a strong suspicion that Germany could not meet the reparation because she had no intention of doing so. A general hike in taxation could have met all foreign debts. No ministry, however, was prepared to risk the internal opposition which this step would have brought; a short-term policy based on the reckless printing of paper money seemed a much easier choice.

The role of France and Britain at the Peace Settlement has also been extensively reassessed. It seemed that France had every right to consider itself the aggrieved party between 1919 and 1923. The French originally sought to accomplish two objectives only: economic reconstruction and military security. These could be attained most effectively within the structure of an Atlantic community which would perpetuate the unity of the war time alliance. Hence the Minister of Commerce, Clementel, had in 1918 proposed an economic bloc which would operate the system of preferential tariffs and come to an agreement on currency matters. As for the future security of France, Tardieu, the French delegate, argued that a neutralized Rhineland would be the best guarantee against future German invasion. This should be related to a permanent pact between the Western powers. Once Western Europe had achieved a new strength and stability as a result of these

agreements, Germany could be allowed to regain her economic and industrial status without the danger of future aggression and war. Unfortunately the French scheme proved unsuccessful. Clemenceau's proposals were rejected by the United States, with the result that France had to depend entirely on German reparations for her economic recovery. Worse followed when the U.S Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles. This meant that the treaty of mutual guarantee between France, Britain and the United States also collapsed. The United States withdrew from all military commitments in Europe, while Britain, whose membership of the alliance had been tied to American involvement, considered her own obligation to France ended by the Senate's decision. France was by now virtually isolated and faced the prospect of containing, by herself, the inevitable revival of Germany. By 1923, moreover, it had become evident that the German government was doing its utmost to escape fulfilling the terms of the treaty. Was it surprising, therefore, that Poincaré, the French President, should have tried to restore the French plan by ordering the occupation of Ruhr?

British government was the main critique of this action. But, it has been argued, that the record of the British delegation at Paris was far from moderate or even consistent. The usual view that Lloyd George was a pragmatist, driven by occasional harshness only by pressure from the British public opinion, will not do. If anything, the British position was more extreme than the French. Lloyd George, for example, appeared just as revanchist as Clemenceau; in 1918 he told the Imperial War Cabinet: 'The terms of peace must be tantamount to some penalty for the offence.' In one of the sub-commissions, a British representative claimed that Germany could afford to pay reparations of 120,000 million dollars. Although Lloyd George appeared to have been won over to moderation, the British government still put reparations figure almost twice as high as did the French, and then complicated the proceedings by demanding the inclusion of war pensions and separate allowances as war damages. Largely because of British stubbornness, the reparations figure had to be settled separately and was not announced until 1921. By this time the German government had taken comfort from the evident disintegration of the alliance between the victorious powers and had begun to probe for weaknesses in the Versailles Settlement. The country most seriously affected by this was France, who had taken a consistently reasonable line on the whole reparations issue.

## **Conclusion**

It is difficult for anyone to seriously argue that the Treaty of Versailles was a success. But, whereas the treaty's detractors maintained that the major need was fundamental review, some of its defenders have put the case for more effective enforcement. The settlement failed not because it was too harsh, but because the alliance which devised it fell apart with the withdrawal of the United States and Britain, and the isolation of France. Although the treaty was supported by Collective Security and the Locarno Pact (1925), it remained susceptible to any German refusal to implement it. The modification secured by the Dawes Pact (1924) was sufficient to win the temporary co-operation of moderate statesmen like Stressmann. But, in the long term, German public opinion continued to see the whole settlement as a Diktat and eventually supported its overthrow by the Nazi regime. Opponents of the treaty argued that Nazism was one of the legacies; its defenders maintain that Hitler succeeded only because the treaty was not enforced. Germany did have grounds for complaint but the Treaty could have been more severe.

As stated by Norman Lowe, "In conclusion it has to be said that this collection of peace treaties was not a conspicuous success. It had the unfortunate effect of dividing Europe into the states which wanted to revise the settlement (Germany being the main one), and those which wanted to preserve it. On the whole, the latter turned out to be lukewarm in support... and it became increasingly difficult to apply the terms fully. Hobsbawm argues that "the Versailles settlement could not possibly be the basis of a stable peace. It was doomed from the start, and another war was practically certain." The French politician Marshal Foch, as the Versailles Treaty was being signed, stated rather prophetically, "This is not peace; it is an armistice for 20 years." Gilbert White, an American delegate at the Conference, put it perfectly when he remarked that given the problems involved, 'it is not surprising that they made a bad peace; what is surprising is that they managed to make peace at all.'

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**LET US SUM UP**

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No single nation's action would be the only reason for the first world war. It was basically a 'tragedy of miscalculation'. Australian historian L.C.F. Turner proposed, maybe the Germans did not deliberately provoke war; it was caused by 'a tragedy of miscalculation'. Most of the leading rulers and politicians seemed to be incompetent and made bad mistakes

- The Austrians miscalculated by thinking that Russia would not support Serbia
- Germany made a crucial mistake by promising to support Austria with no conditions attached; therefore the Germans were certainly guilty; as were the Austrians, because they risked a major war.
- Politicians in Russia and Germany miscalculated by assuming that mobilizations would not necessarily mean war; and
- Generals, especially Moltke, miscalculated by sticking rigidly to their plans in the belief that this would bring a quick and decisive victory.

At the present time, the majority of historians, including many Germans, accept Fritz Fischer's theory as the most convincing one; that the outbreak of war was deliberately provoked by Germany's leaders.

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**LEAGUE OF NATIONS: ACHIEVEMENTS:  
POLITICAL AND SOCIO- ECONOMIC****Objective****Introduction****Origin of League of Nations****Membership of the League of Nations****Organization of the League of Nations****The Assembly****The Council****The Secretariat****The Permanent Court of Justice****International Labour Organization****Objectives and Function of League of Nations****Accomplishment of the league of nations****Political Achievement****Economic Achievement****Social Achievement****Let Us Sum up**

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**INTRODUCTION**

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World War I was the most destructive conflict in human history, fought in brutal trench warfare conditions and claiming millions of casualties on all sides. The industrial and technological sophistication of weapons created a deadly efficiency of mass slaughter. The nature of the war was thus one of attrition, with each side attempting to wear the other down through a prolonged series of small-scale attacks that frequently resulted in stalemate.

Though the origins of the war were incredibly complex, and scholars still debate which factors were most influential in provoking the conflict, the structure of this system had effectively divided Europe into two camps, based on treaties that obligated countries to go to war on behalf of their allies.

In the immediate aftermath of the war, American and European leaders gathered in Paris to debate and implement far-reaching changes to the pattern of international relations. The **League of Nations** was seen as the epitome of a new world order based on mutual cooperation and the peaceful resolution of international conflicts.

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### **OBJECTIVES**

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After studying this lesson you will be able to know about:

- The Origin of League of Nations.
- Membership and the Organization of the League of Nations.
- Political, Social and Economic Accomplishment of the League of Nations.

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### **ORIGIN OF LEAGUE OF NATIONS**

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It is wrong to say that president Wilson alone was the author of the League of Nations. Private initiatives also played an important part in this direction. During world war I, many suggestions were made from time to time for the creation of an international Organisation which could check wars in the future. A

“league to Enforce Peace” was established by a group of public leaders, including many outstanding Republicans headed by Taft. In 1915 was published a draft known as “Proposals for the Avoidance of war” and a preface was written to it by Lord Bryce. ‘the League of Nations Society’ was set up in 1915 and “The League of free Nations Associations” was started in 1918. Later on, both the Associations were amalgamated into the League of Nations Union. In July, 1918, President Wilson typed out his own first draft. In December, 1918 General Smuts proposed a plan containing the germs of the Council and the Mandate System. Lord Robert Cecil prepared a new draft on the basis of the Phillip ore report. The third draft of Wilson was submitted to Hurst and Miller for revision . The result was a composite Hurst – Miller draft. This was used by the League of Nations Commission of the peace Conference as a basis for discussion. A Commission of 19 members was set up under the CHAIRMANSHIP of President Wilson. Originally the Commission, entrusted with the drafting of the Covenant, consisted of 10 members, two from each of five major powers. But this was strongly objected to by the minor states. As a result of this protest it was finally decided to add nine additional members from the small states. On 14 February, 1919, the tentative draft of the Covenant was presented to the Peace Conference as a whole for its consideration.

On 28 April, 1919, the revise document was adopted unanimously at a plenary session of the conference. The Covenant of the League of Nations was incorporated into the Treaty of Versailles which was signed by the German delegation on 28 June, 1919 . the first 26 Articles of the Treaty contained the Covenant of the League of Nations. This Covenant was also incorporated into the Treaty of St. German, the Treaty of Neuilly and Treaty of Serves. On 10 January,1920, the League of Nations officially came into existence .It’s headquarters were fixed at Geneva in Switzerland.

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### **MEMBERSHIP OF LEAGUE OF NATIONS**

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The League head two types of members: original and non – original members. The original members were those states and dominions who were the signatories of the Treaty of Peace and those states who were invited to accede to the Covenant and actually acceded before 20 March, 1920. As regards the non- original members , were subsequently added by a two- thirds majority, it was provided in the Covenant

that "any full self – governing state, dominion or colony not named in the annex may become a member of the League, if it's admission is agreed to by two – thirds of the Assembly, provided it shall give effective guarantees of its sincere intention to observe it's international obligation and shall accept regulations as may be prescribed by the League in regard to military, naval and air forces and armaments. Certain states were even denied membership of the League on different ground like, the applicant states application was not in order, that they were having unstable governments and unsettled frontiers.

The membership of a state could be terminated in a number of ways. The easiest method of termination of membership was voluntary withdrawal. Article 1 (3) of Covenant provided that "any member of the League, may, after two year's notice of its intention to do so, withdraw from the League, provided that all its international obligation and all its obligation under the Covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal". During the life span of the League sixteen states withdrew from its membership. A State could also loose membership of the League through expulsion,. U.S.S.R was the only country to be expelled from membership when she committed aggression against Finland in December 1939. A State could also loose membership by lapse. It may be noted that although 62 states were members of the League of Nations at one time or the other, it's total strength never exceeded 58 at any given time.

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## **ORGANISATION OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS**

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The main organs of the League of Nations were:

1. The Assembly
2. The Council and
3. The Secretariat
4. The Permanent Court of Justice
5. International Labour Organization

### **The Assembly**

Every member of the League of Nation was a member of the Assembly. Although each member was allowed to send three representatives to the Assembly, each state



had only one vote. The Assembly was required to meet at least once a year. However, special session of the Assembly could be convened as and when required. The Covenant assigned to the Assembly two types of functions. First it was authorised to deal with any matter within the sphere of the action of the League or affecting the peace of the world. In addition to these, the Assembly was assigned certain exclusive functions. These included

- i) The right to admit new members to the League of Nations by a two – thirds majority
- ii) Election of the non-German enter members of the Council
- iii) Apportioning the expense of the League among members states
- iv) Advising reconsideration of the treaties which had become inapplicable
- v) To supervise the work of the council
- vi) Election of the fifteen judges of the Permanent Court of International Justice every nine years
- vii) Approval of the Secretary – General nominated by the council, and
- viii) Amendment of the covenant

A casual look at these functions of the Assembly shows that it was a dominant organ of the League. However, in actual practice it could not prove to be very effective body due to its large size.

### **The Council.**

The council was the executive arm of the Assembly of the League of Nation. The Council shall meet from time to time as occasion may require, and at least once in a year, at the seat of the League, or at such other places as may be decided upon.

The Council, like Assembly, also enjoyed two types of powers. In the first instance The Council may deal at its first meeting with any matter within the sphere of action of the league or affecting the peace of the world. In the second category those functions

which were specifically entrusted to the council such as

- (i) nomination of additional permanent member of the Council.
- (ii) formulations of plans for the reduction of armaments, taking into account the geographical situation and circumstances of each state.
- (iii) to advise regarding the means to be taken by the members of the League for preservation of their territorial integrity against external aggression and political independence of their fellow members.
- (iv) to define the scope of authority or control to be exercised by the mandatory powers under the Mandate system.
- (v) to direct the work of the Secretariat and receive reports from the subsidiary organs of the League.

It may be noted that the council because of its small size proved to be more effective body

### **The Secretariat.**

The Covenant also provided for a permanent Secretariat at Geneva, which was headed by Secretary-General. The Secretary-General was appointed by the council with the approval of the Assembly. The Secretary General was assisted by a staff which was appointed in consultation with the Council. The members states had to pay towards the expenses of the Secretariat in certain proportions. While the meetings of the Council and the Assembly were held from time to time, the Secretariat continued to work throughout the year. The official of the League enjoyed certain privileges and immunities while engaged in the work of the League.

The Secretariat was divided into eleven sections which dealt with matters like mandates, disarmaments, health, minorities, economic and financial questions. It was the responsibility of the Secretary-General to register and publish all the treaties entered into by the members of the league

The other functions of the Secretariat included

- (i) co-ordination of the various activities of the League and its different

organs.

- (ii) To provide a source of continuity and follow up for League work
- (iii) To keep record of the various agencies of the League
- (iv) To furnish necessary information and data to the organs and delegates.
- (v) To make necessary arrangements for meetings and conferences

### **The Permanent Court of International Justice-**

The Permanent Court of International Justice was an important adjunct of the League. The Provision for its establishment was made in the Article 14 of the Covenant. In pursuance of these provisions the Council appointed a Commission of Jurists in 1920. The commission prepared a statute of proposed Court, which after due ratification by requisite number of states, the court was set up at Hague in September 1921.

Originally International Court of Justice consist of 11 judges and four deputy judges. These members were selected for a term of nine years by the Council and the Assembly on the basis of absolute majority. Committee of jurist recommend its members to be increased to 15.

The Court enjoyed two types of Jurisdictions- voluntary and compulsory. The voluntary jurisdiction implied that two or more states involved in a dispute could refer the dispute to the court for settlement. On the other hand certain other states specifically signed an undertaking and accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the court in all legal disputes involving the interpretation of a treaty, breach of an international obligations, or the question of international law etc.

### **International Labour Organization.**

The International Labour Organization though an autonomous agency was another organ of the League of Nations. The members of the League of Nations were automatically treated as members of the International Labour Organization. There are also instances when a state was a member of the I.L.O. without being a member of the League of Nation viz. Germany.

The Organization of the I.L.O. was almost similar to the League of Nation itself. Its three organ were General Conference, corresponding to the Assembly, a Governing Body corresponding to the council and the International Labour Office similar to the Secretariat.

The I.L.O. provided for the international forum for the discussion of labour legislation, prepared the way for the formulation of international standards of Labour Legislation and worked as a useful agency for the collection and publication of Labour statics.

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### **OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS**

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The League of Nations was expected to discharge the following functions:

- (i) To formulate plans for the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety
- (ii) To prevent future war and to eliminate causes of strife and discontent. If a state resorted to war in violation of the Covenant it was ipso facto considered to have committed an act aggression against all members of the League
- (iii) The league was expected to respect and preserve the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all the members of the league against all possible external aggressions
- (iv) League of Nations was expected to take necessary steps for effecting peaceful changes. For this purpose the Assembly could advise the member states to reconsider the treaties which had become inapplicable. It could also draw attention to the conditions whose continuance presented a threat to world peace.
- (v) The league was expected to undertake humanitarian work with a view to mitigate the sufferings throughout the world
- (vi) The league was also expected to discharge the responsibilities imposed on it under the Peace Treaties. Thus it held plebiscites in all disputed territories; appointed various international commissions ; protected the rights of minorities

in the newly formed states

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## ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

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### Political Achievements

In the political sphere the record of the league was the mixture of grand success and failures. The league during its existence handled about 40 political disputes involving different states. Most of these cases were handled by the Council, although some of them were also referred to the other two organ viz. the Assembly and the Permanent Court of International Justice. The League was largely successful in diffusing the situation though more effectively against the weaker one. For fuller appreciation of the role of the League in the Political sphere it shall be desirable to examine some of the political issues handled by it.

**1. Asland Islands-** One of the first disputes to be brought before the League Council pertained to Asland Island. Asland Island located between Sweden and Finland which were taken by Russia in 1809. During Russian Revolution, Finland declare her independence which were duly recognized by Sweden. The resident of Asland island which were mainly Swedish start agitating for union with Sweden. The government of Sweden were indifferent to this but after the agitation of the people of the Sweden start supporting the claim. Under the circumstances there was every possibility of war breaking between Sweden and Finland. At this juncture Great Britain in exercise of her right under the covenant of the League, brought the case to the attention of Secretary General. Final was against to the League intervention but the matter was referred to the committee of the Jurist for advise, which didn't support the contention of Finland. The case was finally decided in 1921. The resident of island guarantee autonomy and political right. The neutrality of the Island was internationally recognized through convention held in April, 1922.

**2. Eupen and Malmedy-** Eupen and Malmedy were two districts located between Prussia (Germany) and Belgium, which were ceded to Belgium under the treaty of Versailles. As per the terms of the treaty a plebiscite was held in these areas which went in favour of Belgium. Germany protested to the council against the attribution of Eupen and Malmedy to Belgium but the Council did not accept the German contention

and finally informed her about the irrevocable nature of the decision.

**3. Mosul Boundary Dispute-** Mosul an area rich in oilfield become bone of contention between Turkey and Iraq. By the treaty of Lausanne concluded in 1923 Turkey and Iraq agreed to draw a mutually acceptable boundary. But they failed to draw a acceptable boundary. Ultimately dispute refer to the League in 1924. The Council draw a provisional boundary line between Turkey and Iraq pending final judgment. Subsequently the same line was decided as permanent boundary line between the two. Though the award was accepted to Iraq but Turkey refused to accept the same. On the mediation of Great Britain a compromise was concluded between Great Britain (acting on behalf of Iraq) and Turkey by which a small part of vilayet was handed over to Turkey. Turkey was also assured some royalties from Mosul oil fields.

**4. Corfu Incident-** Corfu was an Island of Greek. A dispute arose between Italy and Greece following the murder of certain Italian military officer on the Greece soil. The Italians Government demanded an apology and full reparation which Greece failed to comply. As a result Italy attacked the Corfu Island of Greece. The matter was taken to the League by Greece in September 1923 while the dispute was still pending in the league, it was informed by the two parties that the dispute had been settled through diplomatic negotiations. It may be noted that France and Britain played an important role in persuading Italy to evacuate Corfu island.

**5. Manchurian Dispute-** The first case where league failed miserably was the Manchurian dispute. This dispute between Japan and China arose in September 1931 when Japan occupied Central Manchuria on the plea that China had destroyed her railway property. Soon after the invasion China plead to the league for intervention. The Council made an appeal to both the parties to withdraw their troops. As the Japanese failed to withdraw their troops , the council appointed a five men commission to study the situation. In the meanwhile Japan also attacked Shanghai. As a result China made another appeal to the assembly which immediately adopted the resolution on 4 March 1932 calling on Japan to evacuate Shanghai. Though Japan evacuate Shanghai she continued to hold on to Manchuria. The

league failed to take any effective action against Japan even though some of the members of the League did not extend recognition to Manchukuo

**6. Italy Invasion of Ethiopia-** In October 1935 Italy attacked Ethiopia , whereupon the latter approached the League for necessary action against Italy. The Committee of six appointed by the League Council also reported that the Italian Government had resorted to war in utter disregard of its obligations under the charter. It however failed to check Italian aggression. Ultimately the Assembly decided to apply economic sanction against Italy. Though most of the states responded favorably to the call for economic sanction, certain other states continued to supply oil to her. So Italy continued bombing Ethiopia and Addis Ababa fell to the invaders. Italy later confiscated Abyssinia and declared that war is over. The league failed to check the Italian aggression against Ethiopia.

**7. Failure of League to check German Aggression-** Most serious challenge to the authority of the league was posed by the Germany. Germany not only withdrew from the League but also ordered conscription in complete violation of the terms of the treaty of Versailles. On March 7, 1936 she remilitarized the Rhineland in violation of the Locarno Treaties. This was followed by occupation of Austria in March 1938 and seizure of Czechoslovakia in March 1939. The league failed to take any action against Germany. It merely adopted resolutions condemning her action and felt contented by issuing warning from time to time. Germany emboldened by this attacked Poland, which started second world war.

**8. Other Disputes-** In addition to the dispute listed above, the League also handled a number of other cases such as the dispute between Poland and Lithuania over the city of Vilna (1920-22), the case of Hungarian octants' between Hungary and Rumania (1923-30), disputes over nationality decrees between Great Britain and France (1921), dispute between Poland and Czechoslovakia over Faworzina district(1923-24)

Apart from ensuring international security , the League played important role in other political activities as well. It ensured that the mandate territories were properly administered. For this purpose it set up Mandates Commission, consisting of eleven experts in colonial government. This Commission received annual reports from the

Mandatory Powers regarding the administration of the territories placed under their mandate. The Commission examined the reports minutely and submitted the same to the Council along with its own comments and recommendations. The Council in turn considered these reports and made necessary suggestions to the Mandatory Powers.

The league also paid full attention to the problem of minorities. It appointed a received complaints regarding ill-treatment of minorities and took up the issues with the concerned governments. Generally the Committee is successful in redressing the grievances , if not succeeded, it could refer the petition to the Council. It may be noted that League mainly adopted the method of persuasion to protect the interest of the minorities.

### **Economic Achievements**

The accomplishment of the league in the economic sphere were no less significant. It provided an elaborate machinery for ensuring economic co-operation amongst various nations of the world. It set up a number of financial and economic Committee consisting of experts drawn from various countries. These Committees held regular meetings at Geneva and regulated the financial and economic work of the league. The Financial Committee played a commendable role in tackling the problems of counter-feting, falsification of commercial documents, double taxation and fluctuating value of gold. The Economic Committee also did valuable work by organizing a number of international conferences. The most notable of the conferences organized by the Economic Committee were the World Economic Conference of 1927 and the Monetary and Economic Conference of 1933.

The Covenant had also imposed responsibility on the League to “make provision to secure and maintain freedom of communications and of transit and equitable treatment for the commerce of all members of the League”. For the fulfillment of this duty the League created an autonomous Communications and Transit Organization was concerned with freedom of international transit, collection of transit statistics, press facilities and accuracy of reporting, the simplification passport and other travel documents, discrimination against foreign shipping in ports, the use of inland waters, the uniformity of highway traffic regulations, coordination of the national public works programmes etc



The Communications and Transit Organization held its first Conference at Barcelona in 1921, where it adopted two conventions. Under these conventions it was agreed that transport originating in one state and crossing second or third state, should enjoy complete liberty of transit with equal treatment for all flags and freedom from custom duties and vexation dues. The organization held yet another Conference at Geneva in November 1923. This conference dealt with the problems of international railway, equality of shipping in maritime ports and the transmission of electric powers. It simplified frontier formalities for passengers and goods traffic through railways; contemplated for equal treatment of all states in port dues and regulations; and effected improvements in the passport system, specially regarding the abolition of visa system.

### **Social Achievements**

In the social sphere also the league did remarkable job. It tried hard to improve the lot of the working people through the International Labour Organization. For this purpose a number of conventions were concluded which were ratified by most of the members. It tried to remove the social evil of slavery. It held a Slavery Convention at Geneva in 1925 for the abolition of Slavery. In 1932 the League set up a permanent Slavery Commission for the same purpose. Some other important work done by the League of Nation are

**(I) Health of the people-** league paid attention to the health of the people and set up the Health Organization in 1923. The Health Organization worked through a Health Committee and Secretariat. It worked in close cooperation with the governments of the members states for the eradication of malaria, small-pox, leprosy, rabies, cancer, tuberculosis, heart diseases etc. it held technical conferences and encouraged research in medicine with a view to improve the health of the people.. the Health Organization of the league also did commendable job in the field of combating infant mortality, collection of statistics, fixation of dietary standards and control of plague etc.

**(II) Resettlement of the millions of war prisoners-** Another commendable work done by the league was the resettlement of the millions of war prisoners and refugees. Dr. Nansen provided able leadership to the League in discharge of these duties. It may be noted that the finance for this purpose were mainly provided by

the member states and other charitable institutions, and the league merely co-ordinate their activities

**(III) Trafficking in women and children-** League tackled the problem regarding traffic in women and children. In 1921 a convention was adopted according to which no women could offer herself for traffic before twenty-one years of age. In 1933 another convention was adopted which provided that international traffic in women of full age with a view to immorality in another country, could be subjected to penalty. It also took measures to solve the problem of obscene literature.

**(IV) Welfare of the Children-** It set up a Child Welfare Committee, which evolved a model agreement regarding the return of children and young people to their homea. Efforts were also made through national legislation to raise the age of marriage and improve the lot of the illegitimate children. It also devoted attention towards the protection of the blind children and provided necessary training to them to make them self-reliant.

**(V) Suppression of traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs-**In 1923 a convention was drawn, which laid down that drugs could not be imported without proper certificates. Trade in opium was restricted. A permanent Control Board was set up, which collected periodic estimates from the countries regarding their narcotic needs. In 1931 another convention was held which paved restrictions on the export of opium and other related drugs to the western countries. For the first time an international body was set up which exercised supervision over sovereign states with regard to production and consumption of manufactured articles.

**(VI) Protection of Minorities-** A Minority Commission and The Council was established. the rights of the minorities which were thus protected included the political and civil rights, use of mother tongue, school instructions in the language of the minority; employment of the minorities in the public offices etc. all these things done in Keeping in mind not to offend the susceptibilities of governments.

**(VII) Codification of International Law-** The league made an effort to codify the international law in systematic manner. The Committee of the Jurists, which drafted the Statue of the Permanent Court of International Justice in1920, adopted a resolution for convening an international conference, with a view to

reconcile the divergent views different topics of international law. It was also expected to consider those issues which were not properly regulated. In 1924 the Council of the League appointed a committee of 16 jurists to examine the issue of codification of the international law. The Committee recommended to the Council in 1927 that codification of law on the following topics could be undertaken- nationality, territorial waters, responsibility of states for damage done in their territory to the persons or property of foreigners, diplomatic privileges and immunities, procedure of international conferences and procedures for the conclusion and drafting of treaties. The league also rendered valuable help in the settlement of the intellectuals in the war devastated areas. It set up an International Committee on intellectual cooperation in 1922. In 1926 it set up the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation at Paris to Coordinate “ international collaboration with the view to promoting the progress of general civilization and human knowledge and notably the development and diffusion of science, letters and arts”.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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League of Nation did a commendable work in promotion of International peace and security. Impressed by the valuable humanitarian work done by the league Cordell Hull, the U.S. Secretary of State remarked in 1939, “ The League of Nation has been responsible for more Humanitarian and scientific endeavor than any other organization in history”.

Walter describes the establishment of the League of Nations as a ‘revolutionary step’, because it meant changes of principles, changes even in the general conviction which form the basis of public opinion. According to Prof. Potter ”measured by what other international organizations had accomplished in the past, the League’s performance even in the security field rates very high, indeed higher than that of any other international institution with the exception of a very few highly special and limited agencies”. Probably the most significant contribution of the League was the influence it exercised in spreading the idea of international cooperation.

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**FAILURES OF LEAGUE OF NATIONS &  
CAUSES OF THE FAILURE OF THE LEAGUE**

**Background**

**Objectives**

**Introduction**

**Aims to be accomplished**

**Failures of the League of Nations**

**Causes of Failure**

**Wall street crash**

**Absence of Great Powers**

**Domination of France and England**

**Rise of Dictatorship**

**Limitations of Legal Method**

**Loss of faith in League**

**Constitutional Defect**

**Narrow Nationalism**

**Lack of Mutual cooperation**

**Separate lines of thought**

**Manchurian crisis and Abyssian crisis**

## Let us Sum up

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### BACKGROUND

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The outbreak of the 1<sup>st</sup> world war made the leaders of the world, to establish an international organization for preventing future wars. The treaty of Versailles also provided a covenant for the establishment of an international organization to maintain peace and security in the world.

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### OBJECTIVE

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By the end of the lesson you will learn

- 1) What the League had to accomplish as its aim.
- 2) How defective constitution, ineffective planning and domination of France and England paved the way for failure of League of Nations.

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### 11.1 INTRODUCTION

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The League of Nation was set up by President Woodrow Wilson of U.S.A on the basis of his fourteen points. It was his idea to create an world organization to maintain peace and prevent future wars. His 14 points underline the creation of a general association of nations. The League was actually established in 1920 and its H.Q was shifted from Paris to Geneva because of the faulty structure, constitution, Inactiveness of bigger power like- America, Russia; Violation of treaty by Italy, Japan; Ineffective sanction and administrate inaction results into its failure.

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### AIMS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

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- 1) To act as “World parliament” where nation would sort out their agreement.
- 2) Persuade the nations to agree to disarmment.
- 3) protect the world from future wars.

- 4) Enforce the treaty of Versailles and persuade the countries to keep promises they had made.
- 5) To improve people's lives and jobs, wealth and to end slavery.

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## FAILURES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

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While the League of Nations could celebrate its successes, the League had every reason to examine its failures and where it went wrong. These failures, especially in the 1930's, cruelly exposed the weaknesses of the League of Nations and played a part in the outbreak of World war II in 1939. During the 1920's the failures of the League of Nations were essentially small-scale and did not threaten world peace. However they did set a marker – that the League of Nations could not solve problems if the protagonists did not 'play the game'.

**Article 11** of the League's Covenant stated: *“Any war or threat of war is a matter of concern to the whole League and the League shall take action that may safeguard peace.”*

Therefore, any conflict between nations, which ended in war and the victory of one state over another, had to be viewed as a failure by the League.

The first crisis the League had to face was in north Italy in 1919, Italian nationalists, angered that the “Big Three” had, in their opinion, broken promises to Italy at the Treaty of Versailles, captured the small port of Fiume. The Treaty of Versailles had given this port to Yugoslavia. For 15 months, an Italian nationalist called d'Annunzio governed Fiume. The newly created League did nothing. The situation was solved by the Italian government who could not accept that d'Annunzio was seemingly more popular than they were – so they bombarded the port of Fiume and enforced a surrender. In all this the League played no part despite the fact that it had just been set up with the specific task of maintaining peace.

The next crisis the League faced was at Teschen, which was a small town between Poland and Czechoslovakia. Its main importance was that it had valuable coalmines there, which both the Poles and the Czechs wanted. As both were newly created nations, both wanted to make their respective economies as strong as possible and the acquisition of rich coal mines would certainly help in this respect.

In January 1919, Polish and Czech troops fought in the streets of Teschen. Many died. The League was called on to help and decided that the bulk of the town should go to Poland while Czechoslovakia should have one of Teschen's suburbs. This suburb contained the most valuable coalmines and the Poles refused to accept this decision. Though no more wholesale violence took place, the two countries continued to argue over the issue for the next twenty years.

Many years before 1920, **Vilna** had been taken over by Russia. Historically, Vilna had been the capital of Lithuania when the state had existed in the Middle Ages. After World War One, Lithuania had been re-established and Vilna seemed the natural choice for its capital.

However, by 1920, 30% of the population was from Poland with Lithuanians only making up 2% of the city's population. In 1920, the Poles seized Vilna. Lithuania asked for League help but the Poles could not be persuaded to leave the city. Vilna stayed in Polish hands until the outbreak of World War Two. The use of force by the Poles had won.

In 1920, Poland invaded land held by the Russians. The Poles quickly overwhelmed the Russian army and made a swift advance into Russia. By 1921, the Russians had no choice but to sign the Treaty of Riga, which handed over to Poland nearly 80,000 square kilometres of Russian land. This one treaty doubled the size of Poland.

What did the League do about this violation of another country by Poland? The answer is simple – nothing. Russia by 1919 was communist and this “plague from the East” was greatly feared by the West. In fact, Britain, France and America sent troops to attack Russia after the League had been set up. Winston Churchill, the British War Minister, stated openly that the plan was to strangle Communist Russia at birth. Once again, to outsiders, it seemed as if League members were selecting which countries were acceptable and ones that were not. The Allied invasion of Russia was a failure and it only served to make Communist Russia even more antagonistic to the West.

The Treaty of Versailles had ordered **Weimar Germany** to pay reparations for war damages. These could either be paid in money or in kind (goods to the value of a set amount). In 1922, the Germans failed to pay an installment. They claimed that

they simply could not rather than did not want to. The Allies refused to accept this and the anti-German feeling at this time was still strong. Both France and Belgium believed that some form of strong action was needed to ‘teach Germany a lesson’.

In 1923, contrary to League rules, French and Belgian troops invaded the Ruhr – Germany’s most important industrial zone. Within Europe, France was seen as a senior League member – like Britain – and the anti-German feeling that was felt throughout Europe allowed both France and Belgium to break their own rules as were introduced by the League. Here were two League members clearly breaking League rules and nothing was done about it.

For the League to enforce its will, it needed the support of its major backers in Europe, Britain and France. Yet France was one of the invaders and Britain was a major supporter of her. To other nations, it seemed that if you wanted to break League rules, you could. Few countries criticised what France and Belgium did. But the example they set for others in future years was obvious. The League clearly failed on this occasion, primarily because it was seen to be involved in breaking its own rules.

The border between **Italy and Albania** was far from clear and the Treaty of Versailles had never really addressed this issue. It was a constant source of irritation between both nations.

In 1923, a mixed nationality survey team was sent out to settle the issue. Whilst travelling to the disputed area, the Italian section of the survey team became separated from the main party. The five Italians were shot by gunmen who had been in hiding.

Italy accused Greece of planning the whole incident and demanded payment of a large fine. Greece refused to pay up. In response, the Italians sent its navy to the Greek island of Corfu and bombarded the coastline. Greece appealed to the League for help but Italy, led by Benito Mussolini, persuaded the League via the Conference of Ambassadors, to fine Greece 50 million lire.

To follow up this success, Mussolini invited the Yugoslavian government to discuss ownership of Fiume. The Treaty of Versailles had given Fiume to Yugoslavia but with the evidence of a bombarded Corfu, the Yugoslavs handed over the port to Italy with



little problem.

All of these failures were secondary to the two major ones in the 1930's. What they did show the world was that the League could not enforce a settlement if it did not have the ability to do so and dictators were keen to exploit this where they could. Prior to the troubles experienced in Western Europe in the 1930's, the League had to deal with two major problems and it fell down on both – Manchuria and Abyssinia

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### **CAUSES OF FAILURE**

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Born with the will of victors of first world war, the League of nation represents an important milestone in the direction of achieving the age old global community aspiration of a global body. League of nations was immediate solution after first world war, it gained certain success in the 1920s but it is generally agreed that it was a failure in the 30s. The League failed to bring about disarmament and also to solve several problems. These problems included:

Vilna (1921), Russo-Polish war(1920-21), Greece vs Turkey (1920-21), Corfu Incident (1923), Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928), Abyssian crisis, Manchurian crisis, unemployment and other causes are:-

#### **Wall street crash:**

In 1929, the wall street crash started a long depression that quickly led to economic problems throughout the world, damaging trade and industry of all countries. It led to negatively effect the relations between countries.

#### **Absence of Great Powers:**

The League proved neither as a universal organization in its scope nor as an equitable body in action. U.S.A. refused to join the League whereas the U.S.S.R. and Germany were not admitted into it for a long time. From the time of the admission Italy, Japan and Germany tried to sabotage the League.

#### **Domination of France, Italy and Germany:**

The most important members of the League, France and Britain failed to fulfill their obligations. The history of the year 1932-1939 is a dismal record of violation of treaties

solemnly drawn up and of acts of aggression by powers which had solemnly renounced was an instrument of national policy. Gradually it was reduced to an organization protecting the interests of the victors—France and Britain.

### **Rise of Dictatorship:**

The emergence of dictatorship and the eclipse of democracies in many parts of the world was another important factor. Rise of Nazism in Germany and Adolf Hitler and fascism in Italy (1919) and Mussolini.

### **Limitation of Legal Methods:**

Although league of Nation was considered as a “world parliament” but no proper system was devised to check the power of the countries who violates treaty and rule set by league of nation. League of Nation become a puppet body in the hand of some countries like – Italy and Japan, League of Nations was unable to impose legal sanction against these countries.

### **Loss of Faith in League:**

League failed in the long run to fulfill the expectation of its more enthusiastic supporters.

**Failure of League in Cieszyn-** Cieszyn is a region between Poland and today's Czech republic, important for its coal mine. Czechoslovakia troops moved to Cieszyn in 1919 to take control of the region while Poland was defending itself from the invasion of Bolshevik Russia. The League intervened, deciding that Poland should control most of the town, but that Czechoslovakia should take one of the town suburbs, which contained the most valuable coal mines and the only railroad connecting Czech lands and Slovakia. Poland refused to accept this decision; although there was no further violence the diplomatic dispute continued for another 20 years.

**Vilna, 1920:** Poland and Lithuania both regained independence after world war first. The city of Vilna made the capital of Lithuania, despite being mainly Polish in ethnicity. During Polish-Soviet war in 1920, a Polish army took control of the city. The league accepted the city as a Polish town on March 15, 1923. Thus the Poles

were able to keep it until Soviet invasions in 1939. Lithuanian authority over Vilna and treated it as a constitutional capital. It was not until 1938 ultimatum, when Lithuania resolved diplomatic relation with Poland and thus de facto accepted the borders of its neighbour.

**Invasion of Ruhr Valley, 1923:** Under the treaty of Versailles, Germany had to pay reparations. They could pay in money or goods at a set value; however, in 1922 Germany was not able to make its payment. The next year, France and Belgium chose to act upon this, and invaded the industrial heartland of Germany, the Ruhr, despite this being in direct contravention of league's rule with France being a major league member and Britain hesitant to oppose its close ally, nothing was done in the league. This set a significant precedent- the league rarely acted against major powers, and occasionally broke its own rule.

**Corfu, 1923:** One major boundary settlement that remained to be made after world war first was that between Greece and Albania. The task to settled the issue was given to a de facto body of the league "The Conference Of Ambassadors" under Italian general Enrico Tellini but while examining the greek side of the border tellini and his staff murdered, On 31<sup>st</sup> August, Italian forces occupied the island of Corfu, part of Greece, with fifteen people being killed. Initially, the league condemned Mussolini's invasion, but also recommended Greece pay compensation, to be held by league until Tellini's killer were found. Mussolini, though he initially agreed to the league's terms, set about trying to change them by working on the conference of ambassadors, he managed to make the league change its decision. Greece was forced to apologize and compensation was to be paid directly and immediately. Mussolini was able to leave Corfu in triumph. By working on the conference of ambassadors, he managed to make league changed its decision. Greece was forced to apologize and compensation was to be paid directly and immediately. By bowing to the pressure of a large country, the league again set a dangerous and damaging example. This is one of the league's major failures.

**Axis rearmament, 1923 and 1932:** The league was powerless and mostly silent in the face of major events leading to world war second such as Hitler's remilitarization of the Rhineland, occupation of Sudetenland and Anschluss with

Austria, which had been forbidden by the treaty of Versailles. As with Japan, both Germany in 1933- using the failure of world disarmament conference to agree to armsparity between France and Germany as a pretext- and Italy in 1937 withdrew from the league rather than submit to its judgement. The league commissioner in Danzig was unable to deal with with Germans claim on the city, a significant contributing factor in the outbreak of World War second in 1939 after it invaded Finland.

1928 –Kellogg-Briand Pact-Sixty five countries signed a treaty to end war- but than they just ignored it.

1920's-The International Labour organization failed to persuade countries to adopt 48 hours week.

#### **Constitutional Defect:**

There was defect in the basic structure of league. It has many organizational defect. It does not have the separate funding body. it depended upon for income our aduntaries contributions. It was not provided any effective machinery to compel the members to respect decisions such when the military atanoclarols to enforce sanction us not clear.

#### **Narrow Nationalism:**

International institutions without international minds are as shallow as democracies without public spirit. The League was based upon very high ideals to which the people could not risk. Still the world was dominated by the spirit of nationalism and every nation tried to save itself at the expense of the rest of the world.

The noble concept of world brotherhood, rising above all national feeling became a fancy. The ideals of league brushed aside whenever they came into conflict with international interests.

#### **Lack of Mutual Cooperation:**

The League was organized on the assumption that the Versailles settlement of 1919

was final and the members should respect the territorial integrity and integration. But the Vienna settlement has no air of permanency about it. One of the principles was national-self-determination and in the newly created states of central Europe there were large minorities who aspired for independence or union with the neighboring states. This was a real source of trouble league had no satisfactory means of modifying territorial adjustments.

### **Separate line of thought:**

Due to acute national rivalries of the post war period, the League failed to bring about any agreement on disarmament- one of the foremost aims of League. The race of armament continued as ever and it led to the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War.

### **Abyssinia and Manchurian Crisis:**

Japan and Italy who were two important countries of League refused all the sanctions of the League which questioned the position of the League as an international institute.

**Italy invasion of Abyssinia, 1935-36-** In Oct 1935, Italy invaded Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and captured Addis Abba in May 1936. The Italian used chemical weapons (mustard gas) and flames throwers against the Abyssinians. The League of nations condemned Italian aggression and impose economic sanction in Nov 1935, but the sanctions were largely ineffective. As Stanley Baldwin later observed it was largely because no one had the military forces on hand to withstand an Italian attack. On 9 Oct, 1935, the U.S refused to cooperate with any of Leagues action.

**Japan invasion of Manchuria-** Japan attacked Manchuria on 1931, without declaration of war, breaching the rules of League. Since Japan was in a depression and the only means that the League of Nations could punish nations was by economic sanction, it had little effect on Japan. After a long and frustrating wait, League official sailed to Manchuria to assess the situation for themselves. A whole year later in Sep, 1932, a report was presented. It was balanced and detailed but clearly suggested that Japan had acted unlawfully- Manchuria should be returned to the China. In Feb of the next year Japan announced further invasion of China for its security purpose. On Feb, 24, 42 votes were against Japan and only one in

its favor, Japan took this as an insult and resigned on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 1933, from the League and further invaded Jehol.

But there was no detailed economic sanction procedure before the League. Even countries like Britain and France had no intention to risk their navies and armies in a war with Japan.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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The League of Nation was the first experiment to establish an international organization in the political field. One of its main shortcoming was that it was primarily aimed to preserve existence consequences on the treaty of versailles of 1919 and other shortcomings are –

- \*It lost its universality of membership.

- \*Basically it acted as European club.

- \*President Woodrow Wilson, one of the founding father of the League of Nations was not allowed to join the league of nation because the U.S. senate refused to ratify the government of the League.

- \*The US congress reduced its contribution to the League budget by 25%.

Moreover it was wrong to say that the League was a complete failure but it was as utter failure in protecting the world from Second World War.

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**MODERNISATION OF JAPAN (1868 – 1905)**

**Structure**

**Objective**

**Introduction**

**Geographical Features**

**Geographical Influence**

**Climate, Rainfall & Rivers**

**People**

**Early Inhabitants**

**Shintoism**

**Early History & Culture before Modernization**

**The Tokugawa Shogunate**

**The Meiji Restoration & Modernization**

**Changes in Social Structure**

**New Age**

**Political Changes (1867-1894)**

**Code of Laws**

**Currency System**

**Political Parties in Japan**

## **Ito and the New Constitution**

### **Re-organization of Education**

#### **Western Music**

### **New Economic and Financial Policies (1868-1893)**

#### **Transportation**

### **Agriculture**

#### **Culture, Press and Literature**

### **Let us Sum Up**

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#### **OBJECTIVE**

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To give an overview of the early history and culture of Japan before modernization and steps taken by the Emperor and his government to bring Japan at par with the Western powers.

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

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Japan is one of the most prosperous nations of the world. The transformation of Japan from an agricultural and feudal society into one of the richest and highly industrialized nations of the modern world has taken place during the nineteenth century.

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#### **GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES**

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Japan is invariably referred to as the “Land of the Rising Sun”. She is also called Nippon which means “Origin of the Sun”. She is a small island country with an area of 145834 square miles. It is one eighth of the size of India. Japan occupies less than 0.3% of the world land area, yet, economically she is one of the most prosperous states in Asia.



Japan is made up of four major islands – Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu. They are in a 2360 mile long arc across the Sea of Japan to the East of Korea. Honshu, the central island is the largest with an area of 89194 square miles. Hokkaido is situated to the north of it. Shikoku, the smallest island, lies to the southwest of Honshu and is separated from it by an island sea. Kyushu is situated to the southwest extremity of Honshu.

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### **GEOGRAPHICAL INFLUENCE**

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The influence of geography on the life of the Japanese is more than evident. Being an island nation, the Japanese have become seafarers. The bays and harbours – Nagasaki and Yokohama, two of the best harbours in the world – have made them traders. They have one of the largest merchant navies. They are also some of the best fishermen in the world, and have an excellent fishing industry.

Japan is a mountainous country. About one fifth of her land area is fit for cultivation and other economic activity. Its mountains have divided the land into many small valleys and plains. Mountains account for 85 percent of the land in Japan. Mount Fuji in the central island of Honshu is the highest with an altitude of 12380 feet. Because of the mountainous nature of land, communication from one place to another was difficult till the introduction of the railways. These geographical barriers divided the nation into small groups, which became independent of the central government in medieval times. In the past, the country was divided into 68 states. At present Japan's 47 prefectures follow the boundaries marked by the mountains.

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### **CLIMATE, RAINFALL AND RIVERS**

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Situated in the temperate zone. Japan enjoys a temperate climate which encourages hard work and much human activity. In winters, winds from Siberia carry moisture from the Sea of Japan and drop it in the form of snow in the central mountains. As a result, the north-west coastal region of Japan has a heavy snowfall in winter in contrast with the clear winter skies and the plains spotted with great cities on the pacific side of Honshu. The summer months last from July to September, and are oppressive because of humidity. Summer and winter last for only four months. The climate in the remaining eight months is greatly pleasant.

Japan gets ample rainfall from 40 to 120 inches per year, which nourishes vegetation and makes it a land of emerald greenery. It also encourages the growth of agriculture. The farthest distance from the sea in any part of Japan is 70 miles. The 229 miles long Shinano river in central Honshu is the longest in Japan. Rivers are small and swift but are unfit for navigation. However, they have proved to be a good source of hydroelectric power and have helped in the establishment of many industries. The flood plains of some of the rivers form the chief center of agriculture.

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## **PEOPLE**

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The people who were to become the Japanese of historic times were emigrant from the Asian continent of a predominantly Mongoloids racial mixture. Most of them reached Japan through Korea in successive waves of migration extending over a great period of time. Some Malayan racial elements resembling the Southern Chinese entered Japan through Formosa. The ancestors of the Japanese people belonged to the Yamato ethnic group which asserted its supremacy over others. The Japanese Royal family belongs to this group.

The Ainus, the original tribe of Japan, are almost extinct except in the northern island of Hokkaido. Today, there are not more than 15000 to 20000 Ainus in Hokkaido, the only place where they are now found.

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## **EARLY INHABITANTS**

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Early history of Japan may be traced back to the Neolithic period, for some of the oldest pottery in the world has been found here. During the early current era, i.e. around 200 to 300 A.D, the Japanese society was organized into hereditary clans. One such clan which entered the Yamato region, established its supremacy. They founded the Imperial family in Japan claiming to be the descendants of Sun God.

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## **SHINTOISM**

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The Japanese followed Shintoism, a primitive religion based on the worship of the supernatural power that dwelt in all forces and objects of nature. Shinot (way of the Gods) is the native faith. Shintoism has been an important religion all through the Japanese history. Buddhism and Christianity are also practised but

these are not more than feeder roots. Like Hinduism in India, it is all inclusive. It is vague and nebulous and was the state religion till 1947, when Japan became a secular state under the constitution of 1947.

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### **EARLY HISTORY AND CULTURE BEFORE MODERNIZATION**

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The history of Japanese civilization flows from two events – the sinicisation of Japan between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D and her westernization in the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, Buddhism became a dominant influence in Japanese life. They adopted many aspects of the Chinese civilization and culture.

The Japanese civilization was tribal in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. while the Chinese civilization had attained a high stage of development. Mahayana Buddhism came to Japan through Korea about 550 A.D. The Yamato ruler prince Shotoku, who was the regent from the 593 to 600 A.D was the greatest supporter of Buddhism. He wrote commentaries on Buddhist scriptures and built Buddhist monasteries. He is also credited with having been the author of a so called constitution which helped to establish a central government based on Chinese model.

From the time of Prince Shotoku till the rise of the Fujiwara family in the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D., Japan and China were close to each other. Chinese culture flooded into Japan and enriched her life, literature, religion and art. The cultural influence of China on Japan deepened during the heyday of the Tang rulers of China.

Though Japan adopted the political system of China, it did not alter the nature of monarchical system. She is perhaps the only country in the world where only one dynasty has been ruling ever since the inception of monarchical rule. For about four centuries, i.e 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries the political power passed into the hands of Fujiwara family which ingeniously and indirectly came to control the Emperor. This period was an age of excellence in literature, art and architecture.

Towards the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D, a professional class of warrior known as Samurai came into existence. These were seasoned soldiers accustomed to hardship. They were loyal to the feudal lords who employed them and were owners of the large estates.

In the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D, the Government sought the help of military chiefs to put down a rebellion which was supported by the Buddhist monks and help restore order. Under such circumstances, Yoritomo established his supremacy and established the parallel government that lasted for the next seven centuries. This parallel military administration came to be called Bakufu (camp office) and Yoritomo assumed the title of “Seii Tai-Shogun”. In this fashion, the head of the Bakufu came to be called Shogun which literally means General. Thus Japan came to have a civil administration under the Emperor and a military administration under the Shogun.

It was during this period that the first European contacts with Japan were established. In 1542 came the Portuguese and established the trade relations. They brought with them gun powder and Christianity, both of which profoundly influenced Japan.

St. Francis Xavier, the well known Jesuit missionary, arrived in Kagoshima in 1549. He was followed by other missionaries. The Japanese welcomed the missionaries for two reasons: (a) through them, they could have a lucrative trade with the west; (b) they discovered much similarity between Christianity and Buddhism.

The introduction of fire arms produced two results. In the first place, the defence of towns and capitals had to be reorganized and strengthened. Secondly breakdown of the central government and the prevailing political confusion and anarchy emboldened feudal lords to declare their independence as chiefs. This new class of virtually independent rival territorial lords and feudal barons in Japan came to be known as the Daimyo.

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### **THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE**

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When Japan was passing through a period of anarchy and political disorganization, three military leaders, viz, Nobunaga, Hideyoshi and Ieyasu made effort to unite her and re-establish an organized and centralized government.

In the struggle for power, Ieyasu, succeeded in vanquishing Hideyori, heir of Hideyoshi, and became master of the country. He appointed himself Shogun in 1603 and established the Tokugawa Shogunate which lasted for over 250 years.

He founded his military capital at Yedo which became the largest fortified city in Japan.

In order to ensure that no military baron became strong enough to challenge his authority, he commanded all Daimyos to maintain houses in Yedo and have some members of their families in the capital, to be kept as hostage. All the official and Samurai were virtual under the control of the Shogun and the Bakafu. He also decided to wipe out Christianity mainly on political grounds. By 1638, most Christians in Japan had been wiped out. The same year, the Shogun closed Japan to all foreigners except the Dutch, who continued to have slender trade relations with the Japanese.

For the next 200 years, Japan was isolated. She enjoyed peace and prosperity. Education, literature, art, and the Confucian learning were encouraged. Buddhism flourished.

**The Perry Mission and the Opening of Japan:-** Perry was not the first attempt to open up Japan to the West. Several Russian and British ships had touched the Japanese ports in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 1847, the king of Holland advised the Japanese to abandon the policy of isolation. The move that finally opened Japan to the West was made by the United States, a power which had no territorial ambitions in the Far East.

Perry's famous Black Ships steamed into Yedo Bay on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1853. He gave the Japanese a letter from President-Fillimore to be presented to the Emperor. The letter stated that the United States was interested in friendship, commerce, coal and provisions for its ships and the protection of ship wrecked sailors. On the second visit of Perry in 1854, a treaty was signed with Japan to the effect. In the two years following the treaty, similar agreements were obtained by England, Russia and Holland. The British treaty opened Nagasaki and the Russia document introduced extra territoriality. The treaties were signed by the Bakafu.

**Fall of the Tokugawa Shoguns:-** For more than two centuries, the Shoguns had used all the political devices and social policies to maintain the fiction that the Emperor ruled and that they merely carried out his wishes. They had isolated Japan but did not succeed in preventing her contacts with the foreign ideas. During

this period, opposition to them had been steadily growing on the ground that the Shogun “was a usurper who had taken the real authority away from the emperor.” The demand now was for the restoration to the Emperor his “original and traditional authority.” When Perry arrived with his fleet in 1853, the Shogun turned to the Emperor and the Daimyo for political support. But the Emperor and the court nobles were in no mood to oblige him, and they were supported by the leaders of the western clans. The forces that finally overthrew the Tokugawa and their allies included the four great western clans of Satsuma, Choshu, Hizen and Tosa.

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### **THE MEIJI RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION**

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In 1867, a lad of fourteen, Mutsuhito, ascended the imperial throne. Mutsuhito assumed the title of Meiji, i.e., enlightened ruler and declared that his policy was to bring about a change in Japanese life vis-vis the outside world. Pressure was brought to bear on the Shogun for his resignation, which he submitted on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1867. An imperial decree was issued, abolishing the office of shoguns, and the dual system of government came to an end in Japan. In desperation, the Shogun marched on Kyoto, was defeated and gave up the hopeless struggle. By 1869, all opposition was crushed; the “Restoration” had been effected and the four western clans assumed control of the government. Once more, the Emperor began to exercise direct authority over the country.

“The Meiji Restoration was not a revolution, not a change in the name of new values ..... Rather it was a change carried out in the name of old values.”

One of the striking innovations of the period was the reformation of the nation on western lines. The foreigner in Japan had come to stay and had to be accepted. The new Emperor Mutsuhito, accepted the ideals of new age. He declared that he would honour the treaties he had entered into with the West and directly supervise Japanese relations with the foreign powers.

The emperor was looked upon as the centre of the new directive forces in Japan. He would act through his ministers but could not take the initiative too openly. The fact of his divine origin and of his own divinity was emphasised.

Everything was done in the Emperor's name. Loyalty to him was the touchstone of patriotism. Any disrespect to him was both high treason and a sacrilege.

The Meiji Emperor fitted admirably into the enhanced role of the crown. He was hard working intelligent and tactful, and he so shaped his policies that it was impossible to determine what originated with him and what with his ministers. He lived through the decades of the great transition. The Meiji Emperor became the symbol of the modernization of Japan. The Meiji Era began on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1868 and ended with Mutsuhito's death on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1912.

**Main characteristics of the modernization of Japan are discussed as follows:-**

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### **CHANGE IN SOCIAL STRUCTURE**

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**Social Equality:-** For about a decade after the Restoration, extensive changes were introduced to reshape the nation's structure. The concept of equality contributed much to the eventual breakdown of the social divisions. This was due to the determined efforts of the lesser samurai, farmers, townsfolk and priests. The first decade of the Meiji Era was, therefore, devoted to an overhauling of the social system, the establishment of fundamental human rights and the recognition and respect of individual worth. These changes involved the abolition of special privileges and the conferment of new rights.

In the summer of 1869, the old court nobility and the Daimyo were designated peers, while those of the samurai class received the designation of Shizoku (gentry). This gentry was divided into eighteen different grades. In the following year, the Government declared that there were only two classes, the Shizoku and the sotsu. To the heimin (commoner) class belonged the farmers, craftsman, priests, and the social outcasts, whose identity as eta and hinin had been abolished. The new Japanese Society was, thus divided into peers, the gentry and the commoners.

**Meiji Reforms:-** The Government did not push through radical changes. In 1871, a decree was issued, making the wearing of swords and cutting off of hair optional. In 1872, conscription for military service was introduced. In 1873, the government abolished the time honored practice of vendetta (duels). It also banned the customs according to which court nobles blackened their teeth and shaved their

eyebrows. In 1874, an order was issued permitting the Buddhists priests to eat beef and marry. As a matter of fact, beef-eating now came to be regarded as a mark of a highly civilized state. Next was the introduction of the practice of the hair cut. Till then, the Japanese had worn their hair long, and the manner in which hair was worn was a distinguishing mark among the social classes.

Changes were introduced to help the nation adjust itself to the moral standards of the West. In 1869 came the ban on lotteries, a practice followed extensively in the Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. In 1872, the sale of persons into bondage and of the pornographic pictures and objects, and the practice of mixed wrestling and tattooing were prohibited. The Gregorian calendar was adopted from 1 January, 1873. This was followed three years later by the adoption of official holidays, and Saturdays to Sundays be half holidays and holidays.

**Liberation of Women:-** One of the earliest advocates of feminine rights was Fukuzawa, who championed monogamy and insisted on respect for women. In 1872, the Government issued a decree, allowing women to enter holy places, Shinto shrines and temples. Justice Minister Eto issued an order in 1872, which proclaimed the liberation of the geishas (cultured sing-song girls who entertained men). In 1873, a married woman was given the legal right to initiate a divorce action against her husband.

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## NEW AGE

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Bread and milk made their appearance on the dining table. The manufacture of beverages like wine, champagne, whisky, gin, brandy and beer was undertaken. The first beer hall in Tokyo was opened on 4 July, 1899.

Photography became very popular and had, by 1874, displaced the more artistic *mishiko*. Lantern slides were the marvels of the seventies, and people were fascinated by the wonderful talking machines (the gramophone). Thomas Edison's kinetoscope reached Japan in 1893. Technological importations from the West accelerated the pace of social and economic changes in Japan.

Gas, kerosene and electricity replaced rapseed oil and candles as source of energy and light. The gaslight era opened in the streets of Yokohama in 1872. Tokyo streets



were lighted in 1885. In January 1887, the Tokyo Electric company made electricity available to consumers, and provided a new method of illumination for the humblest of farmers.

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### **POLITICAL CHANGES, (1867-1894)**

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**Centralization of Administration:** The Meiji Restoration was followed by a reorganization of the Government. It was necessary that the nation must Act as a unit if it was to succeed in competing with the Western Powers. There was, therefore, an urgent need for centralization. A step in this direction had already been taken when the Shogunate was abolished. In 1868, a council, consisting of the members of the western fiefs and of the court nobility, was formed.

In 1868, the capital was moved from Kyoto to Yedo or modern Tokyo, and the Emperor occupied the palace of the Shogun. He now rode out openly to be seen by his subjects and receive their homage. An edict from him denounced all violence against the foreigners.

**New Government:** In the spring of 1868, the Meiji announced the Charter Oath of Five Articles to the Nobles, the Daimyo and the officials assembled at the Imperial Palace in Kyoto. This document outlined the fundamental principles which would guide the Government and form the basis of a strong centralized state. The Five Articles stated:

- (i) Deliberative assemblies shall be established and all matters shall be decided by public opinion.
- (ii) The whole nation shall unite in carrying out the administration of the affairs of the state.
- (iii) Every person shall be given the opportunity to pursue a calling of his choice.
- (iv) Absurd customs and practices of the past shall be discarded and justice shall be based on the laws of heaven and earth.
- (v) Wisdom and knowledge shall be sought all over the world in order to

establish firmly the foundations of the Empire.

**New Departments :** The promulgation of the Charter was followed by the announcement of a new governmental structure, which was based on the doctrine of the separation of powers and closely followed the American model of government. The legislature was divided into the Upper and Lower Chambers; the former was responsible for policies, laws, regulations and diplomatic matters including questions of war and peace, while the latter was entrusted with military affairs, currency, taxation, trade, transportation and foreign relations. The administrative branch was divided into the Departments of Shinto Worship, of Finance, Military Affairs, Foreign Affairs, and local Government. The Department of Criminal Law was the judicial branch.

**Administrative Organization :** After the establishment of prefectures in place of the fiefs in 1871, a new organization for the central government was adopted. This was the work of the Committee of the study of Political Institutions, of which Saigo, Kido and Okubo were members. Three Chambers were established as component parts of the Council of States. The main chamber (Shoin), presided over by the Minister President (Dajodajin), was the Supreme Chamber, whose function was to deliberate and give final decisions on important matters of state in meetings held in the presence of the Emperor. It enjoyed powers of diplomacy, religious rituals, declaration of war, conclusion of peace, making of treaties, and had command over the armed forces. Next to the Minister President were Dainagon (Ministers of Left Chamber and Right Chamber) assisted by a number of Councillors (sangi), whose functions were restricted to policy-making.

**End of Feudalism:** The most pressing problem of the new Government was the raising of finances. The Treasury was empty. There were no funds to meet the expenditure incurred on the formation of new administrative structure.

Acting on the proposal of Yuri Kimmasa and using the total rice production of the nation as a basis, the Government decided, early in 1868, to issue paper currency to be redeemed in legal tender in thirteen years. This measure was taken to relieve the financial plight of the Government. By 1871, paper currency came to be readily accepted. In that year, a Government mint was established at Osaka

to coin metallic money, and the yen was made the unit of exchange.

In 1869, the four feudatories of the South West – the Choshu, Satsuma, Hizen and Tosa – set an example by offering their possessions and their men to the Emperor in order to strengthen his hand and assist in bringing to an end the internal divisions brought about by feudalism.

The enthusiasm of the Emperor and his revived power were also an important factor which led to the dissolution of the feudal order. In 1871, an Imperial decree ordered the end of feudalism in Japan. Japan was no longer a collection of fiefs.

The end of feudalism meant the termination of a system which had been in existence for almost a thousand years. Most of the Daimyo and samurai were uprooted from their accustomed privileged positions. But the abolition of feudalism was of immense advantage to peasant farmers. Under feudalism, they were bound to the soil and subject to galling imposts. Step by step, many of the hereditary restrictions imposed on them were withdrawn. Taxes in rice were replaced by taxes in money. Land was revalued, and reasonable land tenure system was established.

**The New Army:** For the security of the nation, a modern and efficient military organization is an absolute necessity. The old feudal army, which was the monopoly of the samurai, was replaced by a national army drawn from all walks of society. A system of compulsory military training was imposed upon all men of a suitable age, regardless of their station or birth.

In 1870, the Government sent Yamagata and Saigo to Europe to study Western military organizations. The army was first patterned after the French model; by after the defeat of the French in the Franco-Prussian War, the German Army became the model and continued to be so until 1945. The navy, in its early stages of development, received its training at the hands of the Dutch; later, Japanese Admirals were trained by the British Navy and at the United States Naval Academy.

In 1871, garrisons were established in Tokyo, Sendai, Osaka, and Kumamoto. In the following year, separate departments were set up for the army and navy, and Yamagata was appointed the first War Minister. By the end of 1872, the universal military conscription ordinance was prepared and promulgated in January 1873.

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## **CODE OF LAWS**

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Feudal customs, which differed from fief to fief, were found to be inadequate to the needs of modern society. The systems of extra territoriality, under which foreigners were exempt from Japanese jurisdiction, was galling to the Japanese and was for them a badge of national inferiority. Accordingly, a new civil code was compiled after some Western models. The code of commercial laws was based on the German model, while the criminal law followed the French. In 1890, the codes finally received Imperial approval. Japanese were specially trained for the purpose and were appointed for life. The code of civil procedure went into effect in 1892 and the commercial code in 1899. Torture as an instrument of punishment was abolished.

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## **CURRENCY SYSTEM:**

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A uniform national currency became the need of the hour. A commissioner was sent to the United States to study its finances. On his return, the decimal system was introduced in Japan, a new coinage issued and a plan of national bank and paper currency, similar to that in America, was adopted.

**Post & Telegraph Service:** A national postal service was supplemented by a telegraph system introduced and managed by the Government. The telegraph was first in use in 1869, when a connection was effected between the Court House and the light House Bureau in Yokohama. This was followed by the linking of Tokyo and Yokohama. International telegraph communication, however, was inaugurated in 1871. Cable lines connecting Nagasaki with Shanghai and Vladivostok were laid. A telephone line was set up between Tokyo and Yokohama in 1877. The Government took over the operation of both the telegraph and the telephone.

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## **POLITICAL PARTIES IN JAPAN**

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The Imperial decree of 12 October, 1881 gave an assurance that a constitutional government would be established. This gave rise to the formation of three political parties.

The Liberal Party was headed by Itagaki, which represented the extreme radical

wing of the radicals and which wanted the people to have an effective voice in the government of the country.

The Liberal Conservatives were the moderate wing of the advocates of representative government. They favoured a gradual extension of franchise and of the development of local self-government, and a policy of internal reorganization as opposed to a policy of imperialism.

The third party was that of the Constitutional Imperialists made up of the conservatives who, although in favour of a constitution, were opposed to anything which weakened the Emperor's authority. They favoured a restricted electorate, an absolute Imperial veto on legislation and a bicameral legislature.

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### **ITO AND THE NEW CONSTITUTION**

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In 1882, Ito Hirobumi was sent abroad to study various constitutions in operation in the West. He spent two years in Europe to study Western Constitutions; and, on his return, became the head of the commission which drafted the constitution of Japan.

Ito decided that the best model for Japan was the Prussian constitution. He brought back with him German Prussian constitutional experts who played an important role in drafting the Japanese constitution.

**Japanese Constitution of 1889:** The ceremony held on 11 February, 1889 for the promulgation of the new constitution was a simple one. The Emperor took the other document, opened it, and read it in a loud voice. Thus, Japan received its first constitution, which without a single change, was in operation till 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1947, when the post World War II constitution came into force.

**The Emperor:** The New constitution was built upon a combination of the Restoration idea that the Emperor was the source of all power. The Emperor was the head of the Empire, combining in himself the rights of sovereignty, and exercising them in accordance with the provisions of the present constitution.

The Emperor was the supreme commander of the armed force; he alone could declare war, make peace and conclude treaties. He appointed and controlled all

administrative officers, made laws with the consent of the Imperial Diet, laws which were not effective without his sanction, and retained for himself the power of issue ordinances. He conferred titles of nobility; and it was his privilege to grant pardons and amnesty. He was supreme.

**Rights of the People:** The Constitution defined the rights of the subjects of the Emperor. All the Japanese were eligible for office. They had the right to change residence, to freedom of speech, of public assembly, or writing, of association and religion. Their houses were exempt from search. They could not be arrested except in accordance with the law, and could be tried only by legally appointed judges. Their property was inviolate and they had the right of petition. Their duties included the payment of taxes and military service.

**Imperial Diet:** The Imperial Parliament or Diet constituted of two Chambers, the House of Peers and the House of Representatives. The former was composed of the members of the Imperial family and of the two higher ranks of the nobility, as well as representatives elected by their peers from the three lower ranks of the nobility, or certain imperial appointees and some of the highest tax payers chosen by their fellows. The first three groups were life members. The last two had seven-year terms.

The House of Representatives was made up wholly of elected members who were representatives of districts. The right to vote was limited by property qualification. The Diet met once a year; and its session subject to change by the Emperor, was fixed at three months. Its members had the freedom of debate and could not be arrested. Both the Houses enjoyed co-equal powers in financial and legislative matters.

The National Budget was approved by the Diet and no tax could be levied without its consent. The Government could not raise any loan without the Diet's approval. The Diet could reject emergency decrees issued by the Emperor when it was not in session; by an action once taken could not be invalidated. The cabinet was not responsible to the Diet.

The Emperor could prorogue or dissolve the Diet, or call a special session, or extend its life.

**The Executive:** The Privy Council consisted of a President, a Vice-President,

twenty four Councilors and cabinet ministers. Hirobumi was the first President of the Privy Council.

**King's Advisors – the Genro:** The Institution of Elder Statesmen or Genro, which was not provided for in the constitution, was an unofficial body made up of members of a group of samurai. This Genro had the ear of the Emperor, and occupied a commanding position. Their functions were purely advisory.

The Genro were composed of tried and trusted statesmen who had assumed leadership in the making of new Japan. They exercised real power in the Government established under the Constitution. No important decision was taken without their consent; in fact, they took the decision.

The Genro formed an inner core of political power. This group provided all the Premiers and most of the Presidents of the Privy Council. In the last 20 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it showed how an “absolute” administration could function within the framework of representative government.

**The Cabinet:** Under the constitution, the Emperor would have a cabinet; he would appoint the Prime Minister on the advice of the Genro, and other Ministers in consultation with the Prime Minister. The cabinet, the executive wing of the government was responsible to the Emperor. Centring round the Emperor were the cabinet, the Privy Council and the Genro.

**Justice:** Lastly, the constitution provided for the appointment of judges who held office during their good behavior. Separate courts were set up to try administrative cases involving Government officials.

**Emperor Made Powerful:** The Constitution of Japan can best be understood by an analysis of its salient feature. While it described the three basic powers of the government, it strengthened the Emperor's authority in every sphere. The Preamble stressed the unchangeability of the document and the necessity of eternal allegiance to it.

The power, dignity and central position of the Emperor were guaranteed. He was “sacred and inviolable”. Since the Emperor was the state and the state was the Emperor, the latter could be worshipped as the theocratic head of the state.

**Criticism of the Constitution:** The Concept of collective responsibility was absent. This lack of collective responsibility and the assignment of the supreme command of the army and navy to the Emperor led to a policy of dual diplomacy and gave a free hand to the military.

The constitution was then an instrument not so much for granting political rights to the people as for the establishment of a strong centralized government. It was in reality a document for the perpetuation and heightening of the monarchical tradition. The very concept that the Emperor is sacred and inviolable is beyond the scope of the modern constitution of any Western nation.

The constitution provided for an upper House which was definitely aristocratic and intended as a check on the Lower House. The Executive branch of the government was more powerful than the legislature. The doctrine of judicial review was not adopted, and the Privy Council was entrusted with the responsibility of passing judgment on the constitutionality of laws and administrative actions.

In general, the constitution worked reasonably well, except for the conflicts which became inevitable between the two Houses of the Diet and the executive. The various political parties failed in their endeavours to make the cabinet responsible to the Lower House, as it is in England.

The constitution was not as liberal as it was often claimed to be; yet “it established perhaps as liberal a system of government as would have worked in Japan at that time”.

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## **12.9 REORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION**

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In the creation of new states, the effective modern education system became a prime necessity.

The Education Department was created in 1871 with Oki Tokato as its head to eradicate illiteracy. He put into effect system of compulsory education in the following year, which was based on the French model. The country was divided into eight districts, which, were sub-divided into 32 secondary school districts. Each secondary school district contained 210 elementary schools. School attendance for children was compulsory at the age of six. Private universities came to be founded at Keiyo in 1863,



at Doshisha in 1875 and at Waseda in 1882.

Although the administrative organization was patterned after the French model, the elementary school and its curricula followed the American model.

English was taught as a foreign language in secondary schools and higher institutions of learning. In 1880, the Education Ministry introduced English in elementary schools as well.

The Tokyo University, founded in 1877, attained full University status in 1886 with the establishment of the departments of law, medicine, engineering, the sciences, literature and administration. It was renamed Tokyo Imperial University in June 1897.

In 1885, a strongly nationalistic system of education, which was patterned after the German model, was introduced. In March 1886, an Imperial ordinance defined the function of the Imperial University as “the offering of instruction and carrying on investigations in the arts and sciences to meet the needs of the state.” The Imperial University now obtained official sanction as the training school of the bureaucracy.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the foundations of the Japanese educational system had been laid. In 1894, high schools (*koto gakko*) were established by the Government to offer professional training as well as preparatory education for entrance to the Imperial Universities. By an ordinance issued in 1903, colleges were made exclusively University preparatory institutions, while the professional schools were given independent status. Separate colleges of agriculture, forestry, engineering and technology, mining, sericulture, fisheries, medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, commerce and the fine arts, including music, were set up.

In 1899, middle schools were opened and girls’ schools were provided in all the prefectures.

**Education of Women:** Kuroda Kiyotaka, Vice-Commissioner of Colonization in Hokkaido, who visited the United States in 1870, was impressed by the freedom and intelligence of American women. In 1872, he founded in Tokyo the first public school for girls between the ages of 7 and 14, irrespective of family status, whether she was a samurai or a commoner. Two years later, the first girls’ normal school was founded.

In 1882, the girls' high school, attached to the Tokyo Girls' Normal School was opened. Secondary education was now generally available for girls.

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### WESTERN MUSIC

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Music education received a tremendous impetus when, in 1870. The Tokyo School of Music was established. This school offered instruction in piano, organ, violin, voice musicology, and musical theory. The German influence was predominant in this field, for most of the instructors were German and Austrian. In the eighteen-nineties, Western music was no longer the monopoly of the elite; it had become popular enough to be appreciated and enjoyed by the people in general.

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### NEW ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL POLICIES (1868-1893)

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“The Meiji Restoration was an economic revolution which was accelerated by the impact of Western capitalism, resulting in the liquidation of the feudal economy and the emergence of a modern capitalistic system.”

With the abandonment of the policy of seclusion, foreign trade and travel abroad were permitted once more. Free movement of goods, too, was permitted among the provinces. Port duties (tsuzei) on goods were lifted. So was the ban on an individual's freedom of movement and choice of residence.

Assistance was given through the land development programme to help the samurai to establish themselves in agriculture. For example, in Hokkaido, training centres were established to teach them occupational skills, or help in getting employment for them as skilled workers in the railways and factories.

Some of the samurais went into new business enterprises, such as shipping, mining, tea manufacturing, skill reeling, cotton spinning, banking and merchandising. Ex-samurai businessman like Nakamigawa Hikojiro, the genius of the House of Mitsui, Shibusawa Eiichi, Yasuda Zenjiro, Iwaski Yatro of Mitsubishi and Okura Kihachiro are the luminaries of the new bourgeois class who adorn the pages of the recent economic history of Japan. These leaders laid firm foundations of the capitalistic economy of modern Japan.

**Fiscal Problems:** In 1871, Japan adopted the gold standard. The yen was the standard unit of value and the silver coin a subsidiary one. The earliest private bank

was the Mitsui Bank. In 1882, the Bank of Japan took over as the fiscal agent of the Government.

Numerous small industrial and commercial enterprises were in need of short and long term capital. This need was met by small, local and independent banks. Large city banks affiliated to the industrial Houses of Mitsui, Mitsubishi and Sumitomo mobilized the nation's capital, directing into those enterprises which were under the control of these business houses.

The first bank to specialize in savings was the Tokyo Savings Bank, which was established in 1881. In 1893, the Savings Bank Law gave legal recognition to the banks operating exclusively for the purpose of mopping up the saving of the people. Postal savings based on the English Postal Savings Act were introduced in 1875. In 1885, postal deposits were transferred from the First National Bank to the Ministry of Finance. After 1894, agricultural and industrial banks came into operation to aid farmers and manufacturers.

**Government Encouragement to Industry and Commerce:** The Trade Bureau was in charge of national revenues and the promotion of trade. Its purpose was to help augment Government revenues by developing domestic and foreign trade; for this purpose, it offered loans to those who needed them at low rates of interest. Exchange companies were organized under the Bureau to render financial assistance to commercial companies.

Stock exchanges were set up to regulate market prices. The Grain Exchange Regulation was issued in 1876, and rice exchange were set up in Tokyo and Osaka.

Special attention was paid to the promotion of those industries which would assist the Army and the Navy and which would compete with foreign products at home and abroad. Arsenals, foundries and shipyards were built. Mines were opened. Cotton mill, paper mills, chemical works, and factories producing glass and cement were erected. By 1890, over 200 steam factories were in existence. Kobe, Nagasaki and Yokhosuka became the centres of the ship-building industry. Arms and ammunition were manufactured in Osaka and Tokyo. In 1870, a Ministry of Industries was set up under Ito. The economic structure of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Japan was fashioned without a major resort to

loan.

The capital was concentrated in the hands of a few known as the Zaibustu, who controlled almost one-third of the copper industry, one half of the coal production; who had effective control over the movement of cargo, over oil, foreign trade, flour, raw and refined sugar.

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## **TRANSPORTATION**

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With the growth of Commerce came improved means of transportation. Steamships plied in the coastal waters of the island. Heavy subsidized industries encouraged the growth laid of domestic and foreign shipping.

The state was a pioneer in building the railway. A railway line between Tokyo and Yokohama was opened by the Emperor in 1872. Eventually, the railways were nationalized. The state also built telegraph lines in 1886. It consolidated them with the postal service under a joint bureau. The Government introduced the telephone in 1877.

The first steamships were mostly owned and built by foreigner. Soon, however, they were built and owned by the Japanese.

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## **AGRICULTURE**

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The land reforms of 1872 were based on the Government's desire to stabilize land revenue, the main source of which was the land tax. This was followed by the lifting of the ban on the sale of land. Private ownership was recognized, together with the right of mortgage or sale of land. Restrictions on the area of land an individual could hold, and on the sale of agricultural products were removed in 1873. Rice was now exported to China, Hong Kong, Sydney, Melbourne, and even to London and San Francisco.

The payment of tax in kind was abolished in favour of money payment at the rate of three percent. Assessment came to be based on the value of land and not on the actual harvest. This led to the commercialization of farming later.

The inspection of silk for export began in 1868 and cattle raising in 1869. The new

agricultural activities included the cultivation of American cotton, wheat, barley, pasture grass, sugar beets, turnips, olives, grapes, oranges, lemons, California walnuts, peanuts, and Java coffee. The laissez-faire policy continued till the opening of the Diet in 1890. Trade associations (dogyo Kumin) for rice, silk and tea concerned themselves with the inspection of commodities and issued certificates testifying to quality.

In 1891, the Government established an agricultural experimental station with six branches, and encouraged the prefectures to institute land reforms with a view to increasing and improving the quality of rice. New breeds of cattle and horses were developed and stud farms were established.

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### **CULTURE, PRESS AND LITERATURE**

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With the formal opening of Japan to Western influence, there was a shift from the study of Dutch to that of English and French. Increased contact with foreigners called for a large body of interpreters. Competence in European languages became a prime necessity.

One of the most significant innovations brought by the foreigners was the introduction of the newspapers. The earliest of these were the Batavia Nisuwa and the Yokohama publications, Japan Commercial News and the Japan Times.

The first regular Japanese daily was the Yokohama Mainichi, which saw the light of day in 1870. The Asahi newspapers, published in 1879 by Marayama Ryuhei in Osaka and Tokyo, developed their own wire and news services.

Another contribution to the growth of the nation's cultural development came through the publication in a serial form of many of the early novels and translations of western books. Newspapers sponsored the translation of Western novels.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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By 1890, Western influence was very much in evidence on the national educational system, in the law courts and legal code, on journalism and modern literature. But there was no blind acceptance of the form and substance of foreign practice. "Rather, a highly developed selectivism permitted the adaptation of elements compatible with traditional customs and beliefs and amenable to regulation and control by the state."

The Restoration leaders aimed at modernization and self-determination without upsetting the social order. They restored the Emperor to the centre of power and made him a symbol of national unity. The samurai surrendered their feudal rights and accepted the abolition of class distinctions and privileges which was an evidence of their implicit faith in the Imperial policy and in the destiny of the nation. During the Meiji era, the Japanese learnt Western military and industrial techniques, adopted their parliamentary and administrative institutions, and in fact Westernized Japan without eliminating the main characteristic features of the Japanese culture. The Meiji Restoration industrialized Japan without introducing democracy. It was “the harmonization of Eastern and Western cultures.” Japan continued to be Asian, though she had demonstrated that an Asian nation could effectively use those weapons which for centuries has been the basis of European power in Asia.

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**RISE OF CHINESE NATIONALISM AND  
ROLE OF DR. SUN-YAT- SEN**

**STRUCTURE**

**Introduction**

**Objectives**

**The Rise of Chinese Nationalism**

**Revolution of 1911**

**End of Manchu rule and rise of Yuan Shih-kai**

**Opium war**

**First Sino-Japan war**

**Impact of Japan Modernization**

**The Boxer Rebellion**

**The Treaty of Versailles and its Impact**

**The final Stage and Independence**

**The role of Dr. Sun-Yat-San**

**As a Revolutionary**

**As a Rebellion**

**As a writer**

**Let us Sum up**

## **Check Your Progress**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

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Chinese nationalism has drawn from extremely diverse ideological sources including traditional Chinese thinking, American progressivism, Marxism, and Russian ethnological thought. The ideology also presents itself in many different and often conflicting manifestations, including ultraimperialism. China's 5,000 years of cultural and dynastic history are a point of pride among the Chinese. For a millennia China was the epitome of Asia's (and in some cases, the civilized world) scientific, cultural, and political achievement and such thinking plays a large role in Chinese thinking today. Chinese culture has long placed a strong emphasis on respect and tradition, tending to look to the past for example as opposed to dreaming of new future possibilities. So when the Chinese look to past dynasties to define ideas on art, politics, etiquette, and culture in general, they also remember their own mistakes and perceived slights and wrongs perpetrated against them with clarity unknown to many Westerners.

### **OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this lesson the student will be able:-

- a. To discuss the political condition of China after first world war.
- b. To evaluate the main events Chinese Nationalism.
- c. To understand the causes responsible for the Chinese Revolution .
- d. To understand the Role of Dr Sun-Yat-San in the Chinese Revolution

### **RISE OF CHINESE NATIONALISM**

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Indian nationalism with its specific features was the first nationalist movement to emerge in the colonies. By the early years of the twentieth century movements for national liberation had begun to emerge in other parts of Asia, notably in Indo-China,



Indonesia, Korea, the Philippines and Iran.

In Iran, after a series of revolts, the Shah of Iran had been forced to agree to transform Iran into a constitutional monarchy with a parliament, called Majlis. With the support of foreign powers, particularly Russia, the Shah re-established his despotic rule and the Majlis were abolished. In China, a number of revolutionary organisations emerged which later consolidated to form the Chinese Revolutionary League. The president of this League was Dr Sun Yat-sen, who played the leading role in the national awakening of the Chinese people and uniting the various revolutionary groups together.

### **Stages and Factors responsible for the rise of Chinese Nationalism**

There were different reasons and stages in the rise of Chinese revolution. In specific terms, these principles meant the ending of the rule of the Manchu dynasty which had been ruling China since the middle of the seventeenth century, and the establishment of a democratic republic with equitable attribution of land among the populace. The brief reasons and stages are as under :-

#### **Revolution of 1911**

In 1911, revolution swept southern China and on 1 January 1912, China was proclaimed a republic with its headquarters at Nanjing (Nanking). Dr Sun Yat-sen was made the President of the republic. In the meantime, in northern China, some steps had been taken to introduce constitutional monarchy in China, with General Yuan Shih-kai as prime minister. To avoid a conflict between the governments in control of northern and southern China, from Beijing (Peking) and Nanjing respectively, a compromise was reached.

#### **End of Manchu rule and rise of Yuan Shih-kai**

The Manchu ruler abdicated and thus the imperial rule in China came to an end. Yuan Shih-kai was recognised as the president and he was entrusted with the task of calling the parliament. Yuan Shih-kai was supported by foreign powers.

In 1913, he called the parliament but soon dismissed it. He had dreams of declaring himself emperor. In the meantime, Dr Sun Yat-sen had formed the Guomindang

(Kuomintang) or the National Party and had given a call for a “second revolution”. Yuan was able to suppress the Guomindang, which was banned, and Dr Sun sent to exile.

In 1916, Yuan died and China came under the rule of warlords, who controlled different parts of the country and received financial support from foreign powers. When the First World War ended, the national and revolutionary movement in China entered a new phase. By the early years of the twentieth century the Ottoman Empire had lost most of its territories in Europe. Most of her possessions in North Africa had also been taken over by European colonial powers.

### **Opium war**

Up until the 20th century, China had been ruled almost exclusively by dynasties who managed to build and consolidate a significant empire in eastern Asia. The last of these dynasties was the Qing dynasty. Following the destruction of China’s “treasure fleet” in the 15th century by the Mandarins of the Ming dynasty, China’s trade (which reached all the way to the Eastern shores of Africa) with foreign nations slowly disappeared. By the 19th century, China, which had once been at the forefront of scientific advances in the ancient world, was seen as a backward nation, but still a lucrative market for Western nations to tap into. The British sold opium to the Chinese, who smoked it with tobacco after the practice had been introduced to them by Europeans, and slowly the population became addicted to it. Faced with this, the Emperor took action and suppressed the sale of opium, resulting in the First Opium War (1839 to 1842) which saw the modern British expeditionary force crush the Chinese. From this, the Treaty of Nanking was signed: the first of the unequal treaties. Hong Kong was ceded to the British, low tariff rates were fixed and foreigners were given exclusive rights in China. But further issues between the nations led to the Second Opium War (1856-1859), with France, Russia and the USA getting involved. The war culminated in the treaty of Tientsin treaties which opened more Chinese ports to the foreigners, permitted foreign legations in the Chinese capital Beijing, and allowed Christian missionary activity.

### **First Sino-Japanese War**

The episode of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) also added to the humiliations

felt by the Chinese. The Japanese swiftly defeated the larger Chinese army, and imposed a huge amount of repayments. This defeat was extremely embarrassing, as not only was Japan a fellow Asian nation - it was also a former tributary state, once considered to be a subordinate of China. This dealt a major, bitter blow to the Chinese.

This background information reveals the extent of foreign meddling in Chinese affairs before the 20th century. It is important to see that these would lead in large part to the rise of nationalism in China in the start of the century. The unequal treaties humiliated the Chinese, and caused a large amount of resentment for foreigners who often times considered themselves to be superior. The series of defeats at the hands of the West and even against Japan contributed to a strong xenophobic sentiment.

The Chinese despised the missionaries, whom they considered to be manifestations of Western influence and a poisoning of Chinese culture. Christianity was largely incompatible with Chinese beliefs, and often went against Confucianism (the dominant Chinese religion). The concession ports (namely Macau, Tsing Tao and Hong Kong) were painful examples of Western imperialism to many Chinese, who felt like their nation was superior to others.

### **Impact of Japan Modernization**

In an attempt to make up for the gap between the powerful Western nations, China made a serious attempt to modernize itself in the late 19th century, just like Japan had in the 1860s. It had the potential to become similar to the constitutional monarchy in Siam. China, had it remained unified and had developed into a modern nation, could have had the power to contend with Japan for control of East Asia. But things did not work out this way.

### **The Boxer Rebellion.**

It was an xenophobic, nationalist movement run by the Righteous Harmony Society in China between 1898 and 1901, opposing foreign imperialism and Christianity. The uprising took place against a background of severe drought and economic disruption in response to growth of foreign spheres of influence. Grievances ranged from political invasion ranging back to the Opium Wars and

economic incursions, to missionary evangelism, which the weak Qing state could not resist. Concerns grew that missionaries could use the sponsorship of their home governments and their extraterritorial status to the advantage of Chinese Christians, appropriating lands and property of unwilling Chinese villagers to give to the church. These issues culminated in outright violence in the north of China: the Boxers marched on Beijing and put the Foreign Legations under siege. Empress Dowager Cixi gave support to the cause and declared war on the foreign powers, who retaliated by forming the Eight-Nation Alliance, made up of the USA, UK, France, Russia, Japan, Italy, Austria and Germany. The multi-national army defeated the rebellion, and went on to arrest and execute officials who were thought to be supporting the rebels as well as impose another set of huge fines. It was settled: there was no getting rid of the foreigners.

Cixi, who had supported the rebellion, died in 1908 under mysterious circumstances. Assassination remains a possibility, but it has not been confirmed. She was replaced by her nephew, the two year-old Puyi. The Xinhai Revolution of 1911 ended the imperial dynasty as a result of its weakness and its failure to modernize and resist foreign powers. The 6 year old emperor abdicated, and the Chinese Republic was founded.

With its first president Sun Yat-Sen and his party, the Guomindang (GMD, KMD, National People's Party) China had a real opportunity for a proper democracy. However, the chance was denied and the republic was condemned to years of warlord fighting: leaders of certain regions sought to conquer rival regions through warfare. It brought a period of poverty, corruption, violence and political turmoil. However, there were many opportunities for individuals to rise to power (ie. Mao Zedong: from farmer's son to leader of China is an impressive feat), there was freedom of speech much of the time (no unified censorship policy) and much cultural development. There was a real flourishing during the period, which has not been seen in China since then.

### **The treaty of Versailles and its impact**

The final blow to China's pride was the Treaty of Versailles: even though the Chinese had fought on the Allied side – the victorious side – during the First World War, they were humiliated by the giving of the German possessions in Shandong province to Japan. This triggered the May 4th Movement of 1919. A student

union, it was formed in Beijing by over 3000 students in Tiananmen Square who were outraged by the unfair treaty. Protests similar to the one in Beijing sparked all across China in the large cities, notably Shanghai, Wuhan and Tianjin, and eventually they resulted in a general strike, leading to the Chinese delegation flat out refusing to sign the treaty. Meanwhile, the students sought to figure out how they could reinvent China. From then on, traditional Chinese values would be challenged, and the students found a new confidence to stand up to foreign intervention. A generation of “May 4th Authors” wrote strongly anti-Confucian works that condemned the old culture which they held responsible for bringing upon them the crisis. ‘Mr. Science’ and ‘Mr. Democracy’, as the students called them, were introduced to China. An emphasis was placed on educating and modernizing the country. Socially, sexuality and individual selfhood were notions that were heavily explored. One might even say it was the original “60s social revolution”, as the Chinese experienced a freedom that was unheard of in even Western countries at the time.

### **The final Stage and Independence**

On the other hand, the warlordism seemed to be putting the very idea of a united China at risk. Some of them were exceedingly cruel and brutal, and the continuous fighting was damaging the economy which was already suffering due to droughts, floods and famines. As a result, the death toll ran well into the millions. It was in this time that two groups stood out. These two groups embodied the different nationalist views that were prominent in China. On the one hand, there was the resurrected GMD. On the other side was the Chinese Communist Party, which was founded in 1921 and traced its roots back to the May 4th movement). These two groups started the 1920s working together (as they both received aid from Moscow, perplexingly) but would become each other’s nemesis by the time the decade was over. These two groups sought to establish control and create a unified China, and appealed to those who had nationalist views. They even shared many similar objectives, especially industrialization, centralized government, education, and medical care for the masses to improve hygiene. And yet they fought each other bitterly, often targeting each other in violent massacres (such as the one in Shanghai against the Communists in 1927 in which 10000 would die). By 1928, the Nationalist leader Chiang Kaishek’s government came to power in 1928

through an amalgam of military force and popular support of his nationalist ideals..

It is clear that Chinese nationalism was the culmination of a series of events that humiliated China. Many Chinese felt that the country was superior, but it had simply lost its ways and was weakened by the unreliable emperors. The Chinese were very hostile to foreigners who had since the 19th century made the nation's situation all the more difficult. The May the 4th Movement thus opened a box full of nationalist ideas which had been suppressed and bottled up.

However, the Nationalists' rule would encounter serious hurdles: in 1931, the Japanese invaded Manchuria, which understandably angered the Chinese and increased the nationalist tendencies. It became clear the Japanese would continue to move into China progressively as it established itself as a major regional power. None of the foreign nations did anything: the League of Nations was weak, the USA was busy with economic issues, and the USSR was pursuing Socialism in One Country. Chiang resolved that he could not let the Japanese take over any more territory, or the government would collapse as people lost confidence in it – there could be no more humiliations. But the Nationalists knew that Japan was incredibly powerful and had a far superior army, and so hardly concerned themselves with the Japanese. They focused instead on the Communists saying “The Japanese are a disease of the skin; the Communists are a disease of the body”. But, the inevitable happened in 1937: war with Japan broke out again. The Japanese needed to support a growing empire, and China had many resources that Japan needed. But the truth behind the start of the war is that it was probably an accident: neither side actually meant to go to war at the time.

In early July 1937, there were several clashes (especially the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, involving urinating soldiers and whatnot) around Beijing between Chinese and Japanese troops. The new leadership in Japan was indecisive, and the senior commanding Japanese general had had a heart attack which led to his replacement with an inexperienced commander. Faced with these clashes, the action that was to be taken was determined by not the leaders but a running debate between hardliners who wanted to expand and pacifists who were worried about

overextending and wanted to avoid conflict. The hardliners eventually won, and so the Japanese sent an ultimatum to the Chinese forces to withdraw from Beijing. The Japanese occupied the city and attack several towns in the area. In Donzhou the Japanese soldiers killed every single person they could find. Reinforcements were moved to northern China to pressure the Chinese, as normally these events would have led to concessions and an armistice. But Chiang couldn't allow that to happen, and announced that "the limits of endurance had been reached" – the Chinese would fight the Japanese this time. A national conference was held, attended even by the communists (represented by Zhou Enlai). At the same time, Mao in Yan'an (the Communist base after the Long March) declared a policy of 'total resistance by the whole nation' (even though the communists controlled just a small part of the country). Even though the Chinese were ill-prepared to fight a war on this scale, Chiang felt like they had no choice.

The Japanese were rather unprepared for a conflict of such a large scale: they had committed only 250,000 men in the north of China for the conflict. But Chiang mobilized his army, and actually went boldly on the offensive, moving in his best equipped army: a German-trained force to capture Shanghai where the Japanese had landed. This would turn into a disaster for the Chinese and mark an escalation of the war for the Japanese (proof that Chiang should have read more carefully Sun Tzu's book) who would devote more resources to the conflict than they could really afford. Between August and November 1937, the Chinese and Japanese fought for control of the city. The battle eventually cost the Chinese more than 250,000 men – and dealt a serious blow to morale as these were the best Chinese troops. The Japanese lost between 40 and 70 thousand men, far more than they had expected. But the Japanese had still managed to gain complete air superiority thanks to their aircraft carriers, and had managed to destroy any attacking capability the Chinese had had. The Chinese withdrew in November, and started to build defensive positions around Nanking.

Following the defeat in Shanghai, Chiang and the government fell back to Wuhan, leaving 90,000 troops to defend the city under the command of an opium-smoking ex-warlord, who fled after several days of artillery bombardment. Most troops fled as well, leaving the city virtually undefended. On December 13th, the Japanese entered the city, and the events that followed became known as the Rape of Nanking. The words of this scholar cannot accurately describe the vileness and inhumane practices used in the town. What is certain is that over 300,000 people died in the city, many being tortured

in unimaginable ways. Thousands of women were raped, regardless of age. Babies were flung around and caught on bayonets. And to this day, the Japanese have never really fully accepted the horrendous crimes they committed during those hellish 7 weeks. Along with the Holocaust, this event stands out in history as a testament to human brutality and wanton cruelty. Fighting continued during the winter, as the Japanese moved in a pincer movement from the North and from the center towards the city of Wuhan. They suffered their first defeat at the old town of Taierzhuang, losing over 8000 troops. This improved morale for Chinese troops, and showed that with capable leadership they could win battles. But Chiang did not even trust his best generals, and had agents in their headquarters to warn him of any plots.

During 1938, the GMD had support from Stalin, who sent Russian planes and pilots to assist the Chinese army. Nonetheless, in October the Japanese captured Wuhan, and Chiang was again forced to move to Chongqing. Surrender was not an option. The Japanese realized they were over-extended and tried to compensate for this by setting up puppet governments similar to the one in Manchuria in areas like Mongolia, where a Mongolian Prince was installed. In Nanking, an old rival of Chiang from the GMD was placed in control. Despite this, the Japanese kept large occupation forces, who exploited and abused the locals. The war with China sapped Japan of its military capability. When war with the USA and UK broke out in 1941, 34 of the 50 Japanese divisions in the army were located in China. But it had taken just over a year for the Japanese to knock down all of Chiang's efforts to build a united China. To the northwest were the communists, to the south were the Nationalists and in the east and north were the Japanese occupiers, who merely sought to consolidate their hold on the eastern seaboard. The war soon turned into a series of raids and bombing runs. Meanwhile to the northwest, the Communists attempted to strike back with the Hundred Regiment offensive in 1940, inflicting heavy casualties on the Japanese. The Communists lost many more, and the Japanese retaliation was brutal – the 'Three All' campaign was launched: "Kill All, Burn All, Loot All". And relations between the Communists and Nationalists were no better: despite a war with the Japanese, Chiang attacked the New 4th Army, killing thousands, but many guerrilla cells were created as result to fight both the nationalists and the Japanese.

The USA's entry into the war changed everything. With the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan started a whole series of offensives all over the Pacific (Singapore, the Philippines...)



which stretched their military even more. The US gave aid to the Chongqing Nationalists through Burma, though this was interrupted by a Japanese invasion in 1942. Until 1945, the US would try to fly supplies in over the Himalayas to have the Chinese fight the bulk of the Japanese forces. Along with supplies, the US also provided the Nationalists with an advisor: General Claire Chennault, who advocated the use of airpower to defeat the Japanese. He built up squadrons and with the arrival of the B29 super bombers, he truly was in a position to seriously threaten the Japanese, who had no choice but to retaliate through the Ichigo Offensive. It was their last attempt at defeating the Nationalists, whose armies were full of problems. Chiang was suspicious of his generals, and kept them short of equipment. Appointments to the best equipped units were based on loyalty to Chiang rather than actual competence. Corruption was rampant among officers, who embezzled food and pay (keeping dead men on books to claim their pay). A lot of the troops were malnourished and sick, and were in no position to fight. The Japanese were successful in pushing them back and capturing the crucial airfields, but were stretched to the limits as they suffered defeats against the Americans in the Pacific. Nonetheless, the Ichigo offensive had done much harm to Chiang's prestige. The Nationalists only survived through American aid.

When the war ended, Chiang was thought by all the victors to be the ruler of China – even the USSR accepted him as the legitimate ruler. China was given a permanent seat on the Security Council of the newly founded United Nations, and was being treated as a great power. The foreign concessions had been ended by an international agreement in 1943. Taiwan was given back to the Chinese after having been lost during the First Sino-Japanese War. But the Communists still controlled parts of the country, and had around 900,000 troops (versus the 2.7 million Nationalist soldiers armed by the Americans) and were even backed by the Soviets (although half-heartedly). Stalin believed he could work with neutral Nationalists, and had had issues of cooperation with the Communists, whose victory seemed so unlikely.

Even before the war, the Soviets had backed both sides, as China was Russia's neighbor, and there had been border disputes over certain territories. Both groups even promised the Soviets control of territories once they took over. At one point, the Soviets had been so discouraged by the Communist party in China that they instructed it to join forces with the Nationalists (which Mao did!). China was also

given large amounts of aid to fight poverty and famine in the countryside which had been ravaged by war.

In August 1945, negotiations between the two parties were organized. Mao only attended under huge pressure from Stalin. The Americans flew him over to Chongqing, but he insisted on travelling with the American ambassador as a guarantee against assassination. He refused to take Chiang's car when he arrived. While the talks were going on, the Communists moved quickly into Manchuria while the Nationalists moved back into the eastern seaboard. The two generally agreed about multi-party democracy and the need to avoid a civil-war but a proper agreement could not be done. The communists were willing to withdraw from south of the Yangtze river, but refused to cede control of their armies to Chiang. Mao returned to Yan'an in October with nothing accomplished. In November, the Nationalists moved aggressively into Manchuria, while US Marines occupied several important cities (Beijing, Tianjin) to help the GMD take control. The Russians did little to help the Communists: they gave control of a stash of weapons belonging to the Japanese, but at the same time ordered the Communists to withdraw from the cities in Manchuria and to hand them over to the Nationalists. Stalin was worried about the deteriorating relationship with the USA, and wanted to show it that they could still work together. Mao felt betrayed.

Trying to keep the peace between the two, Truman sent General Marshall to China in December of 1945 to mediate a ceasefire in January 1946 which was agreed to by both. Mao conceded the free movement of Nationalist forces, while Chiang was forced to call a Political Consultative Conference to consider the future of China. An amalgam of GMD, independents and Communists took power away from Chiang and began to work on a deal that would be acceptable to everyone. It would involve a coalition government. There would even be a merger of the two armies. But then Chiang intervened – he would not accept parliamentary government, believing that China needed an autocratic government because its history and tradition had made it that way.

He convinced the US that he was forced to move his troops into Manchuria in order to avoid the Communists from seizing it. The Communist general Lin Biao counter-attacked by capturing the city of Harbin, but was told to hold his ground and not be aggressive. Mao hoped he could isolate Chiang from the moderates in the GMD and

the Americans, but the tensions in Europe allowed Chiang to drag the USA into the conflict. In June 1946, the Nationalists renewed the attack, and from July their forces began an all out assault on the communists in the north. The USA reluctantly went along with it, and half-heartedly threatened to cut off aid but never did. The Americans were seen as the last imperial power, and many Chinese were anti-American, so Chiang was seen as the only friend they would be able to get in China. Marshall finally left in January 1947, having achieved very little.

But the Nationalists suffered defeat after defeat as the Nationalists had managed to alienate much of the northern population by appointing corrupt officials. By 1948, the Communists had gained the upper-hand. The Nationalists lost over half a million of their best troops in Manchuria due to poor leadership once again. Chiang's insistence on trying to command from far away proved to be his undoing. Chiang and the GMD escaped to Taiwan, aided and protected by the Americans. The issue of Taiwan remains even today an issue between the USA and China. In December 1950, China seized all American assets and properties, totaling \$196.8 million.

Mao would not forget the fact that both the Soviets and the Americans had backed the Nationalists. But the Chinese civil-war was for the most part just that: a war between two groups part of a same nation. There was almost no interference from the outside, although Russia did often get in the way of the Communists initially (and even as late as 1949 advised the Communists not to cross the Yangtze – Stalin was not much of a risk taker), while the Americans provided lots of supplies (and 2\$ billion in aid) for the Nationalists, it was the Chinese who determined the outcome of the war. Chiang's embarrassingly poor leadership led to his swift and impressive defeat by the Communists, who emerged as the unlikely victors of a long war. Claims that China was another battleground of the cold war can also be dismissed, as both superpowers largely favored the GMD. Some say Truman should have done more. However the USA was not ready to enter another war abroad when none of its interests had been threatened - public opinion would never agree with such a move. Besides, the USA had a serious lack of trust in Chiang and he would have cost Americans more lives than it was really worth. The Americans and the People's Republic of China would only meet again in 1972 during Nixon's visit.

On the other hand, Mao was invited to Moscow to celebrate Stalin's birthday.

There he was kept in a house outside of the city for over a week doing nothing. When he finally met Stalin for a talk, he was yelled at. A lot. So there was some resentment between the two nations, as for some reason Stalin didn't want a second communist country. But before Mao left, Stalin instructed him to watch Vietnam and Korea, as communist movements there were developing. In 1960, the USSR would cut all diplomatic relations with the Chinese. The dispute between the two powers definitely had its roots in the Chinese civil war.

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### **ROLE OF DR. SUN-YAT- SEN**

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Sun Yat Sen played a prominent role in organising the revolutionaries of China. Though he was born in a poor family, he attained high education and later on adopted Christianity. Sun Yat Sen and his supporters were extremely shocked by the defeat of China against France and they decided to uproot the useless Manchu government.

As Sun Yat Sen failed to get a job in the medical department, he shifted to Hawaii islands and got together an organisation of the Chinese immigrants. It came to be known as Shing Chung Hui. With the help of this organisation he began to raise funds for the Chinese revolution. The Head Office of Shing Chung Hui was established in Hong Kong.

#### **As a revolutionary**

He organised a revolutionary army and planned to attack Canton but its conspiracy was exposed before it could be executed and Sun Yat Sen had to flee the country. He reached Japan after facing a lot of problems and then travelled to America and other countries. Having come to know of socialist revolution he studied Das Kapital of Marx thoroughly and an influence of socialist thought became visible in his ideology.

#### **As a rebellious**

Up to 1899 he remained as an immigrant in Japan and the people of China expressed interest in him but owing to the failure of Boxer revolution, he again achieved popularity and the Chinese began to be attracted by him. Consequently, in spite of the suppression of the Boxer revolt, rebellions took place at several places under the leadership of Sun Yat Sen but they were crushed severely.

### **As a writer**

The name and fame of Sun Yat Sen spread far and wide. Dr. Sun Yat Sen has written in his autobiography.

*“In 1895 people considered me a rebellious dacoit due to my failures but after the failure of 1900 people not only stopped to abuse me but the persons who were of advanced thoughts began to express their sympathy towards me seeing me in distress. In fact, the youths of China were deeply influenced by the personality and patriotism of Sun Yat Sen.”*

Through his writing he highlighted the socio-economic conditions of china. He not only inspired the young generation of China but provided guidelines for the development of future China.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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Chinese nationalism has drawn from extremely diverse ideological sources including traditional Chinese thinking, American progressivism, Marxism, and Russian ethnological thought. The ideology also presents itself in many different and often conflicting manifestations, including ultraimperialism. **Chinese nationalism** is the form of nationalism in China which asserts that the Chinese people are a nation and promotes the cultural and national unity of the Chinese.

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**MODERNISATION OF TURKEY UNDER  
MUSTAFA KAMAL PASHA****STRUCTURE****Introduction****Objectives****Modernization of Turkey Under Mustafa Kamal Pasha****The attack on Traditional Islamic Leadership****Implementation of Modernist Turkified Islam****The attack on Islamic Culture****The Secular State****Lets us Sum up**

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**INTRODUCTION**

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Mustafa Kamal Ataturk (1881-1938) was regarded as the most important figure for the modernizing process of the Turkish nation. Through his nationalist ideology and modern political reforms, Kamal was able to maintain the independence of Turkey from the direct rule of the Western countries. This was done by uniting the Turkish Muslim

majority and successfully leading them from 1919 to 1922 in overthrowing the occupying forces out of what the Turkish National Movement considered the Turkish homeland.

The Turkish identity later became the unifying force when, in 1923, the **Treaty of Lausanne** was signed and the newly founded Republic of Turkey was formally established. Since then, Ataturk's 15-year rule was marked by a series of radical political and social reforms that transformed Turkey into a new era of modernization with civil and political equality for sectarian minorities and women. From another point of view, Kamal's reforms failed to preserve Islamic traditions and culture when he consciously amended the constitution of his country only for achieving his personal will 'Modern Turkey'.

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### **OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this lesson you will be able:-

- a. To discuss the political condition of Turkey after the first world war.
- b. To evaluate the main contributions of Kamal Ataturk.
- c. To understand how a traditional Islamic state of Turkey was replaced by a Modern state.
- d. To understand the course of Modernization of Turkey.

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### **MODERNIZATION OF TURKEY UNDER MUSTAFA KAMAL ATATURK**

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Mustafa Kamal later known as 'Kamal Ataturk' was born in Salonica in 1881. He was the son of Ali Riza and Zubaida. At the time of his father's death, he was about seven years old. He then was brought up by his mother with religious knowledge as she wanted him to become a good Muslim.

In 1893, he entered the Military Academy. In the same year, he went on to the Military Academy in Monastir and entered the War Collage in Istanbul. In 1902, he got a promotion from the college to a teaching position on the staff. In January 1905, he graduated from the college with the rank of staff-captain. From that period, his opportunity to be one of the nationalist leaders arose when at the end of the First World War, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire had appointed him as

Inspector-General based on Samsun, Anatolia. He was responsible to disband what remained of the Ottoman forces. Instead of disbanding the army he also created the nationalist political institutions when he gathered supporters for the war of liberation. His aim was to declare a Turkish state free from foreign control.

On 15 May 1917, a Greek army landed at Izmir and occupied the surrounding areas. In fact Mustafa Kamal himself was not satisfied with the Ottoman government's policy to offer no resistance to the Greeks and other allied violations of the armistice terms. It was clear to him that the present Ottoman government seemed to oppose any nationalist ideologies that might threaten them. His combination with several resistance groups to defend the Turkish state against invasion was successful when the Greeks were defeated. Mustafa Kamal became a national hero in the war against the Greeks. He was given an honorific title **Ghazi or 'Defender of the faith'**.

Mustafa Kamal's will and his struggles for the liberation of Turkey were almost successful after the defeating of the Greeks in 1922 and the peace with the Europe at Lausanne in the same year. His achievements in both events brought to the recognition of the Istanbul government to the Kamalist groups and their political principles. His next stage was the transformation of the political instrument into a real political party. This came into reality after the formation of a new party called the People's Party.

The People's Party was very influential to the Turkish people and those who were sympathetic to its movement. During the National Election in 1923, the People's Party took over full power. This was considered as the most successful achievement for Kamal's political career. On 29 October 1923, Turkey was proclaimed a Republic with Mustafa Kamal as President. The emergence of the Kamalist Republic marked the beginning of a new ideological orientation that was 'Modern Secular Turkey'. As President, Kamal's aims were to secure the independence, peace and modernization of the Turkish Republic.

The modernization of Turkey however could not be achieved as long as the constitutional monarchy was still in existence. Hence, his first reform was the abolition of the Sultanate and followed shortly by the abolition of the caliphate in 1924. The abolition of these two posts came as a shock to the Muslim world since they



were the symbol of unity among the Muslims all over the world. In order to make sure that no opposition towards his actions, Kamal later declared it a capital offense to criticize whatever he did. In fact, the abolition of the Sultanate and the caliphate, was a crucial step in secularization.

This radical change aimed to provide the sovereignty to the Turkish nations. From Kamal's view point, the abolition of these two posts would open the new era for the administrative structure of Turkey. The Ottoman political authority must be changed for the betterment of the Turkish nations. The recent decades had seen the weakness of the Ottoman government when they were easily monopolized by the West in terms of the economic and political structure of the government.

The Ottoman caliphs also seemed to be seen as the symbol of obedience of all Muslims rather than playing their role as great Muslim leaders respected by other nations. Therefore it was the time, this corrupted government be replaced with the new government and administration who would protect all Muslims and fulfill their role in accordance with the needs of modern Turkish nations. In order to convince the people on the need of this reform, Kamal stated that the Prophet himself never mentioned to all Muslims about the need for caliphate. The Prophet only instructed his disciple to convert the nations of the world to Islam.

Therefore, it was permissible for all Muslims to choose any type of government they like as long as the such government was able to play its role and administer all Muslim nations. It should be noted that, the abolition of the caliphate by Kemal's groups got support from some Muslims scholars. Abu'l-Kalam Azad, a well-known 'ulama' from India, was in agreement with Kamal's reforms. To him, the spiritual leadership is the due of God and all Prophets and not for the caliphate. Another Muslim scholar such as Iqbal, also approved of the abolition of the Caliphate since the post had no longer played its role for the betterment of all Muslims. The moral supports from these two scholars were more than enough for Kamal to continue the reform. It was believed that the abolition of the Sultanate and the Caliphate, had enabled Kamal to proceed to another reforms since there was no more Muslim authority who would hinder him from continuing his secular reforms. In fact, Kamal's secular reforms had been planned well. It began from the

heads of state to the lower ranks that involved all the people of Turkey.

### ***The Attack on Traditional Islamic Leadership***

It was clear that, Kamal's reform, which based on the Western ideology; 'the national sovereignty and the eliminating of the Islamic authority' became the direct attack on the traditional Islamic leadership. The abolition of the Sultanate and the Caliphate was later accompanied by other series of reforms.

- In 1923, the institutions of 'ulama' called *Sheikh-al-Islam* and the ministry of the Shari'a were abolished. Their numbers also declined. The abolition of these official institutions gave a great impact to the practise of religion among the Turkish people. There was no more religious institution which issued *fatwa* regarding religious matters.
- In 1924, another series of reforms began, leading to the closing of religious school and colleges. Kamal saw the existence of these schools or 'medresa' would prevent the Turkish people from having contacts and association with the West. They would also become the obstacle to the modernization of the Turkish Republic.
- In 1925, the **Sufi orders** were suppressed in the country when one of its leaders, Sheikh Said was sentenced to death. The Kamalist regime saw the existence of such dervish orders and any other Sufi whirling, was something to make people to become ecstatic fools and uncivilized. It should be noted that the suppression of the sufi orders by the Kamalist regime, had been seen by a great part of the population as something acceptable and not against Sufism.
- Most of the people saw the suppression aimed to combat against the corrupt pretenders of Sufism who made such public display of their piety. Moreover, Kamal's reforms from their eyes, aimed to purify Islam from un-Islamic practices. This was one of the factors which contributed to the success of Kamal's reforms in eliminating the Islamic leadership in Turkish society. As the result of the suppression, there was no more public activities of the tariqah orders.

- Many *khanagahs* which at once, became centre for Sufis teachings, were turned into museums. In 1926, the Islamic Law (**Sharia**) was replaced by the Swiss Civil code of Law. This law forbade polygamy and gave wives authority to seek divorce. The adaptation of the Western style of Law into the Turkish Republic seemed to give no room for the Islamic Personal Law concerning the marriage, divorce and inheritance.
- In 1928 there was another amendment in the Turkish Constitution that to remove the article which stated Islam as the official religion of the state. By introducing the Western Law, the Kamalist regime tried as much as they could, to expose the people with the Western civilization regarding the legal and large-scale institutional structures. However it is quite interesting to see that Kamal, despite of his eagerness in implementing the Western law on Muslim personal status, he still showed his loyalty to the Muslim community when he would not let a Muslim women be married to non-Muslims.

### **The implementation of Modernist Turkified Islam**

The abolition of the traditional Islamic leadership that caused the rebellions and oppositions against Kamalist Republic made no sense for Kamal. Through the 'law for the maintenance of order' he used to execute any oppositions and rebellions in the country.

- A move to implement the Modernist Turkified Islam, was another reform towards the modernization of the Turkish Republic. Since the sovereignty belongs to the Turkish nation, therefore the religion of Islam has to be reformed and reinterpreted in accordance to the Turkish national identity and needs.
- In 1928, the regime had introduced a Latin-based alphabet to replace the Arabic letters. In 1933, the Arabic call to prayer had also been substituted with the Turkish language.
- A further step to get rid the influence of Arabic language in the Quran was taken when there was a project to translate the Quran into Turkish

language. This project was regarded as one of the most controversial acts of secularization within the Kamalist Republic. Since the Divine revelation was in Arabic language, therefore the Arabic translation of the Quran according to Kamal, would be a tampering with the word of God.

- In 1932 the translation of the Quran in Turkish language had been read publicly. Those reforms in many respects, aimed to decrease the influence of Arabic and Islamic civilization within the Turkish society. They gave a big impact for Turkish society in general and their new generations in particular. The reforms also cut the young generation off from access to the rich heritage of Ottoman literature that was preserved mostly in Arabic scripts. They also got difficulty to understand and assimilate the religious books written in Arabic.

Today, the new generations find it easy to understand the West in various branches of science and fine arts and equally difficult to understand and assimilate the East. This difference opened a gap in understanding between the new and old generation. As a result of this reform, the students enrollment into the faculty of Theology at the University of Istanbul was also decreased. The faculty later was consolidated in 1933 with the department of literature.

### **The attack on Islamic culture**

Since Islam had blocked the progress of Turkey, therefore its authority should be eliminated and abolished totally. The elimination of the authority of Islam includes all social and political power of the Islamic religious authorities. There were several steps taken by Kamalist regime to eradicate this harmful legacy of Islam such as the banning of the fez and turban then replaced it with the Western-style hats and caps.

- Mustafa Kamal regarded the fez and turban as a symbol of the unenlightened traditionalism that kept Turkey backward. In 1925 the Islamic time and calendar systems was replaced by European ones. As a result of this, Sunday was recognized as a legal holiday for Turkey.

- In 1926 another law was enacted by which making legal the consumption of alcohol by Muslims. This followed by the emancipation of woman in 1925 1935. This was considered as a drastic change for the women's status when it protected the freedom of women in the society. They began to have equal right with men regarding divorce, ownership of property, custody of children, etc.
- Women also began to have equal legal treatment; from no political representative and participation to full suffrage.
- Another critical attack to the Islamic culture was the banning of religious dress. It was forbidden to wear religious dress outside places of worship. In fact the law concerning the dress code was enacted since there was the misuse of the religious dress for the purpose of achieving authority over the ignorant people.

These cultural modernization imposed by the Kamalist regime reached its conclusion with the adoption of Western surname in 1934. Mustafa Kamal chose for himself 'Ataturk' that means 'the father of the Turk'. Through the cultural reformation, Kamal hoped that Islam and its heritage would be destroyed and thus Turkey was thoroughly modernized socially and culturally.

### **Secular state**

Turkey was regarded as the first Muslim country that was declared as a secular state. Mustafa Kamal Ataturk who is recalled as the father of the nation was responsible for the establishment of modern Turkey. His revolutions and reforms have brought Turkey into a new phase of development.

In doing so, he amended the constitution of his country besides abolishing position of the Sultanate and the caliphate that ever since regarded as a symbol of unity among Muslims all over the world. Despite many cultural barriers, his revolutions and reforms have brought Turkey into a new era of modernization even though he consciously realized that such reforms will destroy every vestige of Islam in the life of the Turkish nation.

The consequences of Ataturk's reforms are still being felt today throughout

the Muslim world, and especially in a very polarized and ideologically segmented society.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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Thus Ottoman sultans ruled Turkey for almost 700 years. After World War I, a period of chaos within Turkey ended when a popular, charismatic general named Mustafa Kamal took control. He was named Mustafa at birth and had no surname.

Kamal was convinced that Turkey needed to become a modern nation. He believed that if the Turkish people continued to follow their traditions, they would again be attacked by another western power. The popular Kamal often traveled the countryside to encourage the people “Let science and new ideas come in freely,” he often said. “If you don’t, they will devour you.”By the mid-1920s, the Turkish began a modernization program under the leadership of Mustafa Kamal.

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**FOREIGN POLICY OF HITLER (1933-39)****STRUCTURE****Introduction****Objectives****Foreign Policy of Hitler****Relation with Austria****Saar Plebiscite( 1935)****German Re-Militarisation****Anglo- German Naval Agreement****Re-Militarisation of the Rhineland****Hitler and Spain****Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis****Annexation of Austria(1938)****Munich Crises ( 1938)****Annexation of Czechoslovakia( 1939)****Mamel****Poland****Let us Sum up**

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**INTRODUCTION**

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Although Germany had started the World War I, she was defeated and surrendered before the Allies on 11 November 1918. William II, the German Emperor, ran away to Holand. A Provisional Government under Friedrich Ebert, a saddler and leader of the Social Democrats, as Chancellor was proclaimed at Munich.

In February 1919, a Democratic National Assembly was elected to prepare a democratic constitution. The constitution framed by the National Assembly is known

as the Weimar Constitution of 1919. It provided for a republican form of Government and Ebert became the first President of the German Republic. He continued to occupy that office till 1925.

Germany was badly humiliated by the **Peace Settlement of 1919**. It was impossible for a proud nation like Germany to forget the loss of her colonies and other concessions in various parts of the world. Her military strength was completely crushed. Her navy was practically wiped out. She was saddled with such a huge war indemnity that it was practically impossible for her to pay.

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### **OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this lesson you will be able:-

- a. To discuss the foreign policy of Hitler.
- b. To evaluate the main features of Hitler's relation with Austria.
- c. To learn about the series of attacks launched by Hitler.
- d. To realize that Hitler's foreign policy was to a large extent responsible for the outbreak of World War II.

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### **FOREIGN POLICY OF HITLER**

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The rise of Hitler to power shocked the people of Europe who had not forgotten his utterances from time to time and also what he had stated in a Bible



of the Nazi party. The real objective of his foreign policy lay in the South and East of Europe. It was there that German nationalism hoped to fulfill her objective. It was felt that Germany had a growing population and it was only that region which could give her more space to accommodate that population.

That region was thinly populated by races which could not make full use of the potentialities of that region. It was also maintained that that region was economically complementary to Germany. It was rich in coal, oil and wheat which Germany required for her development.

As things were, it was not possible to exploit fully the resources of that region. While Austria had coal, she did not have grain. Hungary had grains, but no factories. Rumania had ores and oil but she had no markets.

The best results could be achieved only after one political power was established in the whole region and that role was intended to be played by Germany under Hitler.

The pursuit of such a foreign policy soon after his coming to power in Germany would have created trouble. All the enemies of Germany could have joined hands and all prospects of success would be doomed once for all. To avoid such an eventuality Hitler decided to follow a policy of caution. He would like to do all that lay in his power to remove the suspicions of his neighbours.

He declared in unequivocal terms that Germany was determined to follow a policy of peace. Even if she would like to get the treaty of Versailles revised, that was to be done by peaceful means. Hitler decided to consolidate his position at home and make friends among the neighbours.

To quote him, "The German Government and the German people are united in the will to pursue a policy of peace, reconciliation and understanding as the foundation of all decisions and all negotiations." In January 1934, Germany entered into a non-aggression pact with Poland for 10 years. So far as the motives of Germany in making that pact were concerned, it was felt that such a pact would be a good conclusive proof of the peaceful intentions of Germany.

Hitler had shocked and antagonized Western Europe and he feared the isolation

of his country. If Germany wanted to advance southwards she must make peace with her Eastern neighbour. Polish friendship was purchased by giving her a guarantee for 10 years Hitler felt that he could not win over the Soviet Union on account of his persecution of the Communists and the Jews.

Austria was also hostile as she feared her own security from the Czechoslovakia was considered to be too small to be bothered about. No wonder, Hitler decided to enter into a friendly pact with Poland. Poland had also her own reasons to join the pact. She had an uneasy time from 1919 to 1934. The German minorities had proved too much of a headache for her.

It was felt that a treaty with Germany would silence the German minorities and Poland would be safe from the perpetual nuisance. Moreover, Poland had become suspicious of France whose ally she had been for the last many years. It was felt in Poland that there was a tendency on the Part of France to subordinate the interests of Poland with a view to guarantee her own security.

The attitude adopted by France on the occasion of the Locarno Pact of 1925 and the Four Power Pact of 1933 could be pointed out to prove their contention. As both the parties hoped to gain by the pact the same was signed. However, as the events of 1939 show, it was merely a stop-gap arrangement so far as Germany was concerned. She had no intention of permanently guaranteeing the frontiers of Poland and to be on friendly terms with her. As a matter of fact, the World War II started on the question of Poland.

### **Relation with Austria**

Hitler was an Austrian by birth and that partly explains his interest in the affairs of Austria. The Austrians were also Germans and they had been kept separate from Germany by the Treaty of Versailles as the Allies did not want to create a very strong and powerful Germany which could be a perpetual source of danger to the peace and security of Europe. However, Germany would like to annex Austria and with that objective in view. Hitler encouraged the Nazi agitators in Austria to capture the Government. No wonder, their agitation increased day by day.

There was a wholesale condemnation of the Austrian Government by the broadcasts issued from Germany. Leaflets were distributed in large numbers throughout the length and breadth of Austria. Money and arms were also smuggled into Austria. The Austrian Government could not be expected to remain idle in the face of these provocations. No wonder, the Nazi party in Austria was suppressed in June 1933 by the orders of the Government.

The Government of Austria remained firm against German pressure on account of the backing of Mussolini and other powers. Both Great Britain and France were determined to maintain the independence of Austria and they joined hands with Mussolini to make representations to the German Government. The Italian Government also subsidised the Heimwehr which was considered to be bulwark of the independence of Austria.

In spite of this, the Nazis in Austria revolted in July 1934 occupied the Federal Chancery and were successful in fatally wounding Dollfuss, the Austrian Chancellor. Their chances of success were not many as they were not supported by the people of Vienna. When the revolt failed, Hitler declared that he had absolutely no hand in the whole affair.

### **The Saar Plebiscite (1935)**

With a view to compensate France for the losses suffered by her during World War I she had been given by the Treaty of Versailles the right to occupy and exploit the Saar for 15 years. However it was provided that after the lapse of that period, a plebiscite would be held under the auspices of the League of Nations with a view to allow the people of the Saar to decide for themselves whether they would like to go back to Germany or not.

Such a plebiscite was arranged in January 1935. About 5 lakhs of people cast their votes and more than 90 per cent of them voted for Germany. Hence the Saar was handed over to Germany on 1 March 1935. The recovery of the Saar added to the resources of Germany. It also proved the effectiveness of the Nazi techniques of propaganda.

### **German Re-militarisation**

On 16 March 1935, Hitler declared that Germany was not bound by the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles and the peace strength of the German army would be 36 Divisions or 5½ lakhs of men. The German army was to be raised by conscription which was also against the provisions of the treaty of Versailles. In April 1935, there was an agreement at Stresa among Great Britain, France and Italy to form a “united front” against German aggression.

### **Anglo-German Naval Agreement (1935)**

In June 1935, Hitler entered into a Naval Agreement with Great Britain by which Germany agreed to limit the size of her Navy to 35 per cent of the strength of the British Navy. By this agreement, Hitler was able to remove the suspicions of Great Britain and win her to his side.

However, this agreement was against the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles which required Germany to maintain a much smaller naval force than that allowed by the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. This agreement was a master-stroke of Hitler’s diplomacy.

### **Re-militarisation of the Rhineland**

The Treaty of Versailles had demilitarised the Rhineland. It had been specifically provided that no German troops were to be stationed in that region. These provisions were considered to be essential for the safety and security of France and Belgium. However, in March 1936, Hitler denounced the Locarno Treaties and German troops marched into the Rhineland.

While this action of Hitler was condemned by all, his own defence was that France herself was to be blamed for it. It was she who had entered into a military pact with Soviet Russia in May 1935 and as Germany regarded that alliance to be directed against her, she was justified in occupying the Rhineland.

However, it cannot be denied that after the German occupation of the Rhineland, France became exposed to German attack. The same was the case with Belgium.

At the time of the occupation of the Rhineland, Hitler made many offers to the Western Powers for a compromise.

He offered to demilitarise the German territory on the German side of the border to the same extent to which Belgium and France were prepared to demilitarise on their side of the border. He also offered to enter into another Locarno Pact.

He also expressed his willingness to enter into a non-aggression pact with his Eastern neighbours. However, nothing came out of those offers. Hitler was absolutely insincere in all that he was doing. His only object was to keep the people busy at a time when he had shocked them by his action. The result was that Hitler was able to have his way and no action was taken against him.

### **Hitler and Spain**

A Civil War broke out in Spain in 1936. The Republican Government of Spain was helped by the Soviet Union and General Franco and his followers were held by Hitler and Mussolini. They got a large number of volunteers from Germany and also a lot of war material with which they were able to overthrow successfully the Republican Government. Great Britain and France followed a policy of neutrality and that helped both Hitler and Mussolini.

### **Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis**

In 1936, Germany entered into an anti-Comintern Pact with Japan. In 1937, Italy also joined the pact and thus the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis came into being. Germany and Japan came together as both of them were opposed to Communism.

Japan had left the League of Nations on account of her condemnation by the League of Nations on the issue of conquest of Manchuria. So far as Mussolini was concerned, he opposed Hitler in 1934 on the question of Austria. However, things changed after Italian intervention in Abyssinia.

It was during the Abyssinian war that Mussolini was condemned by the Western Democracies. They also enforced economic sanctions against Italy. Hitler adopted a friendly attitude towards Italy on the question of Abyssinia. It was this friendly act which brought Mussolini to the side of Hitler. Not only the two dictators

agreed to cooperate with each other, Mussolini also agreed to give Hitler a free hand in Austria.

### **Annexation of Austria (1938)**

Having removed the Italian hurdle from his way, Hitler decided to annex Austria. After the Nazi failure in 1934 in Austria, Hitler had changed his tactics in his dealings with Austria. The latter was made to understand that the former had absolutely no designs against her. The result was that by 1936, a favourable climate was created in Austria for Germany. In July 1936, Hitler entered into a pact with Austria.

A sort of Italy-German condominium was established over Austria and the relations between Austria and Germany became cordial. In spite of all this, violent demonstrations were made by the Nazis in Austria in 1938. Those were inspired and helped by the German Government. On 12 February 1938, Hitler sent for Schuschnigg, the Austrian Chancellor, to meet him at his personal residence at Berchtesgaden.

The Austrian Chancellor was threatened with an invasion of his country and thereby forced to grant amnesty and full freedom of action to the Nazis Germany. He also agreed to take the Nazi leaders of Austria into his cabinet. The Austrian Chancellor appointed Arthur Seyss Inquart, the Austrian Nazi leader, as his Minister of the Interior. He also agreed to appoint other Nazi leaders as Ministers of Justice and Foreign Affairs.

It was announced on 9 March 1938 that a plebiscite would be held on 13 March 1938 to decide whether Austria would like to remain independent or merge herself with Germany. The Nazi leaders were not willing to have the plebiscite on 13 March as that did not give them enough time for propaganda. Consequently, on 11 March 1938, Arthur Seyss Inquart presented the Austrian Chancellor with an ultimatum demanding his resignation and the postponement of the plebiscite.

He was told that in case he failed to do so, the German troops would enter Austria. The result was that the Austrian Chancellor not only cancelled the plebiscite but also resigned. Arthur Seyss Inquart himself became the Chancellor and in his new position, he invited Hitler to come and save Austria from internal chaos. The German army and air force rushed into Austria. On 14 March 1938, Hitler himself went to Vienna.

The Western democracies did practically nothing. Their attitude can be compared to sincere widows who moaned and shouted but otherwise did nothing. The annexation of Austria was of great importance to Germany. The Austrian National Bank brought to the German Treasury 20 million pounds of additional gold and foreign exchange Germany came into direct contact with Italy at the Brenner Pass.

She also came into contact with Hungary and Yugoslavia. In the words of Churchill, "Mastery of Vienna gives to Nazi Germany military and economic control of the whole of communications of South-Eastern Europe, by road, by river and by rail." Czechoslovakia was isolated and she became absolutely at the mercy of Germany who could deal with her as she pleased.

### **Munich Crisis (1938)**

The State of Czechoslovakia had been created by the Peace Settlement of 1919-20. Her greatest weakness was that she had many minorities in her population and the most important among them was the Sudeten Germans. Although they were nicely treated, they never forgot their separate German nationality in Czechoslovakia.

They had been given seats in the Cabinet and were pretty well off. After five years of Hitler's propaganda, the Sudeten Germans began to look up to Germany for their absorption into that country.

Hitler had a special reason to intervene on behalf of the Sudeten Germans. The Sudetenland was important from the strategic point of view. Its Northern frontier had a mountain range which blocked off German expansion to the South. If this territory were to come under Hitler's control, it would become easy for him to penetrate into South Europe. This area was also full of factories and its occupation was to add to the industrial output of Germany.

However, there were certain difficulties in the way. Czechoslovakia had a large number of forts in the Sudetenland and consequently it was difficult to conquer that region. By a treaty of 1925, France was bound to help Czechoslovakia in case she was attacked by any foreign power. A similar guarantee had been given by the Soviet Union to Czechoslovakia. However, the advantages of capturing the

Sudetenland were so great that the difficulties seemed to be insignificant.

Moreover, the manner in which the western democracies had acted in Manchuria, Abyssinia and Spain showed that they would not lie willing to save Czechoslovakia from Hitler. So far as the Soviet Union was concerned, even if she would like to help her, she could not accomplish much on account of the barrier policy of Poland and Rumania. The latter were not prepared to allow the Soviet forces to march through their territories. Hitler thus felt sure that he could deal with Czechoslovakia as he pleased.

The Sudeten Germans were encouraged to stage demonstrations against their government. They demanded the right to join Germany. The government of Czechoslovakia headed by Dr. Benes tried to meet their demands in every possible way. However, no reconciliation was possible as the Germans instigated them not to do so. The situation began to deteriorate. On 12 September 1938, Hitler demanded the right of self-determination for the Sudeten Germans. He declared that if the latter could not defend themselves, they would be helped by Germany.

The Soviet Union proposed a conference with Great Britain, France and the United States and expressed her willingness to take part in any collective action that might be taken to defend Czechoslovakia against Germany. However, the proposal was not accepted. The British Government asked Premier Chamberlain to accept an Adviser. Lord Runciman was sent as an adviser and was accepted by the Government of Czechoslovakia. A plan was prepared which granted practically everything to the Sudeten. Germans accept their incorporation into Germany.

That offer did not satisfy the Sudeten Germans who were backed by Hitler. The Western democracies were in a very difficult position and they did not know what to do. If they supported Czechoslovakia, there was the certainty of a war in which everyone was likely to be involved. If they did not support her, she could not be expected to resist German pressure single-handed and in this war of nerves Hitler won.

Chamberlain, Prime Minister of Great Britain, decided to prevent war by following a policy of appeasement. He met Hitler on 15 September 1938 and he was frankly told



that nothing could stop the war unless the Sudeten Germans were given the right of self-determination. Chamberlain went back and conferred with the French Government. It was agreed that the only way to stop the war was to give to the Sudeten Germans the right of self-determination.

On 19 September 1938, both Great Britain and France asked Czechoslovakia to agree to the immediate transfer to Germany of the areas inhabited by a population of more than 50% Germans.

The Government of Czechoslovakia agreed to the proposal under pressure. However, at this stage, Hitler increased his demands which were considered by Chamberlain as unreasonable and he refused to do more than refer them to the Government of Czechoslovakia.

It was decided that if Germany immediately attacked Czechoslovakia, the latter would be supported by Great Britain and France. War preparations were ordered. It was declared that the Soviet Union and Great Britain would stand by France if the latter helped Chamberlain against Germany.

At this stage, President Roosevelt made a "Peace by conference" proposal to Hitler to settle the matter amicably. On 27 September 1938, Chamberlain declared, "We cannot in all circumstances undertake to involve the whole British Empire in war simply on her (Czechoslovakia) account." On 28 September 1938 Chamberlain told Hitler, "You can get the essentials without war and without delay." On the same day, Mussolini asked Hitler to settle the matter amicably instead of going to war.

On 29 September 1938, Chamberlain Daladier and Mussolini went to Munich to meet Hitler. There was no Czech or Russian representative present at the conference. After prolonged discussions, the Munich Pact was signed on the night of 29-30 September 1938. Czechoslovakia was to evacuate all the territory occupied by the Sudeten Germans and this was to be completed before 10 October 1938 without any existing installations being destroyed.

The Government of Czechoslovakia was to be held responsible if any damage was done to those installations. The territory to be evacuated by Czechoslovakia was to be

occupied by the German troops.

An international commission was to be set up to decide in which territories the plebiscite was to be held and those territories were to be occupied by international bodies until the plebiscite was completed. The same commission was to fix the conditions in which the plebiscite was to be held, taking as a basis the conditions of the San- plebiscite.

The date to be fixed by the commission was not to be later than the end of November 1938. The final determination of the frontiers was to be carried out by the international commission. Within a period of four weeks from the date of the agreement, the Government of Czechoslovakia was to release from their military and police force any Sudeten German who may wish to be released. She was also to release the Sudeten German prisoners who were serving terms of imprisonment for political offences.

It is rightly said that the heart of the lamb of Czechoslovakia was butchered in the darkness in the midnight by a knife supplied by Chamberlain. Dr. Benes, President of Czechoslovakia, declared that "He had been forced to yield to pressure to which there was no precedent in history and all that was due to the presence of Chamberlain and Daladier." Ribbentrop, Foreign Minister of Germany, remarked, "The old man (Chamberlain) has signed his death warrant and now it is for us to fill the date."

Sir John Simon observed, "It can only be for history to decide hereafter whether the things that were done at Munich the day lead, as well as all of us everywhere in this House hope they will, to better things, or whether the prognostications or increasing evil will prove, to be justified." Winston Churchill described the situation after Munich as "a disaster of the first magnitude." His prophecy was in these words. "I think you will find that in a period of time which may not be measured by years, but may be measured only by months, Czechoslovakia will be engulfed in the Nazi regime." According to L.S. Amery, the Munich settlement represented the triumph of sheer naked force. It was "the greatest and cheapest victory ever won by aggressive militarism." F.L. Schuman says, "The Munich Pact was the culmination of appeasement and warrant of death for the Western

democracies. It was a symbol of the collapse of collective security.”

The question has been asked why the Western democracies submitted to the dictates of Hitler. One reason is that Hitler assured Chamberlain that in case his demands on Czechoslovakia were met, he would like to follow a policy of peace and he had no further aggressive designs. To quote Hitler, “I have assured Mr. Chamberlain and I emphasise it now, that when this problem is solved, Germany has no more territorial problems in Europe. I shall not be interested in the Czechoslovakian state anymore and I can guarantee it. We do not want any Czechs anymore.”

It is rightly pointed out that fault lay not in the intentions of Chamberlain, but in his willingness to believe the words of Hitler. He ought to have known the German dictator better. His words were intended to suit merely the occasion and he was not going to keep them as the future events showed. Another reason given for the attitude of Chamberlain is that there was a strong longing for peace in Western Europe. It would take some time before the people were converted to fight against Germany. However, in case Germany attacked at once, there was every possibility of their facing disaster on account of the preparedness of the German armed forces.

There was a wrong belief in Great Britain and France that after having got everything in Czechoslovakia, the attention of Hitler would be diverted towards Soviet Russia, the two dictatorships would get involved in a life and death struggle and thereby exhaust themselves. The Western democracies were likely to gain under those circumstances. Hence they allowed Hitler to have his way at Munich. Chamberlain also believed that the appetite of Hitler was limited. His view was that Germany and Italy had certain grievances and if those were redressed, peace could be maintained in Europe.

That is the reason why he persisted in the policy of appeasement in spite of warning from Winston Churchill. Chamberlain believed in the good faith of Hitler. When Hitler introduced conscription and violated the provisions of Treaty of Versailles, he promised to adhere to the Locarno treaty. When he violated that also, he promised that he had no other territorial claims. Then there was the Anschluss and Munich. All that

showed that the basic calculation of Chamberlain was wrong.

Another reason why the policy of appeasement was followed was that Great Britain and France were not prepared to enter into an alliance with Soviet Russia on account of ideological differences. Chamberlain is said to have observed, "I must confess to the most profound distrust of Russia." The only alternative was to come to terms with Hitler as Great Britain and France were not ready for war.

Critics of Chamberlain point out that if he had decided to fight in September 1938, the Soviet Union would have joined the war against Germany. Moreover, in September 1938, there were thirty to forty well-trained Divisions of the Czech army which would have fought against Hitler. All that was not there when Chamberlain ultimately decided to fight against Hitler in September 1939.

All the resources of Czechoslovakia also fell into the hands of Hitler and he fought with more resources in September 1939 than he would have done in September 1938 if the war had been declared then. The British army's were not in a better position in September 1939 than they were in September 1938 when Chamberlain made a humiliating peace with Hitler.

After the Munich Pact, the Poles and Hungarians made their demands on Czechoslovakia. Poland demanded and got the Teschen area with its important coal mines. Hungary demanded that area in which there were about a million Magyars and got the same.

### **Annexation of Czechoslovakia (1939)**

In spite of giving his word of honour in September 1938 regarding the rest of Czechoslovakia, Hitler began to make preparations to annex the same. On 14 March 1939, the Governments of Slovakia and Ruthenia declared their independence after holding a conference with Hitler.

On the same day, Hitler asked Dr. Hacha, the successor of President Benes, to meet him in Berlin. When Dr. Hacha went to Berlin, he was made virtually a prisoner. He was surrounded by the associates of Hitler and was asked to sign a document which was to put the fate of the Czech people into the hands of Hitler. General Goering told him that in case he refused to sign the document, his country

would be attacked by the German Air Force and completely destroyed. No wonder, Dr. Hacha fainted and he was brought to his senses after administering injections to him.

Finding himself helpless. Dr. Hacha signed the aforesaid document at 4.30 PM. on 14 March 1939. On the morning of 15 March Czechoslovakia was occupied by the Nazi troops. On 16 March 1939, Hitler declared that henceforth Czechoslovakia would be known as "Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia." Hitler was also invited to become the Protector of Slovakia. The invitation was gladly accepted and Czechoslovakia ceased to exist.

The annexation of the whole of Czechoslovakia had very unfortunate results. The Soviet Union was completely disgusted with the attitude of the Western Powers. She felt that the Western Powers were trying to help and instigate Germany against her. Under the circumstances, she felt that her alliance with France was not binding on her. The system of collective security completely broke down. States like Yugoslavia and Rumania began to realise the uselessness and futility of their alliances with France. It was felt that the security of every state was in danger.

Chamberlain was shocked. On 17 March 1939, he observed, "Public opinion in the world has received a sharper shock than has ever yet been administered to it, even by the present regime in Germany. Hitler had violated his own declared principles by including in the Reich a people of non-German race. He had manifestly departed both from the assurances at Munich, as to the extent and nature of his claims and from his undertaking to deal with any further questions in consultation with great Britain." Chamberlain promised British resistance "to the utmost of its power to any power which attempted to dominate the world by force."

The joint Anglo-French protest against Germany was followed by the simultaneous withdrawal of their ambassadors from Berlin. On 23 March 1939, Chamberlain was forced to make the following admission, "The possible aim of the German Government is the domination of the whole of Europe." The policy of Great Britain and France underwent a radical change. Instead of trying to appease Hitler, it was decided to resist him in the future. On 31 March 1939, Great Britain and France

declared that “in the event of any action which clearly threatened Polish independence and which the Polish Government accordingly considered it vital to resist with their national forces, they would at once lend Poland all support in their power.”

On 6 April 1939, Poland agreed to regard the British guarantee as a mutual obligation. Similar guarantees were given to Greece on 6 April and to Rumania on 13 April 1939. On 19 April Chamberlain indicated British intention to extend the guarantee of independence to Denmark, the Netherlands and Switzerland. On 26 April 1939, the British Government announced its decision to enforce military conscription in the country. On 12 May 1939, Great Britain gave a guarantee to Turkey. In his Albert Hall address on 12 May 1939, Chamberlain declared, “No more deadly mistake could be made than to assume that Britain and France were not in earnest and could not be relied on to carry out their promises.”

#### **15.3.11 Mamel (1939)**

After the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, Lithuania was given an ultimatum by Hitler. The latter demanded the surrender of Memel and the surrounding districts. The German forces occupied this region on 21 March 1939. The port of Memel was remilitarised.

#### **15.3.12 Poland (1939)**

Just as in September 1938, Hitler had declared his intentions on Czech independence, so in January 1939 he spoke warmly of the friendship existing between Germany and Poland. That was merely a preliminary to his making claims on Poland. With the passage of time, the attitude of Hitler toward Poland began to change. It was given out that the German minorities in Poland were being oppressed Poland was asked to give back Danzig to Germany. She was also asked to give a strip of territory to connect East Prussia with the rest of Germany.

The Polish Government was not prepared to accept the demands of Germany. Poland was backed by Great Britain and France. Germany not only abrogated her Non-aggression Pact with Poland of 1934, but also repudiated her Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935. Hitler protested that Great Britain was going back on

the Munich Pact which was “symbolical of the desire of both people never again to wage war on one another”. Hitler accused Great Britain of following a policy of encirclement.

However, before taking the final step against Poland, Hitler decided to ensure himself against a possible attack from the Soviet Union. Ribbentrop went to Moscow and on 23 August 1939 was signed the Non-Aggression Pact between Germany and the Soviet Union. This master-stroke of Germany weakened the defences of Poland, Great Britain and France.

Having neutralised the Soviet Union, Hitler was ready and on 1 September 1939, German troops invaded Poland. The war which started between Germany and Poland developed into a global war. The hunger of Hitler was not satisfied even after the defeat and annexation of Poland. He also conquered Belgium, Holland and Denmark. In June 1940, France also fell.

The problem of Hitler in the middle of 1940 was either to conquer or to make peace with Great Britain. He put out feelers in June 1940, asking only the return of German colonies and British acceptance of his control over Western Europe. However, there was no response. The idea of compromise and British approbation to a German attack on the Soviet Union was long in dying.

In May 1941 Hess flew to Scotland in what was considered to be a peace mission. The problem of preparing an invasion of England proved difficult as the German sea power was not strong enough. Ld General Goering’s Air Force was not able to snatch control of the air from the Royal Air Force.

Elaborate preparations were made, but the battle of Britain was lost in September 1940 and the invasion of England had to be postponed indefinitely. The decision to crush the Soviet Union before attacking Britain was reached in secret in August 1940. Plans of invasion in the autumn were given up for logistic reasons. However, preparations were pushed forward energetically throughout winter and spring with a view to assault in May 1941.

The invasion had to be postponed to June 1941 because of the invasion and

conquest of Yugoslavia and Greece in April 1941. Ribbentrop's invitation to Molotov was no more than a device to remove suspicion and gain time.

The German invasion of the Soviet Union turned out to be a blunder, in spite of the initial success made by the German armies in Soviet Russia, the Germans were ultimately beaten and driven out of the Russian soil. That was partly due to the bravery of the Russian people and partly to the enormous help which was given to her by the United States. In 1945 Germany fell before the combined attacks of the United Nations. Too much greed of Hitler brought disaster to Germany. He himself committed suicide before Berlin fell and his associates were tried by a Military Tribunal and put to death.

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### **LET US SUM UP**

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Germany was humiliated with the Treaty of Versailles and Hitler was concerned with undoing the terms that made Germany suffer so much. He was also elected on the promise of lowering unemployment level after The Great Depression, and he wanted to do so by giving Germany living space for resources (Lebensraum) and making Germany self-sufficient (Autarky). Because of this, his foreign policy is aggressive and expansionist in accordance with fascist ideology.

It didn't appear that way at first, when Hitler demanded military parity in the Geneva Disarmament Conference, or when he took The Saar, or when Germany finally had its union with Austria on the principle of self-determination, or even when he demanded Sudetenland. He also started rearming Germany, but again, so did almost every other nation. But it quickly became clear after 1938, when Hitler invaded all of Czechoslovakia in violation of the agreements at Munich, that Hitler was not going to comply with international frameworks. A year later he invaded Poland after demanding Danzig, starting the Second World War.

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**CAUSES OF WORLD WAR II AND ITS IMMEDIATE  
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**Establishment of the United Nations Organization (U.N.O)**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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After a peace for twenty years the flames of war once again engulfed the whole of Europe on September 1, 1939. The apprehension of war had begun after the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 when the German delegates were coerced to sign the humiliating and dictated treaty of Versailles. Then the German delegate Erzberger had said with great confidence, 'the nation with 60 million oppressed people could never perish.'

The 'German problem' which remained one of the most complicated and disturbing problems of Europe during the period between the world wars ultimately became the most prominent cause of the second world war. Japan and Italy started their expansionist policies. The rise of Hitler and his insatiable ambitions pushed the world to the brink of another devastating war.

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## **OBJECTIVES**

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After going through the lesson, you will be able to comprehend the numerous

causes that were responsible for the outbreak of the World War II on 1 September 1939. There was not one cause but several causes which led the various countries of the world to fight another World War after a gap of just twenty years. One of the most fierce and devastating war in human history, the Second World War had several consequences as well. One age ended and another one started. Many new ideologies were born in Europe after this war. The United Nations Organisation was created for the security of mankind and the establishment of a lasting peace.

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### **CAUSES RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OUTBREAK OF THE WORLD WAR II (1939-1945)**

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Although the crisis caused by the German demand for Danzig and Polish corridor was the immediate cause of World War II, it may be said that the ground for it had been prepared since the end of World War I. The basic or the fundamental causes at work behind the scenes were many and are discussed below :

**Harsh terms and conditions of the Treaty of Versailles** — The Allied Powers invoked the Fourteen Principles of Wilson, but Lloyd George, Clemenceau and their fellow diplomats were so overwhelmed by the feelings of revenge, national self interest and future security that they tried to create an order in which defeated Germany would never be able to raise her head. The terms of the treaty were very harsh. She lost one-eighth of her territories in Europe and 7 million people together with all her colonies. Her naval force was destroyed and her army was reduced to one lakh. She lost 2/3 of her coal fields, 2/3 of iron, 7/10 of zinc and more than half of her lead deposits. Germany accepted the humiliating Treaty of Versailles “with a knife at its throat.” The war guilt clauses were clamped on her, she had to pay a huge war indemnity in the face of near absence of economic resources. A self respecting country like Germany could not bear such harsh terms and conditions for long. Therefore, as soon as the opportunity appeared, Germany took up arms against the Allied Powers to seek vengeance.

**The rise of Dictators** — After the World War I, democracy had been set up in the defeated as well as the newly created states. Weimar Republic which was established in Germany was accused of signing the Treaty of Versailles. Soon the Nazi Party rose. It wanted to re-establish the prestige of Germany in the

international field. Hitler tried his best to convince the people of the world that he aimed at establishing peace but soon he turned aggressive. In 1935, he flouted the military clauses in the Treaty of Versailles and declared re-armament. In 1938, he annexed Austria and dismembered Czechoslovakia. Now the clouds of war began to gather on all sides and the situation became alarming.

Mussolini had established dictatorship in Italy after the first World War. As he too was against the Treaty of Versailles, it demonstrated its imperialistic designs by attacking Abyssinia. The League of Nations could do nothing in this regard. Its weakness was apparent to all.

Meanwhile, Japan also exhibited its imperialistic designs by occupying Manchuria. League of Nations remained silent. Soon the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis came into being. Another political development was that, with the help of the dictators of Italy and Germany, General Franco established his dictatorship in Spain. The countries of the world were now at the brink of war.

**Failure of the League of Nations** — The League of Nations was established after the First World War in order to solve mutual controversies of the European powers and to maintain permanent peace and order in the world. However the League failed to secure world peace. America did not join the League. This deprived it of the support of a powerful nation. In the beginning, the membership of the League was not open to the vanquished nations.

Impressed by the praiseworthy work done by the League of Nations in certain fields between 1925 and 1929, fifty nations became its members. However, this was a temporary phase. The Allied Powers used the League to grind their own axe. As the League of Nations had no effective machinery to enforce its decisions, it, therefore, failed to maintain peace when quarrels involved big powers. The League could not take any effective step at the time of the Japan-Manchuria war, China-Japan war and Italy-Abyssinia war. It could also not restrain Hitler. These failures of the League proved its weakness and incompetence.

**Failure of Disarmament efforts** — The devastation caused by the first World War had taught the people many lessons. There emerged a general agreement that in order to ensure peace and security in the world, the arms race

should cease. After the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, the armaments and armed forces of the defeated nations had been greatly reduced. The Allied powers had assured Germany that after some time general disarmament would be implemented to ascertain collective security. Unfortunately, the policies that were adopted by different nations only encouraged armaments.

The first attempt towards disarmament was made in 1921 in the Washington Conference in which the major naval powers, Britain, America and Japan agreed to delimit the proportions of the tonnage of their warships. The German Disarmament Conference was held in 1932 and efforts were made to reduce the arms and to put a check on them. Thereafter other steps were also taken in this direction but due to the difference between France and Germany no decisions could be taken. Hitler walked out of the Conference as he had no faith left in its sincerity. After this all big and small states began to augment their military power and the world once again sank into the same chaotic condition in which Europe had been before the First World War began. The atmosphere of distrust and suspicion developed all around and made a future war seem impending.

**Contradictory policy of Western nations and the failure of the policy of Appeasement** — This was another important factor which contributed to the outbreak of the Second World War. After the Paris Peace Conference, the group of 'Five Allied Powers' came to an end and the responsibility for enforcing the peace treaties mainly fell on France and Britain. But differences between these two states had increased on the questions of reparation, collective security and disarmament.

It was unfortunate that for the sake of her commercial benefits, Britain implicitly helped Germany in her plans of rearmament. In order to maintain her world wide empire and international trade, Britain wanted to ward off any danger in the Mediterranean region and the Far East. This was why she appeased Italy. Britain did not oppose Japan because it appeared to be the only way of safeguarding her immediate and future trade interests in Far and South East Asia.

Another reason for adopting the policy of appeasement was that after World War I, France had become very powerful in Europe and to keep her under control Britain wanted to strengthen Germany. This enraged the Allied Powers and France

made separate treaties with Poland, Belgium and Czechoslovakia. Hitler and Mussolini took full advantage of the differences between France and England and the policy of appeasement. Mutual distrust weakened the front of the Allied Powers and they found it difficult to check the growing power of the dictators.

**Spirit of extreme nationalism** — The spirit of extreme nationalism was pre-eminent in Italy, Germany and Japan. In these countries, this spirit aimed at making the nation strong and glorious. Hitler made the concept of ‘master race’ the basis of national greatness. The economic depression played an important role in accentuating the spirit of nationalism.

**Rise of two rival military blocs** — Before the First World War, the world had got divided into two rival military camps: while one stood for democracy, the other stood for despotism. And now, before the Second World War, again there were two rival military camps. On the one side were countries like Italy, Germany and Japan, which had formed the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis. On the other side were Allied Powers like Britain, France, Russia and America. They formed a strong treaty organization. When the German Armed Forces under Hitler attacked Poland, Britain and France supported Poland and the Second World War broke out.

**Discontent of the minorities** — The shifting of the boundaries of the states, under the Paris Peace treaties, made exchange of races inevitable. Austria was separated from Germany and Czechoslovakia was recognized as an independent state. This complicated the situation in the Balkan peninsula and Central Europe. While the Treaties were under preparation, the Allied Powers dispelled the fear of the minorities by asserting the principle of ‘self determination’. But these minorities became a source of exciting ‘mutual discord’, discontent and agitation which finally initiated mutual struggle between various states.

**The immediate cause of war : German assault on Poland** — Poland had been declared an independent kingdom according to the decisions taken in the Paris Peace Conference. A Polish Corridor was also created through Germany in order to join Poland with the sea coast. It ran upto the port of Danzig. This decision was also against the prestige of Germany. Hitler assured his countrymen

to re-establish the lost glory of Germany. Thereupon, Hitler made a plan for an assault upon Poland. He demanded that Danzig should be annexed to the German empire immediately as the inhabitants of this territory were mostly Germans. He also demanded that the Polish Corridor should be ceded to Germany. Poland refused the demands of Hitler. Poland fully depended upon the military support of England and France.

On September 1, 1939, Hitler suddenly stormed Poland. On September 3, Britain and France warned Germany to stop war, but Hitler turned a deaf ear. Consequently, Britain and France declared war against Germany. Within a short time, the war spread like wild fire. The Second World War had begun.

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### **EVENTS OF WORLD WAR II, IN BRIEF**

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For your understanding, the events of the World War II can be put into four phases : The **Phase One** comprises events from September 1, 1939 to June 21, 1941, when Germany attacked Poland, Denmark, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, France , Britain and Greece.

In **Phase Two**, the Axis Powers attacked Africa and Germany attacked Russia between June 22, 1941 and December 6, 1941.

The **Phase Three** comprises events from December 7, 1941 to November 7, 1942. It includes Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and occupation of Netherlands, East Indies and Caucasus by the armed forces of the Allied Powers.

The **Phase Four or the last phase** was from November 8, 1942 to May 6, 1945. It includes American attack on French North Africa and the surrender of Germany as well as the surrender of Japan between May 7, 1945 to Aug. 14, 1945.

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### **CONSEQUENCES OF WORLD WAR II**

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The Second World War was the most barbarous, fierce and devastating war in human history. It was so colossal that an age ended with it. Many new ideologies were born in Europe after this war. Following are the consequences of this devastating war :

**Destruction on a large scale** — The Second World War is known as the most destructive war fought in human history. There was vast destruction of human life as well as material wealth and had to be endured by all those who participated in it. In this war, it is estimated that about fifteen million soldiers and ten million civilians lost their lives and about ten million soldiers were wounded. Economic loss suffered by people was colossal.

**End of colonialism and the rise of independent states** — The Second World War sparked off the spirit of independence. Consequently, the freedom movements in Asian countries gathered momentum and forced the imperialistic powers to grant freedom to the occupied countries. The British government changed her policies and India, Burma, Malaya, Lanka, Egypt and other countries were liberated. The French and the Dutch domination was also ended in several colonies. Thus a large part of British, French and Dutch empires slipped out of their yoke.

**End of Imperialism and colonialism** — Some of the European imperialistic powers lost in this war and their colonies set up national governments. Thus the myth of invincibility of European powers was broken and they found unable to hold their empire together. Communist ideology also denounced imperialism and colonialism. National political consciousness had awakened in the colonies and it was impossible to suppress it.

**Change in the techniques of warfare** — The techniques of warfare used in the Second World War greatly differed from those used in the previous years. Hitler's technique of **Blitzkrieg** surprised the whole world. The attacks were quick and victories that required months and years to accomplish were now attained within days. The army and navy had a less vital role vis' a vis' the aeroplanes and airforce. New methods of attacks and counter attacks were successfully tested. The use of the atom bomb brought the world on the verge of disaster.

**Division of society into two ideologies** — In the post Second World War age, several new tendencies were born. The society was now divided into two ideologies: Communism and democracy. While the communists wanted the means of production to be owned by the people as a whole and no person should get any income without engaging himself in productive labour, the believers in democracy



had different thoughts. Although they favoured abolition of social distinctions, they held that the government should make laws to control the origin, exchange and distribution of property to maintain co-ordination between capital and labour, land owners and peasants. They advocated that everyone should get an adequate share of property. It was seen that loyalty to the nation, patriotism and the spirit of sacrifice for the motherland were replaced by devotion to ideology.

**Beginning of the Cold War** — With the end of the second world war, the people at large hoped that at least now a durable peace would prevail and the Allied Powers would be able to solve the numerous post war problems. However, this was not to be. Now, two great powers, the U.S.A and the U.S.S.R appeared on the international stage. And as they stood for contrasting ideologies, soon differences emerged between them. These differences generated so much animosity that a fierce war of charges and counter charges continued unabated. They propagated mutually contradictory ideologies. This is known as the ‘Cold War’.

**Development of Regional Organizations** — In order to ensure their future security, both the power blocs formed regional organizations. Among the security organizations of the western countries the prominent ones are, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Baghdad Pact. Among the communist security organisations, the Warsaw Pact was the most prominent.

**Establishment of the United Nations Organization (U.N.O)** — After the Second World War, an urgent need was felt for creating an international organization for the sake of security of mankind and the establishment of a lasting peace. Efforts in the direction had already started while the war was still going on. The final shape to establish such an organization was given in the San Francisco Conference held in April-June 1945. The constitution of the United Nations Organization was put into practice on October 24, 1945. Its fundamental aim was to maintain international peace and security, to develop friendly relations and international cooperation.

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## **LET US SUM UP**

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There were a multitude of causes which were responsible for the outbreak of the Second World War. Among these, 'the German problem' and the expansionist policies followed by countries like Germany, Italy and Japan were the most prominent. The greatest war in human history fought so far, the Second World War had far reaching consequences as well. One age ended and a new one started. Many new ideologies took birth in Europe. The United Nations Organization was created in its aftermath, with the purpose of establishing lasting and durable peace.

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