

## CHAPTER 11: PATHS TO MODERNIZATION

### Sources

- Official Record
- Dynastic history
- Scholarly writings
- Popular literature
- Religious Literature

### Introduction:

Different societies have evolved their distinctive modernities. The Japanese and Chinese cases are very instructive in this regard. Japan succeeded in remaining free of colonial control and achieved fairly rapid economic and industrial progress throughout the twentieth century. The Chinese resisted colonial exploitation and their own bureaucratic landed elite through a combination of peasant rebellion, reform and revolution. Both these countries are situated in far East Asia, yet, they present a marked physical contrast.

### JAPAN

#### Physical Features

- Japan is a string of islands, the four largest being Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku and Hokkaido.
- There is no major river system.
- More than 50 per cent of the land area of the main islands is mountainous and Japan is situated in a very active earthquake zone.
- There are various homogenous ethnic group, like there are a small Ainu minority and Koreans who were forcibly brought as labour when Korea was a Japanese colony.
- Language spoken in mostly Japanese.
- Japan lacks a tradition of animal rearing.
- Rice is the staple crop and fish the major source of protein.
- Raw fish (sashimi or sushi) has now become a widely popular dish around the world as it is considered very healthy.

## Political System

- Japan became a modern country from the days of petty *daimyo* of Japan.
- In the twelfth century the imperial court lost power to shoguns, who in theory ruled in the name of the emperor, with the help of *samurais* (the warrior class) and *daimyo* with their capital in Edo (modern Tokyo).
- In the sixteenth century, Samurai insured peace and order.
- Japan was divided into more than 250 domains under the rule of lords called *daimyo*.

In the late sixteenth century, three changes laid the pattern for future development.

1. The peasantry was disarmed and only the samurai could carry swords. This ensured peace and order, ending the frequent wars of the previous century.
  2. The *daimyo* were ordered to live in the capitals of their domains, each with a large degree of autonomy.
  3. The land surveys identified owners and taxpayers and graded land productivity to ensure a stable revenue base.-
- By the mid-seventeenth century, Japan had the most populated city in the world – Edo – but also had two other large cities – Osaka and Kyoto.
  - Growth of a commercial economy and a vibrant culture blossomed in the towns, where the fast growing class of merchants patronised theater and the arts.
  - Increased use of money and creation of stock market led the economy in new ways.
  - Social and intellectual changes took place – such as the study of ancient Japanese literature – led people to question the degree of Chinese influence and study of ancient Japanese literature promoted.

## The Meiji Restoration

- The Meiji restoration is termed as one of the most momentous events in the Japanese history.
- There was demands for trade and diplomatic relations. In 1853, the USA demanded Japan that the government sign a treaty that would permit trade and open diplomatic relations.
- Japan lay on the route to China which the USA saw as a major market. At that time, there was only one Western country that traded with Japan, Holland.

- In 1868, a movement removed Shogun and brought Emperor to Edo. This was made the capital and renamed Tokyo, which means 'eastern capital'.
- British dominance in Asia alerted Japan, and scholars there wanted to learn European modern ideas. Many scholars and leaders wanted to learn from the new ideas in Europe; others sought to exclude the Europeans even while being ready to adopt the new technologies they offered. Some argued for a gradual and limited 'opening' to the outer world.
- To develop their economy and build a strong army, the government with the slogan slogan '*fukoku kyohei*' (rich country, strong army), created a sense of nationhood among the people and transform subjects into citizens.
- The government also built the 'emperor system' – a system, where mperor along with the bureaucracy and the military, exercised power. The Emperor was treated with reverence as he was considered a direct descendant of the Sun Goddess but he was also shown as the leader of westernisation. His birthday became a national holiday, he wore Western-style military uniforms.

### **Meiji Reforms**

1. Administrative Reforms: The Meiji government imposed a new administrative structure by altering old village and domain boundaries to integrate the nation. In 1871, feudalism was abolished under the Meiji rule.
2. Economic Reforms: Another Meiji reforms was the modernising of the economy. Japan's first railway line, between Tokyo and the port of Yokohama, was built in 1870-72. In 1872, modern banking institutions were launched. *Zaibatsu* (business families) dominated the economy.
3. Industrial Reforms: Textile machinery was imported from Europe, and foreign technicians were employed to train workers, as well as to teach in universities and schools, and Japanese students were sent abroad. The number of people in manufacturing increased. Over half of those employed in modern factories were women. The size of factories also began to increase.
4. Agricultural Reforms: Funds were raised by levying an agricultural tax.
5. Constitutional Reforms: In 1889, Japan adopted the a new constitution. The Meiji Constitution had created a Diet and declared emperor as the commander of the forces, it was based on a restricted franchise.
6. Educational Reforms: A new school system began to be built from the 1870s. Schooling was compulsory for boys and girls and by 1910 almost universal. Tuition fees were minimal. Tokyo Universtiy was established in 1877.

7. Military Reforms: All young men over twenty had to do a period of military service. A modern military force was developed. The military and the bureaucracy were put under the direct command of the emperor.

### **Re-emergence of Japan as a Global Economic Power**

During the 1930s, Japan exercised imperialist policy and invaded China to extend its colonial empire. Japan's attempt to carve out a colonial empire ended with its defeat by the Allied forces. However, it was defeated in the World War II when the US dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It resulted in huge destruction of masses. Under the US-led Occupation (1945-47) Japan was demilitarised and a new constitution introduced. Japanese philosopher **Miyake Setsurei** (1860-1945) argued that each nation must develop its special talents in the interest of world civilisation: The rapid rebuilding of the Japanese economy after its shattering defeat was called a post-war '**miracle**'.

- The new constitution had Article 9, the so-called 'no war clause' that renounces the use of war as an instrument of state policy.
- Agrarian reforms, the re-establishment of trade unions and an attempt to dismantle the *zaibatsu* or large monopoly houses that dominated the Japanese economy were also carried out.
- Constitution was democratised.
- Political parties were revived and the first post-war elections held in 1946.
- Suffrage was given to women in the elections of 1946.
- There was close relation between the government, bureaucracy and industry.
- Japan also introduced better goods at cheaper rates in the market with its advanced technologies.
- US support, as well as the demand created by the Korean and the Vietnamese wars also helped the Japanese economy.
- The 1964 Olympics held in Tokyo, it symbolised the maturity of Japan's economy.
- The introduction of network of high-speed **Shinkansen** or bullet trains, started in 1964, which ran at 200 miles per hour, added to its prosperity.
- In 1960s several pressure groups protested against industrial pollution. Industrialisation was pushed with utter disregard with the growth of civil society movements, due to its harmful effect on health and the environment.
- Government action and new legal regulations helped to improve conditions.

## **CHINA**

### **Physical Features**

- China is a vast continental country that spans many climatic zones.
- The core is dominated by three major river systems: the Yellow River (Huang He), the Yangtze River (Chang Jiang – the third longest river in the world) and the Pearl River.
- A large part of the country is mountainous.
- There are divergent ethnic group – Han, Uighur, Hui, Manchu and Tibetan.
- Major languages spoken are Chinese and Cantonese.
- Chinese food reflects this regional diversity. Southern or Cantonese cuisine include dim sum (literally touch your heart), an assortment of pastries and dumpling. While, in the north, wheat is the staple food while in Szechuan spices have created a fiery cuisine. In eastern China, both rice and wheat are eaten.

## History of China

- The beginning of modern China can be traced to its first encounter with the West in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- During 1839-42, British won the first opium war in China and snatched power from the Qing dynasty. The second opium war was fought in 1856-60.
- It revolves around three questions – a) How to regain Sovereignty b) End the humiliation of Foreign Occupation c) Bring out equality and development.
- There were three views:
  - i) Liang Qichao used traditional ideas in new and different way to meet Western challenges. He popularised Chinese nationalism.
  - ii) Republican revolutionaries Sun Yat Sen inspired by the ideas from the Japan and the West. He was the founder of the modern China and established a republic in 1911 AD.
  - iii) The Communist Party of China (CCP) wanted to end age-old inequalities and dispel foreigners.
- Later, the Guomindang (the National People's Party) along with the CCP strived to unite Chinese.
- Chiang Kai Shek, leader of the Guomindang, militarised China.
- Mao Zedong, CCP leader, organised a Soviets or peasant councils and fought Japanese colonisation.

- When **Guomindang** (the National People's Party) intensified attacks, the Soviets shifted the base to Yanan, after a 'Long March'. The **Communist Party** captured power and established the People's Republic in 1949.

### **Establishing the Republic:**

- Manchu dynasty overthrown and a republic established in 1911 under Sun Yat-Sen. He studied medicine but was greatly concerned about the fate of China.
- Yat-Sen's programme was called the Three Principles – These were **nationalism** – this meant overthrowing the Manchu who were seen as a foreign dynasty, as well as other foreign imperialists; **democracy** or establishing democratic government; and **socialism** regulating capital and equalizing landholdings..
- Revolutionaries asked for – driving out the foreigners to control natural resources, to remove inequalities, reduce poverty.
- Advocated reforms – use of simple language, abolish foot binding and female subordination, equality in marriage and economic development.
- Sun Yat-sen's ideas became the basis of the political philosophy of the Guomindang which were identified the 'four great needs – clothing food, housing and transportation.
- After the death of Sun, Chiang Kaishek (1887-1975) emerged as the leader of the Guomindang. He launched military campaign to control the 'warlords', regional leaders who had usurped authority, and to eliminate the communists.
- He advocated a secular and rational 'this-worldly' **Confucianism**.
- He encouraged women to cultivate the four virtues of 'chastity, appearance, speech and work' and recognise their role as confined to the household.

The **Guomindang** despite its attempts to unite the country failed because of its shallow social and political vision:

- Sun Yat-Sen's programme of regulating capital and equalising land – was never carried out.
- the party ignored the peasantry and the rising social inequalities. It sought to impose military order rather than address the problems faced by the people.

### **The rise of the Communist Party of China**

When the Japanese invaded China in 1937, the Guomindang retreated. The long and exhausting war weakened China. Prices rose 30 per cent per month between 1945 and 1949, and utterly destroyed the lives of ordinary people.

### **Factors**

. Rural China faced two crises

(a) Ecological Factors:

- Soil Exhanstion
- Deforestation
- Floods

(b) Socio – Economic Factors

- Exploitative land-tenure systems
- Indebtedness
- Primitive Technology
- Poor Communications

The CCP had been founded in 1921, soon after the Russian Revolution. **Mao Zedong** (1893-1976), who emerged as a major CCP leader, took a different path by basing his revolutionary programme on the peasantry. His success made the CCP a powerful political force that ultimately won against the Guomindang. In 1949, Communist Government was established in China and began a new age in the history of China.

### **Establishing the New Democracy 1949-65**

The Peoples Republic of China government was established in 1949.

It was based on the principles of the 'New Democracy', an alliance of all social classes.

- Critical areas of the economy were put under government control.
- Private enterprise and Private ownership of land were abolished.
- The Great Leap Forward movement launched in 1958 was a policy to galvanise the country to industrialise rapidly.
- Mao was able to mobilise the masses to attain the goals set by the Party. His concern was with creating a 'socialist man' who would have five loves: fatherland, people, labour, science and public property.
- Liu Shaochi (1896-1969) and Deng Xiaoping (1904-97) tried to modify the commune system as it was not working efficiently. The steel produced in the backyard furnaces was unusable industrially.

### **Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution**

- The conflict between the concept of 'socialist man' and those who objected to his emphasis on ideology rather than expertise led Mao to launch the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1965.
- The Red Guards, mainly students and the army, was used for a campaign against old culture, old customs and old habits.
- Students and professionals were sent to the countryside to learn from the masses.
- Ideology became more important than professional knowledge. Denunciations and slogans replaced rational debate.
- The Cultural Revolution began a period of turmoil, weakened the Party and severely disrupted the economy and educational system.
- In 1975, the party once again laid emphasis on greater social discipline and the need to build an industrial economy.

### **Reforms of 1978 Deng Xiaoping**

- Deng Xiaoping kept party control strong while introducing a socialist market economy.
- In 1978, the Party declared its goal as the Four Modernisations – science, industry, agriculture and defence.
- 'The Fifth Modernisation' proclaimed that without Democracy the other modernisations would come to nothing.
- in 1989, on the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth movement many intellectuals called for a greater openness and an end to 'ossified dogmas' (su shaozhi).
- Student demonstrators at Tiananmen Square in Beijing were brutally repressed.
- The post-reform period has seen the emergence of debates on ways to develop China.
- Growing revival of traditional ideas of Confucianism and arguments that China can build a modern society based on its own traditions rather than simply copying the West.

### **The Story of Taiwan**

- Taiwan had been a Japanese colony since the Chinese ceded it after the 1894-95 war with Japan.

- The Cairo Declaration (1943) and the Potsdam Proclamation (1949) restored sovereignty to China.
- The GMD, under Chiang Kai-shek went on to establish a repressive government forbidding the freedom of speech, political opposition banned.
- They excluded the local population from positions of power. they carried out land reforms that increased agricultural productivity and modernised the economy s
- Transformation of Taiwan into a democracy after the death of Chiang in 1975.
- Martial law lifted in 1987 and opposition parties were legally permitted.
- Diplomatically most countries have only trade missions in Taiwan instead of complete diplomatic ties because it (Taiwan) is considered to be part of China.
- The question of re-unification with the mainland remains a contentious issue but " Cross Strait" relations (that is between Taiwan and China) have been improving.
- China may be willing to tolerate a semi-autonomous Taiwan as long as it gives up any move to seek independence.

### **Two Roads to Modernisation**

- The histories of Japan and China show how different historical conditions led them on widely divergent paths to building independent and modern nations.
- Japan was successful in retaining its independence and using traditional skills and practices in new ways.
- In the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) China faced a humiliating defeat. On 17 April 1895, Treaty of Shimonseki was signed between China and Japan, ending the First Sino-Japanese War.
- The Chinese became vulnerable after their defeat and declared that both China and Japan needed reforms for modernisation.
- Sino-Japanese war served the basis for the Anglo-Japanese alliance in 1902.
- The Chinese path to modernisation was very different.
- Foreign imperialism, both Western and Japanese, combined with a hesitant and unsure Qing dynasty to weaken government control.
- The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw a rejection of traditions and a search for ways to build national unity and strength.

**Keywords:** Confucianism, Opium war, Modernisation, Meiji, May Fourth movement (60

years earlier, there was an exciting explosion of new ideas), Communist, Proletarian, Daimyo, dim sum.